implementing the procedural requirements of the NEPA of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4371, et seq.), and is in the exercise of authority delegated to the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs by 209 DM 8.

Dated: May 17, 2019.

Tara Sweeney, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tara Sweeney, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs.

BILLING CODE 4337-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary

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National Environmental Policy Act

Implementing Procedures for the Bureau of Reclamation (516 DM 14)

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of final National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the addition of a new categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 for the Bureau of Reclamation in the Department of the Interior’s Departmental Manual (DM) at 516 DM 14. The new categorical exclusion is for the transfer of title of certain projects and facilities from the Bureau of Reclamation to a qualifying non-Federal project entity. The new categorical exclusion allows for more efficient review of appropriate title transfer actions.

DATES: The categorical exclusion is effective May 24, 2019.

ADDRESSES: The new categorical exclusion can be found at the following location: https://www.doi.gov/elips/browse, at Series 31, Part 516, chapter 14.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Catherine Cunningham, Environmental Compliance Division, Bureau of Reclamation, (303) 445–2875; or via email at ccunningham@usbr.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) was established in 1902. Its original mission was one of civil works construction to develop the water resources of the arid Western United States to promote the settlement and economic development of that region. Results are well known in the hundreds of projects that were developed to store and deliver water. That substantial infrastructure contributed to making Reclamation the largest wholesale supplier of water and the second largest producer of hydropower in the United States.

Title Transfer

Title transfer is a voluntary conveyance of ownership (title) for water projects, portions of projects, or project facilities such as dams, canals, laterals, and other water-related infrastructure and facilities to beneficiaries of those facilities. Title transfer divests Reclamation of responsibility for the operation, maintenance, management, regulation of, and liability for the project, lands, and facilities to be transferred. It provides the non-Federal entity with greater autonomy and flexibility to manage the facilities to meet its needs, in compliance with Federal, state, and local laws and in conformance with contractual obligations. Title-transferred assets would no longer be Federal assets.

Under the Reclamation Extension Act of 1914, the responsibility for operations, maintenance, and replacement of facilities may be, and often is, contractually transferred to the water users. Title or ownership of facilities and projects, however, must remain with the United States until Congress specifically authorizes their transfer. Since 1995, Reclamation has been working closely with qualifying entities of specific projects and has conveyed over 30 projects and/or project-related facilities, including dams, reservoirs, canals, laterals, buildings, project lands, and easements. Congressional authorizations for title transfer historically have occurred on a project-by-project basis. While Congress may authorize future title transfers by this same approach, recent legislation was passed to facilitate transfer of title for Reclamation project facilities. On March 12, 2019, the President signed into law the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. Public Law 116–9, Title VIII, Subtitle A of Public Law 116–9, Reclamation Title Transfer (Title VIII), authorizes Reclamation to transfer title of certain project facilities without additional Congressional action if they meet eligibility criteria, under procedures established by Reclamation.

Transfer of title is a Federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires that when a major Federal action would have significant impacts on the quality of the human environment, a statement be prepared to describe the impacts and effects on the human environment associated with the Federal action. When a Federal agency determines that a certain category of actions will not normally have an individually or cumulatively significant effect on the human environment and for which neither an environmental assessment (EA) nor an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required, that category of actions may be excluded from further NEPA review (40 CFR 1508.4). When appropriately established and applied, categorical exclusions (CEs) serve a beneficial purpose. They allow Federal agencies to expedite the environmental review process for proposals that typically do not require more resource-intensive EAs or EISs (Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) 2010).

Comments on the Proposal

Reclamation solicited comments from the public on establishing a new CE through a 30-day public comment period, announced in the Federal Register on October 17, 2018 (83 FR 52503). All comments received, to date, have been considered.

Reclamation received 16 letters from state governments, water and irrigation districts, water user organizations, a national environmental professionals association and a consortium of conservation interests. Individual comments included several that restated the objectives, limitations, and rationale for the CE, several that expressed general or detailed support or opposition for the CE, and several that expressed general or detailed support or opposition to transferring title.

