

# Final Report of the Wood River Valley Lands Benefits Study



A result of a cooperative agreement among:  
Blaine County Commissioner's Office  
The Bureau of Land Management  
and  
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School of Community Resources & Development

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wood River Valley Lands Benefits Study was initiated by the Blaine County Commissioners office and its partners. Acting on behalf of the Wood River Valley community and through the Blaine County Commissioners office, the BLM worked with Arizona State University to complete this study. The purpose of the study was to understand the value and importance of Wood River Valley lands to the communities of Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue and Sun Valley, Idaho. Towards this, fourteen focus group meetings were held in Hailey during the winter and summer of 2006.

The results of the focus groups are:

- The Wood River Valley is valued for its abundant views, wildlife encounters, accessibility, lack of hillside development, changing seasons, water resources, and diverse landscapes
- The benefits of a healthy and diverse community were abundant, as nearly every group indicated that the resource bonds the community together and provides opportunity for all to participate in recreation activities, which make healthy individuals, lifestyles, homes, and communities
- Most groups agreed that the overall lack of overt BLM management presence is a positive aspect of the resource setting in that there is not an overabundance of signs and regulatory information
- Although the overall lack of BLM presence is a positive, many groups stated that there is a need for more developed trailheads at popular high use areas (e.g., information, parking, toilets, etc.)
- The mining history of the Wood River Valley was brought up several times as a positive cultural aspect of the Wood River Valley as it connects the current generation to past generations through the presence of artifacts
- Being outdoors provides exposure to the land and wildlife and fosters a land ethic for increased stewardship of the Wood River Valley lands
- There is an overall sense of conflict between motorized use and non-motorized use, where non-motorized users feel that motorized users are destroying the resource and causing noise pollution near towns and motorized users feel that more and more of their land base for recreation is being taken away
- Considerable concerns were expressed by several stakeholder groups over sheep grazing practices taking place on Wood River Valley lands. These concerns include safety concerns from sheep dogs, decreased vegetation from overgrazing, and an overall feeling that the sheep grazing process is antiquated and poorly managed. Conversely, private ranch owners feel that there is a lack of understanding of these practices and that sheep grazing is beneficial to the ecosystem
- Another major area of concern discussed by these groups is the increasing development of subdivisions in the Wood River Valley. Many felt that the process was detrimental to native wildlife and vegetation while also limiting access to public lands through fences and other physical barriers. There is also a sense that new residents are transforming the traditional private/public lands ethic of open access to a more privatized, “no trespassing” land ethic

Implications of these findings include:

- The approach used in this study - whereby various stakeholders such as local residents, businesses and government agencies having an interest in the future of the Wood River Valley lands, were included in the focus group meetings – supports a collaborative, community-based long range management plan for these public lands
- Activities, experiences, and benefits that are central to the experience on the Wood River Valley lands should be used in designing effective information and marketing programs
- Such information may be used in a positioning statement for the Wood River Valley lands
- The social, economic, and environmental health of the community is important to the viability and sustainability of the Wood River Valley lands. Monitoring a variety of resource management areas related to the experience quality is important.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### *Background of Study*

The Wood River Valley Benefits Study was a joint focus group study initiated by the Blaine County Commissioners Office and its partners. In 2005, the Blaine County Commissioners and the BLM requested the assistance of Arizona State University (ASU) researchers to assess the public input for determining how recreation in the Wood River Valley will be managed in the coming years. A formal interagency services agreement between ASU and the Blaine County Commission signed in October 2005, called for the development of a focus group script that addresses benefit-based management information needs. The agreement originated in response to the interests of a broad range of stakeholders for better information about users on the Wood River Valley lands from the BLM and the Blaine County Commissioners office. The ambition was that such a study will generate in-depth information required from recreation user groups, to support management planning, budgeting, and informed decision making. By understanding more completely the activities, experiences, and concerns regarding the future of the Wood River Valley Lands, use could be managed in ways to maximize benefits not only to residents and households, but to local governments and businesses in the surrounding community.

### *Study Approach*

The 2005 contract called for Arizona State University to develop a focus group script and facilitate several focus group meetings over the winter and summer of 2006. In line with provisions of the agreement, the study was organized to produce the following information:

1. Community preferences for activities, experiences, services and facilities;
2. Community land management preferences
3. Perceived benefits of Wood River Valley land users

This report summarizes study results, and is organized into four chapters beginning with the current introduction. Chapter 2 presents the focus group methodology, including explanation of the focus group process. Chapter 3 presents the summary results of the focus group process. The final chapter discusses some of the implications the findings might hold for future planning and management of the Wood River Valley lands.

## Chapter 2: Study Methodology

The Wood River Valley Benefits Study was initiated by the Blaine County Commissioner's office and the BLM in order to collect and assess social science information from customers (residents, public officials and tourism service organizations) that use or have important relationships with the Wood River Valley area. Focus groups were designed to gain insights from residents, government officials and tourism industry representatives in the communities of Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue, and Sun Valley, Idaho during the winter and summer of 2006. The information gathered from these focus groups will provide a database that will be used for future planning and management decisions for the Wood River Valley.

The focus group methodology presented below was developed cooperatively with representatives from the Blaine County Commissioner's Office, and the BLM. Example copies of focus group instruments and cover letters are located in Appendix A. The study methodology was designed and the data analyzed by the School of Community Resources & Development at Arizona State University. This chapter presents the study methodology and discusses instrument development, administration, data analysis, and study limitations.

### *Focus Groups*

Focus groups were used to identify issues and recreation opportunities of greatest concern to resident customers, Government officials and local tourism businesses. The purpose of the focus group process was to gain an understanding and involvement from local communities concerning the importance of the Wood River Valley. Focus groups were divided into two general recreation user categories: winter users and summer users.

Focus group participants were identified by Blaine County Government and BLM representatives. A letter was mailed to each participant (see example in Appendix A) informing them of the purpose, time and location of each focus group. Participants were asked to RSVP on a postcard that was returned to a representative from the Blaine County Commissioners office.

#### Winter:

A total of four focus groups were conducted in Hailey, Idaho representing winter recreation users. Their general recreation interests are listed below:

1. Non – motorized backcountry users (February 8, 2006) – 12 participants
2. Government Officials (February 9, 2006) – 11 participants
3. Motorized users (snowmobiles) (February 9, 2006) – 11 participants
4. Non – motorized backcountry users (February 10, 2006) – 13 participants

#### Summer:

A total of 10 focus groups were conducted in Hailey, Idaho representing summer recreation users and their general recreation interests. One of these summer focus groups consisted of youth between ages 13 – 16 years. Youth participants were required to have parental consent to participate in the focus group. The summer focus groups are listed below:

5. Hikers (May 15, 2006) – 12 participants
6. Motorcycling (May 15 2006) – 13 participants
7. Fish and Game Officials (May 16, 2006) – 3 participants
8. Hunters (May 16, 2006) – 10 participants
9. ATV users (May 16, 2006) – 4 participants
10. Tourism professionals (May 17, 2006) – 7 participants
11. Equestrian users (May 17, 2006) – 10 participants
12. Private Land Owners (May 17, 2006) – 8 participants
13. Youth (May 18, 2006) – 6 participants
14. Mountain Bikers (May 18, 2006) – 12 participants

In the interim period between the winter and summer focus groups, an attempt was made to capture one more focus group to represent motorized winter recreation users. This attempt was unsuccessful due to a lack of response from this group.

The focus groups were held at the Blaine County Commissioners office in downtown Hailey and facilitated by representatives of the research team from Arizona State University. Each focus group had a facilitator and recorder. The facilitator asked questions and involved each participant in the discussion. The recorder administered written worksheets and wrote comments on flip charts. Comments from the summer focus group meetings were documented on audio recorders, worksheets and flipcharts. In addition to the facilitator and recorder, a BLM person, a Blaine County official and a local graduate student were present at the meetings. The latter three, however, were there only as observers. Sessions lasted from 1 hour and 30 minutes to 2 hours.

After arriving at the meeting venue, focus group participants were asked to sign in and complete a name tag. The focus group team from Arizona State University was introduced, and the purposes of the overall study and focus groups were discussed. The purpose of the year long collaborative study was explained as creating a better understanding of the value and importance of the Wood River Valley to the local communities. Participants were informed that findings from the focus group meetings would be used as part of the future planning and management of Wood River Valley lands. Next, ground rules for the ensuing discussion were explained and the group was oriented to the Wood River Valley area. While each focus group took on somewhat of its own unique personality and communication focus, the participants were generally asked to share responses to the following series of questions:

1. What is your name, your profession or organization you are with? Then consider the question: What has been your most enjoyable personal recreation experience in the Wood River Valley? (to tease out experience components)
2. What recreational activities do you and other residents participate in while in the Wood River Valley?
3. What are your four most important recreation experiences realized during or after participating in two of your most satisfying activities.
4. Think about benefits that stay with you after your recreation outing. What personal benefits do you as an individual derive from your recreation outing within the Wood River Valley lands?

5. Think about the benefits that occur at the societal level due to recreation on these lands. What are some of the social benefits that occur here because of the Wood River Valley?
6. What economic benefits may occur to individuals, local businesses, or the regional economy because of the Wood River Valley? Can you identify any economic benefits?
7. Can you identify some environmental benefits that occur because of the Wood River Valley?
8. What distinct setting features (physical, social, administrative) attract you and other people to the Wood River Valley?
9. What are your physical, social and administrative setting preferences for the Wood River Valley?
10. Finally, are there any other issues or concerns you would like to share with us about the Wood River Valley?

Two kinds of data were collected from each focus group focusing on the study questions. First, open ended questions were asked about the experiences, preferred settings and personal, social, environmental and economic benefits desired. Secondly, checklists and short worksheets were administered to identify the important types of experiences and benefits (personal and social, economic, environmental) to participants. Checklists were developed from experiences and benefits identified in previous research (Driver and Bruns, 1999) and through consultations with BLM managers. Participants were requested to select five most important experiences (from 35 items) which they realized from participating in their most satisfying activity. In addition, participants were asked to indicate up to five most important personal benefits and up to three each of the most important social, economic and environmental benefits realized as outcomes from their activities and experiences.

Next, participants were presented with a natural resource setting matrix representing eight setting criteria that managers could control or adjust. Of these, two of the criteria represented the physical setting (naturalness and facilities), three represented the social setting (group size, contacts and type of encounters) and the last three represented the administrative setting (visitor services, management controls). Each numbered criteria had four possible choices ranging from back-, middle- and front-country to rural settings. Participants were requested to select one choice for each setting criteria that they believed are essential for producing the kinds of experiences and beneficial outcomes identified earlier. Data from the worksheets was entered and analyzed in SPSS 12.0, a statistical program commonly used in Social Sciences for data analysis.

An example of a complete script used by the focus group facilitators is located in Appendix A. A summary of the results from the focus groups is presented in Chapter 3. A more detailed account of the responses and results from each of the four winter focus groups and 10 summer focus groups can be found in Appendixes B and C, respectively.

### *Study Limitations*

All studies have inherent limitations and delimitations that restrict the ability to generalize about the study's results. It should be initially mentioned that the results of the focus groups represent only the views and opinions of the participants chosen or contacted for this

study. While attempts were made to include diversity of perspectives, there is likely a variety of different perspectives beyond those included in this study. This limitation is of particular importance to persons who may want a more representative insight into community or residents opinions from the Wood River Valley community. Unfortunately, all residents or government officials or tourism industry representatives were not included in the focus group methodology or results.

While this limitation must be recognized, the basic inferences that are drawn from this report are valid given the boundaries of these limitations. It should also be recognized this limitation represents a trade-off between the costs of and the benefits of gaining more precise data. In other words, additional focus groups to capture all residents have a financial cost which must be weighed against the benefits of more precise data.

### *Study Assumptions*

As with other research, certain assumptions have to be made in order to organize, collect and report on the results of this study. The following basic assumption has been made in this study:

1. Information provided by the study respondents is "accurate" and unbiased;

Other assumptions have been made in appropriate sections throughout this study and are included in those sections.

### Chapter 3: Focus Group Results

This chapter presents a summary of results of four winter and 10 summer focus group meetings that were designed to gain a better understanding of how the local communities and government agencies relate to and value the Wood River Valley. In addition to gaining an insight about the importance of the Wood River Valley to these communities, these focus groups were also designed to create a baseline of information and issues to guide the development of a management plan for these lands.

**Table 1. The 14 focus groups**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Targeted group</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
<b>Winter</b>				
1	February 8, 2006	R. Virden	Non-motorized backcountry users	12
2	February 9, 2006	M. Budruk	Government officials	11
3	February 9, 2006	M. Budruk	Snowmobilers	11
4	February 10, 2006	M. Budruk	Non-motorized backcountry users	13
<b>Summer</b>				
5	May 15, 2006	M. Budruk	Hikers	12
6	May 15, 2006	M. Budruk	Motorcycling	13
7	May 16, 2006	M. Budruk	Fish and Game Officials	3
8	May 16, 2006	M. Budruk	Hunters	10
9	May 16, 2006	M. Budruk	ATV users	4
10	May 17, 2006	M. Budruk	Tourism professionals	7
11	May 17, 2006	M. Budruk	Equestrian users	10
12	May 17, 2006	M. Budruk	Private Land Owners	8
13	May 18, 2006	M. Budruk	Youth recreationists	6
14	May 18, 2006	M. Budruk	Mountain Bikers	12

While the comments and messages from each focus group had a unique flavor (see Appendix C for a more detailed summary of each focus group), this chapter will attempt to identify some unifying themes and to present some of the highlights from each individual focus group.

