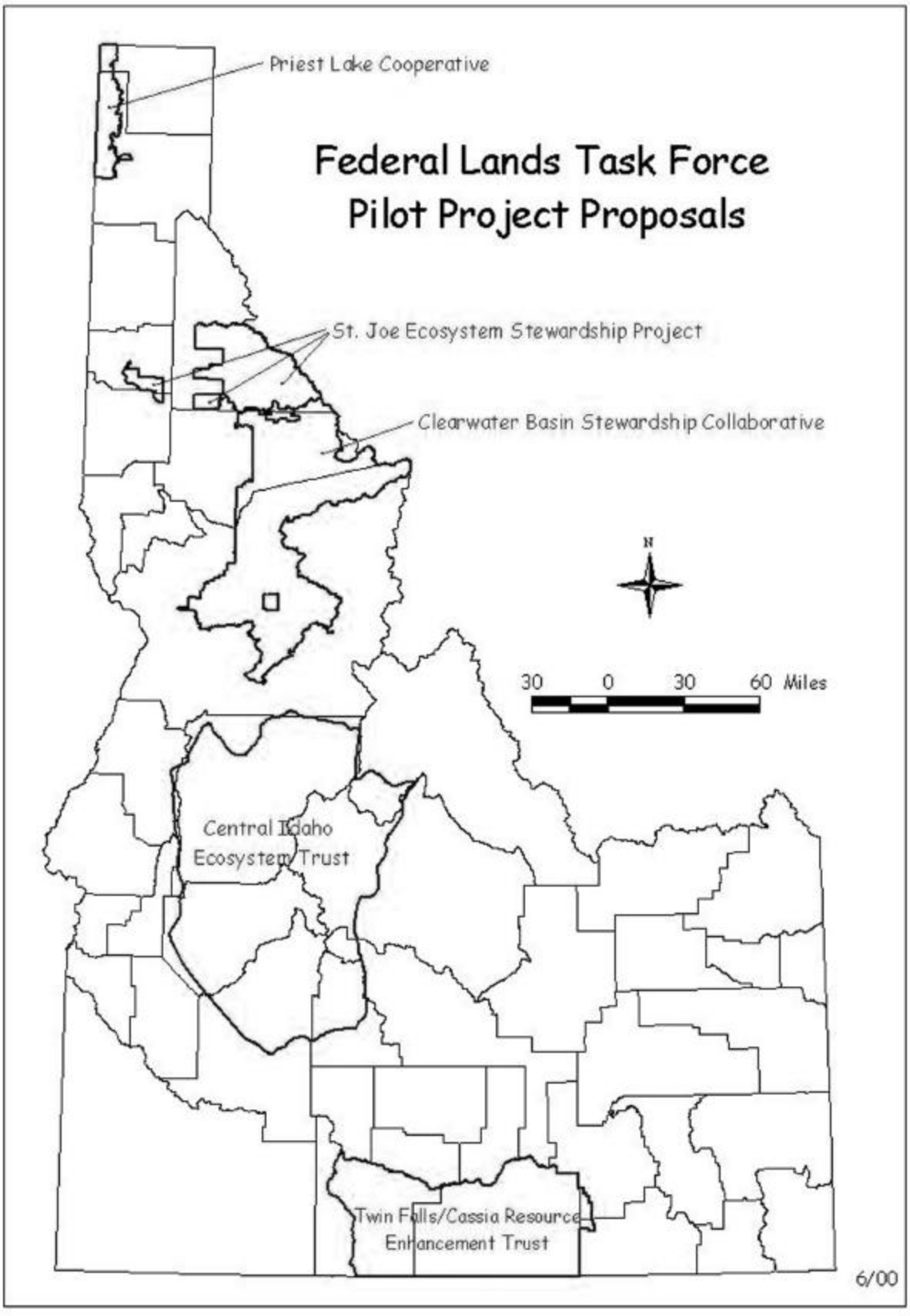
BREAKING THE GRIDLOCK

Federal Land Pilot Projects in Idaho

A Report to the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners
by the
Federal Lands Task Force Working Group
December 2000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FEDERAL LAND PILOT PROJECTS IN IDAHO

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Photos courtesy of Karen Wattenmaker and Jay O'Laughlin.

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

In 1996 the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board) appointed the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force to examine issues of federal land management in Idaho, analyze alternative methods of federal land management, and report their findings. In their July 1998 report to the Land Board, the Task Force recommended development of pilot projects to test three new approaches to federal land management: the collaborative model, cooperative model, and trust land-management model.

The Land Board appointed a Coordinator to lead development of further actions and in October 1999 appointed an eight-member Working Group to identify pilot projects on Idaho's federal lands.

The Working Group recommends five pilot projects for consideration. Consistent with the Task Force recommendations, none of the projects involves state management, state control, or state ownership of federal land.

The five pilot projects use an ecosystem-based approach to maintain and enhance environmental quality, to attain other land management goals and objectives, and to create opportunities for more effective public participation in resource management decisions through revised decision-making frameworks. All projects feature long-range plans, environmental impact analyses, and public involvement.

In total, the five proposed pilot projects encompass 10.8 million acres of federal land, of which 10.1 million acres are National Forest System lands. Currently, 20,476 acres (or 0.2%) of these national forest lands are subject to active forest ecosystem management each year. The projects presented herein propose increasing this to 36,967 acres, or 0.4% of the total national forest area.

The five proposed pilot projects are presented in alphabetical order:

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust

Area: 5.8 million acres; all of the Boise National Forest and parts of the Payette, Sawtooth, and Salmon-Challis National Forests

Goal: Restore vegetation to desired ecological conditions while meeting social needs within an economically-oriented management framework.

Summary: This project uses a trust law framework. Trustees representing national and local interests will provide management oversight. Land management will be keyed to a scientific model ("Ecosystem Diversity Matrix") comprised of 143 combinations of vegetation habitat types and growth stages called ecological land units (ELUs).* These ELUs provide area-specific goals for management and can be related to species' habitat needs and social and economic concerns. Trust revenue will be generated in a manner that recognizes public values and is sustainable over the long term. The trust beneficiaries are entities representing fish and wildlife, recreation, and local government. A "Local Advisory Council" will function as a sounding board for the trust manager in the decision-making process and manage public involvement in the planning process.

* Technical terms such as Ecosystem Diversity Matrix and ecological land units (ELUs) are defined in the Glossary.

Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative

Area: 2.7 million acres; parts of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests

Goal: Restore habitat for elk and other indicator species consistent with social objectives and historical conditions.

Summary: A "Collaborative Group" will guide the management of elk recovery efforts by restoring this portion of the Clearwater River basin to ecological goals within the range of historical conditions. One specific goal is to restore a higher percentage of early- and late-successional stages of vegetation than currently exists. The Collaborative Group will include a wide range of stakeholders such as local government, environmental, wildlife advocates, and multiple-use interests. The group will develop annual and five-year plans for managing the project area. The Collaborative Group will involve the public in defining the goals and products expected from the project and in recommending management objectives.

Priest Lake Basin Cooperative

Area: 265,000 acres; Priest Lake District, Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Goal: Coordinate management efforts of state and federal agencies to restore and enhance ecological conditions and improve resource management for wildlife, recreation, and balanced economic uses.

Summary: Three governmental organizations will be parties to a Memorandum of Understanding for management of the Priest Lake area—the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Department of Lands, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. The federal land will be managed using the cooperative method. The three agencies will cooperatively manage federal and state lands within the area to achieve multiple use objectives while maintaining the Land Board's obligations for the state of Idaho's endowment lands. The management of the cooperative will be guided by a "Local Agency Managers" group consisting of representatives of the three agencies. The managers' efforts will be augmented by a "Public Advisory Committee" as well as representatives of other state or federal agencies with regulatory authorities for Priest Lake resources.

St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project

Area: 726,000 acres; St. Joe District, Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Goal: Restore and enhance ecological conditions by conducting resource management activities through stewardship contract pilot projects, similar to those authorized by the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act.[1]

Summary: Stewardship contract pilot projects will be used for all resource management activities. Western white pine, western larch, and ponderosa pine will be restored to conditions within the historic range of variability. Forage for elk and other big game species will be increased. The focus of the project is to improve ecosystem conditions, support local government activity, and fund other activities, such as watershed improvements. A "Local Advisory Committee" and an "Investment Project Advisory Committee" will oversee and monitor all resource management activities.

Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust

Area: 1.3 million acres (51% BLM and 49% Forest Service lands); 457,418 acres of the BLM's Twin Falls Resource Management Area; 214,462 acres of the BLM's Burley Resource Management Area; 632,120 acres of the Twin Falls and Burley Districts, Sawtooth National Forest

Goal: Provide sustainable use and enhancement of local ecological assets while balancing established and emerging cultures.

Summary: The project will enhance environmental quality, recreation, and long-term stability of local communities. Trust beneficiaries represent local communities, users of resources (water, wildlife and range) and future generations. Trustees represent national, state, and local interests and coordinate with federal and state agencies. Public input and involvement in resource management decisions will be through a "Local Steering Committee" representing a collaborative group of interests.

2. Introduction

In its report (Idaho FLTF 1998), the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force identified three kinds of alternative models the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management might use to improve the problem situation on federal lands in Idaho. To some extent the Task Force addressed application of the models but left unanswered other key questions, including where and how the models could be tested.

In the **Problem Statement** (Section 3), this report suggests that new approaches to federal land management are desirable. After reading the **Background** (Section 4), one should get the idea that change is desirable now. Section 5 identifies key **Features of the Three Alternative Models**. Five **Pilot Project Proposals** (Section 6) identify specific applications of these models on 10.8 million acres of federal lands in Idaho. Sections 7 and 8 present **Legal Analysis** and **Economic Analysis** addressing specific things that need to be changed. The Working Group **Recommendations** (Section 9) suggest all five pilot projects to the Land Board. These models perhaps can be applied elsewhere.

3. Problem Statement

In the past three decades, the delivery of goods and services, as well as intangible and intrinsic values from federal lands, has not met the changing expectations of the public in general, or of Idaho citizens in particular (Idaho FLTF 1998).

The demand placed on resources on these lands has increased. Competing uses cannot

be easily accommodated and conflicts have escalated. Current processes and laws used for the management of federal lands not only fail to satisfactorily resolve the inevitable competition for the uses of resources from these lands, but also set the stage for continued conflict. No single group or interest seems to be satisfied with the present situation. Increasingly, many Americans turn to the courts as the forum for resolving disputes concerning federal land management (Idaho FLTF 1998).

Current dissatisfaction with federal land management is the subject of disagreement between interests. As stated in the Task Force report (Idaho FLTF 1998), dissatisfaction arises from:

- Declining wildlife populations, particularly threatened and endangered species.
- Deteriorated water quality.
- Increasingly restricted recreational access.
- Reduced roadless acreage.
- Reduced availability of livestock forage.
- Reduced timber harvest.
- A cumbersome and lengthy decision-making process that often results in gridlock.

Although there is disagreement regarding the management priorities, the current situation on federal lands has affected Idaho through the destabilization of communities, loss of jobs, loss of economic return, and a decline in environmental quality (Idaho FLTF 1998). Some evidence of these effects can be found in a University of Idaho Policy Analysis Group report (see O'Laughlin et al. 1998a).

Since 1998, additional studies and reports have confirmed the need for active management of federal forest, range, and watershed resources to restore desired ecosystem conditions. One problem is that forest conditions invite insect and disease outbreaks, harbor dead trees, and also, unless removed, excessive amounts of flammable materials to fuel unnaturally hot fires (O'Laughlin 2000b). The catastrophic fires of 2000 underscore the need for active management. In the 2000 fire season, almost 7 million acres burned across 11 western states, with 1.2 million acres in Idaho. The continued spread of noxious weeds is a problem as well.

On June 1, 2000, the Andrus Center for Public Policy held a conference on federal lands at Boise State University. Cecil Andrus, former Governor of Idaho and Secretary of the Interior during the Carter Administration, introduced the conference report by stating that:

> Management of the public lands in the West isn't working very well. Without

> regard to one's perspective on individual issues, almost anybody close to the land will tell you that we have problems that have gone unaddressed and that now must be confronted. The two previous conferences sponsored by the Andrus Center have helped us define the problems. … [One problem is] the tangled web of overlapping and often contradictory laws and regulations under which our federal public lands are managed. It became apparent that little was going to change in the Washington-based, top-down decision-making process that has been the rule for so long (Andrus Center 2000, p.3).

According to western governors participating in the Andrus Center for Public Policy Conference, new approaches to federal land management should include these policy objectives: "Public land policy and its implementation should be decentralized whenever feasible. Decisions made through collaboration work best. Command and control regulation … should be used infrequently" (Andrus Center 2000, p.5).

The Working Group and proponents for the five proposed pilot projects believe that restoring the ecosystem values that society desires will require actions by humans, not inaction. The proposed projects will attain ecosystem restoration goals by using alternative models for federal land management. All projects feature some form of collaborative management decision-making.

4. Background

Federal land management plays an important role in Idaho. The lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) together represent more than 60 percent of Idaho's land base. Idaho's government and its citizens deserve to participate in decision-making affecting the benefits and intrinsic values of the lands we share with all of the people of the United States.

This background section provides a brief history of federal land management (Section 4.1) and describes the current situation as decision gridlock (Section 4.2). The findings and recommendations of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force are reviewed, as are the procedures of the Working Group that produced this report (Sections 4.3 and 4.4).

4.1. Brief History of Federal Land Management

The history of our federal system of public land management is long and complex. In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt recognized that the forest reserves established in 1891, now called the national forests, were a good investment for the nation, and that "thoroughly businesslike management" could increase their usefulness.[2]

The original statutory scheme for federal lands was fairly simple: Congress established broad management objectives, and left to the discretion of local federal managers how to best achieve those objectives. The 1897 Organic Act for the National Forest System established two purposes beyond protecting the forests from destruction: securing favorable conditions for water flows and furnishing a continuous supply of timber.[3] The goals of the 1934 Taylor Grazing Act were to stabilize the livestock industry dependant on the public range, to preserve the land and its resource from unnecessary injury, and to provide for the orderly use, improvement, and development of the range.[4]

As goals for federal lands changed, Congress passed statutes mandating new policy objectives. The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 stated that "national forests are established and shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes."[5] As time went on, Congress also began providing substantive directions that limited the discretion of local managers, such as the restrictions on Forest Service timber harvest practices in the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA).[6] Restrictions were placed on BLM lands through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).[7] Although the agencies had engaged in various resource inventory and planning exercises for many years, Congress has expanded these obligations in more recent times. For example, land-use planning requirements were established in FLPMA and NFMA.

Additional requirements are imposed by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)[8] which requires preparation of reports analyzing the environmental impacts of major federal actions, both at the planning stage and the implementation stage. In the last 35 years, Congress has also passed many environmental protection statutes that affect management of federal public lands, including the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Endangered Species Act.[9] More than seventy environmental laws are on the books today.

The Endangered Species Act[10] requires all federal agencies to undertake interagency consultation with federal fish and wildlife services and to prepare biological assessments when endangered or threatened species may be present in the area affected by a proposed management action.[11] If the services issue an opinion that an action is likely to "jeopardize" protected species or adversely affect their critical habitat, the land management agency must modify the project.[12] If the presence of cultural or historical sites is suspected in a project area, additional interagency cooperation and documentation must occur.[13]

The documentation required before implementation of management decisions can be costly in time and funds. To comply with NEPA, for example, the Forest Service estimated that in 1995 the agency prepared approximately 20,000 environmental impact statements (EISs) and environmental assessments (EAs), at a cost of $250 million that year.[14]

Conducting NEPA environmental analyses and preparing environmental documents consumes about 18 percent of the funds available to manage the national forests and approximately 30 percent of the agency's field resources.[15] The effectiveness of the NEPA process is questioned by many. According to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (see **Glossary**), the Forest Service has actively taken steps to limit

public participation[16] and conducts extensive, complex environmental analyses to avoid or prevail against challenges to its compliance with environmental laws.[17] The GAO also concluded that the NEPA process has largely failed to improve interagency collaboration and consensus building.[18]

In addition, the GAO said the Forest Service received over 1,200 administrative appeals and several dozen lawsuits on project-level decisions each year during the mid-1990s.[19] Administrative appeals and lawsuits are often long and costly affairs, and they take personnel away from on-the-ground management. Citing a federal court decision,[20] the GAO said the current framework of laws can be characterized as a "crazy quilt" of apparently mutually incompatible statutory directives.[21]

For example, forest fires are a special concern in the intermountain West. Restoring forest stands to within the historical range of variability is a widely-accepted, long-term environmental goal (see O'Laughlin 2000b). However, short-term goals often hinder restoration efforts. Prescribed burns can be precluded when it is determined that smoke from such burns will violate air quality standards required under the Clean Air Act.[22] Similarly, thinning and fuel reduction projects may be precluded when temporary increases in stream sedimentation associated with such projects are determined to violate Clean Water Act standards.[23] As the Society of American Foresters said in their comments on the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosytem Management Project (ICBEMP), "Trying to protect aquatic habitat by not allowing management of the adjacent terrestrial areas where fuel has built up does not make ecological sense" (O'Laughlin et al. 1998b).

4.2. Federal Land Management: Gridlock Prevails

The federal government is directly responsible for the administration of 29% of the land in the United States of America.[24] Idaho has more than 63% of its land administered by a variety of federal agencies. In only three other states does federal land exceed 60% of the state—Nevada (83%), Alaska (68%), and Utah (65%).[25]

Of the 50 states, Idaho has the largest portion of its land (almost 39%) in the National Forest System of lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service. The BLM is responsible for almost another 22% of the land in Idaho. Other federal agencies have approximately

3% of the land in the state (O'Laughlin et al. 1998a). These other agencies have more specific missions than the Forest Service and BLM. Because of federal predominance across the Idaho landscape and lack of a clearly defined mission (at least in relation to other agencies), this report focuses on the Forest Service and BLM lands. We also tend to focus more attention on national forests than on BLM lands because of the greater extent of national forests in Idaho and because almost all of the pilot project proposals are within national forests.

Historical analysis reveals that the current situation is rooted in the social values of preserving and protecting various features of lands and resources (O'Laughlin et al. 1998a). Preservation values were codified with the Wilderness Act of 1964[26] and subsequent environmental protection laws, including the Clean Water Act of 1972 and Endangered Species Act of 1973.[27] These laws are strong, and they are sometimes perceived as conflicting with the statutory mission of the land-management agencies to provide multiple goods and services.[28] In addition are NEPA regulations requiring not only analysis of environmental impacts of federal actions, but also public involvement in decisions.[29] In 1976, management of Forest Service and BLM lands was updated but also impeded by enactment of NFMA and FLPMA.[30]

Conflicts between preservation and active management interests are more than a century old, but with laws enacted since the mid-1960s and changes in demographics, these value conflicts have become more intense. The lack of consensus affects agency decisions through what political scientists call "gridlock" (Kraft 2000).

By 1998, national forest timber harvests across the country were about one-third what they were in 1990. Idaho follows that trend, with an 80% reduction in timber harvests on Idaho national forests since 1990. During the 1990s, timber harvests were less than one-third what they were in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. While timber harvests have declined,

project delays and agency expenditures for preparing supporting environmental analysis documents have increased. In Idaho, according to the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, the Forest Service and BLM spend thirty cents of every budget

dollar on resource management, and the rest on administration, including environmental analysis in support of plans and projects (O'Laughlin et al. 1998a).

When he was Chief of the Forest Service, Jack Ward Thomas described the current federal land management situation:

> The management of these lands is approaching 'gridlock' for a number of reasons. The primary cause is the crazy quilt of laws passed by the different Congresses over a century with no discernable consideration for the interactions of those laws. The total of the applicable law contains mixed mandates, and produces mixed and confusing results. This is compounded by myriad court decisions that sometimes confuse more than clarify. It's time to deal with this problem in a comprehensive fashion.[31]

Gridlock results in inaction. Inaction, or passive management of public forest, range, and watershed resources, is less likely to restore the land to desired ecosystem conditions than is active management. The results of passive management include catastrophic wildfires, destructive outbreaks of forest insects and diseases, and the continued spread of noxious weeds. The requirements of federal law need to be reconciled with our current understanding of how we affect our environment and with scientific methods of resource stewardship. This needs to be done comprehensively rather than piecemeal.

4.3. Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Findings

In 1996, in accordance with a mandate of the Idaho Legislature (see Appendix A), the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board) appointed the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force and charged them with examining federal land management issues in Idaho and alternative methods for managing federal lands.

After nearly two years of study, consideration, testimony, and debate, the Task Force issued their findings and recommendations to the Land Board in July 1998. Their report, titled *New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Lands* (Idaho FLTF 1998), contained two findings:

1. The current processes of federal land management have resulted in uncertain decision-making, destabilization of resource dependent communities, and deterioration in environmental quality on federal lands. In short, the system is broken.

2. Significant changes to these processes are necessary. The changes proposed [by the Forest Service and BLM] are not adequate.

The Task Force was also charged with examining alternative methods of management that might improve the situation. Following is a description of the approach they used and their recommendation actions.

The Task Force adopted three principles to be used for developing alternative solutions. They are:

- The ownership of federally administered lands will not be transferred to the state.
- A variety of uses will continue on federally administered lands currently managed for multiple use.
- The public will be involved in the decision-making process.

The principles led to the following general

considerations. These are desirable outcomes from which objectives and alternatives can be crafted:

- Resource management decisions will be made faster, more efficiently, and more effectively, and will produce more certainty and accountability. Local federal land managers will be given greater flexibility in decision-making.
- Environmental quality will be maintained and enhanced.
- Fish and wildlife habitat will be enhanced.
- Community stability and resiliency will be enhanced.
- Land management agency budgets will be stabilized.
- Federally administered lands will be managed in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Management of federally administered lands will be scientifically based to the greatest extent possible.
- All state and federal laws will be obeyed.

The above desirable outcomes were forged into seven functional objectives to guide the Task Force in selecting alternative methods of federal land management. Recommended alternatives had to meet all seven of these functional objectives:

- Involve the public.
- Streamline and localize decision-making.
- Protect water quality.
- Base management on formalized plans.
- Protect species.
- Stabilize agency budgets.
- Stabilize communities.

After considering a number of alternatives, the Task Force recommended three management models for the Land Board to consider. They are:

- Collaborative alternative
- Cooperative alternative
- Trust alternative

The Task Force recommended that the Land Board pursue a pilot project, or projects, testing one or more of the action alternatives for federal land management (Idaho FLTF 1998).

4.4. Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group

In March 1999, the Idaho Legislature passed a concurrent resolution:

> We endorse the report submitted by the Federal Lands Task Force to the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners, support further action by the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners on the proposals contained in the report, and urge the Congress of the United States to pass legislation implementing the recommendations contained in the report.[32]

The Land Board appointed a Coordinator to undertake further actions, and in September 1999 appointed an eight-member Working Group (see Appendix B) to identify pilot project proposals on Idaho's federal lands.

The Task Force recommended that "Design and implementation of a pilot project should be preceded by a detailed economic analysis and a more thorough review of the changes needed in federal law and regulation" (Idaho FLTF 1998, p. 42). This report provides some of those information needs.

In November 1999, the Working Group developed the following mission statement to help guide them through their assignment:

> The Federal Lands Task Force Working Group will develop pilot projects testing the Federal Lands Task Force Report action alternative(s) for managing federally administered lands and will assist in pilot project implementation including but not limited to legislation, regulations, policy, and public education and information.

The Working Group heard invited presentations from a number of people, including Dr. Jack Ward Thomas, University of Montana; Dr. John Freemuth, Boise State University; Jack Blackwell, U.S. Forest Service Regional Forester; Frank Stuart, Quincy Library Group; Joe Hinson, Northwest Natural Resources Group; and Larry Stevens, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Dr. Jay O'Laughlin, University of Idaho, gave several invited presentations, including an overview of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force report (O'Laughlin 1999), forest certification (Cook and O'Laughlin 1999, see Appendix C), potential application of trust law to federal lands (O'Laughlin 2000a), and a literature review of the need for active management to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health (O'Laughlin 2000b). The Working Group held meetings open to the public monthly between October 1999 and November 2000. More than 100 organizations and individuals were contacted (Appendix E). These solicitations resulted in five pilot project proposals (Appendices F through J) which are summarized herein (Section 6).

5. Features of the Three Alternative Models

The following summaries of the three alternative models are based on the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force report (see Idaho FLTF 1998) but also include some additional observations offered by the Working Group. Four of the five pilot project experiments proposed in this report are based on these three models.

5.1. Collaborative Model

Under the concept of collaborative management, those who disagree on management objectives work together to overcome their differences. In a collaborative group all parties agree to work together to achieve some greater good for all interests (Idaho FLTF 1998).

At the Forest Conference in April 1993, President Clinton charged members of environmental organizations, the wood products industry, and local governments to "…keep working for a balanced policy that promotes economy, preserves jobs and protects the environment." He said, " I hope we can stay in the conference room and out of the courtroom."[33] Since that historic conference, many collaborative groups have followed the president's lead and formed organizations to attempt to improve federal land management. The highest profile example of these collaborative groups is the Quincy Library Group (QLG), covering portions of three national forests in northern California. Although the QLG was successful in getting federal legislation enacted,[34] implementation has been held up for several reasons, including adequacy of the Environmental Impact Statement for the project area (see Little 2000).

When diverse voices represent the major players interested in a particular land area, the chances for success are much greater. Even if collaboration does not result in concrete changes but only encourages discus-

sion of differing viewpoints, some degree of progress is made. It is in these discussions that goals and agendas can be understood, and ultimately, agreement can be reached.

Collaborative groups need to forge an agreement on land management issues if they are to be effective. Too much unnecessary input can break down collaborative efforts. A group cannot be so inclusive that hundreds of "micro interests" are involved and so exclusive that a major player is left out of the process.

The key issue with collaborative management is whether the results of the collaborative process will be binding on the federal land manager. The sharing of power envisioned under this model is not a devolution of power from the federal government authority to state or local government authority. Instead, it involves the transfer of some authority and responsibility from the agency's remote central headquarters to its resource managers in the field. Only then can the federal agency be responsive to a collaborative group.

5.2. Cooperative Model

Under the cooperative model, the state and the federal governments agree to manage a block of federal land under some type of shared powers agreement. The terms of the arrangement, including the goals, responsibilities, and funding, will be delineated in a Memorandum of Agreement, supported by federal legislation if necessary. Several examples of such agreements exist, including the City of Rocks National Reserve in southern Idaho.[35]

In his presentation to the Working Group, Larry Stevens, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, observed that personalities are often the determining factor in the success of cooperative agreements. In other words, if one of the parties is not interested in the success of such an agreement, its chances for failure are high. This may seem like an obvious point, but it deserves emphasis because one individual can potentially make or break the project.

Although cooperative agreements have proven successful, such as the 14,320 acre City of Rocks National Reserve, it has yet to be demonstrated whether a cooperative agreement can work with the size of pilot projects and the type of general use lands being considered herein. The cooperative model has generally only been applied to smaller areas of land with a focused mission or purpose.

5.3. Trust Model

A trust clarifies in absolute terms who the trust lands are managed for, the objective for managing those lands, and therefore, the mission of the trustees and the managing agency. This clarification of "mission" and "objectives" is in stark contrast to federally administered multiple-use lands where the mission and objectives for management have been confused after a century of statutory and regulatory change and case law (see Society of American Foresters 1999).

The Idaho Federal Lands Task Force reported that, "If all other things were equal, the trust model of resource management will provide the highest degree of clarity, accountability, enforceability, and sustainability of these three alternatives" (Idaho FLTF 1998, p. 41).

Trust land management is America's oldest

and most durable public land management model (Souder and Fairfax 1996). Many people are familiar with the trust models currently being operated on state lands in most of the western United States. The trust model is also widely recognized by the environmental community. The Nature Conservancy is the largest and best known, but the number of local land trusts is growing. A recent estimate indicates that over 1,200 locally-based trusts exist in the United States, managing 5 million acres. An additional 10 million acres are managed by large trusts such as the Nature Conservancy (O'Laughlin et al. 1998, Yandle 1999). These types of state and private trusts differ from the model proposed herein. The basic premise, however, remains the same. Trustees and land managers are accountable for meeting the mission of the trust to produce benefits in perpetuity. A trust framework precedent for managing federal lands has recently been established for the private Baca Ranch acquisition in New Mexico by Act of Congress, placing it in the National Forest System.[36]

5.4. Conclusions: Toward Model Implementation

The Idaho Federal Lands Task Force report confirmed a General Accounting Office report that the federal land management system in the United States is broken (Idaho FLTF 1998, US-GAO 1997). The difficult task now is to identify and develop the tools to improve the situation. Managing federal lands under the cooperative, collaborative, and trust alternative models has the potential of improving federal land management decisions.

To some degree these three models already have been tested on public lands. We are not therefore proposing something that has never been tried. Rather, we are expanding on, revising, and fine-tuning existing management methods to test their application to Forest Service and BLM lands. The scale of projects proposed will provide meaningful tests of these models.

6. Pilot Project Proposals

To develop a comprehensive approach for proposing pilot project experiments designed to improve the federal land situation in Idaho, the Working Group conducted a series of public meetings attended by Idaho citizens (see Appendix D). More than 100 groups of Idaho citizens who might be interested in developing a pilot project on federal lands were identified, contacted, and offered the

opportunity to submit proposals for pilot projects (see Appendix E). The five projects proposed herein represent the efforts of Idaho citizens who have expressed a desire to work more closely with federal land managers. These five pilot project proposals are listed in alphabetical order. Additional details for each of the projects are provided in Appendices F through J.

6.1. Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust

The concept of "ecosystem management" has been hard to scientifically define and to successfully apply on the ground. Take forest ecosystem management, for example. At both the stand level and across a landscape (see the **Glossary**), it is difficult to see where traditional forest stand-level management ends and management of the ecosystem begins. For example, a mature ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir stand that has been thinned with the objective of providing a more historically accurate or representative mixture of species and age classes may look similar to a stand that has been selectively harvested in order to enhance growth and capture economic values.

The lack of visual distinction has led to value-laden perceptions about forest management. The term "management" can mean active management through logging or passive management to promote preservation of the ecosystem, with little, if any, logging permitted. This confusion in definition and application has rendered the concept of ecosystem-based management difficult to implement as an effective land management policy.

Despite the difficulty, scientists do generally agree that ecosystem-based management is rooted in determining a range of historic, pre-settlement conditions and then moving ecosystem components toward that condition, either passively by allowing nature to take its course or actively through a series of human decisions designed to speed up the process. The Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust (CIET) is based on the belief that forested landscapes can, indeed, move toward a more resilient and historic condition through human actions to achieve it.

Two aspects of this proposal are key to its success. First, the elements of trust law can be a useful tool to set ecological objectives and make decisions for meeting them. In this proposal, trust beneficiaries that represent wildlife, recreation, and local governments act as the interests that the trustees must protect. In optimizing the interests of each, the seven-member board of trustees (four appointed by the Governor, three appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture with the Governor's advice) and trust managers will be forced to choose options that not only move the landscape toward its historic norm but also provide a mix of economic and social values important to the human inhabitants of this area. A "Local Advisory Council" will be appointed by the trustees. It will function as a sounding board for the trust manager in the decision-making process and manage public involvement in the planning process.

Second, the landscape is portrayed in an "Ecosystem Diversity Matrix" that portrays "Ecological Land Units" (ELUs) (Haufler et al. 1996). ELUs are a combination of habitat types and vegetative growth stages; in other words, what grows there and how big it is. For example, the "warm, dry Douglas-fir" habitat type can appear on the ground as any one of several growth stages, ranging from a seedling/sapling stand to mature old growth. Each is an ELU, and each has some impor-

tance to one or more of the native species that live within the landscape. Moreover, land managers can take conscious actions to create more or less of that ELU and measure progress toward meeting desired levels of each ELU across a broad landscape in the "Ecosystem Diversity Matrix."

ELUs are a "coarse filter" (see the **Glossary**) describing on-the-ground conditions in a relatively simple manner. They can be identified either by on-site identification or by predicting where each will occur based on soils, elevation, aspect, and other measures gathered primarily by remote imagery.

There are 143 separate ELUs within the CIET (Mehl et al. 1998). The range of ecological conditions represented by them becomes the basis for all evaluations of historical conditions, existing conditions, and desired future conditions.

A variety of sophisticated software tools allows these ELUs to be either shown on maps as they actually exist (a "spatial" display), or in tabular form (i.e., how much of a particular ecological unit exists.) Thus, managers can readily know the location and total size of each of the 143 ELUs across the landscape that comprise the "Ecosystem Diversity Matrix" (Mehl et al. 1998).

Human involvement is a factor in ecosystem-based management and conservation. Whether that involvement is positive, moving landscapes toward a more historically representative functioning condition, or negative, in which we tolerate "deficits" in the vegetative communities that historically have defined the landscape of this area for years, is a social and political decision. Passive management in a world where civilization as we know it is part of the ecosystem will not by itself restore functional ecosystems. In fact, such a strategy moves away from that goal, not toward it. The thesis of this endeavor is that restoring the ecosystem values which society desires will require conscious actions by humans, not passive inaction.

This proposal, with its combination of governance through a trust mechanism and decisions based on achieving clearly defined ecosystem diversity goals, allows ecosystem-based management and conservation to become predictable and measurable. This approach can become a tool to help manage the conflicts that have characterized public land management for most of the second half of the 20th century.

6.2. Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative

This proposal involves a "Collaborative Group" guiding the management of elk habitat recovery in the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. The group of no more than fifteen will include a wide range of environmental, multiple use, local government, and Native American interests, comprised of individuals with a demonstrated interest in recovering elk and other key species and in working collaboratively toward group decision-making.

The Collaborative Group will be charged with developing annual and five-year plans for the management of the project area. Congress will authorize this group and would recognize the five-year plans as a revision to the current NFMA forest plan for the pilot project area. Three five-year planning cycles, the number of years equivalent to the current NFMA forest planning period, should be completed to provide significant data to evaluate the model. An environmental

impact statement will accompany the five-year plans. For the annual plans, an environmental assessment assuring the consistency of the projects with the goals of the five-year plan will be required.

The Collaborative Group will solicit and consider public input to determine the goals and objectives for land in the pilot project area during the planning periods. The Collaborative Group will hear appeals of

management decisions on the basis that the proposed action was inconsistent with the plans. Appellants receiving an adverse decision from the Collaborative Group could seek recourse in court.

Decisions by the Collaborative Group would be by consensus of the members. In the event a consensus cannot be reached, a majority of the members would develop the Collaborative Group position or decision. The Forest Supervisor would be responsible for implementing the plan developed by the Collaborative Group and would provide technical and other support necessary for plan development. The Collaborative Group would monitor plan implementation.

In order to make the ecosystem restoration project self-sustaining, revenues will be generated from land-management activities consistent with restoration objectives. Revenues and federal appropriations will be used for elk and key species habitat and herd improvement projects. In order to provide for a healthy ecosystem, other projects to improve additional wildlife and fisheries habitats and recreation enhancement should be considered. The revenues generated from forest ecosystem management will be available to help pay for the plan's implementation.

For the purposes of this pilot project, revenues collected from within either of the two national forests can be used anywhere within the project area regardless of the source of the revenues. The appropriate use of the revenues to implement the plans will be decided jointly by the Collaborative Group and the two Forest Supervisors. Until the Collaborative Group project is authorized by Congress, existing NFMA land management plans, policies and legal restrictions will remain in force. Once the new plan is complete and approved through the NEPA process, however, it will replace, in full, the existing NFMA plans.

By its nature, a collaborative effort for these two forests must leave some unanswered questions. For example, the operations of the group itself must be left to the Collaborative Group to decide, once the group is established. We do suggest, however, that any entry into RARE II inventoried roadless areas be, first of all, necessary to meet elk

habitat and population restoration goals.

Second, generally such entry does not require permanent open roads to be constructed in these areas.

Collaboration at this level means that the larger issues on the Clearwater and the Nez Perce National Forests that would logically be addressed through a comprehensive plan need to be identified. While elk habitat recovery will become the focus of collaboration when the annual and five-year plans are developed, efforts to increase elk numbers cannot ignore multiple-use considerations or compromise the successful resolution of such other important issues such as anadromous fish recovery. In fact, if this effort is to be truly successful, it must be complementary to the other matters on both forests that need attention. Based upon the current NFMA forest plans, accompanied by more recent social developments and assessments of on-the-ground conditions, the following issues stand out as potentially benefiting from a collaborative management approach:

1. Improve habitat for steelhead, salmon, and native trout. The Nez Perce National Forest could produce 15% of the total Columbia River system chinook salmon population.
2. Improve aquatic habitat through restoration projects.
3. Improve habitat for lynx and other threatened or endangered species.
4. Restore ponderosa pine, western white pine, and western larch, over time, to an ecologically resilient state within the historic range of variability.
5. Restoration of whitebark pine in higher elevations.
6. Manage vegetation to reduce the risk of unnaturally severe and intense fires.
7. Provide an economical means of thinning overstocked stands and reducing fuel loads.
8. Demonstrate local forest-related professionals can be partners in ecosystem management and restoration.
9. Maintain desirable rural characteristics.
10. Publicize the Nez Perce National Forest to increase tourism.

6.3. Priest Lake Basin Cooperative

This proposal involves a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Idaho Department of Lands, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation on management objectives and responsibilities in the Priest Lake basin. The basis for this proposal is that three management responsibilities for the Priest Lake basin (timber, wildlife, and recreation) will, by virtue of land ownership and existing uses, remain prominent. Meeting these objectives will be easier and more efficient if the individual efforts of the parties to the MOU are combined. A "Public Advisory Committee" will provide advice representative of local and national interests to the resource managers.

Of the 265,000 acres in the Priest Lake Ranger District of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, approximately half the area provides habitat for a threatened population of grizzly bears. This proposal does not include active forest ecosystem management in this portion of the Cooperative except to benefit grizzly bears.

The management of the Cooperative will be guided by a "Local Agency Managers" group consisting of the local managers for the Department of Lands, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Forest Service. Although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality each have various regulatory responsibilities, they do not control and manage land in the Priest Lake basin.

The managers' efforts will be augmented by the Public Advisory Committee, along with representatives of other state or federal agencies with regulatory authorities for Priest Lake resources. Each of the managers will retain their current employment status and rely upon their existing budget and staffs for operational planning and implementation.

Currently, each agency reports, respectively, to the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners, the Parks and Recreation Board, or the hierarchy of the U.S. Forest Service and Department of Agriculture. For the purposes of this pilot project, senior managers from each of the three agencies will comprise the Local Agency Managers group.

The public will have a strong voice through the local Public Advisory Committee that will include representatives of all those with a demonstrated interest in the management of the Priest Lake basin. The membership of the committee will include equitable representation of such interests as county commissioners, the environmental community, wildlife interest groups, wildlife advocates, forest industry, recreational interest groups, and local business interests. The Public Advisory Committee will have significant administrative functions, such as helping provide public involvement in the preparation of one- and five-year plans, plus acting as a facilitator to resolve differing views on management plans. The scope of the Committee's responsibilities should be refined through public discussion of this proposal. Therefore, this proposal does not presume to detail them at this point.

As described in the report of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force, planning will include annual plans, five-year plans, and specific project plans designed to implement the annual plans. Annual and five-year plans will be subject to public review and "appealable" to the Public Advisory Committee. Appeal of the plans will be limited to only those who availed themselves of the opportunities for public involvement in their development. Planning will be carried out as a function of the Local Agency Managers, with those managers relying upon the personnel of the existing three agencies.

6.4. St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project

The basis for this project is the "stewardship contract" law enacted by Congress in 1998.[37] The concepts embodied in the statute meet many of the objectives of the recommendations of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force, although the law did not exist when the Task Force was completing its work. Resource management under this new law meets many of the Task Force's recommendations without major overhaul of existing statutes and policies.