Reclamation appreciates the interest and participation of all respondents. Reclamation has noted the comments, which provided general support and general opposition. For comments providing additional detail, questions, and suggestions, Reclamation, where appropriate, grouped the common comments and responds to the comments as follows:

Comment 1—Adequacy of analysis of title transfers: Commenters were concerned that a CE would preclude NEPA analysis or would not provide enough or sufficiently rigorous analysis for title transfer actions, including indirect effects, reasonable alternatives to be evaluated, and/or cumulative effects.

Response 1—CEs are not exemptions or waivers from NEPA. Rather, they are a type of NEPA review intended to accomplish the purposes of NEPA, efficiently and effectively. A CE is a tool to complete the NEPA environmental review process for proposals that normally would not require more resource-intensive EAs or EISs. Reclamation intends to meet

Tara Sweeney, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs.
requirements under NEPA and other laws and regulations, ensuring the appropriate level of analysis and public involvement, consistent with regulations and policies. Any proposals not meeting the CE Qualification Factors (see CE Qualification Factors section in this notice) or triggering the Department of the Interior (Department) extraordinary circumstances, listed at 43 CFR 46.215, would need additional review.

Comment 2—Adequacy of public and agency involvement: Commenters were concerned that a CE would reduce the ability of the public and agencies to receive notification of the CE and provide public input. One commenter requested notification for any CE Reclamation considers across the Missouri River basin.

Response 2—The CEQ and the Department’s NEPA implementing regulations do not require public notice of an agency’s use of a CE. The eligibility criterion for transferring title, as described in CE Qualification Factor #8 does, however, establish Reclamation’s commitment that affected state, local, and tribal governments, appropriate Federal agencies, and the public be notified, regarding proposed title transfers, and invited to participate in an open manner.

Comment 3—Scope of proposed title transfers: The commenter suggested that Reclamation should divest a portion of a project that would not have qualified for a CE if considered in whole. The commenter expressed a particular concern with piecemeal divestitures involving the Garrison Diversion Unit.

Response 3—The terms “piecemeal” or “improper segmentation” are sometimes used to describe actions that are divided into smaller parts with less significant individual effects, in order to avoid preparing an EIS. Section 1508.25 of CEQ’s NEPA implementing regulations requires that “connected actions” and “cumulative actions” be analyzed in the same impact statement. Reclamation will consider extraordinary circumstances to ensure actions under any CE are not part of a larger action.

Comment 4—Eligibility factors for a proposed title transfer to qualify for use of the CE: The commenter recommends Reclamation’s Framework for the Transfer of Title (September 2004) and Reclamation’s policy clearly exclude the following types of projects and facilities, in part or in whole, from use of the CE:

- Large multi-purpose projects
- Hydropower projects
- Projects that lack consensus among project beneficiaries
- Projects with a history of litigation or legal concerns
- Inter-basin transfer projects or components of an inter-basin transfer project

Response 4—CEQ guidance advises that agencies develop CE by setting limits on potential project actions to ensure they will not result in significant environmental impacts. Reclamation’s new CE is intended to appropriately define and limit use to only those title transfer actions that meet CE Qualification Factors, do not involve extraordinary circumstances, and will not result in individually or cumulatively significant environmental impacts. Reclamation considered other factors for its CE, including some indicated by the commenter. Reclamation has determined, however, that the exclusions suggested by this comment are substantially satisfied in other CE Qualification Factors and analysis of extraordinary circumstances. For example, the transferee would be required to ensure there are no competing demands for the use of transferred facilities.

Comment 5—Extraordinary circumstances: The commenter suggested that Reclamation should not divest a portion of a project that would not have qualified for a CE if considered in whole. The commenter expressed a particular concern with piecemeal divestitures involving the Garrison Diversion Unit.

Response 5—The terms “piecemeal” or “improper segmentation” are sometimes used to describe actions that are divided into smaller parts with less significant individual effects, in order to avoid preparing an EIS. Section 1508.25 of CEQ’s NEPA implementing regulations requires that “connected actions” and “cumulative actions” be analyzed in the same impact statement. Reclamation will consider extraordinary circumstances to ensure actions under any CE are not part of a larger action.