*Summary of overall themes that emerged from the focus groups*

- The Wood River Valley is valued for its abundant views, wildlife encounters, accessibility, lack of hillside development, changing seasons, water resources, and diverse landscapes
- The benefits of a healthy and diverse community were abundant, as nearly every group indicated that the resource bonds the community together and provides opportunity for all to participate in recreation activities, which make healthy individuals, lifestyles, homes, and communities

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- Most groups agreed that the overall lack of overt BLM management presence is a positive aspect of the resource setting in that there is not an overabundance of signs and regulatory information
- Although the overall lack of BLM presence is a positive, many groups stated that there is a need for more developed trailheads at popular high use areas (e.g., information, parking, toilets, etc.)
- The mining history of the Wood River Valley was brought up several times as a positive cultural aspect of the Wood River Valley as it connects the current generation to past generations through the presence of artifacts
- Being outdoors provides exposure to the land and wildlife and fosters a land ethic for increased stewardship of the Wood River Valley lands
- There is an overall sense of conflict between motorized use and non-motorized use, where non-motorized users feel that motorized users are destroying the resource and causing noise pollution near towns and motorized users feel that more and more of their land base for recreation is being taken away
- Considerable concerns were expressed by several stakeholder groups over sheep grazing practices taking place on Wood River Valley lands. These concerns include safety concerns from sheep dogs, decreased vegetation from overgrazing, and an overall feeling that the sheep grazing process is antiquated and poorly managed. Conversely, private ranch owners feel that there is a lack of understanding of these practices and that sheep grazing is beneficial to the ecosystem
- Another major area of concern discussed by these groups is the increasing development of subdivisions in the Wood River Valley. Many felt that the process was detrimental to native wildlife and vegetation while also limiting access to public lands through fences and other physical barriers. There is also a sense that new residents are transforming the traditional private/public lands ethic of open access to a more privatized, “no trespassing” land ethic

*Key summary points from each of the fourteen focus groups*

This section will summarize some of the unique and important messages that emerged from each of the fourteen focus groups (detailed results from each focus group are contained in Appendix C). It is important to remember who the participants of each of the focus groups represent (type of participants, where, when). Focus groups are more useful for gaining insight into specific issues and meanings that may be held by a group, than can be gained from more traditional surveys or questionnaires. However, it should be remembered that focus groups do not represent the views of an entire community or community segment.

*Focus Group 1 – Winter Non-motorized Users (February 2006)*

- Solitude, being close to nature, and physical exercise are the most common experiences occurring on Wood River Valley lands
- The Wood River Valley provides many personal benefits related to improved mental, physical, and spiritual well being
- Non-motorized backcountry activities are minimally damaging to the environment, promote stewardship of the resource, foster community solidarity, and contribute to the Wood River Valley economy

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- Important physical and social aspects of the resource to non-motorized users are the views, undeveloped hillsides, untracked snow, local mining/skiing history, and social interactions
- Members of this group appreciate the lack of overt management from the BLM as well as the proactive planning the BLM undertakes
- Concerns for the management of Wood River Valley lands include motorized vs. non-motorized zoning/conflict, private land/home owner noise infringement from motorized use, need for wildlife corridors/sanctuaries, and a need for more backcountry facilities (e.g., ski huts)

*Focus Group 2 – Government Officials (February 2006)*

- Meaningful attributes of the Wood River Valley include the accessibility of recreation to residents of the valley, the high quality of the resource, and the mining history that adds to the sense of place for Wood River Valley residents
- Managers noted that a better understanding of the environment leads to better management, as the public will have higher expectations for management and have a stronger interest in conservation
- The overall scenic beauty of the Wood River Valley area including mountains, rivers, wildflowers, and wildlife add to the uniqueness of this area
- The local government commitment to preservation along with collaborative planning between agencies were noted as administratively important aspects of the resource
- Problems associated with “loving the resource to death” were mentioned, including crowding, recreation conflicts, motorized vs. non-motorized conflict, development pressures into wildland areas, and wildlife infringement
- Managers identified a need for an integrated systematic trails plan with facilities along with recreation zones for segregating uses
- Funding was identified as a need for the implantation of more management enhancements for the Wood River Valley

*Focus Group 3 – Winter Motorized Users (February 2006)*

- Being outdoors, enjoying scenery, and developing skills and abilities were the most frequent experiences cited by the snowmobilers in this group
- Personal benefits included increased personal well being and decreased stress along with the opportunity to recreate after sunset
- Community benefits from motorized winter recreation included greater search and rescue ability, greater knowledge of the area through increased mobility, and reduction of crime due to opportunities for youth to participate in positive recreation
- Motorized winter recreation users commented that snowmobile tracks do not harm the environment because they “melt”. Additionally, snowmobile tracks were said to provide access for wildlife during the winter months
- Sharing experiences and storytelling after recreation experiences was important to motorized recreationists
- Motorized users are concerned with equity issues in regards to trail closures and zoning. Most felt that if an area is closed for one user due to wildlife or some other resource concern, it should be closed for all users. There is an overall feeling that

snowmobile users “gave up” ground in northern parts of the Wood River Valley and want to be involved in any future plans

*Focus Group 4 – Winter Non-motorized Users (February 2006)*

- Similar to focus group one, solitude, being close to nature, and physical exercise are the most common experiences occurring on Wood River Valley lands for these non-motorized backcountry users
- Deep, personal benefits such as “replenishment of spirit”, “energized positivism”, and “better perspective of life” are achieved through recreation on Wood River Valley lands
- There is appreciation for the unique administrative feature of the Wood River Valley’s federal land ownership which allows for lower density development, conversely, the present “light management” style where “less is better” is preferred (e.g., few rules/signs)
- Concerns arise over resource related impacts from overall increasing use levels (e.g., wildlife impacts, litter/trash, dog/pet waste) as well as the impacts (e.g., wildlife harassment, litter, noise pollution, air pollution) said to be associated with motorized use
- Overall concerns with motorized vs. non-motorized recreation in the Wood River Valley. Future management strategies should include safe/quiet zones for “quiet” recreation near towns, more zoning/existing rule enforcement for winter recreation, restrict motorized use in city areas while providing travel corridors for snowmobiles to access backcountry areas

*Focus Group 5 – Summer Hikers (May 2006)*

- Enjoying scenery and physical exercise are the preferred experiences for this group followed by solitude and being close to nature
- The Wood River Valley provides many personal benefits related to improved mental, physical, and spiritual well being
- Recreation on Wood River Valley lands bonds the community together
- Hikers in this group were satisfied with the facilities and accessibility of recreation resources in the Wood River Valley
- In general, this group is concerned with social problems related to degrading trail behavior (e.g., pioneering new trails, ignoring management regulations), sheep grazing, and lack of respect for private lands/ambiguity of access points
- There is a need for more education and information regarding recreation and etiquette in the Wood River Valley

*Focus Group 6 – Summer Motorcyclers (May 2006)*

- Personal benefits include fun/adrenaline rush/stimulus related sensations and bonding with the resource and family
- Increased mobility from motorized capability leads to a better understanding/awareness of the resource and recreation related impacts

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- The Wood River Valley affords a diverse landscape with abundant views of mountains and natural beauty
- The amount and diversity of the present trail system in the Wood River Valley is favored by motorcyclists
- Motorcyclists want to prevent conflict and fights through education and adequate agency management plans
- There is a need for interagency coordination between the US Forest Service and the BLM in order to create a travel plan to address the needs of Wood River Valley recreationists

*Focus Group 7 – Fish and Game Officials (May 2006)*

- In the Wood River Valley, unlike many other areas, there is a better awareness and appreciation of wildlife leading to reduced wildlife harassment
- Recreation provides for a stable economy due to year round recreation activities and associated tourism/retail/service infrastructure
- Managers identified positive and negative aspects of limited BLM presence/overt management of the Wood River Valley lands – positive, due to a greater sense of freedom from residents; negative, due to risk of mismanagement or not enough management of the resource
- The overall importance of the protected public lands available to residents of the Wood River Valley in that they are abundant, relatively unrestricted, and seemingly “untrammled” was cited by these resource managers
- Fish and Game officials feel there is a need for a permanent BLM ranger to better manage northern parts of the valley
- There are concerns over private land encroachment by recreationists, particularly from motorized users
- The BLM needs to physically access wildlife/big game critical areas throughout the year to better understand the situation with housing development and human activity at BLM boundary
- Fish and Game officials are concerned about housing development in Cove Ranch because of loss of native vegetation and wildlife habitat as well as the altering of wildlife behavior in that area

*Focus Group 8 – Summer Hunters (May 2006)*

- Recreation experiences that are important to these hunters were being close to nature and enjoying physical exercise along with the thrill associated with close wildlife encounters
- Personal benefits for hunting in the Wood River Valley lands revolved around being out on one’s own, being close to wildlife, exercise, and hunting as “a way of life”
- Hunters felt that hunting as a recreation activity was beneficial socially and economically to people in the Wood River Valley due to activism and an influential land ethic as well as license sales that support resource management initiatives
- Hunters in this group value the seasonal changes and variety of vegetation as well as the “remoteness” and “toughness” of the resource when they travel outside of the more developed areas

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- Hunters would prefer that the BLM shift from “issue-related” management to an overall “ecosystem” management construct – hunters are concerned with the management of the resource “as a whole”
- Concerns arise over motorized vs. non-motorized recreation conflict. Hunters would like to see motorized recreation more restricted to roads along with better BLM law enforcement

*Focus Group 9 – Summer ATV Users (May 2006)*

- Experiences important to ATV users include being close to nature, being on my own, and being with friends and family
- Personal benefits related to escaping everyday responsibilities and pressures were common among this group of ATV users
- ATV riding benefits the community by attracting and uniting different people and allowing for bonding to take place between friends and family
- Mountain views, remote lakes, and wildlife are physical attributes of the Wood River Lands that are important to these ATV users. Access and the presence of old mines are social elements of the resource that are important to ATV users
- Although less management is better than high levels of management, ATV users would like to see a slight increase in management presence on BLM lands
- There is a fear of specialized interests influencing the management of the Wood River Valley lands and therefore placing more constraints on ATV recreation

*Focus Group 10 – Tourism Providers (May 2006)*

- Tourism professionals in the Wood River Valley noted that there is a changing trend in environmental awareness among recreationists leading to greater community awareness of the landscape
- Recreation demand is pushing managers to better manage the resource (i.e., an increased understanding and expectation of resource management is raising the bar for managers)
- Recreation drives the local economy by bringing new residents and businesses here and supporting existing local businesses
- Recreation provides economic stability between summer and winter tourist seasons
- There is a market for niche outfitters and creative entrepreneurs
- An important aspect of the Wood River Valley to residents and tourism professionals is that the resource allows for economics and tourism to exist (i.e., “without the land, there is no reason to live and work in the valley”)
- There is a social bond with the people and the resource (e.g., “this resource means everything to me” and “it’s different here”)
- Concerns arise due to different mentalities among current residents and new residents moving to the area with different expectations/mindsets – there is fear of increased conflict due to differing resource management preferences
- There is an overall fear of losing access to public lands through private land and increased development

*Focus Group 11 – Summer Equestrian Users (May 2006)*

- Equestrian users prefer to experience the natural scenery and closeness to nature above most all other recreation experiences discussed
- Stewardship of the resource through advocacy as well as the mobility of horse travel allowing for litter removal are two environmental benefits cited by these equestrian users
- Horse maintenance supports local farming and horse related businesses
- The scenic and natural beauty of the Wood River Valley is important to equestrian users along with the four seasons and diverse habitat zones
- There are concerns among this group regarding access through private land (e.g., fenced properties), public parking limitations (e.g., lack of adequate space for horse trailers), and development and availability of trails (e.g., fear of losing trail access to other uses)
- Sheep herding is an area of concern for equestrian users because sheep are eating vegetation that horses would otherwise eat, the practice in general is antiquated and in conflict with present ecological management strategies, and there is lack of education/information about which areas will be affected at certain times

*Focus Group 12 – Private Land Owners (May 2006)*

- Ranchers identified many recreation activities that take place in the Wood River Valley, but indicated that their primary activity was to maintain their property and the ranching activities that take place therein
- Being close to nature and enjoying physical exercise were the experiences cited most by land owners
- Ranchers commented that their land provides personal benefits to others through providing “open space”, access to public lands, and recreation opportunities
- A considerable concern for ranchers is the unsuccessful attempts for land swaps leading to polarization between Blaine County and ranchers
- Ranchers feel that grazing is critical to the overall management of the Wood River Valley ecosystem and that there is a lack of public understanding of the importance of private land ownership and ranching practices by recreationists
- Ranchers are concerned that the overall trends in motorized recreation along with the perception that open lands means open access will lead to less respect for private land owners and a “loose boundary” between public and private lands

*Focus Group 13 – Youth Recreationists (May 2006)*

- Youth in the Wood River Valley preferred enjoying the scenery, being on my own, and physical exercise experiences above others experiences discussed
- Personal benefits for youths in the Wood River Valley were related to personal freedom/health and achieving personal goals
- The youth from this focus group had much to say about community benefits related to stronger social bonds between friends and family and understanding others with different backgrounds

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- The multiple use concept came up as both social and administrative aspects of the resource that are important
- Several concerns were mentioned regarding the increasing population in the Wood River Valley. Examples include: concerns over how “Quigley” will be developed, seemingly unrestricted development and sprawl in general, light pollution, and seeking a better understanding of carrying capacity of the Wood River Valley
- A changing land ethic due to wealthy, seasonal residents limiting access and increasing land values, and thus displacing less wealthy residents from the valley
- There is a need for more teen programs that would give teens the opportunity to get involved in environmental education and caretaking; possibly through public endorsements of the “outdoor lifestyle” by prominent Sun Valley residents (e.g., Tom Hanks)

*Focus Group 14 – Summer Mountain Bikers (May 2006)*

- Enjoying physical exercise, being with friends and family, and being close to nature are important experiences for mountain bikers in the Wood River Valley
- Environmental benefits from mountain biking range from increased awareness and respect of wildlife, increased stewardship, realization of the need for minimal impacts, and the ability to educate others about land ethics and stewardship
- The unique environment of diverse flora and fauna, smells, views, ability to feel isolated, wildlife, early season trail access on south facing slopes, and no hillside development are important to mountain bikers in this focus group
- Mountain bikers are concerned about the amount of and access to trails in the Wood River Valley. There are not enough trails at present, which leads to abuse of present trails. Mountain bikers would like to see more management response for this concern through the development of more singletrack trails and non-motorized trails
- Accessibility of trails from towns as well as better connectedness between trails and different agency’s trail systems are two areas of concern for mountain bikers
- This group feels that private land development is limiting access to public lands and that the county needs to make provisions for access through these subdivisions

