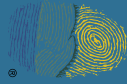




tread lightly!
LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION



IDAHO

East Central

SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST



IDAHO

East Central

With a river at its heart . . .

Salmon-Challis National Forest

With the mighty Salmon River at its heart, the 4.3-million-acre Salmon-Challis National Forest is a study in contrasts. A distance of almost two vertical miles separates the climber atop Mt. Borah (12,662 feet), located on the southern end of the Forest, from the river rafter floating the lowest portion of the main Salmon River Canyon (2,800 feet), on the northern end of the Forest. And everywhere, the Forest offers unsurpassed scenery and outdoor adventures. The rich history of Native Americans, explorers, pioneers, and miners all took place on this landscape shaped by millions of years of volcanic events, earthquakes, glaciers, wind, water, and fire. Here, much of the land remains only lightly touched by civilization, and native plants and wildlife thrive. Each spring, snowmelt from the high mountain slopes feeds the rivers, bringing renewed life to this incredible landscape.

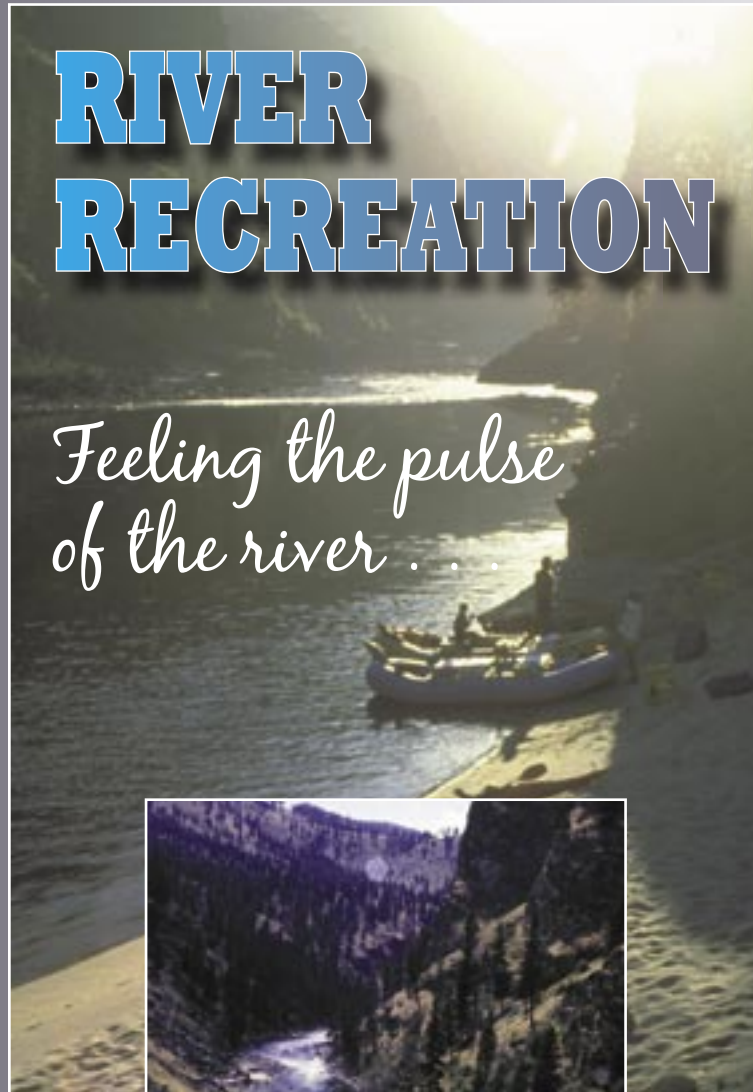
The Middle Fork at its confluence with the Salmon River



USDA Department of Agriculture • Forest Service
Intermountain Region • Ogden, Utah