Comment 6—Clarification on CE Qualification Factors: Three commenters suggested amending the CE Qualification Factors to recognize coordination of operations agreements with the following edits (added language is indicated in italics below):

- #3. The potential transferee must ensure that there are no competing demands for use of the transferred facilities, with the exception of those demands accommodated by existing contractual arrangements.
- #4. The potential transferee must ensure that the facilities proposed for transfer are not hydraulically integrated with other facilities thereby impacting other contractors, stakeholders or activities, with the exception of those impacts accommodated by existing contractual arrangements.

Response 6—Reclamation accepts the rationale and suggested language for CE Qualification Factor #3 and #4. In addition, to ensure that potential transferees coordinate with other parties to such existing contractual arrangements, Reclamation revises CE Qualification Factor #6 as follows:

- #6. The potential transferee must ensure that issues involving existing contracts and agreements, interstate compacts, and agreements are resolved, and treaty and international agreement obligations are fulfilled prior to transfer.

Finally, Reclamation revises the CE language itself to be consistent with the above revisions, and other clarifications with regard to the Secretary’s responsibilities, as follows: “Transfer from Federal ownership of facilities and/or interest in lands to a qualifying entity where there are no competing demands for use of the facilities; where the facilities are not hydraulically integrated; where, at the time of transfer, there would be no planned change in land or water use, or in operation, or maintenance of the facilities; and where the transfer would be consistent with the Secretary’s responsibilities, including but not limited to existing contracts or agreements, the protection of land resources and water rights held in trust for federally recognized Indian tribes and Indian individuals, and ensuring compliance with international treaties and interstate compacts.”

Comment 7—Clarification on “severing ties”: Commenters referred to language provided in Reclamation’s Federal Register notice proposing the title transfer CE. Introductory paragraphs note: “The transfer of title of a project or set of facilities will, in effect, sever
Reclamation’s ties with that project or those conveyed facilities.” The
comments noted that “even if title is transferred, ties with Reclamation are
not severed. For example, the
relationship with a water district would remain.”

Response 8—Because Reclamation
would no longer own, operate, or
otherwise manage transferred assets,
transfers will normally sever its
contractual relationships with affected
water districts.

Comment 9—Project power: Multiple
commenters discussed the need for
continued access to project power for
title transfer projects.

Response 9—The comment appears to be
more related to the terms and
conditions of title transfers rather than
our review to establish a new CE.
Reclamation would implement the
terms and conditions of any
Congressional action authorizing a title
transfer, including any Congressional
directive related to project use power.

Response 10—Public interest and
public trust: Multiple commenters
questioned how operations of the
transferred facilities would be carried
out in such a manner that the public
interest is maintained.

Response 10—Similar to the comment
above, it appears to be more related to
the terms and conditions of title
transfers rather than our review to
establish a CE. Reclamation would
implement the terms and conditions of any
Congressional action authorizing a title
transfer. Once title is transferred, Reclamation has no authority over a
non-Federal entity.

Comment 11—Indian trust resources:
The commenter questioned how Indian
trust resources would be managed and
whether they would be maintained in a
manner similar to that of the Federal
Government.

Response 11—The United States
cannot transfer its Indian trust
responsibilities. Therefore, eligibility to
use this CE would only involve
proposals for which there are no Indian
trust responsibilities. Language in
Eligibility criterion #5 is amended to
clarify this point, as follows: The
transfer would not include lands or
facilities involving Indian trust
responsibilities.

Comment 12—Delegation to non-
Federal entities: Multiple commenters
questioned if Reclamation will delegate
Federal authority to ensure proper
management and protection of public
trust resources.

Response 12—In general, Reclamation
may not delegate its authorities to a
non-Federal entity under title transfer.
Once title is transferred, Reclamation
has no authority over the facility or the
owner. Under CE Qualification Factors,
title transferees are required to
demonstrate ability to properly manage
the subject lands and facilities, which
would be reflected in title transfer
conditions and agreements.

Comment 13—Large and complex
projects: The commenter questioned whether Reclamation will apply this CE
to large and complex projects, such as
the Federal Columbia River Power
System.