*Key summary points for each zone (Winter)*

*Motorized users - Zone A*

- No winter motorized users reported Zone A as being their most satisfying zone

*Motorized users - Zone B*

- Five winter motorized users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 2)
- Snowmobiling is the most satisfying activity in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with snowmobiling in Zone B include being on my own, developing my skills and abilities, escaping everyday responsibilities, being with friends or family and reducing built up mental stress
- Personal benefits associated with snowmobiling include greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics, improved mental well being, greater understanding of the importance of recreation and tourism, enlarged understanding of my responsibility to care for this community, greater sense of responsibility for my own quality of life, greater sense of adventure, greater personal enrichment
- Social benefits associated with snowmobiling in Zone B include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands and heightened sense of satisfaction with our community
- Economic benefits associated with snowmobiling include more positive contributions to local economy, improved local economic stability, increased local job opportunities and increased desirability as a place to live or retire
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, reduced wildlife harassment, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character, sustainability of communities cultural heritage

*Motorized users - Zone C*

- Two winter motorized users reported Zone C as their most satisfying zone (Table 3)
- Snowmobiling is the most satisfying activity in Zone C
- Experiences associated with snowmobiling in Zone C include being close to nature, being on my own, developing my skills and abilities, escaping everyday responsibilities, reducing built up mental stress and enjoying physical exercise
- Personal benefits derived from snowmobiling in Zone C include a more outdoor oriented lifestyle, restored mind from mental stress, improved mental well being, improved skills for outdoor enjoyment, stronger ties with my family and friends, greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics, enhanced awareness and understanding of nature, improved opportunity to view wildlife up close, reduced hypertension
- Social benefits associated with snowmobiling in Zone C include greater family bonding, reduced social isolation, improved functioning in community and greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions
- Economic benefits resulting from winter motorized use in Zone C include improved local economic stability, positive contributions to local/regional economy, greater

value added local service, increased desirability as a place to live or retire, increased local tourism revenue, increased property values

- Environmental benefits resulting from winter motorized use in Zone C include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character, reduced wildlife harassment, sustainability of communities cultural heritage

*Non-motorized users - Zone A*

- A majority of winter non-motorized users reported Zone A as being their most satisfying zone (Table 4)
- Backcountry-, cross country-, telemark-skiing and snowshoeing are this groups most satisfying activities in Zone A
- Experiences mostly associated with winter non-motorized use in Zone A include being close to nature, enjoying the solitude, enjoying the scenery and enjoying physical exercise
- Personal benefits include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, improved mental well-being, greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics, closer relationship with the natural world, greater awareness that this community is a special place
- Social benefits include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, improved functioning in community, heightened sense of satisfaction with our community
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, positive contributions to local/regional economy, increased work productivity
- Environmental benefits associated with winter non-motorized use in Zone A include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations and reduced wildlife harassment

*Non-motorized users - Zone B*

- No winter non-motorized users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone

*Non-motorized users - Zone C*

- Three non-motorized users indicated Zone C as their most satisfying zone (Table 5)
- The most satisfying activities in this zone included backcountry skiing, cross country skiing and telemark skiing.
- Experiences associated with these activities include being close to nature, enjoying physical exercise, developing my skills and abilities, being on my own, being with friends or family and to learn more about things here
- Personal benefits associated with backcountry skiing, cross country skiing and telemark skiing include improved physical fitness and health maintenance and a closer relationship with the natural world
- Social benefits associated with backcountry skiing, cross country skiing and telemark skiing include heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, improved

functioning in community, and greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions

- Economic benefits associated with backcountry skiing, cross country skiing and telemark skiing include increased work productivity, improved local economic stability, positive contributions to local/regional economy, increased desirability as a place to live or retire, and increased local tourism revenue
- Environmental benefits of backcountry skiing, cross country skiing and telemark skiing include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character, and reduced wildlife harassment

*Key summary points for each zone (Summer)*

*Motorized users - Zone A*

- Two summer motorized users reported Zone A as their most satisfying zone (Table 6)
- Motorcycling and track motorcycling were the most satisfying activities reported in this zone
- Experiences mostly associated with motorcycling (including track) in Zone A include developing my skills and abilities, enjoying risk-taking adventure, being close to nature, escaping everyday responsibilities, being with friends or family, and reducing built-up mental stress
- Personal benefits associated with motorcycling (including track) include enlarged sense of personal accountability for acting responsibly on public lands, restored mind from unwanted stress, improved mental well-being, greater spiritual growth, stronger ties with family and friends, enhanced sense of personal freedom and greater awareness that this community is special
- Social benefits associated with motorcycling (including track) include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, reduced social isolation, improved functioning in community, enlarged sense of dependency on public lands and maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character
- Economic benefits associated with motorcycling (including track) include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, positive contributions to local/regional economy, increased work productivity, improved local economic stability and increased local tourism revenue
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, sustainability of communities cultural heritage, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character and reduced looting and vandalism of historic sites

*Motorized users - Zone B*

- The majority (fourteen) of summer motorized users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 7)
- Motorcycling, followed by ATV/Off Roding are the most satisfying activities in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with motorcycling and ATV/Off Roding in Zone B include enjoying physical exercise, being close to nature. enjoying the scenery, being with friends or family, reducing built up mental stress

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- Personal benefits associated with motorcycling and ATV/Off Roading include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, restored mind from unwanted stress, improved mental well-being, greater spiritual growth, improved skills for outdoor enjoyment, and a more outdoor oriented lifestyle
- Social benefits associated with motorcycling and ATV/Off Roading include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, enlarged sense of dependency on public lands, and a heightened sense of satisfaction with our community
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, increased local tourism revenue, and improved local economic stability
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations and greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character

*Non-motorized users (Hikers and runners) - Zone A*

- Seven users reported Zone A as being their most satisfying zone (Table 8)
- Hiking and running are this groups most satisfying activities in Zone A
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone A include being close to nature, enjoying physical exercise, enjoying the scenery, enjoying the solitude, and being with friends or family
- Personal benefits associated with the most satisfying activities in Zone A include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics, greater environmental awareness and sensitivity, greater responsibility for my own quality of life, closer relationship with the natural world, enhanced sense of personal freedom, and improved capacity for outdoor physical activity
- Social benefits associated with most satisfying activities include a heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, reduced social isolation, and maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, positive contributions to local/regional economy Improved local economic stability, and increased local tourism revenue
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, reduced wildlife harassment, and greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character

*Non-motorized users (Hikers and runners) - Zone B*

- Four users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 9)
- Hiking and running are this groups most satisfying activities in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone B include reducing built-up mental stress, enjoying the scenery, enjoying the solitude, being on my own, being close to nature, and escaping everyday responsibilities
- Personal benefits associated with most satisfying activities in this zone include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, improved mental well-being, and enhanced sense of personal freedom

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- Social benefits include heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, improved functioning in community and an enlarged sense of dependency on public lands
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire and increased property values
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character and reduced looting and vandalism of historic sites

*Non-motorized users (Hunting and fishing) - Zone A*

- One user reported Zone A as being his/her most satisfying zone (Table 10)
- Hunting is this individuals most satisfying activities in Zone A
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone A include being on my own, enjoying risk taking adventure, enjoying the solitude, enjoying the physical exercise
- Personal benefits associated with the most satisfying activities in Zone A include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, improved sense of control over one's life, closer relationship with the natural world, greater spiritual growth, stronger ties with family and friends
- Social benefits associated with most satisfying activities include a heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions and improved functioning in community
- Economic benefits include increased work productivity, increased desirability as a place to live or retire, and increased local job opportunities
- Environmental benefits include greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character, increased awareness and protection of landscapes and reduced wildlife harassment

*Non-motorized users (Hunting and fishing) - Zone B*

- Eleven users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 11)
- Hunting is this groups most satisfying activities in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone B include learning about the area's history, developing my skills and abilities, enjoying the scenery, enjoying the physical exercise and being close to nature
- Personal benefits associated with most satisfying activities in this zone include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, stronger ties with family and friends, closer relationship with the natural world, improved opportunity to view wildlife up close, greater environmental awareness and sensitivity, and improved capacity for outdoor physical activity
- Social benefits include enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, greater family bonding
- Economic benefits include improved local economic stability, increased desirability as a place to live or retire and positive contributions to local/regional economy

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- Environmental benefits include greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features, increased awareness and protection of landscapes and increased ecologically friendly tourism operations

*Non-motorized users (Horseback riding) - Zone A*

- Six users reported Zone A as being their most satisfying zone (Table 12)
- Horseback riding is this groups most satisfying activities in Zone A
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone A include being close to nature, enjoying the scenery, escaping everyday responsibilities, gaining a sense of self-confidence, enjoying physical exercise, being with friends and family
- Personal benefits associated with the most satisfying activities in Zone A include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, stronger ties with family and friends, improved opportunity to view wildlife up close, improved mental well-being, greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics
- Social benefits associated with most satisfying activities include a greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands, greater family bonding
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, reduced absenteeism from work, decreased job turnover, improved local economic stability, positive contributions to local/regional economy
- Environmental benefits include reduced wildlife harassment, greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations, and increased awareness and protection of landscapes

*Non-motorized users (Horseback riding) - Zone B*

- Four horseback users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 13)
- Horseback riding is this groups most satisfying activity in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone B include being close to nature, developing my skills and abilities, enjoying the solitude
- Personal benefits associated with most satisfying activities in this zone include improved mental well-being, closer relationship with the natural world, and improved physical fitness and health maintenance
- Social benefits include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character, heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, and enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands
- Economic benefits include positive contributions to local/regional economy, increased desirability as a place to live or retire and increased local tourism revenue
- Environmental benefits include reduced wildlife harassment, increased awareness and protection of landscapes, greater protection of area historical structures and archaeological sites

*Non-motorized users (Mountain biking) - Zone A*

- Seven users reported Zone A as being their most satisfying zone (Table 14)
- Mountain biking is this groups most satisfying activities in Zone A
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone A include being close to nature, developing my skills and abilities, enjoying the scenery, being with friends or family, reducing built up mental stress and enjoying the solitude
- Personal benefits associated with the most satisfying activities in Zone A include improved physical fitness and health maintenance, improved mental well-being, greater sense of adventure, greater awareness that this community is a special place
- Social benefits associated with most satisfying activities include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions , heightened sense of satisfaction with our community , improved functioning of individuals in family and community and greater family bonding
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, increased work productivity, positive contributions to local/regional economy and improved local economic stability
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features and increased ecologically friendly tourism operations

*Non-motorized users (Mountain bikers) - Zone B*

- Five users reported Zone B as their most satisfying zone (Table 15)
- Mountain biking is this groups most satisfying activities in Zone B
- Experiences mostly associated with most satisfying activities in Zone B include being close to nature, being with friends or family and enjoying the physical exercise
- Personal benefits associated with most satisfying activities in this zone include improved mental well-being, improved physical fitness and health maintenance and greater awareness that this community is a special place
- Social benefits include improved functioning of individuals in family and community, heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions and greater family bonding
- Economic benefits include increased desirability as a place to live or retire, increased work productivity, positive contributions to local/regional economy and improved local economic stability
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features and increased ecologically friendly tourism operations

*Government agencies*

- Fourteen individuals from various government agencies participated in the focus groups (Table 17)
- Social benefits associated with recreation on the wood river valley lands include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions,

heightened sense of satisfaction with the community, and an enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands

- Economic benefits include more positive contributions to local-regional economy, increased desirability as a place to live or retire and increased local job opportunities
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes, greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features and increased ecologically friendly tourism operations

*Tourism providers*

- Fourteen tourism provider participated in the focus group meetings (Table 17)
- Social benefits include enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands, greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character
- Economic benefits include increased local tourism revenue, improved local economic stability and increased desirability as a place to live or retire
- Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations and reduced wildlife harassment by recreation users

**Table2. Winter Motorized Zone B (n=5)**

<b>Opportunities and Outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Snowmobiling	Being on my own Developing my skills and abilities Escaping everyday responsibilities Being with friends or family Reducing built up mental stress	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics Improved mental well being Greater understanding of the importance of recreation and tourism Enlarged understanding of my responsibility to care for this community Greater sense of responsibility for my own quality of life Greater sense of adventure Greater personal enrichment</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> More positive contributions to local economy Improved local economic stability Increased local job opportunities Increased desirability as a place to live or retire</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Reduced wildlife harassment Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character Sustainability of communities cultural heritage</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Middle country (1.6)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.2)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.2)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Middle country (2.2)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Back country (1.2)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.4)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.2)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 3. Winter Motorized Zone C (n = 2)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
<b>Opportunities</b> Snowmobiling	Being close to nature Being on my own Developing my skills and abilities Escaping everyday responsibilities Reducing built up mental stress Enjoying physical exercise	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> A more outdoor oriented lifestyle Restored mind from mental stress Improved mental well being Improved skills for outdoor enjoyment Stronger ties with my family and friends</p> <p>Greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics Enhanced awareness and understanding of nature Improved opportunity to view wildlife up close Reduced hypertension</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Greater family bonding Reduced social isolation Improved functioning in community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Improved local economic stability Positive contributions to local/regional economy Greater value added local service Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local tourism revenue Increased property values</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character Reduced wildlife harassment Sustainability of communities cultural heritage</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Back country (1.0)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Front country (3.0)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.5)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

