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Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

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# Summary Environmental Assessment

## Travel Plan Map Revision

### *Elimination of Motorized Cross-Country Travel and Motorized Route Designation*

**Sawtooth National Forest  
Fairfield Ranger District, Camas County, Idaho  
Ketchum Ranger District, Blaine County, Idaho  
Minidoka Ranger District, Twin Falls, Cassia, Power, and Oneida Counties,  
Idaho; Box Elder County, Utah**

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## Acronyms, Abbreviations and Initialisms

ATV	all-terrain vehicle
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>
EA	environmental assessment
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ft	foot/feet
FR	<i>Federal Register</i>
FR	forest road
IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
in.	inch(es)
IRA	inventoried roadless area
mi	mile(s)
MIS	management indicator species
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MVUM	motor vehicle use map
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFS	National Forest System
NHPA	National Heritage Preservation Act
OHV	off-highway vehicle
RD	ranger district
SNF	Sawtooth National Forest
SNRA	Sawtooth National Recreation Area
TEPCS	threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive
USC	<i>United States Code</i>
USDI	U.S. Department of Interior
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service





## Introduction

The Sawtooth National Forest (SNF) proposes to revise the current summer SNF Visitor/Travel Plan Map (Travel Plan Map, U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 1989) to restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails. The 1989 Travel Plan Map was reprinted in 2002, but no changes were made to routes with the re-printing. However, the 2002 printing did divide the travel plan map into two maps: a north-end map, which covers the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA), Ketchum Ranger District (RD), and the Fairfield RD; and a south-end map covering the Minidoka RD (2002 Travel Plan Map, north and south versions, USDA 2002).

The proposal to revise the travel plan map was in part, generated in response to the Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use; Final Rule, published November 9, 2005 (70 Federal Register [FR] 261, 2005; hereinafter referred to as Final Rule for Travel Management). This Final Rule for Travel Management requires that the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), with input from the public, prepare a motor vehicle use map (MVUM) designating those roads, trails, and areas that will be open to motorized travel. In addition, the *Sawtooth National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (SNF Forest Plan, USDA 2003) includes direction to manage motorized and non-motorized travel to provide for public safety; meet resource objectives and access needs; mitigate road and trail damage; and minimize maintenance costs and user conflicts.

To facilitate reading and understanding this summary, the proposal to revise the current summer SNF 2002 Travel Plan Map (USDA 2002) to restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails is referred to from this point forward as a route designation project; the project area may also be referred to as the route designation area(s). The EA is also referred to as the route designation EA. References to the travel plan map is to the most current map(s) available to the public and includes both the north and south-end maps (USDA 2002). The project/analysis areas for the route designation EA are located within the Ketchum, Fairfield, and Minidoka RDs of the SNF located in both Idaho and Utah.

This summary environmental assessment (EA) presents a brief overview of the more in-depth EA, which details the environmental effects of the proposed route designation alternatives and a no action alternative, as well as addressing comments and concerns expressed by the public during the EA comment period. Additional documentation, including the full EA, route descriptions, maps, and more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project record located at the at SNF Supervisor's Office in Twin Falls, Idaho, or on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sawtooth/projects/>.

## Background

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Most SNF visitors use motorized vehicles to access the SNF either for recreational purposes such as sightseeing, camping, hiking, hunting and fishing; commercial purposes such as logging, mining, grazing, outfitting and guiding; administrative purposes such as inspecting and maintaining utilities and research stations; or for a host of other multiple uses the SNF serves. For many visitor types, most notably recreationists, motor vehicles represent an integral part of their experience. Pickup trucks, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), motorcycles, and a variety of other conveyances are used by visitors to access SNF roads and trails. Motor vehicles are a legitimate and appropriate way for visitors to enjoy their SNF—in the right places, at the right time, and with proper management.

The SNF travel plan map was first established in 1989 (USDA 1989) and reprinted in 2002 as two maps: a north-end map, which covers the SNRA, Ketchum RD, and the Fairfield RD; and a south-end map covering the Minidoka RD (Travel Plan Map, north and south versions, USDA 2002). The purpose of a travel plan map is to show visitors the system of roads and trails they may use, as well as how and when they may use them. The SNF motorized transportation system ranges from paved roads designed for passenger cars to single-track trails used by motorcycles. Many roads designed for high-clearance vehicles (i.e., sport utility vehicle) also allow use by ATVs, and other off-highway vehicles (OHVs) not normally found on city streets. Almost all SNF trails also serve non-motorized users including hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

In addition to this managed system of roads and trails, portions of the SNF contain a significant number of user-created roads and trails. These routes are concentrated in areas where cross-country travel by motor vehicles is currently allowed, and often include dense networks of intersecting paths. Generally these routes have not been properly designed and many are located in environmentally sensitive areas such as riparian areas and on lands with highly erosive soils. It has been 18 years since the last comprehensive inventory of user-created routes on the SNF was completed. Continued increases in such routes has made a definitive inventory difficult to document.

Consistent with the Forest Plan (USDA 2003), the SNF has initiated phased site-specific travel management planning (Forest Plan Objective REOB17).

## Purpose and Need for Action

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The SNF is proposing to revise the summer SNF 2002 Travel Plan Map (USDA 2002) to restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails. This project was, in part, generated in response to the Final Rule for Travel Management (70 *Federal Register* [FR] 261, 2005), as it is implemented through 36 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) §§ 212, 251, 261 and 295, which requires the USFS, with input from the public, to prepare an MVUM eliminating cross-country motorized travel and designating roads, trails and areas available for motorized use on all National Forest System (NFS) lands. Route designation is particularly important as the SNF has, and continues to receive, increased motorized use that has resulted in increased user conflicts, public safety concerns, resource damage, and wildlife-related impacts.

While complying with the Final Rule for Travel Management, the SNF must also meet SNF Forest Plan (USDA 2003) requirements to manage motorized and non-motorized travel in such a manner to minimize damage to SNF resources such as soil, water, wildlife, and vegetation; and to minimize the potential for conflicts among different types of visitors. The SNF must also conduct the route designation EA in compliance with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 *United States Code* [U.S.C.] 55 §§ 4321 et seq. 1982, as amended).

Activities that are exempt from the Final Rule for Travel Plan Management include aircraft, watercraft, over-snow vehicles, limited administrative use, emergency and law enforcement response, national defense purposes and uses specifically authorized under a written authorization (e.g., firewood cutting permit, grazing permit, special-use authorization).

## Proposed Action

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The SNF's proposed revisions to the summer travel plan map (USDA 2002) to eliminate cross-country travel and restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails include the following:

1. Designation for use of certain existing roads and trails that physically exist on the ground, and are receiving use, but are not currently on the SNF transportation system of roads and trails. The proposed revision would add additional routes to the transportation system.
2. Changes in type of use or season of use to the current SNF transportation system of roads and trails.
3. Closure of a limited number of system trails and roads that are redundant, not needed for administrative purposes, or are causing resource impacts that cannot be mitigated.
4. Designation of dispersed motorized camping sites or corridors. Dispersed motorized camping would be allowed within 300 feet (ft) of designated roads or 100 ft of designated trails.
5. Elimination of cross-country motorized travel throughout the entire area, except for provisions for parking vehicles on the edge of designated roads for purposes other than camping.
6. Prohibition of the use of motorized vehicles off designated roads or trails for big game retrieval.
7. Designation of some roads as "mixed use," open to both highway legal vehicles and ATVs.

In addition to revising the travel plan map, the SNF has identified trail and/or road proposals that are being considered for future planning. No new roads or trails are proposed for construction under the route designation EA. Any new construction or major reroutes required to bring trails up to standard will require site-specific, project-level NEPA analysis before they may be added to the system.

Based on the decisions made, an MVUM will be prepared in accordance with the SNF Forest Plan (USDA 2003). The MVUM shall become the authoritative document governing motorized travel on the SNF as well as the enforcement tool for all public motorized travel on the SNF. Under the Final Rule for Travel Management (70 FR 261, 2005), the MVUM must be reviewed and revised, as necessary, annually.

It should be noted that:

- The EA only applies to changes and additions to the summer travel plan map (USDA 2002). Previous travel management decisions made through SNF planning activities, NEPA decisions, or special orders will remain in effect until specifically analyzed or unless changes to them are being proposed.
- Winter motorized use is not addressed in the analysis. Over-snow use will continue to be managed under the current SNF Travel Plan Map (USDA 2002).
- Activities that are exempt from the Final Rule for Travel Plan Management include aircraft, watercraft, over-snow vehicles, limited administrative use, emergency and law enforcement response, national defense purposes, and uses specifically authorized under a written authorization (70 FR 261, 2005).

## Area to be Analyzed \_\_\_\_\_

The route designation area that was evaluated for the EA is shown in Figure 1 and includes the following areas on the SNF:

- Areas G and H on the Ketchum and Fairfield RDs
- Portions of Area A in and around Kelley Creek Flats on the Fairfield RD
- Seasonal closures throughout the Fairfield RD
- Section 7, T3N, R13E, and Sections 12–14, T3N, R12E, on the Fairfield RD, and areas shown as K, L, and Q on the Cassia, Albion, Black Pine, and the Sublett divisions of the Minidoka RD
- The Raft River Division (Utah) of the Minidoka RD is included in this analysis and was covered under a previous special order implementing Box Elder County Ordinance 222.

