

United States Forest Service
Idaho Primitive Area Reclassification Hearing
Boise, Idaho
April 5, 1971

The program was introduced by Mr. Ahlskog, Forest Supervisor who then turned the program over to Mr. Hunsacher, United States Forest Service Study Coordinator for the Wilderness Reclassification Study. An outline for the presented material is as follows: The area included in the reclassification study includes the Primitive Area proper of 1¼ million acres, 200,000 contiguous acres outside of the Primitive area, and 8,000 acres of private inholdings in the Primitive Area. The resource elements included in their study include the following:

- Wilderness
 - Recreation - use patterns and identities
 - Soils and Hydrology - potential for timber, wildlife, etc.
 - Water - where and of what type are the on-site present uses
 - Timber - total volume, site classifications, species, sustained yield potential, etc.
 - Archaeology - review of published materials, identification and identification of archaeological sites.
 - An Historical Report
 - Fire - evaluating present protection and control practices
 - Airfields and Air use
 - Transportation - outside, as well as inside the Primitive Area
 - Land status and uses - values, uses, etc.
 - Ecological Analysis - areas of scientific value, ecological trends, etc.
 - Range resources - past and present livestock use patterns
 - Fisheries - conditions of stocking, future use
 - Wildlife - inventory, habitat, rare and endangered species, conflicts
 - Insects and disease
 - Research
 - Socio-economic - human population considerations, etc.

The tentative schedule for the reclassification studies are as follows: Data will be collected by October 1971. A finished functional report will be prepared by February of 1972. A preliminary proposal and brochure will be prepared by November of 1972. Distribution of this proposal and brochure will be accomplished by April of 1973. Begin public hearings in September of 1973.

Certain of the questions submitted at this hearing included the following:

Question: What will be permitted activities in the Idaho Wilderness Area if reclassified as such?

Answer: Wildlife utilization, grazing, hunting and fishing, etc.

Question: Will a copy of the materials presented at this hearing be available to the general public?

Answer: Yes, names should be left with the Forest Supervisor, Ahlskog.

Question: from Mr. Roberts of the Forest Protection Association--why have the additional areas beyond the Primitive Area been included in your study?

Answer: They are not actually a part of the study, but are being looked into.

Question: What is the interpretation of the 5,000 acre clause in the 1964 Enabling Act?

Answer: Vague and unrevealing

Question: Ted Trueblood--he passed.

Question: Mr. George Bessey of Boise Cascade commented that any reclassification of land as wilderness would result in decreased national timber production. He commented that any boundary change recommendations at this time would be premature.

Question from Mr. Richard R. Smith; Chairman of the Northern Rocky Chapter of the Sierra Club: He commented that wilderness research use is growing faster than any other resource use. He recommended enlarged boundaries for the wilderness area because of connecting features. Suggested that they drop the main Salmon and reclassify this portion of the primitive area under the Scenic River classifications. He further commented that the area of Clear Creek and Garden Creek just east of the junction of the main Salmon and Middle Fork should definitely be included as this was the only lowland area remaining in the Idaho Primitive Area. He further stated that the Sierra Club was preparing a booklet on the Idaho Primitive Area Reclassification including their recommendations.

Mr. Ed Langelly of the Idaho Chapter of the Sierra Club pointed out that fish welfare in the Primitive Area depended on stabilization of the water sheds. He secondarily spoke for the Idaho Outfitters and Guides indicating that that group supports the wilderness classification for the Primitive Area as well as the recommended and contiguous areas thereto. He also represented the Wild Rivers Boat Association--same recommendation as for the Idaho Outfitters and Guides.

Mr. Doug _____ of the Western Wood Products Association also commented with regard to the fact that reclassification would remove these areas from timber production.