**Table 4. Winter Non-motorized Zone A (n = 18)**

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>		
Backcountry skiing	Being close to nature	<b><u>Personal:</u></b>
Cross-country Skiing	Enjoying the solitude	Improved physical fitness and health maintenance
Telemark Skiing	Enjoying the scenery	Improved mental well-being
Snowshoeing	Enjoying physical exercise	Greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics
		Closer relationship with the natural world
		Greater awareness that this community is a special place
		<b><u>Community/Social:</u></b>
		Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions
		Improved functioning in community
		Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community
		<b><u>Economic:</u></b>
		Increased desirability as a place to live or retire
		Positive contributions to local/regional economy
		Increased work productivity
		<b><u>Environmental:</u></b>
		Increased awareness and protection of landscapes
		Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations
		Reduced wildlife harassment
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b>	<b><u>Group size</u></b>	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b>
Back country (1.1)	Back country (1.1)	Middle country (1.6)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b>	<b><u>Contacts</u></b>	<b><u>Management controls</u></b>
Back country (1.4)	Back country (1.2)	Middle country (1.8)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b>	<b><u>Pets</u></b>
	Middle country (2.4)	Middle country (1.6)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 5. Winter Non-motorized Zone C (n = 3)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Backcountry skiing Cross-country Skiing Telemark Skiing	Being close to nature Enjoying physical exercise Developing my skills and abilities Being on my own Being with friends or family To learn more about things here	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Closer relationship with the natural world</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Improved functioning in community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased work productivity Improved local economic stability Positive contributions to local/regional economy Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local tourism revenue</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character Reduced wildlife harassment</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Middle country (1.7)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (1.7)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.3)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.0)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 6. Summer Motorized Zone A (n = 2)

Opportunities and outcomes		
Activity Opportunities	Experience Outcomes	Beneficial Outcomes
Motorcycling	Developing my skills and abilities	<b><u>Personal:</u></b>
Motorcycling (track)	Enjoying risk-taking adventure	Enlarged sense of personal accountability for acting responsibly on public lands
	Being close to nature	Restored mind from unwanted stress
	Escaping everyday responsibilities	Improved mental well-being
	Being with friends or family	Greater spiritual growth
	Reducing built-up mental stress	Stronger ties with family and friends
		Enhanced sense of personal freedom
		Greater awareness that this community is special
		<b><u>Community/Social:</u></b>
		Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions
		Reduced social isolation
		Improved functioning in community
		Enlarged sense of dependency on public lands
		Maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character
		<b><u>Economic:</u></b>
		Increased desirability as a place to live or retire
		Positive contributions to local/regional economy
		Increased work productivity
		Improved local economic stability
		Increased local tourism revenue
		<b><u>Environmental:</u></b>
		Increased awareness and protection of landscapes
		Sustainability of communities cultural heritage
		Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character
		Reduced looting and vandalism of historic sites
Prescribed setting character*		
Physical	Social	Administrative
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b>	<b><u>Group size</u></b>	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b>
Back country (1.5)	Back country (1.0)	Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b>	<b><u>Contacts</u></b>	<b><u>Management controls</u></b>
Back country (1.5)	Back country (1.0)	Back country (1.0)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b>	<b><u>Pets</u></b>
	Middle country (2.0)	Back country (1.0)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 7. Summer Motorized Zone B (n = 14)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Motorcycling ATV	Enjoying physical exercise Being close to nature Enjoying the scenery Being with friends or family Reducing built up mental stress	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Restored mind from unwanted stress Improved mental well-being Greater spiritual growth Improved skills for outdoor enjoyment A more outdoor oriented lifestyle</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Enlarged sense of dependency on public lands Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local tourism revenue Improved local economic stability</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Middle country (1.7)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.1)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.1)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Back country (1.1)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Front country (2.6)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.1)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 8. Summer Non-motorized Zone A (n = 7)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Hiking Running	Being close to nature Enjoying physical exercise Enjoying the scenery Enjoying the solitude Being with friends or family	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics Greater environmental awareness and sensitivity Greater responsibility for my own quality of life Closer relationship with the natural world Enhanced sense of personal freedom Improved capacity for outdoor physical activity</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Reduced social isolation Maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Positive contributions to local/regional economy Improved local economic stability Increased local tourism revenue</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Reduced wildlife harassment Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.2)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Front country (2.6)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Middle country (2.0)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (2.2)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.3)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.0)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

**Table 9. Summer Non-motorized Zone B (n = 4)**

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Hiking  Running	Reducing built-up mental stress Enjoying the scenery Enjoying the solitude Being on my own Being close to nature Escaping everyday responsibilities	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Improved mental well-being Enhanced sense of personal freedom</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Improved functioning in community Enlarged sense of dependency on public lands</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased property values</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character Reduced looting and vandalism of historic sites</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Middle country (2.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Front country (2.8)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Middle country (2.3)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 10. Summer Non-motorized Zone A (n = 1)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>		
Hunting Fishing	Being on my own Enjoying risk taking adventure Enjoying the solitude Enjoying the physical exercise	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Improved sense of control over one’s life Closer relationship with the natural world Greater spiritual growth Stronger ties with family and friends</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Improved functioning in community</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased work productivity Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local job opportunities</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Reduced wildlife harassment</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (2.0)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Front country (3.0)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Front country (3.0)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

**Table 11. Summer Non-motorized Zone B (n = 11)**

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>		
Hunting	Learning about the area's history Developing my skills and abilities Enjoying the scenery Enjoying the physical exercise Being close to nature	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b></p> Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Stronger ties with family and friends Closer relationship with the natural world Improved opportunity to view wildlife up close Greater environmental awareness and sensitivity Improved capacity for outdoor physical activity
		<p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b></p> Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Greater family bonding
		<p><b><u>Economic:</u></b></p> Improved local economic stability Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Positive contributions to local/regional economy
		<p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b></p> Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b>	<b><u>Group size</u></b>	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b>
Back country (1.4)	Back country (1.1)	Back country (1.4)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b>	<b><u>Contacts</u></b>	<b><u>Management controls</u></b>
Middle country (1.6)	Back country (1.1)	Middle country (1.8)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b>	<b><u>Pets</u></b>
	Middle country (2.4)	Middle country (2.1)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 12. Summer Non-motorized Zone A (n = 6)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Horse back riding	Being close to nature Enjoying the scenery Escaping everyday responsibilities Gaining a sense of self-confidence Enjoying physical exercise Being with friends and family	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b>                      Improved physical fitness and health maintenance                      Stronger ties with family and friends                      Improved opportunity to view wildlife up close                      Improved mental well-being                      Greater sensitivity to outdoor aesthetics</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b>                      Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions                      Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community                      Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands                      Greater family bonding</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b>                      Increased desirability as a place to live or retire                      Reduced absenteeism from work                      Decreased job turnover                      Improved local economic stability                      Positive contributions to local/regional economy</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b>                      Reduced wildlife harassment                      Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features                      Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations                      Increased awareness and protection of landscapes</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.2)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.0)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Middle country (2.2)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (1.8)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.3)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Back country (1.2)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 13. Summer Non-motorized Zone B (n = 4)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Horse back riding	Being close to nature	<b><u>Personal:</u></b>
	Developing my skills and abilities Enjoying the solitude	Improved mental well-being Closer relationship with the natural world Improved physical fitness and health maintenance <b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands <b><u>Economic:</u></b> Positive contributions to local/regional economy Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local tourism revenue <b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Reduced wildlife harassment Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Greater protection of area historical structures and archaeological sites
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Middle country (1.7)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Middle country (1.8)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.5)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Back country (1.3)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Front country (2.7)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Middle country (1.8)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 14. Summer Non-motorized Zone A (n = 6)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Mountain biking	Being close to nature Developing my skills and abilities Enjoying the scenery Being with friends or family Reducing built up mental stress Enjoying the solitude	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b>                      Improved physical fitness and health maintenance                      Improved mental well-being                      Greater sense of adventure                      Greater awareness that this community is a special place</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b>                      Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions                      Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community                      Improved functioning of individuals in family and community                      Greater family bonding</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b>                      Increased desirability as a place to live or retire                      Increased work productivity                      Positive contributions to local/regional economy                      Improved local economic stability</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b>                      Increased awareness and protection of landscapes                      Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features                      Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Back country (1.5)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Back country (1.3)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (1.7)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.0)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Middle country (1.7)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

**Table 15. Summer Non-motorized Zone B (n = 5)**

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
Mountain biking	Being close to nature Being with friends or family Enjoying the physical exercise	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> Improved mental well-being Improved physical fitness and health maintenance Greater awareness that this community is a special place</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Improved functioning of individuals in family and community Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Greater family bonding</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased work productivity Positive contributions to local/regional economy Improved local economic stability</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Back country (1.4)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Middle country (1.8)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Middle country (2.0)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (2.0)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Middle country (2.2)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Middle country (1.6)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 16. Government agencies (n = 14)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
N/A	N/A	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> N/A</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Heightened sense of satisfaction with the community Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> More positive contributions to local-regional economy Increased desirability as a place to live or retire Increased local job opportunities</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> N/A	<b><u>Group size</u></b> N/A	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> N/A
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> N/A	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> N/A	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> N/A
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b>	<b><u>Pets</u></b> N/A

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

Table 17. Tourism providers (n = 7)

<b>Opportunities and outcomes</b>		
<b>Activity Opportunities</b>	<b>Experience Outcomes</b>	<b>Beneficial Outcomes</b>
N/A	N/A	<p><b><u>Personal:</u></b> N/A</p> <p><b><u>Community/Social:</u></b> Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions Maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character</p> <p><b><u>Economic:</u></b> Increased local tourism revenue Improved local economic stability Increased desirability as a place to live or retire</p> <p><b><u>Environmental:</u></b> Increased awareness and protection of landscapes Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations Reduced wildlife harassment by recreation users</p>
<b>Prescribed setting character*</b>		
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b><u>Naturalness:</u></b> Middle country (1.7)	<b><u>Group size</u></b> Back country (1.1)	<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b> Middle country (2.3)
<b><u>Facilities</u></b> Middle country (2.0)	<b><u>Contacts</u></b> Back country (1.0)	<b><u>Management controls</u></b> Middle country (2.1)
	<b><u>Type of encounters</u></b> Front country (2.9)	<b><u>Pets</u></b> Middle country (2.1)

\*1 - 1.5 = Back country; 1.6 – 2.5 = Middle country; 2.6 – 3.5 = Front country; 3.6 – 4 = Rural

## Chapter 4: Implications and Recommendations

This chapter presents implications from the study and provides recommendations for developing a collaborative planning process which addresses the future management of the Wood River Valley lands. An assumption underlying these implications and recommendations is that the present study is an initial step in a longer collaborative planning process for the Wood River Valley lands.

### *Management*

- An overarching implication from this study is the unique way in which the study was designed. Local residents (including youth), businesses, and government agencies having an interest in the future of the Wood River Valley lands were included in the focus group meetings, and provided information that will be used in future planning and management of these lands. Such an approach supports a collaborative, community-based long range management plan. In line with this, focus group participants identified activities, experiences, benefits of recreation, and management concerns.
- Irrespective of type of recreation use, being close to nature emerged as one of the most frequently reported experiences resulting from recreation on the Wood River Valley lands. Managing to ensure that opportunities for getting close to nature are enhanced should be a priority. Management attention focusing on maintaining the distinctive character of the setting and preserving the viewsapes and scenery are important components to consider.
- In general, focus group participants indicated that the physical, social and administrative setting character be managed to reflect backcountry or middle country settings. Management should therefore lean toward more natural conditions within the resource.
- Management should seek to involve local communities and other stakeholders in recreation and other land use decisions where feasible. A majority of the focus group participants cited one of the benefits the community derives from recreating on these lands is their involvement in decisions regarding the resource. This suggests the importance of resource managers engaging in collaborative planning with local communities and other stakeholders to provide for a high quality recreation experience while also protecting the resource.

### *Marketing*

Messages that capture information regarding activities, experiences, and benefits are crucial in designing effective information and marketing programs. The results of the focus group study suggest that the following are central to recreational experiences on the Wood River Valley lands.

- The most satisfying recreational activities on the Wood River Valley lands during winter are snowmobiling, backcountry and cross country skiing, and hiking. Most

of motorized use takes place in Zones B and/or C. Non-motorized use takes place in Zones A and C. The most satisfying recreational activities on these lands during summer include motorcycling (including track), Four wheeling, ATV/Off Roothing, hunting, mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, wildlife viewing, hiking, and running. Both motorized and non-motorized use in summer occurs in Zones A and/or B.

- Experiences mostly associated with recreation on the Wood River Valley lands include being close to nature, enjoying the outdoors, escaping everyday responsibilities, reducing built up mental stress, enjoying the scenery, enjoying physical exercise, enjoying the solitude, being on my own, developing skills and abilities, being with friends and family, to learn more about things here, enjoying risk taking adventure, developing personal spiritual values, and gaining a sense of self-confidence.
- Benefits largely mentioned fall under the personal, social, economical and environmental categories. Personal benefits mostly include physical fitness and fun, stress reduction, renewed spirit, increased bonding with nature, peaceful mindset, reduced travel times, sense of place, spirituality, exploration. Social benefits generally mentioned include greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions, heightened sense of satisfaction with our community, increased community bonding, providing search and rescue services, fit community, shared outdoor ethic, pride and appreciation of open spaces. Economic benefits include increased work productivity, improved local economic stability, increased desirability as a place to live or retire, increased local tourism revenue, increase in property values, support for local tourism and recreation related businesses, greater opportunities for niche businesses, and more jobs. Environmental benefits include increased awareness and protection of landscapes, reduced wildlife harassment, greater retention of distinctive recreation setting character, increased ecologically friendly tourism operations, learning to respect nature, access to backcountry, increased understanding of the land, reduced motor vehicle use, opportunities for education, open space protection, erosion control, clean air and water, land trust preservation opportunities.

The Wood River Valley lands are a unique natural, scenic area. The above information should be considered in a positioning statement for the Wood River Valley. Such a statement will not only convey what makes the Wood River Valley special in relation to other public lands, but may also be used to attract visitors to the area and boost local tourism.