Motorized use on the SNRA, the northern two-thirds of the Ketchum RD, and the northern half of the Fairfield RD is already restricted to designated routes and is not part of the project area or EA. These areas will continue to be managed according to the SNF Travel Plan Map (USDA 2002).

## Decision Framework \_\_\_\_\_

There are three Deciding Officials—the District Rangers for the Minidoka, Fairfield, and Ketchum RDs. Each District Ranger will make a decision that applies to the land for which the Ranger is responsible. Given the purpose and need, the deciding official reviews the proposed action and the other alternatives to make the following decisions:

1. Will the proposed action proceed as proposed, as modified by an alternative, or not at all?

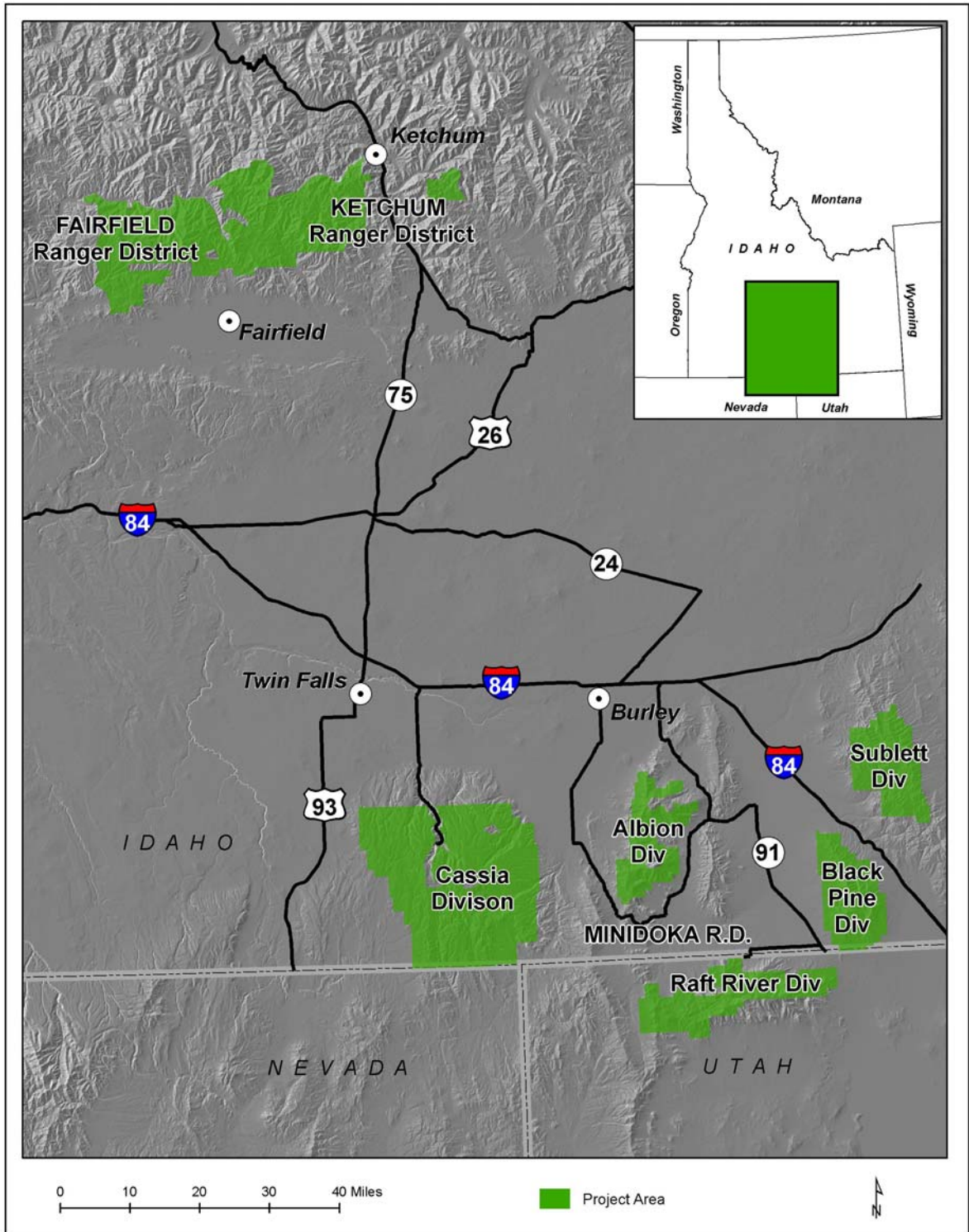


Figure 1. SNF Route Designation project area map.

2. What mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will the USFS apply to the decision?
3. Will the decision require a Forest Plan amendment?

## Public Involvement

The SNF began the process of involving the public in developing the initial motorized route proposal in September 2004. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment during the scoping period of July 1–September 30, 2006, and the proposal has been listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions since October 1, 2006. Public involvement efforts included the following:

- Placing comment cards, which requested public comment and involvement in the process, on vehicles parked at trailheads throughout the project area
- Publicizing, through two news releases, the need for public involvement through comments and participation in open-house presentations
- Contacting, via telephone and meetings, 28 organizations and government entities, which included riding clubs, environmental and recreation groups, and County Commissions
- Meeting and making presentations to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, as well as numerous user groups, organizations, and Tribes.
- Conducting open-house presentations in Fairfield, Malta, Burley, Twin Falls, Hailey, and Gooding.

As a result of initial public involvement efforts, the SNF received written comments from 111 individuals or organizations. Twenty commentors provided detailed maps of roads, trails, and connectors proposed for designation.

The formal 30-day comment period was initiated on October 4, 2006, and continued through November 4, 2006. Written comments were received from 222 parties during the formal scoping period. Comments received during the scoping periods were used to develop a list of issues to be considered during the route designation EA.

A 29-day courtesy review period was initiated on November 1, 2007, and continued through November 30, 2007. This review period allowed the public to review the EA and identify issues that may have been overlooked previously. Written comments were received from 158 parties during the 29-day courtesy review period. No new issues were identified.

## Issues

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The USFS reviewed and separated the issues identified through the public comments into two groups: significant and non-significant issues. Significant issues were defined as those directly or indirectly caused by implementing the proposed action. Significant issues require project-specific alternatives, mitigation measures or design elements to address the effects that proposed activities might have on them. Non-significant issues were identified as those outside the scope of the proposed action; already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; irrelevant to the decision to be made; or conjectural and not

supported by scientific or factual evidence. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has implementing regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500 et seq., 2005) for NEPA that explain this delineation in Sec. 1501.7, "...identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review." A list of non-significant issues and reasons regarding their categorization as non-significant can be found in the project record. The USFS identified seven significant issues from topics raised during scoping.

## **Issue 1. Recreation**

Some commenters expressed concern that elimination of some non-classified roads and trails, as well as elimination of cross-country travel will reduce access for firewood, hunting, dispersed motorized camping, OHV recreation, and general travel. By reducing the amount of roads and trails open to motorized use, it may focus use on fewer trails creating more user conflicts. Some people said that eliminating motorized roads and trails or converting them to non-motorized use would discriminate against people with disabilities or advanced age by denying them the opportunity to use those roads and trails and to enjoy the SNF. Some commenters expressed a desire to have access to quality ATV trail opportunities.

In contrast, others stated that the quantity and location of motorized routes to be designated in the proposed action would adversely affect their non-motorized opportunities. They seek a more silent recreation experience and desire less motorized routes. Some requested that areas currently being managed for motorized recreation be converted to a non-motorized management emphasis. Others thought there is already enough SNF land being managed for non-motorized use.

Some hunters also requested more non-motorized hunting opportunities as it provided them with a quality hunt experience. In response to the quality hunt issue, others suggested that seasonal motorized closures of areas during hunting season be applied only to hunters and that other motorized users should not have to honor the closures.

## **Issue 2. Vegetation**

The SNF is home to many endemic species. Commentors expressed the concern that the proposed action may affect the health, vigor, and diversity of native plants and riparian vegetation, as well as threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive (TEPCS) plant species.

Given the potential for increased use on designated routes, there is a concern that routes designated within known populations or potential habitat may pose greater threats, including the introduction of noxious weeds, to these sensitive areas. Disturbance of soil surfaces and vegetation can set the stage for weed establishment. Concerns were raised that OHV use spreads noxious weeds, which in turn harms native vegetation as well as TEPCS species. Additionally, non-native plants can spread quickly and affect the amount and distribution of native plant species, as well as the animals that have evolved to rely on them. Travel routes are often invasion corridors for the spread of noxious weeds and other invasive species. By concentrating use to designated routes, there is the increased potential for higher concentrations of non-native plants to establish along these corridors given increased disturbance and opportunity for weed introduction. However, eliminating cross-country

travel would reduce the potential for new infestations away from main travel routes going undetected. Some commentors do not accept the idea that motorized use is more impactful to vegetation or entails more risk of noxious weed spread than non-motorized use.

### Issue 3. Soil and Hydrology

Commentors expressed concerns about impacts to soils and hydrology.

