Black Canyon Reservoir
and
Montour Wildlife Management Area
Resource Management Plan
Finding of No Significant Impact
and
Final Environmental Assessment

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Pacific Northwest Region
Snake River Area Office

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PN-FONSI-04-06

Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA Resource Management Plan

Introduction

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Snake River Area Office has completed a planning and public involvement process for the purpose of preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the administration of resources, facilities, and access at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area (WMA). There is no resource plan for Black Canyon Reservoir and Reclamation's management plan for the Montour WMA, prepared in 1984, does not reflect existing conditions or management concerns. The RMP addresses current issues and identifies goals and objectives for future management of Reclamation lands and waters within the RMP Study Area.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires Reclamation to explore a range of possible alternative management approaches and analyze the environmental effects of these actions. Scoping activities were conducted prior to development of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to gather input on issues to be considered in the formulation of management alternatives. A Draft EA evaluating the effects of a No Action and Preferred Alternative was distributed for public review in September 2003.

Alternatives Analyzed in the Draft EA

Reclamation began the public involvement process with a scoping meeting held in April 2002. The meeting was announced in the general area newspapers and through a newsletter sent to user groups, nearby residents, and agencies. An Ad Hoc Work Group (AHWG) was formed to identify issues and assist in development of RMP alternatives. A Preferred Alternative was identified and refined through this process. An Alternative A - No Action: Continuation of Existing Management Practices and Alternative B - Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values were addressed in the Draft EA. Alternative B - Preferred Alternative identified in the Draft EA was modified and is presented in the Final EA.

Proposed Action

The proposed Federal action is implementation of the Preferred Alternative presented in the Final EA. The Preferred Alternative identifies the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP as the guide for future use, management, and site development of Reclamation lands and resources. The RMP contains management goals and objectives, and specifies desired land use

patterns and resource management. The RMP addresses the policies and actions that would be implemented or allowed during the 15-life of the plan to achieve identified goals and objectives.

Consultation and Coordination

Public

The goal of the public involvement and scoping process was to notify and inform all interested parties, including the local communities. The process ensured that all parties had ample opportunity to express their interests, concerns, and viewpoints, and to comment on the plan as it was developed. Reclamation's public involvement process involved the following key components:

- **Newsbriefs**—A newsletter was initially mailed to more than 140 user groups, nearby residents, and agencies. The mailing list was expanded as more interested parties were identified. Three newsbriefs were issued during the RMP process, with a fourth being released upon completion of the RMP and Final EA.
- **Public Meetings/Workshops**—Two public meetings were held during the RMP/EA process in Emmett, Idaho. The first meeting was held early in the process to solicit public input (scoping) related to issues and opportunities. The second public meeting was held after the release of the Draft EA to collect public comment.
- **Ad Hoc Work Group**—This group consists of approximately 19 representatives from interested groups and agencies. They met four times to identify issues, and assist with RMP update and alternatives development.
- **RMP Study Web Site**—Newsbriefs, draft materials, and meeting announcements were continuously posted and updated throughout the RMP/EA process at a dedicated web site: http//www.usbr.gov/pn. Final materials will also be posted at this site.
- **News Releases**—Periodically, Reclamation prepares RMP news releases for distribution to local media, which generally result in press coverage of the process and public notification.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

The evaluation of listed species contained in the Final EA serves as Reclamation's biological assessment as required under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It evaluates impacts to listed, and species proposed for listing, including Ute ladies'-tresses orchids, bald eagles, Canada lynx, gray wolf and bull trout. Reclamation has determined that the Preferred Alternative may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, Ute-ladies'-tresses, bald eagle, Canada lynx, gray wolf, and bull trout. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative will not result in any adverse effects on critical habitat proposed for bull trout in Squaw Creek. The FWS has concurred with Reclamation's determination regarding ESA species and proposed critical habitat.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries)

The Preferred Alternative to implement the RMP does not involve a change in reservoir operations. No ESA listed anadromous fish are known to occur within the Study Area precluding the need to consult with NOAA Fisheries.

Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer

Reclamation collected existing cultural resource information from the Black Canyon and Montour areas, and conducted a Class III cultural resources survey on portions of the RMP Study Area to prepare the EA, and to facilitate subsequent compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Compliance with NHPA requires agencies to consult with Native American Tribes if a proposed federal action may affect properties to which they attach religious and cultural significance. Coordination with the Idaho State Historical Preservation Office occurred in conjunction with public review of the Draft EA. SHPO stated their "cautious" support of the Preferred Alternative and wanted to be assured that as development increased, projects would be reviewed under Section 106 of NHPA by involving Reclamation cultural resource staff at the early stages of project planning. All SHPO comments and recommendations addressed in the Final EA, Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2 were concordant with management actions described in the Preferred Alternative and were accordingly incorporated into the RMP. Future activities in response to specific RMP prescriptions will require consultations with the SHPO and the Tribes pursuant to NHPA and the 36 CFR 800 implementing regulations.

Tribal Consultation and Coordination

Consultation with Tribes

The RMP and EA were distributed to representatives from the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes. Tribal representatives that received the Final EA are listed in Chapter 7, Distribution List.

Indian Sacred Sites (Executive Order 13007)

Reclamation coordinated with the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes regarding Indian Sacred Sires and the RMP through written notifications and meetings.

Indian Trust Assets

Reclamation coordinated with the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes to identify Indian Trust Assets (ITAs). ITAs are discussed in the RMP Final EA, Chapter 3, Section 3.13.

Summary of Public Comments

The Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Draft EA was released for public review in late September 2003, with a 45-day comment period ending November 14, 2003. By the end

of the public comment period, 16 individual or group comments were received, which includes 11 individuals who submitted copies of the same comment. Overall, there were few comments regarding the analysis of environmental impacts in the Draft EA. Nearly all comments pertained to elements of the Preferred Alternative that respondents either favored or objected to. Many of the comments focused on three main subject areas: lack of favor for additional ponds at the Montour WMA; support for more recreational access and a diversity of uses; and support and opposition for designation of a no-wake zone. Several other subjects were commented on by respondents which are summarized in the RMP Final EA, Chapter 4, Section 4.1.1.

Changes in the Final EA

Notable changes include dropping the proposed no-wake zone upstream of the mouth of Squaw Creek from the Preferred Alternative. Gem County has jurisdiction on the water surface and this action would require a County ordinance and enforcement by the Sheriff, therefore this action would not be initiated by Reclamation. The Preferred Alternative was also changed for "Special Events" in the Montour WMA to read, "No special events allowed at Montour WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives." The proposal to consider constructing a small marina at or in the vicinity of Black Canyon Park was also dropped from the Preferred Alternative given that there is private interest in providing a marina on the reservoir. Additionally, discussion of the Black Canyon Partnership development was added to 3.14 and is discussed under Cumulative Impacts.

Summary of Environmental Impacts

The following subject areas were analyzed for the Preferred Alternative in the RMP Final EA.

- **Water Quality and Contaminants**—At the Montour WMA, using water for wetlands may benefit water quality. Increased stormwater runoff from expansion of recreation facilities would be mitigated by individual project design and implementation of BMPs.
- **Vegetation**—Additional funding and a higher priority for the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan would control the spread of weeds and restore low value weed-infested areas back to higher value wildlife habitat and watershed.

    a. Vegetation loss through expansion of Black Canyon and Cobblestone Parks would be mitigated by project design and protective measures taken during construction.

    b. Eliminating special events at the Montour WMA that are not compatible with wildlife goals and objectives precludes vegetation damage from trampling, and the spread and possible introduction of weeds associated with these activities.

    c. Pond development and management would consider sensitive plants species and wetland communities. Management would include monitoring and control of invasive plants, such as Eurasian watermilfoil.

    d. Implementing and monitoring grazing management changes that are consistent with WMA goals is likely to benefit native wet meadow and riparian vegetation.

- **Wildlife**—Effects from livestock grazing and other consumptive uses would be less at the Montour WMA given the emphasis placed on habitat management, and the review of user leases and requests to ensure they are compatible with wildlife management goals.

  a. Potential additional funding and a higher priority for implementation of an IPM Plan could benefit several sensitive species by reversing current conditions and avoiding future habitat degradation that results from weed infestations.

  b. Moving special events to Triangle Park rather than permitting them at the Montour WMA will avoid impacts to sensitive and other wildlife species.

- **Aquatic Resources—**The composition of fish species would remain similar to existing conditions, and there may be a possible increase in population numbers through improved habitat, and development and stocking of ponds in the Montour WMA.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species—**There may be possible minor benefits to proposed critical habitat for bull trout near the mouth of Squaw Creek from actions directed at protecting and enhancing riparian habitat along the reservoir.
- **Recreation and Access—**Angler access to the Payette River below Black Canyon Dam and to the reservoir would be improved.

  a. Overall wildlife and vegetation management improves opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities.

  b. Implementation of a recreation use monitoring program will assess recreation carrying capacity and allow management activities to respond to changing demands over time.

  c. Recreation management strategies will encourage use of appropriate lands, and enhance user experience by reducing hazards, improving traffic circulation and providing additional formalized recreation opportunities.

  d. Management actions related to hunting, fishing, and trapping will beneficially affect recreation opportunities at the Montour WMA.

  e. The impact of the regional population on recreation resources will be decreased given the actions to provide additional recreation facility capacity, and enhanced user experience and satisfaction.

- **Land Use—**Contingent on the cooperation among Reclamation, other agencies, and private land owners for the establishment of Best Management Practices (BMP's) for offsite (non-Reclamation land) activities, a minor potential beneficial impact to land use would result through avoidance of indirect impacts such as erosion, sedimentation, and decreased water quality.

  a. Expansion of the Montour WMA would have a beneficial effect on land use by placing additional land under cooperative management with Idaho Department Fish and Game (IDFG) for protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat, and for provision of recreational activities compatible with WMA goals.

b. Improvement and enhancement of existing recreational sites places emphasis on day use of group facilities at several of the parks. Concentrating day use at existing sites is a minor beneficial impact to land use.

- **Socioeconomics—**There are minor socioeconomic impacts from possible employment opportunities associated with increasing park staff and outside support service needs, and a slight beneficial impact on the local economy.

  a. Improvement and expansion of existing recreation facilities would generate additional funds from fees charged for parking, group picnic reservations, and special events.

  b. Expansion of the Montour WMA may generate additional funds from hunting and fishing use, and collection of associated license fees.

  c. If agricultural leases were discontinued within the Montour WMA there could be a minor adverse impact to the leaseholders who use these lands to produce income.

- **Environmental Justice—**There could be a possible nominal fee increase or new assessment for use of recreation facilities. While no minority group would be disproportionately affected, in general, lower income families or individuals would be affected by fees to a greater extent than middle or upper income groups.
- **Cultural Resources—**There will be a greater opportunity for proactive cultural resource protection and management through increased public awareness and historic designations.
- **Indian Sacred Sites—**The compromising of sacred sites by vandalism and relic collecting, and through land use activities, recreation and development is less under a more focused, controlled, and formalized land use management plan.
- **Indian Trust Assets—**There are no direct impacts to the right(s) to hunt, fish, or gather that may exist.

Environmental Commitments

Reclamation will implement the environmental commitments listed in the Final EA to avoid or minimize effects to resources from RMP implementation activities. These activities include BMP's as well as mitigation measures for protection of certain resources.

Best Management Practices

BMP's for the following categories will be implemented as specified in the Final EA:

- Landscape Preservation and Impact Avoidance
- Erosion and Sediment Control
- Biological Resource
- Site Restoration and Revegetation
- Pollution Prevention
- Noise and Air Pollution Prevention

- Cultural Resource Site Protection
- Miscellaneous

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are environmental commitments intended to compensate for impacts that cannot be avoided through implementation of BMP's.

Vegetation

- In addition to Reclamation's overall planned increase in noxious and invasive weed control efforts, all sites that are disturbed for facilities shall be actively monitored for these plants. All infestations would be treated in accordance with accepted methods and agreements with IDFG and Gem County, and in accordance with Reclamation's IPM Plan.
- The expansion proposed for Black Canyon Park is along a riparian edge of the reservoir. The expansion design will include removing false indigo and other weedy species that are invading along the riparian zone, and leaving native vegetation in place.
- The expansion proposed for Cobblestone Park would be located on a gravel substrate within the floodplain of the Payette River. Although much of it has been invaded by weeds, many areas have native cottonwood and willow. The proposed expansion for Cobblestone Park will be designed to conserve the trees and shrubs onsite, to control weeds, and to limit vehicle use to roadways.
- Where appropriate and cost effective, both expansions will further compensate for impacts on vegetation resources by landscaping the expanded and disturbed areas with native plants instead of with the mix of exotic lawn and tree species that were used for the existing parks.

Wildlife

- Reclamation would replace the area and habitat value of all wetland and riparian areas that would be directly impacted or degraded by implementation of this alternative.
- New wetlands/open water ponds created within the Montour WMA will be developed in upland areas if possible, considering the location of available water source. Where possible, this action could avoid impacts on wildlife that use wet meadows, which is also a valuable habitat type.
- Future development of new emergent wetlands/open water ponds may be in wet meadow areas because of the location of water sources. No ground disturbing activities would be undertaken before a field review was conducted to determine the likelihood of occurrence of sensitive species (e.g. spotted frog). If warranted, a sensitive species survey would be conducted following established protocols and seasonal requirements. Project implementation and design would be based on the findings of the survey.
- Additional wildlife species are likely to become rare over the 15-year time frame of the RMP. Appropriate site clearances following established protocols will also be conducted for other wildlife species that become rare during that period, prior to ground disturbance

Cultural Resources

Mitigation under all alternatives would occur if cultural resources are present that are eligible for the National Register, and if they are being adversely impacted by reservoir operations or land uses or are being damaged by natural agents. If an action is planned that could adversely impact an archaeological or historic resource, then Reclamation would investigate options to avoid the site. Cultural resource management actions for impacted sites would be planned and implemented in accordance with consultation requirements defined in 36 CFR 800, using methods consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

Finding

Based on the analysis of the environmental impacts in the EA, environmental commitments to avoid and reduce impacts, and consultation with potentially affected tribes, agencies, organizations and the general public, Reclamation concludes that implementing the Preferred Alternative, with changes described in the Final EA would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment or the natural and cultural resources in the project area. The RMP will serve as a detailed guide for the future use, management, and site development of Reclamation lands and resources at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. Additional NEPA documentation will be prepared for site-specific RMP actions.

This **Finding of No Significant Impact** has therefore been prepared and is submitted to document environmental review and evaluation in compliance with NEPA.

RECOMMENDED:

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1.0 Purpose and Need for Action

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluates the proposed Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP is being developed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to manage resources, facilities, and access on their lands and waters. Reclamation's lands in the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP area are shown on Figure 1.1-1, *Regional Location Map*.

A Draft EA was prepared to determine whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). That analysis found no significant impacts; therefore, this FONSI and Final EA are being issued for this Federal Action. This is in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

NEPA requires Reclamation to explore a reasonable range of possible alternative management approaches and the environmental effects of these actions. Two alternatives are evaluated and compared in this document: a No Action Alternative and a Preferred Alternative. The impacts of each alternative were evaluated for the potentially affected resource areas, including water quality and contaminants, vegetation, wildlife, aquatic resources, threatened and endangered species, recreation, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, public services and utilities, cultural resources, Indian sacred sites, and Indian Trust Assets (ITAs). Geology, soils, visual quality, climate and air quality, water resources and hydrology, topography, and transportation and access were also evaluated, but are not included in this document because it was determined that no impacts would occur to these resources.

1.2 Authority

Title 28 of Public Law 102-575, Section 2805 (106 Stat. 4690; Reclamation Recreation Management Act of 1992) provides Reclamation with authority to prepare resource management plans.

1.3 Proposed Federal Action

The proposed Federal action is implementation of an RMP for Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA. The intent of the RMP is to serve as a blueprint for the future use, management, and site development of Reclamation lands and resources in the RMP Study Area for the next 15 years. The RMP contains goals and objectives for resource management, specifies desired land use patterns and resource management, and explains the policies and actions that would be implemented or allowed during the 15-year life of the plan to achieve these goals and objectives. In 1984, Reclamation prepared a management plan for the Montour WMA; where still relevant, this plan was used to assist in the preparation of this EA in

writing various affected environment sections in Chapter 3. Additionally, where still appropriate, specific actions in the 1984 management plan were carried forward into the EA alternatives. The selected EA alternative, which will become the basis for the RMP, is intended to replace the 1984 plan for the Montour WMA as well as covering Black Canyon Reservoir and surrounding Reclamation lands.

1.4 Purpose and Need

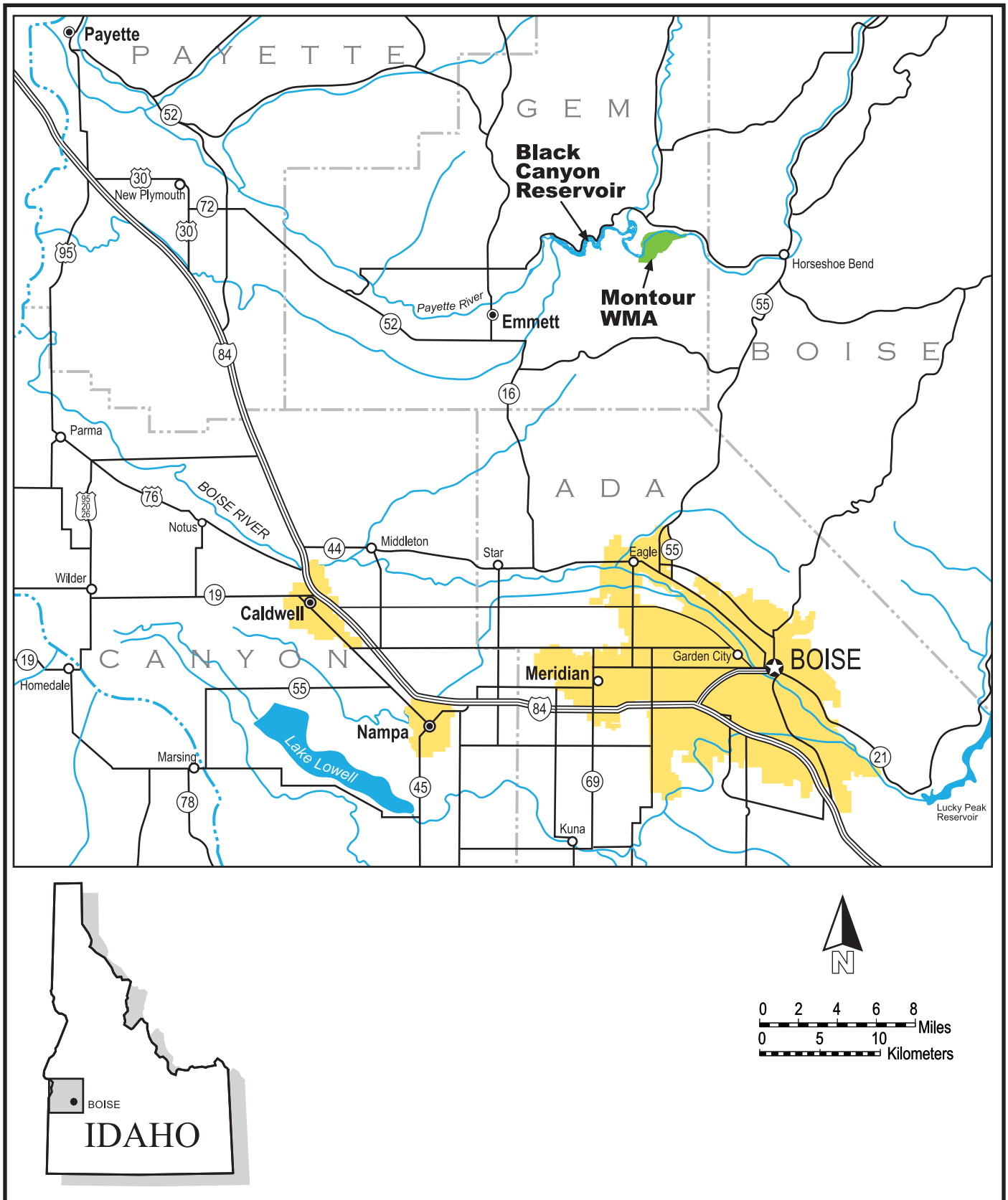
The purpose of this Federal action is to prepare an RMP to effectively manage recreation use and natural and cultural resources at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA. A plan is needed to address current and anticipated future issues to allow the orderly and coordinated development and management of lands and facilities under Reclamation jurisdiction. Several management pressures are coming to bear on Black Canyon and Montour. During the 1990s, Gem County's population grew 28.2 percent, reaching 15,181 in 2000. The population of nearby Ada County grew 46.2 percent, reaching 300,904 in 2000; and Canyon County grew by 45.9 percent, reaching 131,441 in 2002. As population has grown in southwest Idaho, reservoir facilities are increasingly filled to capacity and overflow during weekends and peak use times. Safety risks are heightened as more recreationists park along State Highway 52 when the parking lots are full. With the increased popularity of personal water craft (PWC), the shallow, upper end of the reservoir is being used much more frequently, and this use was not anticipated in 1984. The Montour WMA is becoming more crowded during each hunting season, and safety is becoming a concern. Continued growth of the region and the corresponding use of Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA require the development of an RMP to expand and update the current, outdated guidance and for resolving conflicts with natural resources and among user groups.

The purpose of the RMP process is to develop a comprehensive vision to guide future uses and define land and resource management objectives. The 15-year RMP will be used as the basis for directing activities on Reclamation lands in a way that maximizes overall public and resource benefits consistent with Reclamation goals and to the extent these are compatible with each other. The RMP will be reviewed, reevaluated, and amended to reflect changing conditions and management objectives on an as-needed basis. Future opportunities for public involvement would be provided on significant changes that affect resources or public use.

1.5 Location and Background

Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA are located in Gem County, Idaho, approximately 6 miles from the town of Emmett and about 30 miles northwest of Boise. Black Canyon Dam, which impounds Black Canyon Reservoir in the Payette River drainage, was constructed in 1924 with authorized uses including irrigation and power. Reclamation's reservoir lands cover about 1,100 surface water acres and a narrow strip of land surrounding the reservoir. The four developed day use recreation sites on Reclamation lands at the reservoir and just downstream of the dam include Black Canyon, Wild Rose, Triangle and Cobblestone parks. One 19-site campground is located at the Montour WMA. Surrounding land uses are primarily range land, agricultural, and rural residential. Land ownership is a mixture of private and Federal lands predominately managed by Reclamation and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Insert Figure 1-1, *Location Map (front)*



Neither the authors, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, nor any other party involved in preparing the material and data displayed here warrant or represent that all information is in every respect complete and accurate, and are not held responsible for errors or omissions. This map may graphically depict property boundaries for general reference only and does not necessarily represent legal descriptions.

Figure 1.1-1
Regional Location Map

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Insert Figure 1-1, Locations Map (back)

Cultivated crops in the area include alfalfa, barley, corn, oats, and wheat; grazing permits have also been issued on some Reclamation lands.

1.5.1 Historical Overview

The Montour valley was inhabited by Native Americans as early as 6,000 years ago. Northern Shoshone and Northern Paiute bands inhabited the region for generations, and the Payette River near Montour was an important fishery. With the discovery of gold in the Boise Basin in 1862, miners began passing through the Montour Valley en route to the Boise Basin gold fields, and the community of Montour was established. The community relied primarily on logging, mining, ranching, and farming. Montour prospered up through World War I, but declined during the depression in the 1920s. Black Canyon Diversion Dam was constructed between 1922 and 1924 as part of the Payette Division of the Boise Project. The project authorization includes irrigation and power, and was primarily constructed as a diversion facility for the Black Canyon Main Canal. A powerplant was added in 1925 that consists of two generator units. The plant supplies power to meet irrigation loads in the Boise, Owyhee, and Mindoka projects as part of Reclamation's Southern Idaho Power System. Surplus power is delivered to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for marketing and distribution to regional industries and municipalities.

After completion of the Black Canyon Dam, sediment carried by the Payette River began filling the upper end of Black Canyon Reservoir. In time, this sediment deposition caused water to back up into the Montour area. As the water backup into Montour grew worse, several solutions were considered. In 1976, Reclamation purchased lands within the 100-year floodplain under the Montour Flood Project. Realizing its value for wildlife and public use, Montour Valley was designated by Reclamation as the Montour WMA. In 1983, IDFG and Reclamation entered into a cooperative agreement to manage the WMA.

1.5.2 River and Reservoir System Operations, and Existing Agreements

Black Canyon Dam is a concrete gravity structure with a gated overflow spillway. The dam has a structural height of 183 feet and diverts water to the Payette Division of the Boise Project through the Black Canyon Canal. The reservoir is maintained at a nearly constant elevation throughout the irrigation season to allow flows to reach the canal. The reservoir has 1,100 surface acres, contains approximately 44,800 acre-feet of water, and is about 6 miles long. Additional detail is provided in Table 1.1-1, *Project Specifications*.

The dam and reservoir operate under the supervision of Reclamation's Snake River Area Office (SRAO) Area Manager. The power plant is operated by Reclamation as a run-of-the-river plant (that is, no water fluctuations), although operational releases are coordinated to maximize power generation. The RMP does not include reservoir operations, which are based on contractual and other obligations, such as flood control.

TABLE 1.1-1
Project Specifications

Normal Maximum Water Surface	
Elevation	2,497.5 feet
Storage	44,800 acre-feet
Surface Area	1,100 acres
Shoreline	12 miles
Black Canyon Dam	
Structural Height	183 feet
Crest Elevation	2,500 feet
Crest Length	1,040 feet
Spillway Capacity at Elevation 2497.5 feet	39,060 cubic feet per second
Outlet Works Capacity at Elevation 24.97.5 feet	1,203 cubic feet per second
Powerplant Capacity	10,200 kW

Source: Reclamation Specifications

To meet the goals of the RMP, Reclamation needs to not only analyze the resource information, but must also incorporate its mission and Federal laws and policies. These include environmental compliance laws, Federal responsibilities to Tribes, accessibility compliance laws, and others (see Appendix A for a complete list).

Pertinent information from several related studies are being used to develop the RMP, including but not limited to the following:

- Montour Wildlife/Recreation Area Management Plan (Reclamation 1984)
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) management objectives for Montour WMA
- Recreation user data collected for Black Canyon and Montour Parks (data based on fee collection from prior years and recent user counts)

Reclamation has a cooperative agreement with IDFG to manage the 1,100 acres of land under Reclamation's ownership at the Montour WMA. The agreement emphasizes that management focuses on protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats while providing a variety of recreation experiences. IDFG and Reclamation work cooperatively to accomplish management objectives annually depending on funding availability.

1.6 Related Activities

The following proposed land development, although not a part of the proposed RMP, may have impacts on some of the same resources that could potentially be affected by implementing the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP. Black Canyon Partners, LLC, is proposing a 3,232-acre planned unit development on the south side of the reservoir across from Triangle

Park. The phased development plan includes two 18-hole golf courses, a multipurpose equestrian center, home sites, public marina and boat docks, clubhouse and facilities, trails, condominiums, and commercial development consisting of a post office, fire station, ambulance, and small retail shops. Potential cumulative impacts from this proposed development are discussed in Section 3.14.

1.7 Scoping

Public scoping activities were held prior to the development of the Draft EA, including the following:

- Conducted public scoping meeting
- Reviewed comments generated from the first public information newsbrief
- Gathered input on issues from the first Ad Hoc Work Group meeting

A public scoping meeting was held on April 24, 2002, in Emmett, Idaho. The meeting was advertised through media announcements sent to local and Boise newspapers, and a public information newsbrief that was sent to approximately 150 people. The purpose of the meeting and the newsbrief was to collect public input on the issues that should be addressed in the alternatives for the RMP and EA. Following this meeting, an Ad Hoc Work Group was formed to assist with alternatives development and participation throughout the process. This group consisted of Tribal, agency, and interest group representatives, and met for the first time to discuss issues on June 5, 2002. The public involvement process is described fully in Chapter 4, *Consultation and Coordination*.

1.8 Summary of Issues

- **Natural & Cultural Resources**
  - Overall protection of vegetation and wildlife
  - Habitat improvements at Montour WMA
  - Hunter use/demand vs. wildlife and habitat protection at Montour WMA
  - Impacts of recreation and other uses
  - Erosion of the reservoir shoreline
  - Weed control
  - Impacts of use on cultural resources
- **Recreation**
  - Dealing with increasing demand vs. carrying capacity
  - Expansion and improvement at site-specific facilities
  - Potential need for new facilities, such as marina, concessions, group sites, trails
  - Accessibility issues

- **Land Use & Overall Management**
  - Security of the dam site
  - Law enforcement for vandalism, shooting, off-road vehicle (ORV) use, trespassing
  - Adequacy of parking
  - Coordination with relevant agencies (Gem County, Idaho Transportation Department [ITD], IDFG)
  - Funding sources and prioritizing projects
  - General signage and kiosks

2.0 Alternatives

2.0 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter presents the alternatives being considered for implementation of the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP. It describes the No Action Alternative and one action alternative in detail and provides a summary comparison. For any recreation area improvements described in the alternatives, such as trails, formal campsites, and signage, Reclamation would allow these developments to occur if a managing partner were found. Also, cost-share conditions would need to be met, and Reclamation funds or other funding sources would have to be available. For comparison of the alternatives, it is assumed that all of the facilities would be built. Other actions, such as increased noxious weed control, do not require managing partners or cost-sharing agreements. Such actions may require memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with other agency partners, and are assumed to be implemented for the purpose of comparing and analyzing the alternatives.

2.1 Alternatives Development

NEPA requires Federal agencies to evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed Federal action that meet the purpose and need of the proposed action. The NEPA alternatives development process allows Reclamation to work with interested agencies, Tribes, the public, and other stakeholders to develop alternative management plans that respond to identified issues. This Final EA documents Reclamation's planning and decision-making process for the RMP.

Reclamation began the public involvement process for the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP in January 2002 by initiating public scoping. The purpose of this scoping process was to identify issues in the RMP Study Area that needed to be included in the RMP alternatives and addressed in the Draft EA. After the first public meeting, held in April 2002 in Emmett, Idaho, an Ad Hoc Work Group was formed to address issues and provide input to developing alternatives. The public involvement process is more fully described in Chapter 4, *Consultation and Coordination*. Reclamation developed the alternatives based on issues identified during the public involvement process, and refined the alternatives with assistance from the Ad Hoc Work Group. The Preferred Alternative was identified during this process for evaluation in the Draft EA and was modified as presented in this Final EA.

This process resulted in the development of one action alternative that prescribes a range of natural, cultural, and recreation resource management actions. The No Action Alternative, as required by NEPA, is also analyzed. Each alternative would result in different future conditions at the reservoir and WMA. The two alternatives are summarized below:

- **Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices.** If implemented, this alternative would mean continuing to manage Reclamation lands according to existing agreements and under current laws and regulations. Alternative A is not a "status quo" situation. Management of the reservoir and surrounding lands would be on an ad hoc basis, without benefit of a current management plan. Portions of a 1984

management plan for Montour WMA, where still relevant, would be used to provide direction for the WMA.

- **Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities.** This alternative emphasizes natural and cultural resource enhancement while maintaining current recreational opportunities. Some facility improvements are proposed.

2.1.1 Similarities Among Alternatives

Although the alternatives differ in many ways, several features are common to both alternatives:

- Continue to operate and maintain Reclamation lands and facilities.
- Continue to adhere to existing and future Federal, State, and County laws and regulations.
- Implement existing restrictions on vehicle use of the shore and drawdown zone.
- Prior to any major ground-disturbing activities, conduct the appropriate level of site-specific NEPA analysis and public involvement. Required cultural resource surveys, archeological site evaluations, and necessary inventories for traditional cultural properties (TCPs) would also be completed.
- For recreation development and management aspects, follow the principles in Public Law 89-72, Federal Water Projects Recreation Act of 1965, as amended by Title 28 of Public Law 102-575. Basically, if a non-Federal public entity has agreed to manage recreation on Reclamation lands, Reclamation may share development costs for up to 50 percent of the total cost.
- Coordinate with law enforcement entities regarding Public Law 107-69, which authorizes Reclamation to enter agreements with State, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement on Reclamation land.
- Coordinate with Tribes and appropriate agencies regarding cultural resources.
- Comply with current accessibility regulations and standards required at all new facilities and on retrofits of existing facilities.

All actions are dependent upon the availability of funding and must be within the authority of the applicable agency.

2.2 Alternatives Considered in Detail

The two alternatives described above were selected for detailed analysis in the EA. Table 2.2-1 summarizes each alternative. The remainder of the chapter presents the alternative features as a narrative. The impacts of each alternative are described in Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences. During the public comment period, which opened with the release of the Draft EA on September 30, 2003, and ended on November 14, 2003, the Preferred Alternative was slightly refined, which is described in the FONSI.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE AREA		
Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat	Comply with Federal Endangered Species Act regarding all pertinent activities.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Specifically protect State species of special concern, including Conservation Data Center category S2 and S3 plants and plant communities
Wetland and Riparian Areas	Protect wetland and riparian species.	Improve habitat quality by grazing management and/or exclusion of livestock in wetland and riparian areas.
Noxious Weeds	Develop and implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan, including invasive aquatic species, mosquito control, and enhanced coordination efforts with Gem County Weed Control and CWMA. An IPM may include cultural, biological, mechanical, and chemical control methods.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Seek additional funding by raising the level of priority.
Water Quality, Erosion and Sedimentation Control	Continue to provide adequate sanitation and waste management facilities at developed recreation sites (e.g., restrooms, trash containers, etc.) to protect water quality. Continue to manage use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands, including those leased for agricultural purposes, in a manner that does not adversely affect water quality. Continue to prohibit motorized vehicular use on the shoreline (outside of boat ramps) and within the drawdown zone area of the reservoir. If invited by other agencies, Reclamation would participate in a watershed level group to reduce erosion.	Same as Alternative A.
Cultural Resources **General**	Comply with Sections 106 and 110 of NHPA, ARPA, and NAGPRA. Use consultative processes defined in 36 CFR 800 to determine if sites are eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (Register), assess Project effects, and identify preservation or mitigation actions. Use processes defined in 43 CFR 10 if human remains are discovered that are of Indian origin.	Same as Alternative A.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE AREA (CONT.)		
Identification & Evaluation	Complete archeological surveys when ground disturbing actions are proposed in locations where no survey that meets today's professional standards has been previously performed. This determination will be made by a Reclamation archeologist. Complete test excavations or other site evaluation actions at archeological sites found in areas of new ground disturbance or at other recorded sites if they appear threatened by land use or Project operations. Complete tribal consultations as necessary to determine if traditional cultural properties (TCPs) are present in areas of new ground disturbing actions, or are in or near focused use areas. If TCP's are present, assess impacts on Register eligible TCPs from proposed new actions or from existing use.	Same as Alternative A.
Protection	Unless justified, develop no new features or implement no new ground-disturbing actions within the boundaries of a Register-eligible site or TCP. If a decision were made to proceed with a damaging action, design the facilities to avoid or minimize resource damage. Monitor Register-eligible or unevaluated sites or TCP's in or near focused use areas to allow early detection of damage, in the event such sites are recorded in the future. Implement management or mitigation actions to address identified adverse effects on Register-eligible sites or TCP's. In the event of discovery of human remains of Indian origin, complete protective actions, tribal notification, and consultation procedures as required by 43 CFR 10. Consult potentially affiliated tribes about procedures for protection, treatment, and disposition. Human remains would be left in place; unless it was determined they could not be protected from harm. In the event that future actions generate archeological collections, curate those collections using processes consistent with 36 CFR 79 and 411 DM, which define Federal requirements.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Allow for interpretive materials and increase public awareness of Montour Valley (trails brochure etc.). • Designate Marsh/Ireton Ranch as historic district. • Allow for self-guided tours. • Retain Palmer House. • Designate old Montour Townsite and archaeological sites as historic district.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE AREA (CONT.)		
Indian Sacred Sites	Comply with EO 13007 for any new undertakings. Complete tribal consultations to determine if sacred sites are present in areas of new ground disturbing actions. Seek to avoid adversely affecting sacred sites from new undertakings, and to accommodate Tribal access and use, when consistent with accomplishing agency mission and law.	Same as Alternative A.
Indian Trust Assets	Consult on actions that may affect ITAs and seek to avoid impacts.	Same as Alternative A.
Scenic Values	No specific measures currently in place.	Locate and design any new or renovated facilities, structures, roads, trails, and erosion control structures to be compatible and integrate with the open, rural environment of the reservoir and surrounding area.
Public Safety **Fire Protection Services**	Continue agreements for fire suppression activities on Reclamation lands with the BLM/Gem County Fire District and Gem County Fire Department. Develop a Fire Management Plan.	Same as Alternative A.
Safety and Enforcement Services	Continue contracting and work with Gem County Sheriff's Department to ensure adequate level of law enforcement on Reclamation lands. Continue contracting with County Sheriff Marine Patrol to adequately enforce no-wake boating and circular (clock-wise) designations within the area of the reservoir. Continue enforcing no shooting safety zone around Montour campground and east side of old town site with area demarcated.	Same as Alternative A.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE AREA (CONT.)		
Public Information	Continue to use Reclamation's sign manual to prepare and disseminate information to the public as needed.	Use Reclamation's sign manual to prepare clear, consistent signage to guide public access to and use of Reclamation lands and park facilities. Develop and implement an interpretive program that illustrates the prehistoric, historic, and current land use practices, as well as natural features surrounding and visible from Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. Provide opportunities for wildlife observation and other natural resource-based interpretation and education at appropriate reservoir and WMA locations. Provide informative and concise public information materials on a continuing basis through local merchants, chambers of commerce, government offices, and other means (e.g., web page and link to IDFG web page.); and at: • fee stations, • recreation areas, and • road-side pullouts and appropriate locations within the WMA.
Recreation	Continue Cooperative Agreement with Gem County Waterways to place seasonal day use docks adjacent to highway boat ramps and at locations throughout reservoir. Continue to actively seek non-Federal public entity managing partner(s) to operate all recreation facilities at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. Contribute to an environment that supports viable concession services, with concession management to follow Reclamation's policy.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Establish a formal agreement between Reclamation and Thunder Mountain Railroad for use of Reclamation lands at Montour WMA and Cobblestone Park, as needed. • Work with the County to implement an informal monitoring, assessment, and response program to deal with crowding and the potential for associated user conflicts on the reservoir from boating.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[/1/]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO THE ENTIRE AREA (CONT.)		
Access	Continue to allow access to Reclamation lands according to current policies, i.e., ORV use prohibited.	Establish and implement a Memorandum of Understanding with ITD in coordinating and providing adequate signage at/to designated recreation areas and highway boat ramps to accommodate better visibility and safe ingress/egress at these locations, as well as other methods to increase highway safety and address access-related issues around the RMP Study Area. Work with the County to enforce no parking areas adjacent to recreation areas and highway boat ramps. Coordinate with ITD and the County Sheriff to install barriers to prevent roadside (ad hoc) parking where it is occurring. Cooperate with City of Emmett, Gem County, ITD, BLM, and Irrigation Districts to seek feasible non-motorized trail connections between surrounding community and the reservoir/WMA. *Provide for and maintain non-motorized trail opportunities at appropriate locations around Black Canyon Reservoir and within Montour WMA including better internal parking and WMA trail access.
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO MONTOUR WMA		
WMA Boundary	Stay within current WMA boundary Maintain clearly marked boundaries between Montour WMA and private property.	Update Reclamation/IDFG MOU for management of Montour WMA. Maintain clearly marked boundaries between Montour WMA and private property. Expand WMA boundary on south side Reclamation lands down river to mouth of Squaw Creek (along opposite shore).

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO MONTOUR WMA (CONT.)		
Wetlands and Ponds	Continue to maintain natural and constructed wetlands and develop additional wetlands as funding/staff time are available, but without any overall plan. Obtain water rights following the state process, utilizing water for wetlands from natural seepage and/or agricultural wastewater.	Develop and implement a planned program for up to an additional 25 – 50 pond acres. Develop and implement a long-term pond maintenance plan for all ponds within the Montour WMA, including monitoring for/of: infiltration of Eurasian milfoil, water control structure operability, and water flow (to decrease stagnant water and help control mosquitoes). Based on field review of project sites, avoid sensitive wetland plants and communities. Obtain water rights following the state process, utilizing water for wetlands from natural seepage and/or agricultural wastewater.
Agricultural and Grazing Leases	Continue agricultural leases for habitat values as determined jointly by IDFG and Reclamation. Continue managed grazing.	Continue agricultural leases for habitat values as determined jointly by IDFG and Reclamation. Evaluate existing agricultural leases as they become due for a change in management practices (if necessary) to comply with WMA goals and objectives. Evaluate existing grazing leases as they become due for a change in management practices (if necessary) to comply with WMA goals and objectives.
Seasonal Wildlife Nesting Closures	February 1—July 1; specific to signed areas.	February 1—July 31; specific to signed areas and consistent with other IDFG seasonal closures.
WMA Refuge Hunting Closure Area	Hunting permitted throughout WMA (except for no-shooting safety zone around campground and east side of old town site).	Same as Alternative A.
Irrigation Ditches	No specific actions to enhance or maintain ditches for wildlife values.	Coordinate with local ditch companies for the establishment and maintenance of wildlife and habitat values.
Fire Management	Undertake wildfire rehabilitation in keeping with wildlife habitat values and the intent of the WMA.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Implement prescribed burning for habitat manipulation followed by appropriate planting.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[1]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO MONTOUR WMA (CONT.)		
Production of Waterfowl and Upland Game Birds	Annually maintain waterfowl nesting and water control structures. Monitor and manage residual nesting cover so as to optimize the vigor, biodiversity, and density of vegetation. Maintain secure nesting habitat by restricting activities during the nesting season (Feb1—Jul 1). Enforce area closures to minimize disturbances to waterfowl and other birds.	Annually maintain waterfowl nesting structures. Monitor and manage additional residual nesting cover (50% of upland portions of WMA) so as to optimize the vigor, biodiversity, and density of vegetation. Maintain secure nesting habitat by restricting activities during the nesting season (Feb 1—Jul 31). Maintain and increase water control structures to stabilize water levels to prevent nest flooding. Use media to distribute information on importance of protecting nesting waterfowl and other birds during spring production.
Wild Pheasant Carrying Capacity	Continue to maintain tall grass/forb areas providing dense nesting cover during spring nesting season. Continue to plant food plots in irrigated areas.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Use Habitat Improvement Program to establish food source/nesting area. • Increase use of reservists and volunteers to establish and maintain these habitats. • Establish forbs in permanent cover for broods and adult birds. • Encourage heavy cattail thickets to provide thermal roosting cover.
Montour WMA Recreation & Access **Non-consumptive Recreation (wildlife viewing, hiking, etc.)**	Continue to allow non-consumptive recreational opportunities consistent with the purposes of the WMA.	Monitor and manage public use and access to ensure maintenance of wildlife and their habitats. Monitor consumptive and non-consumptive uses and implement strategies to alleviate conflicts, if necessary. Provide environmental education to groups (scout troops, school classes, bird watchers and sportsmen). Write newspaper articles and news releases, and conduct tours to promote Montour WMA and its wildlife and recreation values as opportunities arise. Develop self-guided wildlife tour for periods not conflicting with hunting or critical wildlife production.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[/1/]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO MONTOUR WMA (CONT.)		
Access	Continue to allow public access except in nesting and brooding areas during seasonal nesting closure.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Develop non-motorized boating access area (put-in and take-out site). • Provide for and actively enforce foot traffic use only off of designated roads. • Provide fewer, larger signed parking areas; i.e., less small, dispersed sites. • Install barriers as necessary to regulate motorized access
Montour Campground	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Upgrade campsites to accommodate larger RVs, within the confines of the existing campground.
Consumptive Recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping)	Continue to allow hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities consistent with the purposes of the WMA.	Provide fishing opportunities during periods not conflicting with nesting or brooding waterfowl. Develop permanent cover for game birds. Develop ponds to provide additional waterfowl hunting sites (pond design will also enhance duck production and other wildlife). Monitor hunter activity related to upland game and waterfowl hunting and implement strategies to alleviate conflicts, if necessary. Adjust public use in response to wildlife management goals, sportsmen needs, and perceptions.
Special Events	Use Reclamation-wide application system when it becomes available to evaluate special events on a case-by-case basis through current application system consistent with intent of the WMA.	No special events allowed at Montour WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives.
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR		
Special Events	Use Reclamation-wide application system, when it becomes available, to evaluate special events on a case-by-case basis.	Same as Alternative A, plus: • Designate Triangle Park as the main location on Reclamation lands to hold special events.
Cobblestone Park	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Improve and expand facilities/area to accommodate additional recreational activities and demand (e.g., Disc Golf, group use area, better fishing access, camping, additional picnic sites). *Work with IDL on lease agreement for lands adjacent to river.

Table 2.2-1. *Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP Final EA Alternatives*

Area and Topic	Alternative A-No Action[/1/]: Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B-Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities
TOPICS APPLICABLE TO BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR (CONT.)		
Wild Rose Park	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Improve and add facilities to accommodate additional day use and group-related activities, and fishing access to the river.
Triangle Park	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Improve facilities at Triangle Park to better accommodate day use and group-related activities.
Black Canyon Park	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Design and build an accessible fishing pier at the easternmost portion of Black Canyon Park. *Expand and/or reconfigure facilities to accommodate increased day use and group-related activities.
Highway "County" Boat Ramps	Continue use and access as currently allowed.	*Work with managing partner (Gem County) to provide facility improvements at the highway "County" boat ramps to better accommodate boating-related activities (e.g., signage, seasonal trash receptacles), including a non-motorized boating access area (take-out site) adjacent to Highway Ramp No. 3. Coordinate with ITD to provide adequate signage designating recreation areas and highway boat ramps to accommodate better visibility and safe ingress/egress at these locations.

Notes:

*Indicates the need for a public entity non-Federal public entity managing partner.

[/1/]Alternative A is the No Action Alternative as required under NEPA. In this case, if implemented, it would mean continuing to manage Reclamation lands according to existing agreements and under current laws and regulations. It is important to note that Alternative A is not necessarily a "status quo" situation. Rather, Alternative A would be a continuation of the existing Reclamation management of the reservoir and IDFG management of the WMA. For the Montour WMA, Alternative A is not simply a continuation of the 1984 Management Plan. Several elements of the plan were not implemented, nor would they be in the future, because of conflicts with wildlife management goals and the lack of a non-Federal public entity partner with whom to cost share. Relevant elements were carried forward in this EA.

Note: All new facilities would be designed in accordance with current standards for accessibility for persons with disabilities.