In addition, these lands extensively contribute to the community's sense of identity. Information from this study may be used to better understand the value and importance of these lands to local communities

### *Monitoring*

The social, economic, and environmental health of the community is important to the viability and sustainability of the Wood River Valley lands. In addition, the resource bonds the community together and provides opportunity for all to participate in recreation activities which contribute to healthy individuals, lifestyles, and communities. Therefore, monitoring a variety of

resource management areas that are related to the experience quality is important. Some specific recommendations include

- Monitoring the desired activities, experiences, benefits, settings, and management actions of local communities
- Monitoring trails, roads, parking areas, and signs for condition and quality
- Monitoring the views for visual/scenic impacts of developments on the recreation experience.
- Monitoring historical mining structures for safety/vandalism as the mines are an important aspect of the cultural history of the area
- Monitoring perceptions of conflict among all users (motorized and non-motorized, recreationists and sheep grazers)
- Monitoring of impacts/changes in the landscape due to sheep grazing
- Monitoring of motorized and non-motorized recreation use, while considering safe/quiet zones especially near towns
- Monitoring of effect of subdivision development on native wildlife and vegetation
- Mapping access to public lands
- Monitoring of differences among current and new residents moving to the area regarding differing resource management preferences

Appendix A: Focus Group Script

**WOOD RIVER VALLEY FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT**

Recreation Management Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Sign-in**

By Assistant Facilitator:

- Guest sign-in
- Distribute name tags
- Participants sign consent letter
- Participants complete a one-page on-site demographic survey

**II. Introduction (5 minutes)**

By Facilitator:

- Self introduction
- Show and orient map
- Describe study

“The Blaine County Commissioners and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) feel it is extremely important to talk to representatives of key user groups who have expressed particular interest in how these lands are to be managed. So, we have organized focus groups – a fancy way of saying *conversations* – with key stakeholder groups scattered throughout communities around these lands. You, as ..... are representatives of one of these key stakeholder groups.”

“The purpose of this study is to better understand the value and importance of recreation in the Wood River Valley BLM lands. The specific purpose for today’s meeting is to help us know more about your recreation experiences, preferences and the benefits you derive from these experiences.”

**III. Assurance of confidentiality, structure of focus groups and ground rules (10 minutes):**

“We want to assure you that everything said tonight will remain completely confidential. In no circumstances will anyone outside of this room be able to determine who said what. However, we use these conversations to extract bulleted themes that summarize all ideas that the group comes up with. Thus, your information and opinions can be forwarded into the planning process, without violating your confidentiality.”

“We do have a request. We will be trying to capture your thoughts and ideas on flip charts. Sometimes things come too fast to get everything down on paper. So to avoid interrupting the flow, we ask your permission to tape the session to make sure we don’t miss anything. However, we will not do so if anyone feels uncomfortable. Would anyone feel uncomfortable, or are there any questions? Again, we guarantee your confidentiality in these conversations.”

To help focus our dialogue and ensure that each of these meetings is conducted within the same context, we have a format and schedule for today’s focus group. I may have to stop the discussion at times so we have time to complete the entire exercise and discussion topics. We hope you can stay through to the end. We anticipate taking about two hours to complete this focus group dialogue.

Before we begin, I would like to turn your attention to some of the ground rules that we have established to make this a productive and enjoyable experience for you.” .... *Refer to and explain poster*

**IV. Review the subject recreation area and Introduce participants to maps and recreation management sub-units or zones (5 minutes):**

"We want to make sure that each of us has in mind the same area context for our group discussion. On the wall are maps of the project Area showing boundaries and three sub-units or recreation management zones. These zones may be adjusted in the plan, depending on the kinds of input received. But for now, these zones outline areas that have some commonality in terms of the types of recreation opportunities presently available, recreation use patterns, management issues and concerns, and so forth. These kinds of issues often vary widely from zone to zone, so we're going to try to focus our discussion and exercises on the particular zone that you find most satisfying. We'll try to keep the discussion focused that way as we proceed to avoid capturing your ideas and thoughts within the wrong spatial context."

**V. Warm-up: (10 minutes)**

"Let's begin by introducing ourselves. Please give your name, tell us what you do and which community you live in.  
Share with us your single most enjoyable personal winter recreation experience you have ever had in the Wood River Valley. Be sure to tell us which zone or zones you are talking about."

**VI. Recreation Activities: (10 minutes)**

"While you were introducing yourselves we started a list of winter recreation activities that you participated in for each of the three zones in the Wood River Valley area. We want to be comprehensive in our list, so please share with us what other kind of activities you enjoy when you use these lands."  
*Assistant writes down the activities that come from these discussions on the flipchart.*  
"In which zone(s) do you generally participate in these activities?"  
"Assistant marks this on the map"

Zone	Enjoyable Experience	Activities	Desired Experiences	Benefits	Settings	Concerns/ Actions
A: _____						
B: _____						
C: _____						

**VII. Recreation Experiences: (15 minutes)**

"While recreationists participate in many activities, it is often the recreation experience itself that creates enjoyment. Experiences are psychological outcomes or the immediate states of mind that come to us as we engage in recreation.  
"We're now going to hand out a short survey of possible recreation *experiences*. First, please write your most satisfying zone at the top and your most satisfying winter activities (up to two) right below that. For your first recreation activity, we would like you to tell us the four most important experiences that you realize from that activity. Indicate these four experiences with a "0" on the worksheet. If you have experiences that you don't see listed, feel free to include them. Please repeat this process for your second activity by indicating an "X" next to the four most important experiences.

*Assistant Facilitator hands out experience checklist (Worksheet 1).*

**VIII. Personal Benefits: (5 minutes)**

“Now, let's talk about the lasting **Benefits** or **Beneficial Outcomes** that stay with you after your recreation outing. By benefits we mean things that are *changed for the better*. You can think of *changes for the better* in many ways. These include individual, social or community, economic and environmental benefits. Let's start with personal benefits.

- **Personal** benefits may include things like improved physical fitness, a restored mind from unwanted stress, a greater understanding and appreciation of rural values, and the acquisition of new outdoor skills.

“I would like you to take a moment and make a list of some of the individual benefits you see coming from these lands on Worksheet 2.

*Facilitator hands out Worksheet 2*

**IX. Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits: (15 minutes)**

“Now, let's talk about the social or community, economic and environmental benefits.

- **Social or community** benefits move us on to benefits like greater community cohesion, greater involvement in community affairs, improved family bonding, reduced exposure to at risk youth, an improved quality of life, greater cultivation of outdoor oriented lifestyles, and sustained cultural integrity.
- **Economic** benefits address such things as greater economic stability, improved job performance, greater community productivity, and improved opportunities for local business.
- **Environmental** benefits include improved conditions such as improved visitor resource stewardship, greater community involvement in environmental issues, greater stewardship of the land, and sustainability of a community's small-town atmosphere.

“I would like you to think about all the possible social, environmental and economic benefits that you see coming out of the Wood River Valley lands. Please take a moment and make a list of some of the benefits you see coming from these lands on the Worksheet 3.

*Facilitator hands out Worksheet 3*

**X. Personal, Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits Using Checklist: (10 minutes)**

*Facilitator distributes Worksheet 4 (Benefits Checklist).*

“Now we're handing out a checklist of personal benefits that have been identified by other recreationists in previous research. As before, please indicate your most satisfying zone and activity at the top of this check sheet. Now, take a minute or two to review the list and choose the five most important personal benefits that you receive from recreation outings in the Wood River Valley area. Again feel free to write in a personal benefit if it is not on the list.

Circle the five most important **personal** benefit items that you realize on the personal benefits checklist worksheet that you would like to attain from recreation outings in this recreation area. Once again, be sure to list those things most important to you personally.”

“After a couple of minutes of doing this, we will have you share them with one another.”

*Assistant Moderator hands out Part I of the Benefits Checklist*

“Now, let’s shift gears a bit and think about benefits realized by like **households, groups, and the community**. We especially want to focus on the perspectives of those recreation participants who also live here locally. We want to identify some of the benefits that you believe people who live within the adjoining community or communities derive from their own outings within this recreation area...and the outings of others. So let’s think about what is most important to your own households and your communities.”

Circle the three most important household, group and community benefits that you believe are attained from recreation outings in this recreation area.

*Assistant Facilitator hands out **Part II** of the Benefits Checklist.*

“Next, let’s think about the **economic** benefits that are realized by businesses and the local economy because of the Wood River Valley Recreation Area. Identify some of the economic benefits that you believe your community should derive or already does from recreation-tourism use of the recreation area and associated visits to your community.”

Circle the three most important economic benefits that you believe are attained from recreation outings in this recreation area.

“Next, identify some of the **environmental** benefits that you believe should be accruing to the natural landscape or to the community environment because of the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.”

Finally, circle the three most important environmental benefits that you believe are attained from recreation outings in this recreation area.

**XI. Important Resource Settings: (10 minutes)**

Now, please think about the Recreation Setting Character of the Wood River Valley Area. Setting refers to an area’s distinctive environmental character. It’s the area’s distinguishing physical, social, and administrative features.

The first of the three different categories of setting characteristics is **Physical**. This involves the character of the land and resources and all man-made facilities. An example might be an area’s remoteness and both type and location of area roads and groomed snowmobile routes. Please indicate three characteristics of the physical setting that add most to your experience on Worksheet 5.

The second setting category is **Social**. This involves the character of recreation use and types of visitors using an area. Examples include number of other parties or groups encountered in the area. Please indicate up to three characteristics of the social setting that add most to your experience on Worksheet 5.

The third setting condition is **Administrative**. This is a bit more difficult to deal with, but it involves that way in which recreation-tourism providers serve visitors, control use, and manage the area. Examples include the kinds of services provided to accommodate recreation use and to enhance visitor enjoyment. Another might be kinds of administrative controls and use limits to protect resources and visitors. Please indicate up to three characteristics of the administrative setting that add most to your experience on Worksheet 5.

*Assistant Facilitator should hand out Worksheet 5.*

**XII. Identify important *PHYSICAL, SOCIAL and ADMINISTRATIVE* setting preferences in the Wood River Valley Recreation Area (10 minutes) (refer to Natural Resource Settings Matrix)**

*Assistant facilitator should hand out Natural Resource Settings Matrix*

We are handing out a matrix with nine setting criteria that managers can control or adjust. Each numbered criteria has four possible choices. On the setting matrix worksheet please check the most important **PHYSICAL** setting characteristics that you believe are *essential for producing the kinds of experiences and other beneficial outcomes* you identified earlier for the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.

On the setting matrix worksheet, check the most important **SOCIAL** setting characteristics that you believe are *essential for producing the kinds of experiences and other beneficial outcomes* you identified earlier for the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.

On the setting matrix worksheet please check the most important **ADMINISTRATIVE** setting characteristics that you believe are *essential for producing the kinds of experiences and other beneficial outcomes* you identified earlier for the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.

**XIII. Management concerns for the Wood River Valley: (10 minutes)**

Now, we would like to know what you feel are the major winter management issues within each zone (or all) of the Wood River Valley area. Specifically, we want to know what kind of concerns or problems you believe exist from use or other pressures that resource managers need to address. I would like you to list as many concerns as you think of on the sheet I am giving you. After giving you a couple of minutes to complete your list, we will give you time to share your thoughts.”

Another way of asking the same thing:

What values/issues of local significance are important for planners to consider? Example: local population growth.

*Facilitator distributes Worksheet 6*

**XIV. Management concerns for the Wood River Valley: (15 minutes)**

"Pretend that you were able to serve as “manager for a day” of the Wood River Valley. What could be done to improve the recreation opportunities in this area? What kinds of things would you prefer managers to do in each zone?"

*Probes:*

“As you make your list, think of the things that need to be done in the area. What issue does BLM need to deal with?"

“As you make your list, think about concerns that might arise from types of users other than you – other recreationists, and other types of land users (e.g. grazing, wildlife, mining, utilities)"

“As you make your list, think about concerns that managers of the area are dealing with fairly well. Also, think about things they are not dealing with, or are dealing with fairly poorly.”

*Assistant lists management concerns and notes made about the quality of existing management on the flip chart.*

**XV. Close**

“Thank you for coming today. We appreciate the richness of your responses. Your input will be invaluable as the management plan for the Wood River Valley is developed. We want to remind you that your responses will remain entirely confidential. But, they will go a long way in shaping a future management plan that will be responsive to your needs. Thank you and good night.”

**WORKSHEET 1**  
**EXPERIENCES CHECKLIST**

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity. If you have one, please indicate a second activity

Most Satisfying Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_ (use an “0” to mark these experiences)

2nd Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_ (use an “X” to mark these experiences)

Please place an “0” to the left of the four most important recreation experiences for your **first** activity that you identified above and an “X” to the left of the four most important recreation experiences for your **second** activity.

- \_\_\_\_\_ being close to nature
  - \_\_\_\_\_ being on my own
  - \_\_\_\_\_ enjoying meeting new people
  - \_\_\_\_\_ learning about the area’s history
  
  - \_\_\_\_\_ developing my skills and abilities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ enjoying risk taking adventure
  - \_\_\_\_\_ escaping every day responsibilities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ enjoying the scenery
  
  - \_\_\_\_\_ being with friends or family
  - \_\_\_\_\_ to learn more about the things here
  - \_\_\_\_\_ gaining a sense of self-confidence
  - \_\_\_\_\_ developing personal spiritual values
  
  - \_\_\_\_\_ reducing built up mental stress
  - \_\_\_\_\_ enjoying the solitude
  - \_\_\_\_\_ enjoying physical exercise
  - \_\_\_\_\_ teaching others about outdoors
  - \_\_\_\_\_ feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**WORKSHEET 2**  
**PERSONAL BENEFITS FROM WOOD RIVER VALLEY LANDS**

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity.

Most Satisfying Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Think about the personal benefits that you realize from recreating in this activity on the Wood River Valley lands. Make a list of some of the individual benefits that you receive from your recreation experiences on these lands.

1. Personal Benefits

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**WORKSHEET 3**  
**SOCIAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**  
**FROM WOOD RIVER VALLEY LANDS**

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity.

Most Satisfying Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about the possible social, environmental and economic benefits that are realized from recreation on the Wood River Valley lands. Make a list of some of the benefits you see as important in each category.

1. Social or Community Benefits

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Economic Benefits

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

3. Environmental Benefits

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**WORKSHEET 4**  
**BENEFITS CHECKLIST (PART I)**

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity.

Most Satisfying Zone\_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Please look over this list and circle the five most important personal benefits that you receive from your recreation outings in the Wood River Valley area.

