



U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management
Coeur d'Alene District
Coeur d'Alene Field Office, Idaho

January 2005



Coeur d'Alene Field Office Planning Area

Summary of the Analysis of the Management Situation



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym or Abbreviation

Full Phrase

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AML	Abandoned Mine Lands
AMM	Abandoned Mines Module
AQRVs	Air Quality Related Values
AUM	animal unit month
ASQ	annual sale quantity
BHSS	Bunker Hill Superfund Site
BF	board foot
BLM	United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
BMP	best management practices
CdA	Coeur d'Alene
CdA RMP	Coeur d'Alene Resource Management Plan
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CWMA	Cooperative Weed Management Area
DBH	diameter at breast height
DOI	United States Department of the Interior
EIS	environmental impact statement
FAR	functional-at-risk
FHRF	Forest Health and Restoration Fund
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FMP	Fire Management Plan
FO	Field Office
FRCC	Fire Regime Condition Class
FS	United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
HFRA	Healthy Forest Restoration Act
HMM	Hazardous Materials Management
ICBEMP	Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project
IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
IDL	Idaho Department of Lands
IDT	Idaho Department of Transportation
IDSHPO	Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
INFISH	Interior Native Fish Strategy
ISDA	Idaho State Department of Agriculture
IPNF	USDA Forest Service, Idaho Panhandle National Forest
MFP	Management Framework Plan
MMBF	million board feet
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

LIST OF ACRONYMS *(continued)*

Acronym or Abbreviation

Full Phrase

NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWPS	National Wilderness Preservation System
OHV	off-highway vehicle
ONA	Outstanding Natural Area
ORV	outstanding resource value
PFC	proper functioning condition
Planning Area	Coeur d'Alene Field Office RMP Planning Area
RMP	resource management plan
RNA	Research Natural Area
ROD	Record of Decision
ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
ROW	right-of-way
SIP	Idaho State Implementation Plan
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
US	United States
USC	United States Code
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
VRM	Visual Resource Management
VRU	Vegetation Response Unit
WUI	wildland-urban interface
WSA	Wilderness Study Area
WSR	Wild and Scenic River

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This document is a summary of the analysis of the management situation (AMS) that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Coeur d'Alene Field Office (CdA FO) conducted as one of the initial steps in preparing a resource management plan (RMP) for BLM-administered public lands in the northernmost five counties of Idaho (see Section 1.3 for a description of the planning area). In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.4-4, when preparing an RMP BLM must analyze inventory data and other information available to determine the ability of the resource area to respond to issues and opportunities. This is called the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS). The AMS prepared by the CdA FO provides the basis for formulating reasonable alternatives for the Coeur d'Alene RMP (CdA RMP).

The planning area was previously recognized as the Emerald Empire Planning Unit in the Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan (MFP), which was approved in 1981. Current management is based on the MFP and other related decision documents listed in Part 2 of this summary.

1.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PURPOSE AND NEED

The Emerald Empire MFP, MFP amendments, and other decision documents listed in Part 2 have guided the BLM's management of public lands within the planning area over the past 23 years. Resource conditions, federal land policies, and public demands have changed tremendously since these documents were approved. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended, requires the BLM to review and revise land use plans when such changes occur.

The CdA RMP is needed to develop a comprehensive plan that restores or maintains resource conditions and provides for the economic needs of local communities over the long term. The land use planning process is the key tool used by the BLM, in coordination with state and local government, tribes, land users, and the interested public, to protect public resources and provide for their use.

Through the CdA RMP process, the BLM will develop new land use planning decisions for those issues that are identified through public scoping. Scoping is a public process designed to reach out beyond the decision-makers and attempts to clarify the issues that are high in the public conscience. The public process is designed to determine and frame the scope of pertinent issues and alternatives to be addressed. Scoping also helps ensure that

real problems are identified early and that they are properly studied; that issues of no concern do not consume time and effort; and that the proposed action and alternatives are balanced, able to be implemented, and thorough. Public scoping began on September 3, 2004 and concluded on October 15, 2004.

The purpose of the CdA RMP is to: (1) respond to resource conditions that have changed; (2) respond to new issues; and (3) prepare a comprehensive framework for managing public lands administered by the CdA FO in accordance with current policies and regulations over the next 15 to 20 years. The public lands will be managed on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with FLPMA. The BLM will also analyze existing decisions in the Emerald Empire MFP and other existing decision documents to incorporate into the CdA RMP, when appropriate.

1.3 PLANNING AREA DESCRIPTION

The CdA RMP planning area is located entirely in the Panhandle Region of North Idaho (Figure 1-1). North Idaho consists of the five northernmost counties in the region and includes Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone counties. The CdA FO planning area includes all land within this region regardless of ownership. However, the decisions in the CdA RMP will only apply to the BLM-administered public lands within the planning area, and is referred to as the decision area.

The CdA FO manages approximately 96,732 acres of public land within five Idaho counties: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone counties. Table 1-1 identifies the acreage and percentages of the planning area by county.

Table 1-1
BLM-administered Public Lands within the CdA FO Planning Area

County	BLM Acres	Total Acres	BLM Percent of Total
Benewah	13,541	502,837	2.7
Bonner	12,139	1,227,920	1.0
Boundary	4,484	818,187	0.5
Kootenai	10,609	837,932	1.3
Shoshone	55,959	1,690,900	3.3
Planning Area Total	96,732	5,077,776	1.9

The CdA FO lies partially within the ceded territory of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. There are also about 180 acres of BLM-administered land within the current Coeur d'Alene reservation boundary. Other federally recognized tribes with aboriginal or historic ties to the area managed by the field office include the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Kalispell Tribe of Indians currently located in Washington, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Montana.

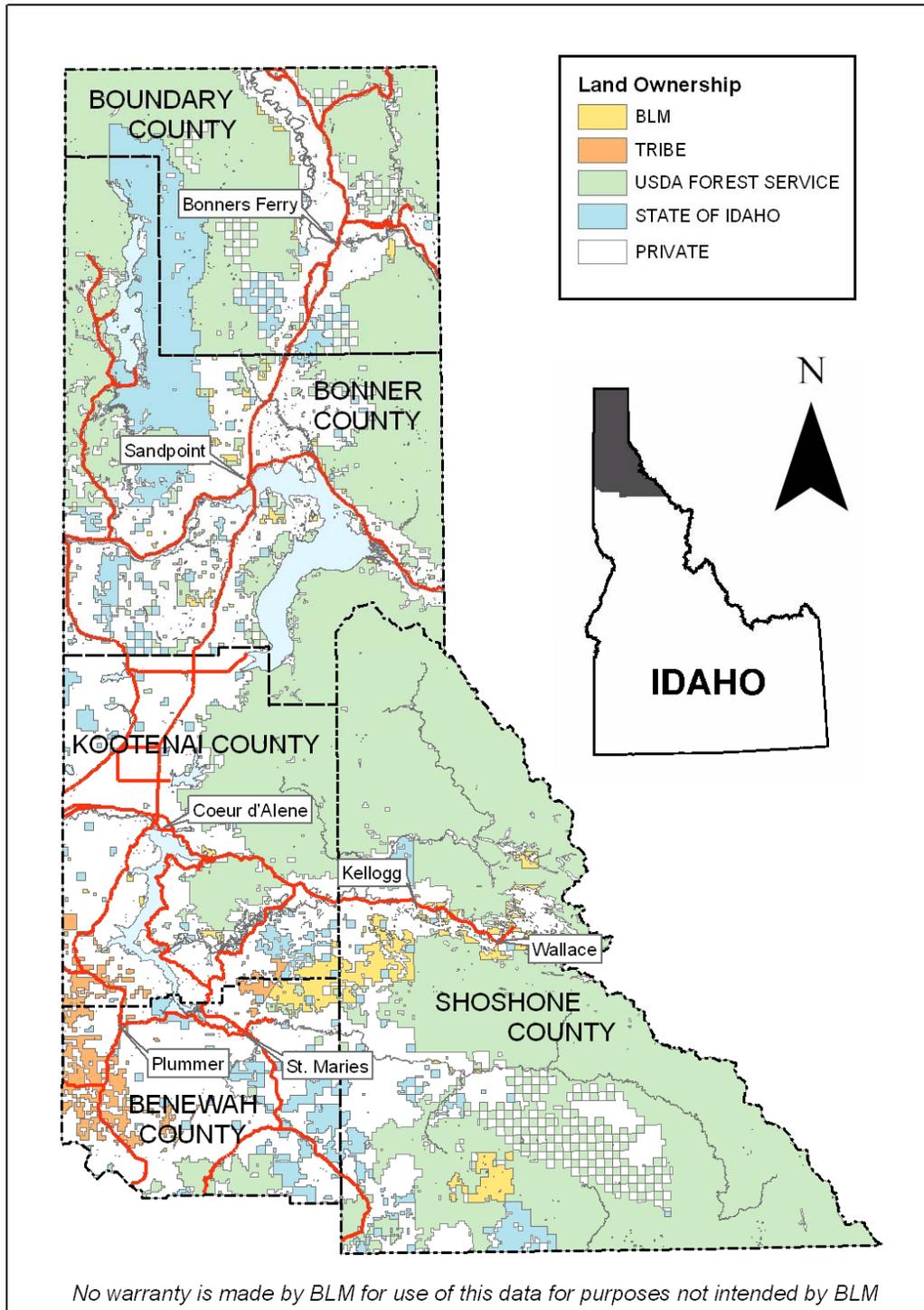
Currently, the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) is revising its forest plan for national forest lands within the Coeur d'Alene planning area. The BLM will coordinate with the Forest Service and other state and federal agencies during the planning process, especially for those resources and issues, such as fire management, roads and trails, and rights-of-way that share administrative boundaries.

The topography within the planning area is diverse, ranging from river valleys to mountain peaks of over 7,000 feet elevation. The majority of BLM-administered land lies between 2,500 and 4,500 feet. Coniferous forest covers most of the planning area, with mountain shrubs and grasslands over a very small area. Major rivers include the Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai, and St. Joe. Lakes are an important feature of the planning area, and include Coeur d'Alene, Pend Oreille, Priest, and the chain lakes.

The Wallace area (Shoshone County) has mineral deposits of national importance. Two large silver mines (Lucky Friday and the Galena) continue to operate here, and a large portion of the working population is employed in some sort of mining activity. Similarly, the towns of St. Maries (Benewah County), Coeur d'Alene (Kootenai County), Bonners Ferry (Boundary County), and Sandpoint (Bonner County) support several sawmills.

Figure 1-1
Coeur d'Alene RMP Planning Area Land Ownership

Coeur d'Alene RMP Planning Area Land Ownership.



PART 2

EXISTING DECISION DOCUMENTS

2.1 EXISTING DECISION DOCUMENTS

Current resource management decisions for the Coeur d'Alene planning area can be found in the following documents (listed in chronological order).

Emerald Empire Planning Unit MFP, Step 3 – Decisions (1981): This document contains decisions concerning land use allocations and basic resource management guidelines for the Emerald Empire Planning Unit (currently the CdA FO). These decisions were intended to guide management activities for approximately a decade.

North Idaho Timber Management Program Record of Decision (1982): This document outlined allocations and management guidelines for timber management within the Coeur d'Alene District, which included both Emerald Empire and Chief Joseph (Cottonwood Field Office) Planning Units.

North Idaho Range Management Program Summary Report (1982): This report outlined decisions to be implemented from the North Idaho Grazing Management Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which covered grazing management for the entire Coeur d'Alene District.

North Idaho Draft MFP Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (1982): This document outlined proposed allocations and management guidelines for wilderness study areas (WSA) within the Coeur d'Alene District.