**Water Quality.** Travel routes can impact water quality by increasing water temperatures resulting from either, a combination, or all, of the following: loss of riparian vegetation, increases in sediment, or increases in chemical pollution (hydrocarbons). Riparian vegetation can be lost by trampling; water quality can be altered by the delivery of increased sediments from improperly designed or maintained routes and from chronic or catastrophic erosion from routes and upland sources; and pollutants can wash off or leak from vehicles at stream crossings.

**Slope Hydrology.** Travel routes can alter slope hydrology by concentrating and re-routing overland flows and intercepted ground water, causing gullies where too much water is drained from the road and trail surface or ditchlines to a single location, and increasing stream densities within the watershed by directly draining road and trail treads and ditchlines into the channel network. Repeated motorized cross-country travel can lead to user-created routes that often have greater impacts than routes that have been constructed and engineered to reduce interactions with the water cycle and erosional processes.

**Wetland and Riparian Conservation Area Condition.** Wetland and riparian areas are particularly vulnerable to motorized vehicle impacts because human use is concentrated in and near these areas and the terrain and gradient often provide easy access. Off-route use can modify wetland hydrology by causing headcutting or by altering or concentrating diffuse water flows. Either process induces erosion, and can drain the local water table, affecting wetland and riparian condition and function. Rutting and compaction can lead to a loss of organic content of wetland soils from oxidation, which can lead to a loss of productivity and hydrologic function.

### Issue 4. Fisheries

Commentors expressed their concerns about the proposed action and its affects to fish species and their habitat.

**Aquatic Habitat.** Travel routes can impact aquatic habitat when a route encroaches on a stream, removing riparian vegetation and increasing streambank erosion and sedimentation. Loss of riparian vegetation and increased bank erosion can widen stream channels and alter aquatic habitat. Increased sediment delivery to streams can fill in spawning and rearing habitats for aquatic organisms decreasing their numbers. Road and trail crossings can fragment aquatic habitats by creating migration barriers.

### Issue 5. Wildlife

Roads and trails can create habitat fragmentation, and human use of roads and trails can cause disturbance to wildlife. The density of roads and trails and the amount and frequency



of their use can impact wildlife due to disturbance during critical life stages, compromised security, and/or impacts to habitat. Particular concerns exist for the following:

- Big game (elk, deer) security during hunting seasons and critical life stages such as calving and fawning
- Existing big horn sheep populations and the effects to future potential reintroductions
- Effects to SNF management indicator species (MIS)
- Effects to federally listed threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate wildlife species
- Effects to Region 4 USFS sensitive wildlife species
- Effects to other native and desirable non-native species, such as migratory bird habitat.

### **Issue 6. Heritage**

Ground-disturbing maintenance and closing and decommissioning user-created routes and system routes have potential to affect heritage resources. If at some time in the future it is determined that ground-disturbing work would occur, National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA, 16 U.S.C. §§ 470 et seq., 2000), Section 106 compliance will be conducted prior to any ground-disturbing activities. If cultural resources are located during the Section 106 field review, avoidance and or mitigation of potential impacts would be developed in consultation with appropriate Tribes and the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office.

### **Issue 7. Economics**

In compliance with 36 CFR 212.55 (a), an analysis must be completed of the anticipated economic effects of route designation on the SNF road and trail maintenance funds and the changes in actual maintenance that can be expected. The need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the proposed action or an alternative is implemented, and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration must be analyzed. Disclosing economic effects is required by 36 CFR 212 Subpart B (36 CFR § 212, 2007) and will be addressed in this EA.

## **Findings Required By Other Laws \_\_\_\_\_**

### **Consistency with Sawtooth Land and Resource Management Plan**

The EA is consistent with the SNF Forest Plan (USDA 2003) goals, objectives, standards and guidelines. A complete consistency checklist is part of the project record.

### **National Environmental Policy Act (1970)**

NEPA directs all federal agencies to consider and report the potential environmental impacts of proposed federal actions. The EA was prepared in compliance with NEPA and the CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 30 §§ 1500 et seq. 2005).

## **Endangered Species Act (1973)**

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) provides for the protection and conservation of threatened and endangered plant and animal species. All action alternatives were assessed to determine their effects on threatened and endangered plant and animal species. A biological assessment/evaluation consistent with the requirements of this act was prepared on the preferred alternative. Coordination with the U.S. Department of Interior (USDI) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through SNF personnel has occurred. A Letter of Concurrence from the USFWS on the biological assessment/evaluation is anticipated by January 25, 2008. Concurrence will be received prior to a Decision Notice being issued on the selected alternative and a copy will be placed within the project planning file.

## **Environmental Justice**

In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 12898 (59 FR 32, 1994), all action alternatives were assessed to determine whether they would have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority or low-income human populations. This EA considered such programs, policies, and activities. No effects were identified during scoping or the formal 30-day comment period on the proposed action.

## **National Historic Preservation Act**

The NHPA of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 470 et seq., 2000), provides for the protection of prehistoric and historic resources. Archeological site investigation did not reveal known sites that would be jeopardized by the designation of a system of motorized routes. The proposed action and alternatives were reviewed and determined to have no effect on any historic properties or heritage resources. Concurrence from the Idaho SHPO was obtained on August 16, 2007.

## **Fort Bridger Treaty of July 3, 1868**

The relationship of the U.S. Government with American Indian tribes is based on legal agreements between sovereign nations. The Fort Bridger Treaty of July 3, 1868, provided for the establishment of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. It also granted hunting and fishing rights to Shoshone–Bannock tribal members on “all unoccupied lands of the United States.” This right applies to all public domain lands that were reserved for NFS purposes that are presently administered by the SNF. These rights are still in effect, and management actions recognize these rights.

## **Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 703–712, 2006) and subsequent EO 13186 (66 FR 3853, 2001) and memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the USFWS and USFS (USFWS and USFS, 2001) provide for the protection of migratory birds.

The proposed action and alternatives comply with USFWS 724 FW 2, Migratory Bird Permits (USFWS 2003), related to the applicability of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to federal agencies and requirements for permits for “take.” In addition, the alternatives comply with EO 13186 because the analysis meets agency obligations as defined under the January

16, 2001, MOU between the USFS and USFWS designed to complement EO 13186. High priority migratory bird species breeding habitats are analyzed and discussed in the effects analysis chapter in this EA. If new requirements or direction result from subsequent interagency MOUs pursuant to EO 13186, the Decision Notice will be evaluated to ensure that it is consistent.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers Act**

River segments and their corridors that are eligible, suitable, or designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers (16 U.S.C. 28 §§ 1271–1287, 2006) are managed to retain their free-flowing status, classification, and outstandingly remarkable values for scenery, wildlife, cultural, fish, geology, hydrology, and ecological/ botanical resources. Opportunities are provided so the public can understand the uniqueness of eligible, suitable, and designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. The proposed action and alternatives do not make changes to routes within eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers, and therefore, do not affect their status.

### **Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Amendments of 1972**

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Amendments of 1972 (Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 26 §§ 1251 et seq. 2006) was enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and ecological integrity of the Nation's waters. The proposed action and alternatives are consistent with the Clean Water Act and its amendments. The proposed action and alternatives do not affect any wetlands and, therefore, no permit is required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A State of Idaho permit for streambed alteration is not required because no streambeds are affected by the proposed action or alternatives.

### **Inventoried Roadless Areas**

Inventoried roadless areas (IRAs) possess social and ecological values and characteristics that are becoming scarce in our Nation's increasingly developed landscape. Protecting air and water quality, biodiversity, and opportunities for personal renewal are highly valued qualities of roadless areas. Conserving IRAs leaves a legacy of natural areas for future generations. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule (36 CFR §§ 294 et seq. 2007) limits or prohibits activities that would negatively affect these values.

The project area includes 19 IRAs. There are no new roads proposed, nor are there any improvements to existing roads proposed within any of the IRAs. Therefore, the proposed action and alternatives would not affect the status of IRAs. A worksheet documenting the effects to the IRA attributes is part of the route designation EA project record.

### **36 CFR §§ 212, 251, 261, and 295 Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use**

These regulations address travel management on NFS-managed public lands related to motor vehicle use, including the use of OHVs. The final rule requires designation of those roads, trails, and areas that are open to motor vehicle use. Designations will be made by class of vehicle and, if appropriate, by time of year. The final rule also prohibits the use of motor vehicles off the designated system, as well as use of motor vehicles on routes and in areas that are not consistent with the designations.

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## The Proposed Action and Alternatives

This section presents a brief description of each alternative considered. This section also presents the alternatives in comparative form, through the use of tables, which are provided at the back of this section. Some of the information used to compare the alternatives is based upon the design objectives of the alternative and some of the information is based upon the environmental, social, and economic effects of implementing each alternative.

The process of formulating alternatives began with the scoping process. Analysis of public comments identified the issues as sufficiently important to warrant alternatives, mitigation, and/or an effects analysis addressing them. The resulting range of alternatives developed and considered is consistent with the purpose and need for action and with the issues raised.

The interdisciplinary team recommended, and the District Rangers approved, the following alternatives in addition to the required no action alternative. The alternatives respond to public input and the issues, while addressing the purpose and need. Each alternative has specific effects associated with it, and how and to what degree it addresses the purpose and need. For the purposes of this analysis, SNF roads are routes that are available to motorized vehicles when used consistent with state laws.