The essence of this proposal is simple—all the resource management work to be completed on the St. Joe District of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest will be completed through stewardship contracts. NEPA analysis will be done for each contract. These contracts will generate revenue from thinning overcrowded stands. Management goals are restoring long-lived seral species such as western white pine, western larch, and ponderosa pine, and increasing forage for elk and other big game species. Revenues from these projects will, first of all, support local governments, and, second, be available to

fund projects that do not generate revenue, such as watershed improvements. A "Local Advisory Committee" and a forest level "Investment Project Advisory Committee" will oversee all the work.

The St. Joe project encompasses 726,000 acres of national forest ownership. Approximately 25% of the total land area in the St. Joe River Basin is currently roadless, with roadless lands comprising 48% of the national forest ownership, or 348,000 acres. Two rivers drain the St. Joe area; the St. Joe itself and its major tributary, the St. Maries. The southern portion of the area includes headwater streams of the Little North Fork of the Clearwater, which flow to the south into Dworshak Reservoir.

The staff of the St. Joe District has developed *An Interim Ecosystem Management Framework* by converting the findings of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan (ICBEMP) into specific proposed objectives and management priorities. This will be accomplished by several actions:

- Aquatic habitats may be restored by building instream structures that would create pools and riparian zones for the recruitment of large woody debris. Other restoration methods include reducing road densities on sensitive land types by obliterating roads within break lands, or reconstructing those that are to remain system roads, and reducing the mileage of those roads within riparian areas. It is also recommended that roads should be obliterated or reconstructed to stabilize slopes and roadbeds.

- Terrestrial habitats can be restored by a reduction in the lodgepole pine stands and replacement with more resilient, long-lived seral species. Replanting these areas with rust resistant white pine, larch or ponderosa pine will establish these seral species.

The ecosystem-based management plan will also include restoration of forest conditions by thinning established ponderosa pine, larch, and Douglas-fir stands to remove shade tolerant understory species. Thinning will accelerate the development of large, early-seral trees established from 1910-1930

era fires, including larch and ponderosa pine. Western white pine restoration involves managing regeneration efforts and planting rust-resistant white pine, particularly on sites where root rot and mountain pine beetle hazard is high, or where stands are moving toward more fire-intolerant species, e.g. Douglas-fir and grand fir.

Stewardship contracting has recently been viewed as a new approach to accomplishing

needed on-the-ground work on federal lands. Through this concept, the Forest Service offers a contract to accomplish such objectives as road relocation, thinning, campground repairs, or restoration of a particular tree species or type. Generally, the work is a combination of ecosystem needs, such as those identified in the St. Joe project. Timber that is removed as part of this work can be sold by the contractor and the value of it used to offset the cost of the work needed by the Forest Service. If revenues from the project exceed the costs of completing the work, then that money is retained by the local unit of the Forest Service to augment projects where costs will likely exceed revenues.

In 1998, Congress recognized the validity of this concept by authorizing a number of stewardship projects through a subsection of the FY1999 appropriation bill.[38] In addition, this law provided guidance on how the projects were to be evaluated and implemented, plus exempted them from other laws that would have impeded their implementation, such as the Knutson-Vandenberg Act[39] that would have otherwise dictated that a portion of the stewardship contract proceeds be kept for reforestation of any logged areas. While all the projects authorized by this law were fully subscribed and are now either being developed or implemented (see USDA Forest Service 2000), Congress has shown recent interest in extending and expanding the concept.

The combination of stewardship contracts and service contracts pave the way to complete the ecosystem restoration work needed on the St. Joe District. While some additional legislative language or intent may be necessary to reconcile the details of the law with this proposal and to reauthorize additional stewardship projects, the St. Joe Valley Association sees no need to modify other federal statutes or the structure of the Forest Service at this time. The St. Joe District will develop its work plan around a series of stewardship contracts that will be developed locally and approved through the Investment Project Advisory Committee.

In the organizational structure, both the Investment Project Advisory Committee and the Local Advisory Committee will have a broad membership, consisting of business and civic leaders, those with environmental interests, sportsmen, industry representatives, and others with an interest in the operation of the pilot project. Their roles, however, will be markedly different. The Local Advisory Committee group will actually conceive and develop the individual stewardship projects, with the help of the St. Joe District Ranger and his or her staff. The Investment Project Advisory Committee will carry out the actual implementation and approval of the projects on the St. Joe District.

Reforming the Forest Service in a way that helps the agency achieve the needs of the ecosystem as well as those of the local communities will not be an easy task. Many approaches must be explored, including those espoused by the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force that call for changes in the rules governing the operation of the Forest Service, at least for the terms of the pilot projects identified by the Task Force Working Group. The St. Joe Valley Association believes, however, there is also room for consideration of an approach that retains the current structure of the Forest Service and will operate within existing rules.

6.5. Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust

The proposal advances an experimental area embracing most of Twin Falls and Cassia Counties that will be managed by a single administrative unit. In order to conform to current federal land-management agency administrative boundaries, the project area embraces much of the Burley Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Area and all of the Twin Falls and Burley Forest Service Ranger Districts. The project's west boundary is the west boundary of the Burley BLM Resource Area. The north boundary is the Snake River. The south boundary is the state line with the exception of embracing the Raft River division of the Burley Ranger District. The east boundary is the east boundary of Cassia County with the exception of embracing all of the Sublett Division of the Burley Ranger District, which extends a short distance into Oneida County.

The proposal is primarily the trust model with key elements from the collaborative model. The mixed model capitalizes on the strengths of both. A trust is utilized to provide a setting conducive to creative experimentation and management. A collaboration model is utilized to create a "Local Steering Committee" within the trust to capitalize on the on-the-ground experience of the greater Twin Falls and Cassia Counties community in concert with national interests.

The proposed project area is rich in diversity and values. It has two ski areas and numerous campgrounds. It is home to one of Idaho's best mule deer populations and offers good fishing. The area is a haven for off-road vehicles, motorized recreation vehicles, and snowmobiling activities.

The local communities in the area are agriculture based and public land resources dependent. Their populations are steady, but the economy of the region has experienced federal resource use reductions. These communities are unique candidates to test the premise that alternative public land management arrangements will help stabilize their economies.

Congress, acting as the "trust settlor," will pass legislation to establish the trust, name the beneficiaries and trustees, and provide any guidance needed for the operation of the

trust. The trust instrument will state the purpose for which the trust is to be managed, i.e., "to ensure ecosystem diversity across the landscape, while providing an optimum mix of social and economic benefits."

Beneficiaries will include entities capable of representing the interests of local communities, users of resources (water, wildlife and range) and future generations. As described in the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force report (Idaho FLTF 1998), trustees will represent both national and local interests.

Financially, the trust must generate sufficient revenue sources to provide adequate returns to the beneficiaries. The trustees must also make investments to preserve the body of the trust and provide some assurance of returns to the beneficiaries on a sustained, perpetual basis. The trust manager and staff will likely come from the established agency structure within the area of the trust's operation.

The trust will encompass all the national forest and BLM lands within the 1.3 million acre area proposed.

The proposal will also establish a Local Steering Committee that represents a cross-section of the Twin Falls/Cassia community. The committee will help the trustees determine policy and provide valuable input on key resource issues such as recreational use, elimination of noxious weeds, and preventions of wildfires.

Under this model, more detailed objectives will be articulated by the trustees and the Local Steering Committee. For example, an extension of the "protect species" objective should be the protection and enhancement of sage grouse and cutthroat trout in this project area. The trustees and Local Steering Committee will have a hand in setting detailed objectives. The project period will be a minimum of 15 years with a provision for extension. The project area includes no wilderness or wilderness candidate acreage.

The Local Steering Committee will make management decisions by consensus. Management objectives will be developed and prioritized. Objectives should be measurable, attainable, and strive toward accomplishing common goals. An action plan will then be prepared to identify who, when, where, and what will be accomplished. Assignments should be given to individual members and subcommittees should be formed to accomplish separate tasks.

Increased monitoring will be a priority to provide improved baseline data and direction in accomplishing goals and objectives. If monitoring indicates downward trends, then re-planning can take place to get back on track. Flexibility must be in the plan to allow for natural catastrophes, drought, floods, fires, ownership changes, changing range conditions, etc.

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust proposal is unique. It proposes to combine two separate federal agencies under a single management structure. Simultaneously, it combines two distinctly different types of landscapes and resources, grasslands and forests. It proposes to combine shared and similar resources, such as water, fish and wildlife, and recreation resources, under a single, yet common set of management enhancement and protection strategies.

7. Legal Analysis

The conflicting patchwork of federal laws and regulations governing public lands in the West has frustrated attempts to bring innova-

tive solutions to ecosystem-based cooperative planning. Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is a leading example (see Section 7.1). As a result, opportunities to explore alternative, inclusive, public planning in federal land management have been squandered.

By its nature, a collaborative effort must leave some unanswered questions. For example, the operations of the group itself must be left to the Collaborative Group to decide, once the group is established. We do suggest, however, that any entry into RARE II inventoried roadless areas be, first of all, necessary to meet habitat and population restoration goals. Second, generally such entry does not require permanent open roads to be constructed in these areas.

Implementation of the five pilot projects recommended herein will require amendments to the legal framework, i.e., statutes and regulations, governing management of federal lands. The amendments are summarized in Tables 1 through 8 (Section 7.2). These tables were developed from similar tables in the Task Force report (Idaho FLTF 1998). They outline the amendments necessary to implement the proposed projects.

The Working Group does not propose as part of these projects any change in the rules for the "25% fund" distribution of receipts from federal lands to counties, schools, and highway districts under federal and state law.[40]

Further, the Working Group supports the current Small Business Program that allocates timber resources between large and small business operations. Timber production resulting from pilot projects must be credited between these entities according to existing statute and regulation.

The pilot projects proposed by the Working Group present a unique opportunity to make the management of federal lands more efficient. Through consolidation of procedural requirements and elimination of duplicate procedures, a more effective process can be implemented.

7.1. National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

Federal laws protecting our environment have accomplished many of the goals for which they were created. Our perception and understanding of the value of the public resources and their place in our environment have been, in large part, molded by these federal laws. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is one of the first laws to reflect the emerging environmental conscience of America in the latter half of the 20th century. It recognized the desire to "create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans."[41]

The specific procedures in regulations for implementing NEPA have spawned thousands of lawsuits that were not originally anticipated (Rodgers 1994). The goals, standards, and purposes of NEPA should not be abandoned by any recommendations to reform our public land laws. Rather, these recommendations should incorporate more efficient and effective procedures to achieve the original aims of the law.

It is also undeniable that many natural resource advocates have come to rely on NEPA procedures to ensure judicial scrutiny over federal agency decision-making and slow the pace of resource use. Such use of

NEPA processes is authorized and permitted under the current federal statutory scheme, notwithstanding the complaints of some resource users. Because of their reliance on administrative and judicial review to direct federal decision-making, environmental advocates can be expected to be skeptical of any changes to existing federal laws for fear that change will disturb their assurance of exacting judicial review.

What would be the result if the effort, funds, time, and resources that go into judicial review of federal decision-making were redirected to cooperative decision-making? If citizens were able to spend less time on judicial dispute resolution at the end of the federal decision-making process and more on cooperative efforts on a national and local level, federal land management agencies would become better stewards of public resources and our environment.

The five pilot projects in this report all rely, to some extent, on Congress to modify the statutes and regulations governing management of federal lands. Because, however, each of these projects embodies the principles of collective decision-making by widely representative stakeholders for the benefit of the public resource, it is our hope that we can incorporate the goals and purposes of NEPA review into a streamlined process. We therefore call upon Congress to include, in authorization of these pilot projects, the requirement for a cooperative and precisely delineated environmental review process (see details in Tables 1, 2, and 4).

Congressional authorization should include the requirement that if the preparation of an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment under NEPA or any other federal environmental review, analysis, opinion, permit, license, or approval is required for a project action, a cooperative environmental review process will be employed. (This is, of course, unless a categorical exclusion will apply.) A single lead federal agency will be designated for development and implementation of the cooperative environmental review process for actions under each pilot project. The Secretary of Agriculture will be designated for projects primarily involving federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, and the Secretary of the Interior will be designated for projects involving federal lands primarily under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management.

The cooperative environmental review process will be incorporated into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the state and federal agencies involved. The environmental review process will identify all potential federal and state agencies that have jurisdiction over related issues that may be affected by the pilot project and will otherwise be part of an environmental document required by NEPA.

The MOU will also be required to identify any other federal agency that might be required by federal law to independently conduct a review or analysis to determine whether to issue a permit, license, or approval or render an opinion on the environmental impact of a project action.

The MOU will ensure that all environmental reviews, analyses, opinions, permits, licenses, or approvals that must be issued by any federal agency will be conducted concurrently with NEPA environmental analysis for the project action and the NEPA and related analysis. Reviews will be completed within a cooperatively determined or legally established maximum time period. We recom-

mend one year for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) (see Tables 1, 2, and 4).

Each federal and state agency's review will be required to be completed within the agreed-upon time periods. If a federal or state agency under the MOU fails to complete its review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing any permit, license, or approval within the established time period, the project will be deemed approved by the agency. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU if failure to permit such an extension will result in material and demonstrable harm to the environment.

Public participation is fully incorporated into this cooperative review process, with meaningful participation required for later standing to object to any approved action. Provision for collective, tiered analysis of the cumulative effects of project actions, by five-year project plans and one-year implementation schedules, will consolidate analyses, reviews, and public participation into manageable and meaningful groupings and increments. This will streamline and facilitate participation by all stakeholders.

This approach is only a procedural refinement of the current NEPA regulations and is completely consistent with the current statute. Similar time limits and reasonable expediting of analysis and review have been successfully incorporated in the implementation of environmental statutes such as the Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Water Act, and California Environmental Quality Act.[42] The latter is a close cousin of NEPA itself.

In this way, and through these safeguards, we seek to protect both the environment and the integrity of these pilot projects. It is our hope that through a refined environmental review process that encourages collective and constructive participation in decision-making by persons of good will and common intent, we can streamline the NEPA process.

7.2 Comparison of Projects

The following eight tables compare how each of the five proposed projects will meet the functional objectives described in Section 4.3. The tables provide a checklist for understanding how, for example, the projects will involve the public (Table 1), protect water quality (Table 3), and improve community stability (Table 8).

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: INVOLVE THE PUBLIC

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans to comply with NEPA.	Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans to comply with NEPA.	Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans to comply with NEPA.	Provide process for public input on NFMA 10-15 year plan and individual NEPA projects.	Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans to comply with NEPA.
Trustees represent national and local interests. Trustees approve management plans, decide appeal, and ensure needs of beneficiaries are met. The Local Advisory Council manages public involvement in all phases of the planning process.	Collaborative Group develops and guides management plans.	Scoping completed by Public Advisory Committee.	Scoping is completed by the Forest Service. A Local Advisory Committee will conceive and develop individual stewardship projects. A forest level Investment Project Advisory Committee will oversee all work.	Scoping is completed by the Local Steering Committee. Trustees represent national and local interests. Trustees approve management plans, decide appeal, and ensure needs of beneficiaries are met.
The public input process for the five-year plan operates within the following time frames: 1) The draft plan with alternatives is published. Public comments are accepted for 60 days. 2) Within 60 days the final draft with the preferred alternative is published. 3) Public comment is accepted for 30 days following publication of the final draft. 4) The agency decision is published within 30 days of the close of the comment period.	The public input process for the five–year plan operates within the following time frames: 1) The draft plan with alternatives is published. Public comments are accepted for 60 days. 2) Within 60 days the final draft with the preferred alternative is published. 3) Public comment is accepted for 30 days following publication of the final draft. 4) The agency decision is published within 30 days of the close of the comment period.	The public input process for the five-year plan operates within the following time frames: 1) The draft plan with alternatives is published. Public comments are accepted for 60 days. 2) Within 60 days the final draft with the preferred alternative is published. 3) Public comment is accepted for 30 days following publication of the final draft. 4) The agency decision is published within 30 days of the close of the comment period.	The public input process operates within NEPA guidelines.	The public input process for the five-year plan operates within the following time frames: 1) The draft plan with alternatives is published. Public comments are accepted for 60 days. 2) Within 60 days the final draft with the preferred alternative is published. 3) Public comment is accepted for 30 days following publication of the final draft. 4) The agency decision is published within 30 days of the close of the comment period.
Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain the right to appeal the decision.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain the right to appeal the decision.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain the right to appeal the decision.	Minimal involvement is required to appeal the decision.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain the right to appeal the decision.
There are two levels of formal appeals prior to judicial appeal.	There is one level of formal appeal prior to judicial appeal.	There are two levels of formal appeals prior to judicial appeal.	There are two levels of appeal consistent with Forest Service processes.	There are two levels of formal appeal.

TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: STREAMLINE AND LOCALIZE DECISION-MAKING

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Establishes a one-year planning process.	Establishes a one-year planning process.	Establishes a one-year planning process.	Follows NFMA and NEPA planning process.	Establishes a one-year planning process.
A Local Advisory Council assists in the five-year planning process.	The Collaborative Group assists in development of the five-year and one-year plans.	A Public Advisory Committee assists in the five-year planning process.	A Local Advisory Committee assists in the planning process. Investment Project Advisory Committee implements.	A Local Advisory Council assists in the five-year planning process.
The five-year plan consists of one-year components.	The five-year plan consists of one-year components.	The five-year plan consists of one-year components.	The NFMA plan is for 10-15 years.	The five-year plan consists of one-year components.
There is a single level of informal appeal.	There is a single level of informal appeal.	There is a single informal issue resolution point with the Local Agency Managers.	There are multiple levels of NEPA appeals.	There is a single level of consultation.
Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain rights to appeal.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain rights to appeal.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain rights to appeal.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is desired but not required.	Constructive involvement in the public comment process is required to maintain rights to appeal.
There are two levels of formal appeals.	There is one level of formal appeals.	There are two levels of formal appeals.	There are multiple levels of NEPA appeals.	There are two levels of formal appeals.
Decisions on uses permissible in roadless areas will be made in the planning process; in general, entry to these areas will not involve construction of permanent open roads.	Decisions on uses permissible in roadless areas will be made in the planning process; in general, entry to these areas will not involve construction of permanent open roads.	Decisions on uses permissible in roadless areas will be made in the planning process; in general, entry to these areas will not involve construction of permanent open roads.	Decisions on uses permissible in roadless areas will be made in the planning process; in general, entry to these areas will not involve construction of permanent open roads.	Decisions on uses permissible in roadless areas will be made in the planning process; in general, entry to these areas will not involve construction of permanent open roads.

TABLE 3: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: PROTECT WATER QUALITY

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Consistent with the Clean Water Act, the State Water Quality Plan will be relied on to protect water quality. It includes: The Forest Practices Act, the Dredge and Placer Mining Act, the Lake Protection Act, and the Surface Mining Act. Each of these establishes BMPs and minimum requirements to protect water quality.	Consistent with the Clean Water Act, the State Water Quality Plan will be relied on to protect water quality. It includes: The Forest Practices Act, the Dredge and Placer Mining Act, the Lake Protection Act, and the Surface Mining Act. Each of these establishes BMPs and minimum requirements to protect water quality.	Consistent with the Clean Water Act, the State Water Quality Plan will be relied on to protect water quality. It includes: The Forest Practices Act, the Dredge and Placer Mining Act, the Lake Protection Act, and the Surface Mining Act. Each of these establishes BMPs and minimum requirements to protect water quality.	Adopt forest plan standards for streams. INFISH standards apply. ICBEMP slope adjustment factor to modify INFISH standards.	Consistent with the Clean Water Act, the State Water Quality Plan will be relied on to protect water quality. It includes: The Forest Practices Act, the Dredge and Placer Mining Act, the Lake Protection Act, and the Surface Mining Act. Each of these establishes BMPs and minimum requirements to protect water quality.
Voluntary BMPs for agricultural activities.	Voluntary BMPs for agricultural activities.	Voluntary BMPs for agricultural activities.	Monitor compliance with forest plan standards.	Voluntary BMPs for agricultural activities.
The Cumulative Watershed effects process as a basis for TMDL development on forested watersheds.	The Cumulative Watershed effects process as a basis for TMDL development on forested watersheds.	The Cumulative Watershed effects process as a basis for TMDL development on forested watersheds.	Complete sub-basin assessments.	The Cumulative Watershed effects process as a basis for TMDL development on forested watersheds.
Monitoring and adjustment of BMPs to meet water quality standards.	Monitoring and adjustment of BMPs to meet water quality standards.	Monitoring and adjustment of BMPs to meet water quality standards.	Comply with state BMP's and state water quality standards.	Monitoring and adjustment of BMPs to meet water quality standards.

TABLE 4: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: PLANNING

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Five-year plan includes land allocations, community, social, and economic needs and impacts. It defines expected outputs.	Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans.	Provide process for public input on five- and one-year plans.	Provide process for public input on NFMA 10-15 year plans.	Five-year plan includes land allocations, community, social, and economic needs and impacts. It defines expected outputs.
The five-year plan requires an EIS.	The five-year plan requires an EIS.	The five-year plan requires an EIS.	The plan requires an EIS.	The five-year plan requires an EIS.
Recognize existing Native American obligations.	Recognize existing Native American obligations.	Recognize existing Native American obligations.	Recognize existing Native American obligations.	Recognize existing Native American obligations.
The one-year plan lists specific projects proposed to fulfill the commitments of the five-year plan.	The one-year plan lists specific projects proposed to fulfill the commitments of the five-year plan.	The one-year plan lists specific projects proposed to fulfill the commitments of the five-year plan.	The plan does not list specific projects proposed to fulfill the commitments of the plan.	The one-year plan lists specific projects proposed to fulfill the commitments of the five-year plan.
The one-year plan requires an EA.	The one-year plan requires an EA.	The one-year plan requires an EA.	Projects require an EA or EIS.	The one-year plan requires an EA.
Once the one-year plan is in place, projects proceed without a further decision process.	Once the one-year plan is in place, projects proceed without a further decision process.	Once the one-year plan is in place, projects proceed without a further decision process.	Projects are appealable.	Once the one-year plan is in place, projects proceed without a further decision process.
If a project is not covered in the five- or one-year plan, an EIS or EA will be required and will need to go through the public input process.	If a project is not covered in the five- or one-year plan, an EIS or EA will be required and will need to go through the public input process.	If a project is not covered in the five- or one-year plan, an EIS or EA will be required and will need to go through the public input process.	An EIS or EA will be required for all projects and will need to go through the public input process.	If a project is not covered in the five- or one-year plan, an EIS or EA will be required and will need to go through the public input process.
One year to complete EIS. Six months to complete EA. Thirty days to appeal final plan. Forty-five days after receiving appeal to render decision.	One year to complete EIS. Six months to complete EA. Thirty days to appeal final plan. Forty-five days after receiving appeal to render decision.	One year to complete EIS. Six months to complete EA. Thirty days to appeal final plan. Forty-five days after receiving appeal to render decision.	Normal NEPA timelines apply.	One year to complete EIS. Six months to complete EA. Thirty days to appeal final plan. Forty-five days after receiving appeal to render decision.
A MOU between the agencies involved would provide for streamlined NEPA compliance. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU.	A MOU between the agencies involved would provide for streamlined NEPA compliance. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU.	A MOU between the agencies involved would provide for streamlined NEPA compliance. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU.	A MOU between the agencies involved would provide for streamlined NEPA compliance. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU.	A MOU between the agencies involved would provide for streamlined NEPA compliance. An extension of negotiations and completion of the review, analysis, opinion, or decision on issuing a permit, license, or approval not to exceed 90 days could be included in the MOU.

TABLE 5: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: PROTECT SPECIES (All Species)

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
NFMA and FLPMA requirements (See table 3 for water quality) must be met.	NFMA and FLPMA requirements (See table 3 for water quality).	NFMA and FLPMA requirements (See table 3 for water quality) must be met.	Follow current NFMA forest plans. Management guidelines specifications are defined in management plan.	NFMA and FLPMA requirements (See table 3 for water quality).
The EIS must address fish and wildlife issues and impacts and is required at the five-year planning level only.	An EIS addressing fish and wildlife issues and impacts is required at the five-year plan level only.	The EIS must address fish and wildlife issues and impacts and is required at the five-year planning level only.	An EIS addressing fish and wildlife issues and impacts is required at the plan level.	An EIS addressing fish and wildlife issues and impacts is required at the five-year plan level.
An EA providing more specific fish and wildlife impact and protection actions is required at the one-year plan level.	An EA providing more specific fish and wildlife impact and protection actions is required at the one-year plan level.	An EA providing more specific fish and wildlife impact and protection actions is required at the one-year plan level.	An EA providing more specific fish and wildlife impact and protection actions is required at the project level.	An EA providing more specific fish and wildlife impact and protection actions is required at the one-year plan level.
Money is available for habitat protection and restoration through the “public goods” and payments to beneficiaries.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities is available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities as determined by the collaborative group.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities is available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities in accordance with Memorandum of Agreement.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities is available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities in accordance with Stewardship contracting guidelines, i.e., trading goods for services.	More money is available for habitat protection and restoration through the “public goods” and payments to beneficiaries than is currently available.

TABLE 6: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
ESA requirements. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service is required at the one-year plan level only.	ESA requirements. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service is required at the one-year plan level only.	ESA requirements. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service is required at the one-year plan level only.	ESA requirements apply. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife is required at both the plan and project levels.	ESA requirements. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required at the one-year plan level only.
Money is available for habitat protection and restoration through payments for "public goods" and to beneficiaries.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities is available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities as determined by the collaborative group.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities will be available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities.	Money for habitat protection and restoration activities is available through current appropriations process and revenue generating activities in accordance with Stewardship contracting requirements.	Money is available for habitat protection and restoration through payments for "public goods" and to beneficiaries.

TABLE 7: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: STABILIZE BUDGETS

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Operations are funded from the proceeds of revenue producing projects and from state and federal government appropriations.	Operations are funded from the proceeds of revenue producing projects and from state and federal government appropriations.	Operations from each land management entity as per their individual appropriations process are expected to be no less than current levels.	Operations are funded from the proceeds of revenue producing projects and from state and federal appropriations.	The operation of the trust is funded from congressional appropriations.
Appropriated funding would be ear-marked by Congress for expenditure specifically on this project	Appropriated funding would be ear-marked by Congress for expenditure specifically on this project	Receipts from cooperative provided to the endowment trust beneficiaries as provided by current law.	Funding consistent with authorizing statute.	Appropriated funding would be ear-marked by Congress for expenditure specifically on this project.
A management account will provide funds for public goods, beneficiaries, and management expenses	Funds can be proportioned to counties or held as a contingency fund for other activities.	A contingency account is provided to allow funds savings for unexpected projects.	When revenues from the project exceed the costs of operations, funds are retained by the local Forest Service unit for priority projects.	A reserve account is managed to adjust for fluctuations in the flow of proceeds from the trust.

TABLE 8: COMPARISON OF PROJECTS
FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE COMMUNITY STABILITY

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust	Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative	Priest Lake Basin Cooperative	St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project	Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
Nothing in authorizing or appropriating language shall be construed as affecting the distribution of revenues to local governments (e.g. 25% forest funds under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 500).	Nothing in authorizing or appropriating language shall be construed as affecting the distribution of revenues to local governments (e.g. 25% forest funds under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 500).	Nothing in authorizing or appropriating language shall be construed as affecting the distribution of revenues to local governments (e.g. 25% forest funds under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 500).	Forest fund payments will continue in each stewardship project area (i.e. 25% forest funds under 16 U.S.C. 500.)	Nothing in authorizing or appropriating language shall be construed as affecting the distribution of revenues to local governments (e.g. 25% forest funds under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 500).
Expected outputs are identified in the five-year plans. This helps provide a diverse economy.	Expected outputs are identified in the five-year plans. This helps provide a diverse economy.	Expected outputs are identified in the five-year plans. This helps provide a diverse economy.	Expected outputs are to meet local community needs.	Expected outputs are identified in the five-year plans. This helps provide a diverse economy.
The EIS planning process is completed in one year. The EA process is completed in six months.	The EIS planning process is completed in one year. The EA process is completed in six months.	The EIS planning process is completed in one year. The EA process is completed in six months.	The planning process is completed in 3-5 years.	The EIS planning process is completed in one year. The EA process is completed in six months.
The Local Advisory Council will manage public involvement in all phases of the planning process but has no decision-making authority.	A collaborative group provides one level of formal appeal for the five-year plan.	Consistent management directives in the Memorandum of Agreement provide consistent decisions; all parties under same rules.	Investment Project Advisory Committee provides consistent management of activities.	A Local Advisory Council helps develop the five-year plan and serves as the one level of appeal.
		A Public Advisory Committee helps develop the five-year plan and serves as the first level of formal appeal.		

8. Economic Analysis

In its report, the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force said, "We were not charged nor equipped to provide a thorough examination of the legal and economic implications, or the environmental impacts of alternative approaches. However, based on our brief review we believe that positive economic returns from a well-designed and located pilot project are achievable" (Idaho FLTF 1998, p.42).

The cash flow structures for each of the five proposed projects are detailed in Appendices F through J and summarized in Table 9. These project reports and cash flow analyses were prepared by independent contractors engaged by the Working Group with specific instructions to provide estimates of potential revenues and expenditures for the projects.

The actual treatment acres and related costs and revenues are not predetermined under any of the proposed projects. The emphasis in each is to change the framework for decision-making to improve the potential for accomplishing sound ecosystem management treatments on the ground, in a more cost-effective manner. What is projected is a dramatic increase in accomplishments on the ground with a large reduction in net cost. In total, the five proposed pilot projects encompass 10.8 million acres of federal land, of which 10.1 million acres are National Forest System lands.

Currently only a small fraction (about 20,500 acres or 0.2%) of these national forest lands receive active forest-ecosystem management treatments each year. The projects presented herein are projected to increase this to about 37,000 acres, or 0.4% of the total national forest area. This is a significant increase in accomplishments on the ground that benefit ecosystems at a projected cost savings of $29.5 million annually.

Although projections for three of the five projects do not provide the "positive economic returns" envisioned by the Task Force, meeting the identified ecological needs by active management in the five project areas improves the cash flow situation by $29.5 million (see Table 9 on next page).

9. Recommendations

- The Working Group recommends five pilot projects to the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners.
- The Working Group recommends the Land Board allow for a public comment period on the report.
- The Working Group recommends that the Idaho State Legislature review the report.
- The Working Group recommends outreach and education to broad interests and stakeholders.

Table 9. Cash flow summaries for proposed projects (millions of dollars).

	Existing Operations FY 1999			Potential Operations		
Project	Revenues	Expenses	Net	Revenues	Expenses	Net
Central Idaho	$10.9	($41.0)	($30.1)	$12.3	($41.1)	($28.8)
Clearwater	$6.5	($21.3)	($14.8)	$31.4	($21.4)	$10.0
Priest Lake	$1.1	($2.6)	($1.5)	$2.7	($2.6)	$0.1
St. Joe	$2.1	($4.9)	($2.8)	$4.0	($5.0)	($1.0)
Twin Falls/Cassia	$0.3	($2.5)	($2.2)	$0.3	($2.5)	($2.2)
Total	$20.9	($72.3)	($51.4)	$50.7	($72.6)	($21.9)

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11. Glossary

Beneficiary (see **Trust: legal terminology**)

Coarse filter - Refers to developing ecosystem management plans based on an appropriate classification of the landscape. A coarse filter partitions **landscapes**, based on ecological, biological, or operational similarities. Fine filter refers to making land-management decisions based on the needs of individual species (Haufler et al. 1996).

Committees (by project, including Boards of Trustees, etc., see Table 1 and Appendices F to J for details)

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust
- **Local Advisory Council**
- **Board of Trustees**

Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative
- **Collaborative Group**

Priest Lake Basin Cooperative
- **Public Advisory Committee**
- **State Board of Land Commissioners**

St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project
- **Local Advisory Committee**
- **Investment Project Advisory Committee**

Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust
- **Local Steering Committee**
- **Board of Trustees**

Ecosystem - A spatially explicit, relatively homogeneous unit of the earth that includes all interacting organisms and components of the abiotic environment within its boundaries. An ecosystem can be of any size, e.g., a log, pond, field, forest, or the earth's biosphere (SAF 1998).

Ecosystem Diversity Matrix (EDM) - A unit of measurement that provides the foundation for resource management planning and represents the primary tool for quantifying landscape conditions (Haufler et al. 1996). The two principal components are the habitat type class and the vegetative growth stage (Mehl et al. 1998).

Ecosystem management or **ecosystem-based management** - Management guided by explicit goals, executed by policies, protocols, and practices and made adaptable by monitoring and research, based on the best understanding of ecological interactions and processes necessary to sustain **ecosystem** composition, structure, and function over the long term (SAF 1998).

Ecological Land Units (ELU) - A unit of measurement that describes the existing vegetation for both overstory and understory characteristics, and predicts the ecological processes associ-

ated with the forest site such as successional pathways, site productivity, forest health thresholds, and habitat suitability (Haufler et al. 1996).

Funds for counties - Natural resource payments to counties and schools from economic activities on federal lands such as timber sales, mineral leasing, grazing, and other activities (Idaho Association of Counties, Idaho Public Lands booklet). For example, this has been done on national forests lands since 1908 with revenue-sharing through the "25% fund" returned to the states for local government use.[1]

General Accounting Office (GAO) - The General Accounting Office is the investigative arm of Congress. GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds, evaluates federal programs and activities, and provides analyses, options, recommendations, and other assistance to help the Congress make effective oversight, policy, and funding decisions. In this context, GAO works to continuously improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the federal government through financial audits, program reviews and evaluations, analyses, legal opinions, investigations, and other services. GAO's activities are designed to ensure the executive branch's accountability to the Congress under the Constitution and the government's accountability to the American people. GAO is dedicated to good government through its commitment to the values of accountability, integrity, and reliability (US-GAO 2000).

Gridlock - The inability to resolve conflicts in a decision-making body, such as Congress or the bureaucratic agencies, which results in government inaction in the face of important political problems. There is no consensus as to what to do and therefore no movement in any direction (Kraft 2000).

Historical range of variability - The historical range of variability characterizes fluctuations in ecosystem conditions or processes over time. It can describe variations in diverse characteristics, such as tree density, vertebrate population size, water temperature, frequency of disturbance or rates of change, and it can be applied at multiple spatial scales from the site to regions comprising millions of acres or more. Note: the range of variability in ecosystem conditions and processes has been described using terms such as "historical," "natural," and "presettlement." Each of these conveys different meanings to different people. "Historical" is used broadly to describe dynamics over a time frame relevant to understanding the behavior of contemporary ecosystems and the implications for management. This period does not have to be on the scale of evolutionary time, but it should reflect the adaptation of species to their dynamic environment (Morgan et al. 1994).

Land Board - To manage the 2.5 million acres of endowment lands (also called school lands or grant lands) and associated funds of the State of Idaho, Article IX of the Idaho Constitution established the State Board of Land Commissioners. The Land Board, as it is commonly called, consists of Idaho's Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and State Controller. The land commissioners, acting in the capacity of trustees on behalf of the beneficiary schools and other institutions, were given the responsi-

bility, under Article IX, Section 8, of the Constitution (as amended), to manage the endowment lands "in such manner as will secure the maximum long financial return to the institution to which
granted."

Indicator species - A species that is closely correlated with a particular environmnetal condition or habitat type such that its presence or absence can be used as an indicator of environmental conditions. A species whose population size and trend is assumeed to reflect the population size and trend of other species associated with the same geographic area and habitats (Dunster and Dunster 1996).

Landscape – An ecologically delineated area large enough to contain viable populations of nearly all of the native species in the area, with the exception of a few species with very large home-range requirements or consistently sparse population densities (Haufler et al. 1996).

Multiple use - [1] The management of all the various renewable surface resources of the national forests so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the needs of the American people (16 U.S.C. § 531(a)(4)). [2] A combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, and wildlife and fish, along with natural scenic, scientific, and historical values (USDI-BLM 1998).

Public lands - All lands owned by the United States. Or, as defined by Congress in a 1979 statute, all federally-owned lands for limited purposes (Coggins et al. 1993). Also, any land and interest in land owned by the United States that are administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except for (1) lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf, and (2) land held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos. Includes public domain and acquired lands (USDI-BLM 1998).

Seral stage - A temporal and intermediate stage in the process of **succession** (SAF 1998). Descriptors of different stages include early-, mid-, or late-seral stages of succession.

State Board of Land Commissioners - See Land Board.

Stewardship contract - A service contract with a resource stewardship objective. A service contract is a mutually binding legal relationship obligating the seller to furnish services (including construction) and the buyer to pay for them. It includes all types of commitments that obligate the government to an expenditure of appropriated funds and that, except as otherwise authorized, are in writing. In addition to bilateral instruments, service contracts include (but are not limited to) awards and notices of awards; job orders or task letters issued under basic ordering agreements; letter contracts; orders, such as purchase orders, under which the contract becomes effective by written acceptance or performance; and bilateral contract modifications

(Ringgold 1998).

Succession - The gradual supplanting of one community of plants by another. Note: the sequence of communities is called a sere, with various **seral stages** (SAF 1998).

Sustained yield - The achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual, or regular periodic, output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use (USDI-BLM 1998).

Trust: legal terminology (from Souder and Fairfax 1996, p. 3)

- A *trust* is a fiduciary relationship with respect to property in which the person by whom the title to the property is held is subject to equitable duties to keep or use the property for the benefit of another.
- A *fiduciary relationship* places on the trustee the duty to act with strict honesty and candor and solely in the interest of the beneficiary.
- The *settlor* of a trust is the person who creates the trust.
- The *trustee* is the person holding property in trust for the beneficiary.
- The property held in trust is the *trust property*.
- The *beneficiary* is the person for whose benefit the trust property is held in trust.
- The *trust instrument* is the "manifestation of the intention of the settlor" by which the property interests are vested in the trustee and beneficiary and by which the rights and duties of the parties (called the trust terms) are set forth in a manner that admits of its proof in judicial proceedings.

12. Notes

[1] The "Stewardship Contract" law authorizing the Forest Service to implement up to 28 stewardship contracting pilot projects is subsection (g) of Section 347 of title III of Section 101(e) of division A of Public Law 105-277, commonly called the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act. The U.S. Forest Service has reported to Congress on implementation of this law (USDA-FS 2000).

[2] Pinchot, Gifford. 1947. *Breaking New Ground*. Harcourt, Brace, New York, NY. p. 190.
[3] 16 U.S.C. § 475.
[4] 43 U.S.C. § 315, preamble.
[5] 16 U.S.C. § 1528 *et seq*.
[6] 16 U.S.C. § 1604, 1611.
[7] 43 U.S.C. §§ 1701 *et seq*.
[8] 42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq*.
[9] 16 U.S.C. §§ 1251 *et seq*. and
33 U.S.C. §§ *et seq.;*
42 U.S.C. §§ 7401 *et seq.;* and
16 U.S.C. §§ 1531 *et seq*.
[10] 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531-43.
[11] 16 U.S.C. § 1536.
[12] *Id*.
[13] For example, 16 U.S.C. § 469a-1 (reporting requirements for disturbance of scientific, prehistorical, historical, or archaeological data).
[14] US-GAO (1997) at 28.
[15] *Id*.
[16] *Id.* at 46.
[17] *Id.* at 40.
[18] *Id.* at 85.
[19] US-GAO (1997) at 30.
[20] *United States v. Brunskill*, No. S-82-666-LKK, unpublished op. (E.D.Ca. Nov. 8, 1984) *aff'd*, 792 F. 2nd 938 (9th Cir. 1986).
[21] US-GAO (1997).
[22] *Id.* at 99.
[23] *Id*.
[24] USDI-BLM (1998).
[25] USDI-BLM (1998).
[26] HCR no. 8, Idaho Legislature, 1999.
[27] Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988. 16 U.S.C. § 460 yy.
[28] Public Law 105-277.
[29] The "Stewardship Contract" law authorizing the Forest Service to implement up to 28 stewardship contracting pilot projects is subsection (g) of Section 347 of title III of Section 101(e) of division A of Public Law 105-277, commonly called the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act. The U.S. Forest Service has reported to Congress on implementation of this law (USDA-FS 2000).
[30] 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq*.
[31] 16 U.S.C. 499 [note].