Land Tenure Adjustment (LTA)/MFP Amendment (1984): This decision amends both the Emerald Empire and Chief Joseph MFPs. The document categorizes lands managed by the Coeur d'Alene District as Category I (suitable for retention in public ownership) or Category II (suitable for transfer out of federal management).

Designation Order (Order No. ID060-4) (1985): This Coeur d'Alene District order designated the Hideaway Islands as a Research Natural Area (RNA).

Land Tenure Adjustment (LTA) Plan Amendment for the Emerald Empire and Chief Joseph MFPs (1989): This document further amended both MFPs and identified management areas and adjustment areas with

guidelines to direct the Coeur d'Alene District's land tenure adjustment activities until an RMP is completed or the MFPs are further amended. This document superseded the 1984 LTA/MFP Amendment.

Plan Amendment for the Emerald Empire and Chief Joseph Management Framework Plans to Designate 12 Areas as Research Natural Areas and/or Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (1989): As the title suggests, this document established RNAs and ACECs within both planning units.

Coeur d'Alene District, Idaho, Emerald Empire Resource Area Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Designations (1990): This document established OHV designation.

Record of Decision (ROD), Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States, BLM Idaho (1991): This document approves the Final EIS addressing the vegetation treatment on BLM lands in 13 western states and its appropriate application to the BLM-administered public lands in Idaho. An integrated approach for the treatment of vegetation will be implemented in the state of Idaho.

Record of Decision, Secretary of the Interior (1991): This ROD made recommendations for 67 WSAs in the state of Idaho, including three in the Emerald Empire Planning Area.

Update to MFPs to include Land Acquisition Management Guidelines (1993): This decision adopted land acquisition guidance for the Coeur d'Alene District.

Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impacts (DR/FONSI), Coeur d'Alene District Programmatic Noxious Weed Control, EA No. ID060-94-05 (1994): This document approves the methods for treating noxious weeds within the district.

Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (1997): This document establishes standards and guidelines, which provided the resource measures and guidance needed to ensure healthy, functional rangelands.

Northern Rockies Lynx Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Statement (2004): This draft EIS will amend land use plans for national forests in parts of Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah as well as BLM units in Idaho and parts of Utah. A Decision Record has not been completed.

PART 3

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES AND RESOURCE USES

3.1 RESOURCES

This section describes the current management situation, trends, and adequacy for the natural, biological, and cultural resources that exist within the BLM CdA FO planning area.

3.1.1 Air Quality

Air pollution control in the United States (US) is mandated by the 1970 Clean Air Act and its amendments and the 1999 Regional Haze Regulations. The Clean Air Act addresses criteria air pollutants, state and national ambient air quality standards, and the Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) program. The PSD program contains specific requirements for ambient air pollutants. The Regional Haze Regulations address visibility impairment.

Air quality management is guided by the National Ambient Air Quality standards (NAAQS) and Air Quality Related Values (AQRVs, Table 3-1). Idaho has adopted the NAAQS in the Idaho State Implementation Plan (SIP).

Particulate matter is both solid particles and liquid droplets found in air. Many manmade and natural sources emit particulate matter directly or emit other pollutants that react in the atmosphere to form particulate matter. Particles less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM₁₀) pose a health concern because they can be inhaled into and accumulate in the respiratory system. Particles less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}) are referred to as “fine” particles and are believed to pose the largest health risks. Because of their small size, fine particles can lodge deeply into the lungs. Sources of fine particles include all types of combustion (e.g., motor vehicles, power plants, wood burning, etc.) and some industrial processes. Particles with diameters between 2.5 and 10 micrometers are referred to as “coarse.” Sources of coarse particles include crushing or grinding operations and dust from paved or unpaved roads.

Air quality in the planning area is generally in the “good” category of the Air Quality Index. Areas of the country where air pollution levels persistently exceed the NAAQS may be designated “nonattainment.” Previously, particulate matter (PM) concentrations in the Sandpoint (Bonner County) and Pinehurst (Kootenai County) areas have exceeded the PM₁₀ NAAQS levels, and these areas were designated as “Nonattainment Areas.” Air quality in

Table 3-1
Standards and Values Used for Air Quality Management in the CdA FO Planning Area

Standards and Values	Principal Pollutants Regulated
National Ambient Air Quality Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum concentrations of six specific “criteria” pollutants allowable to protect human health and the environment including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ozone (O₃) • Particulate matter (PM) • Carbon monoxide (CO) • Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) • Nitrogen oxides (K_n_{ox}) • Lead (Pb)
Air Quality Related Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic, cultural, physical, biological, ecological, or recreational resources, which may be affected by a change in air quality on federal lands and may include such things as plants and animals, water quality, visibility, and odors. • Values are based on the sensitivity of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class 1 - requires more stringent air quality management. Includes national parks and some wilderness areas. • Class 2 - includes everything from non-Class 1 wildlands to urban areas and thus includes all public lands in the planning area.

both these areas has improved in recent years and the areas have been documented to be in compliance with the PM₁₀ NAAQS, though they currently remain designated as nonattainment areas. Throughout the CdA FO planning area, annual average particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) concentrations have remained fairly constant despite an increasing population base in North Idaho.

Smoke has been identified as the primary source of air quality impacts in the planning area. Air quality management is coordinated through the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), who assess atmospheric conditions and current pollution levels before approving submitted burn plans. Air quality management in the CdA FO planning area places priority on protecting human health and the environment by mitigating the impacts to air quality from wildland and prescribed fire, while also allowing fire (wild or prescribed) to function in its natural role in maintaining wildland ecosystems.

The Emerald Empire Planning MFP (1981) provides limited direction for air quality management in the planning area. However, improved air quality management for all air pollution sources would result from continued implementation of the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group Smoke Management Plan (2003) and the Coeur D’Alene Fire Management Plan (2004). Since air quality in the planning area is under the direct administration the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group, Idaho DEQ, and the USEPA, the BLM will continue to coordinate its

management with these agencies to improve overall air quality and conform to both federal and state air quality standards.

3.1.2 Soil Resources

Soil disturbance can lead to long-term changes in ecological conditions and productivity. Soil productivity varies widely depending on soil depth, nutrients, water-holding capacity, and local elevation, aspect, and slope. BLM parcels within the CdA FO planning area range in elevation from bottomlands and terraces to mountain slopes and ridge tops. In general, most of the planning area consists of rugged, forested, mountainous or hilly terrain and of comparatively narrow valleys. Limited mass movement has occurred in the planning area. Roads and other concentrated uses still cause some erosion. In the Silver Valley (Shoshone County) and along the Coeur d'Alene River (Shoshone County), historic mining has resulted in extensive displacement of riparian soils and deposition of metals-laden contamination from mine tailings. Logging and wildfires have resulted in extensive displacement of riparian soils and contributed to river deposits.

The 1981 Emerald Empire MFP and subsequent revisions describe the approach to managing soils in the CdA FO planning area. This planning document sets current management practices, which includes road design to minimize soil erosion, establishes stream buffers and best management practices (BMPs), guides assessment of the physical condition of soil before permitting soil-disturbing activities, and guides the rehabilitation of surface disturbances and mined areas. Overall, field observations suggest that current management practices have reduced erosion within the planning area since the implementation of the 1981 MFP. The historic mining practices that led to many current soil problems have improved significantly.

3.1.3 Water Resources

One of the foremost challenges facing the BLM is the management of public lands where geographic distribution of the lands is fragmented. About two-thirds of the land is in the three southern counties of Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone, and most of this land is in the Coeur d'Alene River watershed. Public lands under BLM management are scattered over four major sub-basins of the Columbia River Basin, including, from north to south: the Upper Kootenai River; the Lower Clark Fork and Pend Oreille River; the St Joe River and the Coeur d'Alene River; and the Little North Fork of the Clearwater River. The BLM administers land within municipal watersheds used by Bonner's Ferry, Sandpoint, Mullan (Shoshone County), Wallace, and Saint Maries. Protection of water quality in these mixed-ownership watersheds remains a primary objective for the BLM.

Within the CdA FO planning area, many stream channels have been extensively altered by wildfires, channelization, wood removal, and the encroachment of structures such as roads and culverts. Historically mined drainages, such as the East Fork of Pine Creek (Shoshone County) have also contributed to the excessive sediment input and destabilization of channels (Matthews and Kondolf 1996).

Some of the water resources on these lands are relatively unaltered by human activity, while others have been intensely impacted. Restoration of the water resources within this region has been assigned a high priority in recent years by the BLM. Two factors have contributed to this: 1) the Coeur d'Alene River has been severely impacted by past mining practices, fire, timber harvesting, and urban development, and 2) the chances of achieving significant improvements in other resources are high given the relatively higher density of BLM lands in this area and the concentration of the lands near the major streams. Some lands will continue to require relatively little active management to retain their resource value. Other lands, while they may be small or isolated holdings, have extraordinary potential for providing long-term water-related benefits.

At the regional scale, beyond the CdA FO planning area, the 2003 Interior Columbia Basin Strategy (USDA FS and USDI BLM 2003) guides watershed management efforts. The Interior Columbia Basin Strategy was part of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP). The ICBEMP was based on a 1993 Presidential directive to develop a scientifically sound, ecosystem-based strategy for management of 64 million acres of lands administered by the Forest Service and the BLM within the Columbia River Basin, and portions of the Klamath and Great basins in the region. The ICBEMP was based on concerns over forest and rangeland health, uncharacteristically intense wildland fires, threats to certain fish and wildlife species, and concerns about local community social and economic well-being. Prior to the ICBEMP initiative, there was little broad-scale scientific knowledge of the ecological, biophysical, social, and economic conditions, trends, risks, and opportunities within these large, but important basins.

Watersheds include riparian areas with waters that are both flowing (perennial and intermittent streams) and standing (lakes, ponds, and wetlands). These areas have been generally classified based on their physical integrity, including whether they are in properly functioning condition (PFC), functional at risk (FAR), or nonfunctional. A more detailed discussion is in Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities – Riparian and Wetlands. Condition classification of each watershed type, the functional characteristics of watersheds, and the associated flowing water and standing water bodies are listed in Table 3-3 (see Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities – Riparian and Wetlands).

Management intended to clean up mining contamination areas and to move roads away from streambeds have been undertaken since 1989 and have decreased the amount of degradation of riparian areas.

Surface water quality standards are set by the state of Idaho in its role of implementing provisions of the Clean Water Act. Within the CdA FO planning area, the state of Idaho lists 163 stream segments on its 2002 list of impaired water bodies. Among the principal causes of water quality impairment are historical mining practices, roads, forest management, and wildfires.

The Bunker Hill Superfund Site (BHSS) is located in Shoshone County in North Idaho, approximately 40 miles east of Coeur d'Alene. The 21-square mile site includes the 365-acre abandoned industrial complex of the former Bunker Hill Company lead/zinc mine smelter and five main communities, including the cities of Kellogg, Wardner, Smelterville, Page, and Pinehurst, located within the Silver Valley.

Much of the focus of water resource management in the CdA FO in recent years has been on restoring natural stream function and water quality within the Silver Valley mining district. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the Bunker Hill Superfund Site provides an additional framework for the remediation and restoration of water and sediment quality in the Silver Valley and along the Coeur d'Alene River. The BLM's effort to accelerate the recovery of Pine Creek (South of Pinehurst) is a good example of the CdA FO's implementation of the Bunker Hill ROD. In this area, the BLM has successfully removed or stabilized tailings piles and other sediment sources; worked cooperatively with Shoshone County to replace undersized culverts; and planted riparian vegetation along much of the floodplain within selected riparian areas.

Groundwater is generally both abundant and of high quality in the planning area, though most of the focus of water resources management is on surface water resources. A high degree of interaction and cooperation with diverse public and private entities representing diverse interests will be required in order to achieve effective management of the water resources within the planning area.

