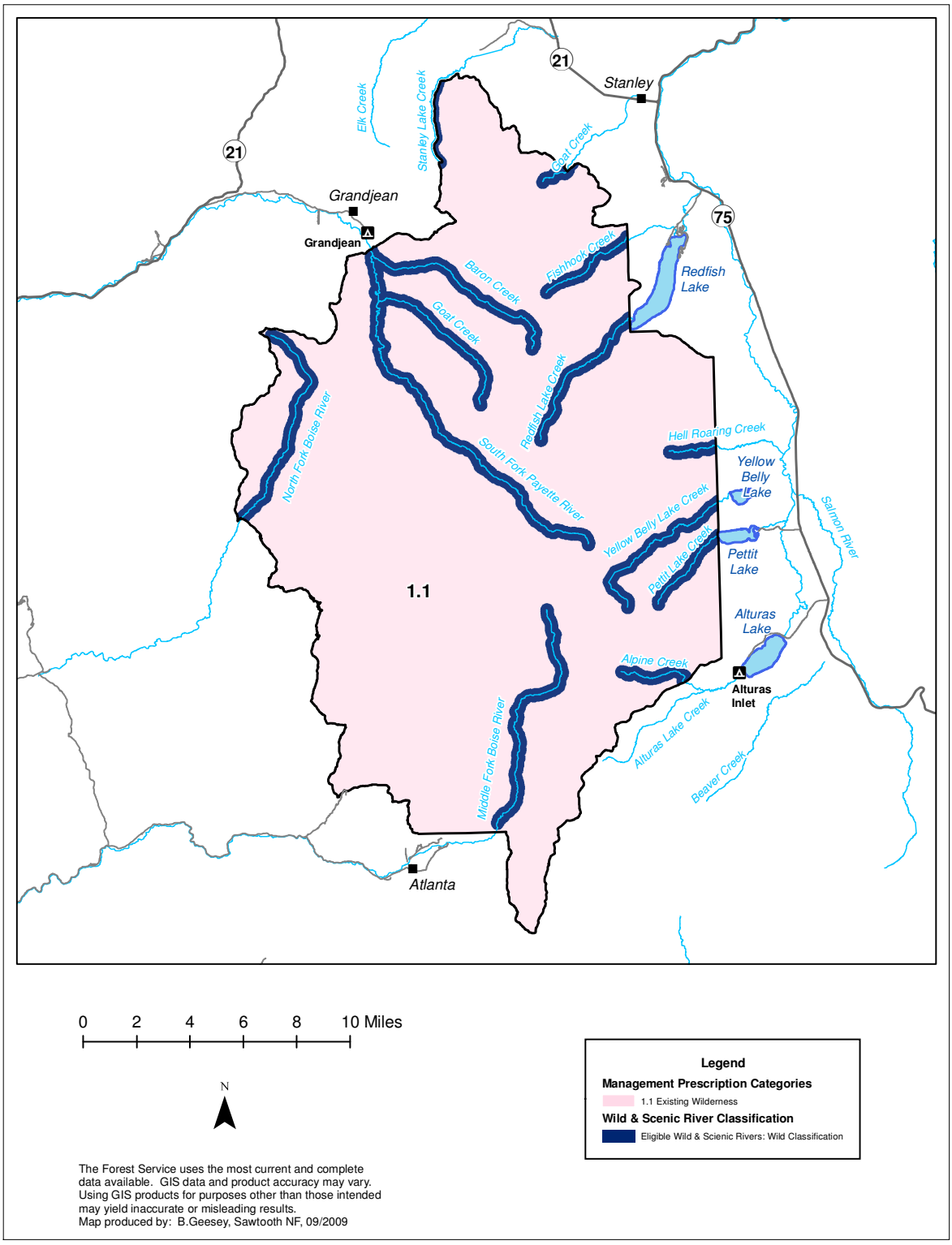

Management Area 01. Sawtooth Wilderness Location Map

Management Area 1
Sawtooth Wilderness

MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

Management Prescriptions - Management Area 22 has the following management prescription.