### Alternative 1, No Action (Baseline) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Fairfield, Ketchum, and Minidoka RDs

Under the no action alternative (referred to hereinafter as “Alternative 1”) current management plans would continue to guide management of the route designation areas within all three RDs. The USFS would not restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails (except in areas that are currently restricted) and would not add any new restrictions nor would any other changes in the SNF transportation system be made at this time. Cross-country motor vehicle use would continue to be allowed. Motorized use of non-classified routes would continue and new routes would continue to be established. Changes to the transportation system would continue to be made on a case-by-case basis.

This alternative has the greatest amount of routes available on the ground. This alternative represents what the USFS has either been able to inventory or is aware exists as of this analysis. This alternative does not address several issues including trails not designed or built to standard, management of a system that is sustainable long term, and quality trail experiences.

### Action Alternatives 2–4 \_\_\_\_\_

Short descriptions of the intent of each alternative and how they respond to the issues identified through scoping are presented.

#### Alternative 2, Proposed Action—Modified

The “modified proposed action” alternative (hereinafter referred to as “Alternative 2”) was created in response to suggestions on the original USFS proposal. The proposed action was

modified to correct mapping errors, to close routes, to change designated uses, and to add seasonal closures. This alternative's objective is to provide improved motorized and non-motorized recreation while reducing effects to wildlife and their habitats. The USFS would restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails, and changes would be made to the SNF transportation system. Cross-country motor vehicle use would be eliminated. The majority of motorized use of non-system (user-created) routes would be eliminated.

### **Alternative 3**

Under Alternative 3, travel route management proposals were based on providing additional and improved motorized recreation opportunities and respond directly to Issue 1, Recreation. This alternative has additional ATV and motorcycle trails proposed using the routes that are shown on the current travel plan map (USDA 2002) as an open route. The USFS would restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails. Cross-country motor vehicle use would be eliminated. This alternative would provide more opportunity for motorized use by designating more roads and trails than are being designated under Alternative 2.

### **Alternative 4**

This alternative was created in response to the comments that were received during the scoping process concerning the negative effects of motorized recreation on wildlife populations and habitat. Alternative 4 responds directly to Issue 5 and indirectly to Issues 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7. The USFS would restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails. Cross-country motor vehicle use would be eliminated. Motorized use of non-system (user-created) routes would be eliminated. This alternative concentrates motorized access in areas where these types of activities are presently occurring while reducing existing routes or minimizing new trail and road designations. This alternative would provide for improved wildlife security and habitat by designating fewer motorized roads and trails than are designated under Alternative 2.

### **Actions Common to Alternatives 2–4**

In response to public comments on the proposal, mitigation measures were developed to reduce some of the potential resource impacts the various alternatives may cause. The mitigation measures would be applied to any of the action alternatives.

1. Any new construction of a trail or road will require site-specific project level NEPA analysis before it could be added to the system.
2. Dispersed camping accessed by motor vehicles would be allowed within 300 ft of designated roads or 100 ft of designated trails except in areas such as campgrounds, where camping is limited to designated sites only. Problem areas will continue to be mitigated and managed through administrative actions and larger scale analysis including site setbacks/delineation, signing, designation of sites, restoration and closures.
3. Cross-country motorized travel will be eliminated throughout the entire route designation area.

4. Big game retrieval using motorized vehicles will be prohibited off of designated roads or trails.
5. Vehicle parking will be allowed on the edge of designated roads for purposes other than camping (see No. 2 above).
6. Some roads will be designated as “mixed use,” open to both highway legal vehicles and ATVs.
7. Non-system routes that become system roads or trails in this process will be maintained to appropriate standards for trail class and road maintenance level.
8. New routes on private, state, or Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands within the SNF boundary will be open to public use only through right-of-way or easements obtained for the purposes of public access. Travel management decisions considered under this EA pertain only to USFS-administered public lands.

## Alternative Description by RD \_\_\_\_\_

Below are narrative descriptions of each alternative presented by RD (Fairfield, Ketchum, and Minidoka). Associated route designations and maps of each alternative are provided in the project record located at the SNF Supervisor’s Office in Twin Falls, Idaho, and on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sawtooth/projects/>.

### **Fairfield RD**

The Fairfield RD has become a destination for single-track motorized recreation. In addition to the established system, there are 310 miles (mi) of non-system routes within the route designation area. These numbers represent an estimate of the number of non-system trails and roads as the best data available at this time. These numbers were gathered from both private and USFS current and historical databases. It is reasonable to assume that there could be more unreported routes on the ground.

Existing trails are currently used by both motorized and non-motorized users. With direction to eliminate cross-country travel, and in consideration of the increasing number of ATV riders visiting the RD, it was determined that new trails and loops needed to be considered, and that trail widths need to be wide enough to accommodate ATVs.

### **Alternative 1**

Under Alternative 1, current management plans would continue to guide management of the route designation areas within the Fairfield RD. The USFS would not restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails (except in areas that are currently restricted) and would not add any new restrictions nor would any other changes in the SNF transportation system be made at this time. Cross-country motor vehicle use would continue to be allowed. Motorized use of non-system (user-created) routes would continue and new routes would continue to be established. Changes to the transportation system would continue to be made on a case-by-case basis.

### **Actions Common to Alternatives 2–4**

A development plan has been completed for Kelley Creek Flats camping area on the Fairfield RD and is included in Alternatives 2, 3 and 4. This popular dispersed camping site has become a base for motorized recreation. Camping and associated use of ATVs and motorcycles in this area created new management issues that were analyzed under a separate action. To implement these actions, designation of existing roads and trails in this area is included under all action alternatives.

Closure of portions of the Wine Creek and Devils Dive trails is included under Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 to provide greater habitat buffers for wildlife.

### **Alternative 2**

The proposed action was modified through scoping to consider additional changes in trail use, designation of existing user-created routes, and seasonal closures.

To address the desire for non-motorized trails in close proximity to the town of Fairfield, and in particular to Soldier Mountain Ski Area, the North Fork Soldier Creek trail is proposed for non-motorized use only. Salt Creek Trail is being changed from a motorized single-track trail to a non-motorized trail.

Motorized access is provided at Free Gold for ATVs (trails less than 50 inches [in.] wide) and at South Fork Soldier Creek Trail for single-track motorized. A motorized single-track trail is also proposed in Gardner Gulch and Cold Spring Ridge.

Existing motorized single-track trails that have been widened by ATVs are proposed for a change in use on the Blue Ridge and Cannonball Mountain trails. Existing user-created routes are proposed as motorized trails for vehicles less than 50 in. wide in the Grouse Butte Area and on Kelley Creek Flats.

It is recognized that recreational use is occurring on non-system roads throughout the project area. Thirty miles of non-system roads, most of which were developed for timber or mining purposes, are proposed for designation as trails less than 50 in. or motorized trails greater than 50 in.

Alternative 2 was also developed to balance recreational use with the need to provide additional protection for big game populations and their habitat. Hunting season closures are proposed on the North Fork, Middle Fork, Roanhide and Cold Spring trails. Additional seasonal road closures are also proposed in the Williams and Rosetta Creek drainages. Bounds Creek Trail and the lower 1.5 mi of Beaver Creek Trail would be eliminated from the system.

Trails identified for future planning include the West Fork Kelley Creek, which is proposed as a motorized trail for vehicles under 50 in. This trail will require major re-construction and site-specific analysis will need to be completed. The Soldier Mountain Front Trail is an existing single-track trail that has been widened by ATVs and is proposed as a motorized trail for vehicles under 50 in. Over 3 mi of this trail traverses BLM-managed public land and will require coordination on the right-of-way.



**Alternative 3**

In response to public comment on the proposed action, additional ATV and motorcycle opportunities are considered under Alternative 3. In addition to the routes proposed under Alternative 2, a change in use is considered for ATVs on portions of trails 7832 and 7087, north of Smoky Dome. Existing motorized single-track routes are proposed for designation and are located between Roanhide and Deer Point, in West Fork Willow Creek off of Forest Road (FR) 70017 and include two connectors to Dollarhide Summit.

Deer Mountain and Elk Ridge are existing user-created routes that were identified to be designated as ATV trails. These routes currently exist on the ground but may require re-routes to address resource concerns. If these routes require major construction, a separate analysis would be required.

**Alternative 4**

This alternative is based upon providing greater habitat buffers for wildlife by reducing trail densities. This alternative would provide fewer motorized trail opportunities as compared to Alternative 2. The Miller Creek Road is proposed for closure under this alternative, and the majority of non-system roads would not be designated for public use. Table 2. Ketchum RD comparison of alternative components shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Fairfield RD.

**Table 1. Fairfield RD comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action Baseline	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	217,789 <sup>a</sup>	—	—	—
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel	203,913	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	0	12	1	12
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	195	146	169	143
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	9	50	69	47
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	29	30	12
Miles of road open to the public	161	162	162	149

*a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.*

## **Ketchum RD**

The Ketchum RD has a well-established motorized single-track trail system. In addition to the established system, there are 82 mi of non-system routes within the route designation area. These numbers represent an estimate of the number of non-system routes that the SNF has data on at this time. These numbers were gathered from both private and USFS current and historical databases. It is reasonable that there could be more unreported routes on the ground.