13. Appendices

APPENDIX A
FEDERAL LANDS TASK FORCE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS
NON-MEMBER ATTENDEES

Allen, Jeff
Anderson, Karl
Bachman, Bill
Bachman, Sandy
Barclay, Pat
Barker, Eric
Bedke, Scott
Bernhardt, Bruce
Blackwell, Jack
Boeh, Bob
Boyle, Judy
Braasch, Sara
Brockman, Bill
Brunelle, Andy
Campbell, Jason
Caswell, Jim
Corrao, Vinny
Crane, Ken
Daly, Calli
Deckard, Jerry
Edmonson, Jamie
Edmonson, Michael
Ellsworth, Pete
Gallagher, Dan
Geary, Tom
Gorsuch, Jane
Hasenoehrl, Mary
Hinson, Joe
Holt, Brad
Housen, Joyce
Jones, Jennifer
Lancaster, Arlen
Lindahl, Ed
Long, Jim
Manning, Robert
Marchant, Gerald
Marchant, Karen
Matthews, Eugene
McRoberts, Darrel
Medberry, Mike
Mengel, Denny
Mereszczak, Ihor
Nelson, Dave
Newcombe, Bruce
O'Laughlin, Jay
Pence, Don
Pence, Ned
Rittenhouse, Dave
Russell, Betsy
Schaefer, Suzanne
Smith, Don
Stewart, Frank
Thomas, Jack Ward
Tugaw, Joe
Turlington, Scott
White, Gino
Whiting, Dan
Willhite, Dick
Williams, J.D.
Williams, Jeff
Wood, Marylin

APPENDIX B

IDAHO CODE 67-2328

67-2328 Joint exercise of powers –

(a) Any power, privilege or authority, authorized by the Idaho Constitution, statute or charter, held by the state of Idaho or a public agency of said state, may be exercised and enjoyed jointly with the state of Idaho or any other public agency of this state having the same powers, privilege or authority; but never beyond the limitation of such powers, privileges or authority; and the state or public agency of the state, may exercise such powers, privileges and authority jointly with the United States, any other state, or public agency or any of them, to the extent that the laws of the United States or her sister state, grant similar powers privileges or authority, to the United States and its public agencies, or to the sister state and its public agencies; and provided the laws of the United States or a sister state allow such exercise of joint power, privilege or authority. The state or any public agency thereof when acting jointly with another public agency of this state may exercise and enjoy the power, privilege and authority conferred by this act; but nothing in this act shall be construed to extend the jurisdiction, power, privilege or authority of the state or public agency thereof, beyond the power, privilege or authority said state or public agency might have if acting alone.

(b) Any state or public agency may enter into agreements with one another for joint or cooperative action which includes, but is not limited to, joint use, ownership and/or operation agreements pursuant to the provisions of this act. Appropriate action by ordinance, resolution, or otherwise pursuant to law of the governing bodies of these participating public agencies shall be necessary before any such agreement may enter into force.

(c) Any such agreement shall specify the following:

(1) Its duration.

(2) The precise organization, composition and nature of any separate legal or administrative entity created thereby together with the powers delegated thereto, provided such entity may be legally created.

(3) Its purpose or purposes.

(4) The manner of financing the joint or cooperative undertaking and of establishing and maintaining a budget therefor.

(5) The permissible method or methods to be employed in accomplishing the partial or complete termination of the agreement and for disposing of property upon such partial or complete termination.

(6) Any other necessary and proper matters.

(d) In the event that the agreement does not establish a separate legal entity to conduct the joint or cooperative undertaking, the agreement shall, in addition to items (1), (3), (4), (5), and (6) of subsection (c) of this section, contain the following:

(1) Provision for an administrator or a joint board responsible for administering the joint or cooperative undertaking. In the case of a joint board, public agencies party to the agreement shall be represented.

(2) The manner of acquiring, holding, and disposing of real and personal property used in the joint or cooperative undertaking.

(3) No agreement made pursuant to this act shall relieve any public agency of any obligation or responsibility imposed upon it by law except that to the extent of actual and timely performance thereof by a joint board or other legal or administrative entity created by an agreement made hereunder, said performances may be offered in satisfaction of the obligation or responsibility. [1970, ch. 38, § 3, p. 82; am 1981, ch. 231, § 2, p. 469; am. 1984, ch. 72, § 3, p. 133; am. 1992, ch. 114, § 2, p. 343.]

APPENDIX C

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Borowicz, Susie	Principal/Teacher Elk City School	Elk City, ID
Cilek, Jeff		Boise, ID
Foard, John	Boise County Commissioner	Garden Valley, ID
Maynard, Robert A.	Attorney, Perkins Coie	Boise, ID
Mulligan, Bill	President, Three Rivers Timber, Inc.	Kamiah, ID
Myers, Bill	Attorney, Holland & Hart	Boise, ID
Schroder, Gerald	Retired	Parma, ID
Whaley, Dave	President, AFL/CIO of Idaho	Boise, ID

EX-OFFICIO

Danielson, Judi	State Senator	Council, ID
Cuddy, Chuck	State Representative	Orofino, ID
Hamilton, Stan	Director, Department of Lands	Boise, ID
McGee, John	Working Group Coordinator	Boise, ID

APPENDIX D
FOREST CERTIFICATION

The Working Group explored the possibility of including forest certification as a requirement of a pilot project. A number of such programs attempt to evaluate with various sets of criteria and indicators whether sustainable forestry is being practiced. It was the consensus of the Working Group that forest certification programs are in their infancy, especially when applied to federal lands. It is premature to require third party certification of these projects at this time.

According to the University of Idaho report referenced below, sustainable forestry may be defined as forest management that is ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially desirable. Programs certifying that landowners practice sustainable forest management, or that wood-based products come from sustainably managed forests, are in the early stages of development. Certification relies on a voluntary approach and sets of *criteria* reflecting forest conditions or processes and *indicators* measuring some aspects of the criteria. Although a 1998 Idaho field test of internationally developed criteria and indicators (C&I) encountered difficulties, the test team did find some appropriate indicators for which data are available. Certification programs develop *standards* for C&I against which measured indicator values can be compared. Neutral third-party certifiers are recognized as the most credible way to do this. At least two forest industry companies in Idaho are in the process of third-party certification of sustainable forestry. Forest landowners and forest products manufacturers weigh the costs of certification against perceived benefits derived from public confidence that forest management is not environmentally harmful. Certification programs are likely to evolve as current problems are worked out. The Idaho landscape is dominated by federal lands on which public policy and public trust pose barriers to certification. Restoring trust by modifying federal land management policies to allow third-party certification of forest stewardship may be a path to sustainable forest management on these public lands.

Toward Sustainable Forest Management: Part I—Certification Programs
by Philip S. Cook and Jay O'Laughlin
Report No. 18, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group
University of Idaho, Moscow
December 1999

APPENDIX E
SOLICITATION LIST FOR PILOT PROJECT PROPOSALS

Adams County
Alliance for the Wild Rockies
American Lands Alliance
Bachman, Bill
Bakem, Ernie
Bass, Dick
Benewah County
Bently, John
Bingham County
Blue Ribbon Coalition
Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce
Boise National Forest
Bonner County
Bonners Ferry Chamber of Commerce
Bryngelson Angus Ranch
Bureau of Land Management
CanAm Tree
Caribou National Forest
Ceda-Pine Veneer Company
Clearwater Elk Recovery Team
Clearwater National Forest
Coeur d' Alene Chamber of Commerce
Coeur d' Alene Tribe
Crown Pacific
Custer County
Double Diamond Ranch
Ehrmantrout, David
Elk City Area Alliance
Evergreen Corporation
Fletcher Consulting
Gooding County
Greater Pocatello Chamber of Commerce
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Hells Canyon Preservation Council
Hoffman, Ted
Idaho Bass Federation
Idaho Cattle Association
Idaho Cattlewomen
Idaho Conservation League
Idaho Council on Industry & Environment
Idaho Education Association
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
Idaho Rivers United
Idaho Panhandle National Forest
Idaho School Boards Association
Idaho State AFL-CIO
Idaho Steelhead and Salmon United
Idaho Watersheds Project
Idaho Wildlife Federation
Idaho Wool Growers Association
Inland Forest Management
Inland Pacific Forest Products
Jumpers, Les
J.D. Lumber Co., Inc.
Kootenai Tribe
Lamanna, Nick
Lands Council, The
Lignetics, Inc.
Malloy Veneer Company
McNeil, Bruce
Merritt Brothers-Athol Remanufacturers
Mesenbrinks Sawmill
Minidoka County
Mullin School District
Nance, Jerry
Nature Conservancy, The
Nethercutt, Rep. George
Nez Perce National Forest
Nez Perce Tribe
North Idaho Energy Logs
Northern Log Homes
Northwest Associates
Northwest Natural Resource Group
Northwestcommunity.com
Odenwald Forestry
Pacific Rivers Council
Panhandle Forest Products
Payette County
Payette National Forest
Pischner, Rep. Don
Poles, Inc.
Ponderay Valley Fibre
Prescott, Roy
Priest Lake Chamber of Commerce
Priest Lake Lumber
Priest River Hardware
Riley Creek Lumber Company
Roly, Jerry
Salmon-Challis National Forest
Save Elk City
Sawtooth National Forest
Sawtooth Society
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Shoshone-Paiute Tribes
Sierra Club, The
Skeer, Murreleen
Sawtooth National Recreation Area
Society of American Foresters
Stim, Franklin
St. Joe Valley Association
Total Land Management
Twin Falls County
Welco of Idaho
Western Whitewater Association
Westfall, Inc.
Wilderness Society, The

The Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust

Submitted to Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Group

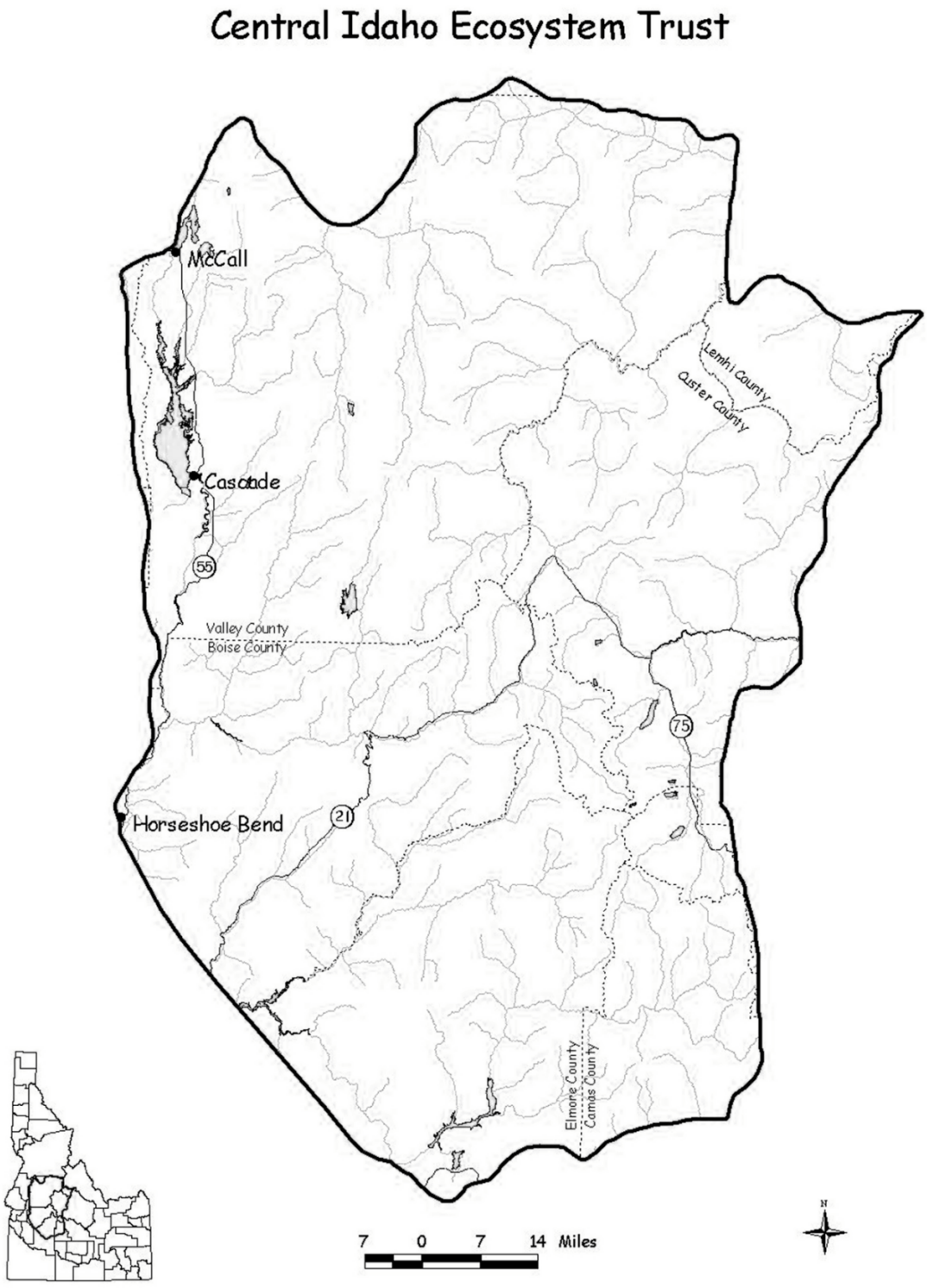

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust
McCall
Cascade
55
Valley County
Boise County
Horseshoe Bend
21
75
Lemhi County
Custer County
Elmore County
Camas County
7 0 7 14 Miles
N

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust (CIET) is an example of an alternative method of managing federal lands that integrates the ecological, social and economic objectives in natural resource management. This project would use a trust law framework. Trustees would provide management oversight; a majority of the trustees would represent national interests. The key to land management is an Ecosystem Diversity Matrix, a model comprised of 143 combinations of vegetation habitat types and growth stages called ecological land units (ELUs). These provide area-specific goals for management and can be related to species' needs and social and economic concerns. The lands would be managed to provide revenue, net of operating costs, for the beneficiaries each year, generated in a manner that recognizes public values and is sustainable over the long term. Trust beneficiaries would represent local government, fish and wildlife interests, recreational interests, and ecological interests.

Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust

Area: 5.8 million acres; all of the Boise National Forest and parts of the Payette, Sawtooth, Salmon and Challis National Forests

Goal: Restore vegetation to desired ecological conditions while meeting social needs within an economically-oriented management framework.

The ecological needs in our National Forest are great. Many of the uses of the forest and the needed improvements on the landscape are not receiving the attention necessary to sustain a healthy ecosystem. The reasons are many: from questioning the definition of ecosystem management and how it is applied on the ground, to the many conflicting laws and regulations. The lack of agreement over how to manage our national forests has caused loss of early successional habitat for key wildlife species, increase of the wildfire hazard throughout large portions of the forest, and negative impact on many communities dependent on a healthy, viable ecosystem in this region.

The project area has had many large wildfires. The northern end of the project area in the Payette National Forest has experienced many crown fires that kill the trees but have little to no consumption of the fuels. These trees fall over and create tremendous fuel loads contributing to intense second burns. The second burns are very hot and tend to "cook" the soil, reducing moisture uptake and exposing areas to extensive erosion due to rain on snow events on these highly erosive Batholith soils. The areas of fallen timber are poor choices for planting or regeneration activities since they are at high risk for subsequent fire activity. The Boise National Forest, further south, has had many stand-replacing fires, which, due to the drier conditions, damage growth and soils and remove the fuels in many of the first burns.

The management of our public lands in the past had been by the principles of "multiple use." Since the 1970's, public land management has moved away from

commodity production. A new direction has been approached using ecosystem management based on ecosystem diversity and landscape-type assessments with management themes. Strategies that address the ecological objectives of ecosystem management are fundamental in accomplishing a goal. Appropriate methods can be confusing and controversial and may only address one of the three main objectives, which are ecological, economic, and social. The historical range of variability strategy is an example of one philosophy that is conceptually accepted by many. Under this philosophy, forest ecosystems would work toward a "historical range of variability." This is a reference to guide management.

The historical range of variability (HRV) can be a goal to begin and assess the results of activities, but with the understanding that the human element of today's realities are not always integrated into the picture when just the HRV is used.

The management of our public lands requires broader boundaries, using landscape strategies encompassing large enough areas to meet the needs of wildlife, vegetative management, water quality, and human uses within the entire ecosystem. When dealing with the whole ecosystem, the needs of all that live in and use the forest can be provided.

Providing an ecosystem management process that describes landscape units can be used to meet the ecological needs, social concerns, and economic benefits. Through implementation these activities will lead to a healthier ecosystem that directs management toward wildlife needs, clean water, recreational use, and community stability. Public involvement will encourage education and a better understanding of what is necessary to implement these complex management tools on public lands.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

CIET demonstration project located in Central Idaho, encompasses approximately 5.8 million acres and extends 180 miles north to south and approximately 100 miles east to west. The area covers all of the Boise National Forest and portions of four other National Forests as well as state and private lands. The four surrounding National Forests that are contiguous with the Boise are the Payette, Salmon, Challis, and Sawtooth National Forest. The Payette National Forest is on the north end of the project area and primarily encompasses the McCall and Krassel Districts and does not including the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. The east and south side of this area is made up of primarily wilderness and national recreational areas providing rafting, hiking, camping, and many other outdoor activities.

This area is sufficiently large enough to contain viable populations of nearly all the native species in the ecosystem with a large cross section of habitats. The area can address water quality and wildlife habitat within landscapes and can be monitored for a variety of needs and considerations that have been recognized as requiring attention.

The management alternative recommended on the CIET is the trust model. The trust model is a well-established process used in many western states. In the West today,

about 50 million acres of land are managed under this system for the benefit of the state's public schools, colleges, prisons, state hospitals, and similar public institutions. While the CIET is a pilot demonstration project to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness on public lands, the trust model is a viable and tested mechanism that has been used for managing large acres of public lands for decades. One of the most current examples is the Baca Ranch Trust in New Mexico.

Scope

Ecosystem management has been accepted as the preferred approach for future land planning by most federal agencies. The definitions of ecosystem management vary, but most focus on a balance of ecological, economic and social objectives. How to implement the ecological objectives challenges land managers to develop new methodologies.

Federal agencies have generally been perceived as leaders in the implementation of ecosystem management. The effectiveness of implementation, however, has been hampered by significant barriers and lawsuits used by interest groups to inhibit or restrict activities that are needed to improve the forest condition. The trust mechanism is a tool to resolve conflicts and guide management of our public lands. With public participation, clear goals can be identified for meeting ecological and management objectives. The combination of using a new set of decision-making tools to manage federal lands, plus incorporating new science and processes is an opportunity to move ahead while proactively addressing the needs of the ecosystem.

MAGNITUDE OF THE PROPOSAL

The management of approximately five million acres of the CIET demonstration project will require the present Forest Service personnel plus support from universities, industry, and local communities. The implementation of Ecosystem Management has been discussed, reviewed, and studied. The CIET project is an opportunity to use the tools we have and to move this discussion to reality. In 1994, a voluntary group comprised of the US Forest Service, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Idaho Department of Lands, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the University of Idaho, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and industry, proposed a partnership for evaluating ecosystem management at a landscape scale. The group, using the Southern Idaho Batholith Landscape, which is the CIET project area, developed a method of categorizing land by habitat types.

To categorize land types and evaluate landscape changes over time, the group implemented a data gathering process. A collaborative process for reviewing both proposed landscape alternatives and the changes over time was evaluated. This process required a description of the historical disturbances that occurred across the landscape, thus providing the natural history of the area and the conditions to which native species have adapted. The group was then able to model and estimate historical stand conditions for landscape planning purposes. The categorization of land by habitat types and stages

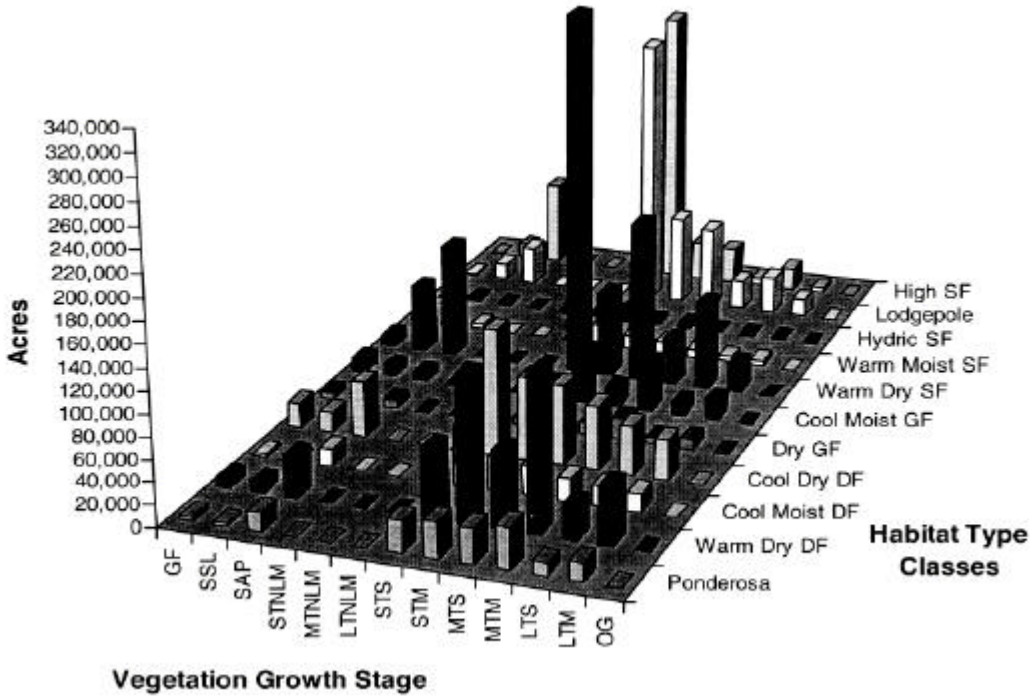
is termed the "Ecosystem Diversity Matrix." This makes it possible to identify specific habitats and stages in their growth. The combination of habitat types and growth stage is termed an "ecological land unit" or ELU" (Haufler et. al., 1996).

It is the intersection of habitat types and growth stages that defines an entity that begins to be useful to land managers. These are termed "ecological land units" (ELUs).

	Habitat Type Class (*Function*)	
Vegetation Growth State (*Structure*)	Ecological Land Unit	

There are 143 separate ELUs that have been defined within the Southern Idaho Batholith landscape. Their wide range of ecological conditions becomes the basis for all evaluations of historical conditions, existing conditions, and desired future conditions.

A variety of sophisticated software tools allow these ecological land units to be both shown on maps as they actually exist (a "spatial" display) and in tabular form, i.e., how much of a particular ecological unit exists. Managers can readily know the location and total size of all 143 ecological units across the landscape.



The size in acres of the ELUs is illustrated by the relative height of the bars.

The 143 ecological units provide a coarse filter view, describing on-the-ground conditions in a relatively simple manner. ELUs can also be displayed "spatially," on a map showing where each exists on the ground.

While identifying each ecological unit is useful, the two key parameters for doing so—habitat type and growth stage—do not, alone, provide all the information necessary to use the ecological units to develop plans. More data is required.

Over the past several years, the Idaho Ecosystem Management Project conducted intense field sampling to gather the information that the definition of the ELUs, alone, would not provide. This entailed field collection of data on:

- Species composition of the overstory,
- Species composition and percent ground cover of dominant understory species,
- Horizontal cover of understory vegetation,
- The diameters, height, and distribution of both live and dead trees,
- Coarse woody debris on the ground,
- Canopy cover, and,
- Ground cover by biotic and abiotic components.

Such detail added to each ELU accomplishes two purposes. First, it allows the quantification of the value of the habitat quality for each of the species that might use a particular ELU. Second, it facilitates quantification of biodiversity across the entire landscape. Both are important to using the ecosystem diversity matrix as a tool for land management planning.

Each animal finds all or a portion of a particular ELU as important to meeting its needs for food, cover, or reproductive opportunities. Some attributes are absolutely vital, while others hold less importance to a particular species. By understanding the needs of the species and then tying those needs to the attributes of specific ELUs, one can predict what changes in the attributes of the ELU would make it more attractive to the specie in question.

This is important. For example, if managers know that white-crowned sparrows occur most frequently in dry sub-alpine fir habitat types in the seedling/sapling growth stage, then the consequences of their actions on that species can be predictable. Moreover, if more numbers of that specie are desirable or fewer of them are acceptable, then management decisions such as thinning treatments that might positively or negatively affect this habitat can be made accordingly.

At the landscape scale, the full component of information on each ELU and its contribution toward meeting the needs of the wildlife species associated with it allows one to determine what might be an "adequate ecological representation" (AER), within that landscape. The Idaho Ecosystem Management Project has defined "adequate ecological representation" as a distribution of inherent ecosystems of a size sufficient to

maintain viable populations of all native species dependent on those ecosystems (Haufler et. al., 1996).

("Adequate ecological representation" can be a management goal and is defined as "sufficient size and distribution of inherent ecosystems that maintains viable populations of all native communities and species" Haufler, 1994.)

As defined, AER is reached when there is enough of a specific ecological land unit available to meet 10% as a minimum amount of that ELU as it existed historically within the landscape and is a starting point for the evaluation. In even simpler terms, if the habitat needs of the wildlife species are met, then the species will be not only be present within the landscape but will also exist at a sustainable level. The system provides a goal to the level of management necessary to providing the habitat needs.

There are three important points. First, the ability to measure habitat needs for individual species in quantitative terms and then to be able to locate that habitat on the ground means that those who modify those habitat parameters will know what species will be affected and how much. Second, land managers can tailor their management practices to produce a desired effect for a particular species. Third, land managers can "trade" effects, to achieve desired results along with economic goals. Land managers can also be assured the needs of species across the landscape can be met by using a minimum historical level as a starting point for evaluation.

The Ecosystem Diversity Matrix describes vegetative growth stages and distribution across the landscape. Implementing an ecosystem management approach requires a process. A process to address what is needed would include: identifying the landscapes and describing their desired future appearances, including ecological, social and economic concerns, and monitoring. A Simplified Ecosystem Diversity Matrix populated with acres by ecological land unit would look like this.

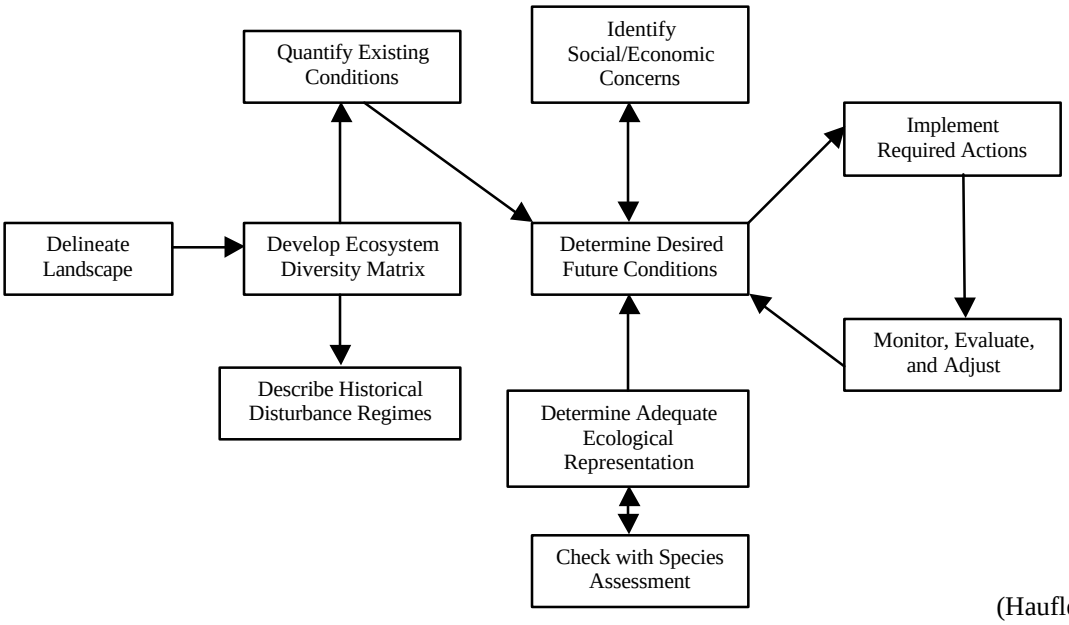
Simplified Ecosystem Diversity Matrix Populated with Acres by Ecological Land Unit

	Habitat Type Class			
Vegetative Growth Stage	Pine	Douglas-fir	Grand fir	Alpine fir
Seedling	100	100	500	
Sapling		100		
Small Tree		100	50	
Medium Tree		100		200
Old Growth		100	300	200
Total Acres	100	500	850	400

Ecosystem management is the integration of ecological, social, and economic objectives at the landscape levels. The management must address the conservation of biological diversity and ecosystem integrity while integrating the social and economic demands to the extent practical. A clear strategy for meeting the ecological objectives as well as the philosophical basis for this strategy is needed to reduce ambiguity that

surrounds specific issues. A process of implementing an ecosystem management approach may look like this flow chart.

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT PROCESS



(Haufler 1996)

COMMUNITY

The CIET project encompasses approximately five million acres of predominately ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir ecosystem which provides homes for fish and wildlife, fiber for wood and paper products, forage for cows and sheep, and an unlimited menu of year-round recreation opportunities. Living within and adjacent to the CIET project are 300,000 Idahoans who are within a one-hour drive of the Boise National Forest, which is the heart of the project area. There are over 30 communities that use this area for recreation and work, including Idaho's capital city located just south and west of the project area in Boise. The CIET project area is within the ceded area traditionally used by the Nez Perce Tribe. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe also uses the area for fishing and hunting. For centuries, the South Fork of the Salmon River has been used as a traditional fishing ground for salmon. The CIET area is used extensively for recreation and services associated with outdoor activities. It provides a sustainable fiber base for wood and paper products, as well as other commodities that are a major component of the rural communities found throughout the area.

Conclusions from the most recent forest plan monitoring reports for the Boise, Payette, and Sawtooth National Forest finds that a change is needed if an effective approach to responsible land and resource stewardship is to be implemented in the area. With the impacts of wildfire (20% of the Boise National Forest has burned in the last 10 years) and new scientific information about aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, a revision of the forest plans is in progress and scheduled for release in 2000. The new plan will

include the ecosystem diversity matrix process and will address large scale ecosystem management.

Ecosystem management issues have increased and need attention; more species and their habitats are at risk, and rural communities face uncertainties about natural resource flows from public lands. Included in the changes are the impacts of increased insect infestations and the unforeseen increases in recreational demands, which press personnel and budgets throughout the project area.

ECONOMY

The rural communities depend heavily on the resource activities of the National Forest. The economy of the CIET is made up of a combination of small rural communities throughout the CIET project area with a few larger cities and communities. Jobs generated from timber harvest, reforestation, recreation, and restoration work are the base incomes that support other businesses in these communities. The larger cities and communities are less dependent on the activities of the National Forest for work but are active users of the forest for camping, hunting, skiing, and other recreational uses. The health of the forest is directly tied to the health of many of the businesses in the area and reaches past the issue of how much we should harvest or how much should we protect. Rather the questions is, "Is the overall system sustainable?" (Center for International Forestry Research, North American Test of Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Forestry, 1999).

ENVIRONMENT

The ecological conditions have been documented and described by the Idaho Ecosystem Management Project and the Forest Service, Southwest Idaho Ecogroup, Intermountain region. Southwest Idaho Ecogroup is made up of the Boise, Payette, and Sawtooth National Forests. This group hosted an independent review of various sets of criteria and indicators of sustainable forestry during 1998. The review was conducted under The Center for International Forestry (CIFOR) and by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Inventorying and Monitoring Institute. This review constitutes CIFOR's North American test of sustainable forest management and is the seventh worldwide CIFOR test. The project was conducted in southwestern Idaho.

The test was conducted to develop sets of locally appropriate criteria and indicators at the forest management level. Criteria and indicators are tools that can be used to conceptualize, evaluate, and implement sustainable forest management. The principal aim of the field test is to identify criteria and indicators that are objective, cost-effective, and relevant to the sustainable management of forests. The focus of the testing procedure was to identify the smallest number of criteria and indicators needed to reliably assess forest management in a cost-effective manner. The CIFOR tests are unique in

testing the application of the criteria and indicators to the field, where key decisions are made.

The Boise National Forest was at the heart of the study area. Other key cooperating land management organizations were the Boise Cascade Corporation and the Idaho Department of Lands. The project team was selected from a wide range of disciplines found throughout the United State, Canada, and Mexico:

- three ecologists;
- one social scientist;
- one economist;
- three forest managers; and
- one forest geneticist.

Additional specialists included a carbon biochemist, an anthropologist, a systems ecologist, and a forest ecologist. The report summarizing this test of criteria and indicators (*Synopsis of FY 1998-99 Forest Plan Monitoring*) is available from the Boise National Forest.

There are three primary levels or scales of monitoring. The first level of monitoring and evaluation is for project level analyses such as evaluating implementation of an individual timber sale or trail construction project. The second level is monitoring and evaluation of individual resources at the mid (forest) scale. The third level is broad-scale (ecogroup) monitoring to support forest plan revision. The emphasis of monitoring in support of forest plan revision is being conducted at the mid and broad scale.

Assessment of properly functioning condition (PFC) was the primary evaluation activity in 1998-99 to support forest plan revision for the ecogroup.

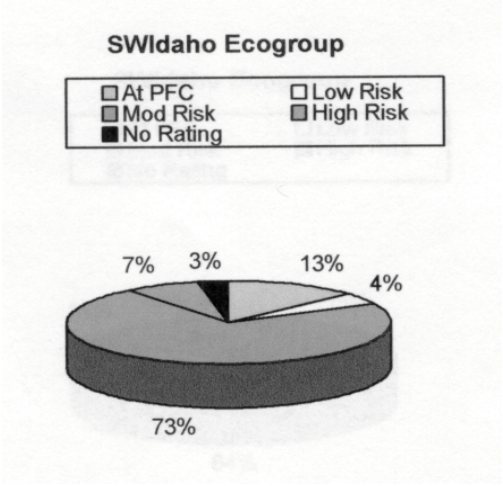
> *Properly Functioning Condition: Ecosystems at any temporal or spatial scale are in properly functioning condition when they are dynamic and resilient to disturbances to structure, composition, and processes of their biological or physical components.*

It is vital that the current condition of our biological and physical ecosystem elements are well understood and described at the management area level (50,000 acres to 250,000 acres) for development of appropriate management direction. PFC is a major anchor point for developing goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines necessary to address changes needed in management direction in order to achieve desired future conditions. The PFC assessment was completed for each of the ecogroup's 55 management areas at the district ranger level on all three national forests.

Each subject area was ranked for each management area. The specialists determined at what level a subject area was ranked. The ranking choices were 1) at PFC, 2) low risk, 3) moderate risk, 4) high risk, 5) not functioning.

Risk: situations in which outcome is not certain, but the chance of system degradation beyond the point of resiliency and sustainability can be estimated.
The following is a summary of the PFC results for the Ecogroup. The percentage figures are accurate to ? one percent and summarize the percent of management areas evaluated for each PFC category. The charts do not demonstrate the percent of acres functioning at PFC or take into account the size of the subject area.

The following example may help when interpreting the charts. Water quality integrity, aquatic habitat, and riparian areas were evaluated in the Southwest Idaho Ecogroup, and thirteen percent of the management areas evaluated on these forests are in a properly functioning condition. This is only one example. The Southwest Idaho Ecogroup evaluated many different criteria ranging from habitat quality to sediment deposition into streams. The chart provides an estimate of the percent of the management area that is properly functioning and the percent that is at some level of risk.



Southwest Idaho Ecogroup Potential Vegetation Category Ratings

Potential Vegetation Group	Ecogroup				Boise Forest				Payette Forest				Sawtooth Forest			
	Risk Level (Percent)															
Forested Vegetation	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High
Pinion/Juniper	0	20	20	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	60
Aspen	13	26	26	35	0	0	80	20	0	0	0	0	17	33	11	39
Dry Ponderosa Pine	14	21	36	39	0	22	33	44	40	20	40	0	0	0	0	0
Warm Dry Doug-fir	0	5	30	65	0	0	13	87	0	34	66	0	0	0	100	0
Cool Moist Doug-fir	8	46	31	15	10	40	30	20	0	66	34	0	0	0	0	0
Cool Dry Doug-fir	13	22	44	22	0	33	47	20	75	25	0	0	8	8	54	31
Dry Grand Fir	0	18	35	47	0	0	43	57	0	30	30	40	0	0	0	0
Cool Moist Grand Fir	10	35	20	35	0	14	14	71	15	47	23	15	0	0	0	0
Warm Dry Subalpine Fir	19	57	21	2	22	78	0	0	80	20	0	0	0	47	47	5
Warm Moist Subalpine Fir	81	19	0	0	0	100	0	0	93	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hydric Subalpine Fir	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Persistent Lodgepole Pine	26	26	26	22	13	25	0	63	0	0	100	0	38	31	31	0
High Elevation Subalpine Fir	77	6	16	0	63	6	31	0	80	0	0	0	0	100	0	0
	Risk Level (Percent)															
Shrublands & Grasslands	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High	At PFC	Low	Mod	High
Low Sagebrush	47	47	6	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	40	53	7	0
Mountain Big Sagebrush	31	38	23	8	67	13	7	13	50	25	25	0	0	60	35	5
Wyoming Big Sagebrush	0	87	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86	0	13
Big Basin Sagebrush	0	40	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	30	30
Bitterbrush	0	0	86	14	0	0	80	20	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0
Perennial Grass	24	46	13	17	38	23	8	31	17	50	13	0	0	100	0	0
Perennial Grass Montaine	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
Montaine Shrub	70	17	13	0	81	13	6	0	75	0	25	0	50	30	20	0
Alpine Meadow	22	51	17	11	29	17	0	0	67	33	0	0	0	38	38	25

The Boise, Payette, and Sawtooth National Forests conducted social and economic data collection in 1998-99 to support the forest plan revision. In addition to laws and regulations, the revision effort is shaped by the evolving thinking of the important role of social and economic analysis in forest planning. The social and economic analysis, still underway, addresses two recent works:

Guidelines for Conducting Social Assessments Within a Human Dimensions Framework developed by the National Forest social scientists and researchers and university social scientists (Bright, et al, 1998). *Sustaining the People's Land: Recommendations for Stewardship of the National Forests and Grasslands into the next Century* (Committee of Scientists, 1999).

The data collected to date will be summarized in the assessment by the following categories:

- National/international settings and issues, including Native American tribes;
- Regional issues, as reflected by the information gathered through the ICBEMP;
- Socio-economic characteristics and changes in Idaho;
- Socio-economic characteristics and changes in affected counties; and
- Socio-economic characteristics and recent changes in affected communities.

Assessing the information listed above builds on the extensive work of scientists from the ICBEMP project and the following sources:

--economic profiles of selected communities throughout the ecogroup;
--interviews with local elected officials (county commissioners and mayors);
--community self-assessment and profiles;
--community profiles developed by the State of Idaho and Native American governments; and
--public comments from scoping conducted in the spring of 1997.

The PFC system is similar to the Idaho Ecosystem Management Project, and the data is important for guiding management to key species and habitats. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) exists between the southwest Idaho Ecogroup and the Idaho Ecosystem Management Project that developed the Ecosystem Diversity Matrix cooperatively. The Southwest Ecogroup has different density classes and growth stages and has made reference to using a 20% of the maximum amount of an Ecological Land Unit as historically found, where the Idaho Ecosystem project identifies 10% as a starting point for the evaluation. Either process describes a goal by acres or by land class and deals with the current situation. Both processes have an overview of the relationship between commodity production and the natural environment. A combination of two processes can be used to identify an ecological goal and provide an objective for developing a plan that meets the requirements for ecosystem sustainability. This provides a documented process to be used as a demonstration within the CIET project.

