

2320 Wildernesses and Primitive Areas

NOV 25 1974

Idaho Primitive Area Review - 9/24-27/74 - E. L. Sorenson

Richard L. Harris, Director, RL&M
Through Henry Ziminski

This will document the key items discussed during my trip to the Idaho Primitive Area on September 24-27. Those participating in the trip included Ranger Earl Dodds and Peter Mourtsen of the Big Creek District along with Dr. Floyd Newby and Richard Walker of the Wilderness Research Center, University of Idaho. Messrs. Newby and Walker in participating in this trip were especially interested in discussing management of the Taylor Ranch and becoming familiar with some of the management problems in the Idaho Primitive Area.

Ranger Dodds has been District Ranger on the Big Creek District for several years and is intimately acquainted with the management problems. He has a good understanding of the Wilderness Act, and Forest Service wilderness management policy. He exhibits considerable interest in setting up a good management program and carrying it out in the Idaho Primitive Area. As a first step in management planning, he has installed eight registration boxes and five electric eye trail counters to obtain better user information. This information will be extremely useful in refinement of management planning in the future. His work with the RIM data has been carried out through the Regional Office and in coordination with other Rangers concerned. He has also made considerable improvement in the trails and has generally kept administrative improvements in good order. Ranger Dodds recognizes many of the unsolved problems in managing the Primitive Area and is anxious to find solutions to them.

We examined and talked about these and other conditions on the ground. Following are the main items reviewed:

1. Primitive Area Interim Management Plan - Management direction for the Idaho Primitive Area is badly needed. Classification as wilderness is currently under consideration but may not be decided for several years. In the meantime, an interim management plan should be prepared as a guide for administering the area according to provisions of the Wilderness Act.

Need for this plan as it pertains to outfitter operations was set forth at the Western Outfitters and Guides Association meeting in Salmon, Idaho, on May 3, 1974. It was announced that work on the plan would be started during the summer of 1974. While three National Forests are involved in managing the Primitive Area, the Payette

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National Forest has most of the acreage and is taking the leadership in preparing the plan. It is recommended Ranger Dodds prepare a management plan outline and meet with District Rangers on other Forests concerned to set preliminary management objectives. These objectives should be in accord with management policies announced at the May 3 meeting. Ranger Dodds may want to arrange for the other Rangers concerned to develop selected parts of the plan. During preparation of the plan, the outfitters and guides should be called upon for their suggestions, especially in regard to time schedules for converting camps and camping equipment to temporary facilities. Work should be done on this plan without delay.

Part's + input only!

These will undoubtedly be ignored!

2. Law Enforcement - Law enforcement is a continuing problem. Serious violations such as leaving trash in the Primitive Area, cutting of green trees, and use of power saws are occurring too often, especially among the outfitters. Ranger Dodds is anxious to get on top of these problems but wants to do so with full cooperation of the Forest Supervisor and Regional Forester. He expressed need for greater support on law enforcement activities. Naturally, he feels that when he moves ahead on a violation case, he should have full support of law enforcement personnel to obtain appropriate prosecution.

There are several things Ranger Dodds must do in order to bring about more understanding and respect for Primitive Area management objectives, rules, and regulations. They are as follows:

a. As discussed in item 1 above, it is extremely important that a management plan be developed and approved by the Forest Supervisor and Regional Forester. This plan will provide specific direction on types of activities and the nature of developments to be permitted. Law enforcement and management direction would be carried out in accord with these decisions.

b. Outfitting and guiding services would be administered in accord with the management plan and the special-use permits. The permits, of course, would contain specific provisions related to management requirements.

c. Inspection of outfitter camps and related discussions with permittees must be documented. It is necessary to build a case history on violations committed in order to advise the permittee that his continued violation of permit requirements places his permit in jeopardy. In this regard, Ranger Dodds has been developing a photographic record on violations. This too will be important in the case record. Each picture should have documentation of date taken, by whom, where, and so forth. As deemed desirable, pictures may be sent with inspection reports to the operators.

The Bridger-Teton National Forest is having similar administrative problems with outfitting operations. For your information, we are enclosing a copy of the Irv Lazier case on that Forest. This correspondence is self-explanatory and illustrates the importance of well documented administrative actions. ✓

contact

d. Further training in law enforcement on the Payette National Forest would be helpful. The Regional Law Enforcement Officer should be asked to visit the Forests in 1975 to become acquainted with administrative problems and law enforcement problems related to Primitive Area management. Randall Miller has assumed the Regional law enforcement job and will be glad to provide any assistance needed. A close working relationship needs to be established with him.

e. Handout materials provided to the public at registration boxes need to be improved as funds permit. Visitors need good maps to guide them through this large area. It was noted that whenever District maps are posted in registration boxes, they are quickly taken for personal use. Resolution of this procedure and need should be covered in the management plan.