2.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Alternative A is the No Action Alternative, as required under NEPA. If implemented, it would mean continuing to manage Reclamation lands according to existing agreements and under current laws and regulations. It is important to note that Alternative A is not necessarily a "status quo" situation. Rather, Alternative A would be a continuation of the existing Reclamation management of the reservoir and IDFG management of the WMA. Management of the WMA, reservoir, and surrounding lands would be on an ad hoc basis, without benefit of a current management plan. Portions of a 1984 management plan for the Montour WMA, where still relevant, would be used to provide direction for the WMA. Some specific highlights of this alternative include the following:

- Protect wetland and riparian species.
- Continue contracting and work with Gem County Sheriff's Department to ensure adequate level of law enforcement on Reclamation lands.
- Continue contracting with County Sheriff Marine Patrol to adequately enforce no wake boating and circular (clock-wise) use regulations within the area of the reservoir.
- Continue Cooperative Agreement with Gem County Waterways to place seasonal day use docks adjacent to highway boat ramps and at locations throughout reservoir.
- Continue to actively seek non-Federal public entity managing partner(s) to operate all recreation facilities at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA.
- Prepare and disseminate information to the public as needed.
- Stay within current WMA boundary (no expansion of WMA on other Reclamation lands).
- Continue to maintain natural and constructed wetlands and develop additional wetlands as funding/staff time are available, but without any overall plan.
- Allow hunting throughout WMA.
- Continue use and access in the WMA as currently allowed.
- Continue current grazing practices within the WMA.

Figure 2.2-1, Alternative A—No Action: Continuation of Existing Management Practices, shows the entire RMP Study Area and highlights key management actions under this alternative. Figure 2.2-2, Alternative A—No Action (Montour Wildlife Management Area), focuses on management actions within the WMA.

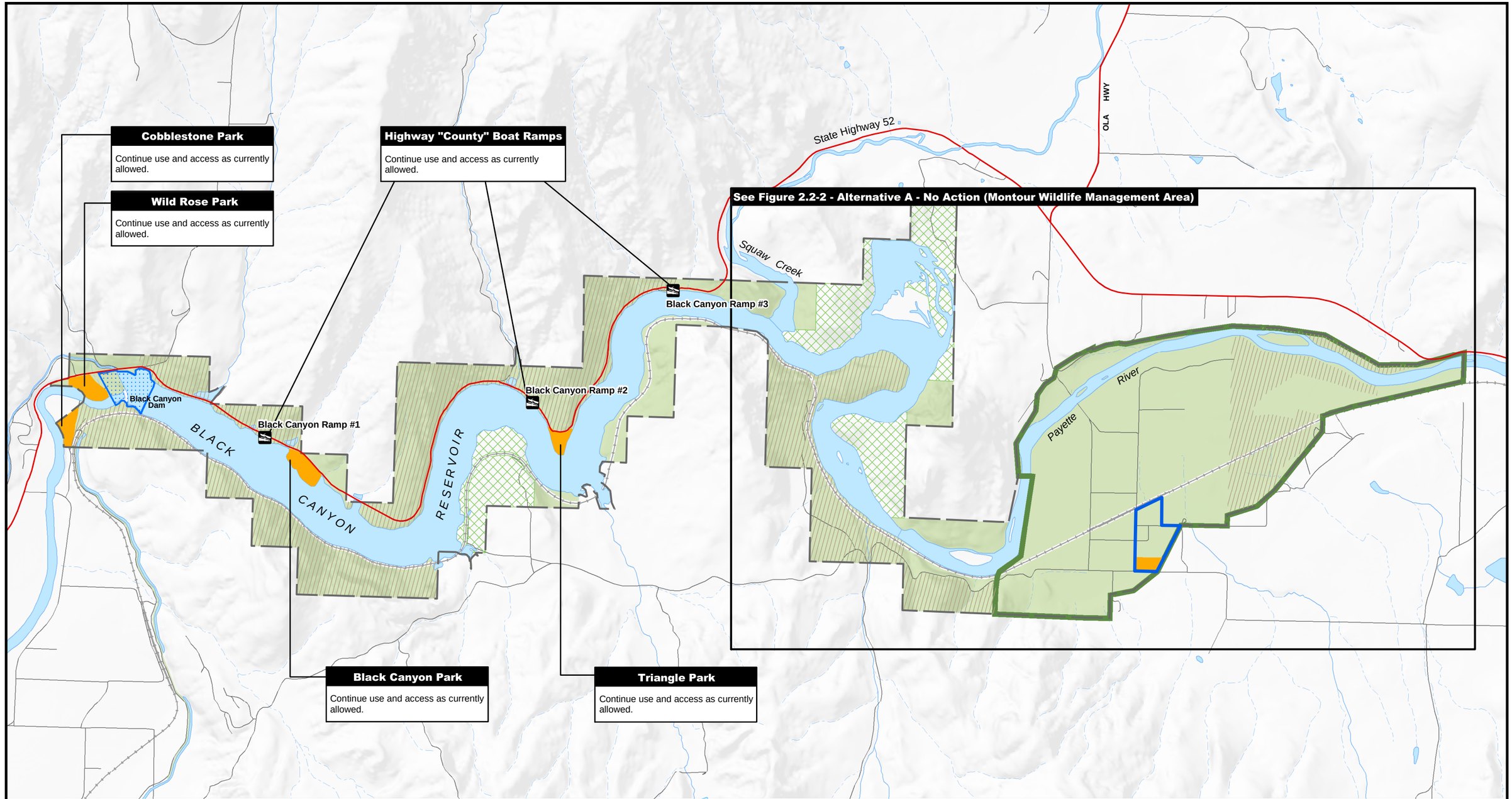


Figure 2.2-1
Alternative A - No Action: Continuation of Existing Management Practices

0 0.5 1 Miles
0 0.5 1 Kilometers

N

- Bureau of Reclamation Lands and Easements
- Private with Flowage Easements
- Montour WMA Boundary
- No-Shooting Area
- Recreation Area
- Grazing Lease
- Reclamation Zone (O&M area surrounding dam)
- RMP Study Area
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Highway
- Road
- Railroad
- Roadside Boat Ramp

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2003
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Insert Figure 2.2-1, Alternative A—No Action: Continuation of Existing Management Practices

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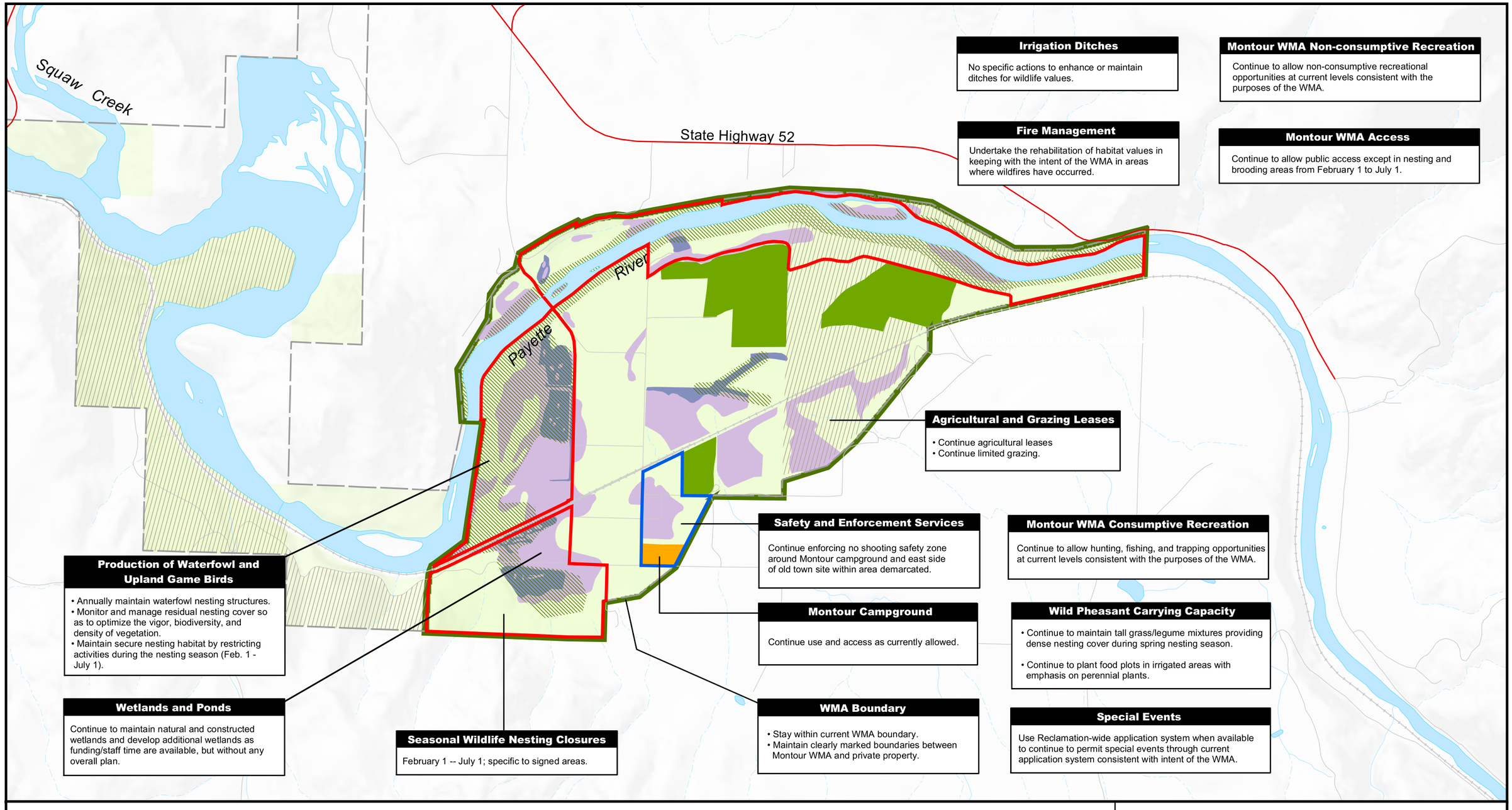

Figure 2.2-2
Alternative A - No Action (Montour Wildlife Management Area)

Reclamation-Constructed Wetland
Wetland Habitat
Agriculture/Wildlife Food Leases
Goose Nesting and Brooding Area
Recreation Area
Nesting Season Closure
No-Shooting Area
Montour WMA
Grazing Lease
Perennial Stream
Intermittent Stream
RMP Study Area
Highway
Road
Railroad

0 0.5 1 Miles
0 0.5 1 Kilometers
N

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2003
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Insert Figure 2.2-2, Alternative A—No Action (Montour Wildlife Management Area)

11 x 17 back

2.2.1.1 Topics Applicable to the Entire Area

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat

Under Alternative A, Reclamation would continue to comply with the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) regarding all pertinent activities.

Wetland and Riparian Areas

Reclamation would continue to protect wetland and riparian species under the same management approach that is currently in place.

Noxious Weeds

Under Alternative A, Reclamation would develop and implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan. This plan would include invasive aquatic species, mosquito control, and enhanced coordination efforts with Gem County Weed Control and the Upper Payette Coordinated Weed Management Area (CWMA). An IPM may include cultural, biological, mechanical, and chemical control methods.

Water Quality, Erosion and Sedimentation Control

To protect water quality, Reclamation would continue to provide adequate sanitation and waste management facilities at developed recreation sites, such as restrooms and trash containers. Chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands, including those leased for agricultural purposes, would continue to be used in a manner that does not adversely affect water quality. Motorized vehicular use on the shoreline (outside of boat ramps) and within the drawdown zone area of the reservoir would continue to be prohibited.

Cultural Resources

General

Reclamation would continue to comply with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). As defined in 36 CFR 800, Reclamation would use a consultative process to determine if sites are eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), assess the effects of the management of the area, and identify preservation or mitigation actions. If human remains are discovered that are of Indian origin, Reclamation would apply the processes defined in 45 CFR 10.

Identification and Evaluation

Reclamation would complete archeological surveys when ground disturbing actions are proposed in locations where no survey that meets today's professional standards has been previously performed. As with present management, this determination would be made by a Reclamation archeologist. Reclamation would complete test excavations or other site evaluation actions at archeological sites found in areas of new ground disturbance or at other recorded sites if they appear threatened by land use or Project operations. Reclamation would also complete tribal consultations as needed to determine if traditional cultural properties (TCPs) are present in areas of new ground disturbing actions, or are in or near focused use areas. If TCPs are present, Reclamation would assess impacts on Register-eligible TCPs from proposed new actions or from existing use.

Protection

Unless justified, Reclamation would develop no new features or implement no new ground-disturbing actions within the boundaries of a National Register-eligible site or TCP. If a decision were made to proceed with a damaging action, the facilities would be designed to avoid or minimize resource damage. Ongoing monitoring of National Register-eligible or unevaluated sites or TCPs in or near focused use areas would allow Reclamation to detect damage early, if such sites are recorded in the future.

Reclamation would implement management or mitigation actions to address identified adverse effects on National Register-eligible sites or TCPs. In the event of discovery of human remains of Indian origin, Reclamation would complete protective actions, Tribal notification, and consultation procedures as required by 45 CFR 10. Potentially affiliated tribes would be consulted about procedures for protection, treatment, and disposition. Human remains would be left in place unless it was determined they could not be protected from harm.

If future actions generate archeological collections, Reclamation would direct curation of those collections using processes consistent with 36 CFR 79 and 411 DM, which define Federal requirements.

Indian Sacred Sites

Any new undertakings on Federal land would comply with Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites). This includes consultation with Tribes to determine if sacred sites are present in areas of new ground disturbing actions. In all cases, Reclamation would seek to avoid damages and maintain access from new undertakings on Federal lands, when consistent with accomplishing agency mission and law.

Indian Trust Assets

Reclamation would consult on actions that may affect ITAs while seeking to avoid impacts.

Scenic Values

No specific measures are currently in place for addressing scenic values.

Public Safety

Fire Protection Services

BLM is responsible for fire suppression on Reclamation lands. In turn, the BLM has agreements with Gem County Fire Protection District and Gem County Fire Department. These services would continue. Reclamation would also develop a Fire Management Plan.

Safety and Enforcement Services

Reclamation would continue to contract and work with the Gem County Sheriff's Department to ensure an adequate level of law enforcement on Reclamation lands. The County Sheriff Marine Patrol would continue to be a partner in adequately enforcing no wake boating and circular (clock-wise) designation within the area of the reservoir. The no shooting safety zone around Montour campground and the signed area on the east side of the old town site would continue to be enforced.

Public Information

Reclamation would inform the public of management decisions and issues as needed through standard media outlets.

Special Events

When it becomes available, the Reclamation-wide application system would be used to continue to permit special events at reservoir parks. The existing application system would be used until the new system is implemented.

Recreation

Reclamation would continue their Cooperative Agreement with Gem County Waterways to place seasonal day use docks adjacent to highway boat ramps and at locations throughout the reservoir. Also, Reclamation would continue to actively seek non-Federal public entity managing partner(s) to operate all recreation facilities at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. As part of this effort, Reclamation intends to contribute to an environment that supports viable concession services, with concession management to follow Reclamation's policy.

Access

Access to Reclamation lands would be allowed according to current policies and regulations. These regulations prohibit off-road vehicle (ORV) use on all Reclamation land unless specifically opened. Also, the safety and security of the dam and the area surrounding the dam has priority over public access to this area. For safety and security reasons, this area will remain closed to public access.

2.2.1.2 Topics Applicable to Montour WMA

WMA Boundary

The current WMA boundaries would remain as they are, and the WMA would not be extended to adjacent Reclamation lands. Clearly marked boundaries between the Montour WMA and private property would be maintained.

Wetlands and Ponds

Natural and constructed wetlands would continue to be maintained. Additional wetlands would be constructed as funding and staff time are available, but without any overall plan.

Agricultural and Grazing Leases

Agricultural leases and managed grazing would be continued where these activities contribute to habitat values.

Seasonal Wildlife Nesting Closures

The seasonal nesting closure would extend from February 1 to July 1. This closure would apply to specific, signed areas. The seasonal nesting closure prohibits all access and activities, including hiking, fishing, and bird watching.

WMA Refuge Hunting Closure Area

Hunting would continue to be allowed throughout WMA, except for no-shooting safety zone around campground.

Irrigation Ditches

No specific actions would be undertaken to enhance or maintain irrigation ditches for wildlife or habitat values.

Fire Management

Recently burned areas would be rehabilitated in keeping with wildlife habitat values and the intent of the WMA.

Production of Waterfowl and Upland Game Birds

Waterfowl nesting structures would be maintained annually. Reclamation would also monitor and manage residual nesting cover to optimize vegetation vigor, biodiversity, and density. A secure nesting habitat would be maintained through the seasonal restriction, and area closures would be enforced to minimize disturbances to waterfowl and other birds.

Wild Pheasant Carrying Capacity

The tall grass/forb areas would be maintained to provide dense nesting cover for wild pheasants during the spring nesting season. Food plots, with an emphasis on perennial plants, would continue to be planted in irrigated areas.

Montour WMA Recreation and Access

Non-consumptive Recreation (wildlife viewing, hiking, etc.)

Non-consumptive recreational opportunities would continue to be allowed at current levels consistent with the purposes of the WMA.

Access

Public access would continue to be allowed as currently, except in nesting and brooding areas.

Montour Campground

Under Alternative A, use and access to the campground would continue as currently allowed.

Consumptive Recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping)

Hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities would continue at current levels consistent with the purposes of the WMA.

Special Events

When it becomes available, the Reclamation-wide application system would be used to continue to permit special events at reservoir parks. The existing application system would be used until the new system is implemented. Any special events that are proposed must be consistent with intent of the WMA.

2.2.1.3 Topics Applicable to Black Canyon Reservoir

Use and access would continue as currently allowed in the following areas:

- Cobblestone Park
- Wild Rose Park

- Triangle Park
- Black Canyon Park
- Highway "County" Boat Ramps

2.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

This alternative emphasizes natural and cultural resource enhancement while maintaining current recreational opportunities. Some facility improvements are proposed, but recreation facility expansion or significant improvements would only be undertaken if Reclamation entered into an agreement with a non-Federal (public entity) managing partner. Some specific highlights of this alternative include the following:

- Improve habitat quality by eliminating grazing in wetland and riparian areas.

- Work with the County to implement an informal monitoring, assessment, and response program to deal with crowding and the potential for associated user conflicts on the reservoir from boating.

- Expand the WMA boundary on the south side Reclamation lands down river to the mouth of Squaw Creek (along opposite shore).

- Develop and implement a planned program for up to an additional 25 to 50 pond acres within the WMA, and develop and implement a long-term pond maintenance plan for all ponds within the Montour WMA.

- Continue agricultural leases within the WMA for habitat values as determined by IDFG; and evaluate existing agricultural leases as they become due for a change in management practices (if necessary) to comply with WMA goals and objectives.

- Allow no special events in the WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives, but continue to allow at reservoir parks (particularly at Triangle Park).

Figure 2.2-3, *Alternative B—Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities*, shows the entire RMP Study Area and highlights key management actions under this alternative. Figure 2.2-4, Alternative B—Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area) Land Status and Use, focuses on land management actions within the WMA. Figure 2.2-5, Alternative B—Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area) Land Cover and Wetlands, shows the locations of existing and potential new wetlands, as well as major habitat areas, within the WMA.

2.2.2.1 Topics Applicable to the Entire Area

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat

In addition to complying with the ESA, as outlined in Alternative A, Reclamation would specifically protect State species of special concern. Such species would include Conservation Data Center (CDC) category S2 and S3 plants and plant communities. These sensitive plants are listed in Chapter 3, *Vegetation*.

Wetland and Riparian Areas

Reclamation would focus on protecting and enhancing wetland and riparian habitat quality by active grazing management or exclusion of livestock in wetland and riparian areas.

Noxious Weeds

As with Alternative A, Alternative B would call for the development of an IPM Plan. As a further step, Reclamation would seek additional funding by raising the level of priority for plan implementation under Alternative B.

Water Quality, Erosion and Sedimentation Control

In addition to the facility maintenance and motorized vehicle prohibition items intended to protect water quality under Alternative A, Reclamation would establish best management practices (BMPs) for surrounding lands where offsite activities may affect Reclamation lands and Black Canyon Reservoir. This activity would be conducted in cooperation with adjacent private landowners and the applicable agencies, such as IDFG, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the BLM, and Gem County.

Reclamation would also implement a cooperative effort to develop an effective erosion control program, including standards, guidelines, and BMPs. This erosion control program would apply to all construction, operations, and maintenance programs on Reclamation lands, while considering program effects on other resources, such as natural, scenic, and cultural values. Other erosion control measures include enforcing appropriate restrictions in shoreline areas, and protecting reservoir shoreline and tributary riparian vegetation.

Cultural Resources

General

Management would be the same as Alternative A for the general approach to cultural resources.

Identification & Evaluation

Management would be the same as Alternative A for the identification and evaluation of cultural resources.

Protection

In addition to the management prescribed under Alternative A, Reclamation would allow for interpretive materials to be developed. The intent of such materials would be to increase public awareness of Montour Valley history, and provide public education about the importance of protecting these resources. Specific actions could include interpretation or signage at the Marsh/Ireton Ranch, brochures for self-guided tours, designation of the old town site as a historic district, and retaining the Palmer House.

Indian Sacred Sites

Management would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Indian Trust Assets

Management would be the same as described for Alternative A.

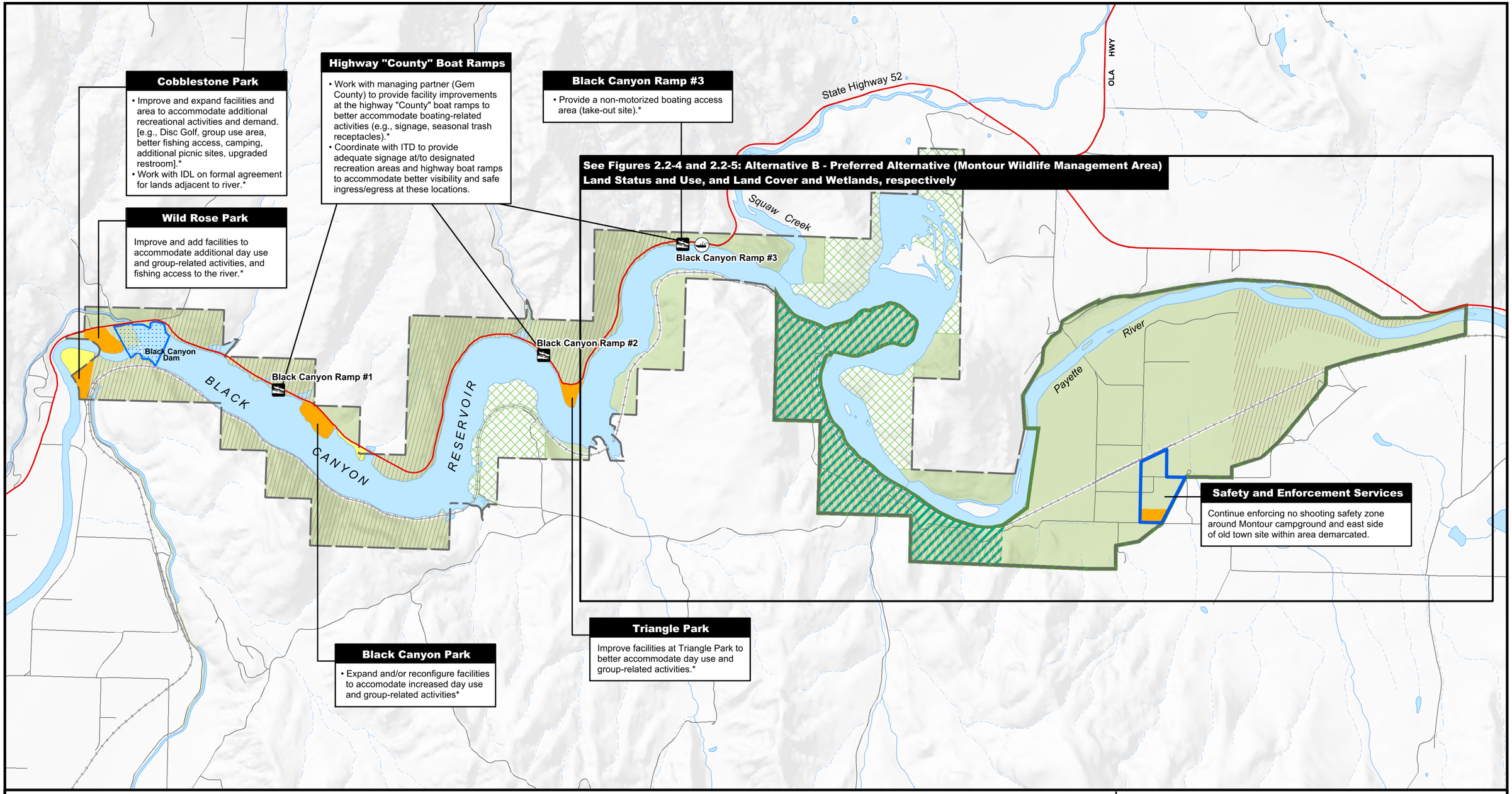

Figure 2.2-3
Alternative B - Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities

Bureau of Reclamation Lands and Easements
Private with Flowage Easements
Montour WMA Boundary
Proposed Montour WMA Expansion
Recreation Area
Potential Recreation Expansion
No-Shooting Area
Grazing Lease
Reclamation Zone (O&M area surrounding dam)
RMP Study Area
Perennial Stream
Intermittent Stream
Highway
Road
Railroad
Roadside Boat Ramp
Non-Motorized Boat Ramp

* Indicates the need for a public entity, non-Federal managing partner.

0 0.5 1 Miles
0 0.5 1 Kilometers
N

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2003
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Figure 2.2-3, *Alternative B—Preferred Alternative: Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities*

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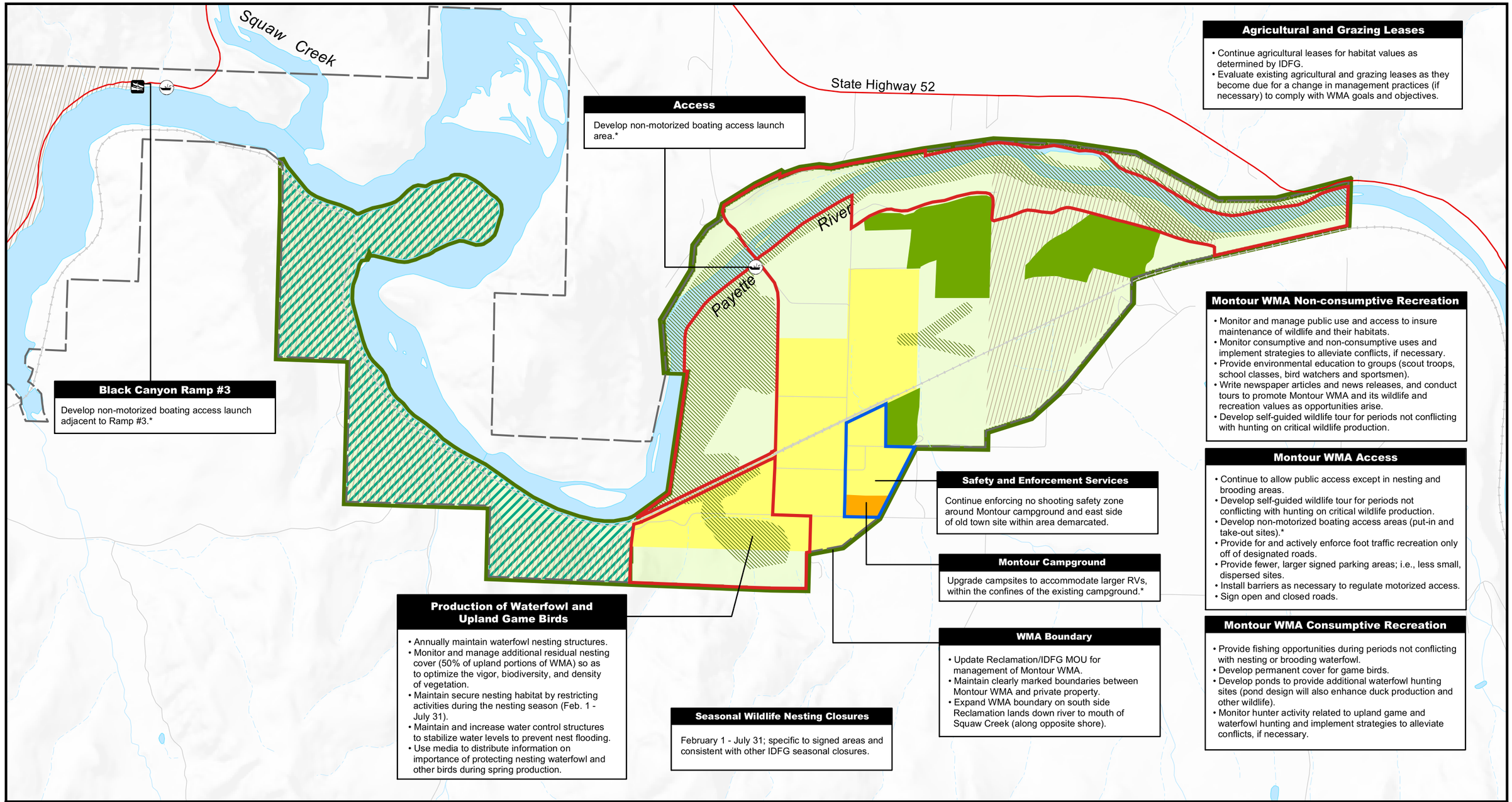

Figure 2.2-4
Alternative B - Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area)
Land Status and Use

Proposed Montour Historic District
Proposed Montour WMA Expansion
Recreation Area
Agriculture/Wildlife Food
Goose Nesting and Brooding Area
Nesting Season Closure
No Shooting Area
Montour WMA
Grazing Lease
RMP Study Area
Highway
Railroad
Perennial Stream
Intermittent Stream
Road
Roadside Boat Ramp
Non-Motorized Boat Ramp

0 0.5 1 Miles
0 0.5 1 Kilometers
N

* Indicates the need for a public entity, non-Federal managing partner.

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2003
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Figure 2.2-4, Alternative B— Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area) Land Status and Use

11 x 17 back

Squaw Creek

State Highway 52

Payette River

Irrigation Ditches

Coordinate with local ditch companies for the establishment and maintenance of wildlife and habitat values.

Fire Management

- Undertake the rehabilitation of habitat values in keeping with the intent of the WMA in areas where wildfires have occurred.
- Implement prescribed burning for habitat manipulation followed by appropriate planting.

Safety and Enforcement Services

Continue enforcing no shooting safety zone around Montour campground and east side of old town site within area demarcated.

Special Events

No special events allowed that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives.

Montour Campground

Continue use and access as currently allowed.

Wild Pheasant Carrying Capacity

- Continue to maintain tall grass/legume mixtures providing dense nesting cover during spring nesting season.
- Continue to plant food plots in irrigated areas with emphasis on perennial plants.
- Use Habitat Improvement Program to establish food source/nesting area.
- Increase use of reservists and volunteers to establish and maintain these habitats.
- Establish forbs in permanent cover for broods and adult birds.
- Encourage heavy cattail thickets to provide thermal roosting cover.

Wetlands and Ponds

- Develop and implement a planned program for 25-50 additional pond/wetland acres.
- Develop and implement a long-term pond maintenance plan for all ponds/wetlands within the Montour WMA
- Avoid Sensitive wetland plants and communities.

Figure 2.2-5
Alternative B - Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area)
Land Cover and Wetlands

Reclamation-Constructed Wetland
Wetland Habitat
Recreation Area
Proposed New Wetland
Proposed Montour WMA Expansion
No-Shooting Area
Montour WMA
Grazing Lease
RMP Study Area
Perennial Stream
Intermittent Stream
Highway
Road
Railroad

0 0.5 1 Miles
0 0.5 1 Kilometers
N

BLACK CANYON RESERVOIR & MONTOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RMP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; EDAW, Inc.; 2003
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Figure 2.2-5, Alternative B— Preferred Alternative (Montour Wildlife Management Area) Land Cover and Wetlands

11 x 17 back

Scenic Values

To enhance scenic values, any new or renovated facilities, structures, roads, trails, and erosion control structures would be located and designed to be compatible and integrate with the open, rural environment of the reservoir and surrounding area. These facilities and structures would be required to comply with applicable design standards, guidelines, and BMPs.

Public Safety

Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services on Reclamation lands would continue to be provided by BLM and a Fire Management Plan would be developed, as described for Alternative A.

Safety and Enforcement Services

Safety and enforcement service would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Public Information

Using Reclamation's sign manual as appropriate, clear, consistent signage would be built to guide public access to and use of Reclamation lands and park facilities. Also, informative and concise public information materials would be provided on a continuing basis through local merchants, chambers of commerce, government offices, the Reclamation and IDFG web sites, fee stations, recreation areas, and road-side pullouts. The information could include such topics as habitat protection, Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA facilities and attractions, and interpretive information. Materials would also be developed to describe and show the purpose, function, and boundary of the Reclamation Zone. The materials would also explain why the safety and security of the dam and area surrounding the dam (i.e. the Reclamation Zone) has priority over public access to this area. The method of distribution would depend on the target users of the informational materials (see Figure 2.2-3).

As part of this public information program, Reclamation and cooperating agencies or groups would develop and implement an interpretive program that illustrates the prehistoric, historic, and current land use practices, as well as the natural features surrounding and visible from Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. The intent of the interpretive program would be to provide opportunities for wildlife observation and other natural resource-based interpretation and education at appropriate reservoir and WMA locations.

Special Events

Special events would be managed as described for Alternative A, plus Triangle Park would be designated as the main location on Reclamation lands to hold special events.

Recreation

Recreation management actions would be the same as Alternative A. In addition, under Alternative B, a formal agreement may be established between Reclamation and the Thunder Mountain Railroad for use of Reclamation lands at Montour WMA and Cobblestone Park, as needed. Reclamation, with the County, would also implement an informal monitoring, assessment, and response program to address crowding and the potential for associated user conflicts on the reservoir from boating.

Access

It is Reclamation's intent to provide adequate vehicular access to and parking at all designated recreation areas along the Black Canyon Reservoir and within Montour WMA. However, such access and parking should be sized in a manner that respects the physical constraints and safe use of these areas. Natural and cultural resource protection should also be a factor influencing how many people could access the site and have a positive recreation experience. Access and parking within the WMA would be formalized by signing approved parking areas and open roads, and eliminating other roads and ad hoc parking areas.

At the reservoir, Reclamation would establish and implement an MOU with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) to coordinate and provide adequate signage for designated recreation areas and highway boat ramps. This approach would accommodate better visibility and safe use of these locations. Other methods to increase highway safety and address access-related issues around the RMP Study Area would also be considered. For example, Reclamation would coordinate with ITD and the County Sheriff to install barriers where unmanaged roadside parking is occurring and posing a safety hazard. Reclamation would work with the County to enforce no parking areas adjacent to recreation areas and highway boat ramps.

Reclamation also intends to improve non-motorized access to the reservoir and WMA through cooperation with the City of Emmett, Gem County, ITD, BLM, and the irrigation districts. One goal would be to seek feasible, non-motorized trail connections between the surrounding community and the recreation and wildlife management areas. Another goal would be to seek hiking and bicycling opportunities at appropriate locations around Black Canyon Reservoir and within Montour WMA to improve internal park and WMA trail access. This action would require a non-Federal, public entity, managing partner to share costs.

2.2.2.2 Topics Applicable to Montour WMA

WMA Boundary

The WMA boundary would be expanded on the south side of the Reclamation lands down river to mouth of Squaw Creek (along the opposite shore). The boundaries between the Montour WMA and private property would be maintained and clearly marked. According to the boundary change and other management changes, the MOU between Reclamation and IDFG would be updated for the future management of the Montour WMA.

Wetlands and Ponds

In cooperation with IDFG, Reclamation would develop and implement a planned program for up to 25 to 50 additional pond acres. Along with development of these ponds, Reclamation would implement a long-term pond maintenance plan for all ponds within the Montour WMA. This maintenance plan would include monitoring for infiltration of Eurasian milfoil, as well as managing the water control structure operability and water flow to decrease stagnant water and help control mosquitoes.

Based on a field review, all activities in the WMA would be conducted to avoid sensitive wetland plants and communities. Reclamation will also explore the possibility of using natural seepage or agricultural wastewater as a water source for wetlands. All appropriate state water right permits would be obtained.

Agricultural and Grazing Leases

As agricultural and grazing leases become eligible for renewal, Reclamation and IDFG would jointly evaluate the leases to determine if a change in management practices would be needed to comply with WMA goals and objectives. Agricultural leases that benefit habitat values would be continued.

Seasonal Wildlife Nesting Closures

The seasonal nesting closure would be extended by 30 days under Alternative B. The closure would be enforced from February 1 to July 31 in signed areas. This would make the WMA consistent with other IDFG WMA seasonal closures.

WMA Refuge Hunting Closure Area

As with Alternative A, hunting would be allowed throughout the WMA except for the no-shooting zone around Montour Campground and east of the old town site.

Irrigation Ditches

Reclamation would coordinate with local ditch companies to establish and maintain wildlife and habitat values in these areas.

Fire Management

Fire management would continue as described in Alternative A, plus Reclamation would implement prescribed burning for habitat manipulation, followed by appropriate planting.

Production of Waterfowl and Upland Game Birds

Reclamation would support IDFG's efforts to optimize production of waterfowl and upland game birds in the Montour WMA. Specific actions include all of those listed under Alternative A, plus the following:

- Develop additional ponds according to established priorities and rare species and community protection, as funding becomes available. Ensure that appropriate measures are instituted at any new ponds to control mosquitoes, aquatic weeds, and other pests, as will be described in the IPM Plan.
- Maintain and increase water control structures to stabilize water levels to prevent nest flooding.
- Distribute information through media outlets on the importance of protecting nesting waterfowl during the spring production period.

Wild Pheasant Carrying Capacity

Reclamation would support IDFG's efforts to increase wild pheasant carrying capacity by implementing the management actions described in Alternative A, plus the following actions:

- Use the Habitat Improvement Program to establish pheasant food sources and nesting areas.
- Increase the use of reservists and volunteers to establish and maintain these habitats.
- Establish forbs in permanent cover for broods and adult birds.
- Encourage heavy cattail thickets to provide thermal roosting cover.

Montour WMA Recreation & Access

Non-consumptive Recreation (wildlife viewing, hiking, etc.)

Reclamation, in coordination with IDFG, would monitor and manage public use and access to ensure maintenance of wildlife and their habitats. This includes monitoring both consumptive and non-consumptive uses and implementing strategies to alleviate conflicts, if necessary.

To encourage non-consumptive uses, Reclamation and IDFG would provide environmental education to groups such as scout troops, school classes, bird watchers, and sportsmen. In addition, both agencies would write newspaper articles and news releases, and conduct tours to promote Montour WMA and its wildlife and recreation values as opportunities arise. A self-guided wildlife tour would be developed for periods not conflicting with hunting or critical wildlife production and seasonal closures. Foot traffic recreation would be allowed on trails and designated roads. No vehicles would be allowed off of designated roads. Reclamation would develop a public outreach web page about non-consumptive recreation at the Montour WMA, and include a link to the IDFG page.

Other entities, such as the Audubon Society, would be allowed to organize and conduct pertinent wildlife dependent recreation at Montour WMA in conjunction and coordination with IDFG and Reclamation.

Access

Access to the Montour WMA would be the same as described for Alternative A, plus these additional management actions:

- Develop a self-guided wildlife tour for periods not conflicting with hunting or seasonal closures.
- Develop non-motorized boating access area (put-in and take-out site).
- Provide for and actively enforce foot traffic recreation only off of designated roads.
- Install barriers as necessary to regulate motorized access.
- Sign open and closed roads.
- Provide fewer, larger signed parking areas. This approach minimizes small, dispersed sites that ultimately disturb more habitat than focused parking areas.

Montour Campground

The Montour Campground would be upgraded to accommodate larger RVs, within the confines of the existing campground.

Consumptive Recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping)

Reclamation would support IDFG's efforts to determine sportsman needs and user satisfaction threshold levels at Montour WMA. The agency partners would seek to adjust public use in response to wildlife management goals, sportsmen needs, and perceptions.

Special Events

No special events would be allowed at the Montour WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives. Special events would continue to be allowed at the reservoir parks, particularly Triangle Park.

2.2.2.3 Topics Applicable to Black Canyon Reservoir

All improvements to the Black Canyon Reservoir recreation area require a non-Federal, public entity cost-share partner for implementation. All new facilities would be designed in accordance with current standards for accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Cobblestone Park

The facilities and area would be improved and expanded to accommodate additional recreational activities and demand. Examples of improvements could include a disc golf course, a group use area, better fishing access, camping, additional picnic sites, and an upgraded restroom. Reclamation would enter into a lease agreement with Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) to expand the recreation area around Cobblestone Park.

Wild Rose Park

The facilities would be improved and expanded to accommodate additional day use and group-related activities, as well as fishing access to the river.

Triangle Park

Because the management emphasis at Triangle Park would change to groups and special events, Reclamation would focus on improving the facilities to better accommodate day use and group-related activities.

Black Canyon Park

An accessible fishing pier at the easternmost portion of Black Canyon Park would be designed and built. Also, facilities would be expanded or reconfigured to accommodate increased day use and group-related activities, since the Montour WMA would no longer be available for such uses.

Highway "County" Boat Ramps

Reclamation would contract with Gem County (as a managing partner) to provide facility improvements at the highway "County" boat ramps. The intent would be to better accommodate boating-related activities such as signage and seasonal trash receptacles. This would include a non-motorized boating access area (take-out site) adjacent to Highway Ramp No. 3. Reclamation would also coordinate with ITD to provide adequate signage at designated recreation areas and highway boat ramps to accommodate better visibility and safety at these locations.

2.3 Alternatives Elements Eliminated from Consideration

Most of the elements suggested by the public were included in one or more of the action alternatives. Some elements that were suggested included allowing for a trail around the reservoir, designating a "wildlife refuge area" within the WMA that would be a no shooting area, and expanding parking for Black Canyon Park by developing an overflow parking area on the north side of Highway 52 across from the park. These elements were reviewed, discussed, and analyzed among the Ad Hoc Work Group members and the Reclamation RMP Team members but were eliminated from further consideration because of potential costs, high potential for conflict with natural resources, conflicts between users, and standard Reclamation policies.