3.1.4 Vegetative Communities

Vegetation Types

The ICBEMP (see Section 3.1.3, Water Resources) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (USDA Forest Service /USDI BLM 2000) identified 15 broad-scale potential vegetation groups for the Interior Columbia Basin, which includes most of the State of Idaho. A potential vegetation group consists of the vegetation types that grow in similar general moisture or temperature environments. Twelve of these groups occur within the planning area.

U.S. Forest Service Region 1 National Forests that are adjacent to BLM-administered lands in the planning area have developed a method of describing vegetation by Vegetation Response Units (VRUs), defined as aggregations of land having similar capabilities and potential for management (USDA Forest Service 2003). VRUs have similar patterns in potential natural communities, soils, hydrologic function, landform and topography, geology, climate, air quality, and natural processes (nutrient and biomass cycling, succession, productivity, and fire regimes). Three VRU groups are present in the CdA FO.

In order to estimate existing acreages by cover type at the planning area level, the BLM correlated the ICBEMP potential vegetation groups and Forest Service VRUs with vegetation mapping data analyzed by the Idaho Gap Analysis Program of the U.S. Geological Survey (Scott et al. 2002). Gap analysis is a scientific method used by local, state, and federal land managers in identifying the degree to which native animal species and natural communities are represented in the present-day mix of lands. Using satellite imagery, the Idaho Gap Analysis Program mapped existing natural vegetation (land cover) to the level of dominant or codominant plant species. Thirty-eight cover types were mapped in the planning area.

Based upon an assessment of the vegetation cover classifications used by ICBEMP, local National Forests, and the Idaho Gap Analysis Program, seven overall groups of vegetation cover types and one “other” category were derived for the CdA FO. Table 3-2 displays the correlation of the ICBEMP and Forest Service Region 1 vegetation cover groups/types with the Idaho Gap data, and the resulting acreage including percent by group/type on BLM-managed lands in the CdA FO planning area.

Vegetation - Forest, Fuels, and Woodlands

Approximately 88 percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO are forested. Across all forest types, wildfire suppression has resulted in an increasing density of Douglas fir and grand fir. Increases in tree mortality, stocking levels, deviations from the desired species composition, and increases in insect and disease levels are all indicators of the conditions and trends in forest health.

The Dry Conifer type, which comprises approximately 30 percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO, is in poor forest health due to root rot, beetles, and other insects and diseases.

The Wet/Cold Conifer type, which comprises approximately 46 percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO, is in poor forest health due to loss of western white pine. Historically, before the introduction of blister rust and wildfire suppression, stocking levels of Douglas fir and grand fir were much lower than exists today. Douglas-fir and grand fir are replacing the western white pine as this species dies out. The loss of western white pine and increases in the amounts of Douglas-fir and grand fir has accelerated forest succession toward shade-tolerant, late-successional vegetation types, which have more true firs, hemlocks, and cedars. Forest health for stands of

Table 3-2
Major Vegetation Cover Types on BLM-managed Lands
in the CdA FO Planning Area

CdA FO Vegetation Cover Type	ICBEMP Potential Vegetation Group	USDA Forest Service Vegetation Response Unit (VRU) Group	Gap Analysis Cover Type	BLM Acres (Percent)
Dry Conifer (representative species-- ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, grand fir, western white pine)	Dry Forest	Warm/Dry	ponderosa pine, grand fir, Douglas-fir, mixed xeric, Douglas-fir/lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir/grand fir	29,430 (30%)
Wet/Cold Conifer (representative species-- whitebark pine, western white pine, lodgepole pine, mountain hemlock, Engelmann spruce, western larch, subalpine fir, grand fir, Douglas-fir)	Cold Forest	Cool/Moist	Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, western larch, mixed whitebark pine, mixed subalpine, mixed mesic, western larch/lodgepole pine, western larch/Douglas-fir	44,635 (46%)
Wet/Warm Conifer (representative species-- western red cedar, western hemlock)	Moist Forest	Moist	western red cedar, western hemlock, western red cedar/grand fir, western red cedar/western hemlock	8,391 (9%)
Aspen/Aspen Conifer Mix	Cold Forest Riparian Woodland		mixed conifer/ broadleaf forest	1,983 (2%)
Mid-Elevation Shrub	Cool Shrub		warm mesic shrublands	5,383 (6%)
Perennial Grass	Dry Grass		foothills grasslands, montane parklands and subalpine meadows	2,455 (3%)
Riparian/Wetland	Riparian Herb Riparian Shrub Riparian Woodland		cottonwood, conifer riparian, broadleaf riparian, mixed conifer/broadleaf riparian, mixed forest/non-forest riparian, grass/forb riparian, shrub riparian, mixed non-forest riparian	1,135 (1%)
Other	Agriculture Urban Rock Water		urban, agriculture, rock, barren land, water	3,320 (3%)

Douglas-fir and grand fir are generally poor due to high stand densities, infection with root rot, and insects. Western white pine, which was once the predominate species in these stands, are disappearing due to mountain

pine beetle and blister rust. As a consequence of blister rust, western white pine only occupies five percent of its historical range.

The wet/warm Conifer type, which comprises only nine percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO, is in poor forest health due to root rot, beetles, and other insects and diseases.

The Aspen/ Aspen Conifer Mix type, which comprises approximately two percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO, is found between 5,500 and 8,000 feet on a variety of soils. It grows best in deep, moist loamy soils in a range of precipitation zones (16 to 40 inches). Aspen occur in pure stands or in association with various conifers such as subalpine fir and Douglas-fir. Associated understory vegetation consists of mallowleaf ninebark, sticky current, maple, elk sedge, pinegrass, blue wildrye, and snowberry. In many aspen stands, conifer encroachment is a natural pattern, resulting in an increased dominance by conifer and reducing the extent of aspen-dominated stands. Forest health for the Aspen/Conifer Mix type is considered to be generally good to fair with some mature stands of aspen undergoing succession to conifer.

Decisions in the Emerald Empire MFP regarding forest vegetation management emphasized commodity (wood products) production. However, national and BLM policy regarding management of forest vegetation on federal lands has changed. Much of the current management of forest vegetation within the CdA FO is guided by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2004, and the ICBEMP Strategy (USDA Forest Service/USDI BLM 2002). The Healthy Forest Restoration Act emphasizes retention of larger trees and removal of smaller diameter (ingrowth) trees to promote healthy, more fire-resistant forests. The ICBEMP Strategy identifies a management strategy for promoting and sustaining a healthy region-wide ecosystem, while supporting economic and social needs, and helping to restore and maintain habitats of plant and animal species.

Vegetation – Nonforested

Non-forested vegetation constitutes a small portion of the CdA FO planning area, and is mainly composed of foothills grasslands, montane parklands and subalpine meadows, and mid-elevation shrublands.

Mid-Elevation Shrub vegetation occurs on approximately six percent of the lands managed by the CdA FO. While this cover type is often found on south and west facing slopes that have experienced large fires, factors such as soil type and other disturbances may influence the distribution of this vegetation across the landscape as well. Generally, this type of vegetation is found at or below 4,000 feet, and is primarily composed of species such as alder, ninebark, oceanspray, snowberry, ceanothus, and Rocky Mountain maple. Some management efforts have occurred in these shrub habitats with the goal of enhancing wildlife forage.

The Perennial Grass type occurs on approximately three percent of lands managed by the CdA FO. This cover type primarily consists of foothills grasslands, montane parklands and subalpine meadows, with minor amounts of Palouse prairie limited to small areas in the southwestern part of the CdA FO planning area. Dominant species in this habitat type include bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, and green fescue.

The greatest threat to these nonforested communities is from invasion by noxious weeds and other exotic species (see the discussion on Noxious Weeds, page 3-9).

Riparian and Wetlands

Riparian and wetland areas occupy transition zones between aquatic and upland habitats, with the term “riparian” generally applied to the vegetated zones adjacent to rivers and streams. These areas are important from an

ecological standpoint as they supply cover for wildlife that access aquatic environments and are a source of food for fish and wildlife. They also influence water quality by filtering out nutrients from runoff, maintaining water temperature by providing shade, and controlling erosion.

In 1991, the BLM Director approved the *Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's*. This initiative established national goals and objectives for managing riparian-wetland resources on public lands. One of the chief goals was to restore and maintain riparian-wetland areas so that 75% or more would be in proper functioning condition (PFC) by 1997 (USDI BLM 1993). PFC and other riparian-wetland conditions are defined in Table 3-3. PFC inventories have been completed on about 76 percent of the riparian/wetland resources in the FO (Table 3-4).

Table 3-3
Condition Classification for Riparian-Wetland Areas

Condition Classification	Definition
Properly Functioning Condition (PFC)	Adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows, thereby reducing erosion and improving water quality; filter sediment, capture bedload, and aid floodplain development; improve flood-water retention and ground-water recharge; develop root masses that stabilize streambanks against cutting action; develop diverse ponding and channel characteristics to provide the habitat and the water depth, duration, and temperature necessary for fish production, waterfowl breeding, and other uses; and support greater biodiversity.
Functional-At Risk	In a functional condition but an existing soil, water, or vegetation attribute makes them susceptible to degradation.
Nonfunctional	Not providing adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris to dissipate stream energy associated with high flows and thus not reducing erosion, improving water quality, etc., as listed under PFC above. The absence of certain physical attributes, such as a floodplain where one should be, is an indicator of nonfunctioning conditions.

Source: USDI BLM 1993; USDI BLM 1994

The CdA FO manages 237 linear miles of streams, including 108 miles of intermittent streams and 129 miles of perennial streams (Flowing Water, Table 3-4). The BLM has assessed functioning condition of approximately 58 percent (137 miles) of these. Of those assessed, about 86 percent (120 miles) are in PFC, nine percent (12 miles) are functional-at-risk, and four percent (5 miles) are nonfunctional. Of the streams (riparian corridors) identified as functional-at-risk, fewer than five percent (<1 mile) are improving, fewer than 10 percent (1 mile) are declining, and no trend is discernable for the remainder.

The CdA FO also manages 263 acres of lakes, and 465 acres of wetlands (Standing Water, Table 3-4). The BLM has assessed the functioning condition of approximately 75 percent (474 acres) of these. Of those assessed, 30 percent (141 acres) are in PFC and 70 percent (333 acres) are in functional-at-risk. The PFC for approximately 254 acres has not been determined.

Table 3-4
Functional Condition Summary for Flowing and Standing Water Managed by the BLM in the CdA FO Planning Area

Type	PFC	Functional at Risk	Nonfunctional	Unknown	Total
Flowing Water (miles)	120	12	5	100	237
Standing Water (acres)	141	333	0	254	728

Management of riparian and wetland areas in the CdA FO planning area is challenging due to intermingled and scattered land ownership patterns. The BLM has made considerable restoration efforts in the Pine Creek (Shoshone County) watershed, which have halted the degradation of plant communities along certain streams (see Section 3.1.3, Water Resources).

The BLM is committed to continuing to maintain and restore riparian and aquatic resources on BLM public lands to proper functioning condition. In the agency's effort to achieve this goal, the BLM has agreed to abide by the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy (see Section 3.1.3, Water Resources), which was developed, in part, to increase and sustain protection for aquatic and riparian components. Management actions include the following:

- Designate Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs) where aquatic/riparian-dependent species receive management emphasis. RCAs will include streams/rivers, ponds, lakes, springs, and wetlands. This may be accomplished by establishing default widths or by developing and using other criteria;
- Use multi-scale analysis;
- Provide habitat for species with narrow habitat requirements;
- Identify restoration priorities and guidance;
- Identify management direction (e.g., objectives, desired future condition) for specific sub-watersheds; and
- Develop a monitoring/adaptive management strategy for aquatic and riparian resources.