### **Alternative 1**

Under Alternative 1, current management plans would continue to guide management of the route designation areas within the Ketchum RD. The USFS would not restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails (except in areas that are currently restricted), would not add any new restrictions, nor would any other changes in the SNF transportation system be made at this time. Cross-country motor vehicle use would continue to be allowed. Motorized use of non-system (user-created) routes would continue and new routes would continue to be established. Changes to the transportation system would continue to be made on a case-by-case basis.

### **Alternative 2**

This alternative was developed to provide a managed system of trails and roads with a focus on backcountry travel.

Proposed single-track motorized trail system additions under Alternative 2 would include an existing motorized route between the Cow Creek and Mahoney Ridge trails. The previously closed Sawmill Creek Trail out of the Greenhorn Trailhead would be added to the system inventory for use by hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists.

Alturas Gulch connecting to the Cow Creek–Greenhorn system is proposed for single-track motorized trail but will require construction of 3.0 mi of trail, and will require additional analysis. A connector from the end of the Panther Gulch Road to Howard’s Trail is proposed for motorized single track, but the existing route will need reroutes and may need additional analysis.

Other major changes occur in the Cove Creek area. A system of single-track trails would be designated connecting Cove Creek Road to the Indian Creek, Quigley Creek, and Baugh Creek roads. Some of these trails would require coordination and approval from the BLM. Lower portions (0.4 mi or less) of the Scree Quarry, Finley Gulch, Fowler Gulch, and Big Witch Creek non-system roads would be designated as trails open to all vehicles under Alternative 2.

Prior to the construction or reconstruction of any new trail proposed for addition to the SNF trail inventory, additional site-specific analysis and disclosure of environmental effects would be required.

The Rough Canyon and Red Rock timber sale roads, which access multiple dispersed camping sites, are non-system roads proposed for addition to the inventoried trail system.

Addition of these roads would allow for continued dispersed camping in the area south of Warm Springs Road.

Through development of Alternative 2, two areas were prioritized to provide for OHV opportunities in the near future. These include the Wolfstone–Kinsey Creek Loop and a system of trails in the Middle Fork Warm Spring, South Fork Warm Spring, and Meadow Creek areas south along the Smoky Mountain crest to the head of Frys Gulch. Designation of the Wolfstone–Kinsey Creek Loop to an OHV loop would require coordination and approval from the BLM.

**Alternative 3**

This alternative is based upon increasing motorized opportunities available compared to Alternative 2. Additional motorized trail opportunities in this alternative include an OHV loop connecting lower Finley Gulch to lower Big Witch Creek, a single-track trail connecting Baugh Creek to Fisher Canyon via Trail Canyon, and designating the Meadow Creek Trail as open to all vehicles. This alternative would also designate the existing trail from Dollarhide Summit connecting to the Middle Fork Warm Spring Trail. Reconstruction and designation of this trail would require approval and coordination with the Idaho Department of Lands.

The previously closed Sawmill Creek Trail, off of the Greenhorn Trailhead, would be added to the system inventory for use by hikers, equestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists.

**Alternative 4**

This alternative was developed to provide greater habitat buffers for wildlife. The most significant changes in Alternative 4 from Alternative 2 are the elimination of all motorized trails in the Cove Creek area except for Driveway Gulch; elimination of the Alturas Gulch trail and the Panther Gulch–Howard’s Trail connector; and redesignation of the Wolfstone–Kinsey OHV Loop Trail to a single-track trail. The Limekiln Road, 70101, would be closed at the SNF boundary. All non-system roads proposed as trails open to all vehicles would also be eliminated. Table 2 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Ketchum RD.

**Table 2. Ketchum RD comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action Baseline	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	76,822 <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel.	74,982	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	8	8	7	8
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	83	87	90	86
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	0	14	11	8
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	4	4	10	0

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action Baseline	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Miles of road open to the public.	34	34	36	33
<i>a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.</i>				

## Minidoka RD

The Minidoka RD has become a destination for ATV motorized recreation. In addition to the established system, there are 53 mi of non-system routes on the Albion Division; 41 mi of non-system routes on the Black Pine Division; 443 mi of non-system routes on the Cassia Division; 142 mi of non-system routes on the Raft River Division; and 65 mi of non-system routes on the Sublett Division. These numbers represent an estimate of the number of non-system trails and roads that the SNF has data on at this time. These numbers were gathered from both private individuals and USFS current and historical databases. It is reasonable that there could be more unreported routes on the ground.

### Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1, current management plans would continue to guide management of the route designation areas within all five divisions of the Minidoka RD. The USFS would not restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails (except in areas that are currently restricted), would not add any new restrictions, nor would any other changes in the SNF transportation system be made at this time. Cross-country motor vehicle use would continue to be allowed. Motorized use of non-system (user-created) routes would continue and new routes would continue to be established. Changes to the transportation system would continue to be made on a case-by-case basis.

## Minidoka RD—Albion Division

### Alternative 2

Alternative 2 on the Albion Division was developed to provide improved motorized and non-motorized recreation. Alternative 2 on the Albion Division includes designation of the Skyline Trail, 7513, as single-track motorized; Brim Canyon non-system route as a jeep trail open to vehicles over 50 in.; Almo Creek system trail 7014 is open as a jeep trail for approximately 1.5 mi and the remainder of the trail is as open to vehicles under 50 in.; designation of the Cassia Creek trail open to vehicles under 50 in.; Ross trail 7805 as open to under 50 in.; and Howell Creek trail 7806 open to vehicles under 50 in. There is also a former system trail adjacent to Smith Creek would be designated as an ATV trail for vehicles under 50 in. The RD is also considering a proposal for future planning to develop an ATV trail from Brim Canyon to Marsh Creek.

### Alternative 3

Alternative 3 recommends the same routes that are recommended for Alternative 2.

### Alternative 4

Alternative 4 was developed to address public concern for the protection of wildlife security and habitat by reducing total miles of motorized routes and adding temporary closures during hunting season. Alternative 4 is similar to Alternatives 2 and 3 with the two exceptions:

Marsh Creek Trail, 7011, is proposed to be closed and the Smith Creek ATV trail would not be designated. There are no future planning proposals for ATV trails.

Table 3 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Minidoka RD, Albion Division.

**Table 3. Minidoka RD, Albion Division, comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	66,760 <sup>a</sup>	—	—	—
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel	65,340	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	11	7	7	7
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	6	11	11	11
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	14	14	14	10
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	2	2	2
Miles of road open to the public	50	50	50	50

*a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.*

## Minidoka—Black Pine Division

### Alternatives 2 and 3

Alternative 2 on the Black Pine Division was developed to provide improved motorized and non-motorized recreation. Alternative 2 on the Black Pine Division designates a route for vehicles under 50 in. between Mud Springs and West Dry Canyon and designates the War Eagle trail, 7833, as single-track motorized. The Minidoka RD–Black Pine division map displays the recommended routes for Alternative 2. Alternative 3 recommends the same routes as are recommended for Alternative 2.

### Alternative 4

Alternative 4 was developed to address public concern for the protection of wildlife and habitat by reducing total miles of motorized routes and adding temporary closures during hunting season. Alternative 4 on the Black Pine Division proposes seasonal closures during the deer hunt for War Eagle trail, 7833, and Pole Canyon, 70761. Alternative 4 would not designate a route between Mud Springs and West Dry Canyon. Table 4 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Minidoka RD, Black Pine Division.

**Table 4. Minidoka RD, Black Pine Division, comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	76,710 <sup>a</sup>	—	—	—
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel	73,883	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	0	0	0	0
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	4	4	4	4
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	0	2	2	0
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	0	0	0
Miles of road open to the public	101	101	101	101
<i>a. Includes total acres within SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.</i>				

## Minidoka RD—Cassia Division

### Alternative 2

Alternative 2 on the Cassia Division was developed to provide improved motorized and non-motorized recreation.

Under Alternative 2, a closure during hunting season is proposed in the Ibex Peak area involving six road sections for a total of approximately 5 mi. Two short sections of system road will be closed: 72138, Bear Hollow, and 72087, Pickett Hollow. This alternative adds a motorized trail off of Old North 676 Road.

Phantom Falls is currently a motorized trail but is proposed to change to non-motorized to improve public safety. A portion of the Lower Big Cottonwood Trail, 7007, is currently open to motorized travel. However, this section of trail, which crosses onto IDFG management units (MUs), is proposed to change to non-motorized.

### Alternative 3

Alternative 3 was developed in response to a public desire for increased motorized routes and includes 27 mi of additional routes above what were considered for Alternative 2. Under Alternative 3: Phantom Falls would remain motorized and be designated as a single-track route; Bear Hollow would have a change in use from road to trail open to vehicles 50 in. or less; McMullen/North Willow Springs, Donahue Basin, Lower Electric springs, Jack and Diamond Creek, Junction Springs would be designated single track; Upper Phantom Falls, Thoroughbred Springs crossover, Kirkham Connector, Thoroughbred Springs, Carlson Canyon, Nevada Gulch, Dry Gulch, Basque Springs, Upper Big Creek #1 and #2, Trapper

Peak, Basin Patch Spring, Cave Canyon Spur, Lost Hat Spring, Quartz Gulch, and Kidd Spring Crossover would be designated trails open to vehicles 50 in. or less; and Bear Gulch Spring would be a designated trail open to all vehicles.