Response 13—Reclamation will
carefully apply this CE to only those
proposed projects meeting the CE
Qualification Factors and free of
extraordinary circumstances. Each
proposed title transfer will be reviewed
on a case-by-case basis.

Comment 14—Additional
considerations to determine eligibility to
use a CE: The commenter expressed
concern about several topics (below)
and questioned how project
requirements would be met:

- Illegal water deliveries, over-
  appropriation (e.g., the Umatilla Basin
  controversy)
- Maintaining instream flow
- Ensuring tribal trust
- Re-allocation of water
- Discretion in mitigation
- Addressing damages to subject
  facilities caused by unforeseen
  circumstances (forces of nature, time)
- Addressing damages downstream
  caused by subject facilities (dam
  failure, slope failure, flooding)
- Congressional approval (all transfers
  require Congressional approval)

Response 14—Reclamation’s
proposed new CE is intended to
appropriately define and limit use to
only those title transfer actions that
meet CE Qualification Factors, do not
involve extraordinary circumstances,
and will not result in individually or
cumulatively significant environmental
impacts. Reclamation considered other
factors for its proposed CE, including
some indicated by the commenter. For
example, for a proposal to qualify for
use of the CE, the transferee would be
required to ensure there are no
competing demands for the use of
transferred facilities and the transfer
would not include lands or facilities
involving Native American trust
responsibilities. Reclamation has
determined that the commenter’s
suggestions are substantially satisfied by
current CE Qualification Factors and
analysis against extraordinary
circumstances. Reclamation will
consider all relevant factors when
determining both the eligibility of the
CE and the potential for extraordinary
circumstances on each proposed title
transfer.

Comment 15—Frequency of title
transfer actions: The commenter
expressed concern that establishing a CE
would result in more frequent
implementation of these types of actions
and cumulative impacts of wide-scale
disposal of Federal lands.

Response 15—Reclamation
anticipates that establishing a CE would
not change the overall number of
potential, eligible title transfer
proposals. Of those, only title transfers
meeting CE Qualification Factors would
be eligible to use the CE. Reclamation
does not anticipate that establishing this
CE would result in a wide-scale disposal
of Federal lands.

Comment 16—CE development
process: The commenter requests that
Reclamation reconsider drafting of its
proposal to establish a CE and
recommends issuing a revised notice.

Response 16—Reclamation
appreciates the commenter’s suggestions
and has revised the CE definition and
CE Qualification Factors in response to
commments to correct and clarify
language. These changes will help
ensure use of the CE only for title
transfers that would not result in
significant impacts. Reclamation is
establishing this title transfer CE
consistent with CEQ and Department
regulations and guidance.

Comment 17—Change in use: The
commenter expressed concern that the
“language in the CE, ‘at the time of
transfer,’” leaves open the possibility that
these same facilities may undergo such
changes in the future without the
procedures and protections to the
environment that normally would be
required of Reclamation under NEPA.”

Response 17—The basis of this CE is
that it applies only in instances where,
at the time of transfer, such changes are
not contemplated; and if they are, the
use of this CE would not be allowed.
This determination relies on the stated
intentions of the potential transferee
and the assumption that parties enter
the agreement in good faith.

Reclamation understands there is a
chance a potential transferee could
falsely state its intention or change its
plan over time. These circumstances
would be no better served by preparing
an EA or an EIS. Reclamation believes
that the potential for this scenario is
mitigated by the underlying purposes of
the project, in which a potential
transferee is already invested and the
interest a potential transferee would
have in protecting its business integrity
with Reclamation and others.

Comment 18—Underruns NEPA:
The commenter is concerned that “. . .
the desire for a speedy environmental review has undermined the very existence of NEPA.”  

Response 18—As provided in CEQ regulations and guidance, establishing a CE and appropriately using CEs are consistent with the policy and objectives of NEPA.

Text of Addition to 516 DM 14, Section 14.5 Categorical Exclusions

F. Title Transfer Activities

(1) “Transfer from Federal ownership of facilities and/or interest in lands to a qualifying entity where there are no competing demands for use of the facilities; where the facilities are not hydrologically integrated; where, at the time of transfer, there would be no planned change in land or water use, or in operation, or maintenance of the facilities; and where the transfer would be consistent with the Secretary’s responsibilities, including but not limited to existing contracts or agreements, the protection of land resources and water rights held in trust for federally recognized Indian tribes and Indian individuals, and ensuring compliance with international treaties and interstate compacts.”