2.4 Summary of Impacts

The impact analysis is presented in Chapter 3. A summary of these impacts is provided in Table 2.4-1.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Water Quality and Contaminants	Increases in recreation as a result of increases in population are expected to result in more motorized boats and PWC on the reservoir. This is expected to result in increased shoreline erosion and more oil and gasoline spills and bypassed unburned fuel.	The impact of regional population growth on water quality because of increased use of motorized boats and PWC would be the same as Alternative A. Specific actions in Alternative B that would benefit water quality include improved grazing management and exclusion of livestock from wetland and riparian areas, and implementing an effective erosion control program in all construction, operations, and maintenance programs. At Montour WMA, using water for wetlands from natural seepage or agricultural wastewater may benefit water quality. Improvements or expanded facilities at recreation areas would increase the amount of impermeable surfaces, which increases stormwater runoff from parking areas into the reservoir. Implementation of stormwater management designs and construction and operation of BMPs would reduce this adverse effect, but would not eliminate it completely.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Vegetation	Development and implementation of an IPM Plan would be expected to result in improved management and control efforts directed toward noxious and invasive terrestrial and aquatic weeds compared to current efforts. The speed and magnitude of improvements will depend upon funding levels. A proposed Reclamation-wide application system for special events could possibly be used as a tool to avoid some impacts to some areas from vegetation damage resulting from high impact human use. Continued use of the WMA for special events would result in vegetation trampling and possibly introduction and spread of noxious weeds. As funds become available, additional wetlands and ponds would be developed and their location would affect the type of impact expected. Ponds constructed in areas that are currently degraded would be expected to have a positive impact as the area is revegetated accordingly. Wetlands developed in areas that currently have high quality native upland or wetland vegetation or populations of sensitive species would have detrimental impacts. Livestock grazing at Montour WMA is expected to occur at the current rate under this alternative. Although the level of grazing impacts has been reduced in the last few years, some ongoing impact to riparian vegetation would continue. Livestock grazing pressure, when coupled with the expected increases in human activity, would likely cause further declines in native forb and grass species and may exacerbate the spread of weeds within the WMA.	Potential additional funding and higher priority of the IPM Plan would result in a positive vegetation management. This would have positive benefits for the RMP Study Area by controlling the spread of weeds and by restoring low value weed-infested areas back to higher value vegetation, which helps to control re-infestation with weeds and benefits wildlife and the watershed. Additions to Black Canyon and Cobblestone parks would likely include removing riparian and exotic and native upland vegetation now found on those sites, which would have detrimental impacts to vegetation resources, depending on the species present. By undertaking protective measures during construction and use, the negative impacts would be reduced. Eliminating special events at Montour WMA that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would reduce damage to vegetation within the WMA from trampling and camping and would reduce the potential for weed introduction and spread caused by these activities. Pond and wetland development would avoid sensitive plants species and wetland communities. All ponds within the Montour WMA would be monitored and maintained so that invasive plants, such as Eurasian watermilfoil, are more likely to be controlled. Wetland development would be of more positive benefit to vegetation under this alternative than under Alternative A. If carefully implemented and monitored, grazing management changes that are consistent with WMA goals are likely to benefit native vegetation, especially wet meadows and riparian areas.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Wildlife	Alternative A is expected to be mostly neutral or positive for wildlife. Recent reductions in livestock grazing that would continue under this alternative could potentially benefit several sensitive species and other wildlife because of improved riparian habitat quality. Several species of sensitive bats forage over water and may benefit from higher insect productivity in created wetlands. Conversion of seasonally moist wet meadow communities to emergent wetland/open water ponds could eliminate foraging areas used by long-billed curlews and possibly spotted frogs. Mitigation measures would avoid potential impacts on sensitive species resulting from conversion of wet meadow to emergent wetland/open water pond habitat. Continued use of the Montour WMA for special events that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would be detrimental for wildlife and habitat.	The potential adverse effects of implementation of Alternative B are expected to be either the same or less than those described for Alternative A. Effects from livestock grazing and agricultural leases would be lower because these leases would be reviewed as they expire to assure that potential impacts on sensitive species and their habitats are avoided, and that the leases are consistent with the goals of the WMA, resulting in potentially better habitat conditions. Better residual cover in wet meadows, resulting from reduced grazing levels, would benefit long-billed curlews and, if present, spotted frogs. However, even relatively light levels of livestock grazing in wet meadow areas could adversely affect curlews and spotted frogs because of vegetation removal and trampling and water quality degradation. Potential beneficial and adverse impacts of wetland development would be the same as Alternative A, including mitigation measures. Potential additional funding and a higher priority for implementation of an IPM Plan, compared to Alternative A, has the potential of benefiting several sensitive species by reversing current and avoiding future habitat degradation that results from weed infestations. Moving special events that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives to a developed recreation site like Triangle Park, would avoid potential impacts to sensitive and other wildlife species because these species are more likely to occur at the WMA.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Aquatic Resources	Alternative A would not be expected to substantially alter the composition or abundance of fish species present in the RMP Study Area compared to existing conditions. Expected increases in RMP Study Area use may result in some reservoir shoreline and near-shore habitat degradation from greater numbers of people and boats. This could impact warm water game species typically associated with shallow habitats through increased turbidity levels and perhaps the presence of higher concentrations of oil and gas during periods of heavy reservoir use by the public using motor boats and PWC. This may result in slightly reduced spawning and feeding success by these species. Increased use of the RMP Study Area also may result in increased angler harvest of game fish in the reservoir, river, and stocked Montour WMA ponds. However, these effects would be anticipated under any management scenario because of projected regional population increases and associated recreation needs and would not be limited only to Alternative A.	Alternative B also would not be expected to substantially alter the composition of fish species present in the RMP Study Area compared to existing conditions, but it may result in increased fish abundance. Impacts on fisheries habitat and fish resulting from increased public use and angler harvest associated with regional population growth would be the same as described for Alternative A. However, actions that would be implemented under Alternative B whose effects would result in improved riparian habitat, increased shoreline stability, reduced shoreline erosion and sediment delivery, and reduced water turbidity may offset these effects by contributing to improved fisheries habitat and perhaps increased fish abundance. Development of additional acres of ponds and pond maintenance would provide increased numbers of stocked fish for anglers to harvest in the Montour WMA. In addition, angler access to the Payette River below Black Canyon Dam and to the reservoir would be improved under Alternative B.
Threatened and Endangered Species	Threatened and endangered species that could be present in the vicinity of the RMP Study Area include the Ute ladies-tresses orchid, gray wolf, bald eagle, and bull trout. Conservation measures for Ute ladies'-tresses orchids include identifying areas of potential habitat that overlap with planned project facilities and new wetlands. In areas of potential habitat, Reclamation would either change the location of the facility to avoid direct and indirect impacts, including surface disturbance and hydrologic changes, or not construct the facility or trail. All potential impacts to Ute ladies'-tresses habitat would be avoided. No formal conservation measures are proposed for either the bald eagle or gray wolf because RMP actions are not expected to have any adverse effects on these species. No formal conservation measures are proposed for bull trout for Alternative A because the actions under this alternative are anticipated to have no adverse effects on bull trout or bull trout proposed critical habitat in or near the RMP Study Area.	Conservation measures would be the same as Alternative A, with the same level of expected impacts for Ute ladies-tresses orchid, gray wolf, and bald eagle. For bull trout, possible minor benefits to proposed critical habitat near the mouth of Squaw Creek may result from actions directed at protecting and enhancing riparian habitat quality along the reservoir shoreline through active grazing management. Reclamation has determined that the Preferred Alternative may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the bull trout, Ute ladies' tresses, orchid, bald eagle, and gray wolf and will not result in any adverse effects on proposed bull trout critical habitat in Squaw Creek.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Recreation and Access	Implementation of Alternative A would be without the benefit of a management plan resulting in generally negligible impacts to recreation resources in the near future. However, as the natural and recreation resources experience pressure and degradation from increased use over time because of population growth (35 to 39 percent), the impact of no management plan would likely result in some adverse impacts to recreation resources. While there is concern that reservoir surface capacity is at or exceeding acceptable levels from a safety standpoint, actions under Alternative A would not likely cause any significant increase in boating or PWC use on the reservoir. Specific proposals in Alternative A related to riparian areas, noxious weeds, and water quality and erosion would have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities. Specific proposals in Alternative A related to public safety would have a minor beneficial impact on recreation as they allow for the safe use of land and water for multiple activities. Allowing special events to take place as they currently do could potentially have a minor adverse impact to recreation if the special event results if crowding and/or conflicts with the general public. Alternative A proposes that use of and access to the campground in Montour WMA, the four parks on the reservoir, and highway County boat ramps continues as is currently allowed. This could potentially have an adverse effect on the recreation experience at and adjacent to these sites. If the demand for recreation resources continues to grow as expected, and the existing facilities are not improved or expanded, these sites could experience the effects of overcrowding resulting in decreased visitor safety and enjoyment.	Alternative B contains several actions that would maintain current recreational opportunities and provide minimal increased recreation facility capacity. Recreation-related actions under Alternative B would have beneficial effects on recreation. Overall wildlife and vegetation management would have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities. Implementation of a recreation use monitoring program would have a beneficial impact to recreation by assessing recreation carrying capacity so that land management activities can respond to changing demands over time. Actions related to access under Alternative B would have a beneficial impact to recreation by encouraging users through management strategies to use appropriate lands, particularly at and adjacent to the “County” boat ramps. Such strategies would enhance the recreation experience by reducing safety hazards and improving traffic circulation. Other access-related actions, such as providing non-motorized trail connections, would have beneficial impacts on recreation by providing an additional formalized recreation opportunity. Alternative B proposes a number of actions related to consumptive recreation (hunting, fishing, and trapping) at Montour WMA. These management/administrative actions would beneficially affect recreation facilities and opportunities at Montour WMA. The impact of regional population growth on recreation resources discussed under Alternative A would be less evident under Alternative B given that actions to provide additional recreation facility capacity and to enhance recreation user experience and satisfaction are proposed. A managing partner is needed in order to develop recreation facilities beyond minimum facilities for public health and safety.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Land Use	Increased use of the RMP Study Area over time would result in an adverse impact to land use because of the lack of a current management plan to provide long-term comprehensive guidance and direction on land uses. Specific proposals in Alternative A related to public safety would have a minor beneficial impact on land use as it allows for the safe use of land and water for multiple activities. Public information proposals would also have a minor beneficial impact to land use by improving the visitor's knowledge of current land use and how their activities are potentially detrimental to or supportive of resources on that land. Allowing special events to take place as they currently do could potentially have a minor adverse impact to land use if the special event has a detrimental effect on the natural, cultural, or recreation resources of that area. If overuse, crowding, or inadequate facilities occur at sites hosting special events, dispersed use could potentially result and have an adverse effect on land use. Identifying a managing partner for recreation facilities at the reservoir, as proposed in both alternatives, would have a minor beneficial impact to land use if management could be provided that is consistent with Reclamation's goals and objectives for the protection of both natural and recreation resources at the reservoir.	The proposals that were previously discussed under Alternative A, and which would have a negligible or beneficial impact on land use, are also part of Alternative B. For Alternative B however, there are additional proposals that go beyond each of the proposals in Alternative A in order to protect natural, cultural, and recreation resources at the reservoir. Cooperation among Reclamation, other applicable agencies, and adjacent private landowners for the establishment of BMPs for offsite (non-Reclamation land) activities would result in minor potential beneficial impacts to land use by avoiding indirect impacts to land use such as erosion, sedimentation, and decreased water quality. However, it is unlikely that other applicable agencies and adjacent private landowners would participate in this process unless incentives could be identified for them to establish BMPs related to activities on land they manage or own. If these incentives can not be identified, it is likely that no BMPs will be established for non-Reclamation lands resulting in no impacts to land use relative to the current situation. Expansion of the Montour WMA boundary would have a beneficial impact on land use by placing additional land under management of the IDFG for protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat and for provision of a variety of recreational experiences compatible with the goals of the WMA. Alternative B proposes improvement and enhancement of all recreation facilities at the reservoir and places an emphasis on day use and group use areas at several of the parks. This would have an adverse effect on land use only if the improvement and expansion of these facilities could not meet the growing demand for recreation facilities, which is unlikely, resulting in dispersed use around the reservoir. The fact that the proposed expansion would only occur at existing sites would be a minor beneficial impact to land use by concentrating this particular use to land on which it is already occurring.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Socioeconomics	In general, impacts to socioeconomics would be negligible under Alternative A. However, if projected population growth and corresponding recreation use is realized, it could have a minor beneficial impact to the local community, particularly for the town of Emmett, and to a lesser degree to other parts of Gem County due to increased expenditures by visitors passing through Emmett. Cultural and natural resource proposals in Alternative A may create minor, short-term employment opportunities that could result in a negligible beneficial impact to the local economy. Development and implementation of an IPM Plan, protection of riparian areas, and compliance with cultural resource regulations are examples of these types of proposals. These programs propose some degree of maintenance, protection, or enhancement of natural or cultural resources that may require particular services potentially resulting in minor income generated within the local economy.	Impacts to socioeconomics would be minor under Alternative B. The implementation of proposals identified in Alternative B may provide some minor additional employment opportunities in the local community by potentially increasing park staff and outside support service needs. The degree of proposed improvements for existing cultural, natural, and recreation resources and for the provision for public safety is greater in Alternative B than in Alternative A. Thus overall, Alternative B would likely provide a slightly greater beneficial impact on the local economy although it is difficult to accurately project any substantial differences in local economics between the two alternatives. Specifically, improvement and expansion of existing recreation facilities, as proposed in Alternative B, would generate additional funds from parking fees, group picnic reservation fees, and special event fees. Based on the expansion of the Montour WMA boundary and the habitat improvement proposals in Alternative B, it could be expected that consumptive recreation opportunities would increase in the WMA. Because the site is managed by IDFG, which receives funds provided by the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses and tags as well as excise taxes collected from hunting and fishing equipment, additional use would likely generate some additional funds associated with these consumptive recreation activities. There is one agricultural lease and two grazing/agricultural leases on lands within Montour WMA. Agricultural leases could be expanded for planting of more ear corn, but if the three remaining leases were to be discontinued, there could be a minor adverse impact to the leaseholders who would lose lands used to produce income.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Environmental Justice	Statistics have not been compiled on the race or ethnicity of users of Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. It would be logical to assume that the users reflect the makeup of the population of Gem County and nearby Ada (which includes the Boise metropolitan area), Canyon, and Payette counties. Implementation of either of the two alternatives would have no effect to environmental justice concerns. Under either alternative, the campground at Montour Campground and parking access at Black Canyon Park would continue to assess nominal user fees set by Reclamation to offset maintenance costs. Additionally, current reservation fees would still be required for the gazebo or picnic shelter at Wild Rose Park, two group picnic shelters at Black Canyon Park, and a group camping area at Triangle Park. The remainder of recreation facilities at Black Canyon would be free. Triangle Park has been designated for special events in Alternative B and could likely assess fees for future events as well. In either alternative, Reclamation would continue to seek a non-federal public entity managing partner to operate all recreation facilities. If a managing partner is found, it is possible that they could assess nominal fees for use of areas that are currently free or increase fees at those locations that currently assess them. While no minority group would be disproportionately affected, in general, lower income families or individuals would be affected by fees to a greater extent than middle or upper income groups.	Same as Alternative A.

TABLE 2.4-1
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities
Cultural Resources	Identification, protection, and management of cultural resources would continue to occur on a project-specific basis, in response to individual Reclamation-initiated or Reclamation sponsored undertakings that pose a threat to cultural resources. The cultural resources management mode would continue to be predominantly one of reacting, instead of proactively initiating protection from within the cultural resources program itself. Significant cultural sites would be protected because of legal requirements to do so, not through any agency initiative or preference.	Reclamation legally must take into account the effects of its actions upon cultural properties under Alternative A and B. However, Alternative B provides greater opportunity for proactive cultural resource management through increased public awareness and historic designations, not provided under Alternative A. Alternative B does not rely on reactions to Reclamation undertakings to trigger protection of cultural resources. Because actions prescribed under Alternative B are more focused, developed, and tend to confine activities to smaller areas, Alternative B would be more beneficial to cultural resources than Alternative A. Recognizing the old Montour town site as an historic district and eventually nominating it to the National Register would provide the historic district with a legal measure of protection. Although increased access tends to increase abuse of cultural resources, creating areas of focused interpretation and public awareness in the Montour Valley will increase respect and stewardship for these resources and the need to protect them, at the same time confining visitors to controlled spaces, decreasing opportunities for relic collection and vandalism.
Indian Sacred Sites	If sacred sites are located in the area of potential effect of a Reclamation project, their integrity is compromised by actual physical disturbances as well as visual or auditory intrusions resulting in changes in character, feeling, and association of the site. In such cases, their “sacredness” and importance as a religious or sacred site is diminished. As with cultural resources, sacred sites are compromised by vandalism and relic collecting, by land use activities, and recreation and other development.	This alternative is essentially the same as Alternative A. However, because of more focused, controlled, and formalized land use activities, potential impacts to sacred sites under Alternative B would be less than for Alternative A.
Indian Trust Assets	Specific treaty rights for hunting and fishing in this area are not universally understood or accepted. Existing management at Montour WMA would continue, and would affect wildlife and fish as described in the Wildlife and Aquatics sections. There are no direct impacts to the right to hunt, fish, or gather under Alternative A.	There are no direct impacts to the right to hunt, fish, or gather under Alternative B.

3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 is organized by resource topic. Resource topics analyzed in detail include water quality and contaminants, vegetation, wildlife, aquatic resources, threatened and endangered species, recreation and access, land use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, cultural resources, Indian sacred sites, and ITAs. Geology, soils, visual quality, climate and air quality, water resources and hydrology, and topography are not discussed because early in the scoping and analysis process, no issues were identified regarding potential effects to these resources.

The affected environment is addressed first and describes the current conditions for each resource within Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA. This is not a comprehensive discussion of every resource within the RMP Study Area, but rather focuses on those aspects of the environment that were identified as issues during scoping or may be affected by the alternatives.

The potential effects of the alternatives are described next in the environmental consequences section for each resource topic. Under the alternatives subheading, the specific impacts of each of the alternatives are discussed in terms of the actions that would occur and specific information about the potential impact. Only impacts that cannot be fully avoided through the application of best management practices (BMPs), listed in Chapter 5, are described. BMPs are considered to be an integral part of the alternatives.

In the environmental consequences section, the depth of analysis of the alternatives corresponds to the scope and magnitude of the potential environmental impact. This chapter compares the effects of the two alternatives described in Chapter 2:

- Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices
- Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative, is an Action Alternative. Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, describes the future without implementation of this RMP. Under Alternative A, lands would continue to be managed as they have been in the recent past. Some of the actions that would be formally implemented under Alternative B are currently being implemented, but on an ad hoc basis. These actions would continue to be implemented on an ad hoc basis under Alternative A, but without the benefit of a formal plan (the RMP). For the Montour WMA, Alternative A is not simply a continuation of the 1984 Management Plan because several elements of that plan were not implemented; nor would they be in the future because of conflicts with wildlife management goals and lack of a non-Federal public entity partner with whom to cost share. Impacts from the Preferred Alternative are compared to the No Action Alternative in this chapter. Mitigation measures and residual impacts remaining after implementation of mitigation measures are described for each alternative. A summary of impacts for each alternative is provided in Table 2.4-1 at the end of Chapter 2.

3.2 Water Quality and Contaminants

3.2.1 Affected Environment

The original capacity of the Black Canyon Reservoir was 44,800 acre-feet. Sediment deposition in the upper end of the reservoir has reduced the storage capacity by approximately 35 percent and contributes to a rising water table in the Montour Valley. At full pool, the volume is now 29,300 acre-feet.

The Montour WMA, which is located above Black Canyon Reservoir, is a complex of wetlands and ponds adjacent to the Payette River that cover 1.7 square miles (1,105 acres). The primary intent of the riparian areas and wetlands in the Montour WMA is to provide for food, cover, nesting, and resting habitat values for game and non-game species. The wetlands are not intended to improve water quality, although the benefits are inevitable. No wetland monitoring program to identify water quality improvements is in place. The Montour WMA will continue to be managed in compliance with its established intent; with management priorities focused on wildlife and habitat values as they relate to both game and non-game species.

Waterbodies are designated in Idaho to protect water quality for existing or designated uses. The Idaho *Water Quality Standards and Wastewater Treatment Requirements* (IDAPA 58.01.02) identifies Black Canyon Reservoir and the Payette River (from the confluence of the North Fork and South Fork Payette Rivers to Black Canyon Reservoir) as special resource waters and protects them for the following beneficial use classifications: cold water biota, salmonid spawning, primary contact recreation, and domestic water supply.

Black Canyon Reservoir is water quality limited for nutrients, oil or gas, and sediments, and is therefore on Idaho's 303(d) list (IDEQ 1998). Reclamation analyzed water quality samples on the north side of the spillway on Black Canyon Reservoir and below Squaw Creek in June 1997 and June 2000.

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) is in the preliminary stages of developing load assessments for sections of the Payette River above Black Canyon Reservoir. Preliminary load assessments are anticipated by the end of 2003. The establishment of Total Maximum Daily Flows (TMDLs) for this section of the Payette River is scheduled for December 2004. From the Black Canyon Dam to the Snake River, the Payette River is 303(d) listed for nutrients, bacteria, and temperature. This is primarily because of irrigation return flows below the dam. TMDLs for sediment and bacteria on the Lower Payette River were approved by EPA in 2000 (IDEQ 2002).

Existing impacts to water quality include increased sedimentation of the reservoir and suspended sediments from shoreline erosion, oil and gasoline spills and bypassed unburned fuel from motorized boating and PWC; suspended sediments, nutrients and pesticides from agricultural wastewater; and suspended sediment runoff from lands located higher in the watershed.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

3.2.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Implementation of Alternative A would result in minimal adverse impacts to water quality in the near future. However, as the natural resources experience degradation from increased use over time, the impact of no current management plan would result in some adverse impacts to water quality.

Information presented in Sections 3.7 and 3.9, *Recreation* and *Socioeconomics*, respectively, indicates that future recreation demand in the RMP Study Area can be expected to grow at a rate similar to the population increases of Ada and Canyon Counties, (39 percent and 35 percent, respectively) over the 15-year life of the RMP. Increases of these magnitudes are expected to cause more adverse impacts to water quality because of more motorized boats and PWC on the reservoir. This is expected to result in increased shoreline erosion and more oil and gasoline spills and bypassed unburned fuel from motorized boating and PWC.

Suspended sediment entering the reservoir from lands higher in the watershed and outside of the RMP Study Area is expected to continue.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

No formal mitigation measures are proposed for Alternative A because the actions under this alternative are not anticipated to have substantial adverse impacts on water quality in the RMP Study Area. BMPs listed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Commitments*, are applicable under all alternatives. Therefore, residual impacts are the same as those discussed in detail above.

3.2.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Specific actions in Alternative B that would have minor benefits to water quality throughout the RMP Study Area include improved grazing management, exclusion of livestock from riparian areas, and implementing an effective erosion control program in all construction, operations, and maintenance programs. These erosion control actions would protect the RMP Study Area for future uses by minimizing the amount of sediment deposited into the reservoir.

Specific actions in Alternative B that would impact water quality with respect to Montour WMA include using water for wetlands from natural seepage or agricultural wastewater. If agricultural wastewater return flows are used for new wetlands, water returning to the reservoir via groundwater movement would be of higher quality as wetlands provide a natural filter for wastewater. In addition, wetlands will reduce the overall quantity of wastewater return flows through evaporation and infiltration. Maintaining water quality with respect to nutrients is of special importance in the RMP Study Area because recreational activities, such as swimming and fishing, can be impaired by nutrient over-enrichment and eutrophication. Although chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands, including those leased for agricultural purposes, are currently used in a manner that does not adversely affect water quality, minimizing agricultural wastewater in the reservoir would nevertheless benefit water quality.

Specific actions in Alternative B that would contribute additional, minor adverse effects to water quality with respect to Black Canyon Reservoir include developing additional facilities to accommodate expanding day use and group-related activities and provide more fishing access to the river. Improvements or expanded facilities at Cobblestone Park and improvements at Triangle Park would increase the amount of impermeable surfaces. This would in turn increase the amount of stormwater runoff from parking lot contaminants into the reservoir. Implementation of stormwater management designs and construction and operation of BMPs would reduce this adverse effect, but would not eliminate it completely.

The impact of regional population growth on water quality degradation because of shoreline erosion discussed under Alternative A may be slightly less evident under Alternative B given that resource management plans to protect and enhance natural resources would be implemented. However, the adverse effects of more motorized boats and PWC on the reservoir would be the same as Alternative A.

Suspended sediment entering the reservoir from lands higher in the watershed and outside of the RMP Study Area is expected to continue.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

No formal mitigation measures are proposed for Alternative B because the actions under this alternative are not anticipated to have substantial adverse impacts on water quality in the RMP Study Area. BMPs listed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Commitments*, are applicable under all alternatives. Therefore, residual impacts are the same as those discussed in detail above.

3.3 Vegetation

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Vegetation and plant communities within the RMP Study Area have been modified from the original native composition by farming, construction of irrigation projects, recreation, livestock grazing, and other human uses, as well as the shallow groundwater resulting from the reservoir. Native plant communities occurring in the area include the following:

- Riparian and wetland habitat along the Payette River and its tributaries
- Small areas of upland vegetation that have not been converted into agriculture
- Natural and created wetland areas that are maintained or supported by irrigation and drainage systems and shallow groundwater levels

Vegetation species in the RMP Study Area are listed in Table 3.3-1. Details about these species and their role and occurrence in the RMP Study Area are provided in Section 3.3.1.1, *Cover Type*. Potential vegetation management issues for sensitive species are provided in Section 3.3.1.2, *Vegetation Management and Invasive Species.*

TABLE 3.3-1
Occurrence of Vegetation Species in the RMP Study Area

Cover Type and Location	Common Name	Scientific Name	Native	Non-Native	Noxious Weed
Riparian Vegetation—Payette River, Tributaries, and Black Canyon Reservoir Shoreline					
	black cottonwood	*Populus trichocarpa*	X		
	black locust	*Robinia pseudoacacia*		X	
	false indigo	*Amorpha fruiticosa*		X	
	Douglas hawthorn	*Crataegus douglasii*	X		
	netleaf hackberry	*Celtis reticulata*	X		
	peachleaf willow	*Salix amygdaloides*	X		
	sandbar willow	*Salix exigua*	X		
	silver maple	*Acer saccharinum*		X	
	red-osier dogwood	*Cornus stolonifera*	X		
	rose	*Rosa* sp.	X		
Upland Vegetation					
Campgrounds					
	blackberry	*Rubus leucodermis*		X	
	black locust	*Robinia pseudoacacia*		X	
	catalpa	*Capalpa speciosa*		X	

TABLE 3.3-1
Occurrence of Vegetation Species in the RMP Study Area

Cover Type and Location	Common Name	Scientific Name	Native	Non-Native	Noxious Weed
	silver maple	*Acer saccharinum*		X	
	lawn species	Various		X	
	shade trees	Various		X	
Montour WMA					
	balsamroot	*Balsamorhiza sagitatta*	X		
	big sagebrush	*Artemisia tridentata*	X		
	bitterbrush	*Purshia tridentata*	X		
	bluebunch wheatgrass	*Agropyron spicatum/Pseudoregneria spicata*	X		
	common camas	*Camassia quamash*	X		
	downy brome	*Bromus tectorum*		X	
	rabbitbrush	*Chrysothamnus* spp.	X		
	rush skeletonweed	*Chondrilla juncea*			X
	squirreltail	*Sitanion hystrix*	X		
Wetland Species—Montour WMA					
Ponds and natural and constructed wetlands					
	blackberry	*Rubus leucodermis*		X	
	black cottonwood	*Populus trichocarpa*	X		
	blue mustard	*Chorispora tenella*		X	
	bristly foxtail	*Setaria verticillata*		X	
	bulrushes	*Scirpus* spp.	X		
	Canada thistle	*Circium arvense*			X
	cattail	*Typha latifolia*	X		
	chicory	*Chichorium intybus*		X	
	cloaked bulrush	*Scirpus pallidus*	X		
	dogfennel	*Anthemis cotula*		X	
	blue elderberry	*Sambucus cerulea*	X		
	false indigo	*Amorpha fruiticosa*		X	
	golden currant	*Ribes aureum*	X		
	hound's tongue	*Cynolgossum officinale*			X
	orchard grass	*Dactylis glomerata*		X	

TABLE 3.3-1
Occurrence of Vegetation Species in the RMP Study Area

Cover Type and Location	Common Name	Scientific Name	Native	Non-Native	Noxious Weed
	peachleaf willow	*Salix amygdaloides*	X		
	poison hemlock	*Conium maculatum*			X
	purple loosestrife	*Lythrum salicaria*			X
	reed canarygrass	*Phalaris arundinacea*		X	
	rushes (many species)	*Juncus* spp.	X		
	Russian olive	*Elaeagnus angustifolia*		X	
	sandbar willow	*Salix exigua*	X		
	sedges (many species)	*Carex* spp.	X		
	smooth brome	*Bromus inermis*		X	
	smooth scouringrush	*Equisetum laevigatum*	X		
	sowthistle	*Sonchus arvensis*		X	
	spotted knapweed	*Centaurea maculosa*			X
	teasel	*Dipsacus fullonum*		X	
Irrigation and drainage systems					
	watercress	*Rorippa nasturtium aquaticum*	X		
	speedwell	*Veronica americana*	X		
	duck weed	*Lemna* spp.	X		

Source: Compilation of available data by CH2M HILL, 2003.

3.3.1.1 Cover Types

The water level of Black Canyon Reservoir is typically maintained within 0.1 feet of full pool (2497.5 feet) during the irrigation season to ensure full diversion capability. The irrigation season coincides with the growing season for riparian vegetation and the constant full pool has resulted in a fairly consistent band of riparian vegetation along much of the reservoir shoreline. Many species that occur for the Payette River also occur along the reservoir. The dominant riparian species growing along the reservoir shoreline is the exotic false indigo. This species is quite aggressive and in many areas has completely displaced native willows and other native species along the reservoir shoreline. Riparian habitat along the Payette River and its tributaries and islands is dominated by black cottonwood and the non-native black locust and silver maple. False indigo also occurs as an understory species at many locations with black locust. Some areas still have healthy stands of native species. Netleaf hackberry, peachleaf willow and sandbar willow, Douglas hawthorn, red-osier dogwood, and rose are the dominant native shrubs along the river. Vegetation in campgrounds is composed of non-native lawn species and shade trees. Tree species, such as silver maple, black locust, and catalpa, are typical. These trees are often very

large and offer some structural habitat for bird species within the campgrounds. Non-native blackberries are the dominant shrub along the margins of several campgrounds.

Vegetation on the Montour WMA is highly variable depending on past and present land uses, depth to groundwater, and the development of wetlands for waterfowl and other wildlife. The WMA is located on the floodplain of the Payette River and has always been subject to flooding during years of high spring runoff. The Montour WMA was settled and farmed prior to construction of Black Canyon Dam. Construction of the dam resulted in a gradual rise in elevation of yearly and major floods and exacerbated the flooding problem and raised the ground water level under the area.

Some areas of the Montour WMA are farmed in cooperative agreements with local farmers who leave a portion of their crop to provide food for wildlife, especially pheasants and quail (also see Section 3.8, *Land Use*). The rest of the area is managed to provide breeding habitat and permanent winter cover for a variety of wildlife species. The shallow groundwater supports wetland species in many areas. These include native species, such as black cottonwood, sandbar willow, peachleaf willow, smooth scouring rush, and cloaked bulrush, but large areas that have been invaded by reed canarygrass. IDFG, in cooperation with Reclamation, has constructed approximately 47.7 acres of ponds. These wetlands and other wet areas, such as ditches, have cattails, bulrushes and sedges. Noxious weeds, especially purple loosestrife are a problem in these areas because of the presence of surface water.

Montour WMA has some areas where native species, such as elderberry, golden currant, black cottonwood, Douglas hawthorn, dogwood, and willows are thriving, but much of this area is dominated by exotics. Some of these non-native species, such as apple trees, black locust, Russian olive, orchard grass, and smooth brome were probably originally planted and have spread. Others, such as Canada thistle, spotted knapweed, hound's tongue, poison hemlock, rush skeletonweed, teasel, blue mustard, chicory, purple loosestrife, and sowthistle are invaders that are able to spread rapidly. Other invaders that have already become established are reed canarygrass, false indigo, bristly foxtail, downy brome, and dogfennel.

Several species of plants are found mainly along the irrigation and drainage systems, including watercress, speedwell, and duck weed. Upland native vegetation is dominated by big sagebrush, bitterbrush, and rabbitbrush. Upland understory species include bluebunch wheatgrass, squirreltail, and balsamroot. In many areas, especially along roadways, upland areas have been invaded by downy brome and rush skeletonweed.

3.3.1.2 Vegetation Management and Invasive Weeds

Vegetation management issues of concern include the spread of invasive and noxious weeds, the maintenance and enhancement of plant species diversity and quality wildlife habitats, and the protection of sensitive plant species of concern.

The most crucial vegetation management issue is weed suppression. Noxious and other invasive weeds can reduce species diversity both in the plant communities where they invade and in the wildlife species using those communities. Weed treatment issues are particularly challenging on the WMA because of the abundance of water in the area. Herbicide use near water, or in areas where the water table is high and groundwater could be contaminated, is severely restricted and

prohibited for some herbicides. However, herbicides have been the primary method of weed control. Other options, such as mechanical or biological controls, must be used to enhance water-approved herbicides.

Noxious weeds that have been found at Montour and Black Canyon are shown in Table 3.3-2. The highest priority for weed control is to prevent the establishment of new species. Small infestations of weeds such as leafy spurge, spotted knapweed, and whitetop have been successfully controlled or eradicated. Canada thistle and poison hemlock, which thrive in the moist soil conditions at Montour, are the most widespread species. Long term efforts to control these species are beginning to show moderate success, although complete eradication will be a major long-term effort if even feasible.

Recently Eurasian watermilfoil has been found in the three constructed ponds at Montour and is spreading rapidly. This highly invasive aquatic weed has the potential to completely dominate open water areas if left unchecked, and there is much concern of it spreading to the downstream watershed. Chemical control of this weed began in the summer of 2003 and will continue in 2004.

Reclamation has funded Gem County Weed Control through financial assistance agreements to control noxious weeds at Montour and Black Canyon Reservoir for several years. Annual funding has ranged from approximately $3,000 to $10,000 and has increased in recent years. The RMP study area is also within the Upper Payette Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). This organization consists of three county weed control agencies, several state and Federal agencies and private landowners who are working cooperatively to control noxious weeds throughout the upper Payette River watershed. These participating agencies and individuals have provided financial and in-kind assistance for weed control at Montour through donated labor and equipment.

TABLE 3.3-2
Noxious Weeds Found within the RMP Study Area

Common Name	Scientific Name
Canada thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
poison hemlock	*Conium maculatum*
purple loosestrife	*Lythrum salicaria*
spotted knapweed	*Centaurea maculosa*
rush skeletonweed	*Chondrilla juncea*
leafy spurge	*Euphorbia esula*
hoary cress (whitetop)	*Cardaria draba*
Scotch thistle	*Onopordum acanthium*
perennial pepperweed	*Lepidium latifolium*
puncturevine	*Tribulus terrestris*
Eurasian watermilfoil	*Myriophyllum spicatum*
Purple loosestrife	*Lythrum salicaria*

Source: Gem County Weed Control
Judy Ferguson, CH2M HILL, observation in field.

3.3.1.3 Species of Concern

Rare Species

Idaho lists five plant species of concern for Gem County (see Table 3.3-3). These are discussed in the following text along with habitat requirements.

TABLE 3.3-3
Gem County Species of Concern

Common Name	Scientific Name	Global Rank State Rank
Aase's onion	*Allium aaseae*	G3 S3
Tolmie's onion	*Allium tolmiei* var. *persimile*	G4 S3
Cusick's camas	*Camassia cusickii*	G4 S2
shining flatsedge	*Cyperus rivulairs*	G5 S2
slickspot peppergrass	*Lepidium papilliferum*	G2 S2

G = Global rank indicator; denotes rank based on range-wide status
S = State rank indicator; denotes rank based on status within Idaho.
1 = Critically imperiled because of extreme rarity or because some factor of its biology makes it especially vulnerable to extinction (typically 5 or fewer occurrences)
2 = Imperiled because of rarity or because other factors demonstrably make it very vulnerable to extinction (typically 6 to 20 occurrences)
3 = Rare or uncommon but not imperiled (typically 21 to100 occurrences)
4 = Not rare and apparently secure, but with cause for long-term concern (usually more than 100 occurrences)
5 = Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure
U = Unrankable
Q = Indicates uncertainty about taxonomic status

Source: Idaho CDC, http://www2.state.id.us/fishgame/info/cdc/cdc.htm

Aase's Onion

Aase's onion is endemic to southwestern Idaho, where it is restricted to the lower foothills between Boise and Emmett, plus two disjunct populations near Weiser (Mancuso 1995). Aase's onion is restricted to a narrow set of habitat conditions consisting of open, relatively barren, xeric, sandy slopes that range from gentle to very steep. Aspects are usually southerly. This onion is primarily associated with sparsely vegetated bitterbrush or bitterbrush/sagebrush communities.

Two main factors contribute to the serious conservation concern for this onion. One factor is that it has a very limited distribution and restricted habitat. The other is that it is located adjacent to a major population center. Both of these cause concern and subject this species to numerous threats (Moseley and Caicco 1989). Potential habitat for this onion within the Montour and Black Canyon Study Area would be in bitterbrush or sagebrush-bitterbrush upland habitat with sandy soils.

Tolmie's Onion

Tolmie's Onion is found on dry, open ground. It usually occurs on rocky, gravelly, or clay soils. It arises from oval bulbs, which are often clustered. Tolmie's onion is found from southeastern Washington and western Idaho to northeastern California. This variety of Tolmie's onion is a narrow endemic which is found mainly in Adams County, Idaho, in the southern Seven Devils Mountains. There are a few disjunct populations in Gem and Washington Counties on USFS land (Moseley and Mancuso 1990). Potential habitat for Tolmie's onion would be in upland habitat.

Cusick's Camas

This lily occurs on steep, moist slopes and terraces that are spring fed or have slow moving water. It is larger and more robust than common camas and generally has lighter blue flowers. Its distribution includes the Snake River canyon area and tributaries in Adams, Gem and Washington Counties. It also occurs in Baker County, Oregon, and close to the southern rim of Hell's Canyon near McGraw Lookout. This camas is most likely to occur in moist to wet meadow habitat on steep slopes or terraces and in lowland sites along water (Atwood and DeBolt 2001).

Shining Flatsedge

This annual member of the sedge family is a rare obligate wetland plant in the Northwest. It occurs most often in wetlands across the eastern U.S. When it does occur, it is often in wet areas at lower elevations. Jankovsky-Jones (2001) identified this flatsedge on the Montour WMA.

Slickspot Peppergrass

Habitat for slickspot peppergrass consists of openings in sagebrush stands that are protected from wind, but not from sun. The surrounding sagebrush-shrub communities are generally on well-drained soil, but the microsites (openings) in which slickspot peppergrass occur are much higher in clay than the surrounding sites. This species is restricted to "slickspots" with a clay layer that is able to hold water. These small-scale habitat microsites range in size from less than one square meter to approximately 10 square meters (Mancuso and Moseley 1998).

The main distribution range of slickspot peppergrass is the western Snake River Plain and adjacent northern foothills in Payette, Gem, Canyon, Ada, and Elmore counties in Idaho. It occurs in semiarid, sagebrush-steppe ecosystems in this region of southern Idaho on the volcanic plains of both the Snake River Plain and Owyhee Plateau and in adjacent foothills. All occurrences of slickspot peppergrass are on or adjacent to volcanic plateaus underlain by basalt or rhyolite (Moseley 1994).

Reclamation-administered land surrounding Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area contains a relatively narrow fringe of sagebrush-steppe habitat and most of these areas are on relatively steep slopes which are generally poorly suited for slickspot peppergrass. While no specific surveys have been conducted, it is unlikely that slickspot peppergrass occurs within the RMP study area.

Designated Critical Habitat

No designated critical habitats for rare and sensitive plant species occur within the RMP Study Area. One such species, shining flatsedge, is known to occur on the Montour WMA (Jankovsky-Jones 2001). Cusick's camas populations occur on steep moist slopes in this area of Gem County. Such areas are unlikely to occur within the RMP Study Area. No other rare plant species are known to occur within the project area, and none were noted within the project area during limited-scope field visits. However, most of the plant species of concern listed in Section 3.3.1.3 are known to inhabit similar settings to native upland, riparian, and wet meadow habitats within the RMP Study Area.

Rare Plant Communities

The Idaho CDC conducted a study in 2001 to identify rare wetland plant associations with the western Snake River and its major tributaries, including the Payette River (Jankovsky-Jones 2001). Plant associations represent repeating assemblages of plant species that occur in response to complex environmental factors. Table 3.3-4 presents the rare plant community occurrences identified at the Montour WMA.

TABLE 3.3-4
Montour Wildlife Management Area Rare Plant Communities

Community Type and Scientific Name	Common Name and Description	Global Rank*	State Rank*
Salix exigua/barren	coyote willow/barren	G5	S4
Distichlis stricta	interior saltgrass (at least 25% cover of this species)	G5	S4
Carex lanuginosa	woolly sedge (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G3	S2
Carex nebrascensis	Nebraska sedge (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G4	S3
Carex praegracilis	clustered field sedge (this species alone or with other graminoids > 25% cover)	G2, G3, Q	S2
Eleocharis palustris	creeping spikerush (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G5	S3
Juncus balticus	baltic rush (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G5	S5
Typha latifolia	common cattail (this species alone or with *T. angustifolia* with > 50% cover)	G5	S4
Scirpus validus	softstem bulrush (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G4	S2
Populus trichocarpa/rosa woodsii	black cottonwood/wood's rose (> 25% cover of rose)	G4	S3
Salix lasiandra/mesic forb	whiplash willow/mesic forb (mesic forbs include *Euthamia occidentalis*, *Urtica dioica, Verbena hastata, Lycopus asper, Smilacina stellata*, and others)	G?	S2

TABLE 3.3-4
Montour Wildlife Management Area Rare Plant Communities

Community Type and Scientific Name	Common Name and Description	Global Rank*	State Rank*
Eleocharis rostellata	wandering spikerush (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	G2	S2
Juncus effusus	common rush (this is the dominant species with > 25% cover)	GU	SU

Source: Jankovsky-Jones 2001
*See Table 3.3-3 for explanation of global and state rank

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

3.3.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

A major adverse affect on vegetation is likely to result from expected increases in human activity and use within the RMP Study Area. Currently, approximately two-thirds of all visitors to Black Canyon Park are from Ada and Canyon Counties. Population forecasts for these two counties anticipate population increases of 39 percent and 35 percent, respectively, by the year 2015 (Sections 3.7 and 3.9, *Recreation* and *Socioeconomics*). These increases are expected to translate into comparable increases in recreational use of the RMP Study Area under both alternatives.

Direct adverse affects from such sizeable increases in human use would substantially impact vegetation within the RMP Study Area. Potential direct affects include vegetation removal for construction projects designed to increase safe access or to enlarge recreational areas. Other direct affects include increased pedestrian use for a variety of activities, which both damages or kills vegetation and intensifies the translocation of weed seeds around the RMP via clothing, boots, or pets.

Indirect adverse affects from increased human use would be equally detrimental over the long run. Increased levels of human activity, such as walking overland, would increase soil compaction. Soil compaction is detrimental to vegetation because it decreases precipitation infiltration into the soil for plant root uptake and, at the same time, increases precipitation runoff. This increases erosion potential and sediment loads. Compact soils also inhibit natural seed regeneration so that native vegetation is not able to adequately replace itself.

Development and implementation of an IPM Plan and better cooperation among all parties may result in improved management and control efforts directed toward noxious and invasive terrestrial and aquatic weeds compared to current efforts. This is in the face of increasing expansion of noxious weeds, which continue to replace native vegetation. Depending on funding levels, this could have one of the following two effects. A better control program without an increase in funding may hold the line by preventing new infestations and controlling the size of existing infestations. This level of effort may be able to maintain the status quo in terms of future weed infestation and wildlife habitat degradation. A second possibility is that additional funding, combined with the IPM, could begin to control problem weeds and reverse the degradation of

native vegetation by halting weed invasions that are occurring throughout the RMP Study Area. It is not known at this time which of these two paths would be followed under Alternative A.

A proposed Reclamation-wide application system for special events could be used as a tool to determine the areas that receive the highest and most frequent impacts from human use. If permits are granted, some vegetation damage could result from high impact human use during special events. Special events held at the WMA are likely to result in vegetation trampling and the introduction and spread of noxious weeds.

Additional wetlands and ponds would be developed as funding becomes available at Montour WMA. If these are designed for areas that are currently inhabited by exotic species or have bare ground, and if these ponds succeed in increasing native plant diversity, cover, and multiple plant structural levels by replacing areas that currently are weed infested, lack vegetation, or are dominated by reed canarygrass or false indigo, then wetland development would benefit the Montour WMA because they will increase waterfowl and amphibian habitat. If these wetlands are developed in areas that currently have high quality native upland vegetation, populations of sensitive species, productive wetland areas for wildlife, or viable native vegetation as listed in Section 3.3.1.3, wetland and pond developments would have detrimental impacts to vegetation values.

Livestock grazing pressure at Montour WMA is expected to occur at the current rate under this alternative. Although the level of grazing impacts has been reduced in the last few years, some ongoing impact to riparian and wetland vegetation would continue. Livestock grazing pressure, when coupled with the expected increases in human activity, would likely cause further declines in native forb and grass species and may exacerbate the spread of weeds within the WMA.

Under either Alternative A (No Action) or Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) little or no disturbance to sagebrush-steppe vegetation is likely to occur. The sagebrush areas are not areas of high human use and increased visitor use is unlikely to adversely affect sagebrush habitats. Expansion of Black Canyon Park may remove a very small portion of heavily disturbed sagebrush vegetation not suitable for slickspot peppergrass.

Given the low probability that slickspot peppergrass occurs in sagebrush-steppe habitats within the RMP study area, and the lack of impacts to sagebrush-steppe vegetation, under either management alternative, Reclamation has determined that implementation of either Alternative A (No Action) or Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) would not impact slickspot peppergrass.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Reclamation would survey for the presence of microsites for slickspot peppergrass prior to conducting any project that would impact shrub-steppe vegetation. BMPs listed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Commitments*, are applicable under all alternatives. Reclamation will proportionally replace areas and habitat value of all wetland and riparian areas that are directly impacted or degraded by implementation actions. The implementation and adherence to these BMPs make it possible to avoid additional formal mitigation measures for Alternative A because the other actions under this alternative are not anticipated to have substantial adverse impacts on

vegetation resources in the RMP Study Area. Therefore, residual impacts are the same as those discussed in detail above.

3.3.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Although both alternatives would develop and implement an IPM Plan, including addressing invasive aquatic plants, under Alternative B additional funding would be sought and weed control would be raised to a higher priority. If more extensive weed control occurs under this alternative, it would result in positive vegetation management for the RMP Study Area. Implementation of weed control would be planned to avoid negative impacts to native vegetation. Weed management treatment methods would be selected that would preserve native species remaining onsite to the greatest extent possible. For sites wholly occupied by weeds, once weed treatment has successfully removed weeds on the area, the site would be replanted with native vegetation in coordination with IDFG, with non-native species used as appropriate to successfully compete with the exotic species and to meet WMA habitat goals. If native species are used, the seed mixture would include both early and late successional species. All species would be acclimated to Gem County so they have the best potential to hold the area against further invasion. These measures would have positive benefits for the RMP Study Area by controlling the spread of weeds and by restoring low value weed-infested areas back to higher value habitat for IDFG management species like pheasants. These actions help to control re-infestation with weeds and benefit wildlife and the watershed.

Black Canyon and Cobblestone parks would be expanded under Alternative B (assuming a public non-Federal managing partner is found to share costs). Additions to these parks would likely include removing native and exotic riparian and upland vegetation now found on those sites. Such removal or damage to native vegetation would have detrimental impacts to vegetation resources, depending on the species present.

Special events that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would no longer be held on the Montour WMA under this alternative. This change would reduce damage to vegetation within the WMA from trampling and camping and would reduce the potential for weed introduction and spread caused by these activities, thus having a beneficial effect on vegetation resources.

Under this alternative, an additional 25 to 50 acres of ponds and wetlands would be developed at the Montour WMA. This type of development would be similar to what is planned under Alternative A, except that sensitive plants species and wetland communities would be avoided by conducting a field review when developing plans for additional wetland areas and ponds. Additionally, under this alternative, all ponds within the Montour WMA would be monitored and maintained so that invasive plants, such as Eurasian watermilfoil, would more likely be controlled. Because sensitive species and plant communities would be avoided and invasive weeds controlled, wetland and pond development would have fewer potential adverse effects on native vegetation than under Alternative A. They could still be detrimental if placed in high quality uplands or wetland communities with native wetland plants. These ponds/wetlands would have the greatest benefit to vegetation and least damage to native vegetation if they are placed on agriculture land, weed infested sites, or disturbed areas.

In coordination with IDFG, grazing leases on the Montour WMA would be evaluated under this alternative as they come up for renewal. If it is deemed necessary, changes in grazing management would be implemented to comply with WMA goals and objectives and to protect wetland and riparian communities. If carefully implemented and monitored, grazing management changes that are consistent with WMA goals are likely to benefit native vegetation.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Substantial detrimental impacts to native plant resources would be avoided by undertaking the following design measures:

- Reclamation will proportionally replace areas and habitat value of all wetland and riparian areas that are directly impacted or degraded by implementation actions.
- The expansion proposed for Black Canyon Park is along a riparian edge of the reservoir. If the expansion removed false indigo and other weedy species that are invading along the riparian zone and leave native vegetation in place, this expansion would not be as unfavorable to current vegetative resources.
- The expansion proposed for Cobblestone Park is a gravel substrate within the floodplain of the Payette River. This site has an open understory that makes it a target for heavy off-road vehicle use. Although much of it has been invaded by weeds, many areas have native cottonwood and willow. If the proposed expansion for Cobblestone Park were designed to conserve the trees and shrubs onsite, to control weeds, and to limit vehicle use to roadways, the expansion would avoid considerable detrimental impacts to native vegetation.
- Both expansions could further compensate for impacts to vegetation resources if the expanded and disturbed areas were landscaped with native plants instead of with the mix of exotic lawn and tree species that were used for the existing parks.

Residual impacts would be the same as described above.

3.4 Wildlife

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Portions of this affected environment discussion are taken from the 1984 Montour Wildlife/Recreation Area Management Plan (Reclamation 1984), when that information still represented current conditions. This information was supplemented by site visits and personal observations by biologists and discussions with Reclamation and IDFG biologists.

The Payette River Wildlife Management Plan (IDFG undated) provides a list of wildlife species known to occur on the Payette River WMA during one or more seasons of the year. Given its proximity to Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour area, and the similarity of habitats present at the two areas, these same species would be expected to occur in the RMP Study Area. The list includes 198 species of birds, 60 mammals, 16 reptiles, and 7 amphibians.

Specific elements of the RMP related to habitat development and management at Montour will serve as the WMA Management Plan for Reclamation and IDFG. Specific goals are expected to be similar to those of the Payette River Wildlife Management Plan that covers lands and islands along the Payette River below Emmett, Idaho. The overall mission statement reads as follows: "The mission of the Payette River WMA is to provide sustained and enhanced wildlife populations and habitat, especially for waterfowl and upland game birds, and to provide the public with a variety of wildlife-oriented outdoor recreational opportunities."