Since 2002, the BLM has been implementing the standards and guidelines outlined in the *Interim Strategies for Managing Fish-Producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, Western Montana, and Parts of Idaho* (commonly referred to as the Inland Native Fish Strategy or INFISH, USDA Forest Service 1995).

Noxious Weeds

On public lands administered by the BLM and throughout North Idaho, noxious weeds have invaded and dominate many roadsides, disturbed areas, and susceptible habitats across the landscape. Invasive species on BLM lands are most likely to be found in disturbed areas, such as forest roads, timber sale areas, and mine sites, though noxious weeds also are invading undisturbed areas, especially dry, open, ponderosa pine forest types.

Noxious weed species having the greatest effect on BLM land in the CdA FO area include spotted knapweed, Dalmatian toadflax, meadow hawkweed, and common tansy. These and other invasive species were historically introduced by livestock, grain production, contaminated hay, wildlife, waterways, and escaped ornamentals. New invasive species continue to be introduced and spread by vehicles, machinery, animals, and humans. Although inventories have not been carried out over time to allow the BLM to accurately indicate the temporal spread of invasive weeds, adequate deductions can be made regarding the trends for each species by comparing the current

spread, extent, and pattern of spread to the point in time and location where these species were first found in the region.

Noxious weed management is coordinated under a cooperative agreement through the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs), which designate weeds for eradication, containment, or management, based on the degree of infestation and the threat that they pose to native habitats. This cooperative agreement is between the USDA-Forest Service, Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF); BLM; Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Idaho Department of Lands (IDL); Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG); Idaho Department of Transportation (IDT); Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Shoshone, and Benewah counties; and four local soil conservation districts. Weed management in the CdA FO is based on integrated pest management principles using manual, mechanical, biological, prescribed burning, and chemical treatment methods for controlling noxious weeds as outlined in *The Record of Decision for the Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (USDI BLM 1991)*. These principles place priority on strengthening the health of the overall plant community, thereby making it more weed resistant. The CdA FO is a member of two CWMAs, which create weed management plans for large geographical areas.

3.1.5 Fish and Wildlife

Fisheries

More than 11,000 miles of perennial streams cross all lands in North Idaho. About 129 miles of these perennial streams are located on BLM public lands, along with 263 acres of lakes and 465 acres of wetlands. The CdA FO also manages 108 miles of intermittent streams. Combined, these areas provide potential habitat for 32 fish species in the Kootenai, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Clearwater river drainages. Detailed discussions on water resources and riparian-wetland vegetation are provided in Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, respectively. Arctic grayling inhabit Crater Lake in the headwaters of Delaney Creek (Shoshone County). Species, such as black crappie, largemouth bass, northern pike, and yellow perch inhabit warm water bays and lakes such as Cougar Bay (Lake Coeur d'Alene) and Gamlin Lake (Bonner County). Sculpin species, trout, and whitefish inhabit cold water streams. Many introduced populations, such as brook trout, have replaced native populations of bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout.

Maintaining and restoring 75 percent of the watersheds, riparian resources, and aquatic resources on BLM public lands to proper functioning condition is necessary to sustain aquatic wildlife and fisheries (see Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities – Riparian and Wetlands).

Current management decisions affecting habitat for aquatic wildlife and fisheries are the same as those identified in Section 3.1.4 for riparian-wetland vegetation.

Terrestrial Wildlife

The wide assortment of topography, vegetation, and climate occurring in the planning area provides diverse habitats for a variety of wildlife species. There are 325 species of wildlife known to occupy North Idaho. The presence of any species may be seasonal or year-round based on individual species requirements.

Forested habitats largely dominate the landscape. As discussed above, the CdA FO manages 108 miles of intermittent and 129 miles of perennial streams for a total of 237 linear miles of streams. More species of wildlife inhabit riparian and wetland areas than any other habitat because of the close proximity of food, water, and shelter. Approximately 165 animal species inhabit mostly riparian and wetland habitats during some period or season of the year. Twenty-two of these 165 species are special status species (see Section 3.1.6, Special Status Species). The

vegetative communities section (Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities) provides additional vegetation and wildlife habitat information. The fragmented land ownership pattern in the CdA FO has made lands managed by the BLM of particular importance because these public lands provide wildlife with critical habitat niches and preferred habitats used by species for breeding, rearing young, foraging, travel between areas (connectivity corridors), and security (refuge) areas.

Of 53 selected wildlife species that use cavities in living, dying, and dead trees during their annual life cycle, nearly 50 percent are migratory birds and 28 percent are special status species. Many of these animals eat the bugs that eat the trees. Many bat species roost in trees cavities and in crevices within tree bark. Bats, especially Townsend's big-eared bat, also roost inside abandoned mine shafts.

Eleven medium- to large-sized carnivore species (coyote, gray wolf, bobcat, lynx, mountain lion, fisher, marten, river otter, wolverine, black bear, and grizzly bear) are key species in wildlife communities.

In general, with the settlement of North Idaho during the past century, the trend has been that wildlife has responded adversely (e.g., avoidance of areas and decrease in suitable habitat for feeding, breeding, and resting) to the following changes in vegetation:

- Early successional tree species replaced by late successional tree species;
- Larger, older trees replaced by smaller, younger trees (decreased cavity-nest niche);
- Multi-story canopies replaced by single-story canopies (decreased complexity);
- Native species replaced by noxious weed species;
- Large stands of forest replaced by small stands of forest (increased habitat fragmentation); and
- Increased numbers and densities of roads (habitat fragmentation and disturbance from human activities).

Current management is generally considered somewhat adequate, though management that has resulted in the establishment of buffers for raptor nesting and road closures for roads not used for five years or more are considered fully adequate.

The BLM has the responsibility to provide habitat for productive and diverse populations of terrestrial wildlife species. In order to sustain and protect terrestrial wildlife species on public land, the BLM will need to maintain and restore the health of vegetation communities, watersheds, riparian resources, and aquatic resources.

The Emerald Empire Management Framework plan established a number of guidelines for managing wildlife habitat to include:

- Seasonal road closures and other protective requirements for important winter range for deer and elk;
- Maintenance requirements for snags for cavity dependent animals;
- Silvicultural methods to protect and improve deer and grouse habitat; and
- Buffers to protect raptor nests.

Current management decisions discussed previously that affect aquatic wildlife and riparian-wetland areas also affect habitat for waterfowl (see Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities – Riparian and Wetlands).

3.1.6 Special Status Species

Special status species are those that are federally listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), species proposed or candidates for federal listing, species designated as “sensitive” by the BLM, and those listed by the State of Idaho as species of special concern. The sensitive species designation is normally used for species that occur on BLM public lands and for which the BLM has the capability to significantly affect the conservation status of the species through habitat management. Generally a native species may be listed as sensitive when it:

- Could become endangered or extirpated from a state, or within a significant portion of its range, in the foreseeable future;
- Is under status review by the USFWS and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS);
- Is undergoing significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species’ existing distribution;
- Has typically small and widely dispersed populations;
- Inhabits ecological refugia (safety and cover), specialized, or unique habitats; or
- Is listed by the state.

Watch List species include species that are not considered Idaho BLM-sensitive species but for which current population or habitat information suggests that species may warrant sensitive species status in the future.

Since the completion of the Emerald Empire MFP in 1981, 24 wildlife species which occur in the CdA FO planning area have been added to the BLM sensitive species list. In addition, three species were added to the Idaho State List and 20 species to the BLM watch list. This is a three fold increase in the number of protected species.

Threatened and Endangered Fish

Major changes in native biodiversity have resulted from shifts in climate and/or geology; however, human influences have substantially affected ecological processes and biodiversity. To some degree, general water quality, riparian habitats, and fish habitats have experienced slight upward trends during the past decade. Whether changes in the trends of ecological processes and biodiversity occur will largely depend on the demands placed on fisheries and other associated resources as the human population base expands. The CdA FO planning area provides habitat for five special status fish species in North Idaho (Table 3-5).

Current management decisions affecting special status fish habitat include establishing streamside vegetation buffers and restricting development activities (e.g., road construction, timber sale planning). Protection of threatened and endangered fish species is mandated by the Endangered Species Act. Current BLM management also includes the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy guidance for aquatic and riparian components (see Section 3.1.3, Water Resources and Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities – Riparian and Wetlands).

**Table 3-5
Federally Listed and BLM Sensitive Fish Species in Perennial Streams
in the CdA FO Planning Area**

Common Name	Status	Fish Habitat in Northern Idaho	
		Total Miles	BLM Miles
White Sturgeon Kootenai River	Federally Endangered	217	0
Bull Trout	Federally Threatened	1,732	11 (0.8%)
Burbot	BLM Sensitive	245	0
Westslope Cutthroat Trout	BLM Sensitive	4,657	68 (1.5%)
Shorthead Sculpin	BLM Watch List	849	19 (2.2%)
Total		11,050	129 (1.2%)

Threatened and Endangered Terrestrial Animals

Federally listed threatened and endangered wildlife occurring within the CdA FO includes the woodland caribou (endangered), bald eagle (threatened), Canada lynx (threatened), gray wolf (threatened north of I-90, experimental/nonessential south of I-90), and grizzly bear (threatened) (Table 3-6). The yellow-billed cuckoo is a federal candidate species that could potentially occur within the planning area. A total of 28 BLM-designated sensitive terrestrial species occur within the CdA FO planning area.

**Table 3-6
Federally Listed and Candidate Terrestrial Wildlife Species
in the CdA FO Planning Area**

Common Name	Status	
Woodland Caribou	Federally Endangered	Habitat loss and mountain lion predation have been the largest contributing factors for downward trend.
Canada Lynx	Federally Threatened	The lack of administrative protection measures for this species was the major contributing factor for listing.
Northern Gray Wolf	Federally Threatened (north of I-90) Experimental/Non-essential (south of I-90)* *classification under the Endangered Species Act, meaning that the population is not considered essential to the survival of the species, but remains protected.	The USFWS is exploring options for delisting because wolf populations have increased beyond the recovery goals. Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming would take over management of this species within their boundaries.

Table 3-6 (continued)
Federally Listed and Candidate Terrestrial Wildlife Species
in the CdA FO Planning Area

Common Name	Status	Status
Grizzly Bear	Federally Threatened	In 1999, the USFWS determined that the Selkirk and Cabinet/Yaak grizzly bear ecosystems should be combined, and the grizzly bears in both warranted, but were precluded from reclassification as an endangered species.
American Bald Eagle	Federally Threatened	The USFWS proposed delisting this species in 1999 because their national population has increased beyond the recovery goals.
Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Federal Candidate for listing	May no longer inhabit Idaho

Threatened and Endangered Plants

BLM special status plants are defined as those species currently listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, as well as species that are proposed or candidates for listing. It also includes species designated as sensitive by the BLM State Director. BLM sensitive species are protected, managed, and conserved in the same manner as federal candidate species. In Idaho, the BLM has defined and further clarified the management of special status plants by designating species as either BLM Sensitive or Watch List (Idaho Bureau of Land Management Sensitive Species List, Instruction Memorandum No. ID-2003-057 (5/20/03). There are two federally threatened species, water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*), and Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*), as well slender moonwort (*Botrychium lineare*), a candidate for federal listing, that have the potential to occur within the CdA FO planning area. Thirteen BLM Sensitive and seven Watch List species occur within the planning area.

Invasion of native habitats by noxious weeds and other exotic species poses one of the greatest threats to native plant species and communities and is an increasing concern within the planning area.

Overall vegetative changes that have occurred across the CdA FO planning area include the following (USDA Forest Service 2003b):

- A shift from species that generally need high quantities of sunlight to persist (more sun loving) to those that can tolerate denser and more shaded forest conditions. This condition is considered to be a factor in reducing the resilience and sustainability of the forest; and
- A shift in forest structure, including the pattern or arrangement of the forest communities, has occurred and could affect resilience and the sustainability of historic ecological relationships.