Management Prescription Category (MPC)	Percent of Mgt. Area
1.1 – Designated Wilderness	100

General Location and Description - Management Area 1 is comprised of lands within the Sawtooth, Boise, and Salmon-Challis National Forests that comprise the Sawtooth Wilderness (see map, preceding page). The area lies in Boise, Custer, Elmore, and Blaine Counties, and is administered by the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Created by Congress in 1972, the Sawtooth Wilderness is an estimated 217,664 acres. Management direction for the area is provided by the Sawtooth Wilderness Management Plan, revised and approved in 1997. The area is surrounded by National Forest System lands administered by the Sawtooth and Boise National Forests. The primary use and activity in this management area is the preservation of wilderness values.

Access - The main access to the area from the south and east is by State Highway 75 to Stanley and the Sawtooth Valley. Access from the north is by State Highway 21 via Lowman or Stanley-to-Stanley Lake (Forest Road 455) or Iron Creek (Forest Road 619). Access from the west is by State Highway 21 to Grandjean via Boise Forest Road 524 and Sawtooth Forest Road 824. Access from the southwest is from Atlanta via Boise Forest Roads 268 and 206. No roads occur within the area, but the area does have an extensive system of trails open to non-motorized use.

Special Features - The Sawtooth Wilderness provides outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, high-quality air and water, protected fish and wildlife habitats, spectacular scenery, and unique geologic features. The area is important in terms of providing clean water to downstream, imperiled fish species. It is also part of the Central Idaho Wolf Recovery Area. A portion of the Idaho Centennial Trail lies within this management area.

Segments of the following 14 streams are eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation: Stanley Lake Creek, Goat Creek, Fishhook Creek, Redfish Lake Creek, Hell Roaring Creek, Yellow Belly Lake Creek, Pettit Lake Creek, Alpine Creek, Alturas Lake Creek, Middle Fork Boise River, North Fork Boise River, South Fork Payette River, Goat Creek, and Baron Creek.

Air Quality - This management area lies within Montana/Idaho Airsheds ID-15, 17, and 21 and portions of Elmore, Boise and Camas Counties. Particulate matter is the primary pollutant of concern related to Forest management. There are ambient air monitors within these airsheds in Garden Valley, Idaho City, and Salmon to obtain current background levels, trends, and seasonal

patterns of particulate matter. The Sawtooth Wilderness is a designated Class I area. In 2000, visibility monitoring was expanded when the area was added to the Regional Haze monitoring network. There are no other Class I areas within 100 kilometers of this management area.

Between 1995 and 1999, emissions trends in all counties improved for PM 10, while PM 2.5 emissions in Elmore and Boise Counties remained constant. PM 2.5 for Camas County showed an improving trend; however, annual emissions were increasing. The discrepancy in trend was due to a peak year of emissions caused by wildfires. The most common source of particulate matter within the counties was fugitive dust from unpaved roads and agricultural activities such as tilling. In addition to Forest management activities, crop residue and ditch burning may contribute to particulate matter emissions. The amount of agricultural-related burning was very low in Boise County (less than 100 acres), moderately low (about 5,000 acres) in Elmore County, and low in Camas County (about 3,000 acres). Elmore County was the only county that had point sources. However, the contribution to the PM 2.5 annual total emissions was minor.

Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources - Elevations range from about 5,200 feet on the South Fork Payette River and Queens River to 10,751 feet on Thompson Peak. Management Area 1 is predominantly in the Sawtooth Ranges/Boise Mountains subsection, featuring glaciated mountains, fluvial mountains, and depositional lands. Slope gradients average between near vertical to 45 percent in the glaciated and fluvial mountains, and 0 to 35 percent in the depositional lands. The surface geology is dominated by Idaho Batholith granitics. Soils generally have low to high surface erosion potential, and productivity is low to moderate. Subwatershed vulnerability ratings range from low to high (see table below). Geomorphic Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds vary from high (functioning appropriately) to moderate (functioning at risk) to low (not functioning appropriately) (see table below). There are minor localized impacts from dispersed recreation use.

This management area comprises portions of eight watersheds across three subbasins. The major streams in the area are the South Fork Payette River, North Fork Boise River, Queens River, Middle Fork Boise River, Baron Creek, and Redfish Lake Creek. Hundreds of alpine lakes occur in the area. The Joe Daley-James and Grandjean subwatersheds are part of state-regulated public water systems. Water Quality Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds vary from high (functioning appropriately) to moderate (functioning at risk) (see table below). There are minor and localized sedimentation impacts from dispersed recreation use. There are currently no 303(d) impaired water bodies or TMDL-assigned subwatersheds associated with this management area.