Wildlife use forested and scrub/shrub riparian communities disproportionately more than any other habitat (Thomas 1979). Thomas reported that 285 of 378 terrestrial species known to occur in the Blue Mountains of northeastern Oregon are either directly dependent on riparian zones or use them more than other habitats. Riparian habitats within the Black Canyon/Montour RMP area are also extremely valuable for wildlife, including neo-tropical migrant birds, raptors, upland game birds, waterfowl, furbearers, mule and whitetail deer, small mammals, and amphibians.

Wildlife present in the RMP Study Area include 13 mammalian predators and fur bearers including river otters in the Payette River. The Payette River WMA Management Plan indicates that 10 species of bats occur in that area. All would be expected to occur in the RMP Study Area. Several of these are considered to be sensitive species by the BLM, and are noted later in this section. The Payette River WMA Management Plan lists 17 species of eagles and hawks and 8 species of owls in the area. Thirty-five species of waterfowl, wading birds, shore birds, and other water-related species have been reported, along with 8 woodpecker species. More than 100 species of migratory songbirds are listed as being present in the Payette River WMA area (IDFG undated). Of particular concern is the presence of introduced bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*) because of their ability to eliminate native amphibians, which are suffering population declines on a global scale (Kiesecker et al 2001). IDFG has indicated that bullfrogs are present in the wetlands at Montour.

Executive Order 13186 defines the responsibilities of Federal agencies to protect migratory birds under the four Migratory Bird Treaties (MBT Conventions) to which the United States is a

signatory. Most birds in North America are considered migratory under one or more of the MBT Conventions. The Executive Order mandates that all Federal agencies cooperate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to increase awareness and protection of the nation's migratory bird resources. Each agency is supposed to have developed an MOU with FWS stating how it intends to cooperate. Reclamation is in the process of finalizing an MOU with FWS, which includes provisions for analyzing Reclamation's effect on migratory birds.

Natural and man-made wetlands in the Montour WMA provide important habitat for many species of wildlife, including shore birds, waterfowl, song birds, and furbearers such as weasels and mink. The wetlands on the west end of the valley are of particular importance to waterfowl. Approximately 170 acres of open ponds and natural wetlands extend in a north-south direction between the Payette River on the west and the agricultural lands on the east. Human use in the immediate vicinity of wetlands is restricted from February 1 to July 1 to protect breeding wildlife and duck broods.

The highest number of waterfowl typically use the agricultural crop lands of Montour during spring migration. Numbers vary from year to year, but 4,000 to 5,000 ducks and geese in the Montour area at this time is not uncommon. Canada geese nest and graze on portions of the higher sites surrounding this wetland and along the Payette River. The Montour area and the nearby Payette River are major producers of Canada geese (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, June 4, 2002). Huntable populations of ring-necked pheasants and California quail occur in the Montour area. Recently, 1,300 to 1,400 pen-raised pheasants have been released annually from the end of October through the end of the year to meet the ever-increasing demand from hunters. Few of these pen-raised pheasants survive the winter. Food plots that are planted to support pheasants also provide food for deer and several species of small mammals and birds.

Past cattle grazing reduced much of the woody and herbaceous vegetation needed for food and residual cover by wildlife at Montour. However, most of the grazing was removed in 2000, allowing more residual herbaceous cover and permanent woody cover to remain, which improves nesting habitat for all non-game species as well as for upland game birds and waterfowl. The grazing that does remain is limited to 35 cow/calf pairs that are on the site from May until mid-September.

The sagebrush-grass community that borders the south side of the valley adds to the vegetation diversity of the area. Many species of wildlife, including mule deer and a variety of birds and mammals, inhabit this area. Mule deer winter on the southern portion of Squaw Butte and most stay north of Black Canyon Reservoir. A small number of migrants from big game units 32 and 32A would move across the Black Canyon Reservoir towards lands to the south each winter. A few deer fall though the ice and drown in the reservoir each year, but this has not been a serious problem (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, June 4, 2002). Several mule deer are killed by vehicles each winter as they attempt to cross Highway 52, which follows the north side of the reservoir. A small resident herd of about 25 whitetail deer are also in the area. A few mountain lions would be expected in the area during the winter when deer are concentrated. The sagebrush-grass community also provides escape cover for pheasants during the fall and winter months. Habitat quality on most of the uplands has been substantially reduced by livestock grazing.

The presence of noxious and invasive weeds has degraded wildlife habitat values in heavily infested portions of wetland and riparian areas as well as on uplands. The potential for additional severe degradation of habitat value is substantial. Noxious and invasive weeds that occur in the RMP area are discussed in Section 3.3, *Vegetation*.

3.4.1.1 Sensitive Species

The **Yellow-billed cuckoo** (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) is a neotropical migrant species that breeds in North America and winters primarily south of the U.S.-Mexico border.

A petition to list this species for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was filed in 1998. The petitioners stated that habitat loss, overgrazing, tamarisk invasion of riparian areas, river management, logging, and pesticides have caused declines in the numbers of yellow-billed cuckoos. The yellow-billed cuckoo was given status as a Candidate species for protection under the ESA. The Idaho CDC lists the status of the yellow-billed cuckoo in Idaho as S1 or critically imperiled. It is also a BLM sensitive species.

Cuckoos favor areas with a dense understory of willow (*Salix* spp.) combined with mature cottonwoods (*Populus* spp.), generally within 100 meters of slow or standing water. They feed on insects, mostly caterpillars, but also beetles, fall webworms, cicadas, and fruit (especially berries). Potentially suitable cuckoo habitat exists on the Montour WMA and on islands in the Payette River. The predominance of false indigo in the riparian zone along the shoreline of much of Black Canyon Reservoir probably precludes yellow-billed cuckoo use of these areas. No surveys have been conducted to determine its status in the area.

Northern goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*) are listed as sensitive species by the USFS and BLM. Hayward and Escano (1989) studied and described northern goshawk nesting habitat in western Montana and northern Idaho.

No goshawks are known to nest in the RMP area. However, they do use forested areas along the reservoir and especially along the Payette River and at Montour during migration and winter. Forested stands provide high quality foraging and roosting habitat and the low levels of human activity during the winter would be attractive to goshawks.

The **ferruginous hawk** (*Buteo regalis*) population is declining throughout its range and this species is listed as sensitive by both the USFS and BLM. Ferruginous hawks are especially sensitive to human disturbance early in the nesting period, when disturbance often results in nest abandonment. They are found in open habitats, such as grassland, shrubsteppe, sagebrush, deserts, saltbush-greasewood shrublands, and outer edges of pinyon-pine and other forests. Ferruginous hawks are not known to nest in the vicinity of the RMP area, but might forage in the Montour area during spring or fall migration or if any pairs nest nearby.

Long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*) were heard at Montour by biologists during spring 2002. It is possible that this species is breeding in the Montour WMA, because they are known to breed on nearby BLM lands. Wet meadows present within the Montour WMA provide high quality foraging habitat for curlews, although curlews also forage in other habitats. This species is listed as sensitive by both the USFS and BLM and has an S3 ranking by the Idaho CDC.

The **spotted frog** (*Rana luteiventris*) population south of the Snake River is considered to be part of the Great Basin Population. This sub-population of the Columbia spotted frog is a candidate

for listing under the Endangered Species Act (Reclamation 1998). Columbia spotted frogs that may occur at Montour are not part of the Candidate Great Basin Population. However, all populations of spotted frogs are believed to be declining because of the loss and degradation of habitat, water diversion, livestock grazing, spring development for livestock, and competition with and predation by exotic species such as largemouth bass and bullfrogs (Reclamation 1998), both of which are present in Montour wetlands. General declines in Western amphibian populations have also been attributed to pathogen outbreaks linked to climate-induced changes in ultraviolet light exposure (Kiesecker et al. 2001).

The Payette River Wildlife Management Plan lists the spotted frog as one of the amphibians that occurs downstream of Black Canyon Dam. However, no field surveys have been conducted to verify this occurrence nor have surveys been conducted on the Montour WMA. The Idaho CDC does not list the spotted frog as occurring in Gem County. Its status in the RMP area is uncertain.

As noted earlier, six species of **bats** that likely occur in the RMP Study Area are considered to be sensitive by the BLM. These species and their state rank by the Idaho CDC are shown in Table 3.4-1.

TABLE 3.4-1
Species of Bats Considered Sensitive by the BLM that Likely Occur in the RMP Study Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	State Rank	Sensitive Species
Long-eared myotis	(*Myotis evotis)*	S3	BLM
Yuma myotis	(*Myotis yumanensis)*	S3	BLM
Small-footed myotis	*(Myotis ciliolabrum)*	S2	BLM
Western pipistrelle	(*Pipistrellus hesperus)*	S1	BLM
Townsend's big-eared bat	(*Corynorhinus townsendii)*	S2	BLM, USFS
Fringed Myotis	(*Myotis thysanodes)*	S3	BLM

S = State rank indicator; denotes rank based on status within Idaho.
1 = Critically imperiled because of extreme rarity or because some factor of its biology makes it especially vulnerable to extinction (typically 5 or fewer occurrences)
2 = Imperiled because of rarity or because other factors demonstrably make it very vulnerable to extinction (typically 6 to 20 occurrences)
3 = Rare or uncommon but not imperiled (typically 21 to100 occurrences)

Source: Idaho Conservation Data Center, http://www2.state.id.us/fishgame/info/cdc/cdc.htm

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

3.4.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Disturbance of wildlife often results in initial displacement and, if the disturbance persists or is somewhat regular, ultimately lower local wildlife population levels in the affected area, especially for more sensitive species. Tolerance of various types of environmental disturbances varies among species and among individuals of the same species. The potential for impact is related to the timing and nature of the disturbance, severity of winter conditions, habitats and species present, physiological status of the animal, hunting pressure, and frequency of the disturbance.

Migratory birds would be both beneficially and aversely affected by actions under Alternative A, depending on the action and the species involved. Most of the actions would have a neutral effect on migratory birds. Changes in cover type to develop wetlands would generally have net beneficial effects on migratory birds, although some individual species would be adversely affected.

The effects of implementation of Alternative A on sensitive species are expected to be mostly neutral or positive. Recent reductions in livestock grazing that would continue under this alternative could potentially benefit several sensitive species. Higher quality riparian areas would provide better potential habitat for cuckoos and higher quality habitat for goshawk prey species. Several species of sensitive bats forage over water and may benefit from higher insect productivity in created wetlands. Long-billed curlews, a sensitive species that often nest in areas of short grass, especially near water (Erlich et al. 1988), might benefit from controlled livestock grazing of upland areas. Conversion of seasonally moist wet meadow communities to emergent wetland/open water ponds could eliminate foraging areas used by long-billed curlews and possibly spotted frogs. Mitigation measures presented at the end of this section would avoid potential impacts on spotted frogs resulting from conversion of wet meadow to emergent wetland/open water pond habitat.

Development and implementation of an IPM Plan and better cooperation between all parties may be expected to result in improved management and control efforts directed toward noxious and invasive terrestrial and aquatic weeds compared to current efforts. This action may partially offset an increasing noxious weed problem, which continues to degrade wildlife habitat quantity and quality. The results of this program depends on funding levels, as described in Section 3.3, *Vegetation*. Future funding levels under Alternative A are not known at this time. It is assumed that revegetation with native species or at least with species that are favorable for wildlife will be an integral part of the IPM. This would have long term benefits for wildlife, which would vary depending on the plant species that are used.

Continued use of the WMA for special events that are incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would be detrimental for wildlife and habitat.

Information presented in Sections 3.7 and 3.9, *Recreation* and *Socioeconomics*, respectively, indicates that future recreation demand in the RMP Study Area can be expected to grow at a rate similar to the population increases of Ada and Canyon counties (39 percent and 35 percent, respectively), over the 15-year life of the RMP. Increases of these magnitudes are expected to cause more disturbance of wildlife, including migratory birds, resulting on lower populations in areas used by recreationists. It is also likely that some direct habitat degradation would occur because of higher levels of use and associated vegetation trampling, which would degrade wildlife habitat value. More visitors would increase the likelihood that more noxious weeds would be introduced and become established, which would also degrade wildlife habitat values. Deer regularly die during the winter along State Highway 52 (SH-52) after being struck by vehicles. An increase in the local human population of the area around the RMP Study Area would result in more traffic on SH-52 and more vehicle deer collisions.

Under Alternative A, additional wetlands and ponds would be developed as funds become available, but there would be no formal plan or goal for development. It is likely that fewer acres

of wetlands would be developed than under Alternative B, resulting in fewer acres of new wetland habitat and lower gains for target management species and fewer potential losses for other species because of changes in habitat types. Any conversion from one type of habitat to another involves gains for species that prefer the new habitat and losses for those that used the replaced habitat. Based on the wetlands that have been developed in the past, new wetlands would likely consist of a fairly high percentage of open water with emergent herbaceous and shrub wetland and riparian vegetation on islands and the shoreline. This type of wetland favors waterfowl and other species that prefer this mix of open water and shoreline habitats including species that nest or forage in tall herbaceous and shrub-dominated wetlands such as red-winged blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), song sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*), and yellow warblers (*Dendroica petechia*). The specific location of new wetlands is not known. If they are constructed in upland areas that have been farmed, fewer, and certainly more common, wildlife species would be adversely affected by the change in cover types. If new wetlands were to be constructed in low lying areas that support seasonally moist wet meadow communities, a variety of migratory and nesting shorebirds such as common snipe (*Galliagno galliagno*), American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), and others would be adversely affected because of small declines in available wet meadow habitat. Reclamation will maintain new and existing wetlands and ponds and the area in and around them within an IPM plan.

Bull frogs, an exotic species, would also be expected to quickly occupy new wetlands on their own. Native amphibians would also occupy these new wetlands over time. However, the presence of bass and bull frogs would substantially reduce the potential habitat value of the new wetlands for native amphibians compared to the potential habitat value if these predators were not present.

Livestock grazing would continue as in the recent past under Alternative A, which is occurring at levels that have been reduced in the last few years. Only a very few wildlife species that prefer short pasture grasses at some times of the year benefit from livestock grazing. These include Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*), which feed on short grasses; killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), which nest in areas with sparse vegetation; and perhaps long-billed curlew (*Numenius americana*), a sensitive species that often nests in areas of short grass, especially near water (Erlich et al. 1988). Livestock grazing is used in some areas of the WMA to maintain short grass for foraging Canada geese. Most wildlife habitat is adversely affected by livestock grazing because of reduced plant species diversity, loss of permanent cover, lack of a herbaceous vegetation layer, reduced survival and recruitment of young riparian plants, and competition for forage with some species (Saab et al. 1995). The recent reductions in livestock grazing levels have allowed some recovery in riparian vegetation on the WMA (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, June 4, 2002).

Agricultural leases would also continue as in the past. These leases generally involve allowing farming on a parcel in exchange for the farmer leaving a small unharvested food plot or assisting in the establishment of permanent cover on formerly farmed lands. These actions are generally intended to improve nesting habitat and provide food for upland game birds, although other wildlife species also benefit from these actions. Seed availability and cost usually dictate the use of non-native species when permanent cover is being established, which reduces potential benefits to a narrower range of wildlife species than if a mix of local native grasses, forbs, and shrubs were planted. The application of herbicides and pesticides on lands leased for agriculture

is regulated by Reclamation to reduce or minimize impacts on wildlife to the greatest extent possible consistent with required farming practices.

Ongoing activities on the WMA that would continue to promote the growth of permanent cover would benefit a variety of wildlife species that require dense vegetation for nesting, escape cover, or foraging. Maintenance of existing wetlands would also benefit a wide range of wildlife species, especially if the success of weed control efforts increases following development and implementation of the IPM Plan.

RMP-related activities associated with recreation sites adjacent to Black Canyon Reservoir that would continue under Alternative A would not cause any additional impacts on wildlife or habitat, including sensitive species. However, as discussed above, expected increases in human use of these sites would have adverse impacts on wildlife.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Where possible new wetlands/open water ponds would be developed in upland areas at Montour WMA. However, new wetlands could also be developed within wet meadows if water sources are more appropriate. No ground disturbing activities shall be undertaken before a field review is conducted to determine the likelihood of occurrence of sensitive species (e.g. spotted frog). If warranted a sensitive species survey would be conducted following established protocols and seasonal requirements. Project implementation and design would be based on the findings of the survey. Where it is possible to place new wetlands in existing uplands, this action would avoid impacts on wildlife that use wet meadows, which is also a valuable habitat type.

Additional wildlife species are likely to become rare over the 15-year time frame of the RMP. Appropriate site clearances following established protocols would also be conducted prior to ground disturbance for other wildlife species that become rare during that period.

3.4.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

The potential adverse effects of implementation of Alternative B on sensitive species are expected to be either the same or less than those described for Alternative A. As in Alternative A, conversion of seasonally moist wet meadow communities to emergent wetland/open water ponds could eliminate foraging areas used by long-billed curlews. The existing MOU between Reclamation and IDFG for managing the WMA would be updated as part of Alternative B. RMP goals related to sensitive species would become part of that MOU, resulting in better protection for and avoidance of impacts to sensitive species.

Development and implementation of an IPM Plan as in Alternative A, combined with a higher priority for weed control under Alternative B, may result in improved management and control efforts directed toward noxious and invasive terrestrial and aquatic weeds compared to Alternative A. Potential additional funding and a higher priority compared to Alternative A would be expected to result in greater success in controlling problem weeds and reversing the general decline in wildlife habitat values compared to Alternative A. As under Alternative A, it is assumed that revegetation with native species or at least with species that are favorable for

wildlife will be an integral part of the IPM Plan. This would have long term benefits for wildlife, which would vary depending on the plant species that are used.

Moving special events primarily to Triangle Park rather than permitting them at Montour unless they are compatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would avoid potential impacts to sensitive and other wildlife species because these species are more likely to occur at the WMA.

Impacts on wildlife that would result from a projected 35 to 39 percent increase in human use of the RMP Study Area over the next 15 years would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Under Alternative B, the WMA boundary would be extended to the west along the south shore of the reservoir to a point opposite the mouth of Squaw Creek. This area has been leased for grazing in the past and current wildlife habitat values are limited. The area does not have a water right, so as funds become available, permanent upland cover would be developed on this area, which would benefit a variety of bird and mammal species. Benefits would accrue for the widest range of species if the future vegetation includes native grasses, forbs, and shrubs.

Twenty-five to 50 acres of additional wetlands and ponds would be developed under Alternative B. The types of beneficial and adverse impacts and the species that would benefit and those that would be adversely affected by this change in cover type would be similar to Alternative A. Compared to Alternative A, additional effort would be placed on controlling weeds and water level fluctuations in wetlands, which would benefit many species of wildlife. Additional efforts would also be placed on avoiding sensitive plant communities, which would benefit associated wildlife species. The problem of introduced aquatic predators preying on native amphibians would be the same as described for Alternative A. Reclamation will maintain new and existing wetlands and ponds and the area in and around them within an IPM plan.

Livestock grazing and agricultural leases would continue under Alternative B but these leases would be reviewed as they expire for conflicts with the management goals of the WMA. New conditions would be added to the leases so that they are consistent with WMA management goals. Potential adverse effects from livestock grazing and agricultural leases would be lower than under Alternative A because of this consistency review and new lease conditions. Also, there would be greater emphasis on eliminating grazing in seasonal wet meadow and riparian areas so that wildlife habitat values could improve, which would benefit many species including numerous migratory birds. Better residual cover in wet meadows, resulting from reduced grazing levels, would benefit long-billed curlews and, if present, spotted frogs. However, even relatively light levels of livestock grazing in wet meadow areas could adversely affect curlews and spotted frogs because of vegetation removal, trampling, and water quality degradation.

Several features of Alternative B would increase non-consumptive recreation opportunities on the WMA and others would foster the dissemination of information about wildlife and wildlife habitat to the public. These actions have mixed effects on wildlife and habitat. More human use of an area like the Montour WMA is generally considered to have adverse affects on wildlife and habitat because of greater levels of wildlife disturbance, vegetation trampling, and weed introduction and spread. Some of these adverse affects of disturbance in parts of the WMA would be partially offset by the extension of the seasonal access closure around wetlands to

protect nesting birds and broods. This closure begins on February 1 and under Alternative B it would be extended to July 31 instead of the current July 1 ending, which would be consistent with the IDFG seasonal closure policy at other WMAs. Increased human use, combined with increased availability of information about wildlife and habitat programs at the WMA, can foster a greater appreciation of actions being undertaken on behalf of wildlife, which can benefit both wildlife and habitat at the WMA. Greater emphasis would be placed on natural resource educational materials and activities under Alternative B, which would benefit wildlife in the long term.

Compared to Alternative A, several management activities on the WMA that would be implemented under Alternative B would promote more growth and maintenance of permanent upland and wetland cover in a variety of locations including along ditches. This would benefit many wildlife species that require dense vegetation near the ground for nesting, escape cover, or foraging. Species such as hawks, owls, and mink that prey on small mammals would benefit indirectly from an improved prey base. Improved water control at existing wetlands to reduce water level fluctuations, would reduce flooding of shoreline nests.

Development of new and expansion of existing facilities at several of the parks around the reservoir would have relatively minor direct impacts on wildlife and habitat. Facility expansion would likely convert areas with various types of permanent cover to landscaped surfaces resulting in minor habitat losses. More and larger facilities would also accommodate more people, resulting in relatively minor increases in wildlife disturbance in the vicinity of the new and expanded facilities. These effects would be relatively minor because habitat values in the vicinity of these facilities is generally low because of the predominance of exotic plants.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Mitigation measures and residual impacts would be the same as described for Alternative A.

3.5 Aquatic Biology

3.5.1 Affected Environment

The Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Study Area fishery consists primarily of resources present in Black Canyon Reservoir. The RMP Study Area also includes resources in the Payette River immediately upstream and downstream of the reservoir and in the lower reach of Squaw Creek, a tributary entering Black Canyon Reservoir from the north.

3.5.1.1 Black Canyon Reservoir

Black Canyon Reservoir is a transition zone from a cold water fishery upstream to a warm water fishery downstream. IDFG (2001) reported that Black Canyon Reservoir supports a "warm water" type fishery, but provides only marginal fish habitat because sand from upstream land disturbances has covered most habitat. IDFG manages the reservoir according to their general management program. This program is applied to water bodies (lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and streams) that are not suited for "wild trout" or "put-and-take trout" management, and has no special regulations. IDFG's management direction for Black Canyon Reservoir from 2001 through 2006 is to monitor fish population species composition and size structure (IDFG 2001).

Game fish species present in Black Canyon Reservoir include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), and bullhead (*Ameiurus* spp.) (IDFG 2001). None of these species are native to Idaho. Research by Zaroban et al. (1999) on the attributes of 132 freshwater fish species occurring in the Pacific Northwest indicates that the game species present in Black Canyon Reservoir have a warm water temperature preference and are water pollution "tolerant." Zaroban et al. (1999) defined pollution "tolerant" species as "fishes that tend to increase in abundance with human disturbances, particularly in relation to increased siltation, turbidity, and water temperature, and lowered concentrations of dissolved oxygen."

The fishery in Black Canyon Reservoir today generally appears similar to that described by IDFG (1986) approximately 15 years ago. In their fisheries management plan for the years 1986 to 1990, IDFG (1986) stated that Black Canyon Reservoir supports a warm water fishery of bass, crappie, and channel catfish. IDFG (1986) also noted that the reservoir provided only marginal habitat for warm water game species, the same as in the most recent assessment (IDFG 2001).

Sediment deposition in Black Canyon Reservoir since the completion of Black Canyon Dam in 1924 has probably had long-term limiting effects on fisheries habitat. Today, sediment fills approximately 35 percent of the reservoir, having reduced reservoir total active storage capacity from approximately 44,800 acre-feet originally to 29,300 acre-feet at present (Reclamation 2003). Most sediment deposition occurs at the upper end of the reservoir, has effectively filled the original river bed in the area, impedes the normal flow of water into the reservoir, and has resulted in a significant extension of the 100-year floodplain at the confluence of the Payette River and Black Canyon Reservoir (Reclamation 1984). IDFG (2001, 1986) continues to report

that Black Canyon Reservoir provides only marginal habitat for warm water game species because of sediment deposition.

3.5.1.2 Montour WMA and Adjacent Payette River

The Montour WMA Guide (IDFG and Reclamation undated) states that long-range plans include developing a warm water fishery for bluegill and largemouth bass in ponds within the WMA. Smallmouth bass are also present in several man-made ponds on the western side of the Montour WMA. The Guide also states that rainbow trout and mountain whitefish can be caught in the Payette River adjacent to Montour.

Results of electrofishing by IDFG during 1975 in Black Canyon Reservoir and the Payette River in the Montour Valley indicated that non-game species are more abundant than game species in these two water bodies (Reid 1975, in Reclamation 1984). A total of eight game species and nine non-game species were collected in the area sampled. Non-game fish comprised approximately 93 percent of the catch (462 fish) during spring, 80 percent of the catch (389 fish) during summer, and 61 percent of the catch (89 fish) during fall. Suckers (*Catostomus* spp.) made up 75 percent or more of the non-game fish collected each season, while carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) comprised no more than 6 percent of the non-game fish collected each season. The most abundant game species collected were brown bullhead (*Ameiurus nebulosus*) during spring, smallmouth bass and bluegill during summer, and black crappie and pumpkinseed (*Lepomis gibbosus*) during fall (Reid 1975, in Reclamation 1984). Game species collected during 1975 are generally similar to game species present today, except for smallmouth bass which are listed in IDFG's current fisheries management plan for the Payette River downstream but not upstream of Black Canyon Dam (IDFG 2001).

3.5.1.3 Squaw Creek

This tributary enters Black Canyon Reservoir from the north and contains rainbow trout and, in its upper reaches, bull trout. IDFG (2001) manages Squaw Creek to maintain native resident stocks of wild rainbow trout (redband trout) and to conserve bull trout. IDFG's management directives for Squaw Creek include inventorying the status and distribution of redband trout, and monitoring the bull trout population present in the upper Squaw Creek drainage (IDFG 2001). Section 3.6, *Threatened and Endangered Species*, provides additional information on bull trout in Squaw Creek.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

3.5.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

The overall effect of Alternative A on fisheries resources in the RMP Study Area would be similar to existing conditions. In Black Canyon Reservoir, this would include the continued presence of a "warm water" fishery dominated by non-game species, the presence of game species such as largemouth and smallmouth bass, black crappie, and bluegill, and management of the reservoir fishery by IDFG according to their general management program. Fish habitat in the reservoir would continue to be marginal and may gradually decline because of slow but continuing sediment deposition associated with upstream land disturbances.

The Montour WMA ponds would continue to provide the same amount of habitat as at present for stocked "cool water" and "warm water" game species, such as bass and perhaps bluegill. Constructed wetlands on the WMA have been stocked with introduced game fish such as smallmouth and largemouth bass to provide recreation opportunities. These species are also likely to occupy new wetlands developed on the WMA, either through stocking by IDFG or through illegal introduction by the public.

Based on the preceding discussion, implementation of actions associated with Alternative A would not be expected to substantially alter the composition or abundance of fish species present in the RMP Study Area compared to existing conditions. Expected increases in RMP Study Area use, anticipated under any scenario because of projected regional population growth and recreation needs, may result in some reservoir shoreline and near-shore habitat degradation from greater numbers of people and boats. This could impact warm water game species typically associated with shallow habitats through increased turbidity levels and perhaps the presence of higher concentrations of oil and gas during periods of heavy reservoir use by the public using motor boats and PWC. This may result in slightly reduced spawning and feeding success by these species. Increased use of the RMP Study Area also may result in increased angler harvest of game fish in the reservoir, river, and stocked Montour WMA ponds. However, as noted previously, these effects would be anticipated under any management scenario because of projected regional population increases and associated recreation needs and would not be limited only to Alternative A.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Future development of new emergent wetlands/open water ponds may be in wet meadow areas because of the location of water sources. No ground disturbing activities would be undertaken before a field review was conducted to determine the likelihood of occurrence of sensitive species (for example, the spotted frog). If warranted, a sensitive species survey would be conducted following established protocols and seasonal requirements. Project implementation and design would be based on the findings of the survey.

3.5.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Fisheries resources in water bodies within the RMP Study Area and the overall effect of Alternative B on those resources would be similar to that described for Alternative A, but with some additional benefits. Riparian habitat quality in the RMP Study Area under Alternative B would be protected and enhanced by active grazing management and/or exclusion of livestock in riparian areas. Potential resultant benefits to aquatic resources would include improved shoreline stability, structure, and ground cover; reduced shoreline erosion, sediment delivery, and turbidity in water bodies; improved overhanging cover and shade; possibly reduced water temperature fluctuations; and improved habitat for terrestrial insects (fish food) that may fall to the water's surface. These potential benefits would be more likely in the narrower upper end of the reservoir and along the river through the WMA than in the wider, lower part of the reservoir.

Two other sets of actions would benefit fisheries resources and the public under Alternative B. The first includes developing an additional 25 to 50 acres of ponds in the Montour WMA that would provide more habitat and increased angling opportunities for stocked warm water game

fish. Implementation of long-term pond maintenance measures directed at managing nuisance plants such as Eurasian watermilfoil (discussed previously) would be implemented, ensuring the proper operation of water control structures, and providing adequate water flow to decrease stagnant water, thus maintaining or improving pond habitat for fish and benefit anglers.

Based on the preceding discussion, implementation of actions associated with Alternative B would not be expected to substantially alter the composition of fish species present in the RMP Study Area compared to existing conditions, but it may result in increased fish abundance. Impacts on fisheries habitat and fish resulting from increased public use and angler harvest associated with regional population growth would be expected under Alternative B, the same as described for Alternative A.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

No formal mitigation measures are proposed for Alternative B because the actions under this alternative are not anticipated to have substantial adverse impacts on fisheries resources in the RMP Study Area. BMPs listed in Chapter 5, *Environmental Commitments*, are applicable under all alternatives. Therefore, residual impacts are the same as those discussed in detail above.

3.6 Threatened and Endangered Species

3.6.1 Affected Environment

3.6.1.1 Plants

The Ute ladies'-tresses orchid (*Spiranthes diluvialis*) is the only Federally protected plant species that may occur in or near the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour area. It typically occupies floodplains and wet meadows with little overhanging shrub or tree canopy. Wetland and riparian habitats such as springs, wet meadows, and point bars within river meanders are potential habitat. Ute ladies'-tresses orchids have been found in southeast Idaho and eastern Washington and may occur in suitable habitats between these locations. The most suitable potential tress habitat would occur in riparian communities along the unimpounded reach of the Payette River and possibly on the floodplain at Montour. Some of the wetlands within the Montour WMA would probably not be considered as potential habitat because these areas only developed after ground water levels rose following construction of Black Canyon Dam. Wetlands that were present before construction of the reservoir and the subsequent rise in groundwater levels might provide suitable habitat for tresses. No searches for this species have been conducted on Reclamation lands.

3.6.1.2 Wildlife

Bald Eagle

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is listed as threatened in Idaho. Populations have expanded dramatically in Idaho and in most of the rest of the lower 48 states in the last 10 years after the use of the pesticide DDT was banned in the United States. Reclamation (1998) and the Idaho CDC indicate that a historic bald eagle nest site located in the Montour WMA has not been used for several years at least. Winter counts along the Payette River from Emmett to Payette have ranged from four to ten in recent years. Reclamation staff report observing as many as 7 bald eagles in the large trees at Black Canyon Park on some winter days. Undoubtedly, some birds also use the Payette River above Black Canyon Reservoir during the winter. The reservoir probably receives only limited winter use because of the poor fishery, general lack of good perch trees except at a few locations, and icing conditions as winter progresses. Eagles that do winter along the river would feed on fish, occasionally waterfowl, and deer killed along Highway 52.

Gray Wolf

The gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) is classified as an experimental non-essential population throughout most of Idaho, including the Black Canyon and Montour area (59 *Federal Register* 60260, November 22, 1994). Wolves typically occupy higher elevation areas during the summer and follow big game animals to lower elevation winter ranges during the winter. Mule deer winter on the southern portion of Squaw Butte and most stay north of Black Canyon Reservoir. A small number of migrants from big game units 32 and 32A will move across the Black Canyon Reservoir towards lands to the south each winter. Wolves could be attracted to the RMP Study Area during severe winters if deer become especially concentrated.

3.6.1.3 Fish

Bull Trout

Columbia River Basin bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) were listed by the FWS as threatened in 1998 (64 *Federal Register* 111, June 10, 1998). In 1999, FWS determined threatened status for all populations of bull trout within the coterminous (lower 48) U.S. (64 *Federal Register* 210, November 1,1999). The FWS proposed the designation of critical habitat and announced the availability of a draft recovery plan for Columbia River Basin bull trout in 2002 (67 *Federal Register* 230, November 29, 2002; FWS 2002a). Proposed critical habitat in the vicinity of the project area includes portions of the Squaw Creek watershed from the confluence of Squaw Creek with the Payette River (Black Canyon Reservoir) upstream. Squaw Creek enters Black Canyon Reservoir from the north.

Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA are located within the proposed boundary of the Payette River Recovery Subunit for bull trout. However, they have not been proposed as critical habitat or identified as bull trout core areas. The bull trout critical habitat subunit (CHSU, the core unit) within the Payette River Recovery Subunit that is nearest the RMP Study Area is the Squaw Creek watershed (FWS 2002a). Within the Squaw Creek CHSU, proposed critical habitat includes 120 miles of streams (28 percent of the total) that provide foraging, migratory, and over-wintering habitat and allow for genetic exchange among bull trout local populations. Black Canyon Reservoir, the Payette River downstream of Black Canyon Reservoir, and the Payette River between Black Canyon Reservoir and the confluence of the North and South Forks of the Payette have not been proposed as bull trout critical habitat or identified as bull trout core areas (FWS 2002a).

Ideal habitat for bull trout includes clean cold waters with large woody debris, undercut banks, boulders, and deep pools (Quigley and Arbelbide 1997). FWS (2002b) stated that bull trout require stable stream channels, clean spawning gravels, complex and diverse cover, unblocked migration routes, and are seldom found in waters warmer than approximately 59 to 64°F. Threats to bull trout include land management practices such as logging, grazing, and road construction, where such practices have degraded habitat through increased sedimentation of spawning gravels, high stream temperatures, and poor water quality (FWS 2002b). Additional threats to bull trout include dams and other barriers (such as impassable culverts) that block adult migrations and access to spawning habitat, and introduced non-native fishes (such as brook trout) that can hybridize with, compete with, and prey on bull trout (FWS 2002b).

The FWS (1998) stated that recent limited surveys indicate bull trout are uncommon in Black Canyon Reservoir. This is not unexpected given the cold, clean, and generally complex habitat requirements of this species as opposed to the warm water, sedimentation, and marginal fish habitat associated with Black Canyon Reservoir (see discussion in Section 3.5, *Aquatic Biology*). The FWS (2002a) noted that "although no major dams prevent bull trout inhabiting the upper portions of the Squaw Creek watershed from entering Black Canyon reservoir, irrigation diversions form barriers to immigrating adults and divert emigrating juveniles into areas with lethal conditions." A map prepared by the IDFG and presented in Reclamation's 1998 Biological Assessment addressing operation and maintenance of their facilities in the Snake River Basin (Reclamation 1998) indicates that bull trout are not present in either the Payette River below the confluence of the North and South Forks (including the Black Canyon and Montour reaches) or

in lower Squaw Creek near the reservoir. In conclusion, it would appear that bull trout may occasionally occur in the RMP area but are not resident there because of the marginal habitat quality.

3.6.2 Environmental Consequences

3.6.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Plants

The Ute ladies'-tresses orchid is the only Federally protected plant species that may occur in or near the RMP Study Area. Reclamation has not developed detailed plans for any future developments, trails, parking areas, new wetlands, other facilities, or water diversion sites. For sites where these facilities and wetlands might be developed, Reclamation would identify those areas that could be potential Ute ladies'-tresses habitat. Areas of potentially suitable habitat in the vicinity of new wetlands where the hydrology could be affected by wetland development would also be identified. Typical potential habitat includes wetland and riparian areas such as springs, wet meadows, and river meanders. Potential habitat may be identified by locating plants that are usually associated with the species or through cover type mapping. In areas of potential habitat, Reclamation would either change the location of a proposed facility or wetland to avoid direct and indirect impacts, including surface disturbance and hydrologic changes, or not construct the facility or wetland. If potential habitat is found near existing or proposed trails, wetlands, or other high-use public recreation areas where the potential for trampling exists, access restrictions would be implemented and enforced. Reclamation would work with FWS to design a system to effectively restrict access without calling attention to the presence of a threatened species. Implementation of these actions would be expected to avoid all potential impacts on the Ute ladies' tresses orchid and potential habitat and result in an ESA determination of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect, from implementation of Alternative A. Reclamation would coordinate with FWS before undertaking actions that would be considered exceptions to this habitat avoidance policy.

Wildlife

Bald Eagle

Bald eagles use the RMP Study Area mostly during the winter, feeding on fish, occasionally waterfowl, and deer killed along Highway 52. None of the RMP actions under Alternative A would affect the quantity or availability of fish or waterfowl as food sources for eagles. The projected increase in recreational use of the area would occur primarily during warmer months when eagles are not present. Traffic volumes are expected to increase on Highway 52 even during the winter because of an increase in the local human population (see Section 3.7, *Recreation*). Higher traffic volumes would likely result in more vehicle/deer collisions along the road. This increase in carrion would provide additional food for scavenging bald eagles, which would be beneficial. However, eagles attracted to a highway to feed on carrion are also subject to being hit by vehicles, so the potential for eagle deaths would also increase, especially for younger, inexperienced birds. Taken as a whole, the ESA determination indicates that changes in the RMP Study Area during the next 15 years may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect, bald eagles. If bald eagles again nest in the RMP Study Area in the future, Reclamation would develop a nest site management plan for the area around the nest.

Gray Wolf

The likelihood of a gray wolf occurring within the RMP Study Area is low, but possible. The greatest chance of an occurrence is during a severe winter when more than a normal number of deer, the wolf's primary potential prey in the RMP Study Area, would be driven to lower elevations by deep mountain and foothills snow. Alternative A would not be expected to have adverse impacts on deer or deer habitat; therefore, no impacts on wolves would be expected as a direct result of actions under Alternative A.

An increase in the local human population of the area around the RMP Study Area would result in more traffic on Highway 52 and more vehicle deer collisions, especially during severe winters. The availability of more dead deer near the highway for scavenging wolves could result in a slightly higher potential for vehicle wolf collisions, although this is considered to be only a remote possibility because of the location of the RMP Study Area. Alternative A would have no effect on wolves but unrelated human population increases in the vicinity of the RMP Study Area would cause an ESA determination of may affect, but would not adversely affect gray wolves.

Fish

Bull Trout

Implementation of actions associated with Alternative A would not extend into or affect Squaw Creek, and would therefore not impact bull trout or bull trout proposed critical habitat present in this drainage. The two resident and three potential local bull trout populations present in Squaw Creek headwater drainages and the larger and possibly migratory bull trout present farther downstream in Squaw Creek would not be directly or indirectly affected by implementation of Alternative A, the same as under existing conditions. As noted in Section 3.6.1, Reclamation's 1998 Biological Assessment on the operation and maintenance of their facilities in the Snake River Basin indicates that bull trout are not present in the Black Canyon Reservoir or Montour reaches of the Payette River or in lower Squaw Creek near the reservoir. Bull trout may occasionally occur in the RMP Study Area but are not resident there because of marginal habitat quality in the reservoir.

Implementation of Alternative A would not result in any of the FWS-defined adverse effects on bull trout or proposed bull trout critical habitat in Squaw Creek.

Conservation Measures and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

All potential impacts to Ute ladies'-tresses habitat would be avoided because of the measures that would be undertaken by Reclamation.

No formal conservation measures are proposed for either the bald eagle or gray wolf because RMP actions are not expected to have any adverse effects on these species.

No formal conservation measures are proposed for bull trout because the actions under this alternative are anticipated to have no adverse effects on bull trout or bull trout proposed critical habitat in or near the RMP Study Area.

3.6.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Plants

Potential impacts to Ute ladies'-tresses orchids would be the same under Alternative B as described for Alternative A. This would result in an ESA determination of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect for Ute ladies'-tresses orchids for Alternative B.

Wildlife

Potential impacts to the bald eagle and gray wolf would be the same under Alternative B as described for Alternative A, resulting in an ESA determination of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect for these species.

Fish

Implementation of actions associated with Alternative B would not adversely impact bull trout or bull trout proposed critical habitat in Squaw Creek, for the same reasons as described for Alternative A. Possible minor benefits to proposed critical habitat near the mouth of Squaw Creek may result from actions directed at protecting and enhancing riparian habitat quality along the reservoir shoreline through active grazing management and/or exclusion of livestock in riparian areas.

Conservation Measures and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

No formal conservation measures are proposed for Alternative B because the actions under this alternative are anticipated to have no adverse effects on Ute ladies'-tresses orchids, the bald eagle, gray wolf, or bull trout or bull trout proposed critical habitat in or near the RMP Study Area. Potential residual impacts would be the same as described for Alternative A.

3.7 Recreation and Access

3.7.1 Affected Environment

Black Canyon Reservoir is located in southwest Idaho, approximately 30 miles northwest of Boise near the town of Emmett in Gem County. Lands owned by Reclamation at Black Canyon Reservoir total approximately 3,900 acres, including approximately 1,100 reservoir surface acres and 12 miles of shoreline. Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA are located in the Payette River valley and offer a wide variety of recreational activities.

There are several other recreation providers in the region that offer flat-water oriented recreational opportunities as well as hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities, including: Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), USFS, and IDFG. Several of the reservoirs located within the Black Canyon vicinity are comparable to Black Canyon Reservoir. However, because Black Canyon Reservoir is operated for irrigation supply, its water level remains high, even in late summer. Most of the other reservoirs experience lower water levels and limited boat access during this time. Two comparable IDFG WMAs are near Black Canyon: Fort Boise and Payette River. Both are managed for waterfowl and upland game birds and are similar in size to Montour WMA (1,300 and 1,200 acres, respectively). In addition to comparable reservoirs and WMAs, there are several other recreation opportunities in the Black Canyon vicinity. The Boise National Forest offers many year-round recreation opportunities and IDFG maintains ten Sportsman Access areas in the Black Canyon vicinity.

3.7.1.1 Recreation Facilities

Developed Recreation Facilities

Overview

Developed recreation facilities are provided by Reclamation in five locations around Black Canyon Reservoir: Black Canyon Park, Cobblestone Park, Montour WMA, Triangle Park, and Wild Rose Park. Public use at Black Canyon Reservoir is concentrated at these facilities; however, dispersed use occurs at numerous locations around the reservoir. As shown in Table 3.7-1, recreation facilities include picnic areas, a campground, courtesy docks, a swimming area, boat launches, restrooms, and various game courts (such as volleyball and horseshoes). No formal hiking or mountain biking trails are provided at Black Canyon Reservoir. Minor trails, particularly for angler shoreline access, exist within developed recreation facilities, but no continuous shoreline trail exists.

In general, the park season at each facility extends from the weekend before Memorial Day through the weekend following Labor Day. The campground at Montour WMA usually remains open a few weeks later than the other facilities to accommodate hunters and anglers. The restrooms at Wild Rose Park are open year-round to accommodate travelers on Highway 52. The hours of operation for each facility is dawn to dusk, with the exception of the restrooms at Wild Rose Park, which remain open 24 hours a day.

TABLE 3.7-1
Facility locations and access at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA

	Cobblestone Park	Wild Rose Park	Black Canyon Park	Triangle Park	Montour Campground	Montour WMA	County Boat Ramp #1	County Boat Ramp #2	County Boat Ramp #3
Acres	8.4	11.3	12.0	6.5	6.0	1,100			
Road Access (Paved/Gravel)	P	P	P	P	P	P	G	G	G
Interior Circulation(Paved/Gravel)	G	P	P	G	P	P/G	G	G	G
Car Parking Spaces (U=undefined)	50(U)	79	106	75(U)	35	5 areas (U)	U	U	U
Boat Trailer/Car Parking	NA	NA	37	U	NA	NA	U	U	U
Boat Ramps (lanes)	NA	NA	2	1	NA	NA	1	1	1
Courtesy Docks	NA	NA	11	4	NA	NA	1	1	1
Picnic Sites – Single Units	9	20	40	9	27[/1/]	NA	NA	NA	NA
Group Picnic Shelters	NA	1	2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Trails/Paths	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Volleyball Areas	no	no	2	1	1	no	no	no	no
Horseshoe Pits	no	no	1	1	1	no	no	no	no
Information/Interpretation Signage	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no
Separate (buoyed) Swimming Area	0	0	1	0	NA	NA	0	0	0
Campsites - Single Units	NA	NA	NA	NA	17	NA	NA	NA	NA
Flush Restrooms	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vault Restrooms	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0
Potable Water	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Electrical Hookups	NA	NA	NA	NA	no	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dump Stations	NA	NA	NA	NA	yes	NA	NA	NA	NA
Maintenance/Storage Facilities	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no

Source: Reclamation and EDAW, 2002, 2003.
[/1/] Picnic sites at Montour Campground include 17 sites associated with campsites and 10 other sites.

Facilities

Black Canyon Park. Black Canyon Park is a 12-acre site located approximately 0.5 miles upstream of Black Canyon Dam. The park is situated at the edge of and overlooking the reservoir on a gentle slope with large grassy areas and numerous shade trees. Entrance to the site is

controlled by an automated gate at which a $2 per vehicle day use fee is collected (fee amount in 2004). Currently, Black Canyon Park is the only day use facility at Black Canyon Reservoir with a day use fee. The gate can be opened with a code by visitors with season passes or reservations for one of the group picnic shelters.

A $1 million renovation at Black Canyon Park was completed in 1993. Improvements included a new boat ramp and docks, roads and parking areas, two restroom buildings, two group picnic shelters, new picnic tables, a renovated irrigation system, landscaping, and lawn areas. The site currently provides individual picnic tables, two group picnic shelters, an unsupervised swimming beach, internal asphalt trails, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, five tie-up docks, and a boat launch. The accessible picnic sites are located along the asphalt walkway that roughly parallels the shoreline. The boat launch has a concrete ramp with two lanes as well as two tie-up docks. The five additional tie-up docks are adjacent to the swimming area. The group picnic shelters are available for rent for $125/day (fee amount in 2004). Each shelter has electric power and can accommodate approximately 50 people. There are two restroom buildings at this site along with potable water. Each restroom building provides two toilets. There are 143 parking spaces, including eight accessible spaces, provided throughout the site in four separate areas.

An approximately 2,300 square foot maintenance and office building, constructed along with the park renovations in 1993, is located at the eastern edge of the park. The building is accessed via a gated maintenance road directly east of the park entrance. Currently, five employees work in the building. The building has six parking spaces, including one accessible space, and an enclosed maintenance yard.