PILOT PROJECT DETAILS

Development of the trust pilot project requires that the elements are delineated between the trust, as well as the trustees and trust managers. It also requires an outline of the management process and fiscal aspects of the organization.

The Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust would be created through a trust instrument, executed by the settlor of the trust, the US Congress. The trust instrument is proposed in the legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President, setting aside a specific National Forest(s) and establishing the intent of the trust, the trustees, the beneficiaries, as well as the structure for trust management.

The CIET must have an expression of intent clearly stating the goal of the pilot project. Multiple use is too ambiguous an expression. A recommendation for an expression of intent be codified in the pilot project:

> *The trustees shall manage these public lands to provide revenue, net of operating costs, for the beneficiaries each year, generated in a manner that recognizes public values and is sustainable over the long term. The beneficiaries are the public, both national and local, that use the National Forest, local education, and communities whose involvement in management of these lands is critical to meeting public needs.*

The clarity of this goal is paramount and establishes who is responsible, what they are to do, to whom they are accountable, and the period of the responsibility. It establishes a firm foundation for decision-making on the part of the trustees and trust managers. It makes trustees and managers accountable to the beneficiaries.

Designation of beneficiaries is a critical element of the CIET, not only because of the distribution of revenues from the management of federal land management activities, but also because the selection of appropriate beneficiaries will foster creative tension to ensure different benefits are balanced by the trustees.

Legislation specified in the Tables recommends that beneficiaries represent local county government, fish and wildlife interests, and recreational interests. These beneficiaries have interests in the local economic considerations of trust land management, the ecological features of the trust landscape, such as water quality and wildlife habitat, as well as the use of, and access to, the trust lands for recreation. Each beneficiary also has an interest in monetary returns because these funds help support local government, on-the-ground fish and wildlife habitat improvements, and maintenance and improvement of recreation resources. At the same time, each has an interest in maintaining the viability of the land base since that perpetuates the capacity of the trust to support the interests of each beneficiary in the long term.

The beneficiaries representing local government would be the school and road districts in the county(s) where the pilot project is located. Including these entities as beneficiaries will enable them to participate in the trust operations.

The beneficiary representing public interests in fish and wildlife would be the Idaho Fish and Game Commission. Members of this commission are appointed by the Governor of Idaho and confirmed by the State Senate. They hire the Director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, who, in turn, directs the operations of the department in carrying out its responsibilities as caretaker of fish and wildlife populations and habitat in the state.

The beneficiary representing public interests in recreational use of federally administered lands would be the Idaho Parks and Recreation Board. The members of the Parks and Recreation Board are appointed by the Governor in the same manner as the Fish and Game Commission. They serve the same capacity in relation to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, the agency responsible for the management of Idaho's 25 state parks.

The CIET includes federal property within the boundaries of five national forest(s) for this pilot project. The trust property management activities that generate revenues will only occur on those "general use" areas of the national forests that are designated in the current land and resource management plan(s) for the selected national forest(s). Because of the many issues associated with undeveloped or roadless lands in Idaho's national forests, we suggest that those areas recommended as additions to the

National Wilderness Preservation System in current national forest land and resource management plans be excluded from consideration as producing revenue from resource commodity use. Subject to the trust decision process and public involvement, other roadless areas could be managed. Motorized recreation would continue in accordance with the management plan in place on undeveloped or roadless lands outside wilderness areas.

Recreational resources within the pilot project areas may be specified in the trust instrument as recreation revenue-producing assets, but these lands would not be used as commodity-producing assets.

Trust Components

Designation of trustees will be conducted so that national as well as local interests are represented. A seven-member board of trustees is recommended.

Four of the trustees would be appointed by the Governor of Idaho. The Governor serves as Chairman of the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners, the constitutional body responsible for overseeing the management of Idaho's 2,466,000 acres of trust land. In this capacity the Governor has knowledge, experience, and insight in the activities of an operating trust. The Governor shall elect to name three members of the State Land Board as trustees, since these individuals also have working knowledge of trust land management. This would provide consistency between the management of state and federal lands within or adjacent to the pilot project area.

The other three trustees will be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture with the advice of the Governor of Idaho. These trustees could be prominent national leaders whose efforts would be focused on the sustainable development of natural resources, and should represent national interests in the use of federal lands for a variety of purposes.

Trustees look after the integrity of the trust and the national interest in managing the trust assets. Trustees approve management plans, can decide appeals, and ensure that the needs of the beneficiaries are met. Trustees also appoint the Local Advisory Council.

The current National Forest supervisor for the lands included in the trust would be the trust manager. The National Forest personnel and management structure on the forest would remain in place. This takes advantage of the existing infrastructure, technical, and support capabilities of the Forest Service. It is possible that some adjustment in the type of skills represented on the forest would take place as the mission of the forest changed under the trust concept. The manager and staff would refocus their management activities in light of the new mission; some uncertainty and rough spots early in the pilot project would be expected. National Forest personnel are, however, capable and committed individuals and the transition should be accomplished with minimal problems.

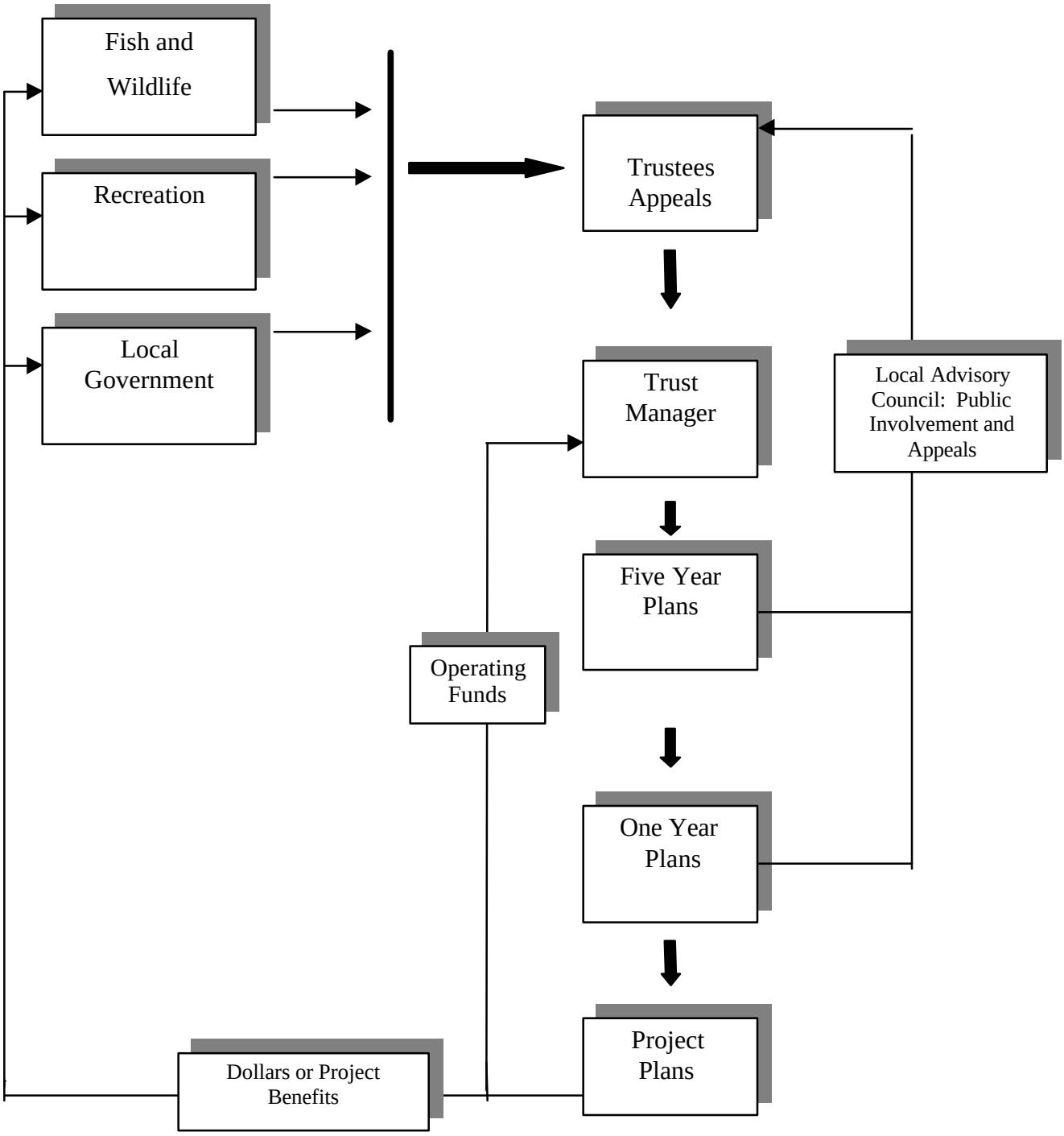
The trust manager will report to the trustees, implements their policies, and ensure that they are consistently applied through each plan and project. The manager will design

and implement projects in accordance with the plans, and is responsible for all planning and directing on-the-ground operations of trust land management.

The management system for the CIET is outlined on the following pages. The trustees provide oversight and broad policy direction consistent with the purpose of the trust. On-the-ground land and resource management decisions are made by the trust manager. The trustees have authority to override the decisions of the trust manager if they believe it to be in the best interests of the beneficiaries. The trustees also serve as the final decision-making authority for public appeals of decisions made by the trust manager.

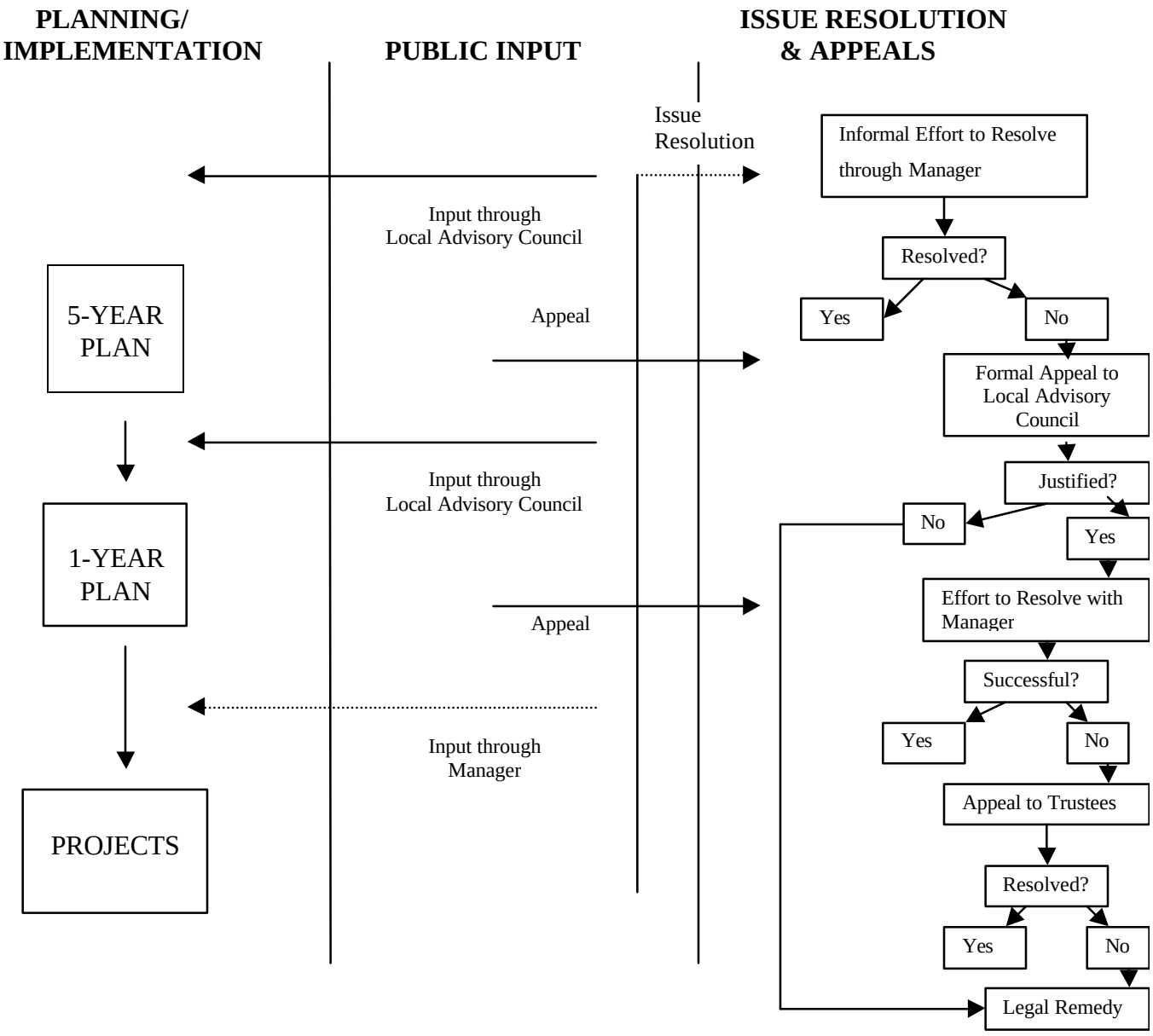
The trust manager will be assisted by the Local Advisory Council. This council, appointed by the trustees, will serve as a point of local contact for the trust manager. Its purpose will be to inform the manager of local needs and concerns and to act as a sounding board for the manager in the decision-making process. The Local Advisory Council will manage public involvement, hear first formal appeal, and be involved in all phases of the planning process.

Management of the Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust



Management Planning and Public Involvement

TRUST PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS[?]



[?] New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Lands, July 1998

The planning and public involvement process outlined in the previous flow chart will guide the operations of the CIET Trust. The foundation of this process is a five-year plan. Development of this plan will require examination of alternatives for land allocations and how to meet local economic and environmental needs. This plan will be based on a sound inventory of land and resources. It will define the broad objectives of land management activities and the levels of production expected from the trust assets.

Each five-year plan will be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement. Public comment will be solicited during the planning process. The Local Advisory Council will oversee the public comment collection and analysis process and will ensure that the comments are considered and accommodated as appropriate in the plan.

Administrative appeals will be allowed during the five-year planning process. The appeals will be managed by the Local Advisory Council. Appeals will be restricted, however, to those individuals or organizations who have availed themselves of the opportunities for public involvement. An effort will initially be made to resolve the appeals informally with the trust manager. Should that effort fail, the appeal will be advanced through the Local Advisory Council, with the trustees having the ultimate appeal authority. Appellants dissatisfied with the administrative process will retain their rights to seek a remedy through the legal system.

Within the broad guidance of the five-year plan, the trust manager, with input from the Local Advisory Council, will develop a one-year plan. This plan will list the specific on-the-ground projects designed to meet the five-year plan objectives for the coming year. Each one-year plan will be accompanied by an Environmental Assessment. As with the five-year plan, public comment will be solicited by the Local Advisory Council during the one-year planning process. The administrative appeal process for the one-year plan is the same as that for the five-year plan. On-the-ground projects identified in the one-year plan are not appealable. The opportunity still exists for interested parties to express their concerns and recommendations to the trust manager or Local Advisory Council on an informal basis regarding the design or implementation of any individual project. Those individuals who filed appeals during the five-year or one-year planning process, saw them through the administrative process, and remained dissatisfied could still avail themselves of the judicial process within the confines of the congressional action establishing the CIET.

This approach to planning should result in a more meaningful plan than those produced under the current National Forest Management Act. The planning horizon is more realistic, and the link between the broad plan and on-the-ground actions is shorter.

The projects are designed to meet all standards, which can be improved through site-specific analysis. Consultation with the regulatory agencies will address species protection. Projects not listed on the one-year plan, but which for some reason the trust manager proposes to accomplish in a particular year (i.e. wildfire damage), would have to be preceded by an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment and

would be subject to the same public involvement requirements and administrative appeal processes as those in the planning process.

FISCAL PROCESSES

One of the principles of resource management is that a long-term outlook is necessary to effectively plan and manage resources. A stable source of funding is therefore necessary to support on-the-ground management activities.

The pilot project will require the federal treasury to provide funding under the current activities. The management of activities will require a stable funding level throughout the pilot project period.

During the pilot project period, any revenues generated from management of the trust assets would be distributed as shown on the flow chart, "Trust Finance and Cash Flow Structure." Revenue from renewable resources, such as timber and grazing, would be deposited into a management account. Revenue from non-renewable resources, such as minerals, would also be deposited into the management account. This fund would be invested within specified guidelines, and the revenue produced through the investment would also be deposited into the management account.

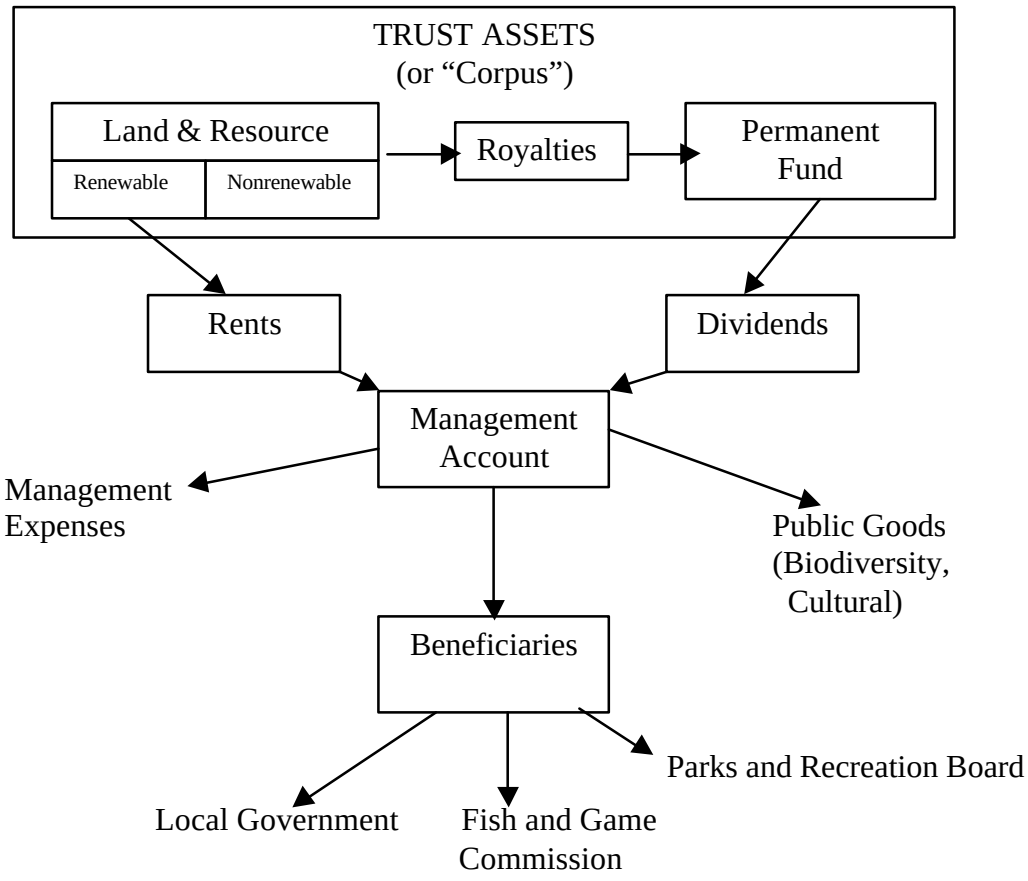
The management expenses of the trust would be paid from a combination of federal appropriations and revenues. A management contingency account would be established to cover unforeseen events and as a cushion against cash flow problems. Management expenses and public goods payments will be paid prior to other distributions. The proceeds of the trust will also fund the costs of maintaining public goods, such as cultural and archaeological sites and biodiversity, that have public value but that do not have a market value, or the protection of which is not a responsibility of one of the beneficiaries. Protection of these values would still be the responsibility of the trustees and the costs would be carried by trust revenues or federal appropriations.

Revenues remaining after funding operations will be deposited in an account each year for the beneficiaries. This account will be managed to provide reasonable, long-term payments to the beneficiaries. The trustees will determine the amount distributed each year. The trustees will also be allowed to retain portions of this account as a hedge against periods of low cash flow. There will likely be a backlog of road and trail maintenance, wildlife habitat, water quality improvement, ecological restoration, and recreation resource development work that will absorb any surplus net revenues for at least five years.

Continued federal funding will be necessary is wildland fire control in the pilot project area. Idaho Code requires that forest landowners pay the state $0.45 per acre to help fund the cost of having adequate resources available to fight fire. This figure represents about half of actual fire preparedness-costs. It is expected that the federal government would continue to meet its landowner obligations and contribute this amount each year. The remaining preparedness costs would be borne as an administrative cost to

the trust. It is also expected that the federal government will provide for fire suppression activities to cover costs of wildfire events in the pilot project area as is presently being funded.

Trust Finance and Cash Flow Structure



The CIET project structure outlined above meets functional objectives. The clarity of the mission provides certainty on the decision-making process. This, accompanied by the Local Advisory Council and the makeup of the trustees, will help stabilize resource-dependent communities. The planning process is formalized and incorporates public involvement. The agency budget would be stabilized through trust revenues. Finally, water quality and wildlife would be protected through application of existing laws, the beneficiary and public goods features of the trust, and long-term intention of the trust settlor. The trust, therefore, meets the qualifications set for this alternative.

REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES

Existing Proforma Boise National Forest

The budget of the Boise National Forest has been constantly changing and the numbers used reflect the final 2000 budget.

Revenues generated from land management operations
1996-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 14,883 acres treated	$8,640,000	
Recreation Fees	$260,000	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$8,900,000	$8,900,000

Expenses Projected for Operations 2000

Timberlands		
Fire	$4,391,000	
Planning	$427,000	
Timber Sales	$5,789,000	
Reforestation	$4,135,900	
Recreation	$1,979,000	
Minerals	$310,000	
Grazing	$472,000	
Heritage Resources	$130,000	
Wildlife	$715,000	
Noxious Weed Control	$40,000	
Soil & Water	$146,000	
Administration/Misc	$6,254,100	
TOTAL	$24,789,000	($24,789,000)

Total revenues available less expenses projected for operations	($15,889,000)

The Boise National Forest budget for 2000 is 12% less than the 1997-1999 average. Recreational fees include special use for campgrounds, ski areas, resorts, and river use. Grazing fees are minimal. Watershed restoration activities are included in the roads and soil and water budgets.

Existing Proforma Payette National Forest McCall and Krassel Districts.

Recently these districts have been administratively combined with New Meadows district and the data has been proportioned to reflect the activities in the specific districts in the project area.

Revenues generated from land management operations
1997-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 500 acres treated	$965,000	
Recreation Fees	$20,000	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	$5,000	
TOTAL	$990,000	$990,000

Expense for Operations 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$661,981	
Planning	$75,970	
Timber Sales	$482,377	
Reforestation	---	
Recreation	$189,598	
Minerals	$120,235	
Grazing	$107,456	
Heritage Resources	---	
Wildlife	$124,472	
Noxious Weed Control	$12,000	
Soil & Water	$247,048	
Administration/Misc	$529,722	
TOTAL	$2,550,859	($2,550,859)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($1,560,859)

The McCall and Krassel budgets are approximately 11 percent of the Payette National Forest budget. Watershed restoration on the Payette National Forest consists of road obliteration, road decommissioning, reconstruction and soil stabilization. The majority of roadless areas on the Payette National Forest are on the McCall and Krassel Ranger Districts.

Existing Proformas for the Sawtooth, Challis and Salmon National Forests

The existing Proformas for the Sawtooth, Challis and Salmon National Forests will be combined using the total cost for the Sawtooth National Forest as a representative unit. All three forests are heavily involved in recreation. The Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness and the Sawtooth National Recreation areas make up the majority of the lands within the project area. The Salmon National Forest has only a small portion of their forest in the project area.

Revenues generated from land management operations
1998-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 942 acres treated	$661,500	
Recreation Fees (1991-1995)	$368,775	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$1,030,275	$1,030,275

Expenses for Operations 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$2,030,000	
Planning	$823,680	
Timber Sales	$554,600	
Reforestation & Vegetation Mgt	$437,200	
Recreation	$2,269,850	
Minerals	$296,400	
Grazing	$429,700	
Heritage Resources	$83,800	
Wildlife	$605,400	
Noxious Weed Control	$40,000	
Roads & Maintenance	$1,517,000	
Soil & Water	$990,100	
Administration/Misc	$3,577,039	
TOTAL	$13,654,769	($13,654,769)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($12,624,494)

The Sawtooth and Challis National Forest are primarily a higher elevation wilderness and recreational use forest. Recreation fees are generated from campgrounds and special use activities throughout the area. Grazing fees and mineral revenues are minimal in the project area.

Existing Proforma for the five National Forests combined for the Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust project area.

Revenues generated from land management operations
1996-1999 Average Treatment Acres

Timberland 16,325 acres treated	$10,266,500	
Recreation Fees	$648,775	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	$5,000	
TOTAL	$10,920,275	$10,920,275

Expense for Operations 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$7,082,981	
Planning	$1,326,650	
Timber Sales	$6,825,977	
Reforestation	$4,573,100	
Recreation	$4,438,448	
Minerals	$726,635	
Grazing	$1,009,156	
Heritage Resources	$213,800	
Wildlife	$1,444,872	
Noxious Weed Control	$92,000	
Roads and Maintenance	$3,914,000	
Soil & Water	$1,383,148	
Administration/Misc	$7,963,861	
TOTAL	$40,994,628	($40,994,628)

Total Revenues Available less cash used for operations	($30,074,353)

Potential Pilot Proforma

The potential Pilot Porforma are provided as an example of the activities that could be implemented to meet ecological sustainable management. The potential pilot proforma for the five National Forests in the CIET project proposes for an area of approximately 2.5 million acres of suitable lands a potential treatment area of 18,140 acres, which could be primarily generated by the Boise and Payette National Forests.

Revenues generated from land management operations
PILOT Proforma

Timberland 18,140 treated acres*	$11,622,000	
Recreation Fees	$648,775	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	$5,000	
TOTAL	$12,275,775	$12,275,775

Expense for Operations 1999 in Project Area

Timberlands		
Fire	$7,082,981	
Planning	$1,326,650	
Timber Sales	$6,825,977	
Reforestation	$4,573,100	
Recreation	$4,438,448	
Minerals	$726,635	
Grazing	$1,009,156	
Heritage Resources	$213,800	
Wildlife	$1,444,872	
Noxious Weed Control**	$184,000	
Roads and Maintenance	$3,914,000	
Soil & Water	$1,383,148	
Resource Monitoring	$398,193	
Administration/Misc	$7,565,668	
TOTAL	$41,086,628	($41,086,628)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($28,810,853)

*The potential treatment acres are projections from each of the forests derived from the recent past activities and from discussions with the Supervisors Offices. Depending on management objectives and ecological restoration needs, this number of acres could be increased significantly.

**Noxious weed control has been doubled to address the increasing threat to native plants and habitats that noxious weeds impact throughout the five National Forests.

COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Economic

The budgets are administered very differently for each forest. Forests such as the Boise and Payette have a mix of projects, and the budget is spread over multiple activities. The forests with high recreational use and wilderness have increased budgets in recreation, roads, maintenance and administration.

The budget summary of the CIET project requires that all funding on the forest remain at or increase present levels. Budgets are decreasing (Boise National Forest has had a 12% budget reduction the past three years) making it difficult for the forest to provide the needed ecological restoration and services to the public.

Presently, the forests in the project area are spending approximately $41 million annually with revenues of $12 million. The cost of managing this area is $29 million over and above revenues produced. The highest cost in the project area is administration at 19% of the budget, fire at 17%, timber sales at 16%, and recreation at 11%.

The efficiency in use of these dollars is difficult to assess since the Forest Service is continually revamping and re-doing plans and projections that are questioned and appealed by interest groups. With budgets declining on the National Forests, enhancing or improving the habitats has become increasingly more difficult. A change in the way operations are conducted is necessary if good land stewardship is to be applied. More can be accomplished with the present budget by streamlining the public input process and requiring all interested parties to participate in the pilot project. Not participating means forgoing the opportunity to appeal and allows the project to move forward. Requiring participation will streamline the system and increase the efficiency of the process tremendously, providing for more restoration accomplishments. Managing the forest into the Historical Range of Variability will provide for long-term sustainability of the ecosystem. Using the generated revenues will reduce the cost of operations and contribute funding for additional habitat improvement projects.

The Potential Proforma for the Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust identifies revenues of over $12 million which can be used for project or management activities. It is not known whether this level of activity will address the habitat needs throughout the project area, but it is a start, and the monitoring and evaluation can begin to address the sustainability of the ecosystem and the improvements that have been made under this trust management alternative. If additional activity is deemed necessary, the revenues generated will help defray management cost and could reach a positive level depending upon the number of acres treated to reach the desired future condition.

Management

The Idaho Ecosystem Management Project was put together with many participants from all agencies and groups, so from the onset each partner would have ownership in the decision-making process. The group decisions and implementation of the process is well documented with compatible data and is a tool to engage in ecosystem management. This group consists of federal, state, industry, and foundation interest who have developed a system that can be used to truly manage using ecosystem management concepts.

In addition, the Forest Service through the Southwest Idaho Ecogroup also checked data and philosophies and social and economic considerations with an independent reviewer to further assess the validity of the process. This work is the most advanced documented ecosystem process in the country and was developed from data on the National Forest lands within the project area.

The strategy and goal is to implement ecosystem management as a planning tool and integrate the new science. A balance of biological diversity and ecosystem integrity with the social and economic objectives will develop a meaningful plan. The process involves Native Americans, the public, and the local communities to address the national issues and implement them locally. Very few initiatives even attempt to fully address the ecological objectives, at least for more than one ecological community type or a few selected species. A blend of this data and processes can begin to address the needs on our landscapes and implement effective ecosystem management.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Present management activities are far below the level of implementation to address the ecological needs of the forest. Through pre-commercial and commercial thinning, use of prescribed fire, and stream and road restoration, landscape-wide improvements can be made to maintain a healthy green forest, increase wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire losses, and protect our water resources. Our National Forest needs to treat more acres and direct management towards long-term ecosystem sustainability. It is undeniable that many natural resource advocates have come to rely on the federal process to ensure judicial scrutiny over federal agency decision-making to slow or stop resource extraction. The tremendous efforts of time, funds, and resources that go into the judicial review of federal decision-making could be more beneficial to our natural resources if these energies were re-directed in a cooperative decision-making process that would serve our environment and public assets on a national and local level.

The Central Idaho Ecosystem Trust project identified the need to implement ecosystem management on all ownership within the ecosystem. The change will be positive and must improve land stewardship and increase the net social benefits of public management to all the users of the forest. The forests will continue to be the areas the

public will seek to use for their recreational activities. Developing a new form of public involvement will bring fresh ideas to the table and replace polarization with cooperation. Local communities will benefit from the restoration activities that keep the forest healthy. The trust model can provide another tool for the management of public lands. The opportunity to monitor and evaluate the new science and processes of ecosystem management can be compared to the management plan's goals and projections. On-the-ground accomplishments can be monitored for cost effectiveness and key outcomes.

When implementing management prescriptions, different vegetational patterns will be studied and restored. The outcomes such as tree size, density, and species will be the goal, and they will be evaluated based on the Historical Range of Variability. The effects of management activities on the ecosystem and the economics will ensure the health of the land and forest in this unique composite of forest, wilderness, and recreation areas.

This project was originally submitted by Elmore, Boise, Gem, and Valley Counties and the Boise Cascade Corporation. Additionally, this project was further developed and modified with the participation and assistance of Northwest Management, Inc. and the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group.

Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative

Submitted to:
Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group

Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative brings together a group of people from all backgrounds to cooperatively provide a stewardship approach for improving conditions on federal lands. The "Collaborative Group" will provide direction for managing the ecological, social, and economic needs on portions of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. The Collaborative Group will guide the management of elk recovery efforts by restoring this portion of the Clearwater River Basin to its natural historical conditions. Specifically, the goal is to restore a higher percentage of early- and late-succession stages than currently exists. The Collaborative Group will include a wide range of commodity, environmental, recreational, fish and wildlife, Native American, and local government interests. The group will develop five- and one-year plans for the management of the project area. It will be the responsibility of the Collaborative Group to determine management objectives and to involve the public in defining the goals of the two national forests during the pilot project period.

Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative

Area: 2.7 million acres; parts of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests

Goal: Restore habitat for elk and other key indicator species consistent with social objectives and historical conditions.

Present management activities have moved away from active management of the land base. These decisions have led to changes in the forest vegetation. The result has been an increase in fire hazard and reduction in wildlife habitat for a number of key wildlife indicator species. The management project described in this document (Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative) addresses a new method of managing federal lands through collaboration, public involvement, and sound ecological practices. This outcome-based approach addresses ecological restoration and a land stewardship ethic that promotes ecological health and local community involvement. The overall goals for implementing this collaborative method would be to evaluate and closely monitor the activities and outcomes as compared to other forests or adjacent lands that are being managed under the existing rules and regulations.

National Forest Service budgets are declining, putting more strain on the ability of the Forest Service staff to maintain and restore the forest ecosystem. Local community stability has been disrupted due to the uncertainty of forest management. As a result of lack of activity on the ground, continual decline in early successional habitat is reducing the habitat for key wildlife species and threatening recreational and scenic values. The decline in early successional habitat and increased fuel loading has intensified wildfires as seen in the 2000 fire season. The number of Rocky Mountain elk, and other key indicator species, in the Clearwater drainage has recently dropped by 50 percent and are continuing to decline. Much of the decline is due to the lack of habitat in the forest. In the past, nationwide, there has been a focused approach to legislating each specific resource issue instead of looking at the entire forest ecosystem. Each individual resource

has its own set of laws and with new regulations emerging concerning heritage resources and planning, the situation will continue to become more complex. The debate should not be on each individual subject, but focused toward the health of the entire ecosystem and developing a plan to meet the ecological diversity and long-term sustainability of the forest. Today, groups that choose to halt management activities are not required to participate in the planning processes that provide cooperation in caring for the land. They participate only at a point to disrupt or delay stewardship activities, resulting in a tremendous amount of time and money being spent by all parties involved with not much "being accomplished".

Cumbersome and overwhelming rules and regulations that inhibit the chance to implement meaningful ecosystem-wide restoration projects need to be considered. If projects in our watersheds, such as wildlife habitat improvements, transportation system upgrades, and recreational improvements are not implemented, the public, wildlife, and local communities will suffer. In addition, the cost to everyone will be great, both in fire suppression expense and the loss in scenic values.

Many new areas of the forest are overstocked with too many trees. This overcrowded condition weakens the trees through competition for light, moisture, and nutrients. Stressed trees are more susceptible to insects and disease, and mortality is high. The dead and dying timber sets the stage for a catastrophic wildfire event that will kill all the trees, damage soils, and silt waterways. This pilot project proposes to evaluate, under new authorization, a method of management that emphasizes the ecosystem without the numerous conflicting rules that now stifle land management agencies.

The monitoring process will include measuring the resource benefits that the public and local communities receive. Each forest tracks accomplishments through a monitoring and evaluation reporting system. Many more projects can be accomplished through increased management efficiencies, streamlining laws, and increasing revenues. These accomplishments will continue to be reported in the monitoring report.

The Forest Service has produced land assessment documents that identify the restoration needs and the many forest health issues. These documents will guide the activities. The pilot project can test the collaborative decision-making process and evaluate its effectiveness as a method of public land management. It will also be a test ground for a set of management practices authorized by law that implement activities to improve and enhance the ecosystem. Once the pilot project has been implemented for a 10 to 15 year period, its accomplishments can be evaluated through monitoring and can be compared to other areas within the Forest Service. It can then be determined whether the results have provided more benefits, improved ecological sustainability, and whether it is more effective in meeting the goals of the resource and the public.

The strategies needed to improve our ecosystems and direct management of the Collaborative would include all the following considerations:

- ? Direct vegetative management towards the natural range of variability, which provides for a more sustainable ecosystem.
- ? Restore habitat for steelhead, salmon, and bull trout through watershed restoration so species can fully utilize the aquatic habitat in the forest.
- ? Manage vegetation and direct silvicultural activities to restore ponderosa pine, western white pine, whitebark pine and western larch while minimizing the risk of unnaturally severe fires.
- ? Evaluate and create habitat for lynx and other listed threatened or endangered species through implementation of ecological sound methods, and careful logging practices that would minimize impacts on the land and provide an economical means of thinning overstocked stands and improving critical habitat.
- ? Use prescribed fire to reduce fuel loads, lower wildfire risk, and improve wildlife habitat.
- ? Manage for species, age classes and appropriate habitats through harvesting methods that encourage long-term protection of soil, land, and water resources.
- ? Improve the efficiency and increase the net social benefits of natural forest management through the collaborative process with public involvement and cooperation.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative project includes both the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests located in North Central Idaho. In the Clearwater National Forest, the area specifically identified is the North Fork, Powell, and Lochsa Ranger Districts, which are part of the Clearwater Basin. This area includes all the major watersheds and totals approximately 1,679,000 acres of national forest on the Clearwater National Forest. Of that total, 988,000 acres are designated as inventoried roadless areas.

The Nez Perce National Forest area includes the Red River, Moose Creek, and Clearwater Ranger Districts, which are the major drainages of the South Fork Clearwater River and Selway River, which also drain into the Clearwater Basin. This area totals approximately 1,040,000 acres of National Forest on the Nez Perce National Forest. Of that total, 414,000 acres are designated as inventoried roadless areas.

In total, the pilot project in the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests consists of approximately 2,719,000 million acres, which includes approximately 1,402,000 acres of roadless area. The area has a diversity of plant communities, recreational uses, wildlife, watershed, and restoration opportunities. Active management of roadless areas will not necessarily occur within the pilot project area but will not be precluded. The degree and nature of management in the roadless areas will be discussed under the collaborative structure of the project. The management of the potential project area for treatment acres or revenues does not include active management in the roadless areas.

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Project area is within the ceded area of the Nez Perce Tribe. The forest area has many native foods, fishery issues, and spiritual gathering locations that are important to the Native American culture. The pilot project intent is to consult and coordinate activities with the Native American communities.

Scope

The purpose of the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative is to restore the Clearwater Basin area elk herds and the native vegetation to historical conditions. Historically, these forests had a higher percentage of area in early successional stages (i.e. seral tree species such as western larch and western white pine on a more open landscape) and late successional stands (characterized by mature older age classes in forest stands). Both stages are significantly less represented today than historically found in these areas. This reduction has resulted in many areas growing into the mid-successional stage (younger dense stands of 16" to 25" diameter trees) with a reduced number of forage plants for big game and other wildlife that are dependent on early successional vegetation. The reduction in the elk population and loss of native vegetation is a result of the loss of the early successional stages. The historical range of variability is a term used to identify the range of certain plant species and vegetative stages that were present in "pre-settlement" time.

As an example the following graph (next page) depicts the historical range of variability and the existing size classes of timber for the Breaklands of the South Fork and main Salmon Rivers with Douglas-fir and dry grand fir habitat types in the Nez Perce National Forest. The current condition is outside the range of historical variability for most of the size classes. The graph shows that the current range for the younger age classes is below the low range and the 16"-25" size class is above the high range. The recommendations identified by the Forest Service to restore and improve these areas will include focusing on species diversity, age class distribution, abundance of plant and animal species, watershed condition, water quality, transportation systems, and human uses and trends in the forest.

Opening up the forest provides for more natural regeneration, and through planting the desired species, more seedling/sapling and pole-size trees can be brought up to the natural range of variability. Implementing thinning throughout the overstocked stands provides more sunlight to the forest floor, encouraging more herbaceous growth for wildlife and helping to keep wildfires on the ground, reducing damage to the forest. Thinning maintains the larger trees for forest cover and regeneration. These ecological restoration activities provide opportunities to return the ecosystem to its natural historical range. The thinning of the overstocked stands also provides an opportunity to reduce the high fuel loading after which prescribed fire can be used safely and effectively in restoring the sites.

