**Efficient Public Collaboration: Topic #4**

**Forest Plan Revision – Draft EIS**

**Comments: Recreation/Access: Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)**

1. **Introduction:** Efficient Public Collaboration (EPC) is an organization working collaboratively to find resolutions to natural resource issues and to make recommendations to public agencies. EPC is organized using the U.S. Forest Service definition of collaboration:

*“Collaboration: A structured manner in which a collection of people with diverse interests share knowledge, ideas, and resources while working together in an inclusive and cooperative manner towards a common purpose.” 36 CFR 219.19*

EPC comprises a diverse group of people (the Collaborative Pool has approximately 45 organizations/ groups/interests), sharing knowledge, ideas and resources in a structured, inclusive, and cooperative manner (non-profit organization with a Mission Statement and Charter, open to any group or organization agreeing to the Charter), working with the common purpose of supporting the broadest possible public interest for the use of public lands.

1. **EPC’s Process for arriving at its Recommendation:** EPC’s common purpose/goal is to facilitate a dialogue that focuses on multiple public interests or the greatest good. In short, EPC defines the public interest, as framed by the courts, as the broadest a set of interests held by the public related to the topic and within the parameters under which the agency must operate. EPC’s Collaborative Group for this topic represents approximately 38 organizations/groups that came together not to negotiate over how to divvy up the pie, but to collectively identify how all interests could be considered and a solution in the broadest possible interest identified.

While EPC is open to any organizations/group that agrees with its purpose/goal, some organizations choose not to participate in the EPC’s process. The interests of these groups are still taken into account by EPC’s Collaborative Group.

1. **The Collaborative Topic:** EPC’s Advisory Group, after discussions with EPC members and National Forests, selects a topic on which to collaborate. The Collaborative Topic EPC addressed in this document is:

*What lands should be allocated to the different Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) strategy and what Plan Components should be assigned to these different ROS allocations as part of the Nez Perce –Clearwater National Forest’s* *Forest Plan Revision.*

1. **EPC’s Recommendation:** The Collaborative Group came to a consensus on the following recommendations for each of the ROS strategies. The recommendations are presented largely in the form of a map. The rationales for the allocations are also described below:
	1. See the attached ROS maps for both winter and summer recreation opportunity recommendations.
	2. MA 3 should be mostly Roaded Natural (RN)
	3. Two areas are identified to meet the needs of a Semi-Primitive Motorized opportunity, with a low motorized trail/road density, are:
		1. East and West Meadow Creek Roadless Area (RA)
		2. Big Horn/Weitas RA
	4. The Sneakfoot RA (Selway Additions) should be managed as a mixed-use winter recreation area (Semi-Primitive Motorized) to meet the interests of the public who are looking for a winter recreation area with easy access.
	5. Hoodoo RA (Great Burn RWA) should be Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized except for about 20% of the area, which would be Semi-Primitive Motorized (See additional attached map).
	6. Provides an overall balance between motorized and non-motorized areas, particularly for Semi-Primitive Motorized and Non-Motorized.
2. **EPC’s Rationale for each of the Roadless Area Recommendation:**

The Collaborative Group’s rationales for each of the recommendations are based on the following:

* 1. **MA3 as Roaded Natural:** MA3 consists largely of the land suitable for timber production. It is reasonable for the public to assume there will be vegetation treatments and timber harvest on these lands. It does not seem reasonable for the public to encounter a Semi-Primitive Setting while recreating in this area. The expectation would be for a Roaded Natural Setting, especially as timber harvesting progresses.

If a focus of MA3 is using timber harvest to achieve vegetation goals, then overlaying a possible restriction does not correspond with that desire. Also, hard-wiring small areas that currently meet a Semi-Primitive Setting amongst Roaded Natural Settings removes opportunities to modify transportation systems or to adapt to changing conditions.

* 1. **East and West Meadow Creek RA and Weitas RA:** EPC agrees with the wilderness assessment’s description concerning the ecological value of the East Meadow Creek and West Meadow Creek RA’s. However, it is this backcounty/primitive environment that also makes it desirable for the public who are looking for a Semi-Primitive Motorized Setting. The limited amount of this type of setting in the Forest compared to the amount of Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized Setting, makes this area important to this user group. It is also important for the following reasons:
		1. Provides significant economic value to Elk City and Dixie by the visitors (many from out-of-state) who use motorized routes in the West/East Meadow RA.
		2. The value and “ease of use” of the historically available and future access from the West via paved highway system.

See the EPC recommendation concerning recommended wilderness for additional support for this recommendation.

* 1. **Sneakfoot and North Fork Face RAs:** There has always been a public interest in areas that have easy access (close to towns or highways) with quality summer and winter recreation opportunities. This area has provided that opportunity for the public, particularly those on the east side of the Forest. This is a small but popular area with potential for growth and capable of accommodating increased use.