Black Canyon Park is the only major location providing the combination of a park environment on the reservoir shore, swimming, and boating access to reservoir waters. As a result, Black Canyon Park receives the most intensive use and is most subject to crowding. During peak periods, the parking lots fill by mid-day and either: (1) visitors begin parking along the highway and walking into the park; or (2) boaters launch from, and end up parking at one of the ramps along Highway 52. These conditions raise highway safety concerns as well as illustrating capacity problems.

Currently, the park is closed during the spring and fall; this limits use and may increase demand at other parks and facilities. Also, during the season when the park is open, some users have suggested that it is not open early enough in the morning or late enough in the evening to properly meet demand.

Cobblestone Park. Cobblestone Park is a 8.4-acre site located downstream from Black Canyon Dam across the reservoir from Wild Rose Park. The park is accessed from a county road with a manually operated gate. This site consists primarily of a large grassy area with shade trees, picnic tables, a gravel parking area, and an accessible single vault toilet. There is also a storage shed in the parking area that is currently empty. Potable water is available at this site. During the park season, a park host resides at the park providing oversight of the park and information to visitors. This site is primarily used as an angler access site for bank fishing.

In 2001, renovations were completed that included a new grass area and installation of landscape irrigation. An accessible paved parking pad was installed at Cobblestone in 2002.

Adjacent to Cobblestone Park, a dirt road leads to a large, underutilized area along the Payette River. This area is state owned, and is used by anglers for bank fishing and could be the focus of additional facility and/or activity development. However, this area is in the floodplain and is covered with water during rare and extreme spring flood events.

Another aspect of Cobblestone Park is its proximity to the Thunder Mountain Line railroad. The Thunder Mountain Line uses the railroad alignment/right-of-way that passes through the RMP Study Area, including the south shore area of the reservoir and the southern portion of Montour WMA. Cobblestone Park is currently a stopping and gathering point for the theme rides offered by the railroad.

Wild Rose Park. Wild Rose Park is a 11.3-acre site located just downstream of Black Canyon Dam. The park is located at the site of the construction camp used while Black Canyon Dam was being built. The park is situated at the edge of and overlooking the river on a gentle slope with large grassy areas and numerous shade trees. There is also a large undeveloped area adjacent to the river that is popular for bank fishing.

Wild Rose Park was originally called Dam Park North; however, it was renamed Wild Rose Park in the spring of 1994 after a significant renovation. These renovations included new roads and parking areas, a new irrigation system, new picnic sites, internal paths, a restroom and associated septic system, a decorative stone wall, a gazebo, group picnic shelter, landscaping, and lawn areas. In addition, a new well was drilled for the use by the Black Canyon Dam facility and Wild Rose Park.

Wild Rose Park currently provides individual picnic tables, a gazebo, and a group picnic shelter. It has also traditionally served as a rest stop along the highway with travelers utilizing the restrooms and the "pet potty area." The restrooms at Wild Rose Park are kept open year-round, primarily because of the park's role as a rest stop for highway travelers. The group picnic shelter and gazebo are each available for rent for $125 per day (fee amount in 2004). The shelter has electric power and can accommodate approximately 50 people. The gazebo is popular for weddings as it is located in a picturesque spot under mature shade trees overlooking the river. Wedding receptions, along with group picnics and family reunions, are often held in the group shelter. One restroom building at this site provides a total of four toilets. There are 98 parking spaces, including two accessible spaces.

Triangle Park. Triangle Park is a 6.5-acre site located approximately 1.0 mile upstream of Black Canyon Dam. This site is more rustic than the other three facilities in both feel and in the type of amenities provided. This site has unique stone features built by the Youth Conservation Corps. The site provides individual picnic tables, a gravel parking area, vault toilets, a covered overlook, and a boat launch. Group camping is allowed at this site on a reservation basis only (Personal Communication, Kathy Mondor, August 2002). The boat launch has a concrete ramp with one lane as well as two tie-up docks. There is no water or electricity at the park.

Generally, the park is underutilized, because (at least in part) it does not have paved parking, water, or electric power, and it is in an area of the reservoir that has been subject to high levels of sedimentation. Sediment build-up is a particular problem right off the boat ramp, limiting the type and number of boats that can use the ramp and causing problems with boats running aground.

Montour Wildlife Management Area. Historically, the Montour WMA was the location of the small valley town of Montour. After the completion of Black Canyon Dam in 1924, sediment began filling the upper end of Black Canyon Reservoir triggering a series of flood events in the river's floodplain, including Montour. After several attempts to mitigate the floods, Reclamation purchased the land within the 100-year floodplain in 1976 and designated the area as Montour WMA. IDFG and Reclamation entered into a cooperative agreement in 1983 to manage the 1,100-acre area to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and to provide a variety of recreation experiences. Montour WMA is a designated wildlife viewing site in the official Idaho Wildlife Viewing Guide.

The Montour WMA Management Plan (Montour WMA Plan) was completed in 1984 to provide a guide for the orderly, coordinated development and management of the land and water resources of the Montour WMA for optimum public benefit (Reclamation 1984). The Montour WMA Plan called for three types of land use within the Montour WMA: recreation, wildlife enhancement, and agricultural production and pasture. To date, these are the only land uses within the Montour WMA, although only a portion of the development directives outlined in the Montour WMA Plan have been implemented. One exception is a single private residence remaining from the historic Montour town site, referred to as the Palmer House. The Montour WMA Plan laid out a phased conceptual plan for recreation development including a campground, picnic area, and bridle and interpretive trails.

Montour WMA consists of two somewhat distinct areas: a large complex of riparian vegetation, natural and constructed wetlands, and agricultural land managed for waterfowl and upland game bird habitat, and an area with a developed campground and many of the foundations from the historic Montour town site. The primary objectives of the Montour WMA were to provide habitat for waterfowl and upland game and to provide game bird hunting and other wildlife-related recreation opportunities (IDFG undated). Waterfowl habitat has been improved by the installation of nesting boxes and constructed wetlands. Upland game habitat is also provided by standing corn or other grains managed through farming and grazing lease agreements.

The Montour Campground consists of 17 individual sites each with asphalt parking spur, picnic table, and cooking grill. The parking spurs can accommodate smaller recreational vehicles (RVs) or trailers; however, RV hook-ups are not currently provided. Utilities include a restroom with vault toilets, water faucets throughout the site, and an RV dump station. Non-chlorinated water for public use is provided from an on-site well. Three large fire pits are available at the campground.

Activities outside the campground at Montour WMA include fishing, hunting, hiking, and wildlife observation. Waterfowl and upland game bird hunting are the most popular activities at Montour WMA, followed by fishing, wildlife observation and hiking, and big game hunting (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, IDFG, September 2002). Within Montour WMA there are several unofficial trails. Designated interpretive and bridle trails proposed in the 1984 Montour WMA Plan were not implemented. Unofficial trails are located predominantly along the Payette River and around Twin Ponds and are most likely used by anglers and hunters. The gravel roads in Montour WMA are also used by hikers and equestrians as an unofficial trail system. In addition, an area within the WMA adjacent to the bridge over the Payette River is used as a put-in site by kayaks and canoeists.

Recreation impacts on vegetation and wildlife resources are a concern at Montour WMA. IDFG specifically closes key nesting areas to all recreational use each year during nesting season, from February 1 to July 1. The closures are identified via signage and through coordination with user groups. However, enforcement of the closures is difficult and violations are a major problem. Intrusion into nesting areas during the nesting season is one of the most significant concerns, whether as a result of activities of human users or inadequate control of domestic animals. Specific to domestic animals, dog trials that occur at Montour WMA are an allowed use. IDFG has guidelines for proper dog handling in sensitive habitat areas and works with organized groups to manage where the trials are conducted during sensitive times of year; however, casual users present a bigger management challenge (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, September 2002).

General, area-wide user group conflicts and safety concerns are emerging in the Montour WMA between both hunting and general wildlife observation interests, and different types of hunters. Vehicle circulation and parking problems are a related concern. At present, hunters and other users simply park along the roads or at self-selected gathering points. No controls are in place to manage circulation or parking (Personal Communication, Tim Shelton, September 2002).

3.7.1.2 Undeveloped Recreation Sites

Seven dirt or gravel turnouts are located along Highway 52, all of which are located between the road and the north shore of the reservoir. These turnouts provide view access, access to the reservoir, and boat trailer parking. Boat ramps and small docks are located at three of these turnouts. One of these is west of Black Canyon Park (designated as ramp #1) and two are to the east (designated as ramps #2 and #3). Ramp #2 is just west of Triangle Park, and ramp #3 is approximately one mile east of that park. Each of these ramps is accessed and used via a small turnout area along the highway, and each of them features a small dock for loading and unloading boats. Ramp #1 is the most heavily used by boaters, especially when Black Canyon Park is either closed or full. This ramp is also used by boaters who do not wish to pay the fee at Black Canyon Park or who simply want a less formal place to stage their boating activities. The other ramps are less busy, but are popular with PWC users because of their location adjacent to the reservoir (i.e., where sedimentation is an issue of concern to power boaters).

Use of these ramps can cause both highway safety and general traffic circulation problems. As noted above, the ramps are served only by small, unmarked turnouts along the highway. When these sites are busy, the turnouts fill rapidly with parked vehicles and trailers, and users begin to park along the highway after launching their boats. This occurs predominantly at Ramp #1 because it is a focus for overflow when Black Canyon Park is full, but drop-off and parking safety can also be a concern at Ramp #2.

In addition to these boat ramps, several other undeveloped dirt and gravel access points are used to launch boats along the north shore.

3.7.1.3 Road Access

The primary access to the RMP Study Area is State Highway 52 (SH-52), which runs east and west and parallels the north side of Black Canyon Reservoir for approximately 5 miles. SH-52 leaves the shoreline west of Squaw Creek and runs east another 2 miles to its junction with Old

Montour Road. The highway has no traffic lights and no stop signs along this stretch. This major arterial is a 2-way, 2-lane road. It has a paved asphalt surface with 11- to 18-foot wide lanes and 2- to 7-foot wide gravel shoulders. The speed limit is generally posted as 55 mph, although there are several locations where it is reduced to recommended speeds of either 50, 45, or 35 mph because of tight curves, especially near Triangle Park (Personal Communication, Gail Newlun, May 15, 2002).

SH-52 connects Reclamation's five recreation areas. Three of the recreation areas, Wild Rose Park, Black Canyon Park, and Triangle Park, have entrances directly off of SH-52. The other two, Montour WMA campground and Cobblestone Park, can each be accessed from separate spur roads off of SH-52.

Seven dirt or gravel turnouts are located along SH-52, all of which are located between the road and the reservoir. These turnouts provide view access, access to the reservoir at three separate boat launches, and boat trailer parking. During peak season weekends and holidays at the reservoir, the use of these highway turnouts often becomes a serious safety hazard. To access boat ramps at these turnouts during peak-use times, drivers must frequently turn around, stop, or back up on the highway to maneuver among the vehicles and trailers haphazardly parked in these turnouts. This stretch of SH-52 is used not only by visitors to the reservoir, but also by residential traffic, utility vehicles, and logging trucks. The road gets peak usage on weekends and holidays during summer months. Data collected by ITD in 2000 indicate that the Average Daily Trip (ADT) count for vehicles on SH-52 decreases from west to east near the reservoir. The ADT count equaled 1,800 between Idaho Boulevard and the dam (3 miles), 1,600 between the dam and the Old Montour Road turnoff (7 miles), and 1,100 between the Old Montour Road turnoff and SH-55 at Horseshoe Bend (9 miles) (ITD 2000).

The Gem County Sheriff responded to 29 motor vehicle accidents on SH-52 between mile marker 37 (Plaza Road) and mile marker 44 (east of Old Montour Road) from January 1996 through June 2002. Table 3.7-2 shows that the number of accidents along this section of highway has either remained constant or increased each year since 1997.

TABLE 3.7-2
Motor Vehicle Accidents in the Vicinity of Black Canyon Reservoir

Year	Number of Motor Vehicle Accidents
1996	4
1997	2
1998	2
1999	4
2000	4
2001	5
2002 (January – June)	8

Source: Gem County Sheriff's Department, 2002

In addition to SH-52, a few additional roads exist within or adjacent to Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir. Wild Rose Park and Black Canyon Park are accessed by paved roads off of the highway to parking and other facilities within the park. The paved access roads are typically two lanes wide and have gravel shoulders. Triangle Park is accessed by a two lane

dirt/gravel road off of SH-52. These access roads to and within the parks are owned and maintained by Reclamation.

Reclamation has designated parking areas at four of the five recreation areas associated with Black Canyon Reservoir. There are 143 paved parking spots at Black Canyon Park, 98 paved parking spots at Wild Rose Park, approximately 100 gravel parking spots at Triangle Park, and approximately 50 gravel parking spots at upper Cobblestone Park. Parking off of the pavement at Black Canyon and Wild Rose parks is prohibited and enforced by towing. A considerable amount of parking occurs along Hwy 52 when lots become full at these recreation areas during busy summer weekends.

Cobblestone Park, directly across the river from Wild Rose Park, can be accessed from SH-52 using Old Dam Road located west of the reservoir and downstream of the dam. Old Dam Road is gravel and is owned and maintained by Gem County. This road is typically 32 feet wide and has shoulders except where it runs along the hillside (Personal Communication, Francie Bassett, May 15, 2002). No significant maintenance or operation issues are associated with this road. County roads in the project area that are gravel are typically re-graded every 10 days to 2 weeks and are plowed as needed in the winter (Personal Communication, Dennis Pulley, May 15, 2002).

Access to the Montour WMA is available by turning south at the junction with the Ola Highway. The Montour WMA is east of the reservoir, one mile south of SH-52 on Old Montour Road. A series of gravel roads are located within the WMA, remnants of the street grid of the old town of Montour. These roads now provide access for recreation activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping, as well as maintenance and management activities and access to one residence within the WMA. Five parking areas are available to recreationists and hunters in the WMA. The campground near the old Montour town site has individual parking spots at each campsite. Roads in the WMA are gravel and typically 32 feet wide. Roads within the WMA are owned by Gem County and maintained by the Gem County Road and Bridge Department (Personal Communication, Francie Bassett, May 15, 2002). No significant maintenance or operation issues are associated with this road except that there is infrequent flooding that periodically covers roads within Montour WMA (Personal Communication, Dennis Pulley, May 15, 2002). Secondary access to the WMA is available on the south side of the reservoir on Shalerock Road.

3.7.1.4 Trails

Few trails are available within or near recreation areas at Black Canyon Reservoir, with the exception of the Montour WMA. Hikers have forged a few “unofficial” trails adjacent to the parks, but there are no official trail routes outside the parks. Trail use is generally limited to people accessing the parks and shorelines from SH-52. Several unofficial trails are in use within Montour WMA. Designated trails proposed in the 1984 Master Plan for Montour were never implemented because of the lack of a cost-share partner. Unofficial trails are located predominantly along the Payette River and around Twin Ponds and are most likely used by fisherman, hunters, and bird watchers. The gravel roads in Montour are also used by hikers and equestrians as an unofficial trail system.

3.7.1.5 Visitor Origin and Activities

In 2002, park staff at Black Canyon Park conducted instantaneous counts of vehicles and park visitors on 11 different days during August and September. Because of limited resources, Black Canyon Park was the only facility at which instantaneous counts were conducted. Although limited in scope, these counts provide useful information regarding visitor origin and the types of activities in which visitors participate. Given that Black Canyon Park is the busiest of the five facilities at the reservoir, these results may be representative of the visitor origin at the other facilities. Since each facility provides different recreation opportunities and experience levels, the types of activities participated in at each site likely vary somewhat from those at Black Canyon Park.

Visitor origin was determined by noting the county of origin on license plates during the instantaneous counts of vehicles and vehicles with trailers. As shown in Table 3.7-3, nearly half of all visitors to Black Canyon Park were from Ada County. This figure suggests that the park serves as a popular recreation destination for residents of the Boise metropolitan area. Most of the remainder of visitors were from Gem County and the adjacent counties of Canyon and Payette. In addition, a number of visitors were from the state of Oregon which is approximately 30 miles west of Black Canyon Reservoir and easily accessed by Highway 52 and Interstate 84.

TABLE 3.7-3
Origin of visitors to Black Canyon Park

Idaho Counties	Percent
Ada County	46 percent
Canyon County	19 percent
Gem County	11 percent
Payette County	10 percent
Washington County	2 percent
Boise County	2 percent
Other[1]	3 percent
Other States	
Oregon	5 percent
Other[2]	2 percent
Total	100 percent

[1]Other counties include Bannock, Owyhee, Elmore, Owyhee, Valley, and Nez Perce.

[2]Other states include California, Utah, and Washington.

Source: Reclamation, EDAW, Inc. 2002

Instantaneous counts were also taken of visitors while they were participating in different recreation activities. Table 3.7-4 shows all of the types of recreation activities visitors participated in while visiting Black Canyon Park. The most common activity at Black Canyon Park appears to be picnicking. As noted in Table 3.7-4, other popular activities include power boating/waterskiing and swimming/sunbathing. While nearly half of the park visitors participated in picnicking, this wide range of activities indicates that the park provides numerous outdoor recreation opportunities.

TABLE 3.7-4
Activities participated in at Black Canyon Park

Activity	Percent participating
Picnicking	48
Power boating/Waterskiing[1]	29
Swimming/Sunbathing	13
Volleyball	4
PWC use	3
Bank fishing	1
Boat fishing	1
Other[2]	1
Total	100

[1]Power boating/waterskiing percentage based on counts of individual boats and an assumption of 5 people per boat.

[2]Other activities include birdwatching, horseshoes, canoeing/kayaking, windsurfing, and sailing.

Source: Reclamation, EDAW, Inc., 2002

3.7.1.6 Current Recreation Activities

Water-Based Activities

Water-based recreation activities in the RMP Study Area include fishing, boating, waterskiing, PWC use, and swimming.

Fishing is a popular activity throughout the Black Canyon Study Area. The primary fish species sought by anglers at Black Canyon Reservoir are smallmouth bass, rainbow trout, crappie, white fish, bullhead and channel catfish, while the primary fish species found within Montour WMA are largemouth bass and rainbow trout (see Section 3.5, *Aquatic Biology*). Both bank fishing and fishing from a boat occur at Black Canyon. IDFG is responsible for issuing permits and regulating fishing activities at Black Canyon, as well as ensuring compliance with IDFG regulations.

Motorized boats are the principle means to access Black Canyon Reservoir. Motorboats support activities such as waterskiing, fishing, and power boating. Presently, there are no limitations on the number of motorized boats allowed on the reservoir and there are no posted speed limitations; however, motorized boats must operate in a clockwise direction. Black Canyon has also experienced an increase in the use of PWC. User conflicts can occur when PWC users disrupt fishing activities and cause safety concerns when they jump boat wakes or pass too close to other boaters.

Swimming is also a popular activity at the reservoir although there is only one swimming area, at Black Canyon Park. None of the recreation areas offer any lifeguard services to facilitate this activity.

Land-Based Activities

Land-based recreation activities in the RMP Study Area include camping, picnicking, hunting, wildlife observation, and informal hiking and unauthorized ORV use.

Currently, camping occurs primarily in the only developed campground in the RMP Study Area, Montour Campground. Camping is limited to no more than 14 days within any 30-day period. Limited group camping occurs at Triangle Park. Camping at Triangle Park is limited to no more than one night and is by reservation only. Dispersed camping is also becoming a concern around Black Canyon Reservoir. Areas most often used at present include Squaw Creek and highway Ramp #3. However, none of these areas are currently posted as no camping zones. Picnicking occurs at all four of the developed recreation facilities at both individual picnic sites and group picnic shelters.

Hunting occurs mainly in the Montour WMA. Primary species sought by hunters include upland birds such as pheasants, gray partridge, and California quail as well as a variety of waterfowl. Natural pheasant populations are supplemented with the release of game farm pheasants as part of the IDFG Pheasant Stocking Program. To hunt pheasants at Montour WMA, hunters must purchase a WMA permit from IDFG in addition to other required license, tag, and permit fees. In general, pheasants are released twice a week throughout the hunting season. In 2001, 764 hunters purchased a WMA permit for Montour WMA. That same year, 1,180 pheasants were released at Montour WMA with a harvest of 1,021 (IDFG 2002a). This figure represents an 87 percent harvest ratio. In comparison, Fort Boise WMA and Payette River WMA had 83 percent and 58 percent harvest ratios, respectively (IDFG 2002a). Bird hunting is permitted over the entire area, with the exception of a safety zone established around the campground and historic Montour town site. IDFG is responsible for issuing permits and regulating hunting activities at Montour WMA, as well as ensuring compliance with IDFG regulations throughout the RMP Study Area. In addition to hunting, random shooting and target practice occur in the RMP Study Area as a whole.

Montour WMA offers the opportunity to view a wide range of migratory and resident birds. Montour WMA is a designated wildlife viewing site in the official Idaho Wildlife Viewing Guide.

There are few trails within or near recreation areas at Black Canyon Reservoir. Hikers have forged a few “unofficial” trails adjacent to the parks but there are no official trail routes outside the parks. Trail use is generally limited to people accessing the parks and shorelines from Highway 52. The gravel roads in Montour are used by hikers and equestrians as an unofficial trail system.

All Reclamation lands, agency-wide, are formally closed to ORV use unless specifically opened as per 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 420. At Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA all lands are closed; however, unauthorized ORV use frequently occurs at Montour WMA.

Special Events

Specific areas of Black Canyon Reservoir are available for group use for events such as reunions, weddings, and large picnics. Five areas are available for reservation: the gazebo and picnic

shelter at Wild Rose Park, two picnic shelters at Black Canyon Park, an area of Triangle Park for group camping, and the Montour WMA near the historic town site. Use of these areas requires a reservation made through park staff and payment of a $125/day rental fee for each facility (fee amount in 2004).

Large, annual events are also held at Black Canyon Reservoir. For example, in 2002 the Boise Aeros Multisport Club used Black Canyon Park for the Emmett Triathlon. In addition, Reclamation, along with several other agencies, sponsors an annual event called Catch a Special Thrill. This event, held at Black Canyon Park, involves taking children with disabilities and terminal illnesses out in boats to go fishing.

In general, large special events require a Special Use Permit that has to be reviewed and approved by the Area Manager. Special events also require payment of an administrative fee and the rental fee of any facilities required for the event (e.g. a group picnic shelter). The cost of the permit varies depending upon the number of people participating in the event and the number of facilities required for the event.

3.7.1.7 Recreation Management

The overall management and maintenance of recreation at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA is carried out by Reclamation with assistance from Gem County and IDFG. Except for a short period of time in the mid-1990's, Reclamation has been the primary agency responsible for managing and maintaining all of the recreation areas at Black Canyon and Montour. Currently, Reclamation employs a full-time Recreation Maintenance Worker along with five summer seasonal maintenance workers to maintain the five recreation areas.

Reclamation has previously attempted to transfer management to Gem County Parks for the five recreation areas but has been unable to reach an agreement because Gem County has, to date, been unable to assume the task. After attempts with two concessionaires, it was found that the revenue generated from user fees at Black Canyon Reservoir was not enough to maintain and operate the facilities while generating a profit. There are currently no contracts between Reclamation and any private concessionaire to provide recreation goods or services at the park.

Each year, the Gem County Sheriff's Department has a specific contract with Reclamation to provide law enforcement services in addition to normal services at Reclamation's lands and recreation areas located at the reservoir and Montour. These contracts provide for patrol of recreation areas during the summer season, as well as funds for equipment. Additionally, the Sheriff provides marine patrol service on the reservoir from mid-May to mid-September (Reclamation 2002). The Sheriff is the sole provider of law enforcement on the reservoir and they operate out of Black Canyon Park. Also see Section 3.8.1.4, *Law Enforcement* subsection.

A Cooperative Agreement between Reclamation and the Gem County Waterways Commission provides for the maintenance and management of public recreation facilities, such as docks, boat launches, and swimming, fishing, and picnicking areas on the reservoir. According to the agreement, Reclamation has jurisdiction over and responsibility for managing recreation facilities at the reservoir while the Waterways Commission has the capability to obtain grant funding for facilities as well as the expertise to maintain these facilities (Reclamation 1990). This

agreement extends to the roadside boat ramps, which are frequently referred to as "County Ramps." Also see Section 3.8.1.4, *Agreements* subsection.

An MOU between Reclamation and IDFG provides for cooperation between the agencies in managing Montour WMA (Reclamation 1983). Reclamation has issued letters allowing dog trials to occur at Montour WMA, although no permits have been issued. See Section 3.8.1.4, *Agreements* subsection, for a description of the MOU.

3.7.2 Environmental Consequences

3.7.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Implementation of Alternative A would be without the benefit of a management plan resulting in generally negligible impacts to recreation resources in the near future. However, as the natural and recreation resources experience pressure and degradation from increased use over time, the impact of no management plan would likely result in some adverse impacts to recreation resources.

While there is concern that reservoir surface capacity is at or exceeding acceptable levels from a safety standpoint, actions under Alternative A would not likely cause any significant increase in boating or PWC use on the reservoir. As more areas become too shallow for boating, boaters are forced into an ever-smaller reservoir surface area and capacity for general boating uses is decreased.

Specific proposals in Alternative A related to riparian areas, noxious weeds, and water quality and erosion would have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities. The implementation of an IPM Plan would have a minor beneficial impact on recreation users by decreasing the nuisance of mosquitoes to some small degree.

Specific proposals in Alternative A related to public safety would have a minor beneficial impact on recreation as they allow for the safe use of land and water for multiple activities. For example, enforcement of the current no-wake zone near the shore line and circular use regulations increase safety on the reservoir by reducing potential conflicts among various watercraft. Public information proposals would also have a minor beneficial impact to recreation by improving the visitor's knowledge of current Reclamation regulations and existing recreation opportunities.

Allowing special events to take place as they currently do could potentially have a minor adverse impact to recreation if the special event results in crowding and/or conflicts with the general public.

Identifying a managing partner for recreation facilities at the reservoir, as proposed in both alternatives, would likely have a beneficial impact to recreation resources if management could be provided that is consistent with Reclamation's goals and objectives for the adequate maintenance of existing recreation resources.

Allowing access to Reclamation lands according to current policies would have a minor beneficial impact to recreation resources, if enforcement resources are adequate, by minimizing potential conflicts between users (e.g., hikers and hunters). A minor beneficial impact to recreation would result from clearly marking the boundary between Montour WMA and private property, which is proposed in both alternatives. This action would establish visible boundaries between different types of activities and thus minimize potential conflicts that often arise when differing activities occur on adjacent parcels of land.

Several proposals in Alternative A address habitat and wildlife within Montour WMA. Maintenance of natural and constructed wetlands and enforcing seasonal area closures for the protection of waterfowl and other bird nesting areas are examples of these proposals. If funding and staff remains adequate, these actions would have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities.

Alternative A proposes that use of and access to the campground in Montour WMA, the four parks on the reservoir, and highway County boat ramps continues as is currently allowed. This could potentially have an adverse effect on the recreation experience at and adjacent to these sites. If the demand for recreation resources continues to grow as expected, and the existing facilities are not improved or expanded, these sites could experience the effects of overcrowding resulting in decreased visitor safety and enjoyment. On the other hand, maintaining current facility capacity may have an indirect beneficial effect on the recreation experience by effectively limiting the potential increase in reservoir surface crowding that would likely occur with the development of new use and access areas.

Other reasonably foreseeable impacts on recreation resources include continued regional population growth and a likely increase in visitor use. Specifically, this growth would increase the demand for consumptive and non-consumptive recreation activities. These impacts would be evident more quickly under Alternative A since no expansion of recreation facilities and fewer programs to protect and enhance natural resources are proposed.

Regional population growth will have reasonably foreseeable impacts on recreation resources. Section 3.9, *Socioeconomics*, details population projections for various counties in Southwestern Idaho that are near the reservoir. Projected population figures indicate rapid and continuing growth in this area until at least the year 2025. It is important to note that the population of areas where visitors to the RMP Study Area live is expected to grow at a rate higher than the state as a whole. Specifically, over two-thirds of all visitors to Black Canyon Park were from either Ada or Canyon Counties, whose populations are expected to increase by 39 percent and 35 percent, respectively, by 2015.

Increases in recreation demand can be expected to mirror population growth (Cordell 1999). While population projections are less reliable for determining future demand for specific recreation activities, these figures can be useful in determining future overall recreation participation. With this in mind, future recreation demand in the RMP Study Area can be expected to grow at a rate similar to the population increases of Ada and Canyon Counties, (39 percent and 35 percent, respectively). Such increases in recreation use in the RMP Study

Area are particularly relevant given that capacity for general boating uses is expected to decrease because of continuing reservoir sedimentation.

It should be noted that while social capacity (crowding) is frequently studied in outdoor recreation research, a definitive perceived crowding scale (i.e., a standard measurement, methodology, and point at which a site is considered to have exceeded its social capacity) has yet to be commonly accepted. Social capacity is a complex issue that is influenced by multiple factors including recreation setting (developed versus dispersed), ethnicity, and activity type, among other variables. Additionally, empirical studies have shown that a typical inverse relationship does not always exist between perceived crowding and satisfaction with a recreation experience. That is, as perceived crowding increases, it would be expected that satisfaction decreases; however, that is not always the case (Manning 1999). It is nonetheless important to recognize that specific use areas within the RMP Study Area may have unique social capacity standards based on specific conditions at each site and that user satisfaction will likely decrease at some point in the future.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Mitigation measures are not necessary because no substantial impacts are expected under the No Action Alternative. Residual impacts are discussed above.

3.7.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Maintenance of Recreation Opportunities

Alternative B contains several actions that would maintain current recreational opportunities and provide minimal increased recreation facility capacity. Recreation-related actions under Alternative B would have beneficial effects on recreation; however, recreation facility expansion or significant improvements would only be undertaken if Reclamation entered into an agreement with a non-Federal (public entity) managing partner.

The most significant differences between Alternative B and the No Action Alternative are focused in and around the WMA. Specific actions that may impact recreation resources and opportunities include the following: expanding the WMA boundary, and constructing 25 to 50 additional wetland/pond acres within the WMA (additional wetland/ponds would also be constructed under Alternative A, though the number of acres has not been specified). Recreation resources potentially affected by implementation of Alternative B include various recreation user groups (e.g., non-motorized boaters and hunters), physical space available for recreation activities, and various recreation experience variables such as crowding and level of regulatory enforcement.

Expanding the WMA boundary and constructing 25 to 50 additional wetland/pond acres within the WMA would have a beneficial impact on hunters and anglers by providing more physical space for specific recreation activities and increased wildlife production.

Actions in other resource areas under Alternative B may have both adverse and beneficial effects on recreation, given their emphasis on resource enhancement. Overall wildlife and vegetation management, such as increased residual nesting cover and extended nesting seasonal closures,

would have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities.

Additional proposals related to enhancement of habitat and wildlife would be a beneficial impact to recreation by assuring that the goals and objectives of the Montour WMA are more likely to be met. The same is the case for both consumptive and non-consumptive recreation, as well as access proposals related to Montour WMA.

Implementation of a recreation use monitoring program would have a beneficial impact to recreation by assessing recreation carrying capacity so that land management activities can respond to changing demands over time. A recreation use monitoring program would provide data for the development of better management practices to reduce, control, or resolve conflicts and concerns regarding recreation carrying capacity at area parks, Montour WMA, and on the reservoir surface.

Actions related to access under Alternative B would have a beneficial impact to recreation by encouraging users through management strategies to use appropriate lands, particularly at and adjacent to the "County" boat ramps. At all reservoir sites and "County" boat ramps, an MOU with ITD would be used to develop a coordinated approach to safety, and Reclamation would work with the County to enforce no parking areas adjacent to recreation areas and highway boat ramps. These management strategies, however, may have adverse effects on recreation user groups who do not want to pay the fee at Black Canyon Park or want a less formal place to stage their boating activities. Overall, such strategies will enhance the recreation experience by reducing safety hazards and improving traffic circulation. Other access-related actions, such as providing non-motorized trail connections, would have beneficial impacts on recreation by providing an additional formalized recreation opportunity.

Specific actions related to recreation and access at Montour WMA would generally have beneficial effects on non-consumptive and consumptive recreation. Specific monitoring and educational actions would likely foster stewardship and alleviate conflicts among various user groups. Development of a self-guided walking tour and a non-motorized boating access area would have beneficial impacts on recreation by providing additional formalized recreation opportunities. Regulation of motorized access and parking and the provision of signed non-motorized trails would enhance the overall recreation experience by reducing the potential for conflict and safety hazards among user groups. In addition, these access regulations would protect habitat needed for wildlife production, thus maintaining various hunting and fishing opportunities.

Certain RV campers would experience positive effects as a result of upgraded campsites at Montour WMA to accommodate larger RVs proposed under Alternative B. However, special events incompatible with wildlife management goals and objectives would no longer be allowed at the Montour WMA under Alternative B, precluding organized groups from using the area for special events.

Alternative B proposes a number of actions related to consumptive recreation (hunting, fishing, and trapping) at Montour WMA. These management/administrative actions would beneficially affect recreation facilities and opportunities at Montour WMA and enhance user recreation

experience by improving user satisfaction, increasing wildlife production and hunting sites, and alleviating user conflicts.

Other primary differences between Alternative B and the No Action Alternative are focused on increased recreation facility capacity at the reservoir. Alternative B proposes improvement and enhancement of all recreation facilities at the reservoir and places an emphasis on day use and group use areas at several of the parks. Overall, the recreation improvements proposed under Alternative B would likely have beneficial effects on recreation.

Improvements or expanded facilities at Cobblestone Park and improvements at Triangle Park could increase the physical space available for recreation and/or alleviate demand at higher use areas such as Black Canyon Park. Alternative B proposes designating Triangle Park as the main location for hosting special events at the reservoir, which would concentrate use, simplify enforcement, and avoid conflicts with the general public at locations with higher use, such as Black Canyon Park. Improvements or expanded facilities at Wild Rose Park would address existing capacity issues and increase bank fishing opportunities at the reservoir.

Actions proposed at Black Canyon Park under Alternative B will likely have beneficial effects by providing new recreation facilities (an accessible fishing pier) and accommodating increased day use and group-related activities by expanding the recreation area to the east. These actions, however, may have adverse effects on some recreation user groups if, at some point, providing additional boating capacity results in unacceptable crowding conditions on the reservoir.

The impact of regional population growth on recreation resources discussed under Alternative A would be less evident under Alternative B given that actions to provide additional recreation facility capacity and to enhance recreation user experience and satisfaction are proposed. However, this would only be the case if Reclamation enters into an agreement with a non-Federal public entity managing partner, thereby shifting management of recreational resources to another entity.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Mitigation measures are not necessary because no substantial impacts are expected under Alternative B. Residual impacts are discussed above.

3.8 Land Use

3.8.1 Affected Environment

3.8.1.1 General Land Use Patterns

Ownership

The U.S., through Reclamation, owns Black Canyon Reservoir and a significant portion of the land immediately adjacent to the reservoir. The U.S., through BLM, owns land adjacent to the RMP Study Area boundary on both the north and south sides of the reservoir. The remainder of the land in the vicinity of the reservoir, both on the north and south sides of the reservoir, is privately owned. Privately owned parcels in this area are typically large in size and are used primarily for grazing and agricultural purposes. A 3,232-acre development is being proposed on the south side of the reservoir opposite Triangle Park. The phased development plan includes two 18-hole golf courses, a multipurpose equestrian center, home sites, public marina and boat docks, clubhouse and facilities, trails, condominiums, and commercial development consisting of a post office, fire station, ambulance, and small retail shops.

Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad, a subsidiary of Rio Grande Pacific Corporation, owns a 100-foot wide right-of-way containing train tracks on the south side of the reservoir. It bisects Reclamation lands, as well as privately owned lands. The railroad has been on the south side of the Payette River since the late 1800s and was used for transporting timber and mineral resources out of the mountains as one of the former Union Pacific branch lines. The railroad is no longer being used for this purpose. However, the Thunder Mountain Line, a company that currently provides scenic and theme-related train rides between Horseshoe Bend and Cascade, started service in 2002 on a segment between Horseshoe Bend and Emmett with stops at Black Canyon Dam (adjacent to Cobblestone Park) and Montour WMA.

Study Area Zoning

Black Canyon Reservoir and Reclamation lands within the RMP Study Area boundary are located within an area designated by the Gem County Comprehensive Plan (1995) Chapter 4-Zoning Uses as either A1 Prime Agriculture or A3 Rural Agriculture. The transition from one zone use to another occurs at a line (Boise Meridian) running precisely north to south in the vicinity of Triangle Park. To the west of the Boise Meridian line Reclamation and surrounding private lands are designated as A1 Prime Agriculture. The intent of the A1 Prime Agricultural zone is to keep lands free from urban development in order to protect them for agricultural or grazing purposes. There is a 40-acre minimum lot size. To the east of the Boise Meridian line Reclamation and surrounding private lands are designated as A3 Rural Agriculture. There is a 5-acre minimum lot size specified in this zone designation.

The Gem County/City of Emmett Comprehensive Plan (1995) designates the Payette River as a "working river" and recognizes agricultural, energy production, and recreation uses associated with the river. The Payette River has also been categorized as a "Hazardous Area" by the plan, as well as the Black Canyon Dam and Reservoir. Hazardous Areas are those which pose safety threats and are either natural or manmade. High voltage electrical transmission facilities are considered a "Major Hazardous Area," which is considered unsuitable for urban density type

development and concentrated human presence without safeguards. Gem County may limit development in these areas (Gem County/City of Emmett Comprehensive Plan 1995).

3.8.1.2 Easements

In addition to managing U.S. land, Reclamation uses or encumbers other privately owned properties along the reservoir through the mechanism of acquired flowage, access, or other easements.

Flowage easements

Five flowage easements totaling approximately 505 acres were obtained from four different private landowners for land adjacent to the reservoir. The lands involved in flowage easements are still privately owned although Reclamation has acquired rights over these lands whereby Reclamation is allowed to flood them as needed. Two flowage easements were obtained from the same private landowner and are located on the south shore of the reservoir across from Triangle Park. Only a narrow strip of the Idaho Northern & Pacific Railroad right-of-way separates these two flowage easements totaling 169 acres. A third small flowage easement (approximately 1 acre) is located south of these where two intermittent streams flow into the reservoir. The fourth and fifth flowage easements, each from a different private landowner, are located on the north side of the reservoir southeast of Squaw Creek. They are approximately 235 and 100 acres in size, respectively.

Access Easements

Reclamation has one access easement with a private landowner for a gauging station. The 1.8 acre easement is located on the north side of the Payette River immediately west of Wild Rose Park and downstream of the dam. Land involved in the access easement is still privately owned although Reclamation has acquired rights over this land whereby Reclamation is allowed to use it for specific purposes.

Other Easements

Reclamation has an 1890 Right-of-Way (ROW) easement that extends for approximately 2 miles and includes approximately 24 acres along the east side of the Black Canyon Canal. According to United States Code Title 43, Chapter 22, Section 945, "in all patents for lands taken up after August 30, 1890, under any of the land laws of the United States or on entries or claims validated by this Act, west of the one hundredth meridian, it shall be expressed that there is reserved from the lands in said patent described a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States (Cornell Law School 2002). Reclamation exercised that reserved right on this segment of the Black Canyon Canal.

There are no known power line easements on Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir. However, large overhead power lines cross the reservoir east of Black Canyon Park that are owned by Idaho Power. No easement documentation related to these power lines exists. It is likely that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the independent regulatory agency within the U.S. Department of Energy, used their jurisdictional authority to place them there because it is federally owned land.

3.8.1.3 Leases

Agricultural and/or Grazing Leases

Reclamation also leases U.S. land around the Black Canyon Reservoir for agricultural and grazing purposes. There are currently four grazing leases, two agricultural leases, and two agricultural/grazing leases (both uses may occur) totaling approximately 928 acres. These leases were established between 1999 and 2002 with the term of the lease ending the end of the calendar year the lease was established. However, the lessee has the option to extend the lease each year, but only for four more years after the original year of the lease. For example, leases signed in 2002 are valid through December 31, 2002; however, the lessee has the option to extend the lease each year, for a length of one year, through 2006.

Lands leased for grazing purposes only are located throughout the RMP Study Area. Land in the Little lease (Contract No. 2-07-11-L1769) is centrally located on the north side of the reservoir and is approximately 75 acres. Land in the McDonough lease (Contract No. 2-07-11-L1465) is located on the north side of the Payette River and Montour WMA at the east end of the RMP Study Area and is approximately 21 acres. Land in the Stanley lease (Contract No. 1-07-11-L1652) is located on the north side and western half of the reservoir in two separate parcels, one near Black Canyon Dam, the other between Black Canyon Park and Triangle Park, totaling approximately 283 acres. Land in the MacGregor lease (Contract No. 0-07-11-L1657) is located on several parcels along the south side and western half of the reservoir totaling approximately 227 acres. A fifth lease (McConnel, Contract No. 1-07-11-L1684), which was renewed in 2002, was for lands (approximately 308 acres) located on the south side of the reservoir west of the Montour WMA. In total, Reclamation leases more than 600 acres of its land at Black Canyon Reservoir for grazing purposes. Grazing leases specify the cow-calf pairs of animal unit months (AUMs) allowed on each parcel leased (ranging from 10 AUM to 42 AUM) and the dates that grazing is permitted (typically April 1 through June 15 and September 1 through October 30). The land is not to be plowed or used for agricultural purposes without approval, access is permitted by U.S. employees or contractors associated with the operation of the Black Canyon Dam and Reservoir, and hunting and fishing by the public can not be restricted by the lessee.

Lands leased for agricultural purposes only are located in the Montour WMA. This is the Gatfield Farms lease (Contract No. 0-07-11-L1656), which is two parcels of approximately 68 acres. In total, Reclamation leases more than 84 acres of its land at Montour WMA for agricultural purposes only. The land is not to be used for grazing purposes without approval, access is permitted by U.S. employees or contractors associated with the operation of the Black Canyon Dam and Reservoir, and hunting and fishing by the public can not be restricted by the lessee. Specifications in the Gatfield Farms lease, which is an agriculture/wildlife lease, detail the crop to be planted, the size of field for each crop to be planted, and a schedule for annual rotation of the crops. For example, while some fields can be planted at the discretion of the lessee (36 total acres), others fields are required to be planted with ear corn and annually rotated in order to provide food and cover for wildlife (32 total acres).

Lands leased for grazing/agricultural purposes (both may occur) are located in the Montour area. The first lease is the Hadley lease (Contract No. 0-07-11-L1529) which is several parcels totaling approximately 230 acres. The second lease is the Keller lease (Contract No. 2-07-11-L1529) which is approximately 14 acres. In total, Reclamation leases more than 244 acres of its land at

Black Canyon Reservoir for agricultural/grazing purposes. Specifications in these leases also detail the crop to be planted, the size of field for each crop to be planted, a schedule for annual rotation of the crops, the number of animals allowed to graze on each parcel, and the time of year they are permitted to graze. The Hadley lease allows 185 acres to be used for grazing (May 1 to September 30 only with no more than 175 AUMs permitted during this period) and 45 acres to be used for agriculture (22 acres as annually rotated corn for wildlife and 23 acres to be planted at the discretion of the lessee). No grazing is to occur in the agriculture parcel at any time. The Keller lease allows the lessee to plant alfalfa and/or small grains. If alfalfa is planted the first cutting must occur after pheasant season nesting is completed and eight inches must be left standing for winter cover. If small grains are planted, 20 percent of the crop must be left standing for wildlife feed and cover.

3.8.1.4 Other Agreements, Contracts, and Permits

Fish and Wildlife

An MOU between Reclamation and IDFG was established in 1983 to provide for cooperation between the agencies in implementing the Montour WMA Management Plan (Reclamation 1983) and managing the Montour WMA. In general, Reclamation, with overall management responsibility, is responsible for completing upland and waterfowl habitat developments as specified in the plan while consulting with IDFG on all matters pertaining to fish and wildlife. IDFG is responsible for providing Reclamation with information and technical assistance during implementation of the fish and wildlife activities provided for in the plan, for enforcing all State of Idaho fish and game laws, and for enforcing wildlife related closures at Montour. IDFG may also initiate and implement enhancement activities outlined in the plan with the approval of Reclamation.

Reclamation and IDFG have jointly reviewed an annual proposal to have a dog trial at the Montour WMA. Reclamation has provided a letter of approval and IDFG has issued a permit authorizing the dog trial. The dog trial has taken place after the nesting season and has been compatible with WMA management goals and objectives.

Concessions

In the mid-1990s, a private concessionaire managed and maintained the five recreation areas for one year but the contract was not renewed for a second year because the concessionaire could not make it financially viable. When management of the recreation areas was put out to bid the next year, a grounds maintenance contractor was contracted to maintain the parks and collect fees. This contract was not renewed at the end of the year. Since then, Reclamation has managed and maintained the recreation areas itself as described in Section 3.7, *Recreation*. It is estimated that the revenue generated from user fees at Black Canyon Reservoir is generally not enough to maintain and operate the facilities and generate a profit. There are currently no contracts between Reclamation and any private concessionaire to provide recreation goods or services at any recreation area.

Noxious Weeds

A cooperative agreement exists between Reclamation and Gem County Weed Control to manage noxious weed species at Black Canyon Reservoir. Canada thistle and Poison hemlock are the most significant noxious weed species found at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA.

Other noxious weeds include yellowstar thistle, Russian knapweed, spotted knapweed, Scotch thistle, purple loosestrife, Eurasion watermilfoil, and perennial pepperweed (see Section 3.3, *Vegetation*). Reclamation pays Gem County Weed Control $7,500 annually for noxious weed management. The Montour/Black Canyon Noxious Weed Control Plan (2002) prioritizes strategies based on the species of concern, the size of the population, and the likelihood of success in controlling the species. The strategies specify the location of the infestation, the herbicide to be used for treatment of each species, the application rate, the time of year to treat, and alternative herbicides for water-sensitive areas. Reclamation may require Gem County Weed Control to use, or refrain from using, certain herbicides in treatment of noxious weeds.

Law Enforcement

Gem County Sheriff is the sole provider of law enforcement in the vicinity of the reservoir, at Black Canyon Reservoir recreation facilities, and on the reservoir. The Sheriff has a specific contract with Reclamation to provide law enforcement at recreation facilities between mid-May and mid-September each year. The contract provides for patrol of these recreation areas for a total of 160 hours (10 hours per week) during the peak season. The contract is updated annually to provide for the necessary services. A wide range of disturbances at the reservoir's recreation areas requires Sheriff response. These disturbances typically include vandalism, theft, battery, domestic violence, discharging firearms, and alcohol-related misconduct. In the vicinity of the reservoir, Sheriff response is typically related to vehicle accidents. The response time from the Sheriff's headquarters in Emmett ranges from 5 minutes to 15 minutes depending whether the location is the dam or Montour WMA, respectively. Park hosts are present at some of the recreation areas during peak season operating hours. Hosts are unable to cite visitors for park violations but communicate with the Sheriff to minimize potential disturbances or to facilitate the handling of those that do occur.