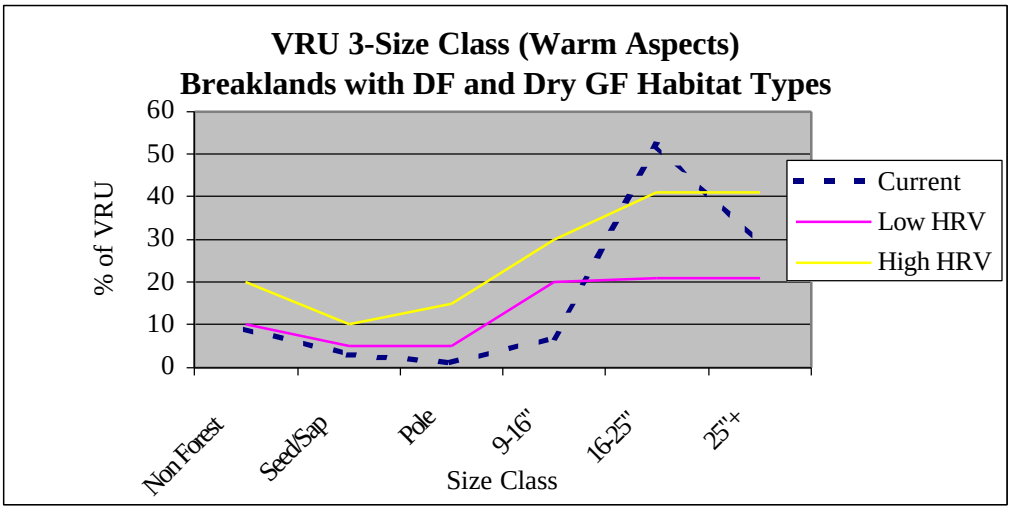


TABLE 1 (Taken from Stewards of the Nez Perce Forest, Vegetation Group, April 2000)

Magnitude of the Proposal

The Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests are home to many fish and wildlife species. As habitat changes due to natural and man caused disturbances, so does the wildlife use and its numbers. The elk and other species that use the early successional habitat of this area are indicators of the habitat changes. Elk numbers have dropped by 50 percent in the past 20 years and continue to decline in response to habitat changes.

The 2.7 million acre area has a history of change. Archaeological evidence collected from digs in the area indicates that elk have inhabited the Clearwater and Selway River basins for over 10,000 years.

Elk numbers in the state dropped in the 1860's as a result of the discovery of gold in the area. With no hunting restrictions, many elk were killed for food. The extensive wildfires between 1910 and 1934 removed huge areas of forest canopy. Following these fires the grasses, forbs, shrubs, and young forests covered the burned areas creating a tremendous amount of forage resulting in the elk population rebounding. [1]

Also around 1910, white pine blister rust, a non-native disease from Europe was introduced into the United States. The disease has killed most of the remaining white pine, and these forests were replaced by stands of grand fir and Douglas-fir that are much more susceptible to wildfire and disease.

In the 1940's fire suppression techniques greatly improved. Keeping fire out of the ecosystem allowed the stands of timber to mature so that the trees over-shadowed the ground vegetation and eliminated grasses, forbs, and shrubs essential for elk forage. On the Nez Perce National Forest, fire frequency has decreased to less than 10% of its historical occurrence. Fires once affected almost 6,000 acres per year before 1930; since then, fires have only burned about 400 acres annually. The complex ecological, political,

and social changes coinciding during this period also affected the timber supply from the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests.

The Forest Service has identified the age-class distribution on the suitable forest lands and found that there are many acres in the 120 to 140 year-old age classes and not enough acres in the younger age classes (11 to 50 years old). A more even distribution of 170 year-old plus timber is also necessary to provide a balance of species, age classes, and forest cover types. The data also shows that there is a high percent of Douglas-fir and grand fir, which are in the 16" to 25" diameter class. These species and diameter class are at significantly higher numbers than the Historical Range of Variability would normally allow (see Table #1 on page 6). These conditions contribute to the higher fuel loading and potential for intensive wildfires that cause long-term damage to the soil and water quality in these areas. The increase of Douglas-fir and grand fir also shade out the grasses and forbs, reducing habitat for elk and other wildlife. An abundance of this heavy timber type structure shifts the forest towards Douglas-fir and grand fir types and away from the ponderosa and western white pine types, thus resulting in the loss of the seral type forest and reducing the habitat for species requiring the early-seral forest type.

Presently, prescribed fire and harvesting activities projected to maintain or improve wildlife habitat and big game winter range on the Nez Perce National Forest, as described in the current Forest Plan, are 60 percent below the desired Forest Service goal (Eleventh Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report, Fiscal Year 1998). As each year passes, more habitat is changing to a late seral condition, and the overall habitat used by key species is being reduced.

Community

In the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative area, there are seven communities which include Elk City, Grangeville, Kooskia, Kamiah, Orofino, Pierce, and Weippe. Lapwai, which is the headquarters for the Nez Perce Tribe, is located outside of the immediate area; however, many tribal members live in these communities. Kooskia, Kamiah, and Orofino are located on the reservation within the pilot area. The employment of Elk City, Pierce, and Weippe is directly tied to the forest activities, such as logging and lumber manufacture. Grangeville, Kooskia, Kamiah, and Orofino range from 15% logging and sawmill employment to 5% at Grangeville. Other employment opportunities include agriculture and agricultural services, construction, transportation, trade, finance, insurance, real estate, motels, medical and social services, and local, state, and federal government employment.

These communities have maintained an economic and social stability during the past 50 years involving primarily federal timber, but also state and private. The history of Elk City as an example surrounds Shearer Lumber Company. This mill and its connection with the community depicts the situation that is common among all these communities.

Shearer Lumber Company mill opened forty years ago and is one of the largest employers in this area with 100 mill workers and another 40 employed by the associated logging and trucking contractors. Since 1990, timber sales have dropped to almost a two thirds reduction. The reduction has been both predictable and drastic with mills closing in Grangeville, Whitebird, Riggins, Juliaetta, and Craigmont, with a loss of 479 jobs from 1994 to 1996. These communities located within the pilot area are directly impacted by the policies and management direction of federal lands. The existing facilities are operating due to the increased use of the private timber, which is being substituted for the reduced availability. This places an increased demand for private timber production while millions of board feet are dying annually on the adjacent national forests due to insects, wildfire, disease, and lack of good stewardship practices.

Economy

The economies of the communities in the study area are diverse in that not all local residents work in the forest, but the businesses, whether accounting, grocery stores, restaurants or recreational business, are all tied to the National Forest lands that surround these communities. Three areas of the economic base that are directly tied to the National Forest for these communities include: 1) jobs generated through logging and mill operations; 2) guiding for recreation, such as fishing, rafting, and hunting; 3) jobs to conduct restoration work in watersheds and wildlife habitat. This work is directly generated from the federal land ownership around these communities. Flowing from these activities is the income that fuels the businesses of the area. Twenty-five percent of the federal receipts from timber sales on the national forests has supported these communities' schools and roads. These revenues have been reduced by over 50% over the past decade, further reducing the ability of local governments to supply basic services in education and roads in these counties.

Environment

The Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forest are heavily forested with precipitation ranging from 30 to over 50 inches annually. The past wildfires in the area have formed a mosaic pattern of forest vegetation throughout the area.

The three main rivers dissecting the proposed areas include the North Fork Clearwater, South Fork Clearwater and the Selway River. These drainages have high recreational use with beautiful scenery, fishing, and hiking opportunities**.** On the Clearwater National Forest, approximately 988,000 acres of the 1,679,000 acre area was inventoried during RARE II (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) with the survey beginning in 1977. Most of these areas have had little to no development since that analysis.

The Nez Perce National Forest (Red River, Moose Creek, and Clearwater Districts) includes approximately 1,040,000 acres, with 414,000 acres designated as roadless. The South Fork Clearwater River landscape assessment developed by the Forest Service has area management themes that include vegetation, wildlife, aquatics,

and recreation. The vegetative pattern is to restore early seral species and conserve scenic integrity on a portion of the geographic areas or Ecological Reporting Units as identified by the Forest Service. There are areas identified for vegetative management including specific changes in tree species composition, wildlife habitat improvements, roads, and recreational needs. The aquatic theme is to restore aquatic processes within the forest.

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative proposes to demonstrate ecosystem management needs as identified by the Clearwater National Forest document, North Fork Big Game Habitat Restoration on a Watershed Scale Assessment (BHROWS) August 16, 1999, and the Nez Perce National Forest document, South Fork Clearwater River Landscape Assessment, March 1998, as it applies to the pilot project areas. The activities include vegetative management, watershed restoration, wildlife habitat, and scenic quality within the proposed areas. The documents specifically address:

- ? Improve watershed conditions important for spawning steelhead or Chinook salmon and help restore bull trout populations
- ? Improve wildlife habitat with the use of prescribed fire and logging as a disturbance to restore early successional stages and the corresponding early seral species such as white pine and larch. Use disturbance to treat large areas of lodgepole pine, which are providing little to no habitat and are increasingly a wildfire hazard
- ? Remove roads no longer needed for access.
- ? Improve habitat for late successional species and maintain older age classes near historical levels
- ? Provide for continued recreational uses and maintain and improve the scenic quality of the area
- ? Provide a source of timber to support local economies and create new jobs within communities in watershed restoration and wildlife habitat enhancement work

PILOT PROJECT DETAILS

Assumptions in the Pilot Project Analysis

The collaborative group process is to guide the management of the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative project. Basic assumptions are that the collaborative group be made up of a range of fish, wildlife, commodity, environmental, recreational, range, and local government interests. A group of no more than 15 is a practical number, and elected officials of the state will provide a significant role in identifying this group. These individuals should demonstrate an interest to work collaboratively regardless of their personal affiliations. Decisions within the collaborative group would be by consensus of the members. In the event consensus cannot be reached, a decision could be by a majority vote of the members.

The forest supervisors would be responsible for implementing the plan and for any of the technical support necessary for its development. The Forest Service will use

all information and data available from the universities, industry, state, and the Forest Service's own data base to develop the five-year and one-year plans.

The development of a new five-year plan will take some time for the collaborative group. Until the new plan is complete, the existing land management plans, policies and legal restrictions will remain in place. Once the new plan is complete and approved through the NEPA process, it will replace the existing Forest Plan. The roadless issue and treatment of these lands within the Clearwater Basin Stewardship project area will be addressed after the group is established. The collaborative group can engage in discussions and decisions surrounding these areas within the project area.

Collaborative Stewardship Component

The collaborative process is an effort to resolve difficult natural resource issues on portions of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. In the proposed legislation, the decision-making process will be established to facilitate activities and provide the best long-term sustainable practices in the field (see Table #4-Comparisons of Projects). Mandatory time limits for completion of the planning and appeals processes are proposed and established to keep the process in motion. Legislation directs the Forest Supervisor to implement decisions for management.

The five-year plan would examine alternatives for land allocations and meeting local economic and environmental needs. This plan would be based on a sound inventory and would be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement.

The one-year plan would designate the specific on-the-ground projects designed to meet the five-year plan objectives for the coming 12-month period. An Environmental Assessment would accompany it.

Administrative appeals will be allowed during the two planning processes. The collaborative group will manage appeals. Appeals, however, will be restricted to those individuals or organizations that have contributed to and are involved in the public input process that exists during the development of the five- and one-year plans.

Administrative appeals would not be allowed at the project level, although informal efforts to resolve project-specific concerns with the on-the-ground manager would be encouraged.

Projects that are not listed on the one-year plan, but which for some reason the on-the-ground manager proposes to accomplish in a particular year, would have to be preceded by an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment, and would be subject to the same public involvement requirements and administrative appeal processes as those in the planning process.

In order for the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative to be successful, Congress must establish mandatory time limits for completion of the planning and appeal

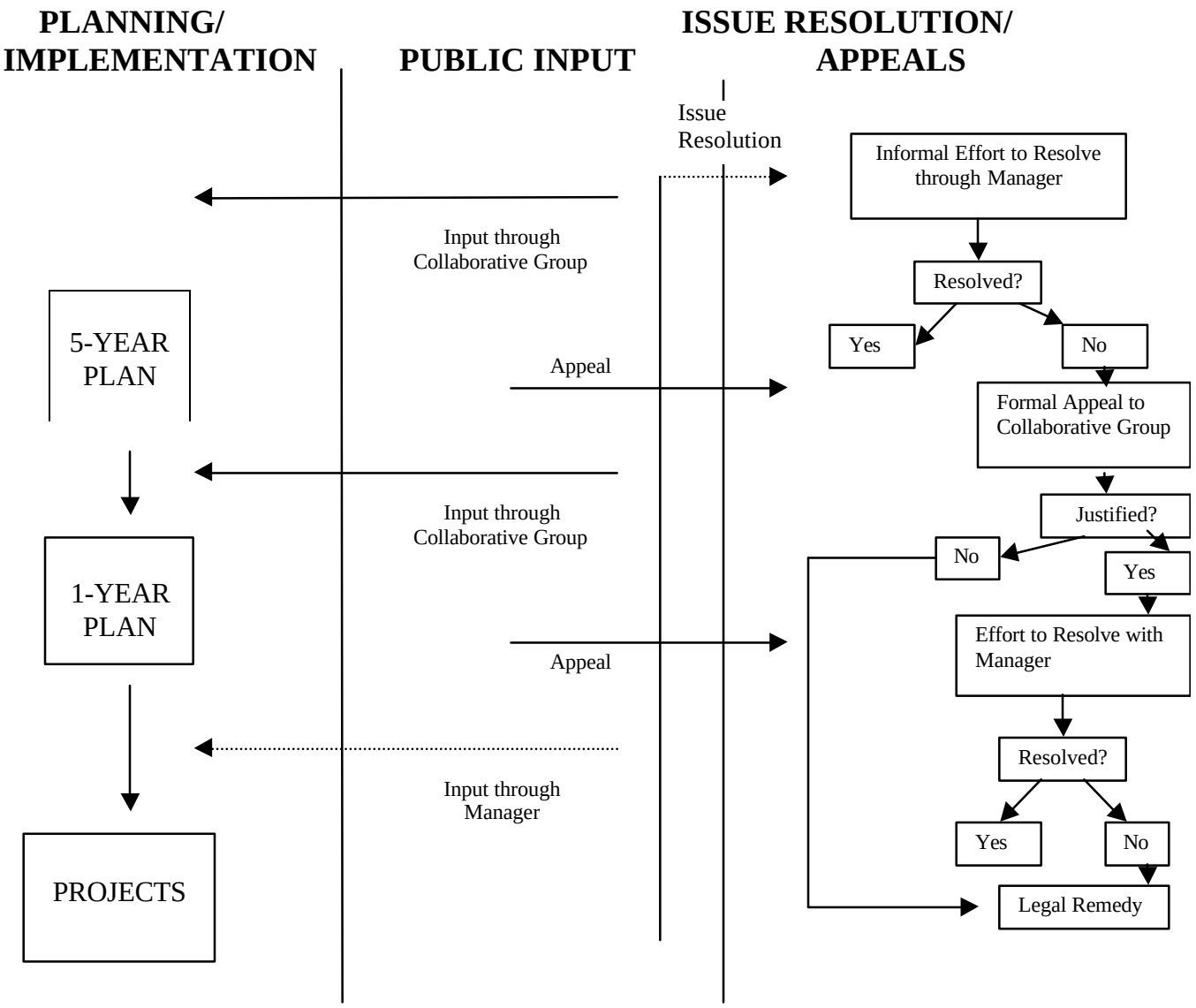
processes described (see Table #4-Comparisons of Projects). Without time limits, one or more members of the group may not participate in good faith and can cause the effort to fail through delay. Working toward consensus from such a diverse group as the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative without time limits will foster inactivity. When decisions cannot be agreed on, they could be decided by a majority vote. This makes balancing the interests in the group even more critical. Without a majority vote, one group of interests could easily override the desires of others, negating the collaborative process.

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative management structure would not change the current Forest Service structure. The Forest Supervisor would be the individual responsible for administering on-the-ground activities within the overall directions of the forest plan. The Collaborative Group would not have supervisory authority over the Forest Supervisor, but once the forest collaborative plan was in place, the group would serve as a monitoring unit to ensure that on-the-ground activities were in fact consistent with the plan objectives.

It is important, however, that the Forest Supervisor be vested with sufficient authority to make decisions and effect their implementation within the broad direction of the forest collaborative plan. The authority granted to the Forest Supervisor must be to make these decisions within the appropriate legal limits without being overruled by officials at the regional or national level. Collaboration cannot work otherwise.

The collaborative process is time consuming, and all interested communities that use the National Forest must be involved to make this effort worthwhile. The public input process is available to all those who are interested in the activities of the forest. It is important that the 15 member Collaborative Board reviews the management on the forest, and the board must insure that the public input process is available to all interested communities. The Collaborative Group function is to determine the management goals, monitor activities, and assess implementation. The pilot project will be monitored and evaluated during implementation and following the project. The success of a land stewardship process like this collaborative can be an example of ecosystem-based management, while providing the benefits of long-term forest diversity and stability in public land management.

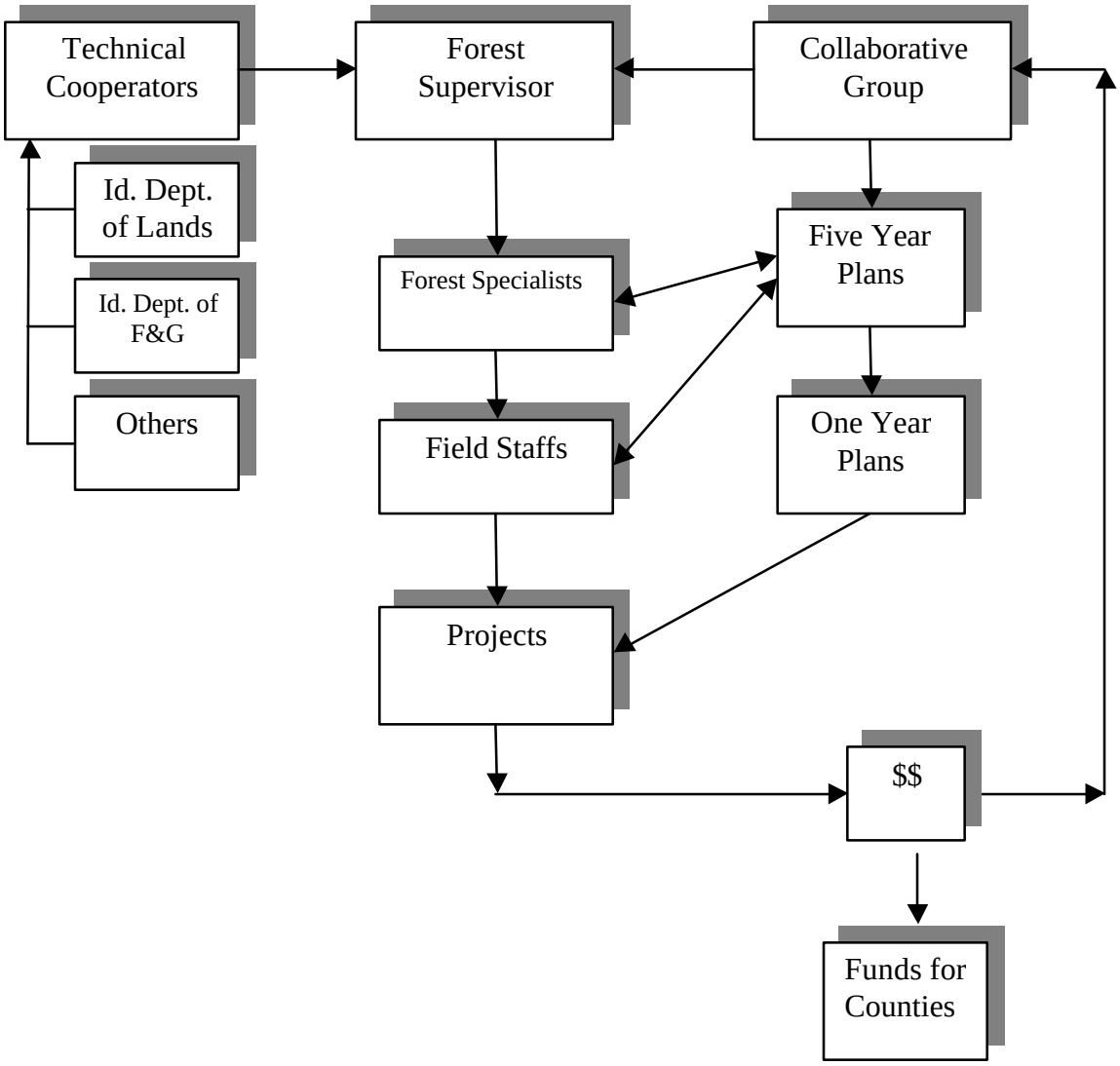
COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS[?]



The Collaborative Group will have access to technical review cooperators such as the Idaho Department of Lands, Department Environmental Quality, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Idaho Fish and Game, universities and others. The Forest Supervisor, the Forest Specialist and field staff provide additional support input into the five-year and one-year plans.

[?] New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Lands, July 1998

Clearwater Basin Elk Collaborative



Public Participation

Public participation under the collaborative process begins with public input into the five-year and one-year plans. The Collaborative Group, together with the Forest Specialists and field staff, will develop five-year and one-year plans for approval.

The collaborative pilot project planning process will test the possibilities and limits of collaboration. It will benefit from existing Forest Service expertise as a useful check of the group expectations and will maintain federal agency management and expertise in place during implementation. This will pave the way for more on-the-ground collaborative management groups.

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative, as envisioned in the pilot project, meets objectives for ecosystem-based management. An Act of Congress, as proposed, would establish the objectives of the group. Those objectives would include formalized plans and stabilized budgets. Managers and local communities would benefit from ecological stability in decision-making and on-the-ground fish, water, and wildlife accomplishments.

Fiscal Processes

Revenues generated from the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative project can support the operations of the Forest Ranger Districts. Appropriations from the National Treasury will be necessary to start the pilot projects and may fully support the operations once the projects are implemented. Funds generated from the pilot project activities will be managed by the Collaborative group and used to meet resource needs and to implement watershed restoration, wildlife habitat enhancement and recreational uses. Funds can be proportioned to local governments roads and/or as a contingency fund for other activities. The Collaborative Group and the Forest Supervisor will determine annually the appropriate levels of funding to implement activities.

It is critical that Congress maintain the revenue generated by the operation of the Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative project as a discrete account during the pilot project period. It will not be possible to meet the functional objective of stabilizing budgets without that provision.

REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES

Existing Proforma
Clearwater National Forest (North Fork, Lochsa, and Powell Ranger Districts)

Revenues generated from land management operations
1997-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 800 acres treated	$1,704,000	
Recreation Fees	$96,763	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$1,800,763	$1,800,763

Expense for Operations 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$675,700	
Planning	$31,000	
Timber Sales	$2,114,700	
Reforestation	$756,700	
Recreation	$595,600	
Minerals	$25,000	
Grazing	$26,100	
Heritage Resources	$25,400	
Wildlife	$258,600	
Noxious Weed Control*	$47,000	
Soil & Water	$179,000	
Road Obliteration	$589,600	
Administration/Misc	$2,547,600	
TOTAL	$7,872,000	($7,872,000)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($6,071,237)

*Noxious weed control is conducted on approx. 1150 acres annually

Recreation fee sources are generated from outfitter and guide and camping fees. There is little to no grazing income on these Ranger Districts. There is little mineral income on these Ranger Districts. The Clearwater National Forest Budget has been reduced by approximately $1,100,000 since 1997. Road obliteration is the most active and costly part of the watershed restoration program on the national forest today.

Potential Pilot Revenue and Expense Summaries

Clearwater National Forest (North Fork, Lochsa, and Powell Ranger Districts)

Revenues generated from land management operations

PILOT Proforma

Timberland 7,843 acres treated*	$11,360,000	
Recreation Fees	$96,763	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$11,456,763	$11,456,763

Expense for Operations North Fork Ranger District 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$675,700	
Planning	$31,000	
Timber Sales	$2,114,700	
Reforestation	$756,700	
Recreation	$595,600	
Minerals	$25,000	
Grazing	$26,100	
Heritage Resources	$25,400	
Wildlife	$258,600	
Noxious Weed Control**	$94,000	
Soil & Water	$179,000	
Road Obliteration	$589,600	
Resource Monitoring	$127,380	
Administration/Misc	$2,420,220	
TOTAL	$7,919,000	($7,919,000)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	$3,537,763

*Acres identified for treatment from the current Clearwater Forest Management Plan.

**Noxious weed control has been doubled to address this increaseing problem

The potential Pilot Proforma assumes the North Fork, Lochsa, and Powell Ranger Districts' budgets to remain about the same and realizes that the Clearwater National Forest budget has shrunk by 7% since 1997. The road obliteration for this analysis uses the average cost of road obliteration. All district personnel and activities are to remain at the existing level or increase as revenues are generated through the pilot project period.

Revenue and Expense Summaries

Existing Proforma

Nez Perce National Forest
(Red River, Moose Creek, and Clearwater Ranger Districts)

Revenues generated from land management operations on the Nez Perce National Forest

1997-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 1600 acres treated	$4,584,000	
Recreation Fees	$65,000	
Grazing fees	$5,326	
TOTAL	$4,654,326	$4,654,326

Expense for Operations1999-Elk City Selway Districts

Timberlands		
Fire	$3,028,000	
Planning	$448,800	
Timber Sales	$2,816,000	
Reforestation	$1,420,000	
Recreation	$969,280	
Minerals	$263,200	
Grazing	$272,000	
Heritage Resources	$116,800	
Wildlife	$654,507	
Noxious Weed Control	$60,000	
Soil & Water	$188,800	
Administration/Misc	$3,191,413	
TOTAL	$13,428,800	($13,428,800)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($8,774,474)

Watershed restoration on the Nez Perce National Forest consists of road obliteration, road decommissioning, reconstruction, soil stabilization, and drainage improvement projects. These costs are included under the soil and water budget. Recreation fees and mineral income are minor on these districts.

Recently Elk City and Selway districts have been administratively combined with adjacent districts and the Elk City district is now part of Red River District, and the Selway is part of the Moose Creek District.

Potential Pilot Proforma

Red River, Moose Creek, and Clearwater Ranger Districts

Revenues generated from land management operations

PILOT Proforma

Timberland 6933 acres treated*	$19,864,000	
Recreation Fees	$65,000	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	$5,326	
TOTAL	$19,934,326	$19,934,326

Expense for Operations Elk City, Selway Districts 1999

Timberlands		
Fire	$3,028,000	
Planning	$448,800	
Timber Sales	$2,816,000	
Reforestation	$1,420,000	
Recreation	$969,280	
Minerals	$263,200	
Grazing	$272,000	
Heritage Resources	$116,800	
Wildlife	$654,507	
Noxious Weed Control**	$120,000	
Soil & Water	$188,800	
Resource Monitoring	$159,570	
Administration/Misc	$3,031,843	
TOTAL	$13,488,800	($13,488,800)

Total Revenues Available less cash used for operations	$6,445,526

*The Nez Perce National Forest Management Plan identifies 4,585 acres in regeneration harvest and 5,000 acres for wildlife habitat. Presently these activities are 60% below projected.

**The Nez Perce National Forest noxious weed control budget has been increasing for the past several years to address this problem that threatens our native plants and habitats. The budget has been doubled to address this issue.

The potential Pilot Proforma assumes the three districts' budgets are to remain about the same and no personnel changes are expected. Mineral and grazing fees are minimal on these districts.

Total Existing Revenue and Expense Summaries vs. Total Potential Pilot Revenues and Expense Summaries for the Clearwater and Nez Perce Project Areas

Existing Revenues and Expense Summaries

Revenues generated from Land Management Operations		
Clearwater National Forest	$1,800,763	
Nez Perce National Forest	$4,654,326	
Total	$6,455,089	
Expense for Operations		
Clearwater National Forest	$7,872,000	
Nez perce National Forest	$13,428,800	
Total	$21,300,800	
Total revenues available less expense for operations		**($14,845,711)**

Potential Pilot Revenue and Expense Summaries

Revenues generated from Land Management Operations		
Clearwater National Forest	$11,456,763	
Nez Perce National Forest	$19,934,326	
Total	$31,391,089	
Expense for Operations		
Clearwater National Forest	$7,919,000	
Nez Perce National Forest	$13,488,800	
Total	$21,407,800	
Total Revenues Available less Cash Used for Operations		**$9,983,289**

Comparisons

The potential treatment of 7,843 acres annually is projected from the Clearwater National Forest. An additional 988,000 acres of roadless forest are not presently being considered for management. This estimate of a treating 7,843 acres annually may not be sufficient to restore and improve the large number of acres that need attention. The potential acres to be treated bring the pilot project area into a positive cash situation. The Clearwater National Forest can maintain all the existing activities presently identified in the budget and have an opportunity to increase watershed restoration, wildlife habitat, soil and water projects, reforestation, heritage resources, and recreational needs. The revenues generated can be directed to the areas that need to be restored to early seral species. Activities needed include thinning overstocked areas and habitat improvement through prescribed burning that blend into the overall landscape themes and goal for each drainage.

The three Districts on the Nez Perce National Forest identify 6,933 acres to treat annually and involves both thinnings and wildlife habitat improvement. This is a target

based on the Nez Perce Management Plan. This conservative estimate of 6,933 acres will not likely address the mortality on the forest from insect, disease, and wildfire losses on the suitable acres available for restoration activities. Presently, the Nez Perce Forest is only completing 40% of the projected thinnings and wildlife habitat projects needed to restore and improve the habitats on the forest. The pilot project has not identified management activities for the 414,000 acres of roadless at this time. The collaborative group will enter into this discussion as management needs are required.

The comparisons identify that the management activities are not being completed within the Clearwater Basin Stewardship project area and are constrained by a limited budget. The districts continually want to do more but have less funding and more constraints. This pilot project with appropriate authorization is an opportunity to change how the Forest Service does business by improving the accomplishments and providing increased income and efficiency. A comparison of how well the pilot project conducts business will be an opportunity to evaluate the accomplishments in restoring, repairing, and improving the ecological needs of the forest. The accomplishments can be compared to adjacent forests and their results. The process will involve the public and includes the cooperation of resource professionals and the community to achieve a long-term goal of maintaining and protecting the ecological integrity of the landscape in a cost-efficient manner.

Management and Monitoring Strategies

Good forest stewardship is the ability to apply appropriate practices to retain the health of the forest and is responsive to social, economic, ecologic, and cultural conditions that exist for the forest ecosystem. The focus in ecosystem restoration is to use silvicultural treatments to roughly emulate historic disturbances such as fire hazard and forest pest problems, with timber production a by-product of these activities. This management strategy combined with good forest stewardship can be conducted in a manner that protects the environment, enhances recreational opportunities, and produces commodities for the local businesses and communities.

The Clearwater Basin Stewardship Collaborative identifies 2,719,000 million acres of accessible and roadless area forest. The potential 14,776 acres to be treated is a conservative estimate and is not expected to be sufficient to take care of the mortality and forest health issues at this time. The treatment acres represent one half of one percent of the total acres in both National Forests. Under a treatment level of this size, impacts would be minimal and environmental concerns, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities can be enhanced with the increased revenues. The amount of restoration activities that can be completed at this treatment level will need to be assessed during the project. This treatment projection is based on the 1,317,000 acres identified by the Forest Service as manageable timberland outside the wilderness areas and does not include growth or mortality occurring in the roadless areas, which are estimated at an additional 1,402,000 acres within the pilot project. The estimate of the amount of harvest needed to restore and enhance the landscape is a question that needs to be identified by the collaborative group and documented in the 5-year plan. The conservative treatment

estimate allows for another comparison, which is to identify the appropriate levels of activity necessary to meet the long-term sustainability of these ecosystems.

Monitoring activities will begin with the collaborative group that will be on the ground to evaluate the benefits and improvements throughout the landscape. Accomplishments will be tracked, allowing for natural forest succession and how it differs from the management activities and the changes these activities make in the ecosystem. Questions to ask are: "Are we moving toward an ecologically sustainable condition?" and "How does this compare to neighboring forests which are under the existing management regimes?"

Economic Efficiency

The information used in the cost analysis is from the Forest Service's annual reports. Additionally, the cost of management on federal lands was also compared to the timber management costs researched and published by Professor Charles E. Keegan and Krista M. Gebert. Professor Keegan is with the Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana, Missoula, MT, and Ms.Gebert is with the US Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Missoula, MT. The study evaluated the timber management costs associated with managing National Forest lands and includes most of the National Forest located in north Idaho and northwest Montana.

The cost of implementing management has skyrocketed due to the continuous review and appeals of groups that desire to halt or inhibit all forms of restoration or management activities. Streamlining the process requires all interested communities to participate in the planning and management of these lands. By choosing not to participate, these groups lose their opportunity to appeal. This will bring the interested groups to the table and enable the collaborative effort to move forward. The collaborative group will invest a tremendous amount of time and energy into this process, and to make it work on the ground will require honest cooperation. To consistently implement ecological improvements on an annual basis requires public participation and cooperation, which can improve the forest while providing a positive outlook to local communities.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Present management activities are far below the level of implementation to address the ecological needs of the forest. Through pre-commercial and commercial thinning, use of prescribed fire, and stream and road restoration, landscape-wide improvements can be made to maintain a healthy green forest, increase wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire losses, and protect our water resources. Our National Forest needs to treat more acres and direct management towards long-term ecosystem sustainability. It is undeniable that many natural resource advocates have come to rely on the federal process to ensure judicial scrutiny over federal agency decision-making to slow or stop resource extraction. The tremendous efforts of time, funds, and resources that go into the judicial review of federal decision-making can be more beneficial to our natural resources if these

energies were re-directed in a cooperative decision-making process that would serve our environment and public assets on a national and local level.

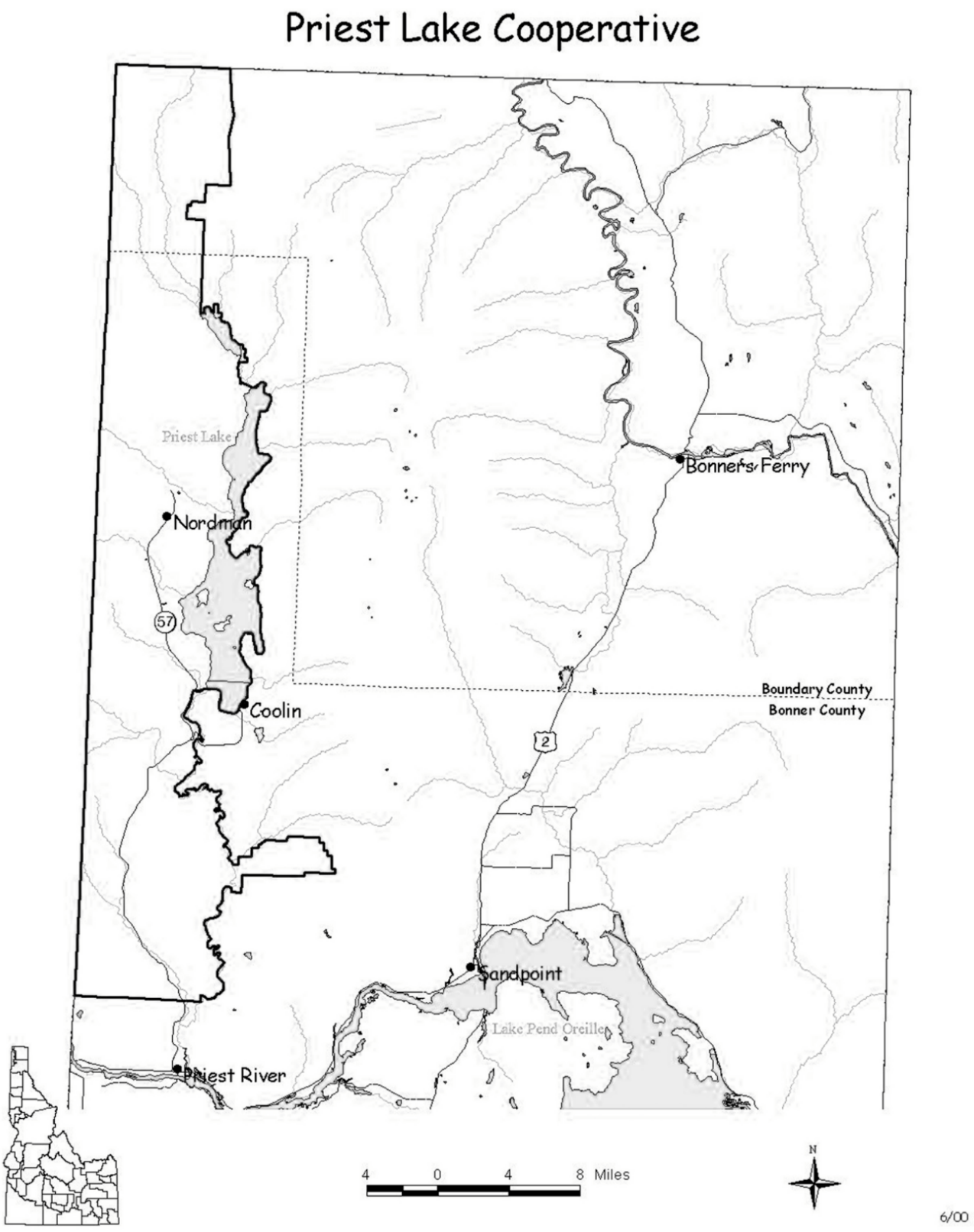
Our National Forests need attention, and the Forest Service as the stewards of the land need a new tool to do this business—a tool that is more cooperative and works on a larger scale. Looking at the entire ecosystem, how the plants, animals, and humans interact and how to provide for these needs on a sustainable basis is a goal that will require ongoing research, education, and leadership.

The public participation process should enrich, not paralyze, the implementation of environmentally sound practices. Monitoring the vegetation management, commodity outputs, and environmental consequences should direct forest planning and regulations. The plans should compare and contrast goals and outcomes of recent activities to other areas that are conducted using a different process. The collaborative process is one more tool to use to develop management activities and to evaluate the effectiveness of the project.

This project was originally submitted by the Clearwater Elk Recovery Team and Save Elk City. Additionally, this project was further developed and modified with the participation and assistance of Northwest Management, Inc. and the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group.

Priest Lake Basin Cooperative

Submitted to:
Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group


Priest Lake Cooperative
Priest Lake
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Bonner County
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Sandpoint
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The management of federal lands has raised many questions on the future of our public forest. The increasing risk from wildfire, insect infestations, and disease threatens the forest attributes of aesthetics, water quality, and recreational values; all attributes the public wants to protect. This pilot project offers an opportunity to evaluate and implement a different method of managing federal lands through a cooperative framework.

Three governmental organizations would be parties to a cooperative agreement for management of the Priest Lake area—the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Department of Lands, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. The three agencies would share the responsibility of managing the natural resources of the Priest Lake Basin under appropriate management objectives for recreation, wildlife, and timber harvest and other uses.

Each agency would manage the lands and resources under its respective jurisdiction. Each agency would utilize its own money, staff, facilities, and equipment to do the management tasks on agency lands. Each agency would retain title and management authority over the lands historically managed by the agency. Each agency would follow the laws of its respective sovereign as established or amended by appropriate legislative and executive actions.

Each agency would continue to operate under the traditional institutional framework, i.e., the forest service district would operate under a District Ranger that reports to a Forest Supervisor; the department of lands supervisory area would operate under an Area Supervisor that reports to the Director of the department, and the state park facilities would continue to operate under a Parks Superintendent that reports to the Director of the parks department.

Each agency would operate under its own Board of Trustees or Directors – either already established like the State Board of Land Commissioners for the land department and the State Board of Parks and Recreation for the parks department, or a specially created Board of Directorsin the case of the Forest Service -- to facilitate working within the cooperative.