Subwatershed Vulnerability			Geomorphic Integrity			Water Quality Integrity			No. 303(d) Subs	No. Subs With TMDLs	No. Public Water System Subs
High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low			
11	7	8	14	11	1	9	17	0	0	0	2

This area provides high water quality for important fisheries downstream, including endangered sockeye salmon, threatened chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout. Native westslope cutthroat trout also occur. Most of the area supports populations of bull trout, with three subwatersheds having strong local populations. Spawning and rearing for the Endangered

sockeye salmon, as well as migration opportunities for this species, occur downstream from this area. Additionally, chinook salmon spawn and rear here. This management area has designated critical habitat for spring/summer chinook salmon. Steelhead and native cutthroat trout are also found in some of the streams. Many high alpine lakes have hatchery-stocked recreational fisheries, featuring species such as non-native cutthroat trout, eastern brook trout, golden trout, rainbow trout, and grayling. These lakes often require regular stocking to provide fishing opportunities, and most impacts to native aquatic species and habitats come from the introduced stocked species and increasing recreation use. Overall, aquatic habitat is functioning properly, with minor sedimentation impacts related to dispersed recreation uses. However, native fish and amphibian populations are at risk in localized areas due primarily to the presence of non-native fish species. The Alturas Lake Creek, Iron-Goat, Upper Middle Fork Boise River, and Yellowbelly Lake Creek subwatersheds have been identified as important to the recovery of listed fish species, and as high-priority areas for restoration.

Vegetation - An estimated 50 percent of the management area is non-forested, or covered by grassland, shrubland, meadows, rock, or water. Much of this percentage is comprised of rock, water, and the alpine meadows, montane shrub, mountain big sage, and low sagebrush vegetation groups. The main forested vegetation groups are High Elevation Subalpine Fir (11 percent), Persistent Lodgepole Pine (14 percent), and Warm Dry Subalpine Fir (14 percent). Ponderosa pine is found at low elevations in the western portion of the area. Aspen is a minor but important component of the warm dry subalpine fir and lodgepole pine groups. Whitebark pine is an important component of the high elevation subalpine fir group.

The Montane Shrub and Low Sagebrush groups are near properly functioning condition, although older ages dominate structural stages due to fire exclusion. The Mountain Big Sagebrush group is functioning at risk, due to structural and compositional changes related to fire exclusion. Alpine Meadows are near properly functioning condition, although fire exclusion has led to localized increases in conifer density.

High Elevation Subalpine Fir is functioning at risk due to fire exclusion that has allowed the more shade-tolerant subalpine fir to increase in density, to the detriment of the whitebark pine component. The Warm Dry Subalpine Fir group is near properly functioning condition, but the Persistent Lodgepole Pine group is at risk because fire exclusion has resulted in older, more decadent stands with more climax species and less early seral species, particularly aspen. Aspen is present in pure stands and mixed with subalpine fir and lodgepole pine; however, many stands are dying out or being replaced by conifers. Fire hazard is increasing in lodgepole stands due to increasing mortality from mistletoe and increasing fuel loads.

Riparian vegetation is functioning properly in most areas but is functioning at risk in some areas due to localized impacts from dispersed recreation use. Snag levels are likely at historic levels in most areas due to restrictions on fuelwood gathering and motorized access. Fire exclusion has reduced wet meadows, willows, and early seral species in some riparian areas.

Botanical Resources – Proposed Region 4 Sensitive species in this management area include Mt. Shasta sedge and Kellogg's bitterroot. No federally listed or proposed plant species are known to occur in the area, but potential habitat exists for Ute ladies'-tresses and slender moonwort. Ute ladies'-tresses, a Threatened species, may have low to moderate potential habitat in riparian/wetland areas from 1,000 to 7,000 feet. Slender moonwort, a Candidate species, is a diminutive fern that may occur in moderate to higher elevation grasslands, meadows, small openings in spruce and lodgepole pine, and open rocky outcrops.

Non-native Plants – Orange hawkweed, Dalmatian toadflax, yellow toadflax, Canada thistle, and spotted knapweed occur in the management area, mostly along the main trail corridors and at the wilderness boundary. Only about 4 percent of the management is considered highly susceptible to invasion of noxious weeds and exotic plant species.