3. Garbage and Sanitation - One of the first jobs to be done in bringing the Primitive Area up to standard is to remove past accumulations of garbage. In several places, old dumps have been uncovered through animal activities. In others, garbage has been left on the ground or sacked up for the Wilderness Ranger to pack out. Ranger Dodds packed out considerable material during our trip. However, the entire area needs to be cleaned up through efforts of both the Forest Service, the outfitters, and other users in order to implement the "pack-it-in, pack-it-out" policy of area maintenance. Once an area is clean, with little indication of littering or hiding of trash in trees and bushes, wilderness users will generally try to keep an area clean. The Wilderness patrolman might also push harder the "take five" program which involves encouraging users to pack out five cans, bottles, or other waste items in addition to their own garbage. This program has worked quite well on other Forests and should be implemented more fully in the Idaho Primitive Area.

Preservation

Conservation groups such as the Sierra Club, can be very helpful on cooperative cleanup programs. In other areas, these groups have made substantial contributions in time and effort to clean up trash around lakes and streams in wildernesses. Opportunities for soliciting such help in getting initial clean up in the Idaho Primitive Area should be explored.

Outfitters should be prohibited from digging any new garbage dumps. At Fish Lake, a new dump has been dug this year and will add to the problem of accumulated waste in the Primitive Area.

Here again is another aspect of outfitter operating procedure which, if continued, would normally place the special-use permit in jeopardy. The pit toilet at Fish Lake is also a bad situation with the effluent well above the ground level. Standards on toilet design as well as toilet location in relation to lakes and streams should be defined. In places, toilet trenches or pits have been located within 15-20 feet of streams.

Standards on location of outfitter camps near lakes and streams and along trails also need to be established. This will require careful thought in the management plan.

Pack animals and riding horses should be tethered away from camps to minimize odor and fly problems and to reduce damage to bushes and trees. The posts generally work quite well when located so as to minimize soil and vegetative damage. Development of such facilities is part of the management planning process for identifying camps, planning rest rotation systems, and otherwise arriving at types and levels of use compatible with Wilderness Act objectives.

4. Taylor Ranch - Dr. Floyd Newby and Richard Walker reviewed the history of the Taylor Ranch. They indicated that while the ranch is presently under jurisdiction of the College of Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Sciences at the University of Idaho, they are working toward having such jurisdiction assigned specifically to the Wilderness Research Center sometime in the future. For this reason, Mr. Newby would like the Forest Service to provide a report, when requested at a later date, on how management of the Taylor Ranch should be carried out in conformity with wilderness management objectives. He indicated that management objectives currently are in three categories, namely (1) education program, (2) visitor information and historic interpretation, and (3) wilderness and resource research.

Do they really know? They must think the WRC is not under Col. FWR.

Following are some of the ideas expressed concerning future management of the ranch:

a. Acquisition - The Forest Service would like to acquire the Taylor Ranch lands to remove the developments and facilities in order to manage these lands according to provisions of the Wilderness Act.

Acquisition could be accomplished through purchase or exchange. If the University exchanged the ranch for lands outside the wilderness, their education and research programs could be carried out effectively and without degradation of wilderness values. Possibilities of making a land exchange should be further investigated with the University.

b. Management Practices - Review of current operating procedures indicates the University is making little attempt to work with the Forest Service in its wilderness research program. This year another new building (workshop) was built on the site. A small garden tractor is being used on the site to push sand off the airstrip. Outfitter tent frames with wooden floors were recently constructed. Garbage is being buried on the site, and placement of toilet, corral, and cookshack facilities in proximity of Big Creek is very objectionable. The sink drain in the cookshack runs directly into the stream. Livestock are not fully controlled and graze onto National Forest lands.

*with a USFS
Stream use permit*

Considering the fact the University will be engaged in wilderness research it needs to develop management objectives for the Taylor Ranch compatible with wilderness? When the Potts outfitter and guide 5-year lease expires, the University should consider eliminating this use or as a minimum, establishing higher standards of operation.

