Wilderness Awareness Workshop

# Case Study Discussion Form

**1. Issue:** Transportation method for removal of demolition debris from an administrative site in the Salmon River corridor and within the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness.

**2. Situation:** Lantz Bar visitor center is located at an FS administrative site along the Salmon Wild and Scenic River in the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness. A decision has been made to remove the non-historic visitor center structure from the site. The project requires dismantling the building with hand tools. The burnable materials will be burned on-site. Non-burnable materials will be transported to Corn Creek for further disposal. Non-burnable materials include the metal roof, floor tiles, glass windows, toilets and plumbing. Corn Creek is an FS administrative site outside the Wilderness and Lantz Bar is located ten trail miles downriver from Corn Creek. The trail between Corn Creek and Lantz Bar is in good condition and maintained for use by stock.

**3. Management Question(s):**

How should demolition materials be transported from Lantz Bar to Corn Creek?

Is the use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport authorized in the river corridor?

If so, what types?

**4. Direction/Guidance:**

**a. What does the Wilderness Act say?**

Section 4 (c) Except as specifically provided for in this Act, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.

**SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

Section 4 (d) The following special provisions are hereby made:

(1) Within wilderness areas designated by this Act the use of aircraft or motorboats, where these uses have already become established, may be permitted to continue subject to such restrictions as the Secretary of Agriculture deems desirable. In addition, such measure may be taken as may be necessary in the control of fire, insects, and diseases, subject to such conditions as the Secretary deems desirable.

**b. What does the Central Idaho Wilderness Act say?**

Section 7 (a) Within the River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness additions designated by this Act-

1. the landing of aircraft, where this use has become established prior to the date of enactment of this Act shall be permitted to continue subject to such restrictions as the Secretary deems desirable:

Section 9 (a)(C) The use of motorboats (including motorized jetboats) within this segment of the Salmon River shall be permitted to continue at a level not less than the level of use which occurred during the calendar year 1978.

Section 9 (b) That segment of the main Salmon River designated as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System by this Act, which lies within the River of No Return Wilderness or the Gospel-Hump Wilderness designated by Public Law 95-237, shall be managed under the provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended, and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, notwithstanding section 10(b) of the note. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or any provisions of the Wilderness Act to the contrary.

**c. What is your agency policy?**

2326 - USE OF MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT OR MECHANICAL TRANSPORT IN WILDERNESS

2326.02 - Objectives

1. Accomplish management activities with nonmotorized equipment and nonmechanical transport of supplies and personnel.

2. Exclude the sight, sound, and other tangible evidence of motorized equipment or mechanical transport within wilderness except where they are needed and justified.

2326.03 - Policy

1. Ensure that Forest Service employees acquire and maintain necessary skills for primitive travel by foot, horse, canoe, or other nonmechanical means and the use of hand tools. For definitions see FSM 2320.5.

2. Do not approve the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport unless justified as described in 2326.1. For procedures and examples see FSH 2309.19. For definitions see FSM 2320.5.

3. Discourage flights over wilderness within 2,000 feet of the ground surface, except in emergencies or for essential military missions.

2326.1 - Conditions Under Which Use May Be Approved. Allow the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport only for:

1. Emergencies where the situation involves an inescapable urgency and temporary need for speed beyond that available by primitive means. Categories include fire suppression, health and safety, law enforcement involving serious crime or fugitive pursuit, removal of deceased persons, and aircraft accident investigations.

2. Aircraft or motor boat use established before the area was designated as wilderness by the Act of 1964 or subsequent wilderness legislation.

3. Exploration and development of valid existing mineral rights (FSM 2323.7).

4. Access to surrounded State and private lands and valid occupancies (FSM 2326.13).

5. To meet minimum needs for protection and administration of the area as wilderness, only as follows:

a. A delivery or application problem necessary to meet wilderness objectives cannot be resolved within reason through the use of nonmotorized methods.

b. An essential activity is impossible to accomplish by nonmotorized means because of such factors as time or season limitations, safety, or other material restrictions.

c. A necessary and continuing program was established around the use of motorized equipment before the unit became a part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, and the continued use of motorized equipment is essential to continuation of the program.

d. Removal of aircraft wreckage when nonmotorized methods are unsuitable.

Specify, for each wilderness, the places and circumstances in which motorized equipment, mechanical transport, or aircraft are necessary for protection and administration of the wilderness and its resources in the forest plan.

The Line Officer approving the use of motorized equipment, aircraft, or mechanical transport shall specify what uses of that equipment are suitable and will have the least lasting impact to the wilderness resource. Schedule use of this equipment to minimize impact on wilderness visitors.

**d. What does your forest plan or wilderness plan say?**

FC-RONR Wilderness Management Plan: Section (I)(E)(3)(b) The CIWA and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act required that a management plan for the Salmon Wild and Recreational River be prepared within one year. This was completed in 1982, and is hereby adopted and incorporated as a part of the management direction being provided by this comprehensive management plan for the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and related Wild and Scenic rivers. The CIWA provides that Wild and Scenic Rivers Act considerations will take precedence over Wilderness Act requirements… If conflicts develop between the Salmon River Plan direction

and Wilderness Plan direction, the River Plan direction shall be used.

Salmon Wild and Scenic River Plan: Section (III)(D)(3)(d)(3) Direction. Chainsaw use on National Forest land will be authorized by permit only. Permitted use will be very restricted during the control season.

**5. What are your management options?**

*Remember to split this minimum requirements decision making process into two parts:*

*Step 1 – Is any administrative action necessary?*

*Step 2 – If action is necessary, what is the minimum tool/method that will cause the least*

*degradation of the wilderness resource and character?*

Step 1: Is administrative action necessary? \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Why?

Step 2: If the answer to Step 1 is YES, administrative action is necessary, then discuss the following

Alternatives and others that your group develops:

1. Transportation of the material by helicopter.

2. Transportation of the material by jet boat.

1. Transportation of the material by mule string.
2. Bury the material on site.

What other alternatives are feasible?

**6. What is your decision?**

**7. What is the rationale for your decision?**

The rationale should link the decision made to wilderness management objectives, law, policy, forest plan standards and guidelines, etc. and explain how this decision best protects the wilderness character while addressing the problem in a feasible manner.

**8. What additional constraints are necessary to minimize disturbance to the wilderness resource and character?**

What mitigation measures are necessary?

Timing, location, or frequency of activity?

Maintenance requirements?

Standards or design requirements?

Monitoring?

**Actual Decision** (if made):

A minimum requirements evaluation was completed that considered two alternatives: removal of the material by jet boat or by helicopter. The jet boat alternative was selected. Removal of the materials by mule string was not an alternative evaluated.

**Rationale for decision:**

The rationale would link the decision made to wilderness management objectives, law, policy, forest plan standards and guidelines, etc. and explain how this decision best protects the wilderness character while addressing the problem in a feasible manner.

The jet boat alternative was selected based on: evaluation of noise concerns, impacts to the recreational experience of boaters and Wilderness visitors, safety, closure of facilities, and cost.