CE Qualification Factors

The CE is limited to the transfer of projects and/or project facilities from Federal ownership to a qualifying entity, which means an agency of State or local government or Indian tribe, a municipal corporation, quasi-municipal corporation, or other entity such as a water district that, as determined by the Secretary, has the capacity to continue to manage the conveyed property for the same purposes for which the property has been managed under Reclamation law. Accordingly, projects involving the following considerations (CE Qualification Factors) of a qualifying non-Federal entity would generally be eligible to be considered for the title transfer CE:

1. The potential transferee must demonstrate the technical capability to maintain and operate the facilities and lands on a permanent basis and an ability to meet financial obligations associated with the transferred assets.

2. The potential transferee must affirm that it has no plans to change the maintenance, operations, or use of the lands and water associated with the transferred facilities.

3. The potential transferee must ensure that there are no competing demands for use of the transferred facilities, with the exception of those demands accommodated by existing contractual arrangements.

4. The potential transferee must ensure that the facilities proposed for transfer are not hydrologically integrated with other facilities, thereby impacting other contractors, stakeholders or activities, with the exception of those impacts accommodated by existing contractual arrangements.

5. The title transfer action would not include lands or facilities involving Indian trust responsibilities.

6. The potential transferee must ensure that issues involving existing contracts and agreements, and interstate compacts and agreements, are resolved, and treaty and international agreement obligations are fulfilled prior to transfer.

7. The potential transferee must assume responsibility for all commitments and agreements into the future.

8. Potentially affected state, local, and tribal governments, appropriate Federal agencies, and the public will be notified of the initiation of discussion to transfer title and will have: (a) The opportunity to comment and suggest options for remedying any problems; and (b) full access to relevant information, including proposals, analyses, and reports related to the proposed transfer.

The title transfer process will be carried out in an open and public manner. If a project or facility is not eligible for transfer under Public Law 116–9, Title VIII, the transfer proponent may seek legislation to authorize the negotiated terms of the transfer of each project or facility.

Eligibility for this CE would be determined by Reclamation, based on the results of on-site inspections, surveys, and other methods of evaluation and documentation prepared by Reclamation to determine the presence or absence of the exceptions. To determine that a proposed title transfer fits within the CE, Reclamation would review the proposal to determine that all the following apply:

1. The Department’s extraordinary circumstances would not be triggered by the title transfer action.

2. The title transfer action would not change:

   a. Operation and maintenance of the facilities or lands transferred;

   b. Land or water use.

3. The title transfer action would not involve any unresolved issue associated with compliance with interstate compacts and agreements; meeting the Secretary’s Indian trust responsibilities; and fulfilling treaty and international agreement obligations.

   Even if a title transfer action that meets these criteria, Reclamation may, at its sole discretion, decide to prepare an EA or an EIS instead of applying the CE.

Public Law 116–9, Title VIII, Subtitle A, Reclamation Title Transfer

Title VIII facilitates the transfer of title to certain Reclamation project facilities. Reclamation’s proposal to establish a new CE for title transfer is separate and independent from implementation of Title VIII. Reclamation anticipates that the applicability of the new CE to proposed projects qualifying for title transfer under Title VIII would be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Likewise, proposed projects that qualify for the new CE may not qualify for inclusion under Title VIII. We note, however, that both Title VIII and Reclamation’s draft language from its Federal Register Notice on October 17, 2018 (83 FR 52503) for the CE referenced “eligibility criteria.” Given that the two lists’ specific eligibility criteria differ, Reclamation will use the term “CE Qualification Factors” for the CE to minimize confusion with the law. In addition, Reclamation has modified CE Qualification Factor #8 to account for title transfer proposals that may already be authorized under Title VIII, as well as those not yet authorized.