*Narrow
Paris
View!*

Many of these opinions were expressed to Mr. Newby during our review. It is expected that he will continue to seek Forest Service opinions and advice in the future.

5. Flying W Ranch - The Forest Service recently acquired this ranch with land and water conservation funds with the objective of removing the developments and having the lands revert to a wilderness condition. Improvements will eventually be removed and other evidence of mans activities obliterated as much as possible. However, even though the Wilderness Act and Forest Service wilderness management policy are generally well understood by the public, there is a possibility some people may strongly react to removal of improvements in this area. It is only natural for some people to react adversely to removal of cabins, barns, and corrals in servicable condition wherever they are regardless of long-range management objectives.

In view of this potential reaction, an information program needs to be worked out in connection with disposition of improvements. Contacts with outfitter and guide associations, conservation groups, State agencies, and key individuals should be planned in advance of planned actions for the removal of these improvements. The timing of site restoration and closure of the airstrip will also require planning.

6. Idaho State Fish and Game Lands - Stonebreaker, Beal, and Hotzel Ranches.

These lands were not visited on the ground; however, flights over the properties and discussions concerning them indicate current management is not being carried out in accord with Primitive Area

management objectives. Several ranches have been purchased by the State with Federal aid funds obtained under the Pittman-Roberson Act. The Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for approving these acquisitions and ensuring that future management of the lands is in accord with the project proposal developed jointly with the State. *-lets check!*

Copies of the Idaho Fish and Game Acquisition Reports have been obtained through the Portland office of the Fish and Wildlife Service. These reports are enclosed for your information.

During preparation of the Primitive Area management plan, need for coordinated Forest Service-State management planning should be discussed with the Idaho Fish and Game Department and with the Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Director at Portland, as necessary. These agencies should generally be cooperative in achieving reasonable management purposes desired. Copies of past memorandums of inspection prepared by the Fish and Wildlife Service covering the Chamberlain Basin properties are also enclosed. They indicate their concern for management of these properties according to Federal standards.

Hoyle L. Sorenson

HOYLE L. SORENSON
Forester
Recreation, Lands, and Minerals

Enclosures

August 18, 1975

Mr. Vern Gurnsey
Boise Cascade Corporation
P.O. Box 50
Boise, Idaho 83728

Dear Vern:

As I promised, attached are copies of the material from the R-4 Forest Service office.

On pages 4 and 5 of the November 25 memo are the items we are most concerned with. Mr. Newby was not authorized to request an inspection of the ranch and did so without the knowledge of either the Dean or myself. This resulted in much misinformation. Under item b., on page 5, Management Practices, we can disprove or discredit all the Forest Service equations and plan to do so at the appropriate time.

Both Mr. Newby and Mr. Walker are no longer with us due to this and many other, what we consider, disloyal and dishonest acts on their part to distort our efforts at developing a Wilderness and Recreation program.

I would be happy to go into greater detail with you at any time.

Very sincerely,

K. M. Sowles
Assistant Dean

KMS:ms



SEP 2 1975

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August 29, 1975

Mr. K. M. Sowles, Assistant Dean
College of Forestry, Wildlife & Range Sciences
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Dear Ken:

I appreciated the information you sent to us. It gives quite a history of the Chamberlain Basin area and many of the older names are familiar, particularly when Tom Murray was most active in the Game Department.

The entire government strategy and policy seem apparent to me as one of destroying historical monuments and obliterating any sign of the works of man, rather than having them continue as historical basis for research or examples of actual history. I don't say this as any criticism of Earl Dodds or any individual; it just seems to be a policy of our government to spend a lot of money for an asset and then destroy it if they can so that man no longer becomes a threat to the area. I really question if this is in the best interest of our taxpaying citizens or even the stated principle of the Wilderness Act as it pertains to such areas. At any rate, it seems that many people already have their minds made up that this is a Wilderness area, even though it is still legally an area under study as a Primitive area.

I appreciated visiting with you, and I had hoped that we would have time to sample some of the fishing on Big Creek; but even though the opportunity and location were right there, it seems that we always run out of time. I look forward to perhaps an invitation for the coffee at some future visit to the Taylor Ranch. I would like to discuss the area further.

I would appreciate your keeping us advised as to what happens in that general area, and particularly as related to the Taylor Ranch and the University of Idaho.

Sincerely,

Vern L. Gurnsey
Vice President, Industry Affairs

VLG:ps

cc: A. J. Eiguren