

Recreation Experience Monitoring in Hells Canyon

Drs. Troy Hall & Ed Krumpe
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

2

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

3

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)

4

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

5

Recreation Opportunities

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

6

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”

7

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

8

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



9

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

10

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

11

Recreation Monitoring Survey

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



12

Recreation Monitoring Survey

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



13

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)



14

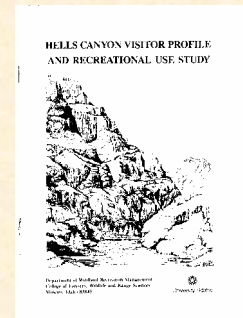
Recreation Monitoring Survey

- Survey topics
 - Boaters' perceptions of change

15

Recreation Monitoring Survey

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



16

Recreation Monitoring Survey

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

17

Recreation Monitoring Survey

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

18

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

19

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?

20

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

21