

Bitterroot

SRB Study

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
Region 1, Missoula, Montana 59801

REPLY TO: 2320 Wildernesses & Primitive Areas

October 28, 1968

SUBJECT: Salmon River Breaks Primitive Area



TO: Forest Supervisors, Bitterroot NF and Nezperce NF

Attached for your information are several copies of Region 4 correspondence. We will try to keep you informed of Region 1, Region 4 coordination efforts.

E. F. Barry
E. F. BARRY, Chief
Division of Recreation and Lands

Attachments

BITTERROOT NF

	Action
<i>MB</i>	Supr
<i>MB</i>	R&L
	TM
	Fire
	Eng
<i>SRB</i>	AO
	Disp
<i>MB</i>	DPF-R
	AS
	Pers
	L-Asst
	TMA
	Gen-Eng
	Transp
<i>C D-5</i>	

OCT 29 1968

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Regional Forester
Forest Service
Ogden, Utah 84401

TO : Assistant Regional Forester, R&L

File No. 2320 (1000)

FROM : Floyd Iverson, Regional Forester

Date: September 25, 1968

SUBJECT: Wildernesses and Primitive Areas (Idaho Primitive Area Study)

Reference is made to my discussion with you and your staff on September 16 and to the discussion at the regular staff meeting on September 23 concerning the organizational plan needed for studying the Idaho Primitive Area. The Region will look to you to plan, organize, and correlate the effort for this important endeavor.

In developing this plan, you should be guided by the following:

1. The Regional Forester's 2320 memorandum of July 31 to the Division of Recreation and Lands commenting on certain aspects.
2. Mr. Herbert's memorandum of August 15 to (and approved by) the Regional Forester. This outlines basic points to be considered in carrying out this study and subsequent action.
3. Region 1 views, which should be provided to us by November 1.

This study endeavor will involve four National Forests and most of the divisions in this office. Indirectly, as you know, Region 1 will also be involved, because of the concurrent study of the nearby Salmon River Breaks Primitive Area. For these reasons, development of our plan will require a large amount of correlation - especially in view of the limited resources all concerned have to work with concerning this important study.

I will depend upon you and your staff to work with all such units in developing a broad-gauge, comprehensive, thoroughly practical plan, including a timetable. The proposed plan should be ready for review and approval by December 15, 1968. This is necessary if all concerned are to be able to properly plan their fiscal year 1969 and 1970 operations, so as to provide for needed funding and participation, including specialists' services, to the fullest practical extent.

cc: Boise N.F.
Challis N.F.
Payette N.F.
Salmon N.F.
R-1
INT
ARF's
D

Floyd Iverson

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service
Federal Office Building
324 25th Street
Ogden, Utah 84401

TO : Floyd Iverson, Regional Forester

File No. 2320

FROM : J. M. Herbert, Assistant Regional
Forester, R&L

Date: August 15, 1968

SUBJECT: Wildernesses and Primitive Areas -
Idaho Wilderness (Proposed)

This refers to our discussion at the 1968 Idaho Supervisors' meeting about processing the Idaho Primitive Area under the Wilderness Act.

Please also refer to my 2320 memorandum for the record of October 13, 1967, and related correspondence, including the Sierra Club report on this area. I also refer to Wild and Scenic River Bills S.119 (which has passed the Senate), H.R. 8416 by Aspinall, and H.R. 90 by Saylor, and the Department's report of August 11, 1967, favoring H.R. 8416 with certain amendments.

Over the years a number of proposals have been advanced as to the long-range, best management for this sizable piece of real estate. In 1956, the then Supervisors proposed a Wilderness of 235,000 acres, with the remaining 1,000,000 acres to be managed as a U-3a recreation area. Until about 8 years ago, the file indicates that some R-4 and R-1 people were advocating a highway the full length of the Salmon River. Such a highway was contemplated when the Primitive Area was established in 1931. You will recall that this route was shown on our transportation plans and included in the 3B study of Forest highways.

At the Idaho Supervisors' meeting a number of possible alternatives were discussed. Several people expressed the view that because of the traffic--motorboats, etc.,--on the main Salmon, it does not qualify for Wilderness. Others thought the Wild River legislative proposal would afford better management direction. The possibility of a National Recreation Area, either totally or in combination with Wilderness and Wild or Scenic River designations, was advanced.

To channel our thinking and formulate a future course, I suggest:

1. The NRA alternative not be a primary objective of the study. The area is not suitable for mass-type recreation and otherwise does not meet the criteria of the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty. There is no reason to believe these criteria will be changed to qualify the area in question.
2. We recognize and support the proposition that Wild River and Wilderness designations are compatible and can properly overlap. H.R. 8416 and S.119 specifically provide for this. Possible desirable exceptions to such overlap might be applied at a few

sites along the main Salmon where improvements are needed because of the 9-month recreation season.

3. We gear our thinking to what is the best long-range management, taking into account the needs of people as well as protection of the fragile country involved. It is my view that most of the Idaho Primitive Area ought to remain roadless even if no special classification were involved.
4. We not let the airplane-motorboat situation unduly influence our thinking. Congress recognized and made specific provisions for these in the Wilderness Act (Sec. 4(d)(1)).
5. We give full weight to the proposition that the main Salmon and Middle Fork should remain damless and that their inclusion in the Wilderness and Wild River Systems will help stave off the dam builders.
6. We admit that whether or not made Wilderness, Wild River, or NRA, the problem of people management, protection, and pollution control is with us and will have to be solved along the Middle Fork and main Salmon.
7. We recognize that any proposal will be controversial and that Wilderness and Wild River designation, particularly, will be opposed by Idaho water interests and, at least in part, by Idaho timber and mining interests.