3.1.7 Wildland Fire Ecology and Management

Fire control and use is regulated to protect life, property, and resources, specifically in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), and to improve forest health and protect air quality.

Fire suppression and timber harvesting in the last century have changed the vegetation patterns, structure, and composition of forests. Therefore, the role that fire plays in these ecosystems has also been altered. Poor forest health conditions will continue to influence fire management decisions, particularly fuel loadings (live and dead tree

size and numbers), tree density (number of trees per acre), tree species (grand fir and Douglas-fir, compared to ponderosa pine, larch, and white pine), and tree health (disease and insect damage and mortality). Further discussion can be found in Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities—Forests, Fuels, and Woodlands.

Per decade, between 1920 and 1959 in all of North Idaho, there was a sharp decline in the number of fires burning more than 10 acres or burning for more than 24 hours. Specifically, the incidence of these fires dropped from 599,000 acres in the 1920s to just 4,190 acres in the 1950s, most likely due to fire suppression. In recent decades, the acreage of large fires has tended to increase, which may be due to the buildup of fuels resulting from successful fire suppression and the increased risk, size, and severity of fires.

Of particular concern are the number of homes and other structures built in and near forest environments, called the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Hazardous fuels continue to accumulate in these areas, along with the continued decline of forest health. WUI and forest health concerns are expected to continue to intensify in the next decade, making fire management an increasingly important factor for maintenance and protection.

National and regional fire strategies describe fire risk conditions in terms of three condition classes and fire regimes. The Fire Regime Condition Classification System (FRCC) describes how far natural fire frequency (fire regime) has departed from the historic condition of an area or landscape to present conditions (functional condition of ecosystem affected) (Table 3-7). FRCC 1 is the desired condition. The dry conifer type is in FRCC 3, and the rest of the vegetation on BLM lands in the planning area is in FRCC 2.

Table 3-7
Fire Regime Condition Class Descriptions

FRCC	Condition Class Description
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire regimes that are within historic ranges and the loss of key ecosystem components of the ecosystem from the occurrence of fire is low. • Areas are considered to be healthy and functioning adequately.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire regimes have been moderately altered from their historic range by either increased or decreased fire frequency and are at moderate risk of losing key ecosystem components. • Areas are considered to be unhealthy and their rate of deterioration is expected to increase moderately to rapidly.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire regimes have been significantly altered from their historic range, and the loss of key ecosystem components is high. • Areas are considered to be unhealthy and nonfunctioning.

The 1981 Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan (MFP) identified fire management strategies for different geographic areas and provides some general fire management assumptions and guidelines. However, it does not reflect national fire management strategies and policies completed in recent years (i.e., Coeur d'Alene Fire Management Plan; National Fire Plan; 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy). Since 1981, the CdA FO has experienced significant changes due to land tenure adjustments (see Section 3.2.1, Forestry and Woodland Products, and Section 3.2.5, Lands and Realty) and the expanding WUI, resulting from increased area population growth. A significant amount of new information on fire behavior and the role of fire in ecosystems has also been generated over the past 23 years.

The Coeur d'Alene Fire Management Plan (FMP) establishes priorities, goals, and guidance for fire management and treatments in the CdA FO planning area (USDI BLM 2004). Areas with moderate to significant disturbance from historical fire disturbance and the WUI will be treated as the highest priority. In areas where fire is at or near its historical fire cycle, the BLM will continue to allow fire to play its natural role. The FMP also has a goal of promoting healthier forests and overall vegetation structure by establishing treatment priorities for decadent stands of aspen and whitebark pine, and for stands of Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, and old-growth with heavy fuel loads. Guidance provided by the Coeur d'Alene FMP is considered adequate for current and future management.

Management processes established under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2004 (HFRA) and Healthy Forest Initiative (HFI) are sufficiently streamlined to allow implementation of projects to meet management goals. The principal source of funding for providing forest products is derived from the Forest Health Recovery Fund (FHRF) and various other fuels management funds. Due to the lack of funding the BLM has not been able to restore, maintain, and enhance forest/ecosystem health.

3.1.8 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are locations of human activity, occupation, or use. They include expressions of human culture and history in the physical environment, such as prehistoric or historic archaeological sites, buildings, structures, objects, districts, or other places. Cultural resources can be natural features, plants, and animals that are considered to be important to a culture, subculture, or community. Cultural resources also include traditional lifeways and practices.

There are 92 known cultural resource sites administered by the CdA FO, ranging in surface area from over 60,000 square yards to as little as 1 square yard. Because of rapid soil development and dynamic geomorphic events, most sites are buried, with only a fraction of the cultural material exposed on the surface, with the remainder extending to great depths. Most sites are related to mining and include adits, tramways, cabins, and mill sites. The North Idaho 1910 Fire Sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and includes the Pulaski Tunnel site. Most cultural resource sites have not been evaluated for their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, but most are thought to be eligible. One area along the Rochat Divide is considered to be a traditional cultural property.

The condition and trend of cultural resources in the planning area vary considerably due to the diversity of terrain, geomorphology, access and visibility, and past and current land use patterns. Because recorded sites are manifested by exposed artifacts, features, or structures, they are easily disturbed by wind and water erosion, animal and human intrusion, natural deterioration and decay, and development and maintenance activities. Based on limited site monitoring and site form documentation, the trend of site conditions in the planning area is considered to be downward. Within the CdA FO planning area, the demand for cultural resources is minimal, except for some members of the Native American and local communities who express a desire for interpretation. Vandalism or collecting (e.g., unauthorized digging and surface collection, and use of metal detectors) is minimal. Development and maintenance activities (e.g., mining, recreation use, OHV use) may affect some sites. Also of concern is the natural deterioration and continuing decay of wooden and rock structures at historic mining and homesteading sites. Collectively, these agents have adversely affected and continue to adversely affect many known cultural resources.

Impacts to cultural resources are expected to increase as greater numbers of people use the outdoors and access to the outdoors becomes easier. Impacts will also continue from authorized uses. Demands for cultural resource information from both scientific and interpretive interests are expected to continue.

Cultural resources in the CdA FO are managed in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and guidelines. The principal federal law addressing cultural resources is the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (16 United States Code [USC] Section 470), and its implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800). The NHPA describes the process for identifying and evaluating historic properties, for assessing the effects of federal actions on historic properties, and for consulting to avoid, reduce, or minimize adverse effects. The BLM meets its NHPA responsibilities under a protocol agreement with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (IDSHPO), as provided for in the National BLM Programmatic Agreement. The process requires a reasonable and good faith effort to consult with those, such as Native American groups or those with scientific or other interests in affected resources, and who might attach religious and cultural significance to affected resources.

The Emerald Empire Management Framework Plan included decisions concerning survey requirements, resource evaluation, and avoidance of impacts to resources, prohibitions of vehicle access to areas of cultural importance to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, and specific inventories and studies necessary to manage cultural resources.

New directives for land use planning in the BLM Land Use Planning Manual H-1601-1 and BLM Manual Section 8110.4 and IB 2002-101 require categorizing known and expected cultural resources according to their nature and relative preservation value. Resource types are allocated to appropriate use categories that include scientific use, conservation for future use, traditional use, public use, experimental use, or discharged from management. These directives also require the identification of priority geographic areas for new field inventory based on a probability for unrecorded significant resources to reduce imminent threats from natural or human-caused deterioration, or potential conflict with other resource uses.

3.1.9 Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources are the physical remains or other physical evidence of past plants and animals generally preserved in soils and sedimentary rock formations. Paleontological resources are important for correlating and dating rock strata and for understanding past environments, environmental change, and the evolution of life.

Paleontological resources that occur on public lands are managed in accordance with the requirements of several federal laws, primarily FLPMA. Additional requirements for the use, management, and protection of paleontological resources on public lands are addressed in a series of federal regulations and orders, as well as by specific BLM manual guidance. Existing regulations and policies also address collecting fossils on public lands. Some areas may be closed for hobby collecting to protect scientifically significant invertebrate or plant fossils or other resource damage. Qualified paleontologists may obtain permits for collecting vertebrate fossils and other scientifically significant specimens. Specimens collected under the auspices of a permit remain the property of the federal government and must be properly kept in qualified museum or university collections.

There is no existing plan guidance for paleontological resources in the CdA FO and no known vertebrate or invertebrate fossil localities on public lands in the CdA FO decision area. The BLM Handbook H-8270-1 describes a classification system that ranks areas into three classes based on their potential to contain vertebrate fossils or exceptional invertebrate or plant fossils. Some Miocene invertebrate and vertebrate fossil localities are known on private lands near Clarkia in the planning area (Smiley 1989). Another potential source of fossil specimens is in the sedimentary belt formations that formed during the Precambrian, although there are none reported. This formation may be found in various locations throughout North Idaho (Alt and Hyndman 1989).

If there are unknown exposed fossil elements, they can be easily damaged by such factors as wind and water erosion, animal and human intrusion, natural deterioration, and development and maintenance activities. Within the CdA FO planning area, the demand for paleontological resources is thought to be low because of the paucity of remains. This determination is based on the known research interests of professional paleontologists.

Because of a lack of paleontology sites there have been no management concerns in the past. If any resources are located in the future, then actions would be initiated to properly manage those resources.

3.1.10 Visual Resources

Visual resource management is guided by FLPMA, which requires the following:

- Public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the scenic values;
- Scenic values be identified as one of the resources for which public lands should be managed;
- An inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values, including scenic values, be prepared and maintained on a continuing basis; and
- Each right-of-way contains terms and conditions which will minimize damage to scenic and aesthetic values.

BLM Manual 8400 and BLM Handbook H-1601-1 direct that visual resource management classes be developed for all BLM lands through the CdA RMP process. BLM Handbook H-8410-1 establishes and describes the BLM visual resource inventory system (Table 3-8).

The Forest Service has a visual inventory and management system similar to the BLM's. While management objects are expressed somewhat differently, both agencies inventory scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and distance zones. Both conduct these inventories on a broad scale within their respective planning areas. With the intermingled ownership that exists, portions of planning areas overlap. In these overlapping areas there are coordination needs to ensure management objectives between the Forest Service and the BLM are consistent.

In many instances the BLM manages only fragments of landscapes and has a minor influence on the maintenance of scenic quality in these areas. Often the land management practices of others have a greater influence. BLM land management actions have generally been small scale, usually involving vegetation modifications from forest management activities and landform modifications from road construction. Minor structure modifications involving utility work on rights-of-way also commonly occur.

Visual resource management classes adopted in the MFP for the CdA FO decision area differ from inventoried classes in several locations. To minimize visual resource management constraints on timber harvesting and forest management activities, some inventoried Class II areas were designated Class III, and some inventoried Class III areas were designated Class IV. This has not resulted in an overall degradation of scenic quality but has resulted in expressed user dissatisfaction on some specific projects.

Wilderness Study Areas are automatically designated VRM Class I (see Section 3.3.2).

Table 3-8
Visual Resource Management Classes and Objectives in the CdA FO Planning Area

VRM Class	Objective	BLM Acres¹
I	Preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes and limited management activity. This class is used for special areas where management situations require preservation of a natural environment unaltered by humans, such as wilderness and wilderness study areas.	32,309
II	Retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be low, and management activities may be seen but should not attract attention.	7,718
III	Partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be moderate, and management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer.	66,238
IV	Provide for management activities that require major modification to the existing character of the landscape. Activities may dominate the view and be a major focus of viewer attention.	30,102

¹ The number of acres managed by the BLM has been reduced due to land tenure adjustments. Current acres by management class have not yet been calculated.