RIVER RECREATION

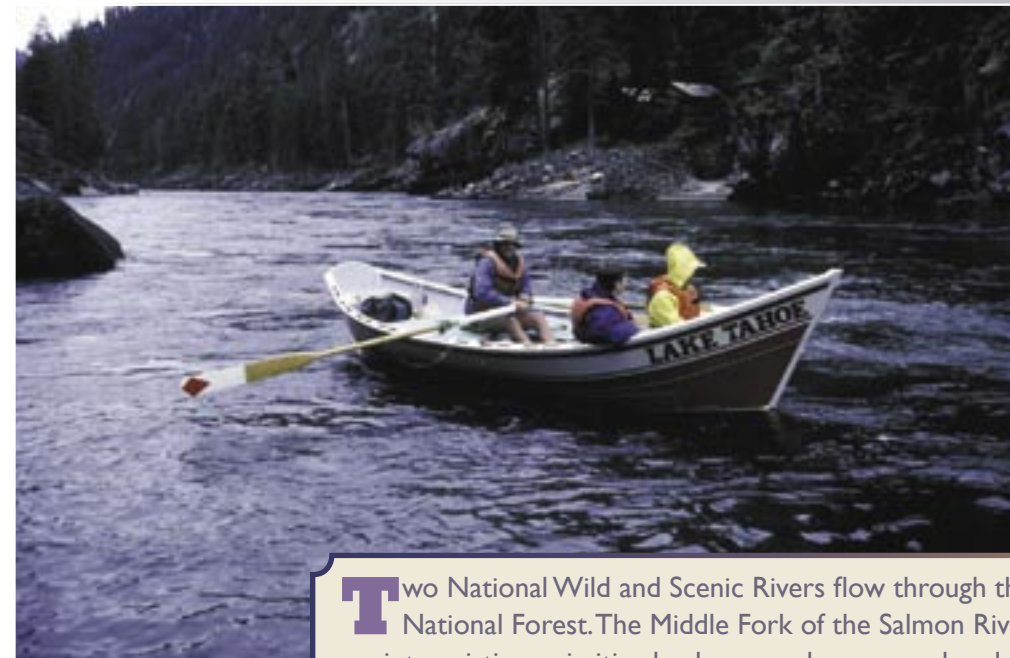
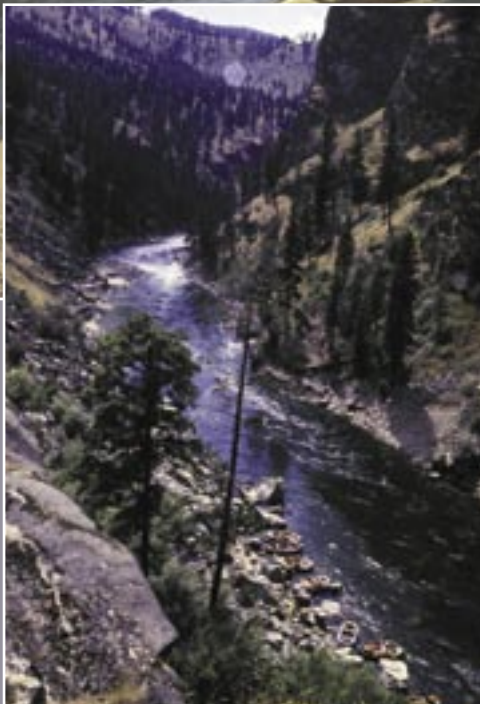
Feeling the pulse of the river . . .