#### **Alternative 4**

Alternative 4 was developed to address public concern for the protection of wildlife and habitat by adding temporary closures during hunting season on several system roads west of Thoroughbred Springs and the Langford Flat areas and forest road (FR) 70542 in the lower Goose Creek and Nevada Gulch areas on the southwest portion of the Cassia Division. Big Cottonwood 707 trail would be designated non-motorized, and system road Big Hollow, 72088, and Big Hollow Spur, 72088A, are proposed for closure. This alternative does not add a motorized trail off of Old North 676 Road. Table 5 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Minidoka RD, Cassia Division.

### **Minidoka—Raft River Division**

#### **Alternatives 2, 3, and 4**

Alternative 2 for the Raft River Division designates the unnamed road from FR 600017 to FR 60026 as open for all motorized vehicles and closes a portion of FR 600090 (in accordance with Box Elder County ordinance), designates a single-track route from Wildcat to Johnson Creek, designates a route for vehicles under 50 in. in the Meadows area to avoid private land, and designates the ATV trail in Sheep Springs as open. Alternatives 3 and 4, for the Raft River Division, recommend the same routes as described for Alternative 2. Table 6 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Minidoka RD, Raft River Division.

### **Minidoka—Sublett Division**

#### **Alternative 2**

Alternative 2 on the Sublett Division was developed to provide improved motorized and non-motorized recreation. Alternative 2 on the Sublett Division designates routes in Van Camp, Fall Creek, and Mud Springs as open to vehicles less than 50 in. wide. Indian Fork, 7188, is designated as single track and Lower Mill Canyon, an old logging road, as an ATV trail. Alternative 2 also designates a portion of a jeep trail as open to motorized travel in Fall Creek, up to the stream crossing only, to facilitate dispersed camping.

#### **Alternative 3**

Alternative 3 was developed in response to a public desire for increased motorized routes and recommends the same routes as are recommended for Alternative 2.

#### **Alternative 4**

Alternative 4 was developed to address public concern for the protection of wildlife and habitat by adding seasonal closures of Trail 7188 (Indian Fork) and Trail 7837 (Line Canyon). In addition to the seasonal closures, Alternative 4 recommends the same routes as are recommended for Alternative 2. Table 7 shows a comparison of the alternative components discussed in this section for the Minidoka RD, Sublett Division.

**Table 5. Minidoka RD, Cassia Division, comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	297,096 <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel	290,633	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	3	8	7	15
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	0	83	92	73
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	88	76	97	70
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	2 <sup>b</sup>	2 <sup>b</sup>	2 <sup>b</sup>
Miles of road open to the public	634	620	620	617
<i>a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.</i>				
<i>b. Conversion of system roads to jeep trails.</i>				

**Table 6. Minidoka RD, Raft River Division, comparison of alternative components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	92,245 <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel.	71,895	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	0	0	0	0
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	9	12	12	12
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	0	0	0	0
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	2	2	2
Miles of road open to the public.	98	96	96	96
<i>a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.</i>				



**Table 7. Minidoka RD, Sublett Division, comparison of alternatives components.**

Alternative Component	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres within the project area	78,262 <sup>a</sup>	—	—	—
Acres of National Forest System lands open for cross-country motorized travel	77,637	0	0	0
Miles of non-motorized system trails	0	0	0	0
Miles of single-track motorized system trails	0	3	3	3
Miles of ATV system trails, motorized trails under 50 in. (wide)	12	14	14	14
Miles of jeep trails, motorized trails over 50 in.	0	1	1	1
Miles of road open to the public	114	114	114	114

*a. Includes total acres within the SNF boundary even though there are private and other government lands.*

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## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

### Alternative 5—Original Proposed Action \_\_\_\_\_

This original proposed action was sent out for public comment in July 2006. This alternative included elimination of cross-country travel across the route designation area and identified non-system routes and trails to be added to the system. This alternative did not include proposed seasonal closures.

#### Rationale for Dismissal

The original proposed action was modified to address mule deer and elk vulnerability. The SNF Forest Plan (USDA 2003) directs the SNF to “Implement temporary, seasonal, or permanent area and transportation route closures through special orders to address big game vulnerability and public access needs” (WIOB12, p. III-26).

The original proposal was also modified in response to requests for further changes in use for motorized and non-motorized trail opportunities. Because the effects of the original proposed action would be covered by the existing alternatives, there is no need for further analysis.

### Alternative 6—Designate All Existing On-the-Ground Routes \_\_\_\_\_

Under this alternative, all existing on-the-ground routes would be designated and incorporated into the transportation system. This includes classified as well as non-system (user-created) roads and trails. Cross-country travel would be eliminated. New user-created routes would not be allowed.

#### Rationale for Dismissal

This alternative would implement the Final Rule for Travel Plan Management. However, this alternative would only meet a portion of the purpose and need statement. In some cases, there are duplicate user-created roads and trails within a few hundred yards of each other. They often include dense, braided networks of intersecting paths. In other situations the user-created roads and trails because of their poor placement and lack of design are causing resource damage. Some of these user-created roads and trails would not meet SNF Forest Plan direction for resource and recreation management. Considerable work would be needed to bring some of these routes into compliance with applicable standards. Duplicate routes adjacent to one another would still exist.

The need to minimize damage to soil, water, wildlife, vegetation, and other forest resources associated with motorized recreation use would not be met. More specifically, the following Forest Plan (USDA 2003) direction would not be met under this alternative:

- Objective REOB17—Initiate a process of phased, site-specific travel management planning as soon as practicable. Prioritize planning based on areas where the most

significant user conflicts and resource concerns are occurring. Identify and address inconsistent access management of roads, trails, and areas across the SNF, RDs, and interagency boundaries

- Guideline REGU07—Where recreation facilities or practices have been identified as potentially contributing to degradation of water quality, aquatic species, or occupied sensitive and watch plant habitat, facilities and practices causing degradation should be considered for relocation, closure, changes in management strategy, alteration, or discontinuance.

## **Alternative 7—Designate Existing Classified Road System/Eliminate Non-System Routes and Cross-Country Travel \_\_\_\_\_**

This alternative is similar to the proposed action (Alternative 2) in that it would designate the existing system routes on the transportation system and it would eliminate cross-country travel. However, it would eliminate all the existing non-system (user-created) routes. This alternative would be compliant with the purpose and need and the Final Rule for Travel Plan Management.

### **Rationale for Dismissal**

This alternative is somewhat similar to Alternative 2 but the main difference would be the elimination of all non-system user-created routes. The Final Rule for Travel Management's purpose is to provide for a system of NFS roads, trails, and areas with the opportunity for the public to participate in the designation process. This alternative does not address public demand to provide for quality ATV trails and would not give the USFS an opportunity to design a system of high quality, sustainable recreation experiences for motorized users. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

## **Alternative 8—Eliminate All Classified Roads within IRAs \_\_\_\_\_**

Under this alternative, the USFS would restrict motor vehicle use to designated roads and trails, cross-country motor vehicle use would be eliminated, and roads within all existing IRAs in the project area would be closed.

### **Rationale for Dismissal**

There are currently roads within IRAs. The 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (66 FR 9, 2001) did not eliminate roads within IRAs. The 2001 Roadless Rule directs how certain activities may be conducted within IRAs and how the USFS must comply with that direction. Should an area be designated as wilderness, the USFS must also comply with that direction. None of the action alternatives contain Level 3 system roads (defined as suitable for passenger vehicles), or higher, within IRAs for route designation. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

# COMPARISON OF EFFECTS FROM THE ALTERNATIVES

This section provides, in table summary form, the results of the environmental consequences (effects) analysis of implementing each alternative to the affected environment for each resource area. Each resource specialist evaluated the effects to the affected environment while closely considering the significant issues raised through public scoping. Information found in Tables 8–14 is focused on activities and effects where different levels of effects or outputs could be distinguished quantitatively or qualitatively among alternatives. The full EA and the detailed analyses supporting the results presented in the tables may be found in the in the project record located at the at SNF Supervisor’s Office in Twin Falls, Idaho.

The decision-makers will carefully consider these results as they conduct their decision analysis. The decisions made will be formalized in a Decision Notice that will be made available to the public at the conclusion of the EA process.