The underlying reason for establishing VRM objectives is to ensure that the visual value or scenic quality of the landscape is retained. Scenic quality is a measure of the visual appeal, and ratings are based on the visual variety and diversity in the landform, vegetation, and water features of a landscape (Table 3-9).

Table 3-9
Scenic Quality Ratings in the CdA FO Planning Area

Class	Degree of Visual Variety	Representative Areas
A	Distinctive (high)	Rochat Divide Grandmother Mountain
B	Common or typical (moderate)	Most of the CdA FO planning area, due to numerous water features, including both large and small lakes.
C	Minimal value or below average (low)	Primarily limited to two small parcels and one larger parcel managed by the BLM in the CdA FO planning area.

The scenic quality is largely stable throughout the CdA FO, but a large increase in population and recreation use over the last two decades has increased visual sensitivity. In other cases, where the scenic quality comprising the central portion of the Silver Valley has been heavily affected by past mining activities, there has seen a considerable amount of rehabilitation over the last two decades. Removal of a smelter, mine structures, and tailings, stream restoration work, and revegetation have improved its scenic quality.

3.2 RESOURCE USES

This section describes the current management situation, trends, and adequacy for the forestry and woodland products, livestock grazing, minerals, recreation, lands and realty, and transportation and access that exist within the BLM CdA FO planning area.

3.2.1 Forestry and Woodland Products

Forest products consist of commercial products derived from forest lands. More information on the overall condition of the forest can be found in Section 3.1.4, Vegetative Communities - Forests, Fuels and Woodlands.

The Emerald Empire MFP designated an annual sale quantity of 6,500,000 board feet (board foot = 144 cubic inches, or 1 foot x 1 foot x 1 inch) which was based on 133,261 acres of commercial forest managed by the BLM in 1981. Since 1981, BLM-managed forest lands within the planning area have been reduced through land exchanges. The CdA FO currently manages about 97,000 acres of forested public lands. In recent years, the CdA FO has sold between 2 and 4 million board feet annually.

Since 1993, except for timber sold under right-of-way grants to private companies and individuals, nearly all of the timber sold has been under the Forest Health Recovery Fund from projects designed to restore, maintain, and enhance forest health. In addition to harvesting dead and dying trees, efforts are made to remove excess trees to return these forests more closely to their historic stocking levels and species mix, and reduce forest fuels to decrease the effects of wildfire, as well as sustaining important components of the forest ecosystem (retention of large or old growth trees).

With the implementation of stand density reduction and fuels management practices to restore, maintain, and enhance forest and ecosystems, five potential sources for forest commodity production are available on BLM forested lands. These forest materials include large sawlogs (over 27 inches diameter), regular sawlogs (9 to 27 inches diameter), hew wood or ton wood (4 to 9 inches diameter), and pulp and hog fuel (material that supports paper mills, fiber board mills, cogeneration plants, etc.).

Due to shifts in government forest management policies (i.e. Healthy Forests Restoration Act, Healthy Forest Initiative), the market for large sawlogs is becoming limited. Many mills currently penalize companies who deliver larger logs. Regular sawlogs from timber sales continue to provide the biggest source of income for the federal government, as well as for purchasers, within the planning area. However, the alternative forest product markets (such as for hew wood, ton wood, and hog fuel) are providing increasingly more income to the federal government, as well as for purchasers. Within in the last seven years, two mills were built to utilize this material. The market for alternative forest products (small diameter trees) is expected to continue to increase as more sawmills retool and as other uses of this material, such as biomass energy production, become more economically feasible.

The 1992 inventory showed that stocking levels have increased dramatically (56 percent) in the small diameter classes (five inches or less), due to in-growth of shade-tolerant trees, such as grand fir and Douglas-fir (Table 3-10). The quantity of this material has increased from 6,000 – 13,000 thousand million board feet (117 percent increase). This in-growth will become increasingly important to manufacturers of alternative forest products.

Table 3-10
Timber Inventory Data from 1974 and 1992 for the CdA FO Planning Area

Indicator	1974 Inventory	1992 Inventory	% Increase
Number of live trees/acre < or = 5" DBH ¹	860	1341	56
Number of live trees/acre > 5" DBH	128	156	22
Gross board feet ² /acre	7 MBF	14 MBF	100
Net board feet/acre	6 MBF	13 MBF	117
Average DBH trees > 5"	10"	11"	10
Suppressed live trees/acre	32	107	234
Live white pine blister trees/acre	3	55	1733
Insects/disease trees/acre	1	105	10400
Mortality trees/acre	25	75	200

¹DBH = diameter of a standing tree measured at breast height.

²Board Foot = 144 cubic inches, or 1 ft. x 1 ft. x 1 in.

3.2.2 Livestock Grazing

There are four active grazing allotments in the CdA FO planning area, consisting of 1,281 acres (Table 3-11). These allotments are utilized by four livestock operators with 269 animal unit months (AUMs, the quantity of forage required by one mature cow and her calf, or the equivalent in sheep or horses, for one month). In addition, for the past 15 years five vacant allotments, consisting of 2,786 acres and 144 AUMs, have remained vacant. This indicates little public demand for grazing livestock on public lands within the planning area.

Grazing allotments in the CdA FO are timbered and are not typical "rangelands." Livestock vegetation is limited to the forage that is provided through timber harvest and other land treatments. When the timbered lands within the grazing allotments are harvested or burned, then increased forage becomes available for livestock allocations.

Table 3-11
Existing Livestock Utilization in the CdA FO Planning Area

Allotment Name	Acres	Type of Livestock *	Season of Use	AUMs Livestock	AUMs Wildlife	Vacant or Leased
Terror Gulch	92	C	6/15-10/1	4	3	Vacant
		H	6/15-10/1	4		
Twin Peaks	199	C	6/1-10/31	148	11	Leased
Gold Mountain West	353	C	6/1-10/31	24	2	Vacant
Gold Mountain East	315	C	5/1-9/15	22	2	Vacant
Long Mountain	779	C	6/15-9/15	101	4	Leased
Trout Creek	231	C	5/1-10/15	15	0	Leased
Drummond Peak	188	C	5/1-12/31	14	6	Vacant
		H	5/1-12/31	13		
Latour Creek	1,838	C	6/15-10/1	76	69	Vacant
Ninemile Creek	9	H	6/1-10/30	5	1	Leased

*C = Cattle; H = Horse

3.2.3 Minerals

The BLM manages the surface and subsurface of federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of Interior, and in some cases, has administrative duties on mineral activities occurring on lands managed by other federal agencies or in private hands (split estate). Exploration and mining activities on all federal lands are governed by the lengthy history of federal laws, and the continually evolving federal regulations developed to implement said laws. Any surface-disturbing activity on BLM-managed lands (with the exception of *casual use* which is defined as “activities ordinarily resulting in no or negligible disturbance of the public lands or resources”) requires notification to and approval from the BLM. Reclamation of disturbed sites is required and will be bonded for as outlined in the federal regulations. In addition to regulating the activities on BLM managed lands, the BLM can withdraw areas from mineral activity. For example, mining claims may not be located on lands designate as a wild portion of a Wild and Scenic River. Finally, in addition to federal laws and regulations, mining in Idaho must comply with the Idaho Department of Land’s Best Management Practices for Mining.

Mineral activities on federal lands are categorized as *locatable*, *leasable*, or *salable*, depending on the mineral resource being developed. These three categories are based on provisions of the General Mining Law of 1872 and subsequent amendments. The General Mining Law of 1872 declared “all valuable mineral deposits in lands belonging to the United States...to be free and open to exploration and purchase.” The federal regulations further defined a locatable mineral, or a valuable mineral, as being “whatever is recognized as a mineral by the standard authorities, whether metallic or other substances, when found in public lands in quantity and quality sufficient to render the lands valuable on account thereof?” (Maley, 1977). Whether or not a particular mineral deposit is locatable depends on a number of factors, including quality, quantity, mineability, demand, and marketability, that create an economically viable resource. The number of locatable minerals originally authorized by the General Mining Law of 1872 has been substantially reduced over time by several subsequent acts, including (but not limited to):

- The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended;
- The Materials Act of July 31, 1947, as amended;
- The Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as amended; and
- The Acquired Lands Leasing Act of August 7, 1947.

The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, authorized that deposits of coal, phosphate, oil, oil shale, gas, and sodium could be developed through a leasing system. The Geothermal Leasing Act of 1970, as amended, authorized the rights to develop and utilize geothermal resources in land subject to these regulations under the federal leasing laws.

The Materials Act of July 31, 1947, as amended by the Act of July 23, 1955, further excluded *common* varieties of sand, stone, gravel, pumice, cinders, and clay from location. These commodities are available only through competitive or non-competitive sales. Other federal agencies, local governments, and non-profit organizations may obtain free-use permits for these commodities, but the use must be non-commercial. Those minerals considered common variety generally have a normal quality and value for ordinary use and include ordinary varieties of clay, limestone, sand, gravel, etc. (Maley, 1977). However, *uncommon* varieties of these commodities remain open to location. Without going into a lengthy technical explanation, uncommon varieties must meet two criteria: (1) the deposit must have a unique property, and (2) the unique property must give the deposit a distinct and special value.

The Acquired Lands Leasing Act of August 7, 1947, provides that federal lands obtained from a private owner under special circumstances, such as purchase, condemnation, or donation are subject to the mineral leasing laws provided mineral title is also acquired. Mineral locations are not permitted on acquired lands unless an order opening the lands to the General Mining Laws has been secured (Maley 1983).

The geologic setting of the CdA FO is favorable for locatable and salable types of mineral deposits. The extraction of both precious metals (gold and silver) and industrial metals (lead, zinc, copper, etc.) has occurred in North Idaho for over 100 years. Most notable is the production of over 1 billion ounces of silver from the Coeur d'Alene Mining District in Shoshone County (Bennett, 1989). Salable minerals, including sand and gravel and building stone, also have a long history of production in north Idaho. Sand and gravel is found in abundance throughout the Rathdrum Prairie, and building stone is plentiful within the CdA FO. In contrast, the same geologic setting is not favorable for leasable minerals such as coal, phosphate, sodium, or oil and gas. None of these commodities has a notable production history in north Idaho.

It is expected that future leasable minerals activities will continue to be minimal. On the other hand, future requests for salable minerals activities will likely increase with the continued population growth in North Idaho. Locatable minerals activities are typically tied to commodity prices which are currently on the rise, therefore it is expected that interest in these commodities will be high. North Idaho's geologic setting and lengthy history with the minerals industry suggest that the minerals program will continue to be active in the CdA FO.

The BLM is preparing a separate report on mineral potential that will provide more detail on these resources and describe major geologic features within the CdA FO decision area.

3.2.4 Recreation

Over the last 25 years, the population has grown tremendously within the CdA FO planning area, and the population is anticipated to increase steadily for the next 25 years. The planning area has emerged and is promoted as a travel and tourism destination, and estimated annual visits are 230,000. Waterfront sites are particularly valuable. Opportunities for outdoor recreation within public lands will continue to increase.

The Emerald Empire MFP identified recreation values and plans for recreation uses within the framework of recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) classes. All BLM land at the time of the MFP decision was categorized within one of the ROS classes identified in Table 3-12. Current designated acreages for ROS classes differ from the MFP acreages because of subsequent land tenure adjustments.