**Part I. Personal Benefits:**

1. Better mental health and health maintenance

- Restored mind from unwanted stress
- Improved mental well-being

- Enlarged understanding of my responsibility to help/care for this community and keep it clean
- Greater sense of responsibility for my own quality of life

2. Personal development and growth

- Greater self-reliance
- Confirmation/development of my own values
- Improved sense of control over one's life
- Improved skills for outdoor enjoyment
- Improved leadership abilities
- Improved outdoor recreation skills
- Greater sensitivity to/awareness of outdoor aesthetics, nature's art and its elegance
- Greater spiritual growth
- Stronger ties with my family and friends
- Increased understanding and tolerance of others
- Enhanced awareness and understanding of nature
- Greater environmental awareness and sensitivity
- Greater understanding of the importance of recreation and tourism to our community
- Improved ability to relate to local cultures
- More well-informed and responsible visitor
- Enlarged sense of personal accountability for acting responsibly on public lands

3. Personal appreciation and satisfaction

- Closer relationship with the natural world
- A more outdoor-oriented lifestyle
- Enhanced sense of personal freedom
- Greater sense of adventure
- Improved opportunity to view wildlife close-up
- Greater freedom from urban living
- Greater personal enrichment through involvement with other people
- Increased appreciation of area's cultural history
- Greater awareness that this community is a special place
- Greater respect for private property and local lifestyles
- Improved understanding of how this community's rural-urban interface impacts its quality of life
- Improved physical fitness and health maintenance
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Reduced hypertension
- Improved capacity for outdoor physical activity

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**WORKSHEET 4**  
**BENEFITS CHECKLIST (PART II)**

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity.

Most Satisfying Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the three most important benefits that you believe come from the recreation outings in the Wood River Valley area for each category below (community, economic and environmental).

**Part II**

**Household and Community Benefits:**

- Heightened sense of satisfaction with our community
- Reduced social isolation
- Improved functioning of individuals in family and community
- Greater family bonding
- Greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions
- Increased compassion for others
- Enlarged sense of community dependency on public lands
- Greater interaction with visitors from different cultures
- Maintenance of distinctive recreation setting character

**Economic Benefits:**

- Increased work productivity
- Reduced absenteeism from work
- Decreased job turnover
- Improved local economic stability
- More positive contributions to local-regional economy
- Increased local tax revenue
- Increased local job opportunities
- Greater value-added local services
- Increased desirability as a place to live or retire
- Increased local tourism revenue
- Increased property values
- Improved maintenance of physical facilities

**IV. Environmental Benefits:**

- Reduced looting and vandalism of historic/prehistoric sites
- Greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features
- Reduced wildlife harassment by recreation users
- Greater protection of area historical structures and archaeological sites
- Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations
- Sustainability of community's cultural heritage
- Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes

**WORKSHEET 5**  
**UNIQUE COMPONENTS OR FEATURES**

**Zone** \_\_\_\_\_

What about the area's distinctive character adds to your experience in the Wood River Valley?

1. Physical environment (e.g. streams, views, wildlife)

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2. Social environment (e.g. history of mining in the area, other recreationists)

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3. Managerial setting (e.g. signs, facilities, management presence)

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**WORKSHEET 6**  
**NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION SETTINGS**  
*Criteria for Classification and Prescriptions*

**Directions:** First, indicate your most satisfying zone and activity.

Most Satisfying Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Most Satisfying Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Next, this matrix has nine setting criteria that managers can control or adjust. Each numbered criteria has four possible choices. Please check the most important physical, social and administrative setting characteristics that you believe are essential for producing the kinds of experiences and other beneficial outcomes you identified earlier in the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.

**PHYSICAL – RESOURCES & FACILITIES:** character of the natural landscape

	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>
<b>1. Naturalness:</b>	<i>Naturally-appearing landscape having — modifications not readily noticeable</i>	<i>Naturally-appearing landscape except — for obvious primitive roads</i>	<i>Landscape partially modified by roads, utility lines, etc., but none overpower — natural landscape features</i>	<i>Natural landscape substantially modified — by agriculture or industrial development</i>
<b>2. Facilities:</b>	<i>Some primitive trails made of native materials such as log bridges and — carved wooden signs</i>	<i>Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments, improved signs, — and very basic toilets</i>	<i>Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as camp grounds, restrooms, trails, and — interpretive signs</i>	<i>Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and — occasional exhibits</i>

**SOCIAL – VISITOR USE & USERS:** character of recreation & tourism use

	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>
<b>3. Group Size (other than your own):</b>	<i>4-6 people per group —</i>	<i>7-12 people per group —</i>	<i>13-25 people per group —</i>	<i>26-50 people per group —</i>
<b>4. Contacts (with other groups):</b>	<i>3-6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7-15 encounters/day on — travel routes</i>	<i>7-14 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., staging areas) and 15-29 encounters/ — day en route</i>	<i>15-29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more — encounters/day en route</i>	<i>People seem to be everywhere, but — human contact is still intermittent</i>
<b>5. Types of Encounters:</b>	<i>Users step aside to avoid unsafe conditions or user conflicts, sometimes — grudgingly</i>	<i>Users may be unnerved but may not necessarily move off routes, areas, or — sites to accommodate others</i>	<i>Users here routinely expect, welcome, and accommodate other visitors —</i>	<i>Because crowd tolerance is a necessary condition for being here, encounters tend — to be impersonal</i>

**ADMINISTRATIVE – ADMINISTRATIVE & SERVICE SETTING:** How Public Land Managers, County Commissioners and Municipal Governments, and Local Businesses Care for the Area and Serve Visitors and Local Residents

	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>
<b>6. Visitor Services:</b>	<i>Basic maps, but area personnel seldom available to provide on-site assistance —</i>	<i>Area brochures and maps, plus area personnel occasionally present to provide — on-site assistance</i>	<i>Information materials describe recreation areas and activities. Area personnel are — periodically available</i>	<i>Everything described to the left in this row, and describe experiences/benefits available. — Area personnel do on-site education</i>
<b>7. Management Controls:</b>	<i>Signs at key access points on basic user ethics. May have back country use — restrictions. Enforcement presence rare</i>	<i>Occasional regulatory signing. Motorized and mechanized use restrictions. — Random enforcement presence</i>	<i>Rules clearly posted with some seasonal or day-of-week use restrictions. Periodic — enforcement presence</i>	<i>Regulations prominent. Total use limited by permit, reservation, etc. Routine — enforcement presence.</i>
<b>8. Pets:</b>	<i>Pets under owner's voice/whistle control —</i>	<i>Leash-free area for dogs, and pack stock may be packed, ridden or tethered anywhere —</i>	<i>Within recreation areas, all dogs on leash, and separate areas provided for pack stock; —</i>	<i>Pets prohibited at recreation sites and other high-use areas —</i>

**WORKSHEET 7  
MANAGEMENT CONCERNS OR ISSUES**

**We would like to know what you feel are the major management winter issues within the Wood River Valley. Specifically, we want to know what kind of concerns or problems exist from use pressures. List as many concerns as you can think of on this worksheet.**

Zone A

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Zone B

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Zone C

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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Example of a focus group letter

January \_\_, 2006

Name  
Title  
Address  
Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The County Commissioners and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking your help in determining how recreation in the Wood River Valley will be managed in the coming years. As a part of this process, we want to conduct some focused group meetings to better understand the importance of the recreation area to local residents. Researchers from Arizona State University will be helping the BLM, and the County by conducting the focus groups. Thus, we are writing to ask for your participation in a focus group meeting we have scheduled for xx:xx a.m. on February \_\_, 2006 at the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

We are seeking the input from a small group of recreationists for this focus group meeting. Your experience in the area gives an important perspective we would like to include in our research and planning effort; your attendance will undoubtedly help this project. During the meeting, we will be discussing: the value of the Wood River Valley Recreation Area to the local community; how you feel the Wood River Valley Recreation Area should be managed; what preferences you have regarding recreation opportunities in the Wood River Valley Recreation Area; and future planning efforts and partnerships that would enhance residents' experiences while recreating in the Wood River Valley area.

The overall goals of the meeting are: to increase collaborative planning efforts among the tourism industry, local communities, counties, and federal land management agencies; to help gain an understanding of the value residents and tourists place on the Wood River Valley Recreation Area; and to identify future management issues that need to be addressed. We would truly appreciate your assistance in reaching these goals. This meeting represents a unique opportunity to voice your opinion directly to those who make the decisions regarding the management of the Wood River Valley Recreation Area.

Your time commitment at this meeting would be between one and a half and two hours. Please let us know if you are able to attend by filling out the enclosed, postage-paid postcard and returning it at your earliest convenience. We look forward to hearing from you and gaining your participation in this important project. Please call \_\_\_\_\_ for any questions or additional information.

Sincerely,

Tom Bowman,  
County Commissioner

John Kurtz,  
BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner

**Appendix B: Focus Group Summaries (Winter Use)**

The following is a list of winter activities that occur in each zone as reported by focus group participants.

Focus Group 1

Non – motorized backcountry users – Hailey, Idaho

February 8, 2006

1. Activity

- Zone A:
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Frontcountry skiing
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Dog walking
  - Biking
  - Winter fishing
- Zone B:
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Multi-day winter camping
  - Wildlife viewing
  - Biking
  - Winter fishing
- Zone C:
  - Cross country skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Paragliding
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Kite skiing
  - Multi-day winter camping
  - Wildlife viewing
  - Dog walking

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 17 being close to nature
- 5 being on my own
- - enjoying meeting new people
- 1 learning about the area's history
- 8 developing my skills and abilities
- 4 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 5 escaping every day responsibilities
- 9 enjoying the scenery
- 10 being with friends or family
- 1 to learn more about the things here

- 7 gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 9 developing personal spiritual values
- 5 reducing built up mental stress
- 18 enjoying the solitude
- 15 enjoying physical exercise
- 3 teaching others about outdoors
- 7 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) Untracked powder, flyable ridge

3. Personal benefits:

- Mental clarity
- Getting in touch with myself
- Stronger spiritual connection
- Exceptional fun
- Closer to nature/connection
- Peace of mind
- Less driving time means more skiing time
- Physical health
- Stress release

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness of environment
  - No damage or noise
  - Less congestion
  - Increased ownership and stewardship
  - Decreased stress of wildlife
- Community
  - Kids' development and education
  - Stewardship/environmental values
  - Protection
  - Community identity
  - Public health
  - Dispersion
  - Public lands creates community solidarity
- Economic
  - Stores and retail businesses
  - Balances the downside of high cost of living
  - Community events
  - Decreased health costs
  - Skiing more friendly for a tourist economy

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Undeveloped hillsides
  - Vertical relief
  - Beautiful views
  - Desert-mountain interface
  - Accessibility
  - Clean air
  - Quiet surroundings
  - Occasional wildlife interactions
  - Streams
  - Untracked snow
- Social
  - Skiing history/culture
  - Seeing others (tracks)
  - Camaraderie
  - Social interactions at trail heads
  - Friendliness of people/ between user groups
  - Mining history
  - Uncrowded nature of experience
- Administrative
  - Parking access
  - Lack of commercialization
  - Access
  - Lack of hillside development
  - Lack of user fees
  - Lack of noise
  - Perceived lack of overt management
  - Proactive BLM planning (better than USFS)
  - Motorized/non-motorized recreation zoning (working in the north valley, a need for the south valley)

6. Management concerns

- Zone A
  - Maintaining access to backcountry
  - Motorized/non-motorized zoning (need and issue)
  - Closure for wildlife
  - Lack of wildlife corridors
  - Conflicts
  - Users and property owners (land boundaries)
  - Motorized and non-motorized
  - Motorized and home-owners (noise)
  - Parking
  - Education/maps
  - High concentration of use

- Safety issues
- People skiing on top of each other
- Need for information/education/etiquette
- Need for maps
- Zone B
  - Maintaining access to backcountry
  - Motorized/non-motorized zoning (need and issue)
  - Closure for wildlife
  - Lack of wildlife corridors
  - Conflicts
  - Users and property owners (land boundaries)
  - Motorized and non-motorized
  - Motorized and home-owners (noise)
  - Parking
  - Education/maps
  - High concentration of use
  - Safety issues
  - People skiing on top of each other
  - Need for information/education/etiquette
  - Need for maps
  - Boundary conflict with zone A
  - Fear of motorization of zone B (limited access for non-motorized)
  - Need for overnight facilities (e.g., huts) to promote ski access to Zones B and C
  - Fear of losing opportunity
- Zone C
  - Need for maps
  - Need for information/education/etiquette
  - Maintain backcountry access
  - Motorized/non-motorized zoning (issue, need for)
  - Wildlife sanctuaries/corridors
  - Conflicts
  - Users and property owners (land boundaries)
  - Motorized and non-motorized
  - Motorized and home-owners (noise)
  - Parking
  - Lack of access
  - Lack of hut/ski facilities

## 7. Future management suggestions

- Zone A
  - Motorized/non-motorized zoning (need and issue)
  - Unbiased mediator between different groups
  - Increased tolerance/acceptance
  - Clarify easements for better access
  - Maps/boundaries – educate and clarify

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- More areas for groomed cross-country skiing
- Create wildlife corridors
- Zone B
  - Development of huts
  - Motorized/non-motorized zoning (need and issue)
  - Unbiased mediator between different groups
  - Increased tolerance/acceptance
  - Maps/boundaries – educate and clarify
  - More areas for groomed cross-country skiing in southern portion
  - Create wildlife corridors
- Zone C
  - Development of huts
- Motorized/non-motorized zoning (issue, need for)
  - Maps/boundaries – educate and clarify
  - Unbiased mediator between different groups
  - Increased tolerance/acceptance
  - Create wildlife corridors
  - Turn over the southern portion of Zone C to motorized users