The Sheriff also provides marine patrol service on the reservoir from mid-May through mid-September. IDPR funds half of this service through their boat license fees while Gem County funds the other half. One Sheriff's officer provides weekday patrol while a second provides weekend patrol for a total of 60 hours a week during the peak season. The Sheriff operates out of Black Canyon Park. Equipment used by the Sheriff's marine patrol consists of one jet boat and two PWC. This equipment is pulled out of the reservoir each day and brought back to Sheriff's headquarters in Emmett. Activities of the Sheriff's marine patrol include boat inspections, emergency response, righting capsized vessels, towing disabled vessels, removing hazards in the water, and enforcing laws.

Sedimentation in the upper part of the reservoir has caused it to become shallow and difficult to navigate safely; therefore, boat use is more concentrated on the western two-thirds of the reservoir. Additionally, the reservoir is narrow and becomes quite crowded on weekends and holidays during the peak season. The actual level of boater conflict on the reservoir is characterized as low but the potential for future conflict continues to increase as the number of boats and PWC on the reservoir increase. Activities most popular on the reservoir include power boating, waterskiing, and PWC use. The most significant potential conflict exists between boats and the PWC that follow boats closely in order to jump their wake. There are no speed restrictions on the reservoir; however boat use must occur in a directional (clock-wise) manner.

Fire Protection

Fire suppression at the reservoir has been provided by Gem County Fire District 1 and Gem County Fire District 2 and has typically been in response to boat, vehicle, trash, or grass fires.

District 1 headquarters are based in Emmett and the district is located west of the reservoir in the Emmett Valley, its eastern boundary near the top of the dam. District 1 personnel include a volunteer chief and 22 volunteer firefighters. Equipment includes nine trucks, including grass trucks, pumpers, and tankers with a total capacity of approximately 9,000 gallons. Response time to the dam, which is 7 miles from District 1 headquarters in Emmett, is approximately 10 to 15 minutes (Personal Communication, Bill Lee, District 1 Fire Chief, July 2002).

District 2 headquarters are based in Sweet, and the district is located northeast of the reservoir in the Sweet Valley. Its southwestern boundary is near Triangle Park. District 2 personnel include a volunteer chief and 17 volunteer firefighters. Ten additional volunteer firefighters are available through mutual aid agreements. District 2 maintains mutual aid agreements with BLM, State of Idaho, Gem County District 1, and Horseshoe Bend Fire District. Equipment includes several trucks, including 2 heavy brush rigs, 2 light brush rigs, a tender with 3,300 gallon capacity, and a pumper. The district received a new truck (750-gallon pumper) in 2002 that is foam-compatible (20-gallon tank) and can pump 1,000 gallons of water per minute (Personal Communication, Bill Lee, District 1 Fire Chief, 2004). Response time to Triangle Park (the western extent of their jurisdiction), which is 7 miles from District 2 headquarters in Sweet, is approximately 17 to 20 minutes. Response time to Montour WMA, which is 4 miles from Sweet, is approximately 12 to 15 minutes. During the past several years, District 2 has responded to four or five calls at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA each year. Response is primarily for wildfires with the occasional vehicle fire (Personal Communication, Jim Buffington, District 2 Fire Chief, September 2002).

Neither fire district has jurisdiction between the Black Canyon Dam and Triangle Park, although both Fire Districts 1 and 2 will respond to fires in this area, as well as any fires near the reservoir.

Both fire districts are volunteer operations with mutual aid agreements with the BLM. The agreements provide for mutual assistance between them to adequately respond to wildfire incidents. The nearest BLM personnel and equipment are located in Boise. The agreements provide for the nearest party to the agreement to respond upon request. In the case of a wildfire incident, the Incident Command System is utilized to facilitate a cooperative effort among agencies and applicable jurisdictions to suppress the wildfire (BLM 1997). The Mutual Fire Protection and Disaster Agreement is to be supplemented annually by an operating plan between the parties.

Reclamation and BLM—Idaho have a Wildland Fire Suppression Agreement that authorizes BLM to provide wildland fire suppression activities on certain withdrawn and acquired lands under Reclamation's jurisdiction in the region. Whether Reclamation project lands at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour are included in this agreement is being clarified by Reclamation.

Recreation Facilities Maintenance

A Cooperative Agreement was established March 29, 1990 between Reclamation and the Gem County Waterways Commission (Contract No. 0-07-11-l0713) to improve the maintenance and

management of public recreation facilities, such as docks and boat launches on the reservoir. According to the agreement, Reclamation has jurisdiction over and responsibility for managing recreation facilities at the reservoir while the Waterways Commission has the capability to obtain grant funding for facilities as well as the expertise to maintain these facilities (Reclamation 1990). For example, in 1992 Reclamation requested 45 docks from the Waterways Commission to be delivered in the spring of 1993. Ownership of facilities, which have been funded through the Waterways Commission and given to Reclamation, is unclear, but will be determined and documented. The roadside boat ramps are frequently referred to as "County Ramps" and signs at these sites bear the logos of both agencies. Reclamation rebuilt docks adjacent to these ramps in 2001. The Gem County Sheriff has correctly operated on the assumption that Reclamation is responsible for maintaining these ramps. Reclamation has correctly operated on the assumption that Gem County is responsible for law enforcement, as well as assistance in placing docks at these and other locations around the reservoir.

Other

Western Idaho Powwow held a recreation permit issued by Reclamation in July 1995 that was terminated in April 2002. The recreation permit allowed them to host a 3-day powwow at Montour WMA each July. However, after several notices, the permit was terminated because of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract.

The United States purchased the Palmer House when acquiring the townsite of Montour. Reclamation has an agreement with the current resident (as of January 2004) of the Palmer House wherein they are allowed to use the house as a residence. Once the house is vacated by that individual, this agreement will not be extended to any other party and all personal belongings will be removed from the premises.

3.8.2 Environmental Consequences

3.8.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Implementation of Alternative A would be without the benefit of a current management plan resulting in generally negligible impacts to land uses in the near future. However, as the cultural, natural, and recreation resources experience pressure from increased use of the reservoir over time, the impact of not having a current management plan would result in an adverse impact to land use by not providing long-term comprehensive guidance and direction on land uses in the RMP Study Area.

Specific proposals in Alternative A related to riparian areas, noxious weeds, and water quality and erosion would have an indirect beneficial impact on land use by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving uses of the land for consumptive and non-consumptive activities.

Specific proposals in Alternative A related to public safety would have a minor beneficial impact on land use as it allows for the safe use of land and water for multiple activities. For example, enforcement of the current no-wake zone near the shoreline and the no-shooting zone surrounding Montour campground allow for multiple activities to occur in the same general area. Public information proposals would also have a minor beneficial impact to land use by

improving the visitor's knowledge of current land use and how their activities are potentially detrimental to or supportive of resources on that land.

In Alternative A, special events would be allowed under the current permit/reservation system, which could potentially have a minor adverse impact to land use if the special event has a detrimental effect on the natural, cultural, or recreation resources of that area. If overuse, crowding, or inadequate facilities occur at sites hosting special events, dispersed use could potentially result and have an adverse effect on land use.

Identifying a managing partner for recreation facilities at the reservoir, as proposed in both alternatives, would have a minor beneficial impact to land use if management were consistent with Reclamation's goals and objectives for the protection of both natural and recreation resources at the reservoir. Beneficial impacts to land use would also result from the managing partner's adequate maintenance and enforcement associated with these recreation facilities.

Allowing access to Reclamation lands according to current policies would impact land use relative to the current situation if enforcement resources are adequate. If these resources become limited, lack of enforcement would result in adverse impacts to land use as a result of dispersed use, increased susceptibility to wildfire, increased noxious weed infestations, and potential conflicts between users.

Alternative A proposes that use of and access to the campground in Montour WMA, the four parks on the reservoir, and highway "County" boat ramps continues as is currently allowed. This could potentially have an adverse effect on land use at and adjacent to these sites as recreation use continues to grow. If recreation use corresponds to population growth, which is projected to grow 67, 57, and 27 percent for Ada, Canyon, and Gem counties, respectively, by 2025, the demand for recreation facilities will significantly increase. If the demand for recreation resources continues to increase as expected, and the existing facilities are not improved or expanded, these sites could experience the effects of overcrowding, resulting in dispersed use. For example, if existing boat ramps are not improved to make it easier and safer for users to access the reservoir, other shoreline locations might be used, resulting in indirect adverse impacts to land use that includes habitat destruction, erosion, sanitation problems, decreased public safety, and cultural resource destruction.

A minor beneficial impact to land use would result from clearly marking the boundary between Montour WMA and private property, which is proposed in both alternatives. This action would decrease the likelihood of confusion over property boundary locations, establish visible boundaries between different types of activities, and thus minimize potential conflicts that often arise when differing activities occur on adjacent parcels of land.

Several proposals in Alternative A address habitat and wildlife within the Montour WMA. Maintenance of natural and constructed wetlands and management of nesting cover for the production of waterfowl are examples of these proposals. If funding and staff for these actions remains adequate, the impact to land use would be beneficial. However, if funding and staff are not available, the impact to land use could become negative over time. If the quality of natural resources were to decline at the WMA, it is likely that the goals and objectives of the WMA would be compromised. In addition, proposals related to access and consumptive recreation

within the Montour WMA would have a negligible impact on land use as long as enforcement related to these topics was adequate.

Alternative A proposes the continuation of agricultural leases for habitat values, which would be a beneficial impact to land use as long as the specifications for proper crop management and leaving food plots unharvested, which are contained within each lease, are followed.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Mitigation measures are not necessary because no substantial impacts are expected under Alternative A. Residual impacts to land use could result from there not being a management plan particularly if funding, staff, and resources diminish in the long-term.

3.8.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Alternative B contains several proposals that would protect existing natural, cultural, and recreation resources thereby reducing the potential for adverse impacts associated with conflicts among various users and land uses. The proposals that were previously discussed under Alternative A, and that would have a negligible or beneficial impact on land use, are also part of Alternative B. For Alternative B, however, there are additional proposals that go beyond each of the proposals in Alternative A in order to protect natural, cultural, and recreation resources at the reservoir. The following proposals from Alternative B are examples that highlight the beneficial impacts to land use that are not incorporated as part of Alternative A.

Cooperation among Reclamation, other applicable agencies, and adjacent private landowners for the establishment of BMPs for offsite (non-Reclamation land) activities would result in beneficial impacts to land use by avoiding indirect impacts to land use such as erosion, sedimentation, and decreased water quality. However, it is unlikely that other applicable agencies and adjacent private landowners would participate in this process unless incentives could be identified for them to establish BMPs related to activities on land they manage or own. If these incentives can not be identified, it is likely that no BMPs will be established for non-Reclamation lands resulting in no impacts to land use relative to the current situation.

In contrast to Alternative A, Alternative B proposes designating Triangle Park as the main location for hosting special events at the reservoir, which would concentrate use, simplify enforcement, and discourage dispersed use. Montour WMA would no longer be used for special events unless they are compatible with wildlife management goals and objectives.

As described in Alternative A, population growth will increase recreation demand. If the demand for recreation resources continues to increase as expected, and the existing facilities are adequately improved or expanded as proposed in Alternative B, these sites should be able to accommodate this increased demand. If not, the scenario described in Alternative A is more likely. It must be noted, however, that without a non-Federal public entity as a managing partner, Reclamation would have no authority to develop new recreation facilities or enhance existing facilities. Only operation, maintenance, and replacement of existing facilities would be authorized.

Development and implementation of an interpretation program that, among other things, illustrates current land uses would benefit land use by improving the visitor's knowledge about how their activities might be potentially detrimental to or supportive of resources associated with that land.

Implementation of a recreation use monitoring program would have a beneficial impact to land use by assessing how land is being used so that land management activities can respond to changing demands over time.

Proposals related to access under Alternative B would have a beneficial impact to land use by directing users to appropriate places, encouraging them through management strategies to use appropriate lands, and decreasing the potential for incidents such as wildfire that could have a detrimental effect on land use.

Expansion of the Montour WMA boundary would have a beneficial impact on land use by placing additional land under management of the IDFG for protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat and for provision of a variety of recreational experiences compatible with the goals of the WMA.

Proposals related to agricultural and grazing leases within Montour WMA would be a beneficial impact to land use by improving habitat values, relative to their current condition, as determined by IDFG so that WMA goals and objectives are met.

Additional proposals related to enhancement of habitat and wildlife would be a beneficial impact to land use by assuring that the goals and objectives of the Montour WMA are more likely to be met. The same is the case for both consumptive and non-consumptive recreation, as well as access proposals related to Montour WMA.

Alternative B proposes improvement and enhancement of all recreation facilities at the reservoir and places an emphasis on day use and group use areas at several of the parks. This would have an adverse effect on land use only if the improvement and expansion of these facilities could not meet the growing demand for recreation facilities, which is unlikely, resulting in dispersed use around the reservoir. The fact that the proposed expansion would only occur at existing sites would be a minor beneficial impact to land use by concentrating this particular use to land it is already occurring on. This is particularly true at boat launch sites. Improvement of these facilities would discourage dispersed use of the shoreline by providing an organized and safe mechanism to access the reservoir.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Mitigation measures are not necessary because no substantial impacts are expected under Alternative B.

3.9 Socioeconomics

3.9.1 Affected Environment

Current population trends, employment, and income for Gem County and nearby Ada, Canyon, and Payette counties are discussed below. Ada County, which contains the city of Boise and neighboring suburban communities, has a large population and thus a significant impact on use of Black Canyon Reservoir, particularly for recreation.

3.9.1.1 Demographic Profile

The closest city to Black Canyon Reservoir is Emmett (population 5,490), the county seat of Gem County (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Nearly one third of Gem County's population resides in Emmett making it the county's largest city. During the 1990s, Gem County's population grew 28.2 percent, reaching 15,181 in 2000. In 2000, 63.8 percent of the Gem County population was classified as rural, a slight increase since 1980.

Idaho's population growth rate from 1990 to 2000 was an increase of 28.5 percent, while the United States' total population growth rate was 13.1 percent. Most of the population in southwest Idaho is located south of Gem County along the Interstate 84 corridor in cities such as Boise, Nampa, and the surrounding suburbs. Ada and Canyon counties have several large cities such as Boise (population 185,787), Nampa (population 51,867), Meridian (population 34,919), and Caldwell (population 25,967). The population of nearby Ada County grew 46.2 percent, reaching 300,904 in 2000.

Table 3.9-1 shows the age distribution of residents in Gem County, surrounding counties, and the State of Idaho for 2000. For the most part, the population distribution and categorical shifts in Gem County resemble that of the state and the country. However, the population of the county and state is growing at a quicker pace than that of the U.S. overall and there is a greater percentage of people over 65 years old in Gem County than elsewhere.

TABLE 3.9-1
Gem County and State of Idaho Age Distribution

County	2000 Population	Change Since 1990 (%)	People Under 5 Years of Age (%)	People Under 18 Years of Age (%)	People Over 65 Years of Age (%)
Gem	15,181	28.2	7.0	28.0	15.6
Ada	300,904	46.2	7.7	27.3	9.1
Canyon	131,441	45.9	9.1	30.9	11.0
Payette	20,578	25.2	7.6	30.6	13.2
Idaho	1,293,953	28.5	7.5	28.5	11.3
United States	281,400,000	13.1	6.8	25.7	12.4

Source: U.S. Census 2000

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the State of Idaho between 1990 to 2000 grew from 1,006,749 to 1,293,953, an increase of 287,204 people (28.5 percent). Between 2001 and 2002, the population of Idaho was estimated to have grown 1.6 percent compared to a 1.1 percent national average, making Idaho the ninth fastest growing state in the country during that period.

Projected population growth at the state level is done by the U.S. Census Bureau. The population growth projection for Idaho from 2000 through 2025 is listed in the Table 3.9-2.

TABLE 3.9-2
U.S. Census Bureau State Population Projection

State	2000 Population	2025 Population	Population Change (2000-2025)	Percent Change (2000-2025)
Idaho	1,293,953	1,739,000	445,047	34%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Until 1992, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, has made estimates of future population at the county level for each state. Each state is now responsible for determining their projections and there is great diversity in methods and results from state to state. Several states, including Idaho, do not have population projections available on the web although the USFS has developed tables for the web and public use. Table 3.9-3 provides county population projections based on USFS analysis of population data.

TABLE 3.9-3
County and State Population Projections

County/State	2000 Population	2015 Population	Population Change (2000-2015)	Percent Change (2000-2015)
Ada	292,609	405,968	113,359	39%
Canyon	128,580	173,547	44,967	35%
Gem	15,326	17,824	2,498	16%
Idaho	1,273,855	1,609,314	335,459	26%

Source: USFS website (http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/planning/econ/easy/info-un/pop-growth.html) with data provided from the Idaho Department of Commerce.

These projections indicate significant population growth in the state. Other entities, such as The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), have projected a state population as high as 2,422,000 in 2025, an increase of 87 percent above the state's population in 2000.

The county population growth projection data indicate that there will be significant growth in Ada County, likely associated with the growth of the Boise metropolitan area. More rural counties, such as Canyon and Gem, will also experience population growth according to the

projections, although less than neighboring Ada County. In the case of Gem County, growth is projected to be less than that of the state as a whole, although still 27 percent.

3.9.1.2 Economic Setting

Emmett is located in the "Valley of Plenty," made possible by the development of an irrigation canal system that has diverted water from the Payette River and Black Canyon Reservoir since the late 1800s when the valley began to be settled. In the early 1900s the irrigation canal system continued to be expanded and by the 1920s, the valley was producing an abundance of orchard fruit, specifically cherries and apples. After an economic decline brought on by the Great Depression and years of exceptional drought in the 1930s and 1940s, the economy rebounded in the 1950s. Since then, the economy has been based on agriculture, timber, and mining, each benefiting from technological advances and providing for a growing post-World War II population.

More recently, however, the economy in the area has begun to diversify by shifting from resource-based manufacturing to government, services, and wholesale and retail trade. Gem County experienced a gain in population since 1990 but did not receive an equal gain in economic benefit during this time. This is due to an increasing number of Gem County residents who choose to commute out of the county to work and shop (primarily in Ada County, where Boise and its suburbs are located). Both the number of persons in the workforce and opportunities for employment increased from 1990 to 2000. The Civilian Labor Force of Gem County increased 19.0 percent during that period while Nonfarm Payroll Jobs in the county increased 29.7 percent. Between 1990 and 2000 the largest increase in the number of jobs in Gem County were in services and wholesale and retail trade. The largest growth rate (200.8 percent) in the county was in mining and construction during this same period (Idaho Department of Labor 2002).

Agriculture and timber resource products are the two basic local industries, and the timber industry formerly provided the bulk of family-wage jobs. However, the timber industry declined because of a lack of a steady supply of logs. As a result, the county's largest employer, Boise Cascade, closed its Emmett mill. The mill later burned in an accidental fire. The amount of land devoted to fruit cultivation has decreased in the Emmett Valley because acreage formerly used for crops is now being utilized for housing and commercial development (Idaho Department of Labor). Between 1987 and 1997 the number of farms actually increased from 539 to 552 but the average acreage of those farms decreased from 414 acres to 331 acres (Idaho Department of Commerce 2000).

In 2000, the median age of persons in Gem County was 37.5 years, up from 36.0 years in 1990 and 31.4 years in 1980. There were 5,539 households in Gem County with an average of 2.7 persons per household in 2000. The 1997 median household income of Gem County was $30,132, which was below the statewide median household income of $33,612. The percentage of county residents below the poverty level (15.4 percent) was higher than the percent of state residents (13.0 percent) below the poverty level (U.S. Census 2000). In 1990, 70 percent of Gem County residents over 25 years of age were high school graduates and 9 percent had at least a bachelor's degree. By comparison, 80 percent of all Idaho residents over 25 years of age were high school graduates and 18 percent had at least a bachelor's degree. In 1990, 95 percent of

Gem County's population was white and 5 percent was Hispanic (Gem County/City of Emmett Comprehensive Plan 1995).

In contrast to Gem County, there were 113,408 households in nearby Ada County with an average of 2.6 persons per household. The 1997 median household income of Ada County was $43,321, which was significantly higher than the statewide median household income of $33,612. The percentage of county residents below the poverty level (8.9 percent) was significantly lower than the percent of state residents (13.0 percent) below the poverty level (U.S. Census 2000).

3.9.2 Environmental Consequences

3.9.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

In general, impacts to socioeconomics would be negligible under Alternative A. However, if projected population growth and corresponding recreation use is realized, it could have a minor beneficial impact to the local community, particularly for the town of Emmett, and to a lesser degree to other parts of Gem County. A visitor origin study conducted in 2002 (refer to Section 3.7, *Recreation*) indicate that most visitors to Black Canyon Reservoir are from Ada County (46 percent), home of the rapidly growing Boise metropolitan area, which is projected to grow 39 percent by 2015. These visitors likely pass through the town of Emmett to or from their final destination and likely require goods and services that are provided in Emmett. Population growth and correspondingly increased recreation use may therefore have a minor beneficial impact on the surrounding area due to increased expenditures by visitors passing through Emmett.

Cultural and natural resource proposals in Alternative A could potentially create minor, short-term employment opportunities that could result in a negligible beneficial impact to the local economy. Development and implementation of an IPM Plan, protection of riparian areas, and compliance with cultural resource regulations are examples of these types of proposals. These proposed programs propose some degree of maintenance, protection, or enhancement of natural or cultural resources that would require particular services potentially resulting in minor income generated within the local economy.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

No mitigation measures are proposed since Alternative A is not expected to directly affect local population or income to a substantial degree. No significant residual impacts related to socioeconomics are identified for Alternative A.

3.9.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

In general, impacts to socioeconomics would be minor under Alternative B. The implementation of proposals identified in Alternative B may provide some minor additional employment opportunities in the local community by potentially increasing park staff and outside support service needs. Additionally, improvements to the park's recreation and wildlife habitat resources would likely increase the amenity value of Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA, making

the area more desirable; however, this increase in amenities would not likely result in any measurable changes to the local socioeconomic conditions. In comparison, the degree of proposed improvements for existing cultural, natural, and recreation resources and for the provision for public safety is greater in Alternative B than in Alternative A. Thus overall, Alternative B would likely provide a slightly greater beneficial impact on the local economy although it is difficult to accurately project a correlation between the two alternatives and any substantial differences in local economics.

Specifically, improvement and expansion of existing recreation facilities, as proposed in Alternative B, would generate additional funds from parking fees, group picnic reservation fees, and special event fees. Recreation facility improvement and expansion would also likely result in an increase of use, putting additional pressure on existing resource managers as well as local enforcement and emergency service providers. A likely increase in use would require additional park staff and adequate agreements with partners such as Gem County Waterways, Gem County Sheriff Marine Patrol, Gem County Sheriff's Department, Gem County Fire Department, and IDFG.

As discussed previously under Alternative A, if projected population growth and corresponding recreation use is realized, it would have a minor beneficial impact to the local community, particularly for the town of Emmett and Gem County.

In comparison to Alternative A, Alternative B has additional proposals such as implementation of an erosion control program, establishment of BMPs for water quality and erosion control during construction, development and implementation of an interpretive program, agreements with the City of Emmett, Gem County, ITD, BLM, and Irrigation Districts regarding provision of adequate access management, and coordination with local ditch companies to maintain and improve habitat values along irrigation ditches. These proposed programs may be additional, yet limited sources for employment opportunities that may be a minor beneficial impact to the local economy.

Based on the expansion of the Montour WMA boundary and the habitat improvement proposals in Alternative B, it could be expected that consumptive recreation opportunities would increase in the WMA. Because the site is managed by IDFG, which receives funds provided by the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses and tags as well as excise taxes collected from hunting and fishing equipment, additional use would likely generate additional funds associated with these consumptive recreation activities. Since recreation use is projected to increase (see Section 3.7, *Recreation*) in the area and consumptive recreation opportunities would increase in the WMA, it is likely that additional funds would be generated.

Alternative B proposes evaluating existing agricultural and grazing leases located in Montour WMA for compliance with WMA goals and objectives as they become due. There is one agricultural lease and two grazing/agricultural leases on lands within Montour WMA. These leases require an extension each year and are renewable for only four years after the original year of the lease. If the leases were to be discontinued, there could be a minor adverse impact to the leaseholders who would lose lands used to produce income.

As stated previously, even though Alternative B proposes a greater degree of improvements and programs, it is difficult to accurately project a correlation between the two alternatives and any substantial differences in local economics.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

No mitigation measures are proposed since Alternative B is not expected to directly affect local population or income to a substantial degree. No significant residual impacts related to socioeconomics are identified for Alternative B.

3.10 Environmental Justice

3.10.1 Affected Environment

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice, 59 Fed. Reg. 7629 [1994]) requires each Federal agency to achieve environmental justice by addressing "disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority and low-income populations." The demographics of the affected area are examined to determine whether minority populations, low income populations, or Indian Tribes are present in the area impacted by a proposed action. If so, a determination must be made as to whether the implementation/development of the proposed project may cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on the minority or low income populations present. Examination of minority and low income populations is warranted through the adoption of a 1994 directive designed specifically to examine impacts to such things as human health of minority populations, low income populations, and Indian Tribes and is commonly known as Environmental Justice.

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) defines "minority" to consist of the following groups: Black/African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Hispanic populations (regardless of race). Additionally, for the purposes of this analysis, "minority' also includes all other non-white racial categories within the 2000 Census such as "some other race" and "two or more races." The Interagency Federal Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG) guidance states that a "minority population" may be present in an area if the minority population percentage in the area of interest is "meaningfully greater" than the minority population in the general population. CEQ also defined "low income populations" based on the annual statistical thresholds from the Bureau of the Census. These "poverty thresholds" are calculated by family size and composition and are updated annually to reflect inflation. A population is considered low income if the percentage of the population that is below the poverty threshold within the area of interest is "meaningfully greater" than the low income population in the general area (state-wide) population.

The resource management planning and NEPA environmental review process for the Black Canyon Reservoir RMP complies with Executive Order 12898 by identifying minority and low income populations early in the process and incorporating the perspectives of these populations into the decision-making process.

Nearly 94 percent of the population of Gem County is white; thus, the potentially affected minority population in this region includes African American (0.1 percent), Indian/Alaska Natives (0.7 percent), Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders (0.1 percent), Asians (0.4 percent), and mixed and other races (5.0 percent). Hispanics (of any race) make up about 6.9 percent of the county population. The income of approximately 13.1 percent of the county population is less than the poverty level compared to 11.8 percent for the state (U.S. Census 2000).

3.10.2 Environmental Consequences

Statistics have not been compiled on the race or ethnicity of users of Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. It would be logical to assume that the users reflect the makeup of the population of Gem County and nearby Ada (which includes the Boise metropolitan area), Canyon, and Payette counties. Implementation of either of the two alternatives would have no effect to environmental justice concerns. Under either alternative, the campground at Montour Campground and parking access at Black Canyon Park would continue to assess nominal user fees set by Reclamation to offset maintenance costs. Additionally, current reservation fees would still be required for the gazebo or picnic shelter at Wild Rose Park, two group picnic shelters at Black Canyon Park, and a group camping area at Triangle Park. The remainder of recreation facilities at Black Canyon would be free. Triangle Park has been designated for special events in Alternative B and could likely assess fees for future events as well. In either alternative, Reclamation would continue to seek a non-federal managing partner to operate all recreation facilities. If a managing partner is found, it is possible that they could assess nominal fees for use of areas that are currently free or increase fees at those locations that currently assess them. While no minority group would be disproportionately affected, in general, lower income families or individuals would be affected by fees to a greater extent than middle or upper income groups.

3.10.2.1 Mitigation and Residual Impacts

No mitigation measures are proposed for either of the two alternatives because no impacts would occur to environmental justice concerns from their implementation. Residual impacts are discussed in the preceding narrative.

3.11 Cultural Resources

3.11.1 Affected Environment

Evidence of human occupation in southwestern Idaho dates to as early as 10,000 years before the present (B.P.). Artifact comparisons with other areas in the region suggest a sequence of prehistoric use of the Montour Valley area from at least 6,000 B.P. to approximately 700 years ago. Over time, there was a gradual shift from the hunting of large fauna toward increased utilization of a diversity of plant and animal resources, reflected in greater variability of tool technologies and site types (Gibson and Kaberline 2002).

The RMP Study Area is located near the boundaries of the Great Basin and Columbia Plateau culture areas. The ethnographic record suggests that two groups, the Northern Paiute and the Northern Shoshone, both speakers of the Numic language, shared resources and range in the vicinity of the RMP Study Area along the Payette River. These groups also shared similar material cultures, socio-political organization, and religious practices. Both the Northern Paiute and the Northern Shoshone followed subsistence-settlement patterns based on small bands of hunters and gatherers living in small transitory camps and exploiting a broad array of resources. Larger groups who wintered in valleys would disperse during the summer to exploit a multitude of resources (Morgan 1999).

In addition to being blessed with a moderate climate and an abundance of large and small game animals, the Montour Valley would have appealed to prehistoric groups in other ways. One attraction would have been easy access to fresh water mussels and salmon. Prior to white settlement, Montour served as an important Indian fishery, with the Montour Valley participating in a major regional Indian trading fair/cultural exchange each summer during salmon season. Another attractive feature of the valley would have been proximity to Timber Buttes. Timber Buttes, a known obsidian quarry approximately10 miles north of the Montour Valley, served as an important lithic source for stone tool manufacture for prehistoric inhabitants of the region for thousands of years (Morgan 1999).

Historically, Euro-American fur trapping and trading were well in place in the Payette River Valley (including the Montour Valley) by the second decade of the 1800's. By the 1830's fur resources in the region were depleted and considered "trapped out." Gold was discovered in the Boise Basin in 1862, with the Payette River serving as a main travel route to the goldfields, taking goldseekers south of Regan Butte, directly west of Montour. In the early 1860's a stage stop was established in the western end of Montour Valley, with four stagecoaches a week traveling up the Payette River through Montour. This stage station became a post office in 1870, and eventually took on stock raising and other functions, becoming known as the Mitchell, Marsh, and Ireton ranch. Prior to 1900 about 50 people lived in and around the valley, relying mostly on logging, mining, ranching, and farming as a way of life. Rail service reached Montour in 1910 (Idaho Northern Railroad), extending through Black Canyon from Emmett to Horseshoe Bend and McCall. In 1911 the town of Montour was platted, and the entire town was built between 1912 and 1915. The town effectively ceased to grow after about the mid-1920's, with ensuing years bringing depression and bankruptcy to the small community (Gibson and Kaberline 2002, Morgan 1999, and Briggs, No Date).

The rural, small town character of Montour remained virtually unchanged between the late 1920's and the early 1980's. In 1924, Reclamation constructed Black Canyon Dam to divert irrigation water to crops and orchards in the Emmett Valley, and for power generation. Increased stream flow and sediment buildup within the Black Canyon Reservoir resulted in higher annual water table and annual flooding in the Montour Valley. Subsequent loss of crops and property damage resulted in years of litigation by the local population. In the 1970's, Reclamation acquired the land within the 100-year floodplain to insure continued project operations of Black Canyon Dam. Following documentation of the Montour Historical District, the Marsh-Ireton Ranch and other businesses, farms, and buildings were purchased and razed. Many long-time Montour residents moved away from the Valley (Morgan 1999).

A total of 52 cultural resource sites (including isolates) have been documented within the boundaries of the Black Canyon/Montour RMP Study Area. The inventory includes 40 archaeological sites, 12 historic structures or features, and one potential historic district, which includes several standing structures and the foundation remains of approximately 30 other structures. Most of these sites have been previously recorded on site records filed at the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) (Gibson and Kaberline 2002, and Morgan 1999).

Most of the archaeological sites are deposits of prehistoric artifacts or flakes, usually obsidian, basalt, or cryptocrystalline silicate (chert, jasper, or chalcedony) produced in tool manufacture. Sites display a range of features and materials, including hearths, diagnostic side and corner notched projectile points, ground stone objects (grinding stones and pestles), cobble choppers, animal bone, and fire-altered rock. Several sites were recognized as dense deposits of mussel shells, reflecting prehistoric exploitation of fresh water mussels. One stratified site (10-GM-61) contains the rare remains of a semisubterranean house pit within its deposits. Prehistoric sites appear to be residential camps, where tools were manufactured, and where exploitation of fresh water mussels and procurement of other food sources was a major focus.

Historic documentation in the RMP Study Area attests to a wide variety of historic site types. These include resources related to transportation (roads, bridges, the railroad); irrigation (dams, canals, and associated structures); and residential/farming/ranching activities (townsite, refuse scatters, buildings, equipment, foundations).

A survey to identify properties of traditional cultural importance to Indian tribes (and sacred sites) has not been undertaken for the RMP Study Area because of the sensitivity of disclosing the location of such places. The Montour Valley contains streams, valleys, draws and other natural features that could have served as traditional resource procurement areas for aboriginal peoples in their search for food, medicine, clothing, and other necessities, and might qualify as "traditional cultural properties." Also, portions of the Valley may have historically served as ritual or ceremonial places, or as locations associated with traditional beliefs and practices; as such, they could constitute places of traditional cultural importance to the Shoshone-Paiute, Shoshone-Bannock, and possibly other tribes, and thus might qualify as "traditional cultural properties."

Although the RMP Study Area has been explored for cultural resources since the mid-1970's, a good portion of the RMP Study Area has not been intensively surveyed on the ground. Of the cultural resource sites known for the RMP Study Area, the following are considered eligible for

the National Register of Historic Places (although more than half of the known archaeological sites have not been evaluated for eligibility to the National Register):

- 10-GM-61 (stratified prehistoric camp site with pithouse)
- 45-1989 (Montour Historic District)
- 45-18109 (Black Canyon Dam)
- 45-1416 (Marsh-Ireton Ranch)
- BS-1819 (prehistoric lithic scatter)
- BS-1824 (prehistoric lithic scatter)

These sites (as well as other sites that remain to be identified and evaluated for the National Register) have the potential to address research questions or to offer vital information relating to prehistoric and historic use of the RMP Study Area. For example, questions of chronology, prehistoric settlement patterns, natural resource use, and prehistoric affiliations/trade could be answered by future archaeological investigations in the Montour Valley. Because it has a combination of floodplain and bench sites, some of which have great antiquity, the Montour Valley is potentially an extremely important context for study of variability and change in prehistoric settlement and subsistence patterns.

3.11.2 Environmental Consequences

There is a greater potential for beneficial effects to cultural resources from Alternative B than from Alternative A. Reclamation legally must take into account the effects of its actions upon cultural properties under Alternative A and B. However, Alternative B provides greater opportunity for "proactive" cultural resource management through increased public awareness and historic designations, not provided under Alternative A. Alternative B does not rely on reactions to Reclamation undertakings to trigger protection of cultural resources.

3.11.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Because a good portion of the RMP study area has not been intensively surveyed for cultural resources, the discussion of environmental consequences is necessarily general. Identification, protection, and management of cultural resources would continue to occur on a project-specific basis, in response to individual Reclamation-initiated or Reclamation sponsored undertakings that pose a threat to cultural resources. The cultural resources management mode would continue to be predominantly one of reacting, instead of initiating protection from within the cultural resources program itself (that is, a proactive approach). Significant cultural sites would be protected because of legal requirements to do so, not through any agency initiative or preference.

Under existing management, exposed archaeological deposits, in general, would continue to be degraded by erosive forces within and away from the reservoir pool, by vandalism and relic collecting, and by Reclamation-sponsored or initiated actions within the RMP Study Area. The net effect of these actions upon cultural resource sites would be to disturb the horizontal and vertical context of artifacts and other cultural materials, thus destroying scientifically and culturally valuable depositional data about the site, and ultimately information about the early peoples whose activities created the site. These effects tend to be cumulative, annually affecting

the integrity of the cultural property and its potential eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

Under Alternative A, management of the WMA, reservoir, and adjacent lands would be on an ad hoc basis, without benefit of a management plan. Several classes of activities routinely conducted under Alternative A around Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour have the potential to adversely affect cultural resources because of their informal, unstructured approach, which traditionally may not consider effects to other natural or cultural resources. These activities include: lack of an effective erosion control program, minimal public information activities, absence of specific procedures for special events, lack of formalized access procedures, and lack of an overall plan for wetland development. Direct impacts to archaeological and other cultural sites from these activities can result in artifact compaction, dispersal, or removal, leading to destruction of the horizontal and vertical context of the site, and to loss of potential for providing scientific information about the site. Based on the existing cultural resource knowledge base, direct impacts would have greater potential for damage to archaeological sites in the Montour Valley than other locations in the RMP area.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Mitigation for adverse effects from actions occurring under Alternative A would be conducted in accordance with procedures specified in the 36 CFR 800 regulations. Under these procedures, mitigating actions would be developed in consultation with the Idaho SHPO and interested Indian tribes.

3.11.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

Possible erosional impacts from reservoir operations and natural forces, as well as adverse effects from relic collecting, would continue under this alternative. However, because actions prescribed under Alternative B are more focused, developed, and tend to confine activities to smaller areas, Alternative B would be more beneficial to cultural resources than Alternative A.

Under Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative, an effort would be made to proactively manage cultural resources in the Montour Valley. Recognizing the old Montour town site as an historic district and eventually nominating it to the National Register would provide the historic district with a legal measure of protection, which future Reclamation actions would have to take into account. In addition, areas of focused interpretation and public awareness in the Montour Valley (for example, at Marsh/Ireton Ranch, the Palmer House, or historic district) would increase respect and stewardship for these resources and the need to protect them, at the same time confining visitors to controlled spaces, decreasing opportunities for relic collection and vandalism.

Under Alternative B, an effort would be made to actively manage resources other than cultural resources, which would provide indirect benefits to cultural resources. Improving habitat quality through grazing management in the entire RMP Study Area should greatly diminish the potential for cattle to trample cultural sites, thereby destroying their context and rendering them vulnerable to erosion. Effective erosion control programs throughout the RMP Study Area would reduce an obvious harmful threat to archaeological sites. Designating Triangle Park as the main location to

hold special events, while not allowing special events at Montour WMA, would confine large groups to areas where there is less potential to impact cultural properties. Alternative B Actions related to access at Montour WMA would generally have beneficial effects on cultural resources by channeling or confining visitors to areas where they can be controlled and monitored through use of larger signed parking areas, by barriers to regulate motorized access, and by development of self-guided tours.

Not all actions anticipated under the preferred alternative would benefit cultural resources and some actions might threaten cultural resources more than Alternative A actions. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the actions proposed under Alternative B are generally more beneficial to cultural resources than Alternative A actions.

Public education and interpretation programs under Alternative B would increase awareness, but at the same time, intentionally or inadvertently, attract greater numbers of people to a specific location, thus increasing the potential for looting and vandalism. Improved access at the reservoir and WMA through non-motorized trail connections and WMA trail access are preferred alternative actions which can open up new areas to surface modification and public use, causing direct and indirect disturbances to cultural sites. Developing and implementing a program for additional wetland pond acreage has high potential for disturbing the context and intact cultural deposits of archaeological sites in the Montour WMA, mainly through use of heavy dirt-moving equipment. However, because only 25 to 50 pond acres are prescribed under Alternative B, this alternative poses less of a threat to cultural resources through pond development than does Alternative A, in which there is no restricted acreage. Expanding facilities at Cobblestone Park and Black Canyon Park to accommodate additional day use can directly and indirectly impact cultural sites by attracting larger numbers of visitors to the facilities (in this respect Alternative B poses more of a threat to cultural resources than does Alternative A). There is a direct correlation between the number of visitors to an area and impacts on cultural resource sites.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Mitigation under Alternative B (or Alternative A) would occur if cultural resources are present that are eligible for the National Register, and if they are being adversely impacted by reservoir operations or land uses or are being damaged by natural agents. If an action is planned that could adversely impact an archaeological, traditional, or historic resource, Reclamation will investigate options to avoid the site. Cultural resource management actions for impacted sites will be planned and implemented in accordance with consultation requirements defined in 36 CFR 800, using methods consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, or for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, for remains or items that fall under the purview of that statute.

3.12 Sacred Sites

3.12.1 Affected Environment

Sacred sites are defined in Executive Order 13007 as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on Federal land that is identified by an Indian Tribe, or an Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion..." Under Executive Order 13007, Federal land managing agencies must accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

There are various natural features and locations on the RMP Study Area landscape that would have held spiritual or religious significance to aboriginal tribes. These features and locations might require special attention by Reclamation in future administration of the project area. The properties might include altars, vision quest sites, burial sites, and river and rock geographic features, among others. Regan Butte, a prominent geographic feature overlooking the Montour Valley, has a unique characteristic: a large hole in the vertical basalt columns near the peak affords a view through the rock from great distances. This anomaly is especially striking when the sun angle is low and appears to pierce the basalt columns. This feature may have been the location of many sacred or ceremonial activities. Modern lore, in fact, points to the butte as an ancient burial location. Local residents recall collecting trade beads and other artifacts many years ago from the top of Regan Butte. Recent offerings of porcupine quills and other objects attest to the continuing spiritual nature and use of this prominent feature (Morgan 1999).

3.12.2 Environmental Consequences

3.12.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative—Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Possible impacts to Indian sacred sites from a continuation of existing management practices in the area of the RMP (or from new management practices or activities) can only be dealt with in a general way since the specific nature and location of sacred properties is unknown. If sacred sites are located in the area of potential effect of a Reclamation project, their integrity is compromised by actual physical disturbances as well as visual or auditory intrusions resulting in changes in character, feeling, and association of the site. In such cases, their "sacredness" and importance as a religious or sacred site is diminished. As with cultural resources, sacred sites are compromised by vandalism and relic collecting, by land use activities, and recreation and other development.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative A)

Executive Order 13007 does not authorize agencies to mitigate for the impact of their actions upon Indian sacred sites. However, it does direct them to avoid adverse impacts whenever possible. For future Reclamation actions in the RMP area that could impact Indian sacred sites, Reclamation would consult with tribes in conjunction with any 36 CFR 800 consultations. Under these consultations, Reclamation will seek means to avoid adverse impacts to sacred sites.

3.12.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Resource Values and Maintenance of Recreational Opportunities

This alternative is essentially the same as Alternative A. However, because of more focused, controlled, and formalized land use activities, potential impacts to sacred sites under Alternative B would be less than for Alternative A.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts (Alternative B)

Mitigation is the same as described for Alternative A above.

3.13 Indian Trust Assets

3.13.1 Affected Environment

ITAs are legal interests in property held in trust by the United States for Indian Tribes or individuals. The Secretary of the Interior, acting as the trustee, holds many assets in trust for Indian Tribes or Indian individuals. Examples of things that may be trust assets are lands, minerals, hunting and fishing rights and water rights. While most ITAs are on-reservation, they may also be found off-reservation.

The United States has an Indian trust responsibility to protect and maintain rights reserved by or granted to Indian Tribes or Indian individuals by treaties, statues, and executive orders. These are sometimes further interpreted through court decisions and regulations.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, a Federally recognized Tribe, located at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in southeastern Idaho have trust assets both on-reservation and off-reservation. The Fort Bridger Treaty was signed and agreed to by the Bannock and Shoshone headman on July 3, 1868. The treaty states in Article 4, that members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe" …shall have the right to hunt on the unoccupied lands of the United States…."

The Tribes believe their right extends to the right to fish. The Fort Bridger Treaty for the Shoshone-Bannock has been interpreted in the case of State of Idaho v. Tinno, an off-reservation fishing case in Idaho. The Idaho Supreme Court determined that the Shoshone word for "hunt" also included to "fish." Under Tinno, the Court affirmed that the Tribal Members' right to take fish off-reservation pursuant to the Fort Bridger Treaty (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 1994).

The Nez Perce Tribe is a Federally recognized Tribe of the Nez Perce Reservation in northern Idaho The United States and the Tribes entered into three treaties (Treaty of 1855, Treaty of 1863, and Treaty of 1868) and one agreement (Agreement of 1893). The rights of the Nez Perce Tribes include the right to hunt, gather, and graze livestock on open and unclaimed lands, and the right to fish in all usual and accustomed places (Nez Perce Tribe 1995).

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Indians, a Federally recognized Tribe, without a reservation possess treaty protected hunting and fishing rights which may be exercised on unoccupied lands within the area acquired by the United States pursuant to the 1868 Treaty of Fort Bridger. No opinion is expressed as to which areas maybe regarded as "unoccupied lands."

Other Federally recognized Tribes that do not have off-reservation ITAs may have cultural and religious interests in the areas being considered in the RMP. These interests may be protected under historic preservation laws and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). See sections 3.11 and 3.12 (Cultural Resources and Sacred Sites) for a discussion of other Tribal interests.

3.13.2 Environmental Consequences

There is no universally accepted understanding as to the specific treaty rights to hunt and fish in the vicinity of the Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA since there has not been a settlement with either the Nez Perce Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes or the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation as to the extent and nature of their off-reservation hunting and fishing treaty rights. Thus, ITA's considered are tribal hunting and fishing rights that may exist. Water rights claims or lack of such claims within the Snake River Basin Adjudication are not necessarily determinative of these kinds of rights.

There are no direct impacts to the right to hunt, right to fish or right to gather under either Alternative A or B. The impacts to resources associated with these rights are discussed in Section 3.4, *Wildlife*, and 3.5, *Aquatic Biology*. Hunting is discussed for each alternative under Sections 2.2.1.2 and 2.2.2.2, *Consumptive Recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping)*.

3.13.2.1 Mitigation and Residual Impacts

No mitigation measures are proposed for either of the two alternatives because no impacts would occur to tribal rights from their implementation. No residual impacts would occur as a result of either of the two alternatives.

3.14 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are effects on the environment that result from incremental consequences of a proposed action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of who undertakes these actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. It has been determined that the proposed Black Canyon Partners, LLC, planned unit development project noted in Section 1.6, *Related Activities*, represents a reasonably foreseeable future action that may result in cumulative impacts to various resources associated with Reclamation lands at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. Known factors related to this project are described below. Potential cumulative impacts to reservoir and WMA resources follow this description.

The Black Canyon Partners, LLC, project is still in the early stages of development, and although some lands have been purchased, future lands still need to be acquired or leased, planning and design concepts worked out, and permits obtained. The project would encompass about 3,232 acres and occur in three separate phases. It is proposed to be developed primarily on private land adjacent to Reclamation lands on the south side of the reservoir, including a large private parcel with a flowage easement (the peninsula across from and just downstream of Triangle Park). It appears the project also proposes using portions of Reclamation lands across from and upstream of Triangle Park.

