

# Recreation Experience Monitoring in Hells Canyon



Drs. Troy Hall & Ed Krumpke  
University of Idaho  
June, 2003

# Tonight's Agenda

- Review goals of monitoring
- Review topics being monitored
- Present ideas for monitoring approach
- Get your input on factors to monitor

# What is monitoring?

- Collects information to determine whether management plan objectives are being met
- Collects information to determine whether management actions have accomplished goals
- Monitoring ? Planning

# Goals and objectives of the Hells Canyon Plan

- Desired future condition:
  - “A blend of motorized and nonmotorized whitewater boating provides diverse user groups a variety of opportunities in a unique setting within a major river environment”
- Manage to ensure specified opportunities for recreation experiences (ROS)
- Manage to ensure that the river’s unique qualities are sustained (ORVs)

# Recreation Opportunities – 6 key features

- Access
  - Number of access sites
  - Visibility of roads
- Naturalness
  - Degree of modification
  - Visual impacts
- Social encounters
  - Number, type, duration, location
- Visitor management
  - Challenge, risk, self-reliance
  - Management controls, contacts
- Facilities
  - Amount of development
  - Toilets
- Visitor Impact
  - Visible at campsites

# Recreation Opportunities

- The river should be managed to provide different “levels” of the features in different places (the “spectrum”)



# Outstandingly Remarkable Values

- Recreation
  - Unique
  - Variety: sightseeing, wildlife observation, hiking, photography, fishing, boating
  - “exceptional” interpretive opportunities
- Scenery
  - “exemplary visual features and/or attractions”
  - “natural sounds produced by the river”
- Cultural
  - “one of the richest accumulations of riverine archaeological resources”
- Fishery
  - “abundant, unique, and diverse sport fishery”

# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Scope
  - Comprehensively assess factors and conditions identified in planning documents as important to the recreation experience
  - Assess only those factors that affect on-river experiences
  - Not looking at other canyon recreation



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- General approach
  - Representative sample of 2003-2004 boaters
  - Spring through fall (April-November)
  - Ability to characterize important sub-groups
  - Ability to characterize experiences on different river segments



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Sampling
  - On-site contact (collect names/addresses)
  - Mail survey (to random subset of those contacted)
  - Survey at 4-6 locations
  - Randomly selected blocks of days
  - Target of 1,500 responses

# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - ROS elements
  - ORVs
  - Effectiveness of management
  - Boaters' perceptions of change in experience
  - Items from past surveys
  - Other factors that impact experience quality



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - ROS elements
    - Access
    - Naturalness
    - Social encounters
    - Visitor management
    - Facilities
    - Visitor impact



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - ORVs
    - Scenery
    - Recreation
    - Cultural resources
    - Fisheries/wildlife
    - Geology



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - Effectiveness of management
    - Facilities (removal of toilets, tables; developed sites; navigational markers)
    - Regulation of craft (PWC; kickers)
    - Use restrictions (caps on use; non-motorized window; group size; aircraft)
    - Regulation on behavior (fire pans; waste pack-out; camping stay limits; designated site camping)





# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - Boaters' perceptions of change

# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - Items from past surveys
  - Surveys done in 1989, 1995, and 1999

## HELLS CANYON VISITOR PROFILE AND RECREATIONAL USE STUDY



Department of Wildland Recreation Management  
College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences  
Moscow, Idaho 83843



# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
  - Other factors that affect on-river experiences

# Recreation Monitoring Survey

- How are we developing questions?
  - Look at past surveys (HCNRA and elsewhere)
  - Develop specific new items
  - Peer review

# Timeline

- June, 2003 – public meetings
- July, 2003 – external review of monitoring plan
- August-November 2003 – data collection
- January 2004 – analysis of initial data
- Early spring 2004 – review and validation
- April – August, 2004 – data collection
- Winter, 2004 – report to USFS

# Questions for You:

- What factors (social, environmental, managerial) contribute most **positively** to your Hells Canyon recreation experiences?
- What factors (social, environmental, managerial) contribute most **negatively** to your Hells Canyon recreation experiences?



# USFS Monitoring in Hells Canyon

- HCNRA Act
- Wild & Scenic Rivers Act
- Recreation Setting
- Visual resource objectives
- Dispersed campsites
- Cultural/historic site protection
- Fisheries habitat
- Jetboat/fall chinook interaction
- Accidental catch of listed fisheries
- Tributary fisheries
- Bald eagles
- Peregrine falcons
- Bats
- McFarlane's four-o'clock
- Noxious weeds