Table 3-12
BLM ROS Classes

ROS Class	ROS Description	Acres ¹
Primitive	Areas characterized by essentially unmodified, relatively large natural environments, where there is opportunity for isolation from human sights and sounds.	0
Semi-primitive non-motorized	Areas characterized by a predominately moderate to large, unmodified natural environment, where there is some opportunity for isolation from human sights and sounds.	17,140
Semi-primitive motorized	The same as semi-primitive Non-motorized except motorized use is permitted within the area.	22,677

Table 3-12 (continued)
BLM ROS Classes

ROS Class	ROS Description	Acres ¹
Roaded natural	Areas characterized by a generally natural environment, with moderate evidence of human sights and sounds. There is about equal opportunity for affiliation with other user groups and for isolation.	86,118
Rural	Areas characterized by a substantially modified natural environment, where human sights and sounds are readily evident.	9,867
Modern urban (urban)	Areas characterized by a highly modified environment, although the background may have natural elements. Opportunities to experience affiliation with individuals and groups are prevalent.	475

¹Based on 1981 Emerald Empire MFP (136,277 acres)

Current decision documents, including the MFP and BLM Manual 8320, provide general guidance for recreation resources. However, much of the BLM land currently in the CdA FO managed for recreation has been acquired since the 1981 MFP was written. Recreation management areas were inventoried as part of the MFP, but area designations were not carried forward as planning decisions; therefore, areas important to recreation planning were not identified. Subsequent recreation planning guidance directed that areas be categorized as special recreation management areas (SRMAs – areas which require explicit recreation management) or extensive recreation management areas (ERMAs - areas where significant recreation opportunities and problems are limited and explicit recreation management is not required). Three areas that have been administratively recognized are the Coeur d'Alene Lake SRMA (Kootenai County), the Lower Coeur d'Alene River SRMA (Kootenai County), and the Gamlin Lake SRMA (Bonner County). A management plan is in place for Coeur d'Alene Lake and Gamlin Lake. No other SRMAs have been designated. In recent years, recreation issues have evolved or are emerging in other areas where SRMA designation should be considered. Rochat Divide, Lookout Mountain, and Silver Valley are all areas considered excellent candidates for SRMA designation.

Where applicable, the BLM coordinates recreation management with the Forest Service. BLM and Forest Service managed lands are often adjacent, which presents an opportunity to ensure that recreation management objectives between the federal agencies are consistent. The Forest Service employs an ROS inventory system similar to that of the BLM and is in the process of finishing a recreation opportunity class inventory for Forest Service lands. Both the BLM and the Forest Service conduct these inventories on a broad scale within their respective planning areas.

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) designations would be affected by updates to ROS classes. Estimates for current OHV designations are 3,800 undesignated, 7,200 acres closed, and 27,500 acres limited. The remaining 58,500 acres remain open.

In 2001, the BLM issued a National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands (USDI BLM 2001) which outlines broad management issues, management goals and actions.

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation recently completed the 2003-2007 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Plan (SCORTP), which provides inventory information, recreation demand projections, and management issues and identifies management goals. Land management agencies, including the BLM, helped the state produce this plan.

3.2.5 Lands and Realty

Land Use Authorizations

The CdA FO processes approximately 20 to 30 right-of-way actions annually. These include right-of-way applications for new facilities (e.g., roads, power lines, telephone lines, communication sites, water facilities) as well as amending, assigning, renewing or relinquishing existing right-of-way grants (e.g., roads, railroads, power lines, communication sites, water facilities, energy). The CdA FO administers 234 rights-of-way, encumbering 1,331 acres of public land (LR2000 Database Report 2003).

Potential new users are encouraged to locate within existing communication facilities. The BLM has not formally designated any right-of-way corridors or use areas within the CdA FO planning area, although attempts are made to group compatible facilities where possible. The FO currently has no right-of-way exclusion or avoidance areas in existing land use plans, although specially designated areas, such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Research Natural Areas (ACECs and RNAs, see Section 3.3.1) and Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs, see Section 3.3.2) do restrict such development. A 2003 update to the 1993 right-of-way corridor study by the Western Utility Group indicates that there are five potential corridors. Several corridors cross public land administered by the BLM.

The CdA FO administers five temporary land use permits involving about five acres of BLM lands (LR2000 Database Report 2004). These permits are issued for a term of up to three years and are for the temporary use of public lands. Most of these permits are used to authorize permittees to temporarily occupy or use structures constructed on public land until the BLM can arrange for removal of the structures or conveyance to the occupant. There are no leases or easements, and there are no airport leases in the CdA FO planning area.

Currently, the CdA FO analyzes requests for land use authorizations and applies mitigation measures on a case-by-case basis.

Overall, the trend in the issuance of land use authorizations is predicted to remain relatively constant. Based on observation, applications for road right-of-way (ROW) grants in the CdA FO planning area are related to timber values. When timber values are high there is an increase in requests to cross public lands and harvest timber on nearby private land, and when timber values are low there are fewer ROW applications because most landowners prefer to not harvest trees in a poor market.

Public lands in the CdA FO provide opportunities for wind energy. A 2003 study by the BLM and US Department of Energy found several locations of medium-to-high wind energy potential, generally located on higher elevations (USDI BLM and DOE 2003). At this time, there has been no interest expressed by private companies in developing these potential sites.

Land Tenure Adjustment

Land tenure (or land ownership) adjustment refers to those actions that result in the disposal of BLM lands and the acquisition of non-federal lands or interests.

Current planning guidance with respect to land ownership is provided by the 1989 District Land Tenure Adjustment Plan, a supplement to the MFP. This direction establishes land exchange as the predominant method of land ownership adjustment. It also categorizes BLM-administered lands into management areas or adjustment areas. The goal in management areas generally is to retain or enhance public land holdings within these zones. Management areas typically include the better blocked BLM lands that meet the retention criteria, but also may include areas in which there are high public values suitable for BLM management, such as Coeur d'Alene Lake Special Recreation Management Area. Lands outside these management areas are in the adjustment areas, and are generally available for the full range of land ownership adjustment opportunities including retention, exchange, sale, or transfer. Land ownership adjustment proposals in the CdA FO planning area are analyzed in project-specific reviews.

There have been 19 land sales since 1981 but only three since 1990. The purpose of most of the sales has been to resolve long-standing occupancy trespass situations in the CdA FO.

The primary means of land ownership adjustment within the CdA FO planning area has been through exchange. Twelve exchanges affecting federal and/or non-federal lands within the CdA FO decision area have been completed since 1981. Local governments and special interest groups continue to place a high priority on the BLM's Coeur d'Alene Lake land acquisitions.

Timber companies will probably continue to view the BLM's scattered timberland in the CdA FO planning area with great interest, and this timberland will probably continue to be the basis of land exchanges in the future. However, the rapidly escalating price of real estate in and around the BLM's priority acquisition areas may limit the amount of land tenure adjustment possible.

Access

For the purposes of this section, access refers to the physical ability and legal right of the public, agency personnel, and authorized users to reach public lands. The lands and realty program primarily assists in the acquisition of easements to provide for legal access where other programs have identified a need.

Access to public lands administered by the CdA FO is an issue of concern to both agency personnel and the public. The existing, fragmented ownership pattern of BLM lands intermingled with private, state, and other federal lands complicates the access situation. While the CdA FO has made and continues to make progress in terms of improving access to public lands, there are still areas within the CdA FO planning area that lack legal access. The 1981 Emerald Empire MFP provides planning guidance with respect to access. In accordance with guidance in this document, the CdA FO has been focusing its access acquisition efforts on the following:

- Larger blocks of public lands that are designated for retention in BLM ownership;
- Areas with important resource values;
- Areas where public demand for access is high; and
- Areas with substantial BLM investments.

Generally speaking, access is acquired from willing adjacent landowners on a case-by-case basis and as needs or opportunities arise.

The CdA FO uses the acquisition of road and trail easements as the primary means of obtaining legal access to public lands where it does not currently exist. There are three types of easements: exclusive easements, where the BLM acquires full public rights to the road in perpetuity and exclusively manages all other uses; nonexclusive easements, where the BLM acquires only the right to use the road in perpetuity but does not control other uses; and temporary easements, where the BLM acquires only the right to use the road for a fixed period. The CdA FO administers 30 exclusive easements, 36 nonexclusive easements, and five temporary easements, for a total of 71 easements (LR2000 Database Report 2004). Since the completion of the Emerald Empire MFP in 1981, the CdA FO has been acquiring access-related easements at the average rate of about six per year. Most of these easements are in support of the CdA FO's timber management program. When possible, emphasis for easement acquisition is on those roads or trails identified through a route analysis process.

Although used much less frequently than easement acquisition, the CdA FO uses land exchanges on occasion to acquire needed access to public lands. Access is typically just one of many benefits of these exchanges. The consolidation of BLM land ownership patterns by exchange has generally improved the access situation in the CdA FO planning area. When disposing of BLM parcels containing roads or trails necessary for access to other public lands, the CdA FO protects these access routes by reserving them in the conveyance documents.

Access needs within the CdA FO planning area are predicted to remain at a relatively constant level. Timber sales should continue to provide the majority of reasons for access, and recreation access to public land should still be a high priority in the future.

Withdrawals

As used in the lands and realty program, a withdrawal is an act, designation, or public land order that requires public land to be withdrawn from the operation of the public land laws. The practical effect of a withdrawal is to close a parcel of land to mineral entry and mineral leasing.

The CdA FO uses three types of withdrawals. The first is a watershed protection withdrawal where public land in municipal watersheds is closed to mineral entry to prevent possible damage to public water supplies. These types of withdrawals are also utilized along rivers and lakes where there is either an energy-producing dam or the possibility of constructing an energy-producing dam. Public lands are also withdrawn to prevent development that would be inconsistent with water storage on the land (flooding). The two watershed protection withdrawals administered by the CdA FO are Sand Creek for the City of Sandpoint, and Rochat Creek for the Town of St. Maries. The total acreage for these withdrawals is 4,703 acres. The second withdrawal type is a power site withdrawal. Information regarding current power site withdrawals is incomplete, but current information indicates that the CdA FO administers three such withdrawals, involving a total of 1,437 acres. The third type of withdrawal is miscellaneous. These withdrawals are for a variety of purposes but usually to protect a BLM recreation site or other facility that would be adversely affected by mineral entry. The CdA FO administers two such withdrawals, involving a total of 253 acres.

The need for new withdrawals of public land within the CdA FO planning area should continue to decrease in the future. Most BLM land with resources that need to be protected by withdrawals already has such protection in place.

Unauthorized Use

Trespass under the lands and realty program can be split into three separate categories:

- Unauthorized use;
- Unauthorized occupancy; and
- Unauthorized development.

The scattered public land pattern in the CdA FO planning area contributes to trespass problems, particularly where patented mining claims make the determination of federal/private property lines difficult. The CdA FO attempts to abate trespassing by prevention, detection, and resolution. In the lands and realty program, priority for resolving trespass in the CdA FO planning area is accorded to those newly discovered ongoing uses, developments, or occupancies where resource damage is occurring and needs to be halted to prevent further environmental degradation. Lesser priority is accorded those historic trespass cases where little or no resource damage is occurring. Realty trespass cases in this latter category are resolved as time permits. There have been 88 realty trespass cases resolved since 1990.

Trespass problems are anticipated to remain at current levels within the CdA FO planning area. With the BLM's scattered land pattern, encroachments on public land will likely continue to occur.

3.2.6 Transportation and Access

See Section 3.2.4, Recreation and Section 3.2.5, Lands and Realty.

3.3 SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

This section describes the current management situation, trends, and adequacy for research natural areas, areas of critical environmental concern, wilderness study areas, and wild and scenic river designations that exist within the BLM CdA FO planning area.

3.3.1 Research Natural Areas and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Research Natural Areas (RNA) are areas that contain important ecological and scientific values and are managed for minimum human disturbance. RNAs are primarily used for non-manipulative research and baseline data gathering on relatively unaltered community types. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) are special designations established through the BLM land use planning process (43 CFR 1610.7-2) where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historical, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. The level of allowable use within an ACEC is established through the collaborative planning process. Designation of an ACEC allows for resource use limitations in order to protect identified resources or values. There are two Research Natural Areas (RNA)/Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in the CdA FO planning area covering 3,075 acres.