Known details of the proposed development are as follows:

- Phase 1:
  - First 18-hole golf course
  - Clubhouse, swimming pool, and tennis court
  - Restaurant
  - Depot and marina
  - Amphitheater
  - Commercial district
  - Approximately 110 residential home sites (3,200 sq. ft. to 40 acres in size)
  - Infrastructure (roads, community water/wastewater system, and utilities)
- Phase 2:
  - Equestrian facilities located at Spring Gulch, including indoor and outdoor arena, barn/stables, and commercial area (veterinarian/farrier/feed)
  - 200 to 250 residential home sites
- Phase 3:
  - Second 18-hole public golf course
  - 200 to 250 residential home sites

The proposed development includes numerous features that could potentially result in impacts to various natural, cultural, and social resources found within the RMP study area. The eastern boundary of the proposed development would abut the new western boundary of the expanded WMA. The project's northern boundary would be adjacent to the reservoir and Reclamation lands on the south side of the reservoir. Drainages running through and out of the proposed

development area and into the reservoir include one perennial creek (Anderson Creek) and several intermittent creeks. The area proposed for this development has primarily been used for livestock grazing or has remained in a fairly natural state; therefore, the development would drastically alter the area's long-term use and character.

It is important to note that if any Federal actions are triggered from the proposed development, then future specific effects on Reclamation lands and facilities would be handled under a separate NEPA analyses.

3.14.1 Cumulative Impacts Related to Resource Topics Included in the Draft EA

3.14.1.1 Water Quality and Contaminants

A development of this size would likely cause a substantial amount of land disturbance and erosion potential, adding to sediment loads in the reservoir. Increased boating activity could adversely affect shoreline habitat and increase soil erosion. The proposed golf courses and other areas with maintained landscapes (residences, commercial areas, etc.) have the potential to contribute pesticides and fertilizers into Anderson Creek, various intermittent creeks, and ultimately the reservoir. Sewage disposal, increased snowmelt, and increased stormwater runoff have the potential to increase nutrient loading to the reservoir.

3.14.1.2 Vegetation

Development of the project would likely result in the loss of native plant communities in the project area and would increase shoreline erosion and loss of shoreline plant communities, as a result of more boats on the reservoir.

3.14.1.3 Wildlife

The project would likely result in the loss of wildlife habitat in the project area as the development proceeds and would increase shoreline erosion and loss of shoreline plant communities, as a result of more boats on the reservoir. Wildlife in the WMA could be affected because of its proximity with the project and presence of more people in the area.

3.14.1.4 Aquatic Biology

Potential cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project include increased anglers on the reservoir, land disturbance, associated water quality issues, and possible flow reductions in tributaries.

3.14.1.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

The proposed project could potentially affect Ute ladies' tresses orchids that may occur in or near the RMP Study Area. Typical potential habitat includes wetland and riparian areas such as springs, wet meadows, and river meanders. Impacts to Ute ladies' tresses could include surface disturbance and hydrologic changes in areas where suitable habitat is located.

Bald eagles use the RMP Study Area mainly during the winter months. An increase in the year-round human population as a result of the proposed project could potentially affect eagle use in the area.

Although the likelihood of a gray wolf occurring within the RMP Study Area is low, it is still possible. The greatest chance of an occurrence is during a severe winter when more than a normal number of deer, the wolf's primary potential prey in the RMP Study Area, would be driven to lower elevations by deep mountain and foothills snow. An increase in the local human population of the area around the RMP Study Area from the proposed project would result in more traffic and consequently more vehicle deer collisions, especially during severe winters. The availability of more dead deer near the highway for scavenging wolves could result in a slightly higher potential for vehicle wolf collisions, although this is considered to be only a remote possibility because of the location of the project.

The proposed project would not affect Squaw Creek; therefore, there would be no cumulative impacts to bull trout.

3.14.1.6 Recreation and Access

Construction of the proposed planned unit development would dramatically and permanently change the type and level of recreation activity in the area. A major impact would be the creation of an entirely new recreation activity in the area (golfing), and new visitors and residents that would be drawn to the area to participate in this activity. Additionally, the proposed development would be expected to attract many visitors and local residents in the summer when most reservoir visitors currently use the area. This would create some adverse impacts such as increased crowding and potential conflicts on the reservoir because of increased boating activities, and to a lesser degree, increased competition for space at the reservoir recreation sites. Increased use, competition, and conflicts would likely alter the reservoir visitor's experience and may cause visitors to go elsewhere. Conversely, the project would also create new recreational opportunities that don't currently exist. In summary, the proposed project would have both an adverse and a positive impact on recreation in the area. While it would create the positive impact of providing new recreational activities and visitor experiences, it would potentially displace existing visitors, as well as the character of the recreational experience currently available in the area.

It is likely that a development of this scale would substantially increase traffic in the area, particularly on the south side of the reservoir where the development is being proposed. While the cumulative effect would be more traffic in the general area, it would be expected to have only a marginal affect on reservoir users due to the reservoir recreation sites all being located on the north side of the reservoir off Highway 52. However, short-term effects to access (including traffic-related problems) would be greater to the entire area as a result of construction-related activities and the larger number of vehicles and using area roads.

3.14.1.7 Land Use

Overall, the proposed project would alter land use patterns, result in changed zoning, increase overall activity levels, and modified property values throughout the surrounding area. This, in turn, could spur more growth and even greater cumulative impacts on area resources. The project

would put increased pressure on, and thus cumulatively affect, area providers of public services and utilities, such as law enforcement, emergency services, and power, water, and waste service.

The project also proposes using some of Reclamation's land in their development. If this is the case, Black Canyon Partners, LLC, would need to obtain a permit from Reclamation in order to use Reclamation land. Should Reclamation choose to issue the permit, it would obligate some Reclamation land for a different use than currently exists, and could result in exclusive uses where the general public would no longer be assured access.

Any development proposed within the area encumbered by Reclamation's flowage easement would still be subject to reservoir flowage if necessary; therefore, no cumulative effects would be anticipated in this area.

3.14.1.8 Socioeconomics

Construction of a phased project of this magnitude would substantially and permanently change the type and level of human activity in the area. This would likely result a adding a relatively large number of job opportunities, particularly in the short-term during construction, but also in the long-term with the addition of primarily service-oriented jobs. Thus, the cumulative effects on socioeconomic resources would generally be positive.

3.14.1.9 Environmental Justice

No cumulative impacts to environmental justice would be anticipated as a result of the proposed development project.

3.14.1.10 Cultural Resources

The proposed Black Canyon Partners, LLC, development project would have both direct and indirect impacts upon cultural resources. Construction and development of Phase 1 activities would involve large areas of surface disturbance that can directly damage intact cultural deposits, break artifacts, and mix together artifacts from different episodes of occupation thus destroying context. Associated road or trail construction would increase surface erosion, destabilizing the soil base and damaging fragile archaeological sites. The planned use of the area for commercial, residential, and recreational purposes would radically alter the population base of a heretofore sparsely-populated area, greatly increasing the potential for archaeological site looting, relic collecting, and vandalism. Both the direct and indirect impacts of the Black Canyon Partners, LLC, development to cultural resources would intensify and expand in area with subsequent Phases 2 and 3, through increased surface disturbance and greater numbers of residents and recreational activities.

3.14.1.11 Sacred Sites

Should any Indian sacred sites such as burials happen to be present, construction and development can adversely affect such sites by disturbing or destroying their physical and spiritual context. Any activities that result in an increase of visitors and residents to an area is likely to adversely impact sacred sites—directly, by causing a physical change in the character of the site, and indirectly, by introducing intrusive elements such as noise, increased looting, and changes in viewshed and setting. A greater chance for those impacts occurring would result from

subsequent Phases 2 and 3 of the Black Canyon Partners, LLC, development and associated increased use of the area.

3.14.1.12 Indian Trust Assets

Indian Trust Assets, or the right to hunt, fish, or gather that may exist, apply to Federal lands. The proposed development would not impact tribal rights that may exist, but could affect resources associated with the rights, the vegetation, wildlife and aquatic habitat on the federal lands. Discussions for Vegetation, Wildlife, and Aquatic Biology are noted in the narrative above, *3.14 Cumulative Impacts*.

3.14.2 Other Potential Cumulative Impacts

Noise-related impacts and effects on visual resources and air quality were not described nor impacts assessed in the Draft EA because it was determined that the alternatives would not affect these resources. However, the proposed project would likely affect these resources, thus, summaries of the probable effects to these resources is provided below.

3.14.2.1 Air Quality

Cumulative effects on air quality would be increased levels of airborne dust and would be associated primarily with construction-related activities, and therefore, relatively short-term. Nonetheless, because of the level of development being proposed and the phased nature of the project, these impacts could be drawn out over a fairly lengthy timeframe.

3.14.2.2 Visual Resources

As previously noted, construction of the proposed planned unit development would dramatically and permanently change the type and level of activities in and character of the area resulting in an adverse impact on the visual resources on the RMP Study Area. The dominant visual quality of the area, including where the proposed project would be located is, for the most part, unencumbered by buildings, roads, and other human-induced impacts (golf course and marina). The project would completely change the character of the south side of the reservoir from pastoral and rural to one that has a more suburban character.

3.14.2.3 Noise

Cumulative effects to noise levels in the area would be increased levels associated primarily with construction-related activities, and therefore, relatively short-term. Nonetheless, because of the level of development being proposed and the phased nature of the project, these impacts could be drawn out over a fairly lengthy timeframe. Additionally, increased boating on the reservoir would cause an incremental increase in the overall noise effects caused by this activity.

4.0 Consultation and Coordination

4.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

4.1 Public Involvement

Reclamation's approach to preparing the RMP and associated EA has been to involve the public, particularly by developing a dialogue with local stakeholder groups. The goal of the public involvement process was to make sure that all stakeholders, including the general public, have ample opportunity to express their interests, concerns, and viewpoints, and to comment on the plan as it was developed. By fostering two-way communication, Reclamation was also able to use the talents and perspectives of local user groups and agencies during the alternatives development process.

Reclamation's public involvement process has involved the following five key components:

- **Newsbriefs**—A newsletter was initially mailed to more than 140 user groups, nearby residents, and agencies. The mailing list is continuously expanded as more interested parties are identified. Three newsbriefs were released during the RMP development process, and one more was released upon completion of this Final EA and the RMP.
- **Public Meetings/Workshops**—Two public meetings were held in the RMP/EA planning process. One was held early on in the process to solicit public input (scoping) related to issues and opportunities, and the other was held after the release of the Draft EA to take public comments. Public meetings were held in Emmett, Idaho.
- **Ad Hoc Work Group**—This group consisted of approximately 19 representatives from interested groups and agencies. They met four times throughout the RMP development process to identify issues and assist with RMP update and alternatives development.
- **RMP Study Web Site**—The newsbriefs, draft materials, and meeting announcements were continuously updated throughout the project at a dedicated website on Reclamation's Pacific Northwest site: http://www.usbr.gov/pn. The final materials will also be posted at this site.
- **News Releases**—Periodically, Reclamation prepares news releases for distribution to local news media. Such news releases generally result in press coverage of the RMP process.

In March 2002, the first newsbrief introduced the RMP process, announced the first public meeting, and provided a mail-in form for submitting issues and initial comments on the management and facilities at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA. Approximately 10 of these response forms were returned. The results of the mail-in response form and the issues raised at the first public meeting were summarized in the second newsbrief, mailed November 2002. The third newsbrief was mailed in September 2003 and provided an update of the Ad Hoc Work Group (AHWG) process and announced the public meeting for the Draft EA. The fourth newsbrief announced the release of the Final EA and completion of the RMP.

The first public meeting was held on April 24, 2002, in Emmett. The purpose of this meeting was to conduct public scoping of the issues at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting. Reclamation provided information about the RMP

planning process, then the participants broke into small work groups to discuss important issues and opportunities the RMP should address.

The second public meeting was held on October 9, 2003, to take public comment on the Draft EA. Approximately 10 people attended the meeting, and a wide range of public access issues were discussed. Reclamation encouraged participants to also submit their comments in writing so that they could be formally addressed as part of this Final EA.

The AHWG met in June and August, 2002, and January and October 2003. As part of the August 2002 meeting, the group spent a day touring the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA Study Area and becoming more familiar with the issues. The 19 members were of considerable assistance in the alternatives development process. A wide variety of viewpoints was included in the group. The Preferred Alternative was arrived at through AHWG discussions, and the recommendations of agency specialists and planners. At the October 2003 meeting, the group reviewed the comments from the public meeting and offered final suggestions for the Preferred Alternative. The entities represented in the AHWG are listed in Table 4.1-1.

TABLE 4.1-1
AHWG Represented Interests

Adjacent Land Owners	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Audubon Society	Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad
Boating Interest	Idaho Transportation Department
Bureau of Land Management	Local Business Interest
City of Emmett	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Fishing Interest	North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association
Gem County Commissioners	Personal Watercraft Interest
Gem County Sheriff's Office	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Gem County Weed Control Board	Shoshone-Paiute Tribes
Gem Economic Development Association	

4.1.1 Summary of Public Comments

Reclamation's Draft EA of the Black Canyon and Montour WMA RMP was released for public review on September 30, 2003. The public comment period was open until November 14, 2003. During this period, Reclamation held a public meeting and an AHWG meeting in Emmett. Public comment forms were distributed to participants at both meetings. By the end of the public comment period, 16 individual or group comments were received. This count includes 11 people who submitted copies of the same comment, and one agency comment, which is discussed in Section 4.2.2, National Historic Preservation Act.

Reclamation thanks all of those who provided comments. The public comments, along with responses, are provided in Appendix D. Overall, comments focused on three main subject areas:

- **Additional pond acres:** Three respondents do not favor the creation of additional ponds at Montour WMA.
- **Recreational access:** Most respondents favor more recreational access and a diversity of uses. Two asked for maintenance of open grassy fields for dog training, some other people asked for improvements to boat ramps, and one person requested that an existing pond at Montour that is used for fishing be made available year-round rather than being subject to the seasonal waterfowl nesting closure. Most respondents indicated that the additional month proposed for the nesting closure is too restrictive. Many also asked that Cobblestone Park be open year-round and that special events be allowed at Montour.
- **No-wake zone upstream of Squaw Creek:** While one respondent supports the designation as proposed in the Preferred Alternative, the 11 people who submitted copies of the same comment feel that the no-wake zone starts too far downstream. They suggest that the no-wake zone should be started farther upstream so that a referred fishing area can continue to be accessed. They provided a map showing the location of their suggested location change.

Other concerns were expressed by one or two individuals. One such concern included a perceived emphasis on waterfowl production at the expense of upland game bird production at Montour. Another respondent felt that agency cooperation, seeking a managing partner, and continued monitoring of RMP implementation were critical success factors. Several other subjects were also addressed, as listed in Table 4.1-2.

TABLE 4.1-2
Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Draft EA—Comment Summary

Issue	Number of Comments	Summary of Comments
Support Preferred Alternative	3	Support Preferred Alternative, but have certain changes or recommendations.
Do Not Support a Specific Component of Preferred Alternative	11	The Preferred Alternative is too restrictive for motorized boat users.
	2	The Preferred Alternative does not consider the desires of dog trainers.
No Wake Zone	1	Designate no-wake zone near the mouth of Squaw Creek
	11	Designate no-wake zone further upstream of Squaw Creek (shown on respondent's map).
RMP Implementation Monitoring	1	Assure plan implementation through an established monitoring process to measure success.
Enforcement of Seasonal Closure at Montour	11	Request better enforcement of existing seasonal closure as there are currently many violations.
Agency Coordination and Managing Partners	1	Assure cooperation between agencies involved in the RMP. Actively search for a managing partner for the RMP.

TABLE 4.1-2
Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Draft EA—Comment Summary

Issue	Number of Comments	Summary of Comments
Manage an Area for Dog Training	1	Maintain open grassy fields for dog training.
Provide Year-Round Recreation Pond	1	Establish one 10-acre pond for year-round fishing and other recreational opportunities.
Additional Ponds in Montour WMA	2	Do not support development of additional ponds in the WMA. Reasons include concern about the spread of weeds such as Eurasian milfoil, impingement upon available dry land for upland hunting, lack of adequate management of existing ponds, possibility of more extensive nesting closures with pond expansion, overemphasis on habitat for waterfowl versus pheasants, restrictions on space available for hunting.
	1	Additional ponds are acceptable, as long as they are placed and maintained appropriately.
Seasonal Nesting Extension of Nesting Season Closure at Montour	2	Do not extend the nesting closure. They do not believe it is needed at Montour.
	11	Change nesting habitat restrictions for the pond on south side of Shellrock Road to Feb. 1 to April 15 to allow fishing.
Recreation Access	1	Do not over-develop Montour (barriers, parking lots, fences).
	11	Improve boat ramps #1 and #2.
	11	Open gate for Cobblestone Park year-round.
Special Events	2	Allow special events in Montour WMA

Note: The number of comments indicated counts all of the 11 people who submitted copies of the same letter.

4.2 Agency Consultation and Coordination

Reclamation consulted with several Federal and local agencies throughout the RMP process to gather valuable input and to meet regulatory requirements. This coordination was integrated with the public involvement process.

4.2.1 Endangered Species Act

The evaluation of endangered species contained in the Draft EA served as Reclamation's biological assessment as required under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It evaluated impacts to listed species and those proposed for listing including the Ute ladies'-tresses orchid, bald eagle, gray wolf, and bull trout. FWS provided comments on the Draft EA in their letter dated February 25, 2004. With the issuance of this FONSI and Final EA, Reclamation has determined that the Preferred Alternative may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the bull trout, orchid, bald eagle, and gray wolf and will not result in any adverse effects on proposed bull trout critical habitat in Squaw Creek. The FWS concurs with this determination, and their letter is included in Appendix C.

4.2.2 National Historic Preservation Act

Reclamation collected existing cultural resource information from the Black Canyon and Montour Study Area to prepare the Draft EA, and to facilitate subsequent compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Coordination with the Idaho State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) occurred in conjunction with public review of the Draft EA. SHPO stated their "cautious" support of the Preferred Alternative, but wanted to assure that as development increased, archeological resources would be preserved. SHPO submitted the following three comments on the Preferred Alternative:

- Ensure that archeological investigations are conducted in accordance with Section 106 of NHPA.
- Nominate the old Montour town site as a historic district for the National Register of Historic Places.
- Focus public interpretation on the history and prehistory of the Payette River and Montour Valley.

All of these comments are in accordance with management actions described in the Preferred Alternative that will be incorporated in the RMP. In addition, it is understood that specific, future undertakings in response to specific RMP prescriptions will require consultations with the SHPO and the Tribes pursuant to the 36 CFR 800 regulations.

4.3 Tribal Consultation and Coordination

4.3.1 Government-to-Government Consultation with Tribes

The RMP and EA were distributed to representatives from the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes. Tribal representatives that will receive the Final EA are listed in Chapter 7, Distribution List.

4.3.2 Indian Sacred Sites (Executive Order 13007)

Reclamation informed the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes about the RMP through written notifications and meetings.

4.3.3 Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)

Reclamation coordinated with the Shoshone-Bannock, Shoshone-Paiute, and Nez Perce Tribes to identify ITAs. These are discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.16, Indian Trust Assets.

4.3.4 Other Laws and Regulations

The relationship between Federal agencies and sovereign Tribes is defined by several laws and regulations addressing the requirement of Federal agencies to notify or consult with Native

American groups or otherwise consider their interests when planning and implementing Federal undertakings. Among these are the following:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Executive Order 12875, Enhancing the Intergovernmental Partnership
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations
- Presidential Memorandum: Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments, April 29, 1994.
- Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments

Reclamation has adhered to these laws and regulations as applicable to the development of the Final EA and the RMP.

5.0 Environmental Commitments

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

5.1 Best Management Practices

The following best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to avoid or minimize potential effects to the resources within the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Study Area that could occur if the Preferred Alternative were implemented. Although not listed here, the management actions identified in the Preferred Alternative as needed for proper stewardship of resources are also considered to be environmental commitments.

5.1.1 Landscape Preservation and Impact Avoidance

1. Developed facilities will complement with and be subservient to the surrounding landscape wherever possible.
2. Disturbed areas resulting from any construction will be aggressively revegetated.
3. To the maximum extent practicable, all existing trees, shrubs, and other naturally occurring vegetation will be preserved and protected from construction operations and equipment except where clearing operations are required for permanent structures, approved construction roads, or excavation operations.
4. To the maximum extent practicable, all maintenance yards, field offices, and staging areas will be arranged to preserve trees, shrubs, and other vegetation.
5. Clearing will be restricted to that area needed for construction. In critical habitat areas including, but not limited to, wetlands and riparian areas, clearing may be restricted to only a few feet beyond the areas required for construction.
6. Stream corridors, wetlands, riparian areas, steep slopes, or other critical environmental areas will not be used for equipment or materials storage or stockpiling; construction staging or maintenance; field offices; hazardous material or fuel storage, handling, or transfer; or temporary access roads, in order to reduce environmental damage.
7. Excavated or graded materials will not be stockpiled or deposited on or within 100 feet of any steep slopes (defined by industry standards), wetlands, riparian areas, or stream banks (including seasonally active ephemeral streams without woody or herbaceous vegetation growing in the channel bottom), or on native vegetation.
8. To the maximum extent possible, staging areas, access roads, and other site disturbances will be located in disturbed areas, not in native or naturally occurring vegetation.
9. The width of all new temporary and permanent roads will be kept to the absolute minimum needed for safety, avoiding wetland and riparian areas where possible. Turnouts and staging areas will not be placed in wetlands.

5.1.2 Erosion and Sediment Control

1. The design and construction of facilities will employ applicable recognized BMPs to prevent possible soil erosion and subsequent water quality impacts.

2. The planting of grasses, forbs, trees, or shrubs beneficial to wildlife, or the placement of riprap, sand bags, sod, erosion mats, bale dikes, mulch, or excelsior blankets will be used to prevent and minimize erosion and siltation during construction and during the period needed to reestablish permanent local native vegetative cover on disturbed sites located outside of landscaped areas. Appropriate landscaping plants and materials will be used for such purposes in landscaped areas.

3. Final erosion control and site restoration measures will be initiated as soon as a particular area is no longer needed for construction, stockpiling, or access. Clearing schedules will be arranged to minimize exposure of soils.

4. Cuts and fills for relocated and new roads will be sloped to facilitate revegetation.

5. Soil or rock stockpiles, excavated materials, or excess soil materials will not be placed near sensitive habitats, including water channels, wetlands, riparian areas, and on native or naturally occurring vegetation, where they may erode into these habitats or be washed away by high water or storm runoff. Waste piles will be revegetated using suitable native species after they are shaped to provide a natural appearance.

5.1.3 Biological Resources

1. Rare and sensitive species clearances described below will be conducted after project authorization, but prior to the start of construction.

2. If native plant communities must be used for access roads or staging areas, site clearances at the appropriate time of year for the species involved will be conducted by qualified biologists to ensure sensitive species are not impacted. Any established search protocols will be followed. Additional information concerning avoidance of rare and threatened or endangered species is presented in Sections 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7.

3. Construction activities that could impact fish will be undertaken during non-spawning periods.

4. During the 15-year period covered by this RMP, species not currently protected under the Endangered Species Act may be listed and species that are not considered to be rare may become so. If any such species occur on Reclamation lands, Reclamation would develop and enforce appropriate site disturbance, time of year, distance restrictions in areas harboring Federal and state designated species of special concern (including Federally designated endangered or threatened species and rare species).

5.1.4 Site Restoration and Revegetation

1. Construction areas, including storage yards, will limit the amount of waste material and trash accumulations at all times.

2. All unused materials and trash will be removed from construction and storage sites during the final phase of work. All removed material will be placed in approved sanitary landfills or storage sites, and work areas will be left to conform to the natural landscape.

3. Upon completion of construction, grade any land disturbed outside the limits of reservoir pools, permanent roads, and other permanent facilities to provide proper drainage and blend with the natural contour of the land. Following grading, replant with native vegetation in coordination with IDFG, with non-native species used as appropriate. All plants used will be suitable for the site conditions, and beneficial to wildlife.

4. Where applicable, consult with the following agencies to determine the recommended plant species composition, seeding rates, and planting dates:

    - Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG)
    - U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
    - Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR)
    - U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

5. Grasses, forbs, shrubs, and trees appropriate for site conditions and surrounding vegetation will be included on a plant list developed during site design. Species chosen for a site will be matched for site drainage, climate, shading, resistance to erosion, soil type, slope, aspect, and vegetation management goals. Wetland and riparian species will be used in revegetating disturbed wetlands. Upland revegetation shall match the plant list to the site's soil type, topographic position, elevation, and surrounding communities. Local native species will be used in all areas that are not landscaped unless IDFG determines that non-native species are preferred to meet a management goal.

5.1.5 Pollution Prevention

1. All Federal and State laws related to control and abatement of water pollution will be complied with. All waste material and sewage from construction activities or project-related features will be disposed of according to Federal and State pollution control regulations.

2. Construction contractors may be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit as established under Public Law 92B500 and amended by the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95B217).

3. Construction specifications shall require construction methods that will prevent entrance or accidental spillage of pollutants into flowing or dry watercourses and underground water sources. Potential pollutants and wastes include refuse, garbage, cement, concrete, sewage effluent, industrial waste, oil and other petroleum products, aggregate processing tailings, mineral salts, drilling mud, and thermal pollution.

4. Eroded materials shall be prevented from entering streams or watercourses during dewatering activities associated with structure foundations or earthwork operations adjacent to, or encroaching on, streams or watercourses.

5. Any construction wastewater discharged into surface waters will be essentially free of settling material. Water pumped from behind cofferdams and wastewater from aggregate processing,

concrete batching, or other construction operations shall not enter streams or watercourses without water quality treatment. Turbidity control methods may include settling ponds; gravel-filter entrapment dikes; approved flocculating processes not harmful to fish or other aquatic life; recirculation systems for washing aggregates; or other approved methods.

6. Any riprap shall be free of contaminants and not contribute significantly to the turbidity of the reservoir.

7. Appropriate controls to reduce stormwater pollutant loads in post-construction site runoff shall be followed. The appropriate facilities shall be properly designed, installed, and maintained to provide water quality treatment for runoff originating from all recreational facilities.

8. All parking lots and marinas should be designed to promote efficient vehicle and boat traffic to prevent congestion and pollution.

9. Waste facilities should be connected, whenever possible, to sanitary sewer systems instead of septic tanks to avoid water quality problems from failed tanks.

5.1.6 Noise and Air Pollution Prevention

1. Contractors will be required to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations concerning prevention and control of noise and air pollution. Contractors are expected to use reasonably available methods and devices to control, prevent, and reduce atmospheric emissions or discharges of atmospheric contaminants and noise.

2. Contractors will be required to reduce dust from construction operations and prevent it from damaging dwellings or causing a nuisance to people. Methods such as wetting exposed soil or roads where dust is generated by passing vehicles will be employed.

5.1.7 Cultural Resource Site Protection

1. If necessary, Reclamation will prepare a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) to define long-term management and protection goals and processes. The CRMP may be a single plan covering the entire RMP area, or it may be specific to a particular site or sites in the RMP area that are in need of management or protection.

2. If there are significant cultural resource sites that may be affected by a Reclamation action (including TCP's), Reclamation will consult with the SHPO and Shoshone-Bannock and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes about appropriate actions to take to protect those sites.

3. Cultural resource management requirements and goals shall be integrated into other management plans completed under the RMP, including the comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan and Integrated Pest Management Plan.

4. When implementing habitat restoration activities, plant resources that have traditional importance to the Shoshone-Bannock and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes shall be used, insofar as these plants accomplish the habitat restoration goal and are reasonably comparable in cost.

5. Information shall be provided about the prehistory and history of the RMP area, for the enjoyment of users.

6. Reclamation will coordinate with the BLM during the their resource management planning on lands adjacent to Reclamation's boundary, to identify actions they might implement that would aid in protecting cultural resources on Reclamation's lands.
7. Location-specific cultural resource clearances shall be obtained when the agency acts to enhance recreation and wildlife. Avoid adverse effects to significant cultural properties by relocating or redesigning any proposed development.
8. Cultural sites shall be stabilized or protected when avoidance is not possible. Test excavations will be conducted as necessary to determine the presence or nature of subsurface deposits, or whether an archeological site may be eligible for the National Register. Consultation, per 36 CFR 800, will also be conducted to determine site eligibility, project effect, and appropriate treatment of adversely affected Register-eligible sites.
9. Actions to protect human burials shall be initiated as soon as possible if they are reported to be exposed or endangered by reservoir operations, natural erosion, or land use. Unless the burials are clearly non-Indian, tribes potentially affiliated with the remains will be consulted upon discovery of a burial, and procedures for protection, treatment, and disposition of the remains will be worked out with those tribes in accordance with NAGPRA.
10. Archaeological collections shall be curated in most cases at the Archaeological Survey of Idaho, Western Repository, in Boise (except NAGPRA burials and cultural items). When NAGPRA burials or cultural items are recovered, procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 10 for consultation and custody will be followed.
11. If consultation with Indian tribes reveals Indian sacred sites to be present that are being adversely affected by land use, Reclamation will implement actions to avoid or reduce those impacts.

5.1.8 Miscellaneous Comments

Reclamation-issued land use licenses, leases, and permits will contain sufficient language and stipulations to help protect existing resources and help mitigate possible conflicts among the various users and between visitors and adjacent land owners.

5.2 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are environmental commitments intended to compensate for impacts that cannot be avoided through implementation of BMPs.

5.2.1 Vegetation

To avoid substantial detrimental impacts to native plant resources, Reclamation will undertake the following design measures:

- In addition to Reclamation's overall planned increase in noxious and invasive weed control efforts, all sites that are disturbed for facilities shall be actively monitored for these plants. All

infestations will be treated in accordance with accepted methods and agreements with IDFG and Gem County and in accordance with Reclamation's Integrated Pest Management Plan.

- The expansion proposed for Black Canyon Park is along a riparian edge of the reservoir. The expansion design will include removing false indigo and other weedy species that are invading along the riparian zone, and leaving native vegetation in place.
- The expansion proposed for Cobblestone Park is a gravel substrate within the floodplain of the Payette River. This site has an open understory that makes it a target for heavy off-road vehicle use. Although much of it has been invaded by weeds, many areas have native cottonwood and willow. The proposed expansion for Cobblestone Park will be designed to conserve the trees and shrubs onsite, to control weeds, and to limit vehicle use to roadways.
- Both expansions will further compensate for impacts on vegetation resources by landscaping the expanded and disturbed areas with native plants instead of with the mix of exotic lawn and tree species that were used for the existing parks where appropriate and cost effective.
- Reclamation will proportionally replace areas and habitat value of all wetland and riparian areas that are directly impacted or degraded by implementation actions.

5.2.2 Wildlife

- Reclamation will replace the area and habitat value of all wetland and riparian areas that are directly impacted or degraded by implementation actions.
- New wetlands/open water ponds created within the Montour WMA will be developed in upland areas if possible, considering the location of available water sources. Where possible, this action could avoid impacts on wildlife that use wet meadows, which is also a valuable habitat type.
- Future development of new emergent wetlands/open water ponds may be in wet meadow areas because of the location of water sources. No ground disturbing activities would be undertaken before a field review was conducted to determine the likelihood of occurrence of sensitive species (e.g. spotted frog). If warranted a sensitive species survey would be conducted following established protocols and seasonal requirements. Project implementation and design would be based on the findings of the survey.
- Additional wildlife species are likely to become rare over the 15-year time frame of the RMP. Appropriate site clearances following established protocols will also be conducted for other wildlife species that become rare during that period prior to ground disturbance.

5.2.3 Cultural Resources

Mitigation under all alternatives will occur if cultural resources are present that are eligible for the National Register, and if they are being adversely impacted by reservoir operations or land uses or are being damaged by natural agents. If an action is planned that could adversely impact historic properties, Reclamation will investigate options to avoid the site. Cultural resource management actions for impacted sites will be planned and implemented in accordance with consultation requirements defined in 36 CFR 800, using methods consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

6.0 Preparers

6.0 PREPARERS

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7.0 Distribution List

7.0 DISTRIBUTION LIST

7.1 Overview

The Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA RMP Final EA has been sent to the tribes, government officials, agencies, libraries, groups and organizations, and individuals named in the following distribution list. As noted, the EA is available for review at several libraries; it is also available for viewing (and downloading, if desired) on Reclamation's web site at http://www.usbr.gov/pn.

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Associated Press
P.O. Box 1187
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Idaho Statesman
P.O. Box 40
Boise, ID 83705-1800

Messenger Index
P.O. Box 577
Emmett, ID 83661

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Sweet Times
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KTSY
16115 South Montana Avenue
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7.6 Libraries

Emmett Public Library
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Boise Public Library – Downtown
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8.0 Glossary

8.0 GLOSSARY

1890 Act reserved rights-of-way	Rights-of-way, for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States, were reserved in all patents issued on public lands west of the 100th Meridian entered after August 30, 1890. (Patents are the initial conveyance of public lands from the United States.) These reserved rights-of-way can be exercised either by Confirmation Deed, Right-of-Way Notice, or through construction itself.
Accessibility	Providing participation in programs and use of facilities to persons with a disability. Disability is defined with respect to an individual: (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual; (2) a record of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment.
Acquired Lands	Lands which Reclamation has acquired by purchase, donation, exchange, or condemnation.
Acre-foot	Volume of water (43,560 cubic feet) that would cover 1 acre of land, 1 foot deep.
Action Alternative	A change in the current management approach.
Affected environment	Existing biological, physical, social, and economic conditions of an area subject to change, both directly and indirectly, as the result of a proposed human action. Also, the portion of an environmental document describing current environmental conditions.
Algae	Mostly aquatic single celled, colonial, or multicelled plants, containing chlorophyll and lacking stems, roots, and leaves.
Algal bloom	Rapid and flourishing growth of algae.
Alternatives	Courses of action that may meet the objectives of a proposal at varying levels of accomplishment, including the most likely future conditions without the management plan or action.
Amphibian	Vertebrate animal that has a life stage in water and a life stage on land (for example, salamanders, frogs, and toads).
Aquatic	Living or growing in or on the water.

Archeology	Related to the study of human cultures through the recovery and analysis of their material relics.
Archeological site	A discrete location that provides physical evidence of past human use.
Artifact	A human-made object.
Best Management Practices	Activities that are added to typical operation, construction, or maintenance efforts that help to protect environmental resources by avoiding or minimizing impacts of an action.
Community	A group of one or more interacting populations of plants and animals in a common spatial arrangement at a particular point in time.
Concentration	The density or amount of a substance in a solution (water quality).
Conservation Measures	Similar to mitigation measures (defined below), conservation measures are actions taken to avoid impacts to species protected under the Endangered Species Act.
Cubic foot per second (cfs)	As a rate of streamflow, a cubic foot of water passing a reference section in 1 second of time. A measure of a moving volume of water.
Cultural resource	Cultural resources are historic and traditional properties that reflect our heritage.
Drawdown	Lowering of a reservoir's water level; process of releasing reservoir storage.
Endangered species	A species or subspecies that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
Ephemeral stream	A stream that flows only in direct response to precipitation, and thus discontinues its flow during dry seasons. Such flow is usually of short duration. Most of the dry washes of more arid regions may be classified as ephemeral streams.
Erosion	Refers to soil and the wearing away of the land surface by water, wind, ice, or other physical processes.
Eutrophic	A body of water with high nutrient levels.
Exotic species	A non-native species that is introduced into an area.

Facilities	Manmade structures.
Federal Lands	Lands, or interests in lands (such as easements and rights-of-way), owned by the United States.
Fish and Wildlife Service Species of Concern	Species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for which further biological research and field study are needed to resolve these species' conservation status.
Forb	Herbaceous plant that is not a grass, sedge, or rush. Non-woody herbs and wildflowers are examples of forbs.
Grass	Herbaceous plants with jointed stems, slender sheathing leaves, and flowers borne in spikelets of bracts.
Habitat	Area where a plant or animal finds suitable living conditions.
Hydrologic	Pertaining to the quantity, quality, and timing of water.
Indian Sacred Sites	Defined in Executive Order 13007 as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on Federal land that is identified by an Indian tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion; provided that the tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion has informed the agency of the existence of such a site."
Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)	Legal interests in property held in trust by the United States for Indian Tribes or individuals, such as lands, minerals, hunting and fishing rights, and water rights.
Intermittent streams	Streams that contain running water longer than ephemeral streams but not all year.
Juvenile	Young animal that has not reached reproductive age.
Migratory Birds	Most birds in North America are considered to be migratory birds under one or more of the four international Migratory Bird Treaty Conventions to which the United States is a signatory. Under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Acts, it is unlawful "by any means or manner to pursue, hunt, take, capture, or kill" any migratory birds except as permitted by regulations issued by the FWS.

Mitigation measures	Action taken to avoid, reduce the severity of, or eliminate an adverse impact. Mitigation can include one or more of the following: (1) avoiding impacts; (2) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of an action; (3) rectifying impacts by restoration, rehabilitation, or repair of the affected environment; (4) reducing or eliminating impacts over time; and (5) compensating for an unavoidable impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments to offset the loss.
National Register of Historic Places	A Federally maintained register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and properties that meet the criteria of significance defined in 36 CFR 63.
Neotropical migrant	Birds that breed in North America and winter in tropical and subtropical America.
No Action Alternative	The outcome expected from a continuation of current management practices.
Perennial	Plants that have a life cycle that lasts for more than 2 years.
Precipitation	Rain, sleet, and snow.
Preferred Alternative	The primary alternative considered by Reclamation for implementation following analysis in the Environmental Assessment. This analysis, along with public input, could alter management actions described in the Preferred Alternative. If this occurs, any changes would be documented in the Final Environmental Assessment.
Project facilities	Canals, laterals, drains, pumps, buildings, and etc. owned by the United States. *Note:* Title to project facilities and lands remains in the United States until specific legislation is enacted to authorize disposal (regardless of who is responsible for care, operation and maintenance of the facilities).
Project purposes	Lands are withdrawn and acquired for authorized purposes of the specific Reclamation Project. These can include irrigation, flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife.
Public involvement	The systematic provision for affected publics to be informed about and participate in Reclamation decision making. It centers around effective, open exchange and communication among the partners, agencies, organizations, and all the various affected publics.

Public lands	Public lands include only those Federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (with the exception of lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf and lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos).
Raptor	Any predatory bird, such as a falcon, eagle, hawk, or owl, that has feet with sharp talons or claws and a hooked beak.
Reclamation project lands	Federal lands or interests in lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Includes withdrawn lands, acquired lands, and 1890 Act reserved rights-of-way which have been exercised. *Note:* Reclamation Project Lands **are not** the same as public lands. Reclamation Project Lands were initially withdrawn, acquired or exercised for specific project purposes, and are governed by different Federal land management laws and regulations than public lands. Public uses of Reclamation Project Lands can be suspended as necessary to protect Project Facilities, and Reclamation Project Lands are not open to off-road vehicles unless specifically opened for that use.
Reclamation zone	Area located immediately around the dam and administered by Reclamation.
Relinquishment	Notification to BLM by a Federal agency (like Reclamation) that specific withdrawn lands are no longer needed for project purposes.
Reptile	Cold-blooded vertebrate of the class Reptilia, comprised of turtles, snakes, lizards, and crocodiles.
Reserved works	Those project facilities for which the care, operation, and maintenance has been retained by the United States.
Resident	A wildlife species commonly found in an area during a particular season: summer, winter, or year round.
Resource topics	The components of the natural and human environment that could be affected by the alternatives, such as water quality, wildlife, socioeconomic, and cultural resources.
Resource Management Plan	A 15-year plan developed by Reclamation to manage their lands and resources in the study area.

Restoration	An action by BLM that restores withdrawn land to the status of unreserved public lands subject to settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws.
Revocation	The actual cancellation of a withdrawal by the Bureau of Land Management. The of the land is then restored to public land status.
Riparian	Of, on, or pertaining to the bank of a river, pond, or lake where soil moisture levels are higher than in surrounding uplands.
Runoff	That part of precipitation that contributes to streamflow, groundwater, lakes, or reservoir storage.
Seasonal Nesting Closure	Closure of a portion of the WMA by the IDFG to both vehicle and foot entry for any purpose. The closures are in effect in spring and early summer to provide undisturbed nesting opportunities for wildlife.
Sediment	Unconsolidated solid material that comes from weathering of rock and is carried by, suspended in, or deposited by water or wind.
Shrub	A woody perennial, smaller than a tree, usually with several stems.
Songbird	Small to medium-sized birds that perch and vocalize or "sing," primarily during the breeding season.
Spawning	Laying eggs directly in water, especially in reference to fish.
Species	In taxonomy, a subdivision of a genus that (1) has a high degree of similarity, (2) is capable of interbreeding only within the species, and (3) shows persistent differences from members of allied species.
Steppe	A plain without trees (apart from near rivers and lakes), the same as a prairie. It may be semi-desert or covered with grass or shrubs, or both depending on the season.
Study Area	The area evaluated in this Environmental Assessment as being directly affected by potential management actions described in the Resource Management Plan.
Threatened species	Any species that has the potential of becoming endangered in the near future and is listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)	A TMDL is a pollution reduction plan that accounts for all pollutant sources to the water and determines how much each source is allowed to contribute. The basic premise is that if existing pollutant inputs (loads) from all sources are reduced to a specified level (the maximum daily load), and a margin of safety is added, then water quality goals will be achieved.
Traditional Cultural Property (TCP)	A site or resource that is eligible for inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places* because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community.
Transferred works	Those project facilities for which the care, operation, and maintenance has been transferred from the United States to the irrigation districts.
Water quality limited	A water body that exceeds water quality standards or does not support its designated beneficial use, such as cold water habitat or primary contact recreation.
Wetland habitat	Wildlife habitat associated with water less than 6 feet deep, with or without emergent and aquatic vegetation in wetlands.
Wetlands	Lands transitional between aquatic and terrestrial systems where the water table is usually at or near the land surface or the land is covered by shallow water. Often called marshes or wet meadows.
Wildlife Management Area	A category of land use. An area of Reclamation-owned land that is managed for wildlife habitat and preservation. The goal is to ensure that wildlife values are preserved as recreation use, residential use, and commercial development increases near recreation sites.
Withdrawn lands	Withholding of an area of public land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws for the following purposes: (1) to limit activity under those laws in order to maintain other public values in the area; (2) to reserve the area for a particular public purpose or program, or (3) to transfer jurisdiction of the area from one Federal agency to another.

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Appendix A
Black Canyon and Montour WMA
RMP Goals and Objectives

Black Canyon Reservoir
&
Montour Wildlife Management Area
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Introduction

A set of draft RMP Goals and Objectives were prepared as part of the RMP alternatives development and analysis process and included as Appendix A in the Draft EA. During the initial stages of development it was determined that Montour WMA should be renamed as a Wildlife "Management" Area (from a Wildlife Recreation" Area) to: (1) reflect the main intent for which it was established and is being managed (protection and management of wildlife and their habitat), and (2) for consistency with the rest of Idaho Department of Fish and Game's management areas (which are all WMAs).

The draft Goals and Objectives were derived from: (1) the public involvement process (especially Ad Hoc Work Group discussions and clarification related to pertinent issues outlined in the Problem Statement); (2) ongoing coordination with Reclamation decision-makers regarding the scope of the RMP and Reclamation's mission/authority related to RMP preparation and implementation; (3) findings of the RMP resource inventory; and (4) input from specialists on the RMP Planning Team.

These final Goals and Objectives were further refined as a result of public and agency comments on the Draft EA and are included in the RMP. They reflect the full range of issues and opportunities that must be addressed in the RMP (as presented and discussed in the separate Problem Statement document included in the RMP).

Finally, there are a number of objectives denoted with an "**". Adoption and implementation of these objectives are dependent on Reclamation getting a non-Federal public entity managing partner and/or concessionaire agreement to manage recreation at Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour WMA Campground.

The RMP will also be governed by a number of legal mandates, all of which will serve as guidance in both interpreting the Goals and Objectives and implementing proposed management actions. The primary among these are listed below:

Law, Executive Order, or Policy	Description
American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978	Recognizes that Indians have the right to practice traditional religions, access sacred sites located on public lands, and use and possess sacred objects; and imposes certain procedural requirements on Federal agencies.
Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979, as amended	Ensures the protection and preservation of archaeological sites on Federal land. ARPA requires that Federal permits be obtained before cultural resource investigations begin on Federal land. It also requires that investigators consult with the appropriate Native American groups before conducting archaeological studies on Native American origin sites.
Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974	Provides for the preservation of historical buildings, sites, and objects of national significance.
Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1974, as amended*	Provides for protection of water quality.
Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1970	Provides for protection of air quality.
Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended	Provides for protection of plants, fish, and wildlife that have a designation as threatened or endangered.
Executive Order 12898, February 11, 1994, Environmental Justice, as amended by Executive Order 12948, January 30, 1995	Requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of its programs and policies on minority and lower income populations.
Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands	Directs all Federal agencies to avoid, if possible, adverse impacts to wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands.
Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites, May 24, 1996	Provides for access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands used by Indian religious practitioners.
Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Government, November 6, 2000 (revokes EO 13084)	The EO builds on previous administrative actions and is intended to: • Establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have tribal implications. • Strengthen government- to-government relations with Indian tribes; and • Reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes.
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1958	Requires consultation and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Indian Trust Assets Policy (July 1993)	Reclamation will carry out its activities in a manner which protects Indian Trust Assets and avoids adverse impacts when possible.
Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended	Provides protection for bird species that migrate across state lines.

Law, Executive Order, or Policy	Description
Executive Order 13186, January 10, 2001. Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds	Requires Federal Agencies that may have a negative effect on migratory birds to develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to promote the conservation of migratory birds.
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969	Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA specify that as part of the NEPA scoping process, the lead agency "... shall invite the participation of affected Federal, State, and local agencies, any affected Indian tribe, ... (1501.7[a]1."
National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended	Section 106 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of any actions or programs on historic properties. It also requires agencies to consult with Native American Tribes if a proposed Federal action may affect properties to which they attach religious and cultural significance. Section 110 requires agencies to identify and appropriately manage historic properties on lands under their jurisdiction.
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990	Regulations for the treatment of Native American graves, human remains, funeral objects, sacred objects, and other objects of cultural patrimony. Requires consultation with Native American Tribes during Federal project planning.
Presidential Memorandum: Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments, April 29, 1994	Specifies a commitment to developing more effective day-to-day working relationships with sovereign Tribal governments. Each executive department and agency shall consult to the greatest extent practicable and to the extent permitted by law, with Tribal governments prior to taking actions affecting Federally recognized Tribal governments.
Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities – Reclamation Policy (November 18, 1998)	Established a Pacific Northwest regional policy to assure that all administrative offices, facilities, services, and programs open to the public, utilized by Federal employees, and managed by Reclamation, a managing partner, or a concessionaire, are fully accessible for both employees and the public.
Reclamation Policy for Land Management & Concessions	Provides policy, directives, and standards Reclamation follows in managing Federal Project lands, facilities, and concessions.
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 504	Provides for access to Federal or Federally assisted facilities for the disabled. The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), whichever is the more stringent, are followed as compliance with Section 504.
Public Law 102-575, Title 28, as amended	Provides Reclamation with the authority to cost-share on recreation projects and fish and wildlife enhancement facilities with public non-Federal managing partners on Reclamation lands and authorization for preparing RMPs.
Interior Department Manual Part 512, Chapter 2	Articulates the policy, responsibilities and procedures for consulting with tribes to identify and assess impact to Indian trust resources.