The day-to-day management of the cooperative would lie with the respective land owning agencies. The heart of the cooperative, however, would be the “Local Agency Managers” consisting of at least one representative from each of the three agencies. The Local Agency Managers would be responsible for identifying tasks and actions that might be undertaken jointly or perhaps by one of the three agencies with experience or qualifications that would streamline, simplify, or speed up the action or process. For example, the agencies might work together on prescribed burning to accomplish more burning within tight windows at less cost. Another example might be that state parks would lead the management of public recreational programs in the area because of their experience.

The cooperative would establish a “Public Advisory Committee” to provide advice to the Local Agency Managers and the respective boards of trustees.

Management of the endowment lands as part of this cooperative may pose Constitutional, Admission Act and Trust management concerns from the standpoint of maintaining fiscal

integrity of the funds expended and revenues earned. Operational funds come from specified dedicated fund sources and all revenues earned go to similarly specified dedicated fund accounts for subsequent management activities and the beneficiaries.

The management of endowment lands is the province of the State Board of Land Commissioners, and they may not delegate that oversight to any other party, nor may any of the revenues earned be distributed to any entity other than the specified beneficiary. This project will have to be carefully structured to retain Idaho's constitutional requirements for endowment trust lands.

Priest Lake Basin Cooperative

Area: 265,000 acres; Priest Lake District, Idaho Panhandle National Forest. Of the 265,000 acres in the Priest Lake Ranger District, approximately half the area provides habitat for a threatened population of grizzly bears. This proposal does not include active forest ecosystem management in this portion of the cooperative except to benefit grizzly bears.

Goal: Coordinate management efforts of state and federal agencies to restore and enhance socially determined ecological conditions and improve economic efficiency of resource management for recreation, wildlife, and timber.

Cooperative approaches are not new to natural resource management. In Idaho, there are formal cooperative arrangements that describe areas and responsibilities for fire control between the state and federal agencies. The complexities of implementing the federal Clean Water Act as it applies to forest management are included in a memorandum of understanding among six separate federal and state agencies. The City of Rocks National Reserve is a tract of BLM, Forest Service, and state lands that are actually all part of the National Park Service. The City of Rocks National Reserve is managed cooperatively under a contractual agreement between the State of Idaho and the National Park Service, with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation having the on-the-ground management responsibility.

This proposal identifies the Priest Lake Ranger District as a parcel of federal land that can be managed by using the cooperative method. Some of the benefits that the Cooperative will provide include:

- Meaningful public involvement for those with an interest in the management of the Priest Lake Basin through a standing "public advisory committee" that will provide equitable representation of all interests,

- A much greater ability to focus on the wildlife and recreational resources of the lands located on both sides of the lake. Managers working cooperatively will be better able to take actions to protect and/or restore forest ecosystems and sensitive species issues,

- Additional revenues can be generated to maintain or add to the infrastructure of campgrounds, interpretative sites, trails, snowmobile areas, and other attractions that

are vital to the local businesses of the basin,

- ✍ The ability of the professionals of the land and recreational management agencies to focus on and specialize in the job responsibilities where their skills and expertise contributes to create a "synergistic" effect through their cooperative efforts. For purposes of this discussion, the management of cottage sites on both sides of the lake would be under the management of Department of Lands staff, and, finally,

- ✍ The potential for the public to help shape the processes outlined in this proposal for the management of the basin so that the role of the public as a member and a beneficiary of the cooperative is maximized.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Priest Lake Basin pilot area encompasses the Priest Lake Ranger District in Idaho, which is approximately 265,000 acres located on the west side of Priest Lake. The area is a popular recreation destination for the Spokane, Washington, and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, residents. The east side of the lake is primarily owned by the State of Idaho and has the same resource values as the national forest lands across the lake. However, the management objectives differ, since the Idaho Constitution clearly mandates that these lands be managed for financial returns. The adjoining national forest lands are generally managed for multiple uses. The Forest Service ownership on the west side of the lake, which lies below the Grizzly Bear Recovery area, encompasses approximately 138,000 acres. Active management during the past 15 years has made much of this area roaded and accessible. The area is also experiencing increased recreational use from the nearby population centers. Since the area is also home to the grizzly bear, lynx, woodland caribou, and bull trout, the management combination of both the recreation users and the threatened or endangered species provides an excellent location to demonstrate a cooperative project.

Of all the wildlife species in the area, the grizzly bears have commanded the greatest attention. This species, listed as "threatened" in 1975, occupies many of the lands in the Priest Lake basin. While grizzly bears have persisted in the area, despite a long history of timber harvest and other disturbances, concern over the species has led to road closures and modifications to timber sales and other projects to better accommodate the needs of the bears and to reduce interactions with humans. The protection of these threatened or endangered species habitat is part of the complex ecosystem plan that involves the integration of restoration, water quality, and long-term sustainability of the area.

MAGNITUDE OF THE PROPOSAL

The Priest Lake Basin proposal involves managing the State of Idaho endowment lands on the east side of the lake, Forest Service national forest land ownership on the west side of the lake, and State of Idaho state park lands on Priest Lake and Priest River in a cooperative manner. The pilot project proposal is to be managed as a Cooperative for a 10- to 15-year period.

The State Board of Land Commissioners would serve as the board of tustees for the state endowment lands in this pilot project. The State Board of Parks and Recreation would serve as the board of trustees for the state park lands in this pilot project. The forest service would create a 5-7 person Board of Directors for the federal lands in the pilot project. The management agencies would include the Forest Service, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Each agency would provide at least one staff person to support the Local Agency Managers to carry out the cooperative aspect of the management direction.

A Public Advisory Committee as the public voice identified in the "New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Lands," July 1998, will be comprised of representatives with demonstrated interest in the management of the Priest Lake Basin.

The membership of the Public Advisory Committee will include equitable representation from county commissioners, the environmental community, wildlife interest groups, forest industry, recreational interest groups, and local business interests. The Public Advisory Committee may assist in public involvement, preparation of the five-year and one-year plans, and may act as facilitator in resolving differing views on management plans and activities.

The three potential official parties to the cooperative agreement for Priest Lake—the Forest Service, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation—will include the public as a fourth party to the cooperative agreement through the Public Advisory Committee. Periodically, representatives of the three oversight boards may meet to facilitate cooperative activities.

Each of the agencies would rely upon their existing staffs for timber, engineering, recreation, fish and wildlife, and planning expertise. The Department of Lands staff would operate on federal money or appropriated state general fund monies whenever staff was involved in activities that were not associated with endowment land management.

The three Boards of Trustees and Directors would work with the Public Advisory Committee and the Local Agency Managers to resolve issues and determine cooperative objectives, tasks, and actions. Receipts from treated areas, sale of timber, recreation fees, and other sources would support operations only on the lands which generated the revenue. Each agency would advance funds, as appropriate, for projects jointly agreed upon by the trustees and the Local Agency Managers.

The public, including residents of the area and recreational visitors, will receive benefits from cooperative management.

The public will find ease of use with a uniform set of fees and rules for all the recreational uses of the area. With the agencies working together, the recreational infrastructure of roads, trails, campsites, and other capital facilities should improve. The Local Agency Managers, together with public input from the Public Advisory Committee, can prioritize the needs and budgets in the project area.

The combination of the three organizations allows the experience and expertise of each entity to share data and management styles to implement the goals identified by the group as a whole.

COMMUNITY

The larger communities of Priest River and Sandpoint, as well as a half dozen smaller communities, are dependent on the timber activities in the area. Employment generated from timber activities, restoration, reforestation, and recreation are the main sources of revenues for the families and businesses of the area. The health of the forest is important to the recreational users and the local community, since most opportunities to work and play are found around and adjacent to Priest Lake. Recreation activities include boating, fishing, hunting, and camping, with many users coming from the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene areas.

ECONOMY

The residents of Spokane, Washington, and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, influence the economy around the Priest Lake Basin. Together, these communities have over 500,000 residents in the surrounding counties. Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry also are within reasonable distance of the Priest Lake Basin. These communities were established as timber communities and have a long history of living with the land. The National Forest makes a significant contribution to the economy of local communities through the income produced by direct and indirect employment.

While timber revenues have provided the majority of income from the area in the past, recreation cannot be overlooked. There are currently 261 developed campsites within the basin, including those at Indian Creek and Lionhead State Parks and those operated by the Forest Service. Sources of revenues include cabin site leases on federal lands, boating and snowmobile permits, timber harvesting, and recreation revenues. Cabin site leases on state land would not be considered as part of the recreational programs in the Cooperative.

ENVIRONMENT

The Priest Lake Basin has identified three main environmental areas that need attention:

- ? Management of key indicator species—the basin is home for the grizzly bear, lynx, woodland caribou, and bull trout.
- ? Restoration of historically abundant tree species—vegetative management activities are needed to restore tree species that were historically more abundant and direct management toward the larger basin-wide ecosystem.
- ? Improvement of fish habitat—water quality standards must be met and watershed restoration completed to improve fish habitat.

The Endangered Species Act may require modifications to the existing practices on both federal and state lands. The decision of the amount of room each species needs and the cost human society should bear to protect these species from extinction is difficult. The Idaho

Panhandle National Forest Plan identifies indicator species to help assess the impact of land management decisions on the wildlife resource. The ten indicator species are: bald eagle, grizzly bear, woodland caribou, gray wolf, elk, moose, white-tailed deer, goshawk, pine marten, pileated woodpecker, and the peregrine falcon. As an example, the grizzly bear is a species that will require monitoring and continual assessments to evaluate how the vegetation responds to different management practices. Vegetative responses will affect specific species differently and through continual monitoring can be managed to meet individual species needs.

Restoration of specific species of trees is important since many are not represented well in the ecosystem. White pine, whitebark pine, ponderosa pine, and larch have been greatly reduced. The loss of white pine and whitebark pine to blister rust has these populations at low levels. Wildfire suppression has also altered the vegetative composition and patterns across the forest, reducing the amount of some species and increasing others. Many areas are overstocked with Douglas-fir, grand fir, and hemlock that are very susceptible to insect and disease. As insect and disease or fire kills the trees, they fall over and create a tremendous fire hazard. This in turn increases the risk of a high intensity catastrophic fire that damages the soil, silts streams, and retards regeneration.

In some watersheds, sediment continues to be produced in some highly roaded areas, which affects water quality and fish habitat. Road decommissioning and obliteration is being conducted to reduce sediment and improve fish populations and habitat. Treatments directed in these areas to improve the habitat for key species and to enhance forest health will move management toward a larger ecosystem based approach. The management plans are to include vegetation management, and monitoring will begin to provide a basis for management prescriptions and the effects of management decisions on the habitat and the species involved.

PILOT PROJECT DETAILS

The Forest Service portion of the Priest Lake Basin is approximately 265,000 acres. The pilot project recommends management on the 138,000 acres which lie south of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone. This allows greater flexibility to meet endangered species needs for the grizzly bear, lynx, woodland caribou, and bull trout, since these areas will not be scheduled for treatment unless activities will enhance and improve wildlife habitat.

The management of the Priest Lake Basin as a cooperative between the Idaho Department of Lands, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Forest Service provides the expertise and personnel to successfully implement cooperative projects. The specific requirements and activities necessary to provide good stewardship and services to the public at large can be directed to the organization best equipped to conduct the practices. The structure described has been documented in the “New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Land,” July 1998, and is discussed in this proposal.

The environmental analysis/documentation, appeals and litigation involving Forest Service lands can be conducted with Forest Service personnel. The Forest Service should use all pertinent data from universities, industry, and state research units, as well as their own, to develop the environmental analysis and the five-year and one-year plans.

The Idaho Department of Lands shall manage the endowment lands in accordance with the constitutional charge and direction from the Land Board. Additionally, the department, through general-funded, in-house personnel or contracting, could provide support in treating the areas on federal lands. The recreational activities should be directed to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to streamline and standardize the services to the recreational users in the area.

When creating the pilot project time period, the environmental analysis and the five-year management planning process that may require two or three years must be taken into consideration. To allow sufficient activities to occur for monitoring and evaluation, the pilot project recommended time period is 15 years.

There are economies of scale in cooperative management of state and federal lands surrounding Priest Lake. Forests with a larger contiguous base have lower management cost than forests with smaller holdings. The fixed cost can be spread out over a larger area, taking advantage of the economies of scale. To keep unit costs under control, combining management units is advantageous. Cooperatively managing areas will provide the opportunity for monitoring and evaluation of the entire basin. The cooperative can reduce cost, address wildlife habitat, and provide good forest stewardship practices with a multi-agency approach.

The cooperative method would provide the opportunity for each agency to focus their expertise on the management and responsibilities that best fit their organization. An example might be to have the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation manage the State Parks and camping areas on both sides of the lake, standardizing fees and services for all users.

The cooperative method would provide budgetary benefits to each of the agencies. Presently, revenues from federal timber sales are returned to the federal treasury, less the portion that is kept by the Forest Service for brush disposal, reforestation, and the 25 percent of the gross revenue from the sales returned to the local counties. These revenues can be used for operations and habitat improvements.

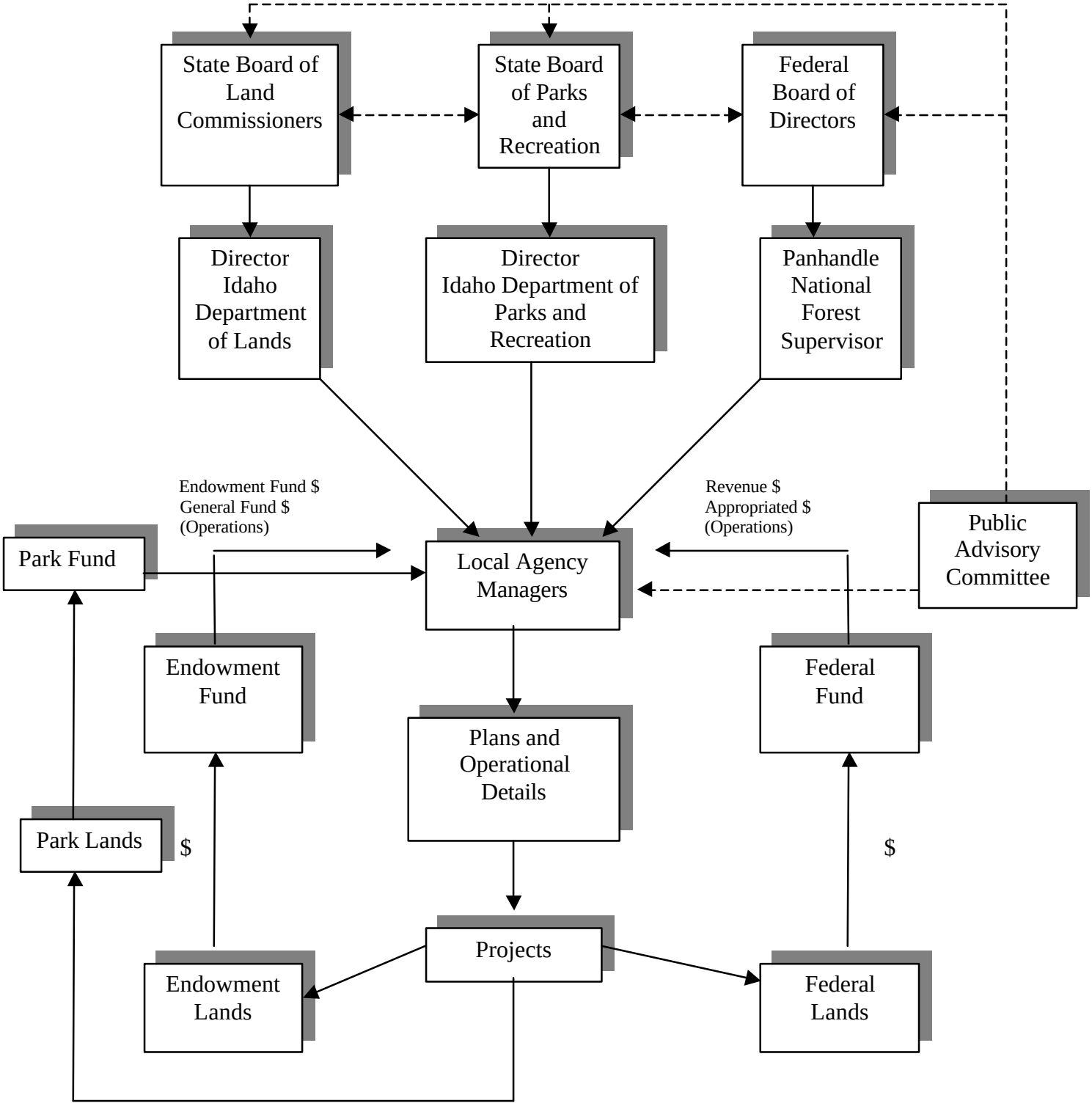
Congress funds other functions of the Forest Service through annual appropriations, however with declining timber sale activity and generally reduced appropriations, the Forest Service is experiencing major budget problems. These reductions are manifested in reduced maintenance of campgrounds and recreational facilities, less road maintenance and wildlife habitat programs, and other limitations that are costly to users of the forest. Stabilizing budgets and increasing revenues will support not only local communities but also allow for more watershed restoration and ecosystem management that works toward long-term forest sustainability.

COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Properly constructed, the pilot project will provide an opportunity for a parcel of mixed federal-state ownership to be managed in a cooperative manner. Development of the cooperative pilot project will require legislation both on the part of Congress and the Idaho Legislature. Such

action would designate the pilot project area, the purpose, and the method of achieving the goals. This action would be followed by development and execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the state and the federal government clearly describing the obligations of each party in the operation of the project. This action would be undertaken under the joint powers' authority of the state and federal government.

Priest Lake Basin Cooperative

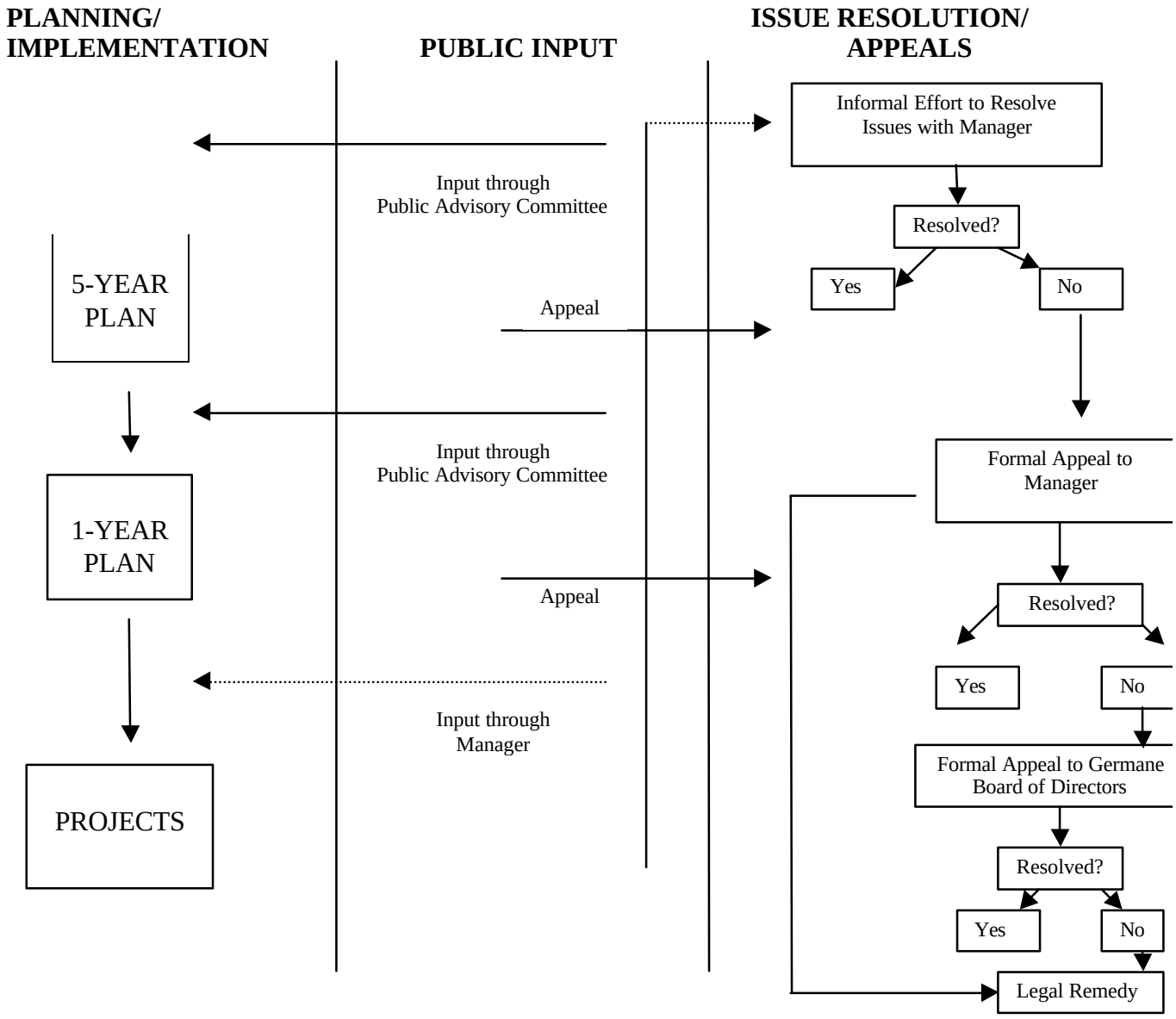


The proposed management system of the Priest Lake Basin Cooperative is diagrammed in the previous chart.

Upon execution of the Memorandum of Understanding between the federal and state governments, the management of the pilot project will be the responsibility of the respective state and federal managers. Neither relinquishes control over land under their individual authority, but the management is done on a cooperative basis guided by the memorandum and mutually developed plans to implement the intent of the agreement.

As with the other alternatives, the Priest Lake Basin Cooperative operations will be directed by five- and one-year plans. A Public Advisory Committee would provide public input during the planning process. The appropriate Board of Trustees or Directors would adjudicate administrative appeals. Formal administrative appeals would be allowed during the five- and one-year planning processes but would not be allowed on individual projects.

Cooperative Planning and Public Input Process



FISCAL PROCESSES

The fiscal support for the Priest Lake Basin Cooperative would come from both the federal treasury and the general fund of the State of Idaho. The extent of funding from each source would be clearly defined in the Memorandum of Understanding supporting the pilot project.

Since the objective of the Priest Lake Basin Cooperative will be set in the future by the Cooperative Boards of Directors, funding from both the state and federal government is expected to continue throughout the pilot project period. Non-endowment land revenue produced from the

pilot project activities will offset the operational costs of the project as well as public goods expenses. We also recommend funding a contingency account to provide for unexpected future events and downturns in revenue and funding.

Any revenue remaining after operations, funds for counties, and contingency funds would be distributed to the state and federal agencies on a proportional basis for disposal according to their respective guidelines.

The cooperative pilot project will require more complex accounting than the other alternatives due to the need to maintain separate accounts for state and federal funding support and revenues.

The Priest Lake Basin cooperative will use the same planning process as used in the trust and collaborative alternatives, retaining the same opportunities for public involvement and administrative appeals. The Public Advisory Committee will ensure the interests of the local citizens are fully considered in the decision-making process. The committee will encourage close communication and cooperation between federal and state land management agencies. Since successful models of state and federal cooperative agreements are already in operation, this type of pilot project should be readily implemented on the ground.

The Memorandum of Understanding would establish the cooperative duties of each agency/department and would delineate the funding and distribution of revenues. The memorandum, supported by state and federal legislation, would provide formalized plans and stabilized budgets. Managers and local communities would benefit from clear objectives to guide decision-making. Fish and wildlife habitat and water quality would be maintained and enhanced through affirmative decisions, on-the-ground accomplishments, and a stable flow of funds to improve ecosystems and protect resources.

REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES

Existing Proforma Panhandle National Forest, Priest Lake Ranger District

Revenues generated from land management operations
1996-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 707 treated acres	$846,800	
Recreation Fees	$250,000	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	5,100	
TOTAL	$1,101,900	$1,101,900

Expense for Operations 1999 Priest Lake Ranger District

Timberlands		
Fire	$408,911	
Planning	$7,300	
Timber Sales	$35,531	
Reforestation	$626,540	
Recreation	$232,237	
Minerals	$19,446	
Grazing	$7,132	
Heritage Resources	---	
Wildlife	$11,358	
*Noxious Weed Control	$11,000	
Roads and Maintenance	$139,667	
Soil & Water	$92,244	
Administration/Misc	$991,009	
TOTAL	$2,582,375	($2,582,375)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($1,480,475)

Watershed restoration on the Panhandle National Forest consists of road obliteration, road decommissioning, reconstruction, soil stabilization, and drainage-improvement projects. These costs are included under the soil and water budget. Recreation fees and income are generated through special use fees, cabin, and campground use. *Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) 1998 summary of noxious weeds identified 248,800 acres. This makes the IPNF one of the top three National Forests in the region requiring large-scale weed control efforts.

Potential Pilot Proforma

Priest Lake Ranger District

Revenues generated from land management operations

PILOT Proforma		
Timberland 2073 treatment acres*	$2,482,000	
Recreation Fees	$250,000	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees 82,000 AUM Total	$5,100	
TOTAL	$2,737,100	$2,737,100

Expense for Operations1999 Priest Lake Ranger District		
Timberlands		
Fire	$408,911	
Planning	$7,300	
Timber Sales	$35,531	
Reforestation	$626,540	
Recreation	$232,237	
Minerals	$19,446	
Grazing	$7,132	
Heritage Resources	---	
Wildlife	$11,358	
Noxious Weed Control**	$22,000	
Roads and Maintenance	$139,667	
Soil & Water	$92,244	
Resource Monitoring	$50,100	
Administration/Misc	$951,909	
TOTAL	$2,604,375	($2,604,375)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	$132,725

*Potential treatment acres from the Priest Lake District are similar to state lands and are projected by the Forest Service.

**Noxious weeds control efforts are doubled in the Potential Proforma to address this increasing problem that threatens native plants and habitats.

COMPARISON OF MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ECONOMIC EFFICIENCIES

The strategy of coordinating the Idaho Department of Lands and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation together with the Forest Service may allow for some consolidation and streamlining. Combining and directing management activities to the personnel and departments that can best handle the specific needs will increase resource input and reduce the cost of management. The social and ecological improvements are discussed in the Management Strategies and the economic considerations are identified in Economic Efficiencies.

Management Strategies

Good forest management or forest stewardship is the ability to apply appropriate practices that retain the health of the forest. Stewardship is responsive to social, economic, ecologic, and cultural conditions that exist for the forest ecosystem.

In response to declining forest health, there has been a move toward large-scale ecological restoration and management. The focus in ecosystem restoration is to use silvicultural treatments to roughly emulate historic disturbances such as fire and forest insect infestations.

This management strategy, combined with good forest stewardship, can be conducted in a manner that protects the environment, enhances visual qualities for recreational users, and produces commodities for the local businesses and communities.

The Priest Lake Ranger District on the west side of Priest Lake encompasses approximately 265,000 acres. The potential treatment acres of 2073 is a conservative amount, which will be monitored and evaluated to determine if this level of activity meets the restoration needs in the project area. If restoration needs indicate increased activities are necessary, the Directors will direct the cooperative to move quickly to achieve the desired future condition.

Economic Efficiencies

The Priest Lake Ranger District recently planned in 1998-2002 to treat 2100 acres. In the past management activities from the Priest Lake District treated approximately 2000 acres annually. In recent years, administrative decisions and legal challenges have reduced the number of acres treated to approximately 700 acres (1992-1999). The Forest Service has identified that 2100 acres can be treated annually. This management level can address the environmental issues and protect the scenic beauty of the lake region. These recommendations are reasonable when the landscape size, tree growth, and location of the pilot project are taken into consideration.

The existing Revenue and Expense Summary identifies $1,101,900 in revenues generated on the pilot area, with an annual budget expenditure of $2,582,375. This is a cost of $1,480,475 over revenues. The potential proforma identifies that the pilot project will treat 2073 acres, which is the projected goal. The Forest Service has not been able to meet this target due to dwindling budgets and continual appeals and objections by interest groups. The potential proforma, if implemented as outlined by the Forest Service, would generate $2,737,100 in revenues, producing a positive income of $132,725 over and above the cost of management.

This revenue can be used for operations or ecological needs throughout the pilot area. If the Directors see restoration needs increasing beyond the level of past activities, more acres can be treated to improve the forest health by moving toward the desired future condition and providing a healthier ecosystem.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Present management activities are far below the level of implementation to address the ecological needs of the forest. Through pre-commercial and commercial thinning, use of prescribed fire, and stream and road restoration, landscape wide improvements can be made to maintain a healthy green forest, increase wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire losses and protect our water resources.

Our National Forest needs to treat more acres and direct management towards long-term ecosystem sustainability. It is undeniable that many natural resource advocates have come to rely on the federal process to ensure judicial scrutiny over federal agency decision-making to slow or stop resource extraction. The tremendous efforts of time, funds, and resources that go into the judicial review of federal decision-making can be more beneficial to our natural resources if these energies were re-directed in a cooperative decision making process that would serve our environment and public assets on a national and local level.

The Priest Lake Basin Cooperative will ensure the opportunities for public involvement in the decision-making process. The Public Advisory Committee will encourage close communications and cooperation between the federal and state land management agencies. The Memorandum of Understanding would establish the cooperative duties of each agency and would delineate the funding and distribution of revenues. The Memorandum would also provide for formalized plans and stabilize budgets. Managers and local communities would benefit from clear objectives that guide the decisions.

The cooperation of several agencies allows for new ideas and fosters the change necessary to meet the challenges of managing our public resources. The Priest Lake Basin area is the home of several threatened or endangered species and has experienced a large increase in recreational use and interest from several larger communities in the area. The cooperative can demonstrate, and evaluate through monitoring, the effectiveness of managing under this method. Through effective monitoring, the pilot project accomplishments can be compared to adjacent areas. The ecological conditions can be assessed and evaluated as to how the practices contribute to long-term sustainability of the Priest Lake Basin ecosystem.

This project was originally submitted by Riley Creek Lumber, Crown Pacific Corporation-LLP, Louisiana Pacific Corporation and Idaho Forest Industries. Additionally, this project was further developed and modified with the participation and assistance of Northwest Management, Inc. and the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group.

The St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project

Submitted to:
Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group

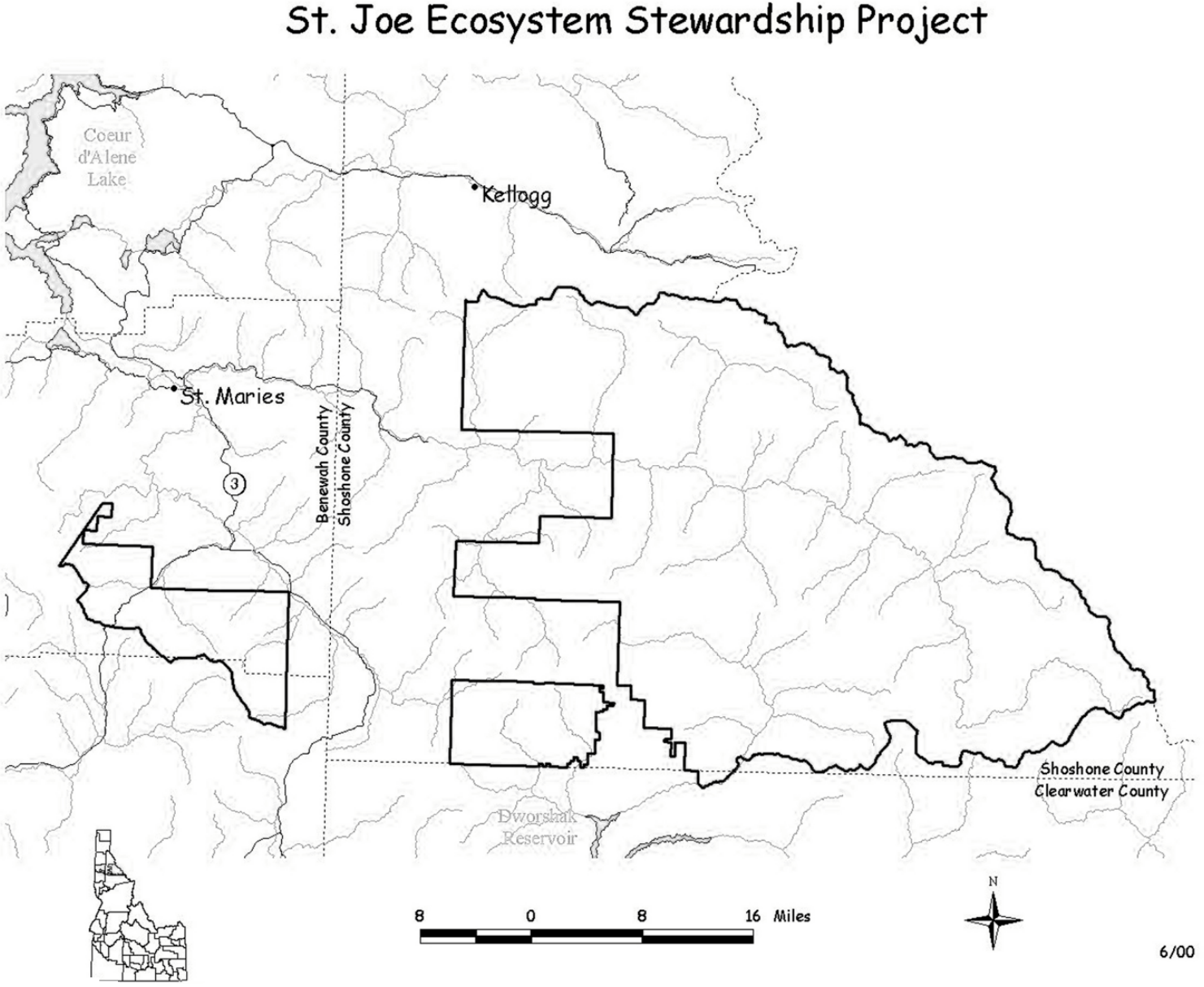

St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project
Coeur d'Alene Lake
Kellogg
St. Maries
3
Benewah County
Shoshone County
Shoshone County
Clearwater County
Dworshak Reservoir
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project will use Land Stewardship contracts (Public Law 105-277) for all resource management activities. Historically dominate species such as white pine, larch, and ponderosa pine would be restored. Forage for elk and other big game species would be increased. Contracts would generate revenue through activities such as thinning overcrowded forest stands. Some revenues would support local governments, and some revenues would be made available to fund activities that do not generate revenue, such as watershed improvements. A local monitoring group and an "Investment Project Advisory Committee" would oversee all resource management activities.

St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project

Area: 726,000 acres; St. Joe District, Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Goal: Restore and enhance socially determined ecological conditions by conducting all resource management activities through stewardship contracts consistent with the "Stewardship" law passed by Congress in 1998. Since 1992 Interior appropriations have continued authorization for contracts that will use all or part of the revenues received for timber removed as an offset against the cost of Stewardship services(i.e. goods for services). Identified services include site preparation, replanting, recreation, wildlife habitat enhancement, and other multiple use improvement.

All the models of new approaches for the management of federal lands developed by the Federal Lands Task Force have common elements in each of the proposed pilot projects. First, each creates a group to oversee the management of the federal lands; this can take the form of a board of trustees, a collaborative group, or a Citizen Advisory Committee. Second, all receipts from the activities of the operation of the trust, collaborative or cooperative, fund the project's operations with none of the revenues being returned to the federal treasury. Third, each model requires Congress to enact changes in the law that enable each of the pilot projects to be implemented.

This proposal is different because it is based upon laws that Congress has already passed. This project is similar to the other proposals presented by the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group in that a local group oversees management, monies fund the project's operations, and all the proceeds from the project stay in the local communities.

The basis for the "St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project" is the "Stewardship" law enacted by Congress in 1998. These statutes and the concepts embodied in them meet many of the objectives and recommendations of the Federal Lands Task Force. Although these new laws did not exist when the Task Force was completing its work, the laws offer the possibility of implementing some of the Task Force's recommendations without overhauling the existing statutes and policies. The St. Joe Valley Association offers this proposal as a way to capture that opportunity presented by Congress and provide a demonstration of good stewardship on the land.

The objective of the proposal is to conduct all resource management on the St. Joe District through Stewardship contracts. The area would be managed based upon a plan designed to meet the landscape needs within the project area. Ecological management strategies would be implemented on a basin-wide approach. Ecological considerations include:

- ? Restoring habitat for bull trout through watershed restoration so species can fully utilize the aquatic habitat in the forest.
- ? Managing vegetation and direct silvicultural activities to restore ponderosa pine, western white pine, western larch, and minimize the risk of unnaturally severe fires due to overstocked and crowded stands.
- ? Evaluating and creating habitat for threatened or endangered species through implementation of ecologically sound methods, instituting careful logging practices that would minimize impacts on the land, and providing an economical means of thinning the overstocked stands which contribute to the high wildfire risk.
- ? Using prescribed fire to reduce fuel loads and improve wildlife habitat through vegetative management.
- ? Managing for species, age classes, and appropriate habitats through harvesting methods that encourage long-term sustainability of soil, land, and water resources.

Contracts that generate revenue from management practices provide those revenues to support local governments and are available for other projects, such as watershed improvements. A monitoring committee of local citizens and a forest level "Project Advisory Committee" will oversee the pilot project to ensure the ecological objectives are being met both in the planning stages and on the ground.

The St. Joe—Current Ecosystem Conditions

The St. Joe District of the Panhandle National Forest was an early participant in ecosystem planning. In 1997, largely before other forests began to think in terms of an ecosystem-based revision of their forest plans, the St. Joe developed "An Interim Ecosystem Management Framework" to bridge the gap between the current forest plan and the new findings coming from the Interior Columbia Ecosystem Management Project. This effort evolved into the "geographical assessment" for the St. Joe area, published in 1997. This information will be used to guide the management in the project area.

Like most subsequent ecosystem assessments, the St. Joe version identified the current ecological condition and identified the desired future condition. As is true for many forests in the Inland Northwest, current conditions in the St. Joe District reflect a past that is influenced by a combination of natural and human factors. The condition of the ecosystem can be addressed in two broad areas: aquatic and terrestrial. The aquatic and terrestrial aspects are well documented in the report "Interim Ecosystem Management Framework" and the subsequent work "Toward a Forest Ecosystem Approach: An Assessment for the St. Joe Area." These papers prepared by the staff of the Panhandle National Forest in 1997 provide new direction and a framework to blend the present plan with the most recent scientific information on ecosystem processes within the project area. The findings of both will not be repeated for this proposal, but a summary of the major conditions will be incorporated.

General

The St. Joe area encompasses 726,000 acres, which is in national forest ownership. Approximately 25% of the total land area is currently in roadless designation (1997), with roadless lands comprising 48% of the national forest ownerships, or 348,000 acres. Two major river are in the St. Joe sub-basin: the St. Joe River and its major tributary, the St. Maries River. The southern portion of the area includes the headwater streams of the Little North Fork of the Clearwater River, which drains to the south into Dworshak Reservoir.

Several natural factors combine to make the St. Joe area highly productive and rich in biological diversity. Moist, warm marine airflow meets the drier air masses of the northern Rocky Mountains. The high amounts of precipitation coupled with fertile volcanic ash cap soils produce a diverse array of plants and animals. In fact, the St. Joe area has some of the most productive and biologically diverse lands in the entire interior Columbia River Basin.

Of the ten small towns within the St. Joe sub-basin, all but three are traditionally dependent upon the forest industry to support their economies. The communities have maintained their economic and social stability during the past fifty years primarily from federal timber, with some state and private timber adding to the stability of the St. Joe sub-basin. While the area includes portions of three counties, it tends to function as a single economic and social entity. St. Maries is the commercial and social center for the St. Joe sub-basin. The population of St. Maries is approximately 2,700, and the entire population of the St. Joe sub-basin likely doesn't exceed 5,000. Despite the low number of permanent residents in the project area, it is important to note that well over 500,000 people live within seventy-five miles of the St. Joe sub-basin in the communities of Spokane, Washington, and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. These communities and the surrounding counties are some of the fastest growing areas in the country. These residences place an unexpected increase on the recreational facilities and resources on the St. Joe Basin.