## Recreation

**Table 8. Recreation Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.**

Recreation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Fairfield Ranger District</b>				
<b>Miles of road and trail maintained for motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities</b>	Motorized: 365 Non-motorized: 0	Motorized: 387 Non-motorized: 12	Motorized: 430 Non-motorized: 1	Motorized: 351 Non-motorized: 12
<b>The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum</b>	ROS Class acreages are maintained	ROS Class acreages are maintained	ROS Class acreages are maintained	ROS Class acreages are maintained
<b>Recreation Niche</b>	Compatible with the Sawtooth National Forest (SNF) Recreation Niche goals  Marginally compatible with the Recreation Niche settings	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals

Recreation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Forest Plan compliance</b>	Alternative 1 does not actively help to achieve Forest Plan Objectives	Complies with the SNF Forest Plan direction, and helps achieve Forest Plan Recreation Objectives 0730, 0840, 0929, and 1028, which call for reducing soil erosion caused by OHVs, and Objectives 0733, 0847, 0930, and 1031	Complies with the SNF Forest Plan direction, and helps achieve Forest Plan Recreation Objectives 0730, 0840, 0929, and 1028, which call for reducing soil erosion caused by OHVs, and Objectives 0733, 0847, 0930, and 1031	Complies with the SNF Forest Plan direction, and helps achieve Forest Plan Recreation Objectives 0730, 0840, 0929, and 1028, which call for reducing soil erosion caused by OHVs, and Objectives 0733, 0847, 0930, and 1031
<b>Ketchum Ranger District</b>				
<b>Miles of road and trail maintained for motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities</b>	Motorized: 121 Non-motorized: 8	Motorized: 139 Non-motorized: 8	Motorized: 147 Non-motorized: 7	Motorized: 127 Non-motorized: 8
<b>The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum</b>	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained
<b>Recreation Niche</b>	Marginally compatible with the Sawtooth National Forest (SNF) Recreation Niche settings	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals
<b>Forest Plan compliance</b>	Alternative 1 does not actively help to achieve Forest Plan Objectives	Complies with Recreation Objective 0464 by reducing the number of routes available for motorized use and putting more trails into the system where they will receive regular maintenance and patrols	Complies with Recreation Objective 0464 by reducing the number of routes available for motorized use and putting more trails into the system where they will receive regular maintenance and patrols	Complies with Recreation Objective 0464 by reducing the number of routes available for motorized use and putting more trails into the system where they will receive regular maintenance and patrols
<b>Minidoka Ranger District</b>				
<b>Miles of road and trail maintained for motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities</b>	<b>Motorized</b> Albion: 74 Black Pine: 105 Cassia: 722 Raft River: 107 Sublett: 126  <b>Non:motorized</b> Albion: 11 Black Pine: 0	<b>Motorized</b> Albion: 77 Black Pine: 107 Cassia: 770 Raft River: 111 Sublett: 132  <b>Non:motorized</b> Albion: 7 Black Pine: 0	<b>Motorized</b> Albion: 77 Black Pine: 107 Cassia: 802 Raft River: 112 Sublett: 132  <b>Non:motorized</b> Albion: 7 Black Pine: 0	<b>Motorized</b> Albion: 73 Black Pine: 105 Cassia: 753 Raft River: 111 Sublett: 132  <b>Non:motorized</b> Albion: 7 Black Pine: 0

Recreation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
	Cassia: 3 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Cassia: 8 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Cassia: 7 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Cassia: 15 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0
<b>The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum</b>	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained	Desired ROS Class acreages are maintained
<b>Recreation Niche</b>	Compatible with the Sawtooth National Forest (SNF) Recreation Niche goals  Marginally compatible with the Recreation Niche settings	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals	Compatible with the SNF Recreation Niche goals
<b>Forest Plan compliance</b>	Does not actively help to achieve Forest Plan Objectives	Fulfills Recreation Objectives 1227, 1333, and 1414. Helps achieve Recreation Objectives 1128 1331, 1131 and 2018	Fulfills Recreation Objectives 1227, 1333, and 1414. Helps achieve Recreation Objectives 1128 and 1331 and Objectives 1131 and 2018	Fulfills Recreation Objectives 1227, 1333, and 1414. Helps achieve Recreation Objectives 1128 and 1331 and Objectives 1131, and 2018

## Vegetation

Table 9. Vegetation Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.

Vegetation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Fairfield Ranger District</b>				
<b>Infested (non-native/noxious weeds) acres accessible by motorized travel based upon route location and designation</b>	19	0.33	0.33	0.33
<b>Estimated total acres at risk of introduction/spread of noxious weed invasion based susceptibility</b>	60,651	5,367	5,453	5,272

Vegetation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Estimated total acres of threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive plant species occupied and potential habitat within open-use areas and designated routes</b>	Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 13,251 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 190  Least Phacelia: 8	Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 8,953 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 103  Least Phacelia: 0	Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 9,138 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 104  Least Phacelia : 0	Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 8,810 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 99  Least Phacelia : 0
<b>Ketchum Ranger District</b>				
<b>Infested acres (non-native/noxious weeds) accessible by motorized travel based upon route location and designation.</b>	89	83	83	83
<b>Estimated total acres at risk of introduction/spread of noxious weed invasion based susceptibility</b>	17,511	1,983	2,063	1,859
<b>Estimated total acres of threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive plant species occupied and potential habitat within open-use areas and designated routes</b>	Ute Ladies':tresses Orchid: 4,342 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 14	Ute Ladies':tresses Orchid: 3,056 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 9.4	Ute Ladies':tresses Orchid: 3,196 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 9.4	Ute Ladies':tresses Orchid: 2,919 acres potential habitat  Bugleg Goldenweed: 9.4
<b>Minidoka Ranger District</b>				
<b>Infested acres (non-native/noxious weeds) accessible by motorized travel based upon route location and designation.</b>	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 355 Cassia: 318 Raft River: 221 Sublett: 871	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 239 Cassia: 74 Raft River: 158 Sublett: 717	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 239 Cassia: 74 Raft River: 158 Sublett: 717	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 239 Cassia: 74 Raft River: 158 Sublett: 717
<b>Estimated total acres at risk of introduction/spread of noxious weed invasion based susceptibility</b>	Albion: 12,674 Black Pine: 17,012 Cassia: 83,974 Raft River: 31,762 Sublett: 38,991	Albion: 861 Black Pine: 1,633 Cassia: 12,252 Raft River: 3,021 Sublett: 3,488	Albion: 861 Black Pine: 1,633 Cassia: 12,468 Raft River: 3,021 Sublett: 3,488	Albion: 834 Black Pine: 1,633 Cassia: 12,162 Raft River: 3,021 Sublett: 3,488



Vegetation Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Estimated total acres of threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive plant species occupied and potential habitat within open-use areas and designated routes</b>	All Divisions Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 31,329 acres potential habitat  Albion Division Christ Indian Paintbrush: 16  Davis' wavewing: 122  Cassia Division Goose Creek Milkvetch: 0  Idaho Penstemon: 18	All Divisions Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 15,248 acres potential habitat  Albion Division Christ Indian Paintbrush: 0  Davis' wavewing: 0  Cassia Division Goose Creek Milkvetch: 0  Idaho Penstemon: 4.7	All Divisions Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 15,188 acres potential habitat  Albion Division Christ Indian Paintbrush: 0  Davis' wavewing: 0  Cassia Division Goose Creek Milkvetch: 0  Idaho Penstemon: 4.7	All Divisions Ute Ladies'-tresses Orchid: 14,937 acres potential habitat  Albion Division Christ Indian Paintbrush: 0  Davis' wavewing: 0  Cassia Division Goose Creek Milkvetch: 0  Idaho Penstemon: 4.7

## Soils and Hydrology

Table 10. Soils/Hydrology Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.

Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Fairfield Ranger District</b>				
<b>Percent detrimental disturbance</b>	14.3	7.8	8.1	7.1
<b>Percent total soil resource commitment</b>	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4
<b>Miles of open or designated routes</b>	702	387	430	351
<b>Miles of open or designated routes on high surface erosion lands</b>	446	247	270	225
<b>Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas</b>	235	147	160	143
<b>Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas on high surface erosion lands</b>	95	66	69	61

Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Ketchum</b>				
Percent detrimental disturbance	11.1	6.8	7.1	6.4
Percent total soil resource commitment	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Miles of open or designated routes	224	139	147	127
Miles of open or designated routes on high surface erosion lands	47	32	33	31
Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas	95	66	69	61
Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas on high surface erosion lands	47	32	33	31
<b>Minidoka Ranger District</b>				
Percent detrimental disturbance	Albion: 10.8 Black Pine: 15.2 Cassia: 24.4 Raft River: 18.2 Sublett: 16.9	Albion: 6.6 Black Pine: 9.0 Cassia: 16.0 Raft River: 7.2 Sublett: 9.4	Albion: 6.6 Black Pine: 9.0 Cassia: 16.2 Raft River: 7.2 Sublett: 9.4	Albion: 6.5 Black Pine: 9.0 Cassia: 15.9 Raft River: 7.2 Sublett: 9.4
Percent total soil resource commitment	Albion: 0.6 Black Pine: 0.8 Cassia: 1.3 Raft River: 1.0 Sublett: 0.9	Albion: 0.3 Black Pine: 0.5 Cassia: 0.9 Raft River: 0.4 Sublett: 0.6	Albion: 0.3 Black Pine: 0.5 Cassia: 0.9 Raft River: 0.4 Sublett: 0.6	Albion: 0.3 Black Pine: 0.5 Cassia: 0.9 Raft River: 0.4 Sublett: 0.6
Miles of open or designated routes	Albion: 130 Black Pine: 154 Cassia: 1,212 Raft River: 258 Sublett: 191	Albion: 74 Black Pine: 109 Cassia: 770 Raft River: 111 Sublett: 132	Albion: 77 Black Pine: 110 Cassia: 802 Raft River: 111 Sublett: 132	Albion: 73 Black Pine: 107 Cassia: 753 Raft River: 111 Sublett: 132
Miles of open or designated routes on high surface erosion lands	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 16 Cassia: 217 Raft River: 221 Sublett: 39	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 16 Cassia: 127 Raft River: 84 Sublett: 21	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 16 Cassia: 128 Raft River: 84 Sublett: 21	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 16 Cassia: 122 Raft River: 84 Sublett: 21
Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas	Albion: 28 Black Pine: 58 Cassia: 320 Raft River: 49 Sublett: 116	Albion: 16 Black Pine: 46 Cassia: 188 Raft River: 27 Sublett: 80	Albion: 16 Black Pine: 46 Cassia: 196 Raft River: 27 Sublett: 80	Albion: 16 Black Pine: 46 Cassia: 179 Raft River: 27 Sublett: 80
Miles of open or designated routes in riparian conservation areas on high surface erosion lands	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 12 Cassia: 97 Raft River: 40 Sublett: 24	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 10 Cassia: 53 Raft River: 21 Sublett: 16	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 11 Cassia: 54 Raft River: 21 Sublett: 16	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 10 Cassia: 52 Raft River: 21 Sublett: 16