If we can concur in the above, I suggest an objective of the Wilderness study be to establish a large area--at least of equal size to the Primitive Area if the study reveals such an acreage qualifies and that Wilderness values are paramount. The Middle Fork and a portion of the main Salmon should be included.

The inholdings and landing strips present problems. Clear, long-range objectives need to be established for these. This will involve a study of alternatives, including:

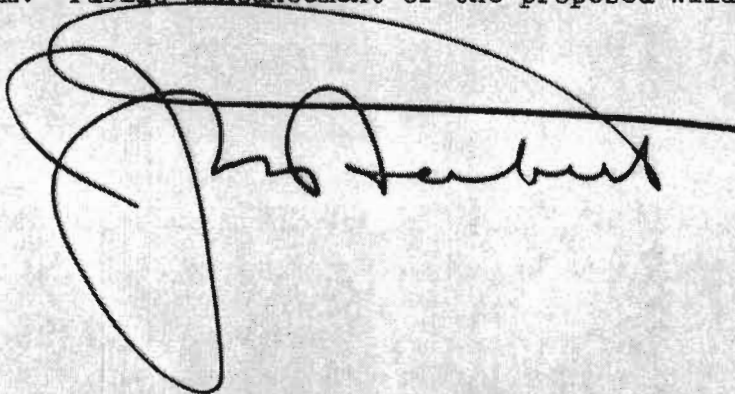
1. Acquisition of all or some inholdings.
2. Elimination or restrictions on the landing of airplanes for other than fire protection and emergencies.
3. Establishing enclaves or "holes in the doughnut" encompassing private and/or National Forest land.

Admittedly, findings of the Bureau of Mines and Geological Survey may substantially influence boundaries. Since these findings will not be available for about 3 years, we should drop--for the time being--potential mineralization considerations. Even when their reports are available, there are no precedents for comparing Wilderness vs. mineral values. It appears that Congress will undoubtedly participate in this decision.

The matter of jurisdiction over the riverbed of the main Salmon is not resolved. Section 14(c) of H.R. 8416 recognizes that the beds of certain rivers may vest in the state and requires that the state agree not to permit mining of such beds. Until the courts determine otherwise, I think there is a good basis for assuming the riverbeds are Federal property.

We agreed at the Supervisors' meeting to process the Idaho and Salmon River Breaks area concurrently. However, I do not think they should be recommended for one combined large Wilderness.

If you concur in the principles above expressed, I suggest you so indicate below and copies be sent to R-1 and the involved Forests. The matter of scheduling a timber inventory and other aspects of the study is being set forth in another memorandum. Public announcement of the proposed Wilderness study has been processed.



Approved:

Lloyd Johnson
Regional Forester

8-15-68
Date

cc: Boise N.F. - 6 copies
Challis N.F. - 6 copies
Payette N.F. - 6 copies
Salmon N.F. - 6 copies
I&E
R-1 - 8 copies
RF

Regional Forester
U. S. Forest Service
Federal Office Building
Ogden, Utah 84401

TO : Assistant Regional Forester, R&L 2320 (1000)
FROM : Floyd Iverson, Regional Forester DATE: July 31, 1968
SUBJECT: Wildernesses and Primitive Areas -
Idaho Wilderness (Proposed)

You will be very interested in the enclosed material - observations of the Assistant Regional Foresters and concerned Forest Supervisors - regarding the proposed statement on the Idaho Primitive Area and adjacent territory. As I anticipated, there is a wide divergence of opinion among the group.

I would appreciate it if you would analyze these comments and provide me with your personal reaction.

As we move toward a regional position on this matter, I am becoming more certain of a few basic points which may be helpful at this stage in jointly considering all facets of this important matter. They are:

1. Our study should include not only the territory now included in the Idaho Primitive Area, but also adjacent areas that may qualify for Wilderness status.
2. We should plan for and carry out a thorough, well-rounded program for assembling basic information - including much of the same type of material that the National Park Service and Forest Service teams did in studying the Sawtooth Area a few years ago. Included would be not only information on the soil, water, minerals, timber, range, wildlife, and traditional recreation resources, but also data on geology, archeology, history, present and anticipated uses (both conforming and nonconforming), and other items of a similar nature.
3. We must be very careful not to be placed, in any way, in the position of, seemingly, prejudging the study. Our news release of August 1, for instance, reflects a position which we cannot deviate from, especially at this point. Certainly, our position must be above reproach at all times.
4. In developing our studies upon which to base a Forest Service position in the future, I think it is a sound and consistent course, in considering various alternatives, to include, as one strong possibility, the establishment of a relatively large Wilderness-type area. At least as I see it now, there is no sound basis for us to take any other stand at the present time.

RF FILE

5. While I might agree that just at present a National Recreation Area designation does not seem to fit the situation, I doubt if it would be wise, at this time, to start people thinking toward total exclusion of this as an alternative.
6. In carrying this whole program forward, I think it would be wise to have all reasonably possible alternatives in mind - and to plan to present our discussions on the "pros and cons" for each of them at the time of the formal hearing. (We may not need to devote nearly as much time and effort to preparing our presentations on the less "promising" alternatives, of course.) If handled properly, I think we can avoid being placed on the defensive if we proceed in this manner.

What presently concerns me most, John, is the difficulty we might get the organization into by too much channelized thinking about one or two alternatives at this point in time. There certainly is a place for some expert direction about now; but as Regional Forester, I think I must maintain a flexible position - being able to look down all sides of the mountain so we can move eventually in the right direction without getting boxed in.

I hope these thoughts will be helpful as all of us give further consideration to this important matter.

Enclosure

cc: Boise N.F.
Payette N.F.
Salmon N.F.
Challis N.F.
ARF's
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Floyd Junson