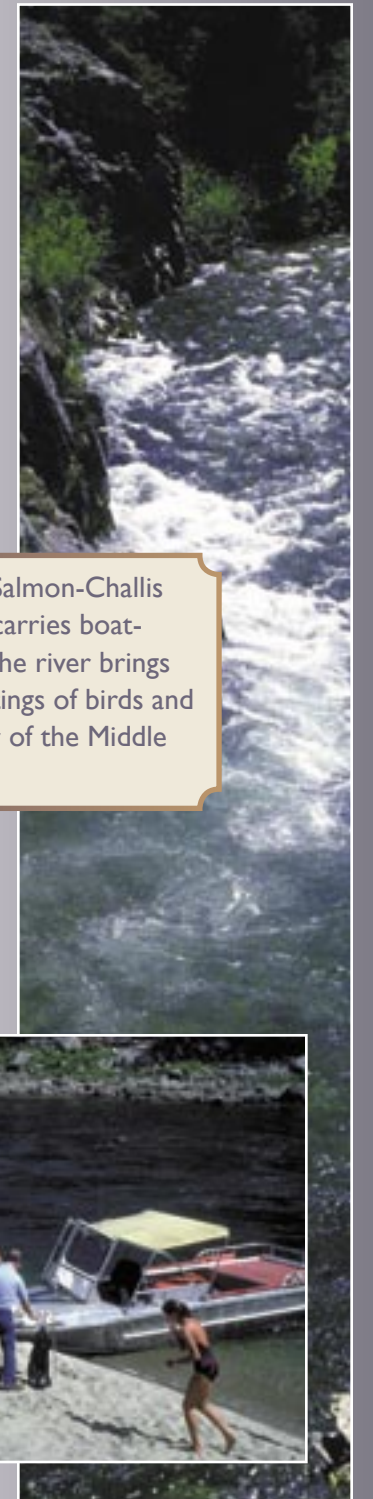
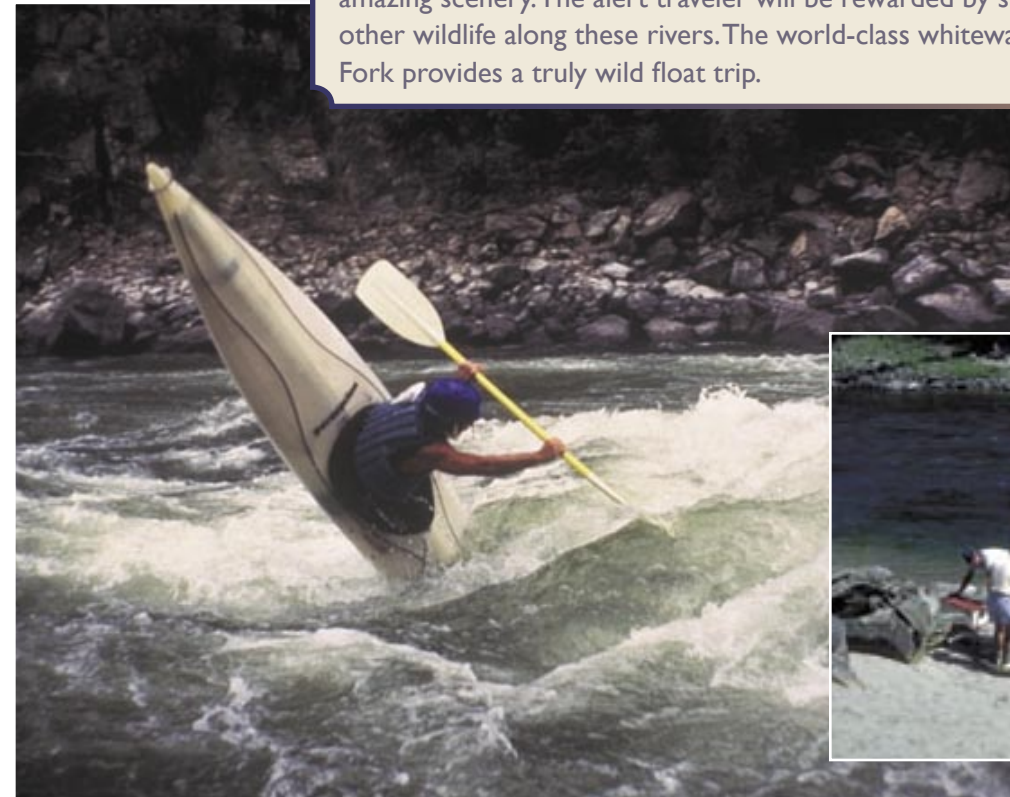
Humans are drawn to the Salmon River for many reasons. They enjoy the challenge of negotiating surging rapids in a rubber raft. They celebrate when they hook an elusive trout. They relax while floating quiet water in the depths of a river canyon. They capture the river's unique beauty with the camera lens, or simply find solace in the music of the river. On its long journey to join the Snake River, the Salmon River flows for 400 miles. The river passes through portions of the Salmon-Challis National Forest, slowly eroding and sculpturing the face of the land as it gives life to an arid country. Visitors to the river are witness to what eons of time and flowing water have accomplished.