This area provides for a mix of family-oriented recreational opportunities including snowmobiling, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, hiking, and mountain biking. It provides opportunities for a range of activity levels, from easy to difficult. This area has great opportunity for the recreating public that ROS mapping does not otherwise account for

Sneakfoot and North Fork Face RAs provide easy access to the Selway Wilderness and a transition from the highway to a semi-primitive motorized to semi-primitive non-motorized and then primitive. Bringing the wilderness boundary closer to the motorized activities would only diminish the wilderness character and increase conflict. This would not be a positive addition to the Selway’s wilderness character and would eliminate an important recreational area valued by a wide range of mixed users and interests, including city, county and state governments.

* 1. **Hoodoo RA (Great Burn RWA)**: See EPC for our recommendation specific to this area. This is a summary of that recommendation.

Hoodoo RA is the only remaining area in the Forest that provides for a high elevation recreation experience that can be accessed by means other than hiking or horse back. This area consists of numerous lakes and high basins that are highly desired by the recreating public, including those who use or need alternative modes of access.

This area would be summer non-motorized except for the trail to Fish Lake. It would be winter non-motorized except for approximately 20 percent that would be motorized. Within this 20 percent area, site-specific decisions would be made as to where snowmobiles would be allowed. This would allow for an adaptive management approach to address wildlife concerns. It is not suggested that the specific areas available for snowmobiles be identified as part of the revision effort. We believe it is not appropriate to make a site-specific decision on the exact areas for snowmobile use as some are proposing. We are suggesting a general area that allows for modifying decisions as new information or changed condition may arise.

* 1. **Balanced User Opportunity:** This recommendation results in approximately 30% of the Forest in a Roaded Natural/Rural Setting, approximately 30% in Primitive Setting, and 40% in a Semi-Primitive Setting. There would be approximately 12 percent in motorized and 25 percent in non-motorized, providing a balance of opportunities.
1. **Collaborative Group Participants and Other Organization Contacted:** The following is a list of those who make up EPC’s Recommended Wilderness Project Collaborative Group and others who have been involved in our discussions and deliberations. There was unanimous agreement on the EPC recommendation among the EPC Collaborative Group/Committee.

**The Collaborative Participants and Other Organization Contacted:**

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| **Organization in Collaborative Group Agreeing to Recommendation** | **Group Representative** |
| American Legion (AL) | Jinny Cash |
| Backcountry, Hikers, Bicyclists & Equestrian, Inc | Cory Biggers |
| Citizen at Large | Tracy Duncan |
| Clearwater County Commissioner | Mike Ryan |
| Clearwater Trekkers | Leslie Anderson |
| Community of Dixie | Steve Repp |
| Efficient Public Collaboration | Marty Gardner |
| Elk City | Karen Crosby |
| Empire Lumber | Greg Danly |
| Idaho Aviation Association (IAA) | Bill Ables |
| Idaho Co. Veterans Association (VFW) | Jinny Cash |
| Idaho County Commissioner | Skip Brant |
| Idaho Park & Rec | Randy Doman |
| Idaho Pathfinders | Todd Stenzel |
| Idaho Recreation Council | Mark Jennings |
| Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission | Eileen Rowan |
| Idaho State Snowmobile Association | Sandra Mitchell |
| Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation | Mike Schiegel |
| Health Care Administration | Michelle Gardner |
| Lewis and Clark ATV Club | Jim McIver |
| Mining Interest | Ron Hartig |
| Montana Mountain Bike Alliance | Greg Beardslee |
| National Wild Turkey Foundation | Alex Arnold |
| Public Lands Access Year-round (PLAY) | Dave Galantuomini |
| River Access For Tomorrow (RAFT) | Jim McIver |
| Small Businesses | Don Ebert |
| Small Businesses | Kelli Rosollini |
| Team Lochsa | Scott Bledsoe |
| The Oregon Pilots Association (OPA) | Bill Ables |
| The Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) | Bill Ables |
| Twin Rivers Back Country Horseman (TRBCHI) | Carl Paulson |
| Professor (Ret.) of Natural Resource Management | Steve Daley-Laursen (Dr.) |
| Professor of Environmental Philosophy | Bert Baumgartner (Dr.) |
| Director of Outdoor Recreation Program, U of I | Trevor Fulton |
| Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) | Jinny Cash |
| Western Whitewater Association | Shay White |
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| **Organization in the Collaborative Group Pending Internal Processes for Final Response** | **Group Representative** |
| Mineral County | Roman Zylawy |
| Ravalli County  | Chris Hoffman |
| Nez Perce County | Don Beck |
| Lewis County  | Greg Johnson |
| Lewis and Clark Chamber of Commerce | Kristin Kemak |

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| **Organization in the Collaborative Group Having a different Recommendation** | **Group Representative** |
| None |  |

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| **State of Idaho Government Consulted**  | **Name** | **Comment** |
| Idaho State Representative, District 7 | Representative Priscilla Giddings | Agreed with this recommendation  |

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| **Organization/ Individual Advising the Collaborative** |  |
| Forest Service, ID Team Leader | Zach Peterson |
| Professor of Law | Barb Cosens (Dr.) |
| Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Clearwater Region | Zach Swearingen |
|  Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation |  Jeff Cook |