

2-1-18

Idaho's had the highest percentage of population growth in the nation for 2017. Increased by 2.2% according to US Census Bureau (story in Trib on 12-27-17)

According to IDPR from 2012 to 2016 there was a 6% increase in ohv stickers, and 11% decrease in public land access. This could cause an additional strain on natural resources, increase crowding and diminish recreation experience.

Motorized recreation creates funding for trail maintenance and there is no dedicated funding for non-motorized recreation. Off-highway vehicles took nearly 1 million trips in 2012 spending \$434 million.

Once motorized use is disallowed funding sources will no longer be available and trails won't be maintained. Downed trees, water damage, and wildfire damage will become major impediments to enjoyable and safe travel on Idaho trails. I think the forest service should increase motorized recreational opportunities and reduce any RWA's.

Forest Service is suppose to sustain health, diversity, and productive of forest and grasslands to meet present and future generations. Nearly 40% of the land mass, 20.3 million acres in Idaho is composed of National Forest land making the Forest Service an essential provider of outdoor recreation opportunities.

According to the 2008 Idaho Roadless, both motorized and non-motorized trails are allow.

A trail is established for travel by foot, stock, or trail vehicle, and can be over, or under, 50 inches wide. Nothing in this paragraph as proposed was intended to prohibit the authorized construction, reconstruction, or maintenance of motorized or non-motorized trails that are classified and managed as trails pursuant to existing statutory and regulatory authority and agency direction (FSM 2350). Nor was anything in this paragraph intended to condone or authorize the use of user created or unauthorized roads or trails. These decisions are made subject to existing agency regulations and policy and that intent has been retained in the final rule. Rather than treat an area as an RWA, designate it as Idaho Roadless making it less restrictive.

An RWA designation doesn't seem to significantly address catastrophe wild fires.

In reading the NEPA information in plain language, NEPA requires that a government assess it's own actions to determine if significant environmental impact will and occur, and if the impacts are significant, government must review and select among feasible alternatives an action that can achieve a desired objective while minimizing the environmental impacts.

That being said, I don't think the government is doing enough to reduce fuels in the National Forest unless the desired objective is a catastrophe wild fire.

If an RWA is created in an area, there needs to be a motorized trail corridor through the area, or around it so the motorized community can visit the area. Foot trails could be created that take off the motorized corridor for users who want the solitude. Similar to the Magruder corridor going through the Frank Church Wilderness.

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