The recreation section of the Salmon Wild and Scenic River runs from North Fork, past the mouth of the Middle Fork, to Corn Creek, where the river enters the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness. The 79-mile section of the river from Corn Creek to Vinegar Bar boasts one of the deepest canyons in North America, where crashing rapids alternate with long quiet stretches. Jetboats also navigate the waters of this section of the river.



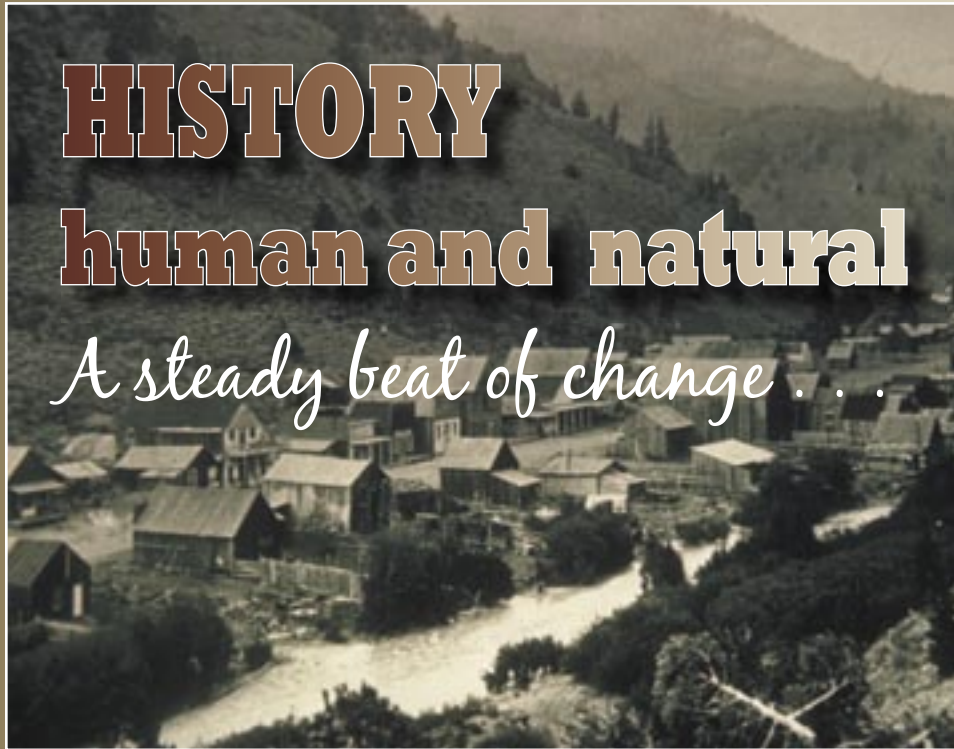
Two National Wild and Scenic Rivers flow through the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The Middle Fork of the Salmon River carries boaters into pristine, primitive landscapes where every bend of the river brings amazing scenery. The alert traveler will be rewarded by sightings of birds and other wildlife along these rivers. The world-class whitewater of the Middle Fork provides a truly wild float trip.



HISTORY

human and natural

A steady beat of change . . .