## Fisheries

**Table 11. Fisheries Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.**

Fisheries Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Fairfield Ranger District</b>				
Number of subwatersheds where route density exceeds 1.7 mi/mi <sup>2</sup>	9	4	6	2
Miles of system trails <sup>a</sup>	204	232	263	199
Miles of system routes closed to motorized use	0	18.11	12.47	34.94
Percent of riparian conservation areas open to motorized use and dispersed camping	40	27	28	27
<b>Ketchum Ranger District</b>				
Number of subwatersheds where route density exceeds 1.7 mi/mi <sup>2</sup>	1	0	0	0
Miles of system trails <sup>a</sup>	97	112	117	101
Miles of system routes closed to motorized use	0	0.80	0.80	1.47
Percent of riparian conservation areas open to motorized use and dispersed camping	49	34	36	33
<b>Minidoka Ranger District</b>				
Number of subwatersheds where route density exceeds 1.7 mi/mi <sup>2</sup>	Albion: 1 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 20 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 1 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 10 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 1 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 11 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 1 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 10 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0
Miles of system trails <sup>a</sup>	Albion: 31 Black Pine: 4 Cassia: 91 Raft River: 9 Sublett: 11	Albion: 34 Black Pine: 6 Cassia: 159 Raft River: 14 Sublett: 15	Albion: 34 Black Pine: 6 Cassia: 188 Raft River: 14 Sublett: 15	Albion: 29 Black Pine: 4 Cassia: 150 Raft River: 14 Sublett: 15
Miles of system routes closed to motorized use	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 0 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 1.46 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 0 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 0.63 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0	Albion: 1.64 Black Pine: 0 Cassia: 4.99 Raft River: 0 Sublett: 0

Fisheries Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Percent of riparian conservation areas open to motorized use and dispersed camping	Albion: 38 Black Pine: 55 Cassia: 59 Raft River: 53 Sublett: 86	Albion: 29 Black Pine: 27 Cassia: 28 Raft River: 22 Sublett: 37	Albion: 36 Black Pine: 27 Cassia: 28 Raft River: 22 Sublett: 37	Albion: 28 Black Pine: 27 Cassia: 27 Raft River: 22 Sublett: 37

a. Miles of system trails may be slightly different than those displayed in other resource summary tables due to the scale of analysis and rounding. The fisheries analysis analyzed data at the 6th field scale and then aggregated this into overall totals for each district or division. Other resources analyzed there data at the larger district and division scales.

## Wildlife

Table 12. Wildlife Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.

Wildlife Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<b>Fairfield Ranger District</b>				
Acres open to cross-country motorized travel within wildlife habitat	217,789	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>
Average open-road <sup>b</sup> density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	0.54	0.42	0.42	0.37
Average open <sup>b</sup> motorized trail density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	1.2	0.5	0.69	0.5
<b>Ketchum Ranger District</b>				
Acres open to cross-country motorized travel within wildlife habitat	76,822	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>
Average road density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	0.54	0.32	0.4	0.27
Average motorized trail density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	1.4	0.84	0.84	0.78
<b>Minidoka Ranger District</b>				
Acres open to cross country motorized travel within wildlife habitat	579,388	0a	0a	0a
Average road density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	1.68	1.05	1.05	0.99

Wildlife Indicators	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Average motorized trail density within wildlife habitat (mi/mi <sup>2</sup> )	0.47	0.56	0.60	0.56
<p>a. Note there will be some acres open to off-road travel within 300 ft of designated roads for the purposes of dispersed camping only</p> <p>b. Open-road/trail density refers to the density of roads/trails (mi of road/m<sup>2</sup> of habitat) that are open throughout the May 1–December 1 time period (roads/trails closed during the hunting season are not part of this density).</p>				

## Heritage

**Table 13. Heritage Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.**

Indicator	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Potential effects to heritage resources	High potential to have direct adverse affect to heritage resources	Higher likelihood that potential affects could be mitigated	Higher likelihood that potential affects could be mitigated	Higher likelihood that potential affects could be mitigated

## Economics

**Table 14. Economics Effects Comparison—Fairfield, Ketchum, Minidoka RDs.**

Indicators	Alternative 1	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Road and trail Maintenance	No Change	Minor decrease in miles (mi) of road requiring maintenance; will NOT be noticeable.	Minor decrease in mi of road requiring maintenance; will NOT be noticeable	Minor decrease in mi of road requiring maintenance; will NOT be noticeable.
Updating and maintaining route markers and signs	No Change	Purchasing and installing route markers and signs on both roads and trails should receive more funding and emphasis for the next 3–5 years. After that funding needs will decrease, but sign maintenance will require steady funding for long term.	Purchasing and installing route markers/signs on both roads and trails should receive more funding and emphasis for the next 3–5 years. After that funding needs will decrease, but sign maintenance will require steady funding for long term.	Purchasing and installing route markers/signs on both roads and trails should receive more funding and emphasis for the next 3–5 years. After that funding needs will decrease, but sign maintenance will require steady funding the long term
Routes removed from system to be monitored for erosion and considered for decommissioning	No Change	Future decommissioning needed to prevent resource damage may need to be funded by allocation other than	Future decommissioning needed to prevent resource damage may need to be funded by	Future decommissioning needed to prevent resource damage may need to be funded by allocation

Indicators	Alternative 1	Alternative 2 Proposed Action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
if erosion becomes a problem		road maintenance	allocation other than road maintenance	other than road maintenance
Increased route use caused increased maintenance needs	No Change	Case-by-Case. Increased grading and possible need for spot surfacing.	Case-by-Case. Increased grading and possible need for spot surfacing.	Case-by-Case. Increased grading and possible need for spot surfacing.

## CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The USFS consulted the individuals, federal, state, and local agencies, tribes and non-USFS persons identified in Tables 15 and 16 during the development of the EA.

**Table 15. Route designation EA interdisciplinary team members.**

Contributor	Education and Experience	Contribution
Kim Pierson	BSc, Biology, and an MSc, Ecology/Botany, and 7 years with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	ID Team Leader and Vegetation Analysis
Ann Frost	BSc, Recreation Resource Management/Geography, and 14 years in Recreation—Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and 6 years with the USFS	ID Team Leader and Recreation Analysis
Joe Miczulski	BSc, Wildland Recreation Management, and 28 years with the USFS	Recreation Analysis
Zeke Zimmerman	BSc, Recreation, and 29 years with the USFS	Recreation Analysis
Terry Clark	BSc, Forestry, and 30 years with the USFS	Recreation Analysis
Sarah Lau	BSc, Civil Engineering, Licensed Professional Engineer in Idaho, and 17 years with the USFS	Engineering/Roads and Economic Analysis
Terry Hardy	BSc, Soil Science, and 22 years with the USFS	Soils Analysis
Dena Santini	BSc, Biology, Wildlife Emphasis, Graduate work—Biology, 23 years with the USFS	Wildlife Analysis
David Skinner	BSc, Wildlife Resources, and 10 years with the USFS	Wildlife Analysis
Ed Waldapfel	BSc, Forest Management, and 37 years with the USFS (retired)	Public Affairs
Brenda Geesey	BSc and MSc, Forestry, and 19 years with the USFS	GIS/Maps
Jill Kuenzi	BSc, Mathematics and Natural Science, MSc, Wildlife Biology, and 15 years with the USFS	GIS/Maps
John Chatel	BSc, Environmental Biology, MSc, Environmental Biology, and 10 years of professional experience.	Fisheries Analysis
Randy Thompson	MSc, Anthropology, archaeologist for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest 1999–2005, Forest Archaeologist Sawtooth National Forest, August 2005 to present	Heritage Analysis
Sharon LaBrecque	BSc, Wildlife Management, and 26 years with the USFS	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Coordination, EA Reviewer
Carol Brown	BSc, Forestry, and 27 years with the USFS	NEPA Coordination, Contracting Officer's Representative

**Table 16. Route designation EA federal, state and local agency contributors.**

Contributors	Education & Experience	Contribution
Jeff Cook, Outdoor Recreation Analyst	BSc, Wildland Recreation Management, and 16 years with Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	Recreation
Randy Smith, Wildlife Biologist	BSc, Wildlife Management 1979; MSc, Wildlife Management, 1982, and 23 years with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game	Wildlife Biologist

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