Focus Group 2  
Managers - Hailey, Idaho  
February 9, 2006

1. Recreation activities in the Wood River Valley

- Winter activities:
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Cross country skiing
  - Snow shoeing
  - Snowmobiling
  - Wildlife viewing
  - Cultural history
  - Fishing (river and ice)
  - Sledding
  - Snow camping
  - Ski/board kiting
  - Solitude
- Summer activities:
  - Hiking
  - Biking
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Backpacking
  - Dirt bike/ATV
  - Wildlife viewing
  - Rock climbing
  - Mushrooming
  - Trail running
  - Solitude
  - Walking swimming
  - Kayaking
  - Tubing
  - Camping
  - Hang gliding
  - Paragliding
  - Equestrian
  - Birding

2. Meaning/importance of the Wood River Valley:

- Lands are close to home (“Very accessible” to remote areas)
- High quality resource for diverse forms of recreation and skill levels
- WRV history and resources are tied to community sense of place
- WRV adds to quality of life
- Scenic natural beauty
- WRV is more of a resident “play area”

- “southern Idahoans” also use the WRV
  - WRV offers opportunity to get away and escape
3. Environmental, community, and economic benefits
- Environmental
    - Protection/stewardship of resource
    - Ethics
    - Educational opportunities
    - Increased awareness of environment means better management (i.e., residents care about conservation and have high expectations)
  - Community
    - Health benefits to community – gets people out
    - Improves quality of life
    - Public lands/recreation help to “bond” community
    - “social health” is dependent upon public lands (e.g., land trusts)
    - Recreation opportunities lead to “social interactions”
    - Free and accessible lands
    - Cultural opportunities to expand because of place/lands
    - Place adds to political power
    - Residents have an ethic toward the land
    - Relationships with other and private land owners to improve management
  - Economic
    - Protection/stewardship of resource
    - Justice in recreation opportunities
    - Political advocacy
    - Outfitters/retail
    - Employment (economic development and diverse economy)
    - Conservation/resource based employment
    - Strong real estate/construction market
    - Increased real estate values (cost of living)
4. Important resource settings
- Physical
    - Desert-mountain interface
    - Wildflowers
    - River environments and other waterways
    - Warm springs and water features
    - Wildlife
    - Mountains
    - High desert environment
    - Diversity of desert mountain interface
    - Accessibility
    - Visual accessibility/scenery
    - View corridors
    - Terrace and mining artifacts/history

- “local communities” and attractions combine to create diverse opportunities
- Diverse accommodations/yurts (i.e., huts)
- Social
  - Companionship
  - History/culture – social lessons from
  - Natural history
  - Diverse blend of outdoor activities and cultural opportunities
  - Family activities creating strong values
  - Yurts (huts)
  - Shared experiences creating desire for better stewardship
- Administrative
  - Diverse tourism accommodations
  - Opportunity for conflict resolution
  - Local government commitment to preservation
  - Local zoning/planning
  - Lack of overt government management and low infrastructure development (especially in the southern portions of the valley)
  - Effectiveness of current management
  - Collaborative planning

#### 5. Management concerns

- Overall
  - Weeds
  - Recreation conflicts
  - Dog walking and wildlife (dog waste)
  - Snowshoeing vs. cross country skiing
  - Motorized vs. non-motorized
  - Sheep dogs vs. hikers
  - Hikers vs. motorized
  - Agriculture/ranging vs. recreation
  - Limited access – need for better parking
  - Development pressures into lands – wildlife encroachment
  - Trail maintenance (need more)
  - Social trail growth (not planned)
  - Interface recreation/wildlife
  - Shared use problems – need more management
  - Trespassing on private lands
  - Population growth of valley increased pressures
  - “loving the resource to death”
  - Recreational snowmobiling in housing developed areas
  - ATV Damage/motorized use impacts
  - Need for more access points

#### 6. Future management suggestions

- Overall

- Segregated use areas (i.e., recreation use zoning)
- Public information campaign
- Need a systematic “trails” plan with support facilities and connectivity
- Plan and market areas for appropriate, well thought out use
- Think through and manage for different recreation experiences for different areas
- Need for city/resource interface to be planned – access and transition
- Improve wildlife habitat
- Create a joint planning environment
- Federal agencies
- Local agencies
- Land trusts
- Smart growth
- County
- Local user groups
- Need funding
  - Endowment
  - Real estate tax
  - Transportation tax
  - Local option taxes
  - User fees
  - Development fees
- Zoning – linkage with USFS travel planning

7. Comments from managers about zones

- Zone A
  - Include Greenhorn
  - Potential for most conflict because of use and residential
  - Non-motorized zones with motorized corridors and parking
  - Wildlife closures
  - Quigley/issue
- Zone B
  - More shared use – but need to improve accessibility
  - Wildlife closures – considerations
  - More involvement with local land owners
- Zone C
  - Extend south to river
  - More shared use – need to improve accessibility

Focus Group 3  
Motorized users – Hailey, Idaho  
February 9, 2006

1. Activity

- Zone A:
  - Snowmobiling
  - Downhill skiing
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Alpine skiing
  - Ski touring
- Zone B:
  - Snowmobiling
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Dog walking
  - Hiking
  - Alpine skiing
- Zone C:
  - Snowmobiling
  - Dog sledding
  - Cross-country skiing

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 9   being close to nature
- 7   being on my own
- 1   enjoying meeting new people
- 2   learning about the area's history
- 8   developing my skills and abilities
- 3   enjoying risk taking adventure
- 3   escaping every day responsibilities
- 10   enjoying the scenery
- 6   being with friends or family
- 4   to learn more about the things here
- 2   gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 4   developing personal spiritual values
- 7   reducing built up mental stress
- 6   enjoying the solitude

- 7 enjoying physical exercise
- 6 teaching others about outdoors
- 6 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) wildlife, being close to nature

3. Personal benefits:

- Fun
- Increased fitness/decreased stress
- More leisure time after sunset
- More connected to surrounding
- Increased family bonding
- Renewal of spirit/improved mental state
- Accessibility

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Low impact activity (i.e., tracks melt)
  - Activity use creates awareness and respect of lands
  - Increased understanding of nature/wildlife
  - Agreements among land owners and users helps land
  - Awareness about wildlife/ethics
  - Roads/tracks help for migration of wildlife
- Community
  - Safety/search and rescue
  - Reduced crime among youth – gives opportunity to “blow off steam”
  - Family bonding
  - Friends/companionship
  - Brings diverse groups together – agreements for shared use/tolerance and learning to accept
  - Draws stronger connection to the land and other people
  - Preparedness/knowledge of area/awareness of resource means better search and rescue ability
- Economic
  - Local business
  - Retail/equipment sales/repairs
  - Service jobs
  - Fuel sales
  - Tourism industry
  - License sale monies go to public good

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Views of mountains
  - Presence of wildlife

- Size of area/openness
- Desert/forest interface
- Diversity of terrain
- Diversity of vegetation
- Location of towns/communities
- Streams
- Social
  - Signs of history
  - Not as busy as other areas, lower density
  - Acceptance of motorized use from community
  - Gathering points at mountain tops
  - Mixture of locals and visitors to area
  - Storytelling/shared experiences
- Administrative
  - Residents' maintenance of area (e.g., trash pick up)
  - Parking areas
  - Lack of overt management presence
  - Self management
  - Lands are open
  - Less management is better

#### 6. Management concerns

- Overall
  - Private property conflicts
  - Accessibility issues with private property
  - Concerns of limiting use of motorized recreation
  - Fear of future restrictions/patrolling
  - Avalanche awareness
  - More ability with newer machines
  - Need education
  - Post danger signs needed
  - USFS is doing nothing
  - User conflicts
  - Three zones, but only one area to the users
  - Losing parking
  - Too much focus on less important features (e.g., bathrooms, parking lots)
  - Closures

#### 7. Future management suggestions

- Overall
  - Don't close areas to one use, if closed, close to everyone (e.g., for game)
  - Provide better/more parking areas
  - Need to plan for accessibility (development will cause problems)
  - Place trails/routes (corridors) for reaching remote lands
  - Need to acquire land for staging/parking and corridor (maybe a trade)

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- Don't close areas to snowmobiles or motorized uses
- No exclusive use areas
- BLM needs to be involved in all activities
- Provide education about proper behavior, etiquette
- Provide access and parking
- Don't make more rules and more restrictions by BLM
- Don't close more trails/roads

Focus Group 4

Non – motorized backcountry users – Hailey, Idaho

February 10, 2006

1. Activity

- Zone A:
  - Snowshoeing
  - Walking/hiking
  - Telemark skiing
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Fishing
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Running
  - Dog walking
  - Snow camping
  - Wildlife viewing/tracking
  - Photography
  - Birding
  - Snow education
  - Tubing/sledding
  - Snowboarding
  - Ice skating
  - Hunting
- Zone B:
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Running/hiking
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Hiking
  - Telemark skiing
  - Dog walking
  - Winter camping
  - Ice fishing
  - Photography
  - Wildlife watching
  - Hunting
- Zone C:
  - Cross country skiing
  - Snow camping
  - Telemark skiing
  - Silent sports
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Track skiing
  - Skate skiing
  - Wildlife watching
  - Photography

- hunting

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 19 being close to nature
- 8 being on my own
- enjoying meeting new people
- learning about the area's history
- 4 developing my skills and abilities
- 1 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 5 escaping every day responsibilities
- 16 enjoying the scenery
- 7 being with friends or family
- 1 to learn more about the things here
- 1 gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 1 developing personal spiritual values
- 3 reducing built up mental stress
- 17 enjoying the solitude
- 20 enjoying physical exercise
- 1 teaching others about outdoors
- 1 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) proximity of opportunities

3. Personal benefits:

- Healthy lifestyle/well being/mental clarity/energized positivism
- Interaction with environment and wildlife
- Memories
- Replenishment of spirit
- Education
- Serenity
- Low impact (less driving involved)
- Sense of place
- Physical exercise
- Better perspective of life
- Appreciation of natural beauty

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Appreciation of environment and wildlife
  - Reduced oil/fuel intake
  - Minimum impacts from winter recreation
  - Watershed benefits
  - Respect/increased value of land stewardship equals preservation
  - Low impacts to wildlife
- Community
  - More fit people
  - Equity/access for all
  - Sharing in the outdoors
  - Increased community appreciation
  - Greater appreciation of quiet
  - Education leads to community appreciation
  - Community coming together for conservation
- Economic
  - Support for retail (ski shops)
  - Tourism
  - Low cost to participants
  - Helps recruit employees
  - Opportunity for niche enterprises
  - Health equals better productivity

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Topographical variety/diversity
  - Orientation to sun/light
  - Lower density development/open space
  - Wildlife/clean water
  - Federal land protection (proximity and access)
  - Desert mountain interface
  - Edible plants
- Social
  - Low density/lack of crowding
  - People are happy/enjoying
  - Sharing experiences with others
  - History of mining and Native Americans (cultural history; “grazing naturally”)
- Administrative
  - Federal ownership allows opportunity for lower density development and planning
  - Agencies use “light management”/less is better
  - Few written rules/signs
  - Winter closure gates (vehicles)

6. Management concerns

- Overall
  - Lack of enforcement of rules
  - Wildlife impacts from noise and smell
  - Safety between auto and other motorized recreation uses
  - Safety of backcountry skiers threatened by snow machines below
  - Litter/trash
  - Dog packs (conflict and waste)
  - High marking affecting experience
  - Losing terrain to motorized impacts (e.g. political influences); area is shrinking
  - Increased population/crowding
  - User conflicts are increasing
  - With motorized recreation
  - With snowshoers walking on ski trails
  - Noise pollution
  - Trespassing of snowmobiles on private property/lack of respect for property/others
  - Impacts on wildlife
  - Air pollution smells and affects on watershed
  - Do not have clearly defined areas/zones for use
  - Snowmobiles impact experience and where non-motorized users go
  - Lack of parking areas
  - Lack of consideration and etiquette toward other users

7. Future management suggestions

- Overall
  - Offer “opportunities” for self propelled folks that are thought through
  - A human carrying capacity needs to be assessed on the WRV lands
  - Need safe areas close to towns set aside for non-motorized use
  - Needs to be permanent protection of BLM/USFS lands
  - More attention is needed for wildlife/wildlife habitat protection
  - Management plan needs to address noise and quiet areas
  - Three E’s: Engineering, education and enforcement
  - USFS travel plan needs to be updated and integrated with this [BLM]
  - More restrictions during winter/open ruleless isn’t enough
  - Allow road/trail corridors for motorized use to help them get out
  - Restrict motorized use in city areas
  - Keep motorized use on trails/roadways to a point
  - Increase education at the early age levels
  - “soft boundaries” against public lands to prevent sharp contrasts of housing and open space/wildlife implications from such development
  - More collaborative planning between agencies (Fish and Game, USFS, BLM, private developers)
  - Make wildlife part of the visitor experience

### Appendix C: Focus Group Summaries (Summer Use)

The following is a list of summer activities that occur in each zone as reported by focus group participants.