1880's - Custer, Idaho



1980's - Earthquake fault, 1983



Late 1800's - Tombstone

Evidence of the raw, rugged history of the West is clearly visible in and around the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Here remnants of the lives and societies of Native Americans, gold and silver miners, missionaries, boatmen, explorers, pioneers, trappers, and mountain men are scattered across the land. You can follow the Lewis and Clark Trail to the place where the American flag was first unfurled west of the Rocky Mountains. A rich geological history is also found here, from natural arches along remote trails, to large areas affected by volcanic upheavals, to mountain ranges built by the action of plate tectonics. On October 28, 1983, a magnitude 7.3 earthquake centered near Challis formed a six-foot high scarp that still stretches for several miles along the western slope of the Lost River Range. This earthquake disrupted groundwater flows as far away as Yellowstone National Park, where it affected the eruptions of Old Faithful Geyser. Geologists estimate that an earthquake of similar magnitude has occurred in this area every 3,300 years for many millennia.



Late 1800's, horse-drawn grader



Native Americans - Peel tree



Bayhorse charcoal kilns



Lewis and Clark Trail



Late 1800's



1940's - Dredge

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

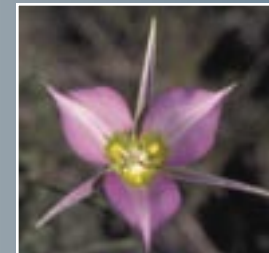


Arteries to a wondrous neighborhood . . .

Located along the network of Scenic Byways, Backcountry Byways, and scenic routes in and around the Salmon-Challis National Forest is a vast spectrum of scenery and points of interest. Scores of opportunities exist to explore, hike, or camp near these roads and highways. You can drive along the high ridge dividing the Salmon-Challis from the Bitterroot National Forest. A trip to Stanley, Idaho, will take you to the only place in the United States where three National Forest Scenic Byways converge; the Sawtooth, Ponderosa Pine, and Salmon River. Nearby are impressive natural and historic wonders, including Mount Borah, the highest point in Idaho, and an earthquake interpretive site at the foot of the mountain. Or visit the Yankee Fork's historic mining district on the Custer Motorway, with its interpretive center near Challis. Silver and molybdenum mines, a unique floating gold dredge, ghost towns, and other historic structures are all within the mining district.



Custer Motorway

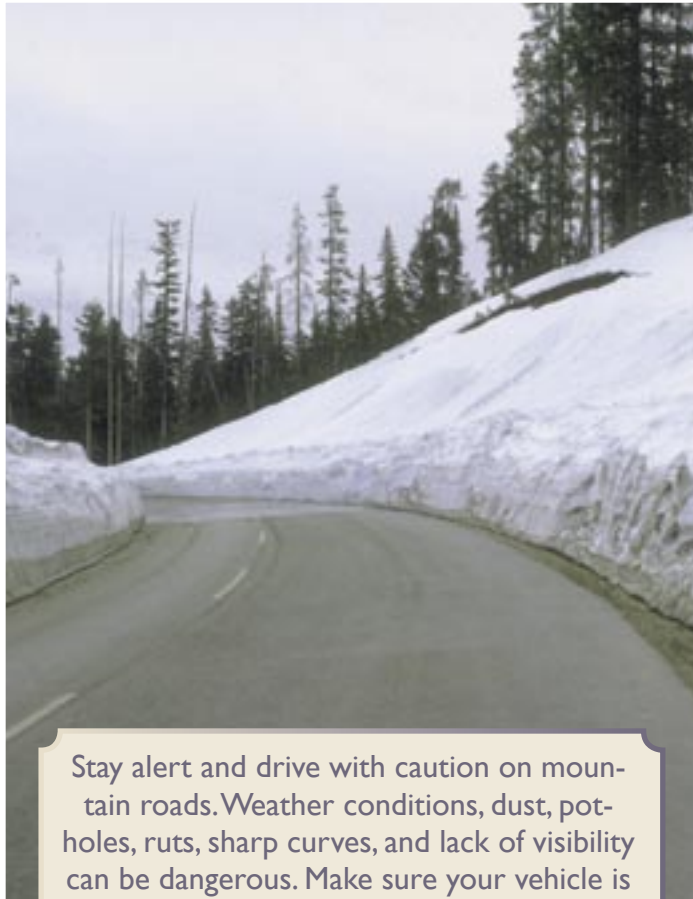


Salmon River Scenic Byway



SCENIC BYWAYS are regularly traveled major roads that offer unique combinations of recreational adventures and scenic attractions.