Wildlife Resources - Mixed conifer forests provide habitat for a number of Region 4 Sensitive species, including northern goshawk and flammulated owl, and other species of management concern, such as pileated woodpecker. Higher-elevation forests provide habitat for lynx, a Threatened species, great gray and boreal owls, three-toed woodpeckers, mountain goat, wolverine, peregrine falcon, moose, as well as summer range for elk, black bear, and mountain lion. Much of the area provides nesting and foraging habitat for migratory land birds, and general habitat for wide-ranging mammals such as elk, bear, and wolves. Gray wolves were re-introduced near here in 1995 and 1996, and populations likely occur in the area, which is part of the Central Idaho Wolf Recovery Area. Overall, terrestrial habitat is functioning properly for the most part, with localized impacts related to human disturbance and long-term fire exclusion.

Recreation Resources - Primitive, wilderness-oriented recreation--such as backpacking, stock packing, hunting, fishing, hiking, climbing, and camping--occurs throughout the area. Although the area is a national attraction, much of the use is concentrated in the summer and fall seasons due to the high-elevation, deep-snow conditions during winter and spring. Over 200 miles of trail are maintained in the area, and all are closed to motorized vehicle use. The management area lies in portions of Idaho Fish and Game Management Units 35, 36, and 39. Several outfitter and guides operate in the area under special use permits.

Cultural Resources - Cultural themes in this area include prehistoric, trapping, and mining. Few prehistoric sites have been recorded; however, the Shoshone Sheepeater Tribe likely used trails through the high-elevation area to access the Salmon River from their Boise and Weiser River camps. Early trapping and mining activity occurred in portions of the area, and signs of trapper and miner log cabins are still evident.

Timberland Resources - There are no tentatively suited acres in this management area because wilderness designation makes this area not suited for timber production.

Rangeland Resources - An estimated 6,800 acres are considered capable for livestock grazing. These acres represent about 1 percent of the capable rangeland acres for the entire Forest. All capable acres are allocated to livestock used by recreationists. Some limited pack and saddle stock grazing is allowed.

Mineral Resources - The management area is rich in mineral and geologic resources; however, Public Law 92-400 closed the wilderness to future mineral entry. There are no locatable mining claims remaining within the wilderness boundary.

Fire Management - The Rabbit Fire in 1994 burned an estimated 15 percent of the management area. The McPherson Fire in 1989 burned an estimated 3,300 acres. Fire management for this area is described in the Sawtooth Wilderness Prescribed Fire Plan (1999).

There are no National Fire Plan communities or wildland-urban interface subwatersheds wholly within the Wilderness. The Joe Daley-James, Grandjean, Hell Roaring-Mays, Redfish-Little Redfish, Cabin-Vat, Alturas Lake, Pettit Lake Creek, and Iron-Goat subwatersheds that are considered to pose risks to life and property from potential post-fire floods and debris flows. Historical fire regimes for the area are estimated to be: 27 percent lethal, 57 percent mixed1 or 2, and 16 percent non-lethal. Only 3 percent of the area regimes have vegetation conditions that are highly departed from their historical range. However, 26 percent of the area regimes have vegetation conditions that are moderately departed from their historical range. Wildfire in these areas may result in larger patch sizes of high intensity or severity.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

Follow the management direction in the Sawtooth Wilderness Management Plan located in Appendix I. Because the Wilderness is also located in the SNRA, the following SNRA general management direction also applies.

SNRA General Management

Standard – Manage both federal and private lands to ensure the preservation and protection of the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and fish and wildlife values and to provide for the enhancement of the associated recreational values in accordance with Public Law 92-400.

Standard – Management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources on federally owned lands (such as timber, grazing, and mineral resources) shall be allowed only insofar as their utilization does not substantially impair achievement of the purposes for which the recreation area was established. "Substantial impairment" is defined as that level of disturbance of the values of the SNRA that is incompatible with the standards and guidelines of the Forest Plan (contained in this document). The proposed activities shall be evaluated as to: (1) the period of impact; (2) the area affected; and (3) the importance of the impact on the SNRA values. Use process guidance in Appendix I to assist in determining compliance with this standard.