Aquatic Habitats

The aquatic ecosystem of the St. Joe area is characterized as "breaklands" with steep slopes that drop off of gentle ridge tops to the many streams that bisect the area. These lands are susceptible to mass erosion (landslides) as well as sedimentation from normal runoff. Combined with this naturally erosive state are the historic large fires in the area and past land uses, including road construction, that need to be addressed. When fires remove vegetation or when roads are poorly located and constructed, the high rainfalls, especially rain on snow events, and geologic conditions take their toll. Landslides and erosion problems are common in the St. Joe sub-basin if management activities not carefully planned and implemented.

In the past, human activity and natural events have impacted the rich native fisheries of the St. Joe area. Consider the comment included in "Timber Down the Mountain" (Blake, 1971) regarding fishing in Marble Creek, "…I have never seen trout fishing, from Canada to California, half as good as the fishing in Marble Creek before the log drives." While the upper reaches of the St. Joe River and its tributaries may still offer the kind of fishing that Blake remembered, the log drives, mining, grazing, large road systems, and introduction of non-native fish species all have had impacts in the more developed watersheds. Today fish populations persist, and while Blake might not find "great" fishing in the St. Joe area, good

fishing can be found in the St. Joe River and its tributaries. The area is utilized by thousands of fisherman annually.

Terrestrial Habitats

Past human actions have impacted terrestrial and aquatic habitats. Prior to European settlement, the lands within the area were characterized by large stands of fire tolerant trees. These trees, while old, still represented early successional stages of forest development. Tree species common in these "old" seral forests were western white pine and western larch in the wetter habitat types and ponderosa pine on the drier sites. These trees commonly lived for 200-400 years, even though fires commonly burned through the area on a much shorter cycle. A stand replacing fire would occur on average every nineteen years in some portion of the St. Joe sub-basin. This frequent fire cycle favored the development of large, fire tolerant, early successional tree species and discouraged thin barked, shade tolerant, late successional tree species.

Two human actions greatly altered the vegetative pattern of this area. The first action was the exposure of white pine to blister rust, an exotic disease that has decimated western white pine in the sub-basin. Much the same as chestnut blight forever altered the composition of eastern hardwood forests, blister rust has drastically reduced the frequency of occurrence of western white pine in the northern Idaho forests. Although genetic research has produced white pine progeny that is generally rust resistant, treatment of mature stands has not been successful. As a consequence, most stands of this highly valuable specie are salvaged as the white pine dies. This situation has caused a major historical component of the St. Joe's terrestrial habitat to largely disappear from the landscape.

The second major human impact on the terrestrial habitat was the advent of fire control. While blister rust was a biological phenomenon brought in by settlers, fire control was born of the political and social concerns. These concerns were surely heightened by the 1910 fire that burned about half the St. Joe sub-basin, as well as much of north Idaho and northwest Montana. Given the growing population of the area and the resource values within it, efforts to prevent and suppress all fires in the forests were inevitable. Fire suppression efforts were extremely successful in reducing both the damage and the overall numbers of wildfires each year.

Fire control and the introduction of blister rust increased late successional species in the forests of the St. Joe sub-basin. Species that could occupy the western white pine sites and were intolerant of fire replaced the large western white pine, ponderosa pine, and western larch stands across the landscape. This resulted in an increase in grand fir, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and both western and mountain hemlock. Often very dense, young stands of these late successional species developed. Historically, the long-lived early seral species occupied approximately 45% of the St. Joe sub-basin. Now these same species and forest types occupy only 10 percent of the area.

These changes in forest composition have produced less diversity in the forest landscape. The stands are at risk from intensive wildfire and have a high potential for outbreaks of insects and disease problems. For example, grand fir and hemlock are drought intolerant, while Douglas-fir and grand fir are both susceptible to root rot. During droughts, these species become stressed and are more susceptible to insects or disease problems,

resulting in a high rate of mortality contributing tremendous fuels for wildfires. Also, the exclusion of fire has lead to the lodgepole pine stands living beyond their normal life span creating high fuel loads. These factors have led to an increase risk of wildfire to the St. Joe sub-basin. Catastrophic fires can have a devastating effect on the watersheds, fish, wildlife, and recreational values of the area.

Ecosystem Needs and Treatments

The discussion of the condition of the St. Joe might appear to place the blame for many of the current conditions on past human actions. The settlement of the area and the social and economic activities have affected the ecosystem. The St. Joe Valley Association recognizes, however, that these activities were methods of the time. Rather than to assess blame or assume that human actions must stop in order to make up for past practices, this proposal is based on the St. Joe Valley's belief that (1) humans are part of the St. Joe ecosystem, and (2) their future actions can create conditions that will lead to a more sustainable ecosystem.

Among the findings of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan (ICBEMP) were the groupings of all 164 sub-basins into six "clusters." Each cluster has similar management histories and conditions, along with similar needs and opportunities. The St. Joe area is classified as "forest cluster 4," characterized as a moist forest type that is highly roaded and with low terrestrial and aquatic integrity. This cluster has risks to its ecological integrity, including the potential for fire, the ability to maintain older forest structures in managed areas, and susceptibility to insects and disease.

ICBEMP also identified opportunities to reduce those risks. In general some of these options include:

- Restoration of older forest structures in managed areas,
- Connection of aquatic strongholds through restoration, and,
- Treatment of forested areas to reduce fire, insect, and disease susceptibility.

These recommendations are guidelines and not particularly specific. The St. Joe Ranger District staff, however, turned these general recommendations into very specific proposed objectives and management priorities in "An Interim Ecosystem Management Framework." They are summarized in the following table:

Achieving Ecosystem Needs in the St. Joe Area

Ecosystem Needs	Treatments to Produce the Desired Outcome
Aquatic Habitats	
Increase pool quality characteristics and lateral fish habitat	Build in-stream structures to create pools and manage riparian zones for the recruitment of large woody debris
Reduce road densities on sensitive land types	Obliterate roads within breaklands or reconstruct those which are to remain system roads
Reduce the mileage of roads within riparian areas	Obliterate roads along streams and relocate them upslope if they are to remain system roads
Reduce roads that are built on slash	Obliterate or reconstruct these roads. Relocate necessary roads on stable slopes and roadbeds
Terrestrial Habitats	
Reduce the extent of lodgepole pine and replace with more resilient long-lived seral species	Use small clearcuts in lodgepole stands and replant with rust resistant white pine, larch, or ponderosa pine. Thin stands to favor these species where they are already established.
Restore dry site, open forest types	Thin established ponderosa pine, larch, and Douglas-fir types to remove shade tolerant understory species.
Accelerate the development of large, early seral trees	Commercially thin stands from 1910-1930 era fires to favor larch, ponderosa, or white pine.
Promote white pine and other early seral, long-lived species	Use shelterwoods or clearcuts with reserves and plant rust-resistant white pine, particularly on sites where root rot and mountain pine hazard is high or where stands are moving toward more fire intolerant, short-lived species.

These specific objectives and management priorities provide direction for the Forest Stewardship Contracting project. The identified treatments implemented on a basin-wide approach will direct management to produce the desired outcome. This process begins with ecosystem management, and, through effective monitoring, specific management prescriptions can be tailored to meet the vegetative and habitat requirements of the species and to restore the basin.

Current and Potential Economic Benefits

Revenue and Expense Summaries

Existing Proforma Panhandle National Forest, St Joe Ranger District

Revenues generated from land management operations
1996-1999 Average Treatment Acres and Values

Timberland 1044 treated acres	$2,090,000	
Recreation Fees	---	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$2,090,000	$2,090,000

Expense Projected for Operations 2000

Timberlands		
Fire	$642,920	
Planning	---	
Timber Sales	$68,044	
Reforestation	$802,700	
Recreation	$1,166,064	
Minerals	$49,380	
Grazing	$248,742	
Heritage Resources	---	
Wildlife	$68,521	
*Noxious Weed Control	$15,000	
Soil & Water	$243,935	
Roads	$262,500	
Administration/Misc	$1,370,037	
TOTAL	$4,937,843	($4,937,843)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($2,847,843)

The St. Joe budget and personnel for the proposal are expected to remain at present levels. Recreation, minerals, and grazing fees are minimal on the District.

*The Idaho Panhandle National Forest's 1998 summary of noxious weeds identified 248,800 acres making the IPNF one of the top three National Forests requiring large scale weed control efforts. Approximately 1800 acres are treated annually.

Potential Pilot Proforma

St Joe District
Revenues generated from land management operations
PILOT Proforma

Timberland 1978 treatment acres	$3,960,000	
Recreation Fees	---	
Minerals	---	
Grazing fees	---	
TOTAL	$3,960,000	$3,960,000

Expense Projected for Operations 2000

Timberlands		
Fire	$642,920	
Planning	$0	
Timber Sales	$68,044	
Reforestation	$802,700	
Recreation	$1,166,064	
Minerals	$49,380	
Grazing	$248,742	
Heritage Resources	$0	
Wildlife	$68,521	
*Noxious Weed Control	$30,000	
Soil & Water	$243,935	
Roads	$262,500	
Resource Monitoring	$69,251	
Administration/Misc	$1,315,786	
TOTAL	$4,967,843	($4,967,843)

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($1,007,843)

*Noxious weed control funding is at twice the present level and is necessary to protect native species and habitats.

The Potential Pilot Proforma assumes the St Joe Ranger District budget will remain at existing levels, and no personnel changes are expected. Recreation, mineral, and grazing revenues are insignificant on these districts.

The St. Joe has traditionally been a “timber” district. As recently as 1993, the Avery and St. Maries Districts (now the St. Joe) planned to offer over 60 million board of timber sales, approximately one-third of the Panhandle National Forest’s 198 million board feet of timber sales for that year. Plans, however, fell short and the St. Joe’s timber sales dropped drastically.

Summary of St. Joe Timber Sales, 1993-1999

Year	*Volume Planned Or Offered* (MMBF)*	*Volume Sold (MMBF)*	*Volume Harvested (MMBF)*
1993	64.7	18.7	36.1
1994	22.4	1.0	23.7
1995	20.4	4.3	19.1
1996	50.8	12.7	12.2
1997	14.9	14.6	12.5
1998	5.0	10.1	10.5
1999	5.5	12.5	2.7

*****_Volume planned or offered is either the "planned" volume for the years in which the Panhandle Forest produced five-year timber sale plans or the volume actually offered in later years when there were no longer-term plans._

Perhaps the biggest change in timber sales on the St. Joe has been the transition from a "program" with specific timber sale goals each year to an ecosystem-based approach where timber is a by-product of land treatments. By design, a more natural condition on the ground became the goal of the ecosystem-based management. As such, it has become very difficult to project specific timber sale offerings for the upcoming year. Rather, the scope of the ecosystem work is clearly defined, and the estimated amount of timber resulting from management becomes secondary, playing an insignificant role. Therefore, the St. Joe's "ecosystem assessment" includes large areas of lands where ecosystem needs must be addressed, but no estimates of the timber harvest volume are identified. The St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project has addressed this by identifying acres that are to be treated to meet the ecosystem needs.

As each of these areas is given a priority for implementing ecosystem management objectives, the NEPA analysis begins. Planners develop an estimate of work to be performed and volume to harvest from affected acres. Currently, two NEPA analyses are underway: the North Fork of the St. Joe and the Eagle Bird areas. Treatment within the ecosystem restoration projects may include 10 million board feet from the North Fork, while Eagle Bird may produce 25 million board feet. Most of this timber would result from the prescribed silvicultural activities that include commercial thinning and small regeneration harvests designed to favor western white pine and western larch. Over the long term, forest planners estimate that to complete the needed ecosystem restoration on the St. Joe, it may require treatments on 1978 acres or more and may include 18-20 million board feet.

Comparisons

The existing Revenues and Expense Summary identifies an expenditure of $4,937,843 with revenues of only $2,090,000. This indicates a cost of $2,847,843 over and above revenues generated. As budgets decline, these costs leave little opportunity for improving recreation, heritage resources, wildlife, soil and water, and watershed restoration.

The potential treatment of 1978 acres annually is projected from the 375,000 acres on the St. Joe District that has been identified by the Forest Service as good producing timberland. An additional 348,000 acres of roadless forest are not presently being considered for management, but mortality alone on these acres could be between 20 and 30 million board feet annually. This conservative estimate of treating approximately 2000 acres annually may not be sufficient to restore and improve the large number of acres that need attention. The projected volume identified by the Forest Service does not bring the pilot project area into a positive cash flow; a deficit of $1,007,843 still remains. The St. Joe Ranger District can maintain project activities identified in the budget but does not have an opportunity to increase watershed restoration, wildlife habitat, soil and water projects, reforestation, heritage resources, and recreational needs without increasing funding or revenues.

The comparisons identifying the management costs for the St. Joe Valley Association Proposal are constrained by a limited budget and are decreasing with lower funding levels and less outputs in all areas. The districts continually want to do more ecosystem-based management but have less funding and more constraints. The pilot project, with appropriate authorization, is an opportunity to change how the Forest Service does business. A comparison of how well the stewardship process conducts business is an opportunity to evaluate the accomplishments in restoring, repairing, and improving the ecological needs of the forest. The process will involve the public and includes the cooperation of resource professionals and community to achieve a long-term goal of maintaining and protecting the ecological integrity of the landscape in a cost-efficient manner.

Creating an Organization to Restore Ecosystems

On-the-ground efforts to restore ecosystem integrity such as those outlined in the following table are expensive. While some ecosystem needs can be met by implementing long-term management practices such as commercial thinning to promote early establishment of seral species within younger stands, others activities are costly and are not expected to generate income. Obliteration of roads, for example, may cost $20,000 per mile, and creating pools in streams by building log dams or installing rock gabions can cost over $2,000 each. To complete this work requires an appropriation of monies by Congress specifically directed toward these purposes or a way to generate revenues from other sources.

Stewardship contracting has recently been viewed as a new approach to accomplishing needed on-the-ground work on federal lands. Through this concept, the Forest Service offers a contract to accomplish the objectives. Generally, the work includes ecosystem objectives, such as those identified for the St. Joe sub-basin. Revenues generated are used to offset the cost of the project. If revenues from the project exceed the costs of the project, then the money is retained by the Forest Service to augment other local projects where costs will likely exceed revenues.

Stewardship contracting will be more effective if the goals and accomplishments desired are outlined by the Forest Service initially. This allows the contractors implementing the Forest Stewardship work to develop by experience or creative methods new operational ideas not presently used by the Forest Service. The Forest Service needs to limit the administrative overhead and the use of standardized government contracts, such as treeplanting and prescribed burning, and allow the contractors, through their own methods, to develop

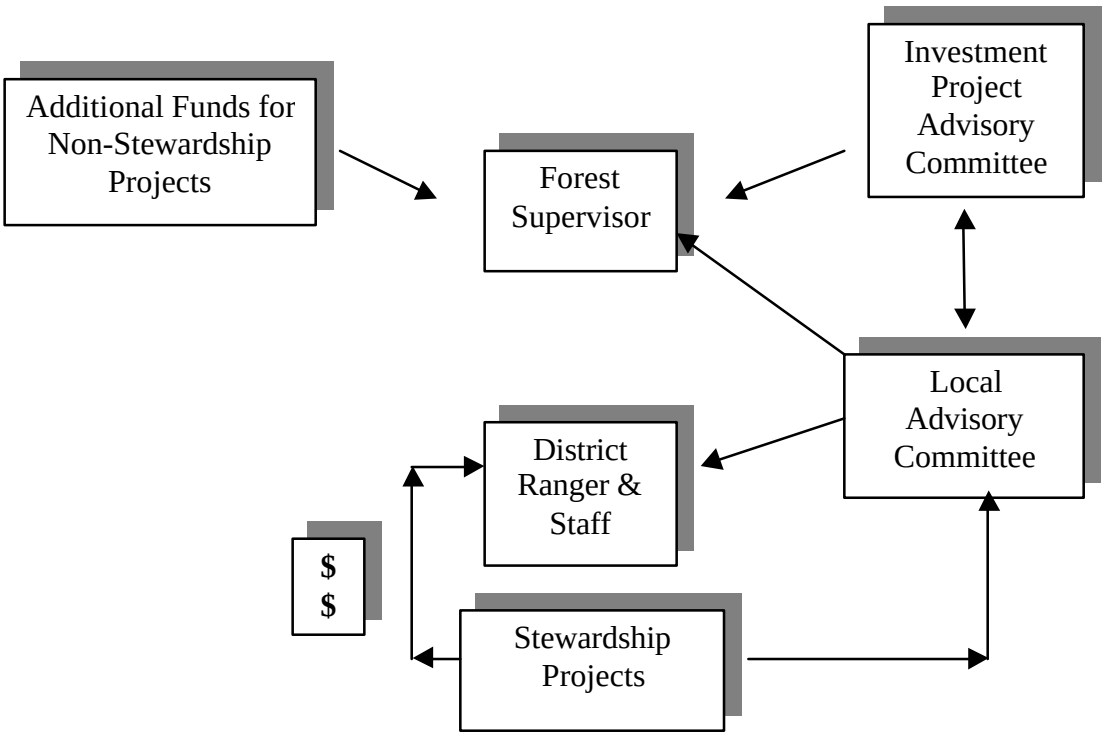
proposals meeting the intent of the project. The Stewardship contracting allows opportunities to enhance the management of public lands. The Stewardship contracting process should resist making the effort a large Request for Proposals (RFP) with imbedded standard contracts. This is an opportunity to implement new ideas, concepts, and business practices on the ground.

In 1998, Congress recognized the validity of this concept by authorizing a number of Stewardship projects throughout the country. In addition, this law provides guidance on how the projects are to be evaluated and implemented, plus exempted them from laws that would have impeded their implementation. The projects are exempt from the Knudsen-Vandenberg law that would have otherwise dictated that a portion of the stewardship contract proceeds be directed toward reforestation of logged areas. All the projects authorized by this law were fully subscribed and are now either being developed or implemented.

The combination of Stewardship Contracts and service contracts pave the way to complete the ecosystem restoration work needed on the St. Joe District. While some additional legislative language or intent may be necessary to reconcile the details of the law with this proposal and to reauthorize additional stewardship projects, the St. Joe Valley Association sees no need to modify other federal statutes or the structure of the Forest Service at this time. The St. Joe District would develop its working plan around a series of stewardship contracts that would be developed locally and approved through the "Investment Project Advisory Committee." As such, the St. Joe District would become the "St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Pilot Project."

The following chart shows how to develop and approve a stewardship project:

St. Joe Stewardship Project



In this organizational structure, both the "Investment Project Advisory Committee" and the "Local Advisory Committee" would have a broad membership, consisting of business and civic leaders, environmental interests, sportsmen, industry representatives, and others with an interest in the operation of the pilot project. Their roles would be markedly different. The Local Advisory Committee group would actually conceive and develop the individual stewardship projects, with the help of the district ranger and his or her staff. The "forest" level "Investment Project Advisory Committee" would carry out the actual approval of the projects on the St. Joe.

Project Summary

Changing how the Forest Service does business to help the agency achieve the goals for ecosystem management and those of the local communities will not be an easy task. Different alternatives must be explored. Implementing this pilot project with this community is an opportunity to evaluate a Stewardship Project already in progress.

The St. Joe Ecosystem Stewardship Project is a demonstration that takes advantage of the ecosystem restoration opportunities that the Forest Service has identified for the St. Joe and Congress's recent willingness to use stewardship contracts to finance the needed projects. It will not only help restore the elements of sustainable, resilient terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the St. Joe, but also provide employment for those fortunate to live and work in the St. Joe River Basin.

This project was originally submitted by The St. Joe Valley Association. Additionally, this project was further developed and modified with the participation and assistance of Northwest Management, Inc. and the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group.

Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust

Submitted to:
Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group

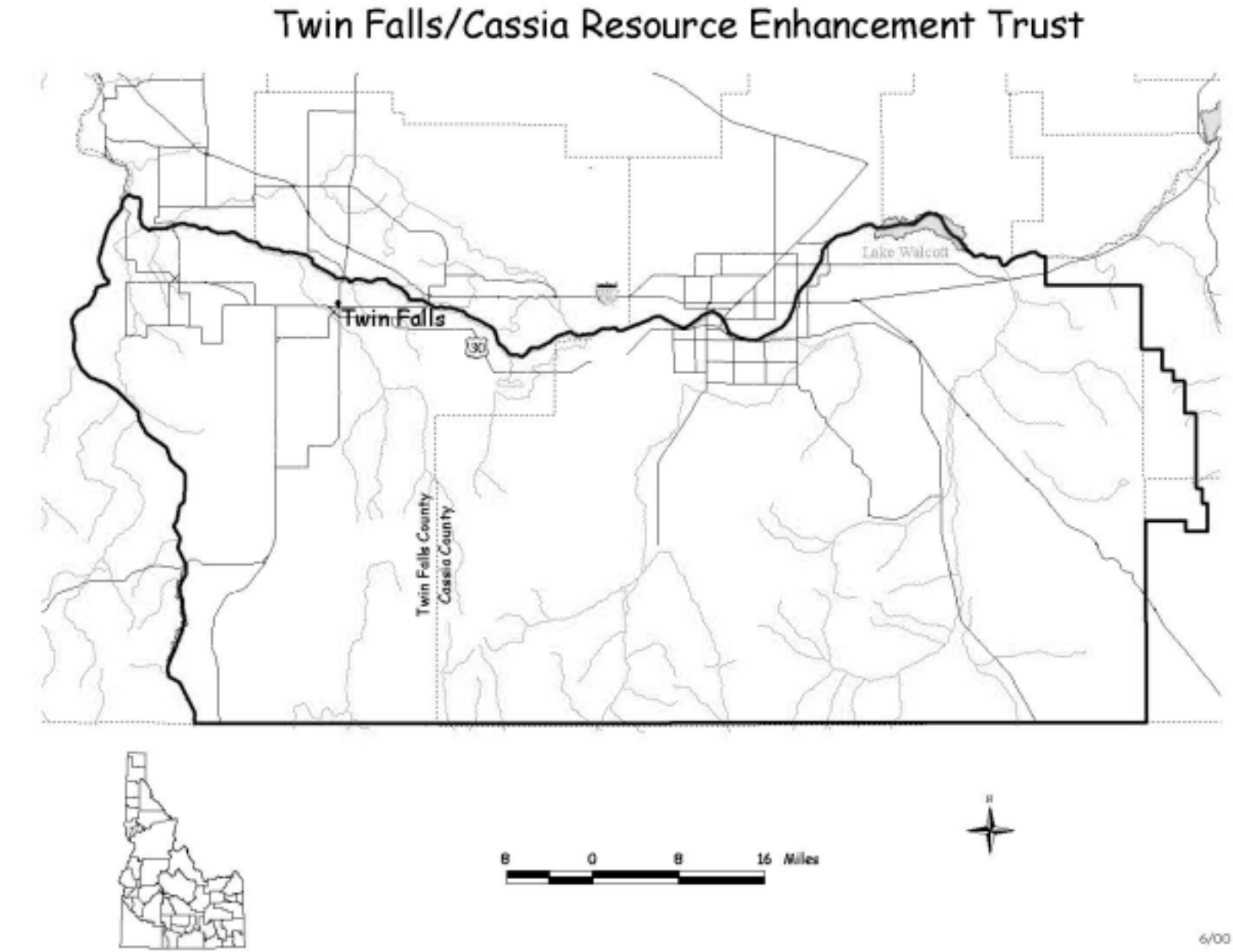

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust will enhance environmental quality, recreation use, and long-term stability of local communities. A trust accomplishes this through the principles of clarity, accountability, enforceability, and perpetuity. Trustees would represent national, state, and local interests. Federal and state agencies would operate in a coordinated and efficient management structure. Public involvement in resource management decisions would be through a collaborative group of local interests. Beneficiaries of management entities would represent the interests of local communities, users of resources (water, wildlife, range, etc.) and future generations.

Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust

Area: 1.3 million acres (51% BLM and 49% USFS)
457,418 acres of the BLM Twin Falls Resource Management Area
214,462 acres of the BLM Burley Resource Management Area
632,120 acres of the USFS Twin Falls and Burley Districts, Sawtooth National Forest

Goal: Provide sustainable use and enhancement of local ecological assets while balancing established and emerging cultures.

In July 1998, the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force completed its report and presented its findings and recommendations to the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners. The report, *New Approaches For Managing Federally Administered Lands,* was accepted by the Land Board.

In March 1999, the Idaho State Legislature passed House Continuing Resolution (HCR) 8 which endorsed the Task Force Findings and Recommendations, supported further implementation actions be taken by the Board of Land Commissioners, and urged that action be taken by the United States Congress.

In September 1999, the Board of Land Commissioners appointed a Federal Lands Task Force Working Group and authorized it to develop pilot project proposals. The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust is one of five such proposals being presented to the working group for consideration.

In full acknowledgement and agreement with the findings and recommendations of the Federal Lands Task Force Report, a wide consortium of Twin Falls County and Cassia County, Idaho, residents have joined together in a collaborative effort and present this proposal to the working group for its consideration. Their purpose is to propose the establishment of a pilot project based upon a combination of federal range and forested land components in order to experiment with a management alternative to the existing federal management systems now in

place. It is a unique opportunity to implement the much-discussed single-administrative approach to the current federal system which houses BLM and USFS in separate departments.

This group feels strongly that the biggest problem with the current approach to federal land management is that there is no room allowed for on-the-ground decision-making nor flexibility in management. This approach threatens environmental quality, limits recreational use, and creates and unstable situation for local economies and multi-generational family businesses.

The specific mission of the Twin Falls/Cassia Trust is to provide sustainable use and enhancement of local ecological assets while balancing established and emerging cultures.

Stability is the outcome most desired from the foundation of long-term resource management in this area. After careful consideration of the three action alternatives as proposed and described by the Task Force, the trust alternative was chosen as the basis for this proposal. The four principles forming the foundation of a trust, clarity, accountability, enforceability, and perpetuity, provide the major incentives for choosing this alternative.

Coupled with these four principles, the trust alternative has a major added advantage. A trust is a legally defined entity and its establishment permits that its structure and mission cannot be changed without legal action and significant effort. Therefore, the proponents of this proposal feel confident that the establishment of a trust is the best alternative for use in this pilot area and that it has the best chance for reaching the desired outcomes. This pilot proposal is unique for numerous reasons including:

- ✍ The establishment of Trustees in such a manner so as to provide that national, state, and local interests are represented.
- ✍ An alteration and expansion of the public participation process by establishing a collaborative element in the body of a Local Steering Committee to work in concert with both the Manager and the Trustees.

This pilot proposal includes significant changes to the current federal system. These changes include:

- ✍ A combination of local, state and federal agencies into a single coordinated, efficient management structure;
- ✍ A business management philosophy to be employed and fiduciary responsibility and accountability ensured;
- ✍ The establishment and utilization of a collaborative local steering committee;
- ✍ The employment of verifiable sources of scientific and economic knowledge;
- ✍ Incentives for public volunteerism and management participation.

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust proposal is presented in the belief that it meets the seven functional objectives proposed by the Federal Lands Task Force.

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE STATEMENT

In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt recognized that the forest reserves established in 1891, now the national forests, were a good investment for the nation, and their usefulness could be increased by "thoroughly businesslike management."[1] Nearly a century later, many of the people of Idaho have come to the conclusion that President Roosevelt's original vision for the future of western public lands has been unrealized. More importantly, they believe that the simple principles implied within his vision statement have been almost totally forgotten. Indeed, large numbers of people nationwide have similarly expressed the belief that a century of evolving federal land management systems has resulted in a virtual management stalemate more often referred to as "gridlock."

It is widely perceived that the present federal land management system has failed to achieve even a small semblance of the President's original vision. Federal land management system "gridlock" is thought by many to be seriously and detrimentally affecting the quality of the environment and the sustainability of the many resources derived from these lands. Simultaneously, while the system in place today is charged with managing, sustaining, and protecting the environment and all its resources, it is perceived to be dysfunctional to such a degree that it actually fosters many adverse economic and social effects as well.

These two compounding negative effects are being experienced most often and most adversely in those areas and communities directly connected to the federal lands of the west. Certainly, this describes much of the State of Idaho.

On April 30, 1998, in testimony given before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, ex-Chief of the United States Forest Service, Jack Ward Thomas, described the actual federal land management situation of late 20th century as follows:

> *"The management of these lands is approaching 'gridlock' for a number of reasons. The primary cause is the crazy quilt of laws passed by the different Congresses over a century with no discernable consideration for the interactions of those laws. The total of the applicable law contains mixed mandates, and produces mixed and confusing results. This is compounded by myriad court decisions that sometimes confuse more than clarify. It's time to deal with this problem in a comprehensive fashion."*

The contrast exhibited between what the President envisioned and what the Chief described as the actual case is striking, to say the least. Indeed, it has fostered grave concerns for the people of Idaho. Certainly, our national lands have come a long way from what was originally perceived as "could and should be" to "what actually is" today.

In 1996, the State of Idaho, Board of Land Commissioners, appointed a task force and charged them with examining federal land management in Idaho. The draft charge specifically stated:

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[1] *Breaking New Ground;* Gifford Pinchot; Harcourt, Brace: New York, 1947.

"There is considerable discussion throughout the western states, and many other states as well, about the purpose of federal lands, and how that purpose can best be achieved. Often, the conversation turns to the question of whether the various states could better manage selected federal lands. Could the various states manage "federal lands" more economically, and more to the benefit of the people who are dependent on the federal lands for jobs, goods, and services."

After nearly two years of study, consideration, testimony, and debate, the task force issued their findings and recommendations to the Land Board in July 1998. Their report, *New Approaches For Managing Federally Administered Lands*, produced two significant findings:

"The current processes of federal land management have resulted in uncertain decision making, destabilization of resource dependent communities, and deterioration in environmental quality on federal lands. In short, the system is broken."

"Significant changes to these processes are necessary. The changes proposed in the Upper Columbia River Basin Draft Environmental Impact Statement are not adequate."

Obviously, much of what the task force found in the course of its work substantiated very closely what ex-Chief Thomas succinctly stated before Congress. A description of the problem was likewise well articulated in the task force report (page 6, 3.0 Problem Statement). More importantly, however, the task force charge required that it not only study the problem, its causes, and the deficiencies of the current system, but also was charged with examining what possible alternative methods of management might be crafted in any *genuine* attempt toward solving its many problems.

Idaho Senator Larry Craig recently wrote in the *Alliance for the West,* Winter 1999 newsletter:

"…All of these factors have led to an explosion of down-home creativity in solving public lands conflicts through consensus-based approaches throughout the West and, increasingly, in other parts of the country. This exciting future is evolving as solutions emerge from local efforts to achieve a sustainable balance between people and their land. The success of this movement will retain the best of the national environmental ethic forged in the last few decades, while focusing this ethic through creative solutions."

The Idaho Federal Lands Task Force effort is one of the "down-home," creative efforts the Senator mentioned. From the issuance of its original draft charge to the publication of its final report, the purpose of the task force, with Land Board approval, necessarily evolved during the course of examining the issue at hand. The draft charge *evolved* from an original version that called for determining whether the states could manage the lands better into a work that considered several alternative methods of management, regardless of which institution was actually charged with the management.

This significant evolution in task force charge came about as a result of the thoroughly examined issues and key elements of the current state and federal land management systems in Idaho. Task force debate, statewide testimony, and serious collaboration efforts yielded the following results:

First, the task force adopted three significant ***principles*** to be used for developing alternative solutions. They are:

1. The ownership of federally administered lands will not be transferred to the state.
2. A variety of uses will continue on federally administered lands currently managed for multiple use.
3. The public will be involved in the decision-making process.

Second, the task force debated and arrived at seven ***desirable outcomes*** that were determined to be common to all members of the current debate. They are:

1. Environmental quality will be maintained and enhanced.
2. Fish and wildlife habitat will be enhanced.
3. Community stability and resiliency will be enhanced.
4. Land management agency budgets will be stabilized.
5. Resource management decisions will be made more efficiently, effectively, and will produce more certainty and accountability. Local federal land managers will be given greater flexibility in decision-making.
6. Federally administered lands will be managed in a fiscally responsible manner.
7. Management of federally administered lands will be scientifically based to the greatest extent possible.

Third, applying these desirable outcomes, the task force crafted seven ***functional objectives*** to guide the task force process. They are:

1. Involve the public.
2. Streamline and localize decision-making.
3. Protect water quality.
4. Base management on formalized plans.
5. Protect species.
6. Stabilize agency budgets.
7. Stabilize communities.

Fourth, the task force recommended three ***alternative systems*** of management for the Land Board to consider. They are:

1. Trust alternative
2. Collaborative alternative
3. Cooperative alternative

Last, the task force recommended that the State of Idaho, Board of Land Commissioners, *pursue a pilot project(s) testing one or more of the action alternatives for federal land management.*

In full acknowledgement and agreement with the findings and recommendations of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Report, a wide consortium of Twin Falls County and Cassia County, Idaho, residents have come together in a collaborative effort. Their purpose is to propose the establishment of a pilot project on a combination of federal range and forested land components of the State of Idaho in order to experiment with an alternative to the existing federal management system.

This proposal is being presented in a genuine fashion supported by honest motives. The purpose is to accomplish the goal of breaking "gridlock." It is presented in full recognition that a continuance of the status quo can only serve to impose additional negative effects directly upon the environment and the people of this area. In that same vein, neither can a continuance of the status quo be expected to serve the best interests of the American people in the long run.

Strongly ingrained community attributes, natural instincts, and sense of values could be effectively and positively employed in any effort made toward accomplishing much of what President Roosevelt envisioned so many years ago. Likewise, in order to deal with the problem, which was so eloquently described by Chief Thomas, the members of this community make this proposal.

THE PROPOSED AREA

Description of the Proposed Pilot General Boundary

This proposal advances an experimental area embracing all of Cassia County, most of Twin Falls County, and parts of both Power and Oneida Counties in the State of Idaho. This boundary closely conforms to the current federal land management agency administrative boundaries for both the south half of the Sawtooth National Forest and all of the BLM's Burley Resource Area.

Beginning at the confluence of Salmon Falls Creek and the Snake River in the northwest portion of Twin Falls County, the proposed northern boundary of this proposed area would follow the centerline of the Snake River easterly and upstream through the entire length of Lake Walcott. At a point just west of Tule Island, the boundary would continue to follow the Cassia and Power County lines south and east until it intersects the Sawtooth National Forest at the northern boundary of the Sublett Division. At that point, just south of the Houtz Canyon Road, the boundary would extend into Power County by following the eastern line of the Sublett Division.

Continuing south along the eastern boundary of the Sublett Division, the boundary would encompass that portion of Oneida County found within the Division. The proposed boundary would then, upon again reaching the common Cassia and Oneida County lines near Cold Spring Canyon, turn due south toward the Idaho/Utah state line. The southern boundary of the proposed

area would follow the Idaho/Utah state line west approximately twenty-two miles to a point two miles west of Standrod.

From this point, the proposed boundary would again turn west following the southern border of Idaho to the point where Salmon Falls Creek crosses the state line into Idaho from Nevada, approximately 2 ½ miles west of Highway 93. The western boundary of the proposed area is then defined by the centerline of Salmon Falls Creek, and from this far southwestern extremity of the proposed area, it would turn northward and back toward the point of beginning at the confluence of Salmon Falls Creek and the Snake River.

Size and Magnitude of the Proposed Area

The proposed pilot general boundary encompasses the following general breakdown of land by ownership. Note that portions of Twin Falls County, Power County, and Oneida County, do not fall within the proposed boundary and that a portion of the Burley RMA, north of the Snake River, is not included.

FEDERAL

TOTAL **Federal**: ~**1,304,000 acres**
(59.79%)

Bureau of Land Management

TOTAL gross BLM : ~ 671,880 acres
Twin Falls RMA ~ 457,418 acres
Burley RMA ~ 214,462 acres

Sawtooth National Forest

TOTAL gross National Forest: ~ 632,120 acres

Twin Falls/Burley Ranger Districts* ~ (gross acreage per Division)
Cassia Division ~ 310,080 acres
Albion Mountain Division ~ 76,000 acres
Sublett Division ~ 78,800 acres
Black Pine Division ~ 75,400 acres
Raft River Division ~ 91,840 acres

*This district includes acreage in the state of Utah that currently does not fall under this proposal.

STATE

TOTAL **State**: ~ **82,275 acres**
(3.77%)

PRIVATE

TOTAL **Private**: ~ **780,430 acres**
(35.78%)

(private, county, and municipal land within proposed pilot general boundary)

Twin Falls Co. (approx. acres) ~ 111,520 acres
Cassia Co. ~ 668,910 acres
Power Co. ~ 0 acres
Oneida Co. ~ 0 acres

OTHER

TOTAL **Other**: ~ **14,290 acres**
(0.66%)

City of Rocks National Reserve: ~ 3,410 acres
Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge: ~ 10,880 acres

TOTAL AREA WITHIN GENERAL PILOT BOUNDARY: ~ 2,180,995 acres

Land Use Within the Pilot Area

The following data illustrates the pattern of land usage throughout the general area of the proposed pilot. Data used originated from the totals for Twin Falls and Cassia Counties and is current through approximately 1999. Some of the area included here is not within the pilot proposal. [2]

Land Use	Acres	Percent Total
Urban	14,900	0.5%
Agricultural	825,800	28.5%
Range	1,970,100	68.1%
Forest	55,200	1.9%
Water	18,400	0.6%
Wetland	0	0.0%
Barren	8,400	0.2%
Tundra	0	0.0%
Perennial Snow	0	0.0%
TOTAL	2,892,800	100.0%

Environment

This area is characterized by broad stretches of flat to rolling semi-arid plains interspersed with shallow to deep canyons, high elevation desert plateaus, and infrequent mountain ranges. Elevations range from 4,500 feet on Rock Creek near Twin Falls to Cache Peak in Cassia County at 10,339 feet above sea level. Precipitation ranges from 10 to 15 inches across this broad landscape. Upon most of the federal land proposed for this pilot, the precipitation comes in the form of snow. The growing season usually lasts from early March until October but varies from year to year. Average winter temperatures vary between 36 degrees as the high to 16 degrees as the low. Summer temperatures vary between 91 degrees high to 57 degrees as the low.

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[2] Land Use acreage for those portions of Power and Oneida counties is not included. Within these counties there are no urban acres included. There is, however, additional acreage of usage in agriculture, range, and forest. Additionally, there is some acreage in water (ex. Sublett Reservoir) and may well be some additional area classified as barren. (Source: *1999 County Profiles of Idaho, Idaho Dept. of Commerce*).

In such an environment, water is the central ingredient to all life. Assuring the continued use of quality water resources is high upon the list of local concerns, especially as it pertains not only to crop and livestock production, but also to fisheries, wildlife, and biological diversity within riparian areas across this broad expanse. It is also important to the recreational user. From the perspective of livestock grazing, water sources on these lands are invaluable to the stability desired as an end product through the implementation of this pilot project.

The major sources of crop irrigation water in this area are canals (Snake River origination), deep well pumping, and free flowing streams and reservoirs. The later, such as Goose Creek Reservoir, are especially important because their sources originate on the federal lands being proposed for management under this proposal. Apart from the agricultural use of the limited water in this area (wells and canals), the water originating from federal land is being closely scrutinized. It is obvious to almost all who use the National Forests and BLM lands that protection and enhancement of these sources determines the future usage.

Conifer forests of Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine dominate the forest landscapes, usually at higher elevations, and are generally confined to mainly the northern and eastern slopes. A sage/grass vegetation type dominates most of the southern and western slopes and high plateau-like terrain. Soils are deep and highly productive with the availability of water in the lower lands and canyon bottoms. At the higher elevations, soils are considerably shallower and less productive, especially on the steeper southerly exposures. Soils in this area are derived from volcanic and sedimentary material.