*A permit may need to be required for construction related activities.

RMP Policy and Purpose

Reclamation's resource management policy is to provide a broad level of stewardship to ensure and encourage resource protection, conservation, and multiple uses, as appropriate. Management practices and principles established in an RMP must be consistent with Project purposes and in accordance with existing Federal laws, regulations, and policies, and provide for the protection of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources; cultural resources; public health and safety; and applicable uses of Reclamation lands and water areas, public access, and outdoor recreation. Resource Management Plans are intended to be used as the basis for directing activities on Reclamation lands and reservoirs in a way that maximizes overall public and resource benefits while providing guidance for managing the area during the next 15 year period. Through implementation of an RMP, Reclamation aims to balance competing and conflicting demands for differing uses and to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses, while affording an appropriate level of resource protection and enhancement.

Goals & Objectives

As stated and shown in the above table the RMP will be governed by a number of legal mandates, all of which will serve as guidance in both interpreting the goals and objectives and implementing proposed management actions. In all cases, implementation of the goals and objectives listed below, and any specific management actions resulting from them, will comply with the applicable legal mandates in the above table.

Natural Resources (NAT)

Wildlife and Vegetation Management

GOAL NAT 1: Protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife habitat and natural resources on Reclamation lands.

Objective NAT 1.1: Avoid or minimize impacts of RMP actions on Federal and State designated species of special concern, including Federally listed rare, endangered, or threatened plant and animal species.

Objective NAT 1.2: Minimize adverse impacts to wildlife and vegetation in all actions considered to accommodate public demand at recreation sites or on the surface and shoreline of Black Canyon Reservoir; and utilize management practices that protect and enhance resource values of and for native species (plants and animals) in all decisions related to habitat management and other land uses.

Objective NAT 1.3: Protect and/or enhance wetland and riparian habitats within the Montour WMA, and at and adjacent to Black Canyon Reservoir in accordance with existing Federal regulations and consistent with this RMP.

Objective NAT 1.4: Take primary responsibility (including funding) and work with partner agencies (IDFG, Gem County Weed Control, and Upper Payette CWMA) to study and effectively control aquatic and terrestrial noxious and invasive weeds on

Reclamation lands and waters, including invasive aquatic species such as zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil, and New Zealand mudsnail.

Objective NAT 1.5: Manage Montour WMA in compliance with its established intent; with management priorities focused on wildlife and habitat values as they relate to both game and non-game species.

Objective NAT 1.6: Expand the WMA boundary on the south side of the Reclamation lands down river to the mouth of Squaw Creek (along the opposite shore) and coordinate management activities with IDFG on down-river lands adjacent to the reservoir to protect habitat for waterfowl, other migratory birds, and riparian and upland wildlife.

Water Quality

GOAL NAT 2: Protect water quality in the Montour WMA, Black Canyon Reservoir, and associated segments of the Payette River and its tributaries.

Objective NAT 2.1: Ensure that adequate drainage control, sanitation, and waste management facilities are provided at all parking lots, maintenance yards, and recreation sites (e.g., restrooms, trash containers, and RV dump stations, as appropriate) to protect water quality.

Objective NAT 2.2: Manage the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on Reclamation lands, including those leased for agricultural purposes, in a manner that does not adversely affect water quality and consistent with State and Federal regulations.

Objective NAT 2.3: Continue to prohibit motorized vehicular use on the shoreline (outside of boat ramps) and within the drawdown zone area of the reservoir.

Objective NAT 2.4: Minimize the potential for pollutants to enter Montour wetlands, Black Canyon Reservoir, and the Payette River from activities on Reclamation lands.

Erosion and Sedimentation

GOAL NAT 3: Control soil erosion in priority areas where erosion causes concern for water quality, safety, and damage to resources and facilities.

Objective NAT 3.1: Implement cooperative efforts aimed at encouraging others outside of, but having an affect on the RMP Study area to reduce erosion and the amount of sedimentation entering the Payette River and other tributaries into the reservoir.

Objective NAT 3.2: Protect, restore and/or manage shoreline vegetation and tributary riparian vegetation to control erosion.

Objective NAT 3.3: Develop and enforce appropriate restrictions at shoreline areas to avoid erosion.

Objective NAT 3.4: Implement an effective erosion control program (standards, guidelines, and BMPs) in all construction, operations, and maintenance programs on

Reclamation lands while considering program effects on other resources (natural, scenic, cultural).

Cultural Resources (CUL)

Goal CUL 1: Seek to protect and preserve cultural resources, including prehistoric and historic-period archeological sites and traditional cultural properties.

Objective CUL 1.1: In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) seek to protect National Register-eligible sites from impacts from new undertakings.

Objective CUL 1.2: In accordance with Section 110 of the NHPA, implement proactive management of cultural resources, focusing on protecting identified resources from damage.

Objective CUL 1.3: Increase awareness of cultural resources compliance and protection requirements among resource management partners.

Objective CUL 1.4: Provide opportunities for public education on area prehistory and history, including the importance of and requirements for protecting these resources.

Indian Sacred Sites (ISS)

Goal ISS 1: Comply with requirements of Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites)

Objective ISS 1.1: Seek to avoid damage to Indian sacred sites when avoidance is consistent with accomplishing Reclamation's mission and larger public responsibilities.

Objective ISS 1.2: Provide for access by traditional religious practitioners to sacred sites, when consistent with mission.

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)

Goal ITA 1: Protect Indian Trust Assets as specified in applicable Federal mandates.

Objective ITA 1.1: Seek to avoid any action that would adversely impact Indian Trust Assets that may exist.

Recreation and Access (REC)

Land-based Recreation

GOAL REC 1: Provide adequate sites and facilities for land-based recreational uses at Black Canyon Reservoir while affording the public a quality recreational experience consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.

Objective REC 1.1: Continue to actively seek a non-Federal public entity managing partner to operate all recreation-oriented facilities and areas at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA.

Objective REC 1.2: Formalize the relationship between Reclamation and Thunder Mountain Railroad for use of Reclamation lands at Montour WMA and Cobblestone Park through a memorandum of agreement and/or permit for such use if necessary as a result of Thunder Mountain proposals for use of Reclamation lands.

Objective REC 1.3: Work with Gem County to provide facility improvements at the highway "County" boat ramps to better accommodate boating-related activities.

Objective REC 1.4: Make available a clear and understandable process for the public to follow when requesting special use of Reclamation lands and or facilities (including overall policy requirements, permit and application process, and fee structure for various uses).

Objective REC 1.5: Contribute to an environment that supports viable concession services, where appropriate, with concession management to follow Reclamation's policy.

GOAL REC 2: Work with IDFG to provide appropriate recreation opportunities in the Montour WMA, consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.

Objective REC 2.1: Cooperate with IDFG, as needed, in providing hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities and associated facilities and infrastructure, consistent with the purposes of the WMA.

Objective REC 2.2: Support IDFG's efforts to determine sportsman needs and user satisfaction threshold levels at Montour WMA.

Objective REC 2.3: Support IDFG's efforts to improve public access and opportunities for wildlife-dependent, non-consumptive uses (e.g., nature appreciation) unrelated to hunting or fishing, and consistent with the purposes of the WMA.

Objective REC 2.4: Allow for upgrades at Montour Campground as needed.

Shoreline and Water-based Recreation

GOAL REC 3: Provide adequate shoreline and water-based facilities to address demand for boating and other water-based uses consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives.

Objective REC 3.1: Allow for the continued use and development of "at your own risk" swimming areas at appropriate locations around the reservoir (e.g., Black Canyon Park, Triangle Park).

Objective REC 3.2: Continue the Cooperative Agreement with Gem County Waterways Commission to place seasonal day use docks adjacent to the highway boat ramps and at appropriate locations throughout the reservoir.

Objective REC 3.3: Provide fishing opportunities (i.e., at ponds) where it has minimal impact on other wildlife values at Montour WMA and maintain opportunities within the reservoir.

****Objective REC 3.4:** Improve boat launch ramps and associated infrastructure at appropriate Black Canyon Reservoir facilities consistent with natural and cultural resource protection and conservation objectives.

Water Surface Management

GOAL REC 4: Manage the Black Canyon Reservoir water surface to accommodate a variety of uses in a safe manner while minimizing conflicts among users.

Objective REC 4.1: Ensure that provision, permitting, and/or expansion of shoreline facilities on Reclamation lands does not result in providing levels of water access that exceed safe use of the reservoir's water surface.

Objective REC 4.2: Coordinate with the County Sheriff Marine Patrol to adequately enforce circular (clock-wise) designations within the area of the reservoir.

Objective REC 4.3: Provide information to reservoir users regarding boating safety and operating rules and regulations.

Access and Other Recreation Uses

GOAL REC 5: Provide appropriate vehicular and non-motorized access to recreation sites at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA consistent with natural, cultural resource, and safety and security objectives.

Objective REC 5.1: Provide for adequate vehicular access to and parking at all designated recreation areas and within Montour WMA; such access and parking should be sized in a manner reflecting the physical constraints, safe use of the area being served, and natural and cultural resource protection, as necessary.

Objective REC 5.2: Coordinate with ITD and Gem County to address traffic safety concerns along Hwy 52 and the "County" boat ramps.

****Objective REC 5.3**: Cooperate with IDFG, the City of Emmett, Gem County, ITD, BLM, and the Irrigation Districts, as needed, to seek feasible non-motorized trail connections between the surrounding community and the reservoir/WMA.

****Objective REC 5.4**: Provide for and maintain non-motorized trail opportunities (hiking and bicycling) at appropriate locations at Black Canyon Reservoir and within Montour WMA consistent with natural and cultural resource protection and conservation objectives (e.g., trails linking parks and Montour, better internal park and WMA trail access, trail linkages between the reservoir and surrounding BLM lands).

Objective REC 5.5: Continue Reclamation policy (as per 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 420) prohibiting ORV use on Reclamation lands and work with County Sheriff to actively enforce this regulation.

Objective REC 5.6: All new or existing facilities and programs will be designed or retrofitted in accordance with current Federal standards for accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Objective REC 5.7: Coordinate with Thunder Mountain Railroad regarding their use of Reclamation lands consistent with natural and cultural resource objectives, and to avoid or minimize conflicts to other area visitors.

Land Use, Management, and Implementation (LMI)

GOAL LMI 1: Allow for expanded recreation opportunities and other uses at Black Canyon Reservoir, and continued opportunities at Montour WMA while balancing the need for the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and open space and scenic values.

Objective LMI 1.1: Locate and design all new or renovated facilities, structures, roads, trails and erosion control structures to be compatible and integrate with the open, rural environment of the reservoir and surrounding area.

Objective LMI 1.2: Allow the continued use of Reclamation lands adjacent to the reservoir for agricultural and grazing purposes when not in conflict with natural and cultural resource protection.

Objective LMI 1.3: Allow the continued use of Reclamation lands at Montour WMA for agricultural and grazing purposes when beneficial to wildlife and associated habitat values.

GOAL LMI 2: Ensure that reservoir operations are not disturbed as a result of other uses and activities.

Objective LMI 2.1: Require that the Reclamation Zone (operation and maintenance) be described (history, purpose, and function) and shown on publicly distributed materials.

Objective LMI 2.2: Safety and security of the dam and area surrounding the dam has priority over public access to this area; for safety and security reasons this area will remain closed to public access.

GOAL LMI 3: Ensure protection of the public, and public resource values and facilities.

Objective LMI 3.1: Continue contracting and work with Gem County Sheriff's Department and Marine Patrol to ensure an adequate level of law enforcement on Reclamation lands and Black Canyon Reservoir.

Objective LMI 3.2: Continue to operate under the current BLM/Gem County Fire Protection District #2 Agreement (signed June 1997) covering the area from the dam eastward, including Montour WMA.

Objective LMI 3.3: Coordinate with State Waterways and Gem County to provide reservoir users with information regarding boating safety and operating rules and regulations.

Objective LMI 3.4: Continue enforcing the no shooting safety zone around Montour campground and around the east side of the old Montour town site.

Objective LMI 3.5: Work with the County adjacent land owners to address activities and proposed uses on adjacent properties during County approval process.

GOAL LMI 4: Provide informational, educational, and interpretive materials to increase public awareness of recreational opportunities, use restrictions, safety concerns, and natural and cultural resource values.

Objective LMI 4.1: Using Reclamation's sign manual as appropriate develop clear, consistent signage to guide public access to and use of Reclamation lands and park facilities.

Objective LMI 4.2: Provide informative and concise public information materials on a continuing basis at: fee stations, recreation areas, roadside pullouts; and through local merchants, chambers of commerce, government offices, and other means (such as the World Wide Web).

Objective LMI 4.3: Develop an interpretive program that illustrates and educates on the prehistoric, historic, and current land use practices, as well as natural features surrounding and visible from Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA.

Objective LMI 4.4: Provide opportunities for wildlife observation and other natural resource-based interpretation and education at appropriate reservoir and WMA locations.

GOAL LMI 5: Achieve timely implementation and coordination of RMP programs and projects.

Objective LMI 5.1: Establish and maintain a clear phasing schedule and list of priorities for RMP implementation; and update on an annual basis.

Objective LMI 5.2: Seek Reclamation and managing partner (IDFG) joint funding to implement applicable RMP actions according to the priority list and phasing schedule.

Objective LMI 5.3: Keep stakeholders, surrounding landowners, and the public informed regarding the status of implementing the RMP.

Objective LMI 5.4: Maintain a positive relationship with users, neighboring landowners, and other management agencies, local government, and wildlife conservation groups.

Appendix B
Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

2001

August 10, 2001	Meeting with the Fort Hall Business Council, Shoshone- Bannock Tribes to discuss Resource Management Plans and other Issues
November 19, 2001	Meeting with the Fort Hall Business Council, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to discuss Resource Management Plans and other issues

2002

February 1, 2002	Meeting with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Council, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley to discuss Resource Management Plans and other issues
February 25, 2002	Meeting with staff of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall to discuss Resource Management Plans
March 13, 2002	Letter to the Chairman of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Council of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley inviting the Tribes to designate a representative to the Ad Hoc Work Group
March 13, 2002	Letter to the Chairman of the Fort Hall Business Council, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall inviting the Tribes to designate a representative to the Ad Hoc Work Group
March 13, 2002	Letter to the Chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee of the Nez Perce Tribes inviting the Tribe to designate a representative to the Ad Hoc Work Group and offering to meet with staff or leaders to discuss the RMP
March 25, 2002	Meeting with staff of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall to discuss Resource Management Plans and other issues
April 10, 2002	Letter to the Chairman of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Council of Duck Valley- Summary of February 1, 2002 meeting

2003

February 21, 2003	Letter to the Chairman of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Council of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley requesting a meeting to discuss Reclamation Programs and Activities
March 11, 2003	Meeting with staff of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall to discuss Resource Management Plans and other issues
April 2, 2003	Meeting with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribal Council, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley to discuss Resource Management Plans and other issues
April 22, 2003	Summary of April 2, 2003 Meeting with the Tribal Council of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley with enclosure, Summary of Programs and Activities, Spring 2003
April 22, 2003	Letter to the Chairman of the Fort Hall Business Council, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall confirming April 30, 2003 meeting
April 28, 2003	Letter to the Chairman of the Natural Resource Committee of the Nez Perce Tribe requesting a Meeting to Discuss Reclamation Programs and Activities including Resource Management Plans
April 30, 2003	Meeting with the Fort Hall Business Council of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
June 3, 2003	Meeting with the Nez Perce Natural Resource Committee to discuss various Reclamation Programs and Activities including Resource Management Plans
June 12, 2003	Letter to the Chairman of the Nez Perce Natural Resources Subcommittee summarizing the June 3, 2003, meeting

Appendix C
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office
1387 S Vinnell Way, Suite 368
Boise, Idaho 83709

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

FEB 27 04

FEB 25 2004

Memorandum

To: Area Manager, Snake River Area Office, Bureau of Reclamation, Boise, Idaho

From: Acting Supervisor, Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Boise, Idaho

Subject: Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area Resource Management Plan, Boise Project, Payette Division, Idaho – Concurrence
File #1009.0700 OALS #1-4-04-I-224

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is writing to provide concurrence with the Bureau of Reclamation's (Bureau) Biological Assessment (Assessment) for the Black Canyon Reservoir (Reservoir) and Montour Wildlife Management Area (Area) Resource Management Plan (Plan). The Bureau requested the Service's concurrence with its determination that the Plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)*, Ute ladies'-tresses *(Spiranthes diluvialis)*, bull trout *(Salvelinus confluentus)*, or gray wolf *(Canis lupus)*, and will not result in the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat for bull trout. The Bureau requested concurrence and made its determinations pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act).

The Bureau also determined that the proposed Plan would not jeopardize the continued existence of the then proposed plant slickspot peppergrass *(Lepidium papilliferum)*. On January 22, 2004, the Service announced the withdrawal of its proposal to list slickspot peppergrass *(Lepidium papilliferum)* under the Act. This species no longer has any status under the Act, and will not be addressed further in this memorandum.

The proposed Plan involves continued management and enhancement of natural and cultural resource values and recreational opportunities at the Reservoir and Area. A complete description of all actions that are proposed as part of the Plan can be found in the Assessment, section 2.2.2. In general, the proposed Plan continues the existing management of the Reservoir and Area, with some additional measures aimed at improving water quality, wildlife habitat, public safety, and maintaining or improving recreational opportunities.

Based on the information provided in the Assessment, the Service concurs with your determination that the proposed Plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bald eagles. Bald eagles are known to use the Reservoir during the winter for foraging and other activities.

Currently, there are no known bald eagle nest sites at the Reservoir or Area. Because most activities specified in the Plan will occur in the summer months, and any potential impacts to wildlife or other natural resources are expected to remain the same or to be wholly beneficial, the Service does not anticipate that the implementation of the Plan will result in any adverse impacts to bald eagles.

The Bureau determined that the Plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect Ute ladies'-tresses. To date, Ute ladies'-tresses has been found in Idaho only in Bonneville, Madison, Jefferson, and Fremont Counties. The Service does not expect that Ute ladies'-tresses would occur within the Area, and any potential impacts to the species from the implementation of the Plan are discountable. In addition, the Bureau has proposed to identify and avoid any potential Ute ladies'-tresses habitat that may be impacted by Plan implementation. For these reasons, the Service concurs with the Bureau's determination for Ute ladies'-tresses.

The Bureau also determined that the proposed Plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bull trout. Bull trout are known to occur upstream of the Reservoir in upper Squaw Creek. However, given the distance between known populations and the Reservoir, numerous irrigation diversions along the mainstem Squaw Creek, and warm water conditions found in the Reservoir, the Service does not expect bull trout to occur in the Reservoir. The Plan is not expected to affect Squaw Creek. For these reasons, the Service considers the potential for adverse impacts to bull trout is discountable. Critical habitat for bull trout was proposed in Squaw Creek, but did not include the area of the Reservoir. Various actions in the Plan may impact the very lower reaches of Squaw Creek, but they are not expected to destroy or adversely modify the existing value of the habitat elements required to support bull trout in Squaw Creek.

It is possible that the gray wolf may occur in the project area. However, the Plan is not expected to adversely impact prey populations, or to significantly increase human use of the area. Therefore, the Service concurs that implementation of the Plan will not adversely impact the gray wolf, and will not jeopardize the continued existence of the experimental, non-essential population.

This concludes consultation for the proposed reservoir and wildlife management area Resource Management Plan under section 7 of the Act. If the project proposal addressed in this letter is modified or environmental conditions change, you should confirm that your determinations are still correct. If you have any questions regarding our comments please contact Kendra Womack of my staff at (208) 685-6955. Thank you for your continued interest in endangered species conservation.

Appendix D
Comments on the Draft EA and Reclamation's Responses

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Letters of comment received as a result of the public review of the Draft EA are included in this appendix. All of the letters received are listed below. Copies of these letters follow, along with the responses.

Comment Letter **Page**

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

FOUNDED IN 1881

Our mission: to educate through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of Idaho's cultural heritage.

Dirk Kempthorne
Governor of Idaho

Steve Guerber
Executive Director

Administration
1109 Main Street, Suite 250
Boise, Idaho 83702-5642
Office: (208) 334-2682
Fax: (208) 334-2774

Archaeological Survey
210 Main Street
Boise, Idaho 83702-7264
Office: (208) 334-3847
Fax: (208) 334-2775

Capitol Education Center
Statehouse/P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0001
Office: (208) 334-5174

Historical Museum and Education Programs
610 North Julia Davis Drive
Boise, Idaho 83702-7695
Office: (208) 334-2120
Fax: (208) 334-4059

Historic Preservation Office
210 Main Street
Boise, Idaho 83702-7264
Office: (208) 334-3861
Fax: (208) 334-2775

Historic Sites Office
2445 Old Penitentiary Road
Boise, Idaho 83712-8254
Office: (208) 334-2844
Fax: (208) 334-3225

Library/Historical and Genealogical Collection
450 North Fourth Street
Boise, Idaho 83702-6027
Office: (208) 334-3356
Fax: (208) 334-3198

Oral History
450 North Fourth Street
Boise, Idaho 83702-6027
Office: (208) 334-3863
Fax: (208) 334-3198

Memberships and Outreach and Development
1109 Main Street, Suite 250
Boise, Idaho 83702-5642
Office: (208) 334-3986
Fax: (208) 334-2774

Publications
450 North Fourth Street
Boise, Idaho 83702-6027
Office: (208) 334-3428
Fax: (208) 334-3198

State Archives/Manuscripts
2205 Old Penitentiary Road
Boise, Idaho 83712-8250
Office: (208) 334-2620
Fax: (208) 334-2626

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
OFFICIAL FILE COPY
Oct 14 03

TO	INIT	DATE
3902	CC	10/14/03

RECEIVED
OCT 14 2003

October 9, 2003

Ms. Carolyn Coiner
Bureau of Reclamation
Burley Project Office
1359 Hansen Ave.
Burley, Idaho 83818-1821

RE: Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Resource Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA)

Dear Ms. Coiner:

Our office has received the draft Environmental Assessment for Resource Management Plan for Black Canyon Reservoir and the Montour Wildlife Management Area. After reviewing the document, we cautiously support Alterative B as the preferred alternative. We are concerned, however, about the amount of development in the WMA proposed under this alternative. Bureau of Reclamation needs to ensure that these projects are reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. To conduct an effective review, Reclamation's cultural resource staff needs to be involved in the early stages of project planning. Reclamation should therefore take this opportunity to ensure that consideration of cultural resources and Section 106 Review are adequately addressed in the cooperative agreement for management of the WMA. 1-1 1-2

The Resource Management Plan also calls for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places of the old Montour town site as a historic district. We applaud this effort and will be happy to provide any assistance our office can offer. Finally, we agree that elements of the public interpretation planned for the project area, including within the WMA, should focus on the historic and prehistory of the Payette River and Montour Valley. 1-3 1-4

We appreciate your cooperation. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 208-334-3847.

Sincerely,

Susan Pengilly Neitzel
Deputy SHPO and
Compliance Coordinator

cc: Ray Leicht, Bureau of Reclamation, Boise

The Idaho State Historical Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

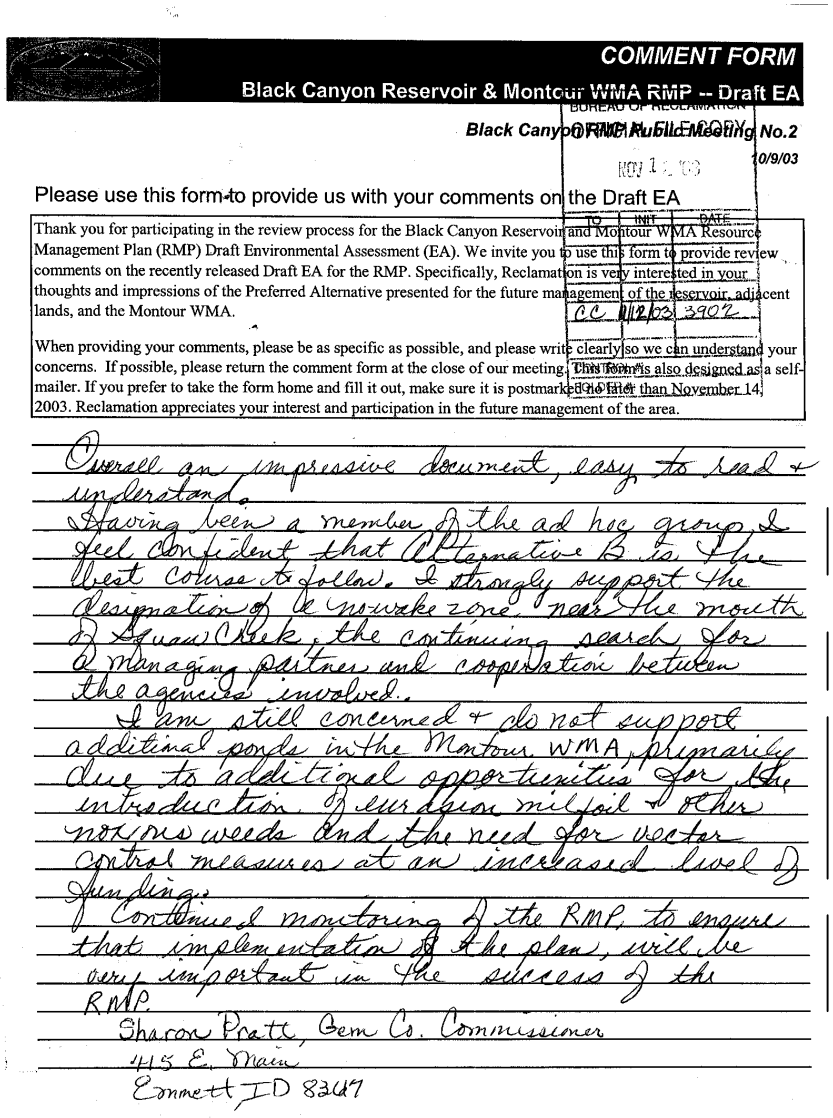
1—Susan Pengilly Neitzel, Boise, Idaho

1-1 Comment noted.

1-2 Under Alternative A and Alternative B, Reclamation will carry out Section 106 review for undertakings proposed in the WMA and elsewhere in the RMP Study Area. Every attempt will be made to involve Reclamation's cultural resource staff in the earliest planning stages of a project, so that timely consultations can be carried out and full consideration can be given to matters of site eligibility, project effects, and mitigation.

1-3 Comment noted. Alternative B calls for designation of the old town site as a historic district.

1-4 Comment noted. This is the intended emphasis under Alternative B.



COMMENT FORM

Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP -- Draft EA

Black Canyon RMP Public Meeting No.2 10/9/03

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
NOV 12 '03

TO	INIT	DATE
CC		11/12/03

3902

Please use this form to provide us with your comments on the Draft EA

Thank you for participating in the review process for the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA Resource Management Plan (RMP) Draft Environmental Assessment (EA). We invite you to use this form to provide review comments on the recently released Draft EA for the RMP. Specifically, Reclamation is very interested in your thoughts and impressions of the Preferred Alternative presented for the future management of the reservoir, adjacent lands, and the Montour WMA.

When providing your comments, please be as specific as possible, and please write clearly so we can understand your concerns. If possible, please return the comment form at the close of our meeting. This form is also designed as a self-mailer. If you prefer to take the form home and fill it out, make sure it is postmarked no later than November 14, 2003. Reclamation appreciates your interest and participation in the future management of the area.

Overall an impressive document, easy to read + understand.

Having been a member of the ad hoc group I feel confident that Alternative B is the best course to follow. I strongly support the designation of a no-wake zone near the mouth of Squaw Creek, the continuing search for managing partners and cooperation between the agencies involved. 2-1 2-2 2-3

I am still concerned + do not support additional ponds in the Montour WMA, primarily due to additional opportunities for the introduction of curlyleaf milfoil + other noxious weeds and the need for vector control measures at an increased level of funding. 2-4

Continued monitoring of the RMP, to ensure that implementation of the plan, will be very important in the success of the RMP. 2-5

Sharon Pratt, Gem Co. Commissioner
415 E. Main
Emmett ID 83617

2—Sharon Pratt, Emmett, Idaho

2-1 Comment noted.

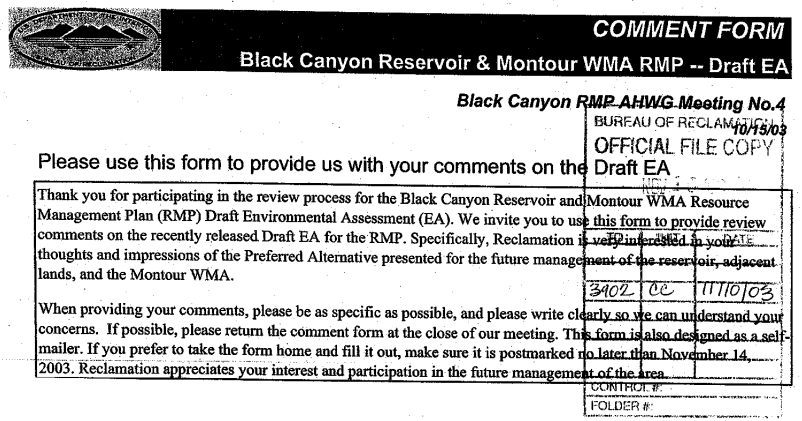
2-2 As described in the Final EA, the proposed no-wake zone upstream of the mouth of Squaw Creek will not be pursued and is no longer part of Alternative B. Implementation of a no-wake zone would require a County ordinance and enforcement by the County Sheriff, because they have jurisdiction on the water surface. Therefore, it would not be a management action initiated by Reclamation.

2-3 Non-Federal, public entity managing partners are needed to develop many of the potential facilities allowed under Alternative B. Agency coordination will be important for management, and is a critical component of the RMP.

2-4 Between 25 and 50 acres of additional wetland/pond acres are proposed in the Preferred Alternative. The primary goal of the WMA is to manage to support game and non-game wildlife habitat, including fish and waterfowl. A monitoring and maintenance plan for all ponds within the Montour WMA will include control measures for Eurasian milfoil. Reclamation will maintain all wetlands and ponds and the area in and around them within an Integrated Pest Management Plan.

2-5 The RMP is a guidance document that will be used by Reclamation staff during the next 15 years. The components of the plan will be implemented as funding permits. Having this plan available allows Reclamation to request budgets according to the needs of the area and as identified in the RMP process.

3—Richard W. Wilson, Boise, Idaho



COMMENT FORM
Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP -- Draft EA

Black Canyon RMP AHWG Meeting No.4

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION 10/15/03
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Please use this form to provide us with your comments on the Draft EA

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When providing your comments, please be as specific as possible, and please write clearly so we can understand your concerns. If possible, please return the comment form at the close of our meeting. This form is also designed as a self-mailer. If you prefer to take the form home and fill it out, make sure it is postmarked no later than November 14, 2003. Reclamation appreciates your interest and participation in the future management of the area.

November 3, 2003

Carolyn Burpee-Coiner
PN Region, RMP Coordinator
1359 Hanson Ave.
Burley, ID 83318

Dear Carolyn:

I appreciate the opportunity to have served on the Black Canyon RMP ADHOC Work Group with you and your staff at the Bureau of Reclamation, as well as lay committee members. I believe progress was made in the exchange of ideas and excellent suggestions were offered, specifically regarding the Montour WMA at meeting number four on October 15, 2003.

Historically, the Montour WMA has been a unique property. Over the past 15 years or more, it has provided outstanding opportunity for both field and water training opportunities for Idaho bird hunters. Well-maintained grassy fields on the north portion of the WMA have been an invaluable asset for the training of pointing dogs. The various ponds on the WMA have provided opportunities for water work, both for retrieving breeds and the versatile hunting/pointing dogs. Alternative B pretty much ignores this need, and as such is unacceptable to the bird hunters of Southwest Idaho. Montour WMA is the only piece of public land in the Southwest Region Fish and Game which is capable of providing these resources which are indispensable for the training of hunting dogs. Virtually every hunting-dog trainer is also an avid bird hunter.

-1

3-1 Comment noted. Alternative B reflects the emphases at the WMA on wildlife management. The Montour WMA will be managed in compliance with its established intent; with management priorities focused on wildlife and habitat values as they relate to both game and non-game species. Other activities, including dog training, will be allowed at appropriate locations according to established seasonal and locational restrictions consistent with IDFG regulations.

Carolyn Burpee-Coiner
Page two
November 3, 2003

The development of up to 100 additional acres of ponds, at this juncture, I believe is a very bad idea. It would severely impinge upon the available dry land for upland hunting. Additional ponds cannot be justified until such time as the existing ones are optimally managed. | 3-2

The existing seasonal wildlife nesting closure, February l to July l, has been in effect for many years. Testimony offered at ADHOC work group meeting had indicated that extension of the closure date through July 31, was based upon the late nesting of diving ducks. The prevalence of these species at Montour Wildlife Management Area is considered by some to be low to nonexistent. | 3-3

The dog-training bird hunters who utilize Montour Wildlife Management Area, strongly request the reestablishment of quality grass fields for spring and summer dog training. In the past, these have been maintained through rotational grazing and irrigation. | 3-4

As an alternative to the February 1-July 31, waterfowl nesting closure being proposed by IDFG, a year-round pond of ten acres or more would be an acceptable alternative. This would also provide fishing opportunities for the general public and individuals at the WMA campground. | 3-5

Open fields and ponds provide diversity of recreational opportunities. I believe that the IDFG should be encouraged to determine sportsmen's needs and user satisfaction threshold levels for Montour WMA, taking into consideration the sportsmen's needs and perceptions, focusing wildlife management goals more on quality than quantity of habitat, in order to provide the most well-rounded spectrum of opportunities for the diverse user groups who will be utilizing the Montour WMA in years to come. | 3-6

Sincerely,

Richard W. Wilson, M.D.

RWW/ec

3-2 See response to Comment 2-4.

3-3 IDFG is primarily responsible for wildlife management at the Montour WMA. Based on their research and findings at other WMAs, IDFG believes that the extension of the closure date is necessary to maximize nesting success for late-nesting and re-nesting waterfowl. Many other species of nesting birds would also benefit from the extended closure.

3-4 Reclamation does not plan to issue grazing leases in portions of the WMA where it has been excluded. IDFG's management goals are to maintain tall grass/forb areas providing dense nesting cover on approximately 50 percent of the upland habitat within the WMA so as to optimize the vigor, bio-diversity, and density of vegetation. The goal of eliminating grazing in these areas is to allow tall grasses and forbs to grow and provide cover for pheasants and other wildlife.

3-5 Reclamation does not plan to create a pond specifically for year-round recreational use.

3-6 Comment noted.

Carolyn Burpee Coiner - Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP - Draft EA / Comments Pag

From: <riskyriver@juno.com>
To: <ccoiner@pn.usbr.gov>
Date: 11/14/03 12:07PM
Subject: Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP - Draft EA / Comments

attn: Carolyn Burpee-Coiner

comments re/ Montour WMA (from a regular user of this area for dog training, walking, wildlife watching, and some limited hunting in past):

Many aspects of your preferred Alternative B have merit and would improve this area. I do have some concerns with possible 'over-development' occuring (ie, barriers, parking lots, fencing etc.). While I realize the need to have some controls, this area should be kept as natural and accessible as possible. I am also opposed to extending the nesting season, unless it can be shown that there is hard-fast scientific evidence to support this in terms of any substantial increase in waterfowl production. I am futher opposed to a policy that forbids ANY special events in this WMA - this seems in conflict with accessibilty and also with 'promotion' of the area mentioned in the RMP. 4-1 4-2 4-3 4-4

I could support some additional ponds in future, but think that locations may be better planned, so as to make use of wetland areas already present and also maintain some of the nice grassy pasture areas we have used in the past. Additional ponds may also be premature until the existing pond areas are better maintained (ie, address/resolve the overabundance of plant life both in and along ponds) so as to improve the useabilty by waterfowl and the accessibility for humans for fishing, hunting and other uses. Further concerns with additional ponds would be additional areas of the WMA closed for nesting season, and thereby reducing access all the more. 4-5

All that said, you have put a lot of effort into the RMP, it has many positive aspects, and I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments. I will be attending the 11/20 meeting there with Jerry Deal of IDFG, and I appreciate you mailing me the RMP information in advance.

thanks much,
Diane Mazy
Boise, ID

CC: <riskyriver@juno.com>

Diane Mazy
2210 Manitou Ave.
Boise, ID 83706

4—Diane Mazy, Boise, Idaho

4-1 Comment noted.

4-2 The proposed parking areas, fencing, and other structures under Alternative B would be applied in existing use areas to better control access and reduce damage to vegetation and the spread of noxious weeds. Additional recreation improvements, for example, at the Montour Campground, would only occur if a non-Federal public entity managing partner to cost-share were found.

4-3 See response to Comment 3-3.

4-4 Special events within the Montour WMA would be evaluated in terms of their compatibility with wildlife management goals and objectives. To preclude impacts to sensitive and other wildlife species, special events that are incompatible with WMA management goals and objectives could possibly be held at a developed recreation site like Triangle Park.

4-5 See response to comments 2-4, 3-1, and 3-4.

Carolyn Burpee Coiner - Montour WMA RMP Page

From: "w b dillon" <wbdillon@fmtc.com>
To: <ccoiner@pn.usbr.gov>
Date: 11/14/03 3:38PM
Subject: Montour WMA RMP

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Montour RMP

I have some concerns with Alternative B. Alternative B calls for additional pond acres. I hunt on most of the WMA's in the Treasure Vally. They are becoming increasingly tilted towards waterfowl habitat. Idaho Fish and Game's program for planting game farm pheasants on the WMA's (including Montour) has been very sucessful. There are far more poeple hunting pheasants on these WMA's than 10 years ago. I do not think it is wise to convert upland bird habitat to waterfowl habitat. The pheaant program has made all WMA's more crowded. Adding pond acres will compress more upland hunters into a smaller area. There are enough ponds on the Montour WMA now. 5-1

My second concern is decreasing access during the month of July and eliminating special events. I know that many people train hunting dogs on the WMA in the summer. My observations are that there are few ducklings left on the WMA during July. Eliminating access to large portions of the WMA during July will eliminate an important hunting dog training area for an important period of time. Many people that train on the WMA also participate in formal dog club events on the WMA. Those are usually held in late August or September. It is increasingly difficult to find areas large enough and with adequate habitat to hold these events. Eliminating special events on the WMA would be very deterimental to the dog training clubs. 5-2

I do support expanding the WMA down river to Squaw Creek. 5-3

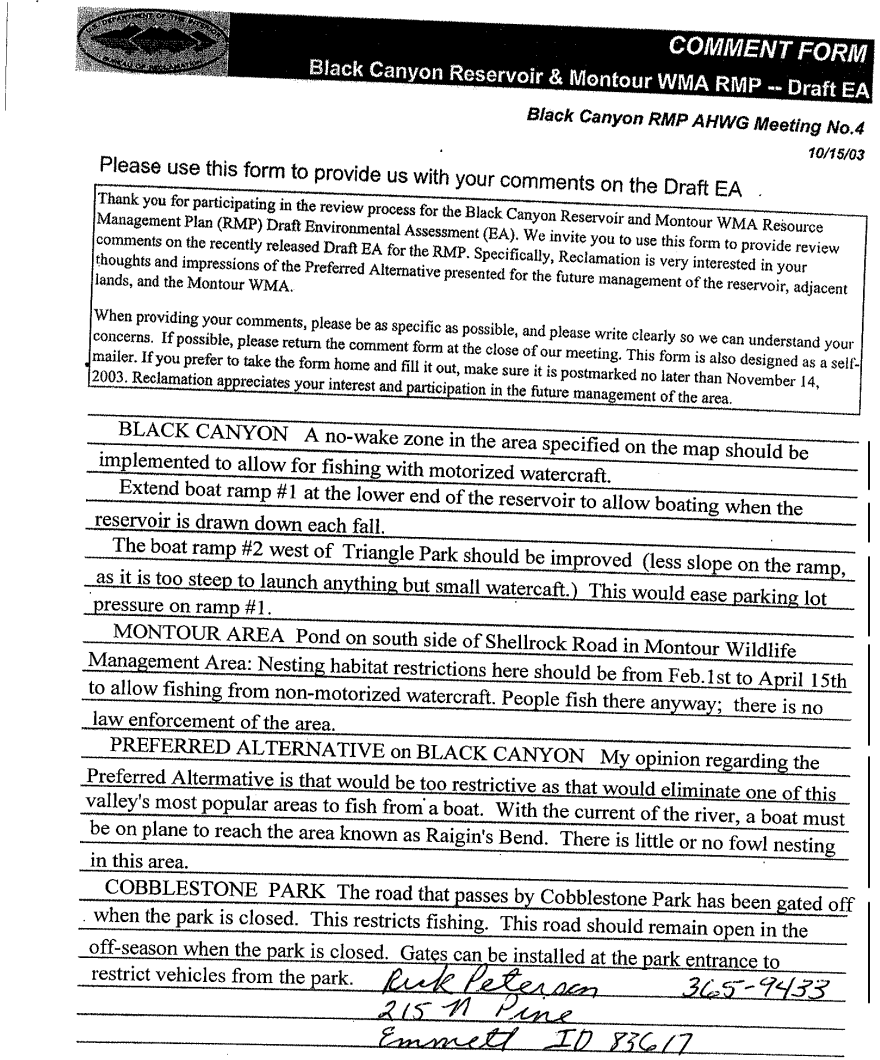
Bill Dillon
5300 S.E. 3rd Ave.
New Plymouth, ID 83655-5313

5—Bill Dillon, New Plymouth, Idaho

5-1 See response to Comment 2-4. IDFG's management goal for the Montour WMA is to maximize waterfowl production and to develop extensive areas of upland pheasant cover. Measures to provide for production of both species are described in Chapter 2 of this Final EA. Also, please see response to comment 3-4.

5-2 See response to comments 3-3, 3-4, and 4-4.

5-3 Comment noted.



COMMENT FORM
Black Canyon Reservoir & Montour WMA RMP -- Draft EA

Black Canyon RMP AHWG Meeting No.4
10/15/03

Please use this form to provide us with your comments on the Draft EA

Thank you for participating in the review process for the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WMA Resource Management Plan (RMP) Draft Environmental Assessment (EA). We invite you to use this form to provide review comments on the recently released Draft EA for the RMP. Specifically, Reclamation is very interested in your thoughts and impressions of the Preferred Alternative presented for the future management of the reservoir, adjacent lands, and the Montour WMA.

When providing your comments, please be as specific as possible, and please write clearly so we can understand your concerns. If possible, please return the comment form at the close of our meeting. This form is also designed as a self-mailer. If you prefer to take the form home and fill it out, make sure it is postmarked no later than November 14, 2003. Reclamation appreciates your interest and participation in the future management of the area.

BLACK CANYON A no-wake zone in the area specified on the map should be implemented to allow for fishing with motorized watercraft. 6-1

Extend boat ramp #1 at the lower end of the reservoir to allow boating when the reservoir is drawn down each fall. 6-2

The boat ramp #2 west of Triangle Park should be improved (less slope on the ramp, as it is too steep to launch anything but small watercaft.) This would ease parking lot pressure on ramp #1. 6-3

MONTOUR AREA Pond on south side of Shellrock Road in Montour Wildlife Management Area: Nesting habitat restrictions here should be from Feb.1st to April 15th to allow fishing from non-motorized watercraft. People fish there anyway; there is no law enforcement of the area. 6-4

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE on BLACK CANYON My opinion regarding the Preferred Altermative is that would be too restrictive as that would eliminate one of this valley's most popular areas to fish from a boat. With the current of the river, a boat must be on plane to reach the area known as Raigin's Bend. There is little or no fowl nesting in this area. 6-5

COBBLESTONE PARK The road that passes by Cobblestone Park has been gated off when the park is closed. This restricts fishing. This road should remain open in the off-season when the park is closed. Gates can be installed at the park entrance to restrict vehicles from the park. 6-6

Rick Peterson 365-9433
215 N Pine
Emmett ID 83617

6—Rick Peterson, John Overfelt, Bob Parks, Don Sulgrove, Carl Pook, Thomas Grant, Gene Corn, Bryan Frederick, Guy Gerard, Randy Lindler; Emmett, Idaho. Todd D. Martin; Boise, Idaho.

6-1 See response to Comment 2-2.

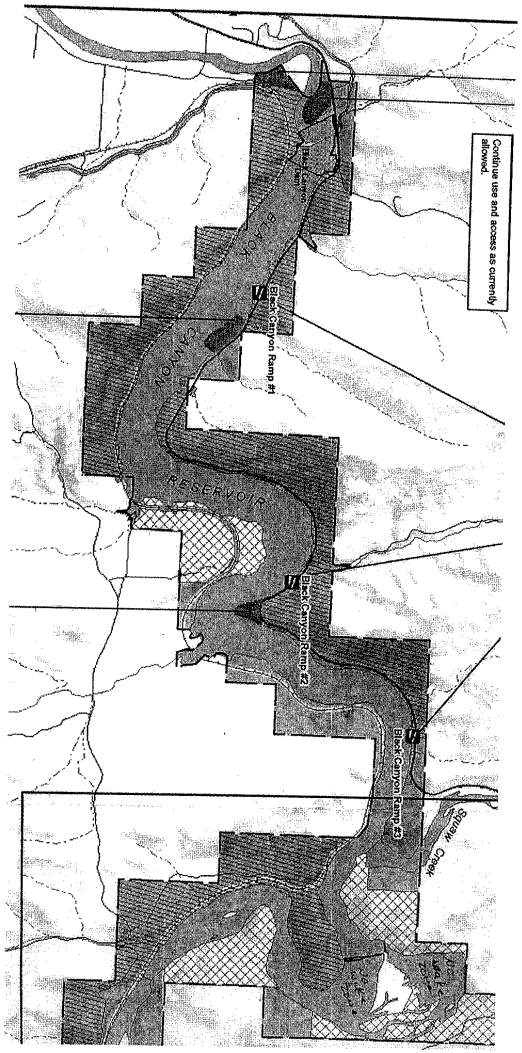
6-2 Improvements will be made at the boat ramps if Gem County or another non-Federal public entity managing partner is found to cost-share. Reclamation is required to have such a partner for any recreation improvements.

6-3 See response to Comment 6-2.

6-4 The nesting habitat restrictions will be implemented as described in this Final EA and as noted in response to Comment 3-3. IDFG agrees that past enforcement of seasonal closures on wetlands and ponds at Montour has been inadequate and plans to increase enforcement actions.

6-5 The proposed no-wake zone has been eliminated. Please see response to Comment 2-2.

6-6 When Reclamation allowed the gate to Cobblestone Park to remain open during the off-season, the facilities were vandalized. This requires the gate remain closed during this period, unless a cooperating entity (city, county or state) is willing to take responsibility for the facilities and open and close the gate daily.


Continue use and access as currently allowed.
BLACK CANYON
RESERVOIR
Black Canyon Ramp #1
Black Canyon Ramp #2
Black Canyon Ramp #3
Squaw Creek