Salmon-Challis National Forest



Stay alert and drive with caution on mountain roads. Weather conditions, dust, potholes, ruts, sharp curves, and lack of visibility can be dangerous. Make sure your vehicle is designed for the kind of roads you will be traveling. Call ahead for road conditions.

tread lightly!
LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION



- Travel only where permitted and obey travel regulations. Don't enter the Wilderness on your ATV.
- Respect the rights of others.
- Educate yourself and others about private land boundaries.
- Avoid non-durable surfaces, stream sides, and waterways.
- Drive your ATV safely and responsibly.

For more information . . .

Salmon-Challis National Forest (208) 756-5100
www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/recreation

River Information:
 Middle Fork Ranger District..... (208) 879-4101
 North Fork Ranger District (208) 865-2700

Float Note:
 Both the Middle Fork and the section of the Salmon River below Corn Creek require boating permits, the recreation section from North Fork to Corn Creek does not. Permits are allocated through a lottery system with applications accepted from December 1 to January 1 for the lottery for the following float season. Call 888-758-8037 after October 1 for the latest lottery information. Outfitter and guide services are also available for the Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Other Information:
 Challis Ranger District..... (208) 879-4100
 Leadore Ranger District..... (208) 768-2500
 Lost River Ranger District..... (208) 588-3429
 Salmon - Challis Ranger District (208) 756-5100
 Yankee Fork Ranger District (208) 838-3300

Idaho Parks & Recreation:
 Historic Yankee Fork Mining District..... (208) 879-5244
 Idaho Fish & Game Department, Salmon Office..... (208) 756-2271
 Salmon Valley Chamber of Commerce (208) 756-2100
 Challis Chamber of Commerce..... (208) 879-2771
 Arco Chamber of Commerce..... (208) 527-8977
 Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association (208) 342-1438
 Craters of the Moon National Monument..... (208) 689-3155

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SEASONAL RECREATION

Circulating through the seasons . . .



Spring approaches hesitantly on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. In the valleys and on the lower slopes of the mountains, new plant life begins to stir by April. But cold rains and snowstorms are still frequent, the winter snowpack remains unmelted, and camping and hiking are limited by cold nights and poor access to roads and trails. In late May and early June, however, visitors will begin to notice wildflowers, and will often see deer and elk fawns trailing their mothers through budding aspen groves and conifer forests. On the rangelands near Challis, new foals join a wild horse herd.



Early summer brings warm days that begin to melt the mountain snows. As the snowpack melts, creeks and rivers rise swiftly, in some years bringing flooding. Be aware that although days may be warm, streams are still very cold. Hot weather usually begins by the end of June, but snow may linger in the high elevations well into July. Nights are cool at most elevations, and thunderstorms are frequent. Snow in the high elevations is not unknown at this time of year, so be prepared for any type of weather during your outdoor experience. As trails dry out and open, hikes into the Lemhi and Salmon River Mountains followed by a soothing soak in hot springs such as the one at Warm Springs Creek, are a wonderful way to spend a weekend. Warm temperatures also bring thermal wind currents, which attract high gliders to King Mountain on the Lost River Ranger District.