There is no lack of local environmental issues. Water quality, riparian improvements and protection, and fisheries are of major concern. The stabilization and improvement of habitat for populations of species such as the sage grouse and sharp tail grouse, the control of noxious weed invasion and other undesirable plants, such as juniper, rabbitbrush, medusahead, and cheatgrass, all rank high upon the local list of environmental concerns.

Communities

The principal cities lying within this proposed area include the county seats of Twin Falls and Burley. Other municipalities within the Twin Falls County portion of the area include the cities of Buhl, Filer, Kimberly, Hansen, and Murtaugh as well as numerous other small towns and hamlets, including Hollister, Amsterdam, and Rogerson. Cassia County, all of which is contained within the pilot proposal, similarly contains numerous cities including Albion, Declo, Malta, Oakley, as well as a host of similar small towns and hamlets, such as Almo, Elba, Basin, and Marion.

These communities are exemplary of much of rural America. Similarly, the large and small cities and towns of this area have, for over a century, served as the main cultural, service, and economic centers for larger matrices of land usage, mainly agriculture in its many forms. The use of land and natural resources has sustained and promoted both stability within these communities and a continuing homogeneous connection between the urban and rural sectors of the local population. As elsewhere in many parts of America, these particular rural communities

are closely knitted. For over 130 years, family, church, and economic values have been forged and wedded together within the surrounding landscapes of pastoral agronomy.

Significantly, and as in many other areas of the western United States, there exists an additional element of major consideration when addressing the issue of community stability. Major alterations of federal land management policy can produce substantial effects directly proportional to the amount of the area these federal lands occupy in relationship to those otherwise held in a particular area.

Population

The approximate population currently living within Twin Falls and Cassia Counties is 85,775 people.[3] Of that, approximately 42% live in rural areas. Just over 50% of the entire population live within the cities of Twin Falls and Burley. The balance, some 8%, live in the numerous small towns scattered throughout the two counties. Population growth is projected at approximately 1.3 to 1.4% per year in this general area.

The population density of this area is depicted in the following chart.

County[4]	**Total**	**Avg. per sq. mile**	**% Rural**	**% Urban**
Twin Falls	64,334[5]	33.4	36.4	63.6
Cassia	21,441	8.4	57.3	42.7
TOTAL	**85,775**	**19.1**	**41.7**	**58.3**

Locally, modest growth of the population base is being felt mainly within the larger cities and towns. Meanwhile, the local rural population segment tends to remain stable to slightly declining in total numbers.

Economy

Of the total economic sales occurring within this area, the majority (as it has been for well over a century) continues to be based upon agricultural production in all its many forms. For example, in Cassia County, approximately 82% of the total economic sales are from agricultural production, and about 78% of direct and indirect employment is dependent upon agriculture. [6]

In 1996, the Idaho Department of Commerce produced the following data indicating employment within Twin Falls and Cassia County areas.

County	**Farm/Ranch**	**Ag Services**	**Government**	**Other**	**Total**

[3] (Sources: *1999 County Profiles of Idaho, Idaho Dept. of Comm.*, Twin Falls and Cassia/Minidoka Chambers of Commerce, 1999)

[4] Does not include Power or Oneida Counties because little or no population is included within the proposed general area.

[5] Total population for Twin Falls County; some of the population does not live within the proposed area.

[6] Source: Idaho Association of Counties at web page www.idcounties.org , 1998

Cassia	1,617	691	1,547	8,152	12,007
Twin Falls	2,326	1,260	4,712	28,769	37,067
TOTAL	**3,943**	**1,951**	**6,259**	**36,921**	**49,074**
% of Total	**8.0%**	**4.0%**	**12.8%**	**75.2%**	**100%**

The value of grazing as one of the major uses of federal lands in this area has been well documented. Within the proposed pilot area there are some 287 grazing allotments established upon these federal lands. In 1999, some 348 individual permittees grazed both cattle and sheep on these allotments. Cow-calf operations dominate grazing use, although some portion is dedicated to sheep. A total of 237,199 AUMs (animal unit months) can be ascribed to the federal allotments included within this proposed pilot area. [7]

The most significant issue with regard to these grazing allotments is the fact that they are primarily used on an annual basis during a period of the year from approximately April 15 to October 15. For over a century, ranchers in this area have used the federal range as summer range, without which their operations would effectively be impossible to sustain. The same is true for the woolgrowers of this area. Therefore, significant reductions in the use of federal range would amount to far more in the way of reduced economic activity than the half-year usage on federal lands would otherwise indicate.

Cow-calf grazing upon federal lands within Cassia County alone has been estimated to generate half the total gross dollar return for ranchers in this area. Annually, and on average, 26,500 calves are produced in Cassia County. Half of their total growth can be attributed to the time spent grazing federal allotments. It has been estimated that the production of these calves generates a value to the local ranchers of nearly $6.9 million dollars per year, directly as a result of grazing on federal allotments. This dollar figure can be used as one estimate of the direct total monetary value to the local economy derived from federal lands within Cassia County. Similar economic figures exist in Twin Falls County.

Additionally, and as with any agricultural product produced from the land, a multiplying factor comes into effect when such products become initiated into other associated industries and "value-added" enterprises. Such is the case with livestock as well. The University of Idaho conservatively estimates that for each dollar of net return from cow-calf grazing, a minimum of $5.00 is generated in overall economic activity. In the case of cattle grazing in Cassia County itself, 1998 figures totaled over $34.0 million dollars, most being generated locally.

Other significant added values to both the local and regional economy are generated through following cattle operations after grazing such as "Warm Up" and "Finish Feeding" lots where cattle are progressively fattened prior to eventual final sale and slaughter. These added economic impulses have been estimated to contribute toward an overall total generation of nearly $62.6 million to the local, regional, and interstate economies.[8]

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[7] Source: BLM AUM's from Cassia (1982) & Twin Falls (1984) Resource Area RMP's, Burley BLM District, Burley, ID.; FS AUM's from personal communications, Sawtooth NF.

[8] Source: R. Garrard, Cassia County Extension Agent, U of I. report, *Economic Impact of Livestock Grazing On Public Lands*

Within the past decade, concerted local efforts have been made toward diversifying this area's economy, especially within the manufacturing, service, tourism, and recreation sectors. These efforts have resulted in the attraction of several significant employers in the manufacturing and service sectors and some are again agricultural based.

Tourism has received much attention and expansion since this area is home to many outstanding attractions. Outdoor recreation, in its many forms, has also added to the economic base of the area economy in recent years. This economic sector has grown significantly, especially because the local people are themselves recreation enthusiasts who use their many local opportunities at approximately 1 ½ to 2 times the national rates for almost every category. [9]

Each of these sectors of the local economy has been successfully established near or within the two principal hub cities of Twin Falls and Burley. Much of the recreational economic activity, although originating in or near these two cities, is focused heavily upon the outlying rural private and public lands within the pilot area. Much of the countryside surrounding these two metropolitan hub cities remains in its former rural cast where agriculture and livestock grazing remain the economic mainstay and where public land remains the largest segment (almost 60%) of the total land base.

PROPOSED PILOT MECHANISMS

Assumptions In Pilot Project Proposal

For the purposes of this proposal, the following assumptions are made:

1. *Adherence to applicable state and federal laws will be required.*
2. *The management of land and resource uses will be done in a thoroughly businesslike manner subject to frequent accountability checks.*
3. *A variety of land and resource uses will continue.*
4. *Valid existing rights will be honored.*
5. *The responsibility for fire control will remain with the federal government.*

Pilot Trust

This proposal is being made in the form of a land management trust, which is a fiduciary relationship in which the trustee holds and manages property (corpus) for the benefit of a specific beneficiary(s). In making this proposal, a comprehensive understanding of the legal definition of trust terms is required (See U of I, 1998 PAG Report, Table 5-8, page 84). To complement this information, it is useful for each of these terms to be explained further in the context of this proposal as follows:

Fiduciary Relationship – places on the trustees the duty to act with strict honesty and candor and solely in the interest of the beneficiary(s).

[9] Source: 1995 Market Profiles, *The Lifestyle Market Analyst for the County of Twin Falls*

The Settlor **-** is the entity (person) that creates the trust. In this case, it is assumed that the Congress of the United States of America will become the settler.

Trustees **-** is the person(s) holding property in trust for the beneficiary. In this proposal, it is envisioned that the trustees will oversee the management of these public lands so as to provide benefits for the beneficiaries each year. Under 5.1.4, Trustees, of the Task Force Report (page 20), recommendations were made regarding designation of the Trustees. This pilot is proposed in full support of the recommendations as written. The five-member board of trustees would consist of three trustees appointed by the Governor of Idaho, one appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, and one appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, the federal appointees made with the advice of the Governor of Idaho.

Trust Property – is the property or asset, otherwise referred to as the corpus that is held in trust. In the context of public land management, the property interest or asset to be managed on behalf of the beneficiary(s) is the land and resources themselves. In this proposal, and in order to conform to current federal land management agency administrative boundaries, the project area embraces most of the Burley Resource Area and all of the Burley and Twin Falls Ranger Districts of the Sawtooth National Forest.

The Beneficiary **-** is the entity for whose benefit the trust property (corpus) is held in trust. The trust requires designation of beneficiaries as recipients of the benefits. Beneficiaries are not directly involved in managing the trust but have legal standing to challenge decisions made by trustees or trust managers if those decisions are inconsistent with the trust mandate to manage for the beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries of this trust are proposed to be local communities, users of resources and future generations. Each of these beneficiaries have a mutual interest in maintaining the viability, health, and productivity of the land and resources since that perpetuates the capacity of this trust to support the interests of each beneficiary in kind.

The Trust Instrument **-** is the manifestation of the intent of the settlor by which the property interests are vested in the trustee and beneficiary and by which the rights and duties of the parties (otherwise known as the trust terms) are set forth in a manner that admits of its proof in judicial proceedings. For the purposes of this proposal, it is anticipated that a trust instrument will be in the form of legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President setting aside the proposed pilot area. Such legislation will establish and define the three essential elements of a trust. These elements are:

A clear expression of intent
A description of the beneficiary(s)
An ascertainable property interest

Trust land management, as a concept, is well established in both the private sector and in state government. The trust land management alternative offers many positive attributes that foster the potential for sustainable resource management most acceptable to the proponents of this pilot project.

The four principles of a trust are clarity, accountability, enforceability, and perpetuity. A key advantage of a trust is that, since it is a legally defined entity, its structure and mission cannot be changed without legal action and significant effort. This provides stability in planning and decision-making. Stability is the outcome most desired from the foundation of long-term resource management and, in this proposal, it is the major incentive for choosing this alternative.

For the purposes of further describing this proposal, much reliance and reference is made to several publications dealing with trust land management. These references include those referenced by the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force in their report, *New Approaches for Managing Federally Administered Lands* (1998). Additionally, extensive use is made of the comprehensive work done on the subject by the University of Idaho, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group in the report titled *History and Analysis Of Federally Administered Lands in Idaho (1998).*

Establishing a trust of any kind first requires specifying its essential elements and parts. For a trust to exist, first the three elements must be present and clearly defined.

Elements of the Trust

Mission Statement
Trust Beneficiary(s)
Trust Property

Mission Statement

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust Mission Statement is:

Provide sustainable use and enhancement of local ecological assets while balancing established and emerging cultures.

Trust Beneficiary(s)

A trust cannot be created unless the Settlor "manifests an intention to impose duties which are enforceable in the courts" (U of I, PAG Report, pg. 85).

A key characteristic of a trust is the clarity of the mission: the trustee is obligated to manage trust resources for the benefit of the beneficiary. Mission clarity gives trustees and trust managers a well-defined purpose to guide decision-making. This clarity also gives beneficiaries a basis for judging the decisions and actions of the trustees and managers and holding them accountable to the trust mission.

Three beneficiaries are proposed for the Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust proposal. They are proposed to be those entities *most capable of representing the interests of local communities, users of resources, and future generations*. Each of these entities have mutual interests in maintaining the viability, health, and productivity of the trust assets. The same

mutual interests promulgate and perpetuate the capacity of this trust proposal to support the interests of each beneficiary in kind.

Future Generations
Users of Resources (includes water, wildlife, range)
Local Communities

Trust Property

Finally, there must be a property interest that exists or is ascertainable and is to be held for the benefit of the beneficiary(s). In the context of public land management, the property or tangible assets to be managed is the land and resources themselves. In this proposal, and in order to conform to current federal land management agency unit boundaries, the project area embraces most of the Burley Resource Area and all of the Burley and Twin Falls Ranger Districts, otherwise referred to as the "southhalf" of the Sawtooth National Forest. This proposed area represents the body of this trust and is described with some detail under Article I., Proposed Area.

Parts of the Trust

Trust Management System
Trust Assets
Trust Benefits

Development of a trust pilot project also requires that a delineation of all its parts be made, and that they be defined and described. It also requires that management and fiscal processes be fully outlined and described.

Trust Management System

The management system proposed for the Twin Falls Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust illustrates a clear and continuous connection between the three essential portions of the management system being proposed: Trustees, Manager, and Local Steering Committee (LSC). The Management Planning, Decision Making, Fiscal, and Public Participation Processes, as described within the Federal Lands Task Force Report (pages 17 through 27) form the foundation for this proposed trust pilot project.

The Trustees

Trustees provide the oversight and broad policy direction consistent with the purpose and intent of the trust. The Trustees serve as the final decision-making authority for public appeals of decisions made by the trust manager and are responsible for the broader policy decisions within which the trust manager operates. They are responsible for ensuring that the manager achieves the trust mandate. The five-member board of trustees would consist of three trustees appointed by the Governor of Idaho, one appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, and one appointed by

the Secretary of the Interior. The federal appointees would be made with the advice of the Governor of Idaho.

The Trustees would select the Trust Manager from a field of prospective and capable candidates who are knowledgeable of and experienced with the proposed pilot area. The selection of the manager could be made from either within the existing federal agencies or from a field of other qualified candidates with the credentials necessary to successfully accomplish the purpose of the pilot proposal

The Trustees will also appoint a Local Steering Committee (LSC) from the population living within the proposed pilot general area boundary. Candidates will be nominated by local interests and chosen by the trustees with the advice of the county commissioners. Their selection will be based upon individual qualifications, credentials, demonstrated successful ability to collaborate with others, and their willingness to serve a minimum term of three years.

Trust Manager

The trust manager reports to the trustees, implements their policies, and ensures those policies are consistently applied through each plan and project. The manager designs and implements projects in accordance with the plans, and is responsible for all planning and directing on-the-ground operations of trust land management. The trust manager makes on the ground land and resource management decisions. The LSC provides a point of local contact for both manager and trustees.

The manager reports to the trustees and the trustees have the authority to override the decisions of the trust manager if they believe it to be in the best interests of the beneficiaries. The trustees also serve as the final decision-making authority for public appeals of decisions made by the trust manager.

The manager would choose the management staff. Individuals with both credentials of experience and knowledge of the proposed pilot lands, resources, and uses will constitute the body of the staff. They will represent the major scientific and business management disciplines deemed needed by the manager to efficiently and economically manage the pilot and to achieve the intent of the project.

As with any experimental endeavor, the flexibility and authority to modify the management structure, as determined by need, is essential. It is possible that some adjustment in the type of skills represented on the existing agency staff would take place because the mission of the pilot is different.

Limitations in size, imposed largely by budget restraint, will ultimately determine the eventual minimum size and cross-section of skills in the staff structure. The manager, however, must be continuously afforded as much latitude as possible in the construction and melding of a capable team. As in any successful business, the manager must also have the latitude to either increase or decrease the size and cross-section of the skills of staff, as needed, in order to

accomplish the clear intent of the trust pilot project. The manager must also have, and maintain, disciplinary authority over staff.

The management staff will be responsible for all planning and plan implementation. The planning and public involvement process will guide the operations of the trust manager. The foundation of this process is the five-year plan.

The trust manager will work in concert with, and predominantly rely upon, the assistance of a Local Steering Committee (LSC) in decision-making. This committee, appointed by the trustees from a pool of individuals nominated by local interest groups, will serve as a point of local contact for the trust manager and trustees.

Local Steering Committee (LSC)

The trustees will appoint a Local Steering Committee (LSC) from the population living within the proposed pilot general area as stated previously under *Trustees*. The LSC represents the collaborative element of this pilot project. It will oversee the public involvement process including the collection of public comment. It will conduct analysis of these comments and ensure that they are fairly considered and accommodated as appropriate within the context of achieving the objectives of the pilot.

The purpose of the LSC will be to inform the manager of local needs and concerns and to act as a sounding board for the manager in the local decision-making process. The LSC will manage public involvement in all phases of the planning and appeals processes and simultaneously, be accountable to the trustees for maintaining and perpetuating the same broad policy directives established by the trustees for the manager. The LSC will, on behalf of, and in direct contact with the trustees, act as the trustees' local oversight instrument.

Appeals will be managed by the LSC as described under 5.1.7 (page 21) of the Task Force Report. The LSC will avail itself, as appropriate, to the assignment of Standing Review Committees and Technical Review Teams to assist it in the mitigation of appeals whether they are of an administrative or a scientific nature.

Standing Review Committees (SRC)

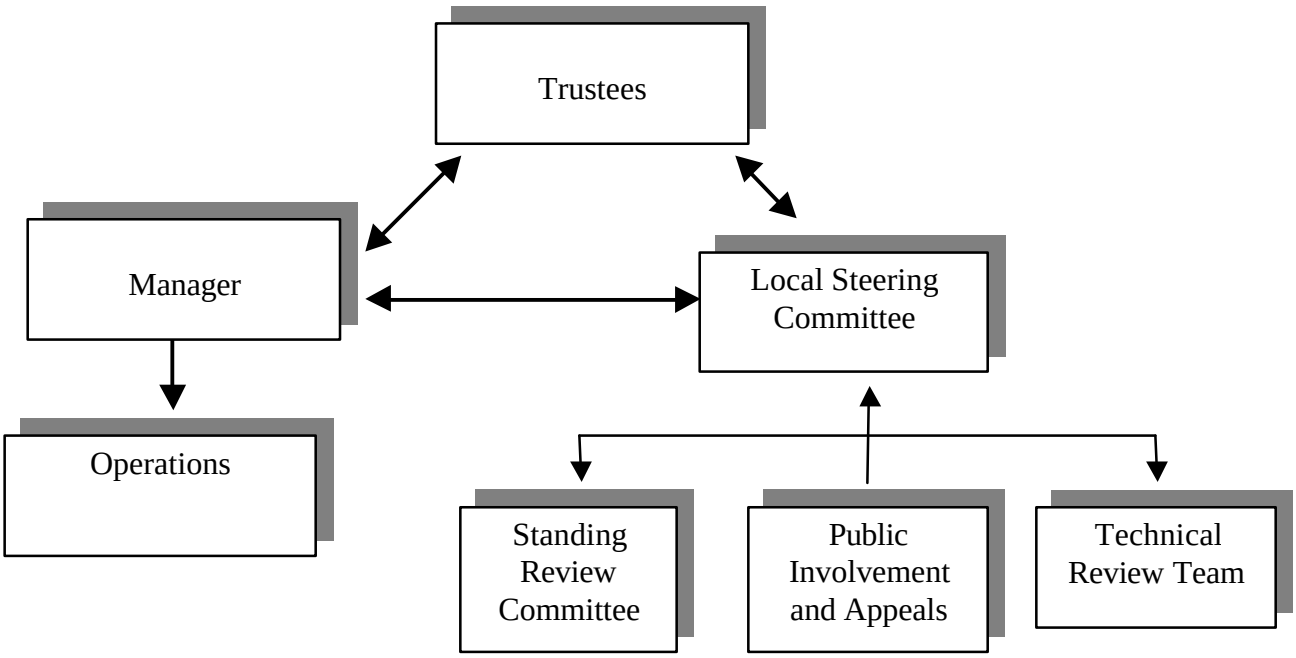
An SRC can be assigned from within the LSC membership for various purposes, including but not limited to, the review of project fiscal activities, public administrative appeals, review of planning documents such as environmental impact statements (5-year plan) and assessments (1-year plans), policy reviews, etc.

Technical Review Teams (TRT)

A TRT can also be authorized and formed by the LSC. These teams may consist of combinations of members of the LSC and management staff working in conjunction with scientific and research experts. Or they may be formed of independent individuals with the specific credentials necessary to advise the LSC upon technical issues and new scientific

information relevant to the functions of the pilot. In its collaborative role, the LSC will review and provide input to the manager on the five-year and one-year planning schedules. The LSC will help the trustees in determining policy and with the monitoring of project operations. The manager, or proxy, will maintain full participation and be included in all LSC meetings and deliberations.

Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust



Trust Assets

The property interest assets to be managed on behalf of the beneficiaries in this proposal are composed of the land and resources as described in ***THE PROPOSED AREA***. Under this proposed trust, generated cash revenues from historical resource uses in the form of rents, royalties, and other fees, will be treated as a "working asset" rather than as a direct benefit to be dispersed to the beneficiaries. Instead, it is proposed that these working assets be retained and used as a tool meant to augment the essential purpose of the trust, specifically the enhancement of the ecological assets.

Rents include payments received from sales of timber, grazing permits, recreation fees, special use permits, etc. Royalties include payments from mineral leases and sales of land, etc. A more detailed description of these revenues and their various sources are included under ***REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES***.

Although limited, revenues are proposed to be used to fund specific enhancement efforts as one of the various operations of this trust. The management plan developed by the Manager, in consultation with the LSC, and subject to the final approval of the Trustees, will define a list of the kinds of enhancement uses these revenues will be used for. The Trustees, with the advice of the Manager and the LSC, will from time to time, review and reconsider this list and modify it as necessary to maintain the mandates of the trust.

For example, it is proposed that monetary assets derived from the sale of timber be retained and used to finance forest health improvement projects; range grazing fees would

be retained and used for range betterment projects; recreation fees would be retained and used to maintain and improve recreation facilities, etc. Royalties, such as those derived from mineral leases, would be retained and used for projects respective to mining. *Sales of land assets would not fall under the purview of this trust*, but would remain with the federal government. Those revenues derived from the sale of land would not be retained and used by the trust.

Trust Benefits

The major trust benefit to be provided is encapsulated within the trust **Mission Statement**. It reads in part, "…to provide sustainable use and enhancement of local ecological assets…." The focus of the trust mandate remains on protecting the corpus over the long term, thereby enabling it to remain a sustainable source of benefits. The term enhancement, in this case, means to advance, heighten, and increase the value of the assets, the land, and resources. Ecological, as a term, is used as an adjective to specifically encompass all of the assets denoted by the trust proposal, including people. The clear purpose and mission of this trust proposal is to protect and enhance the trust assets. Ecological assets are made up of many aspects including both tangible and intangible values. To some, this can mean biological diversity; to others, it could mean ecological integrity, or ecosystem assets. In this proposal, it can mean the environment and all of its assets and values.

This proposal makes the recommendation that the specific beneficiaries be local communities, users of resources, and future generations. Beneficiaries, as described, can each be claimed to connote wide areas of interests, both nationally and locally. It is therefore proposed that those entities most capable of representing these interests, on a local level, be clearly identified.

Benefits, as supplied through the management of this trust, come in several forms of protection, enhancement, and use. They include, but are not limited to, trust land management policies that meet the specific duties of the Trustees.

Management of the Pilot Trust

Proposal Term

As proposed in the Federal Lands Task Force Report, the suggested term of this pilot proposal is 15-years. It is proposed that the Trustees will conduct two interim reviews at 5-year intervals and a detailed final review of the outcome of the pilot project during the final year of its term. Based upon the results and findings of that final review, it is proposed that the Trustees, on behalf of the Beneficiaries, decide this management system is to be extended, modified and extended, or cancelled.

Fiscal Functions

It is proposed that funding for this pilot remain at the FY-1999 level (see REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES), as established for both the federal agencies encompassed by

the proposed pilot project area, throughout the term of the project. An exception is made with respect to funds appropriated for fire suppression and pre-suppression costs, as they are not included in this proposal. The pilot proposal includes retention of all revenues collected from rents and royalties. Sales of land would not fall under the purview of this pilot. Should they occur, transactions would remain solely with the federal government. Retained revenues will be utilized as working assets as described previously under *Trust Assets*. All mutual agreements, other than fire control and suppression agreements currently in place, would be assumed and continued as part of the pilot project.

It is proposed that the Trustees conduct a thorough audit of the fiscal process employed by the trust pilot at least once annually. It is proposed that a simplified accounting system be designed during the course of crafting the Management Organizational Plan (see A.2.a. Trust Manager) and submitted to the Trustees for their approval as part of that plan and prior to the implementation of the pilot project. It is also the intent of the proponents that the trust find better, faster and cheaper methods to manage the assets of the trust.

Management Direction

This pilot proposal includes significant changes to the current federal system. These changes include:

1. *A combination of local, state, and federal agencies into a coordinated, efficient management structure;*
2. *A business management philosophy to be employed and fiduciary responsibility and accountability ensured;*
3. *The establishment and utilization of a collaborative local steering committee;*
4. *The employment of verifiable sources of scientific and economic knowledge;*
5. *Incentives for public volunteerism and management participation.*

Whenever and wherever possible, funding resources will be directed toward the use of competitive, contracting for much of the project workload. It is perceived that in so doing, significant extension of funding resources can be realized. At the same time, an improvement in measured amounts of actual work accomplished can be attained. This concept could be especially applicable in those areas of immediate need, such as the control of noxious weeds.

Within the pilot area there are scientific and resource management institutions which could be used more effectively in the course of conducting the management. Utilizing the vast and pertinent knowledge and experience of the offices of the Idaho Departments of Lands, Parks and Recreation, Water Resources, Environmental Quality, and other state and county agencies can significantly expand the ability of the trust management to achieve its goals and extend its ability to make available funding as effective as possible. Additionally, the University of Idaho, Department of Rangeland Resources, and the Cooperative Extension System based in Twin Falls and Burley, both have extensive knowledge and experience with local land resources and should be utilized as much as possible.

Additionally, this proposal includes managed maximum use of share cost and local, volunteered resource-enhancement project efforts. There is much local public support for an expansion of this type of an approach to management and doing so can result in management funds being further extended. Besides imparting a stronger sense of partnership and shared stewardship in the public perception of land management, there are additional valuable benefits to be gained from such activities. These include, but are not limited to, the opportunity to involve the public more directly in the actual management of these lands and resources. Enacting this approach can be a positive opportunity for increasing the education of the general public as well.

Finally, this proposal uniquely includes combining two federal land management agencies under one management system. It offers an opportunity to test the premise that such a combination could result in increased management efficiencies through the elimination of duplication. The ultimate desired result of significant improvements and enhancements to the ecological assets, as well as the protection of the corpus, is embodied in this proposal.

Public Participation

This proposal includes a complete acceptance of the Public Participation Process as described within the Federal Lands Task Force Report. Uniquely, it utilizes a LSC, appointed by the Trustees, in a *collaborative* role meant to expand the ability of the public to participate in the management planning, decision-making, and fiscal activities of the trust. This proposal includes the Federal Lands Task Force Report's detailed description of the appeals and planning processes as written.

Staffing

The proposed trust pilot assumes that current levels of federal staffing and structure will be retained. It is, however, proposed that during the period prior to implementation, the appointed manager will carefully review the existing level and structure. The manager will creatively combine the two as deemed prudent, legal, expeditious, and functional, and make recommendations to the Trustees as to how staffing structure and size might ultimately best be designed toward meeting the goals and objectives of the project.

Facilities And Equipment

The proposed trust pilot also assumes that current federal facilities and equipment will be retained. Again, it is proposed that, during the period prior to implementation, the manager will carefully review these infrastructure items and make recommendations to the Trustees as to how best to efficiently utilize all or parts of the existing facilities and equipment.

III. REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARIES

Initially, proposed management of the Twin Falls Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust will require no more federal funding than the current situation. Upon implementation, it is expected that the local steering committee and trustees will determine ways to more efficiently and effectively manage the lands with decreased annual appropriations.

Although limited, revenues are proposed to be used to fund specific enhancement efforts as one of the various operations of this trust. The management plan developed by the Manager, in consultation with the LSC, and subject to the final approval of the Trustees, will define a list of the kinds of enhancement uses these revenues will be used for. The Trustees, with the advice of the Manager and the LSC, will from time to time, review, reconsider, and modify this list as necessary to maintain the mandates of the trust. For example, it is proposed that monetary assets derived from the sale of timber be retained and used to finance forest health improvement projects; range grazing fees would be retained and used for range betterment projects; recreation fees would be retained and used to maintain and improve recreation facilities, etc. Royalties, such as those derived from mineral leases, would be retained and used for projects respective to mining. Sales of land assets would not fall under the purview of this trust but would remain with the federal government. Those revenues derived from federally approved land sales would not be retained and used by the trust.

EXISTING REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARY

Federal Proforma (BLM and Forest Service)

Revenues Generated from Land Management Operations
FY-1999

	USFS	BLM	Total
Timberland	---	---	---
Recreation Fees	$26,297	---	$26,297
Minerals	---	---	---
Grazing fees	$100,980	$148,500	$249,480
TOTAL	$127,277	$148,500	$275,777

Expense for Operations 1999*

Resource Management			
Forestry	$394,542	---	$394,542
Recreation	$201,856	$93,859	$295,715
Minerals	$34,938	$73,533	$108,471
Range	$236,780	$428,152	$664,932
Roads	$48,938	---	$48,938
Heritage Resources	---	---	---
Wildlife and T&E	$37,920	$207,186	$245,106
Noxious Weed Control	$36,000	$30,000	$66,000
Soil & Water	$48,168	$93,477	$141,645
Resource Monitoring	$25,925	---	$25,925
Administration/Overhead	$175,252	$305,886	$481,138
TOTAL	1,240,319	1,232,093	2,472,412

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($2,196,635)

*Funds for fire suppression/administration are not included

POTENTIAL REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARY

Federal Proforma (BLM and Forest Service combined)

Revenues Generated from Land Management Operations
Based on FY-1999

	USFS	BLM	Total
Timberland	---	---	---
Recreation Fees	26,297	---	26,297
Minerals	---	---	---
Grazing fees	100,980	148,500	249,480
TOTAL	$127,277	$148,500	$275,777

Expense for Operations*

Resource Management	
Forestry	$322,000
Planning/Implementation**	$170,000
Recreation	$300,000
Minerals	$100,000
Range	$650,000
Roads	$48,938
Wildlife and T&E	$250,000
Noxious Weed Control	$100,000
Resource Monitoring	
Soil, Water, Range, Wildlife, Forestry	$75,000
Administration/Overhead	$456,474
TOTAL	$2,472,412

Total revenues available less expense for operations	($2,196,635)

* Funds for fire suppression/administration are not included.
**Previously, planning and implementation was supposedly absorbed in each account. This proforma consolidates that function to provide more thorough and coordinated planning and oversight.

Comparisons

Federal agency funding was extensively studied in compiling this report. Information provided a virtual maze of 78 funding accounts, some similar between agencies, some unique to an agency. Tracking funds through these accounts was only partially possible. Of the total amount of money expended by both agencies combined, it is possible to trace approximately 25% to actual field projects. The remaining 75% are not traceable. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) responses, as received, illustrated that over $2.8 million was spent by both agencies combined during FY-1999. Of that amount, no credible information was found, nor is audit capacity possible, to explain where and how almost $2,000,000 was actually used.

The proposed pilot proforma assumes that appropriated funding will remain at the FY-1999 level and will continue to be available during the term of the Pilot. The proforma assumes that combined agency staffing levels remain at, or near, the present size. It also assumes that generated revenues will be retained and used as "working assets." Working assets are applied directly to those resource uses from which they were derived.

Resource management remains approximately the same except for a proposed shift in management emphasis toward more contracting and administration resulting in less reliance upon force account labor. The proposed proforma budget also includes placing more emphasis upon planning and implementation functions. Funding is increased in wildlife, threatened and endangered species, noxious weeds, monitoring, and recreation. Range administration/overhead, forestry, and minerals have overall decreased with more emphasis being placed on wildlife and threatened and endangered species, such as sage grouse habitat.

Resource monitoring is significantly increased by a factor of three times over current levels. Increased emphasis upon trend monitoring will provide the baseline from which the pilot project can be evaluated.

Administration/Overhead costs of Facilities & Equipment, Offices, Law Enforcement, and Mining Administration have been reduced to illustrate the partial savings expected from the effects of combining agencies.

Of that portion of the federal FOIA information that was traceable, it is apparent that at least 75 to 80% of all funds were expended upon labor in one fashion or another. There were, however, few records supplied which would indicate whether that labor was expended on resource project (field-type) improvements, administration, monitoring, or office work assignments.

It is apparent that trend monitoring receives very little emphasis by either of the agencies. Neither does one of the most pressing issues found within this pilot proposed area, noxious weed invasion and spread. Administration, in all its forms, does receive emphasis. A new management focus, it seems, is sorely needed, especially where such pressing resource problems demand immediate attention and expeditious and applicable use of funding resources.

A notation of the expenses devoted to timber management on the south half of the Sawtooth National Forest should be made here. The forest expended almost $400,000 in FY-1999 managing timber. In doing so, they harvested a reported 1,736,030 board feet. Emphasis was placed primarily on the issuance of salvage firewood permits, and these activities are accountable for over 85% of the volume sold. FOIA requests did not specify any revenue that might have been collected by the Forest Service in this regard and therefore none was reported. Serious forest health problems are indicated, as well.

This report is written with limitations fully exposed to the reader. Without additional detailed information and a willingness to spend enormous amounts of time trying to understand federal spending (assuming the information was provided), there is no pragmatic way in which to determine that an accurate and fair representation is being presented here. The pilot proforma is therefore an estimate only and should be reviewed as such.

PROPOSAL STRATEGIES

The management strategies and economic efficiencies of this pilot proposal will direct management toward measurable positive enhancement of the ecological assets of the area. Ecological assets include ***biologic***, ***economic***, and ***social*** parts. These parts are intertwined in a matrix of mutually dependent connection. The premise of this proposal includes the concept that the stabilization and improvement of each of these individual parts of the ecological base can only positively affect the others.

Management Strategies

The management strategies to be employed by this pilot are based firmly upon the concept that protection and enhancement of the biological part of the ecological assets creates the foundation from which the stability and enhancement of the others stem. Conversely, healthy economic and social bases provide the vehicles needed to promote and maintain the continuation of the protection and enhancement of the biological part.

In order to provide the vehicles needed, management will be modified to include more responsibility and frequent accountability of the economic part of management. At the same time, the present management system will be modified to include the social part through an increase in direct local public involvement with the management decision-making process.

The pilot proposal is based squarely on achieving measurable results and positive outcomes through altered management strategies over the term period. In order to frequently track results, an *aggressive application of trend monitoring* will be employed. This will include monitoring of the health and diversity of range and forest vegetation, water quality, and wildlife and aquatic species. Collection and appreciation of monitoring data will provide the baseline from which management strategy can be applied, and flexibly modified over time in order to reach the goal.

Application of funding will be modified. *Expenditures will be strategically directed* toward more use of outside contracting in order to maximize accomplishment and make a

maximum use of staff expertise while, at the same time, minimizing the costs of overhead, insurance, and equipment. Economic expenditures will include the application of working assets obtained from the collection of rents. These expenditures will be directed specifically at enhancement projects of those identified associated resources from which they emanate. A more direct system of meeting monetary obligations to local government is included in the proposal.

An *increased use of public participation* in the management is an asset to be tapped. The creation of a collaborative LSC, the extended use of local, state, and regional sources of scientific knowledge, and the expansion of local volunteerism can illustrate that the concept of concentrated local involvement can be effectively employed in achieving the balanced objectives of the pilot project.

Economic Efficiencies

Combining two separate land management agencies under one functional system can result in significant positive change in the way these ecological assets are protected and enhanced. Singular management strategies, based upon the clarity of a common goal as expressed in the pilot mission statement, can be directed toward common ends. Duplications of effort in many areas of endeavor can be eliminated.

Extension of available funding and working assets can be realized. Simplification of the manner in which funding assets are dispersed and audited will build public confidence in the management direction. Planning and scheduling efficiencies can be realized by annually providing stable funding sources that can be used for long-term achievement of goals, such as those identified in the five-year plan. Emulating the pilot management system after the simplified methods used by the State of Idaho will reduce administrative costs and extend the ability of management to direct additional effort toward achieving the goals of the pilot.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust proposal is unique. It proposes to combine two separate federal agencies under a single management structure. Simultaneously, it combines two distinctly different types of landscapes and resources, grasslands and forests. It proposes to combine shared and similar resources, such as water, fish and wildlife, and recreation resources, under a single, yet common set of management enhancement and protection strategies.

Furthermore, the proposal is an attempt to expand upon the concept that a more concentrated use of collaborative local involvement can aid in achieving the singularly clear mission of management. The proposal is designed to eliminate the primary causes of public land management “gridlock” by embracing the four trust land management principles of clarity of mission, accountability of the system, enforceability of the law, and perpetuity of resources. These principles are firmly imbedded within the body of the proposal.

It is a common perception that trusts are limited solely to monetary interests. It is true that much historical use of the trust concept has been applied in such a manner, and very

successfully so. There is, however, equal proof that use of the trust concept can be successfully applied to other endeavors of merit. One excellent example of this is The Nature Conservancy (Mann and Plummer, 1995). The trust is one of the world's oldest and most successful forms of conducting affairs where the trustees are required by law to act with "undivided loyalty" to the beneficiary(s). In this respect, this proposal embodies significant alteration of the basic incentives that underpin the policies and practices used in managing these ecological assets today.

This trust proposal is not based upon the management of monetary assets. It is designed to include making use of its limited revenue generating capacity and place it directly toward the achievement of trust mission objectives. Maintaining the level of existing federal funding, however, and combining it with use of self-generated "working assets" derived from resource uses, can provide the economic foundation needed. Doing so would stabilize the monetary budgets of management as well as provide for the sustainability and stability of local economies. There will be continued use of pilot area resources including recreation, grazing, mining, and timber.

The proposal includes embracing the seven functional objectives that were established in order to guide the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force in its deliberations. It includes involving the public on an expanded collaborative level with management and the trustees thereby creating a national to local connection composed of the common principles which bind the trust; clarity, accountability, enforceability, and perpetuity.

The proposal also includes acceptance of the Task Force recommendations for streamlining the planning and decision-making processes, an acceptance of the Task Force recommended appeals process, and places emphasis upon providing protection and enhancement of the resources while bringing stability to the local communities of people.

Admittedly, the trust concept is complex and will not be easily understood by the general public. This proposal is no different. The argument can be made, however, that the complexities and inadequacies of the current system(s) is one of the major causes of much local and national frustration, mistrust, and confusion all of which only serve to exacerbate the conflict between opinions and perceptions.

The Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Trust proposal advances Chief Jack Ward Thomas' suggestion that "it is time to deal with this problem in a comprehensive fashion." It proposes that a meaningful test be attempted. A test, which, even on a small scale, could ultimately point the way toward a better system of management and, perhaps a wider application in the future. Likewise, "thoroughly businesslike management," as proposed by this pilot project, and by President Roosevelt so long ago, if applied to these lands, will prove that their "usefulness" as a "good investment for the nation" can be, after all, fully realized.

A hearty recommendation is hereby made to the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners that, after carefully considering its drawbacks and merits, they grant approval and allow the proposal to be included in the continued implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

The proposal, although certainly complex, is elementary in its reasonableness. Its probability for success certainly depends upon the clarity of its purpose, the enforceability of its terms, the accountability of its systems, and the perpetuity of its effects. Only time and experiment can prove these tenets to be true. The ability to monitor and collect the data needed to illustrate its accomplishments over the term of the project must be instituted at the outset in order to provide these proofs. In contrast to accepting continued gridlock, it is conceivable that this proposal can result in achieving the positive ends desired and deserves the opportunity to be attempted.

This project was originally proposed by Bill Bachman and Resource Concepts, Inc. on behalf of local ranchers, recreationalists and elected officials. The project was further refined by the Working Group, Northwest Concepts, and the Idaho Cattle Association.