Hideaway Islands RNA/ACEC (170 acres on the Kootenai River in Boundary County) was designated to preserve existing plant communities in an unmodified condition typical of the black cottonwood/red osier dogwood habitat type. Existing management decisions to maintain the area in a nondestructive and nonmanipulative manner are somewhat adequate. Given the alteration of hydrologic regime, future management action may be needed to maintain the black cottonwood/red osier dogwood community in a more natural successional, rather than climax, ecological condition. However, the progression towards a climax plant community also presents a research opportunity. Weed inventory, control, and monitoring may be necessary to retain desirable native plant community features. Also, there have been incidences of livestock trespass and this should be monitored to ensure that natural values were not affected.

Lund Creek RNA/ACEC (2,905 acres in Shoshone County) was designated to protect unique natural features and ecological diversity. Existing management calls for avoiding vegetative manipulation (including timber harvest) and prohibits vehicle access.

3.3.2 Wilderness

Congress established a National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) on federal lands when it passed the 1964 Wilderness Act. The BLM became involved with the wilderness study review process with implementation of the FLPMA, which directed the agency to inventory and study its remaining roadless areas and make recommendations whether or not each area should become a congressionally designated wilderness area. The areas that the BLM identified are called Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Until Congress makes its decision, FLPMA requires the BLM to protect the wilderness character of each WSA. By policy, management of WSAs is generally less restrictive than management of wilderness areas, but activities that would impair wilderness suitability are prohibited. Examples of activities that are allowed in WSAs are hunting, fishing, and trapping under state and federal laws; rock hounding; travel with motorized vehicles on open routes; camping, hiking, and horseback riding; staking mining claims and public prospecting without use of mechanized earthmoving equipment or explosives, or using vehicles off existing routes.

Existing mining and livestock grazing may continue in the “same manner and degree” as when FLPMA was passed. Some mineral lessees, mining claimants, or holders of rights-of-way have valid rights that must be honored, even if doing so impairs wilderness values. These activities must be conducted in a manner that avoids unnecessary impacts on wilderness resources.

There are three WSAs in the CdA FO planning area: Selkirk Crest (Bonner County), Crystal Lake (Shoshone County), and Grandmother Mountain (Shoshone County). The Selkirk Crest WSA contains 70 acres and is adjacent to the USFS Selkirk Crest roadless area #1-125, which contains approximately 97,960 acres. In its recommendation to Congress, the BLM identified that designation of the Selkirk Crest WSA should be contingent on the designation of the adjoining USFS roadless area. In its 1986 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on wilderness study areas in North Idaho (USDI 1986), the BLM recommended that the area be designated for custodial timber management if the adjoining USFS roadless is not designated as wilderness.

The basin below Crystal Lake contains the site of a past fire and now supports a dense brush cover. The FEIS recommended that the area not be designated wilderness. In the event that Congress agrees with this recommendation, the FEIS further recommends designating the area as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA).

Current acreage figures for Grandmother Mountain include 12,140 acres of BLM land. The 1982 MFP amendment recommended that the area be designated nonwilderness and that 2,941 acres be managed for intensive timber harvest, although most of these acres were transferred to the Forest Service in a legislated land exchange. The MFP also recommended that 9,684 acres be designated as an ONA and that 2,905 acres be designated as Research Natural Area (RNA).

3.3.3 Wild and Scenic Rivers

A Wild and Scenic River (WSR) is a free-flowing river with “outstandingly remarkable” values (ORV), as described in the Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968. There are three classifications of WSRs (Table 3-13).

A portion of the St. Joe River (Benewah County) that is bound by National Forest is the only WSR designation in the CdA FO planning area. The CdA FO currently manages no designated WSR corridors. As part of the RMP

process, the BLM will conduct a WSR study that will determine the eligibility of stream and river segments in the CdA FO planning area and, if necessary, will make recommendations for the suitability of eligible river segments for the inclusion in the WSR system. The results of this study will be incorporated into RMP.

Table 3-13
Classification of Wild and Scenic Rivers

Class	Criteria
Wild	Rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, generally inaccessible, except by trail (no roads), with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and having unpolluted waters.
Scenic	Rivers having the same characteristics as “Wild” but accessible in places by roads. These rivers are usually more developed than Wild and less developed than Recreational.
Recreational	Rivers or sections of rivers that remain largely natural in appearance but are readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along the shoreline, and may have had some impoundment or diversion in the past.

3.4 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

This section describes the current management situation, trends, and adequacy for tribal trust and treaty obligations, public safety including abandoned mines and hazardous materials, and general social and economic characteristics that exist within the CdA FO planning area.

3.4.1 Tribal Trust and Treaty Obligations

Indian Trust Resources and Tribal Treaty Rights are legal interests in assets held in trust by the federal government for federally recognized Indian tribes or nations, or for individual Indians. These assets can be real property, physical assets, or intangible property rights. Examples include lands, minerals, water rights, hunting and fishing rights, other natural resources, money, or claims. Treaty rights are not gifts or grants from the United States but are bargained-for concessions. These are grants-of-rights from the tribes rather than to the tribes.

The United States and represented agencies, including the BLM, have a special trust relationship with Indian tribes because of these treaties. As a federal land managing agency, the BLM has the responsibility to identify and consider potential impacts of BLM plans, projects, programs, or activities on Indian trust resources (e.g., fish, game, water quality, and plant resources). When planning any proposed project or action, the BLM must ensure that all anticipated effects on Indian trust resources be addressed in the planning, decision, and operational documents prepared for each project. The BLM also has the responsibility to ensure that meaningful consultation and coordination concerning tribal treaty rights and trust resources be conducted on a government-to-government basis with federally recognized tribes.

There are four Native American Tribes that have interests in the public lands managed by the CdA FO: the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Kalispel Tribe, Kootenai Tribe, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. There are no lands in the planning area formally held in trust by the BLM, and there is no existing plan guidance specifically for Indian Trust Resources and Tribal Treaty Rights in CdA FO planning area. However, the CdA FO maintains a government-to-government relationship with tribal governments in the use and protection of resources on public lands.

Because the BLM manages portions of the ceded lands that are within the traditional use areas of the tribes, it has a trust responsibility to provide the conditions necessary for Indian tribal members to satisfy their treaty rights. Members of the tribes may exercise their hunting, fishing, and gathering rights on federal lands outside the boundaries of the reservation. Currently, Native American tribes are not dependent on commodity resources from lands managed by the CdA FO for their economic livelihood, but may use BLM public lands resources for subsistence and cultural purposes. Tribal treaty rights that might be pursued on public lands within the CdA FO include fishing for resident game fish species, hunting both large and small game, and gathering various natural resources for both subsistence and medicinal purposes. There is little specific information currently available on the exact species sought or locations used by Native Americans exercising their treaty rights within the boundaries of the planning area.

Since the signing of treaties and agreements, the availability of natural and cultural resources that were used by tribes in the exercise of their treaty rights has changed. Mineral extraction, timber harvest, farming, ranching, construction, introduction of exotic species, declines in water quality, and vehicle use have led to a general decline in fish, game, and plant species. The loss of resources and visual intrusions on locations can have a detrimental effect on Native American socio-cultural activities associated with plant, fish, or animal procurement. More recent trends include a greater awareness among managers of treaty rights issues and commitments to collaborative work with the tribes.

3.4.2 Public Safety

Abandoned Mines

Management of Abandoned Mine Lands (AMLs) by the CdA FO is not predicated on decision documents listed in Section 2. The AML program was not in existence when the previous BLM Emerald Empire MFP was written in 1981. AML management is based on current BLM policies and the policies of other regulating agencies.

There are currently more than 128 AML sites that have been inventoried and entered into the BLM's Abandoned Mines Module (AMM) database for the CdA FO planning area, 123 of which are in Shoshone County. The remaining AML sites are in Kootenai and Bonner Counties. No sites have been entered for Boundary or Benewah Counties.

Some inventoried sites still need to be entered into the AMM database. Not all of the AML sites include conditions that are hazardous to humans or the environment, but more than 70 mine openings have been posted with a BLM restriction/closure order due to the hazards that are present. The restriction/closure order prohibits underground entry by persons not having the proper training, experience, and equipment. The CdA FO currently inventories, posts, and revisits posted sites each field season.

The current policy in AML management in the CdA FO planning area is that any AML site with hazardous conditions is considered for remediation measures. These actions may include either total closure or placement of a bat-friendly (allowing bats to enter-exit) grating or gate over any underground entrances. If water quality issues are present, then proper treatment measures will be employed. Sites easily accessed by the public are given first priority.

The BLM is currently coordinating its AML efforts consistent with those of the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and the Forest Service.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are found on the public lands administered by the BLM. Most of the hazardous materials issues are associated with past mining activities and abandoned mine lands (AML). Many of the BLM hazardous material incidence responses are materials illegally disposed of on public land, which often include illegal drug (methamphetamine lab) wastes. It is likely that this type of activity will continue in the future. Illegal dumping of non-hazardous solid waste makes up the bulk of the dumping activity on BLM lands. The BLM hazardous materials incidence responses follow the District Hazardous Materials Contingency Plan (BLM August 1995).

Much of the mining contaminated public lands are in the Coeur d'Alene basin and part of the expanded Bunker Hill/Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund Site listing. The requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) add to the management needs for the public lands. CERCLA requires the BLM to take actions to clean up hazards, protect the public, protect BLM employees, and adds transfer and permitting requirements. The Field Office program attempts to maintain consistency and coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency's Records of Decision for Bunker Hill / Coeur d'Alene Basin (USEPA 1992, USEPA 2002), and the Coeur d'Alene River Basin and Lake Management Plans.

The hazardous materials management program was not in existence at the time of the 1981 Emerald Empire MFP. Much of the current hazardous material management program in the CdA FO is focused on lands affected by previous mining activity and on illicit dumping activity. The program further focuses on immediate and long term threats to human health and the environment, and the protection of BLM employees.

The BLM's hazardous materials management and abandoned mine lands programs have been very active in addressing hazardous materials and mining related problems. HMM has had many responses to methamphetamine lab or drug related wastes in the past few years (2-4 per year). Each year, sites of small quantity waste dumping (3-10 per year) are found mainly along roads near recreation areas. Such sites are normally checked for hazardous materials and then removed and disposed of. In 2004, in an effort to get a better handle on the extent of these small wastes sites, over 30 sites were cleaned up by the recreation crew in addition to and outside our normal recreation site waste pickups. The HMM and AML programs have been very active in coordination and cleanup activities related to the Superfund and Coeur d'Alene basin, with three to nine sites having actions taken per year. Since removal actions at the major sites on the public lands in Pine Creek have been undertaken with flood or Central Hazardous Materials funding, it is expected that the level of cleanup activities and funding will decrease in the future unless there is significant recovery of funds for natural resource damage restoration activities.

3.4.3 Social and Economic Conditions

Socioeconomic resources include population, employment, income, housing, earnings, and schools. Population is the number of residents in the area and the recent change in population growth. Employment data takes into account labor sectors, labor force, and statistics on unemployment. Income information is provided as an annual total by county and as per capita income. Housing includes numbers of units, ownership, and vacancy rate. Earnings-by-industry provides a measure of the health of local business activity. School enrollment and capacity are important considerations in assessing the effects of potential growth.

Economies of the CdA FO planning area counties are affected by public land uses within the planning area. Similarly, the demographics, social structure, and values influence the demand for recreation and other opportunities provided by the public lands. For these reasons, demographic, economic, and social data will be presented for the five counties in the planning area. A socioeconomic report for the CdA FO is underway, and the results will be presented in the draft RMP/EIS, when published.

PART 4

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