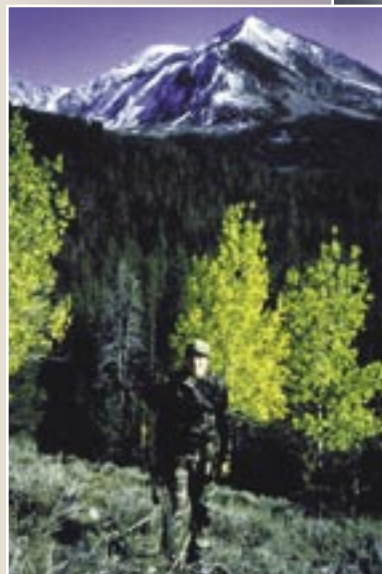


Autumn usually arrives in the mountains by the first week of September, even before the leaves of aspen and gooseberry have turned to gold and crimson. The deep canyons of the Salmon River are busy with the rush of late season boaters and fishermen. The days are still warm, native trout and salmon are migrating upstream to spawn, and black bears fatten on wild berries for their winter hibernation. The eerie whistling calls of elk echo through the forest. Birds are on the move; ravens descend to lower elevations, while sandhill cranes and ospreys migrate out of the area.



The first heavy winter snows usually arrive by mid-November. A few late elk hunters brave the cold, while skiers, snowmobilers, and ice fishermen enjoy the forest on clear days between storms.

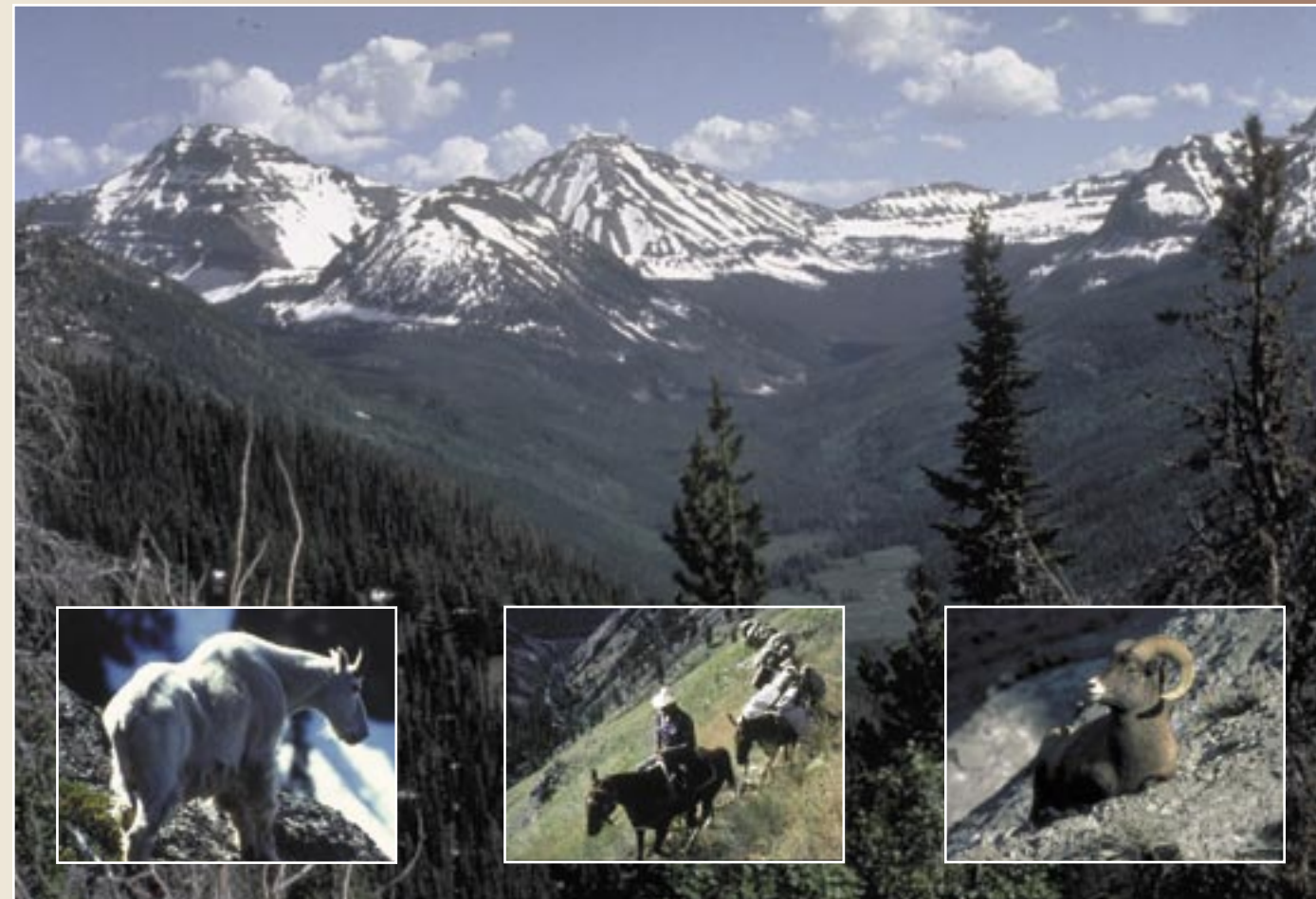
Higher elevation roads and trails are inaccessible in winter. Ice builds up along the riverbanks. At Deadwater, on the main Salmon River below North Fork, a rock shelf stretching across the river begins to capture floating ice. In some years, this ice jam may stretch upriver for over 25 miles to the town of Salmon. While bear and some small mammals hibernate, others are active, and mountain sheep, elk and deer move to south facing slopes and lower elevations to forage for food. Many bald eagles and other raptors winter in the valleys, feeding on carrion, rabbits, and smaller birds.