Categorical Exclusion

The Department and Reclamation find that the category of actions described in the CE (below), limited by the CE Qualification Factors, does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This finding is based on analysis of Reclamation’s proposal to establish this CE, including analysis of Reclamation’s title transfer actions. To date, Reclamation has prepared EAs and made findings of no significant impact (FONSI) on eight projects that were limited in scope, consistent with the CE Qualification Factors. The EA and FONSI documentation for these projects is available at www.usbr.gov. Reclamation has prepared two EISs on title transfer proposals and two EAs for projects that involved more complex actions than those that would meet the CE Qualification Factors. In addition, Reclamation has prepared 12 EAs and FONSIs on title transfer proposals for which mitigation was applied to reduce impacts to less than significant. Several of these proposals involved issues of concern including sites of interest to tribal communities and adverse effects to historic properties. The full complement of these EAs, FONSIs, EISs, and Reclamation’s knowledge and experience contribute to the body of work Reclamation has used to analyze its title transfer actions and validate its
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Availability for the Draft Four Rivers Field Office Resource Management Plan and Associated Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Four Rivers Field Office (FRFO), Boise, Idaho, has prepared a Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and by this notice is announcing the release of the Draft RMP.

DATES: To ensure that comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the Draft RMP/Draft EIS within 90 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS in the Federal Register. The BLM will announce future meetings or hearings and any other public participation activities at least 15 days in advance through public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

The FRFO currently manages land in accordance with the 1983 Kuna Management Framework Plan (MFP), the 1987 Jarbidge RMP, and the 1988 Cascade RMP. These plans have been amended since originally approved. This planning effort will identify goals and objectives and update management guidance to create a new RMP. The BLM engaged in public scoping to help identify planning issues that directed the formulation of alternatives and framed the analysis in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. Issues include managing the scattered BLM-administered land base, balancing increasing public demand with conservation of fragile resources and balancing resource uses (including energy development). The planning effort also considers socio-economic concerns and special designations including lands with wilderness characteristics, wild and scenic rivers and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

The Draft RMP/Draft EIS evaluates four alternatives in detail. Alternative A is the No Action Alternative, which is a continuation of current management, public use, resource protection, and conservation prescriptions in the existing RMPs and MFP, as amended. It does not address issues that were nonexistent or unforeseen when the BLM prepared the original RMPs and MFP.

Alternative B emphasizes protecting natural resource values from potential impacts of population growth and increased use and incorporates protective measures for plants and wildlife compared to other alternatives. While some areas would still emphasize recreation and community development available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with Ms. Murdock. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FRFO encompasses an area located in southwestern Idaho extending north of the Snake River from approximately Glenns Ferry in the southeast, west to Weiser, and north to McCall. The planning area includes all of the FRFO located outside the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area which is governed by a separate RMP. The planning area encompasses approximately 783,000 surface acres and 1,173,150 acres of mineral estate in Ada, Adams, Boise, Camas, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley and Washington counties administered by the BLM. Much of the planning area comprises interspersed sections of public, private, State or Forest Service lands.

Many of the planning area includes all of the FRFO planning area includes all of the FRFO.

Copies of the FRFO Draft RMP/Draft EIS are available in the Boise District Office at the above address; at the Idaho BLM State Office, 1387 South Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709; and online at the following website: http://go.usa.gov/xnsn6.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: For further information, contact Pam Murdock, Project Lead, telephone 208–384–3300; address 3948 S Development Ave., Boise, Idaho 83705; email Four_Rivers_RMP@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact Ms. Murdock. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with Ms. Murdock. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

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Alternative B emphasizes protecting natural resource values from potential impacts of population growth and increased use and incorporates protective measures for plants and wildlife compared to other alternatives. While some areas would still emphasize recreation and community development available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with Ms. Murdock. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FRFO encompasses an area located in southwestern Idaho extending north of the Snake River from approximately Glenns Ferry in the southeast, west to Weiser, and north to McCall. The planning area includes all of the FRFO located outside the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area which is governed by a separate RMP. The planning area encompasses approximately 783,000 surface acres and 1,173,150 acres of mineral estate in Ada, Adams, Boise, Camas, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley and Washington counties administered by the BLM. Much of the planning area comprises interspersed sections of public, private, State or Forest Service lands.