

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society

POSITION STATEMENT--Idaho and Salmon River Breaks Primitive Areas

--Salmon River National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society is a professional wildlife organization of some 200 professional natural resource specialists working in Idaho.

This Chapter wishes to file a position statement on the wilderness recommendations for these two primitive areas and the ^{proposed} Salmon River National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Chapter supports the ^{2.3} ~~1.8~~ million acre wilderness recommended by ~~Governor Cecil Andrus~~. ^{It also} ~~and the~~ ^{The River of No Return Wilderness Council} supports the ^{US Forest Service's proposed} classification of 237 miles of Salmon River into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

These primitive areas support a community of some 190 species of wild animals. The largest elk herd south of the Salmon River is found there. One of the most significant Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep populations in the United States (largest in Idaho) finds seclusion in the canyon complex. Rocky Mountain goats inhabit most of the crest areas. Mule deer are scattered throughout the areas and white-tailed deer are in the main Salmon River Canyon. The primitive areas are among the few remaining high quality mountain lion environments.

The tributary systems to the main rivers (Middle Fork and main Salmon) contain extremely valuable spawning and rearing areas for seagoing chinook salmon and steelhead. The native west slope cutthroat depends on the high quality aquatic habitats of the tributaries and main river for survival.

In summary, the perpetuation of this unique environment (and its flora and fauna) is inextricably tied to wilderness classification. We therefore ^{2.3} urge the two primitive areas be combined into ~~1.8~~ million acre wilderness, and that ^{the} 237 mile section of the Salmon River be classified ~~into~~ into The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, as proposed by the Forest Service.

CERTIFIED BY:

Sen. Frank Church
CC Rep. David Hanson
Rep. Steven Symms
Sen. James A. McClure

President, Idaho Chapter,
The Wildlife Society
December 27, 1973