WILDERNESS

A wild pristine treasure surrounding the heart . . .

Much of the Salmon-Challis National Forest is untrammelled by man, with 80% of its land either roadless or in the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness. Both the Middle Fork and the Main Salmon River flow through portions of this 2.4-million-acre Wilderness. Navigating the wild, treacherous river below the confluence of the Middle Fork was a challenge for boatmen of the past, who delivered goods and passengers in wooden scows to miners and homesteaders. Since traveling back upstream was impossible, the scows were then dismantled for use as building material, leading to the nickname "River of No Return." Today's Wilderness is a wonderland of abundant wildlife, pristine lakes, and breathtaking scenery. The Salmon-Challis administers 1.2 million acres of "The Frank," sharing its vast boundaries with the Boise, Payette, Nez Perce, and Bitterroot National Forests.



LEAVE NO TRACE

- Plan ahead and prepare properly.
- Camp and travel on durable surfaces.
- Pack out what you bring into the forests.
- Properly dispose of what you can't pack out.
- Leave natural things where and how you found them.
- Minimize the use and impact of campfires.



FIRE



Key to the cycle of life in the forest . . .



Lightning is nature's fire-starter. In the summer of 2000, lightning triggered an unprecedented number of large wildfires on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The result of those fires will be visible for years, and where the fire burned intensely, revegetation will take many years. In areas where the fire burned more moderately, signs of new life stimulated by the fires are visible. The natural introduction of wildland fire can benefit a landscape.

Visitors will discover:

- Fire is a natural occurrence that can trigger rejuvenation of a forest ecosystem.
- Some cones and seeds need fire in order to germinate.
- Fire thins forest undergrowth and removes excess plants and trees.
- Large trees can survive cooler, low intensity fires.
- Most forest fires burn in a mosaic pattern, leaving islands of unburned vegetation.
- Fire can improve rangeland and stimulate the growth of grasses and forbs.
- Some wildlife actually need fire-adapted areas to thrive.
- Too much fire prevention eventually damages forest health.
- When all fires are suppressed, fuels build up and fires become larger and more destructive.
- Intense fires can destroy habitat needed by wildlife to survive and raise their young.



Remember . . .

- Fire can cause loss of life and damage to property and natural and historic resources.
- Under the right conditions, fire can benefit the forest.
- Only fire management experts should prescribe and monitor fires needed for forest health.



Be Careful . . .

Use fire wisely to avoid starting a destructive wildland fire.

- Make sure your campfire is dead-out before leaving your campsite.
- Extinguish cigarettes, break matches, use spark arresters on equipment, and park your vehicle over bare ground.
- Use of fireworks is prohibited on the National Forests.