Focus Group 5  
Hikers – Hailey, Idaho  
May 15, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Walking
  - Running
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking
  - Hunting
  - Hiking with dogs
  - Hiking with kids
  - Four wheeling
  - Horseback riding
  - Historical/cultural recreation
  - Boating
  - River walking/sitting/picnicking
  - Mushrooming
  - Partying (young people)
  - Gun shooting (target)
  - Rock/mineral collection
  - Wildflower collecting
  - Education/field trips
  - Baseball/soccer
  - Swimming
  - Rock climbing
  - Skateboarding
  - Game hunting
  - Wildlife watching
  - Photography
  - Fishing
  - Dirt biking
  - Camping archery
  - Exploring/discovery
- Zone B:
  - Walking
  - Hiking
  - Hiking with dogs
  - Hunting
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking with kids
  - Running
  - Historical cultural recreation
  - Mushrooming

- Partying
- Camping
- Backpacking
- Game hunting
- Dirt biking
- Wildlife viewing
- Photography
- Four wheeling
- Fishing
- Horseback riding
- Rock collecting
- Mineral collecting
- Wildflowering
- Education/fieldtrips
- Exploring/discovery

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 12 being close to nature
- 6 being on my own
- 2 enjoying meeting new people
- 1 learning about the area's history
- 4 developing my skills and abilities
- 2 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 3 escaping every day responsibilities
- 15 enjoying the scenery
- 6 being with friends or family
- 4 to learn more about the things here
- 6 gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 1 developing personal spiritual values
- 5 reducing built up mental stress
- 12 enjoying the solitude
- 16 enjoying physical exercise
- - teaching others about outdoors
- 2 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

- Ease of access to nature
- Improved mental well-being
- Escaping urban environment
- Increased physical fitness and health
- Increased personal freedom
- Increased understanding of wildlife behavior
- Better understanding of biocentric viewpoint (man is but a part)
- Appreciation of resource
- Increased problem solving/creative thinking
- Increased understanding of nature
- Solitude (no motorized equipment)
- Increased responsibility of life
- Ease of creative memorable experiences
- Increased appreciation of land and environment protection
- Opportunities to see “nature” up close
- Enjoying the beauty
- Better awareness of “real” self

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness of resource and “natural” processes and problems
  - Increased stewardship
  - Increased sensitivity to resource
  - Increased ecologically friendly tourism operations
  - Relatively less impact
- Community
  - Increased satisfaction with community
  - Increased opportunities for youth to learn (creates/fosters positive role models)
  - Increased family togetherness
  - Bonds community (common ground/shared values)
  - Attracts likeminded people
  - Community fitness
  - Provision of better healthy alternatives
  - Creates organizations (e.g., trail groups, land trusts)
  - Public access to river and federal lands
- Economic
  - Increased land value
  - Tourism
  - Increased desirability of living here
  - More “outdoor” jobs/niche market/outdoor retailers
  - Restaurants
  - Increased work productivity (e.g., less absentees from work)
  - Special events (e.g., bike races)

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Diverse landscape
  - Benign climate (i.e., four seasons)
  - Relatively pristine (air, water quality)
  - Great views, abundance
  - “hidden” spots of topography (e.g., canyons, gulches)
  - Abundant wildlife/flowers
  - Accessibility of public lands
- Social
  - Meeting likeminded people
  - Problem solving/route finding
  - Mining history
  - Social interaction on “neutral” ground
  - Minimal personal conflict (although this is said to be changing)
  - Self-reliant
- Administrative
  - Decreased management presence
  - Trash cans
  - Trail signs
  - Dog stations
  - Good maintenance
  - Decreased presence of facilities
  - Availability of information
  - Good personnel (positive, informative)

6. Management concerns

- Ignoring closed trails
- Lack of adequate enforcement over closed trails
- Degradation of trails and roads by motorized users and bikers
- Spring wet season issues (all users)
- Competition for trail use in spring wet season
- Lack of respect for private lands
- Sheep grazing
  - Erosion
  - Exotic weed spreading
- Lack of thorough BLM recreation management plan (motorized use said to be dictating the current plan)
- Lack of BLM and interagency education and information in local media outlets
- Need for comprehensive BLM trails plan
- Need to create access routes in order to move motorized use well outside of town (safety concerns)
- Lack of trails for quick access near town
- Need use-specific designated trails
- Need to revise the multi-use concept due to early season issues (wet trails)

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- Hailey and points South need more trails
- Increased awareness and clarify accessibility in southern parts of Valley
- Need trail “hubs” like in Lake creek where trailheads are developed
- Trail cutting/pioneering in sensitive areas by motorized users
- Increased wildfire viewing areas
- Social carrying capacity/BLM defined
- Education program in school system
- Lack of safety considerations

Focus Group 6  
Motorcycling – Hailey, Idaho  
May 15, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Motorcycling
  - Hiking
  - Mountain biking
  - Fly fishing
  - Hunting
  - Camping
  - Off road driving
  - Target shooting
  - Equestrian
  - ATV riding
  - Paragliding
  - Boating
  - Rock hounding
  - Canyon parties
- Zone B:
  - Motorcycling
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking
  - Fly fishing
  - Hunting
  - Camping
  - Off road driving
  - Walking
  - Target shooting
  - Back country skiing
  - Equestrian
  - ATV riding
  - Boating
  - Rock hounding
  - Canyon parties

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 11 being close to nature
- 7 being on my own
- - enjoying meeting new people
- - learning about the area's history
- 10 developing my skills and abilities

- 7 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 5 escaping every day responsibilities
- 12 enjoying the scenery
- 7 being with friends or family
- 2 to learn more about the things here
- 2 gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 3 developing personal spiritual values
- 10 reducing built up mental stress
- 2 enjoying the solitude
- 15 enjoying physical exercise
- 1 teaching others about outdoors
- 1 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) Learning to share public lands with all

3. Personal benefits:

- Decreased stress
- Increased relationships with friends/family
- Rush adrenaline
- Increased personal freedom
- Increased mental wellness
- Closer relationship with natural world
- Physical fitness
- Increased responsibility for personal quality of life
- Achieving personal goals
- Having fun
- Appreciation of public land
- Appreciation of where I live (special place)
- Accessibility/closeness/less driving time to recreate
- Increased sense of adventure

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness of natural landscape
  - Trail maintenance/litter removal
  - Group maintenance allows better mobility
  - More education/responsible use awareness
  - Increased environmental awareness
    - Big picture view is seen because motorized use allows for more ground to be covered

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- Increased understanding of long term trail impacts because more miles are covered
  - Community
    - Opportunity for kids to spend bonding with family/keeps them from trouble
    - Learning about other recreation groups
    - Conversations/community socialization outside of work
    - Education/awareness of issues outside of valley
    - Showing the area to visitors
  - Economic
    - Local businesses (retail, food, fuel, manufacturing)
    - Tourism (lodging, restaurants)
    - Attraction value
    - Tax revenue (sticker sales)
    - Increased desirability for those working in recreation industry
    - Increased property value
5. Important resource settings
- Physical
    - Diverse trail system
    - Natural beauty/views/mountain ranges
    - Wildlife
    - Amount of trail miles
    - Diverse landscape (mountains to desert)
    - Challenging trails
    - Awesome physical environment
  - Social
    - Not crowded/solitude
    - Tolerance/relatively good cooperation
    - Relating to mining history
    - Embracing/accepting of tourists by locals
  - Administrative
    - Minimal regulation/open access
    - Good cooperation with BLM
    - Not oversigned – fosters respect for BLM
    - Trails are not over-improved
    - Seasonal closure for other users
    - Access through private lands – BLM helps coordinate this
    - Minimal policing/law enforcement
6. Management concerns
- Concern about population growth
  - Need to ensure education and awareness between different user groups in order to prevent conflicts and fights
  - Don't want any changes
  - Private land route closures – don't want to close access

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- Increased BLM track maintenance (consider youth only tracks)
- BLM money should be used more for track management, easements and interagency coordination and education
- Motorized group looks at whole area
- Want to preserve access through zone A
- Address travel plan coordination between USFS and BLM
- Do not want losses of land or critical connecting trails – preserve current system
- Learn from other land use allocation processes – do not want to cause use conflicts
- Want to work together to create a workable, fair plan without conflict

Focus Group 7  
Fish and Game – Hailey, Idaho  
May 16, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Hiking (high concentration in zone A)
  - Mountain biking
  - Motorcycling
  - ATV riding
  - Four wheel driving
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Equestrian
  - Camping
  - Skiing
  - Snow shoeing
  - Snowmobiling
  - Mountain lion hunting
  - Snow boarding
  - Teleskiing
- Zone B:
  - Firewood/timber cutting
  - Mountain biking
  - Motorcycling
  - ATV riding
  - Four wheel driving
  - Hunting
  - Equestrian
  - camping

2. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness of/projection of natural landscapes
  - Reduced wildlife harassment relative to other areas due to greater awareness/appreciation of wildlife
  - Environmental friendly (greater awareness of wildlife issues) tourism operations
  - Land ethic (valley-wide)
- Community
  - Increased satisfaction with community
  - Increased quality of life
  - Increased community involvement
  - Increased community dependence on public lands
  - Maintenance of distinct recreation character

- Economic
  - Enhanced local economy from tourism
  - Local/regional economy benefits
  - Inbound hunters increase economic welfare
  - Economic stability (newer year round recreation trend)
  - Increased value and desirability of living here
  - Recreation based businesses; increased value of these businesses based on proximity to resource
  
- 3. Important resource settings
  - Physical
    - Abundant wildlife viewing opportunities
    - Undeveloped views; easy and quick access to views
    - Lack of noise
  - Social
    - Sense of freedom through accessibility/public lands and unmarked private
    - Limited crowding/solitude
    - Community togetherness
    - Limited conflict between users
  - Administrative
    - Lack of BLM presence (good and bad aspects of this)
    - Some people sense freedom through limited BLM presence
  
- 4. Meaning/importance of the Wood River Valley:
  - “untrammeled” lands available to community
  - Unrestricted access
  - Fortunate to have abundant public land
  - Dependence on lands by community (e.g., resource drives people to come here, resource would not be the same without the resource)
  - Diversity of activities
  - Protected valley (by terrain, mountains); limited winds/heat
  
- 5. Management concerns
  - Lack of trails management/motorized management
    - Leads to resource damage
    - Riparian areas
    - Wildlife infringement (often deer/elk) because of high traffic on roads
  - Overabundance of pioneered roads/ATV trails
  - Roads affect experiences of non-motorized users (hikers and hunters)
    - (e.g., solitude infringed, no respect for effort to get to destination on foot)
  - Zone B landowners getting fed up with motorized users
    - Closures due to lack of management control
  - Lack of BLM presence in the Wood River Valley/BLM does not get up to the northern part of the valley enough
  - No M.O.U. between Fish and Game and BLM

- BLM not engaged in law enforcement/no M.O.U.
- Lack of facilities (e.g., toilets, parking, signage for winter closures)
- Need more information from BLM given to the public
- BLM needs to be more proactive in management
- Improved technology for snow machine/ski/snow boards allows for greater mobility. Wildlife concerns due to high levels of winter activity (displacing wildlife)
- Zone A subdivisions (and associated dog presence) will increase winter recreation activity and disturb wildlife

## 6. Future Management

- BLM needs to physically access wildlife/big game critical areas throughout the year (in response to housing and human activity at BLM boundary) to understand what is taking place
- Full time BLM ranger for Blaine County
- Motorized vehicle travel plan (with permissive language)
  - Like USFS, keep people from going anywhere
- Revisit grazing levels
- Establish or maintenance of easements for access to BLM lands
- Maintain wildlife management corridors (private lands)
- Cove Ranch
  - Example of private land owners putting homes adjacent to land – on native wildland habitat
  - In general concerns over development on “natural” landscapes that will affect wildlife due to increased human activity

Focus Group 8  
Hunters – Hailey, Idaho  
May 16, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Biking
  - Archery
  - Recreational shooting
  - Equestrian
  - Mountain biking
  - Hunting
  - Mushrooming
  - Fishing
  - Boating
  - Swimming
  - Canyon party
- Zone B:
  - Hunting
  - Mountain biking
  - Fishing
  - Duck hunting
  - Hiking
  - Elk hunting
  - Dog walking
  - Grouse/chucker/sage grouse/small game hunting
  - Bear hunting
  - Cat/mountain lion hunting
  - Shed (antler) hunting
  - Bird watching
  - Canyon party
  - Motorized sports
  - Wood cutting
  - Moose hunting
  - Wildlife observation
  - Backpacking
  - Camping
  - Waterfowl hunting
  - Recreational shooting
  - Equestrian

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 8 being close to nature
- 4 being on my own

- 2   enjoying meeting new people
- 2   learning about the area's history
- 6   developing my skills and abilities
- 3   enjoying risk taking adventure
- 1   escaping every day responsibilities
- 7   enjoying the scenery
- 5   being with friends or family
- 2   to learn more about the things here
- 2   gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 2   developing personal spiritual values
- 3   reducing built up mental stress
- 4   enjoying the solitude
- 8   enjoying physical exercise
- 1   teaching others about outdoors
- 1   feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s)   beauty of wildlife, hunting in general, thrill with close encounters with wildlife

3. Personal benefits:

- Exercise
- Increased skills for outdoor enjoyment
- Hunting becoming a way of life
- Decreased stress
- Spiritual growth
- Increased opportunity to view wildlife up close
- Increased sense of personal freedom
- Stronger ties with family and friends
- Satisfaction with meat (quality and economically)
- Closeness to natural world

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Greater awareness of protection of environment
  - Litter removal
  - Increased stewardship of public lands
  - Helpful insight for wildlife management
  - Activism helping preserve habitat/ecosystem
    - Increased dialog between agencies and habitat conservation agencies
  - Increased funding leads to more habitat preservation

- Community
  - Stronger ties with family and friends
  - Network of strong bond between hunters
    - Formal clubs/hunters safety classes
  - Influential land ethic
  - Open space/public lands as a benefit to hunters
  - Increased values/moral development for youth
  - Shared political and outdoor interests
  - Hunters responsible for many aspects or recreation enjoyed by all
- Economic
  - Meat consumption (personal)
  - Purchase of hunting/fishing equipment
  - Tourism outfitters/guides/jobs
  - Local goods and services (food, gas, lodging)
  - Licensees support fish and game operations
  - Activism leading to land management enhancement from revenues
  - Proximity to resource means to less personal expense

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Desert mountain interface
  - Dramatic seasonal changes
  - Free-flowing streams/micro ecosystems
  - “toughness” of area
  - Abundant flora/fauna
  - Remote areas ecosystems
  - Quiet
- Social
  - Shared values/ethics/politics (when out far enough into the land)
  - Environmental projection efforts (physical and economic)
  - Connection with the past culture/history/artifacts
  - Unique areas shared with friends
  - Solitude/lack of others
- Administrative
  - Less facilities/signs/toilets and other “hard” infrastructure (some basic information facilities are fine, but do not want to much)
  - Accessibility through private lands
  - Lack of roads
  - Management regulations of mechanized travel
  - Closures of old mines

6. Management concerns

- Access to public lands through private lands
- Conflict between off road users and non motorized users

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- Non-system trails and associated problems such as erosion, non native weeds, and wildlife harassment (not enough enforcement and said to be primarily caused by motorized users)
- Remote roads leading to litter dump sites
- Not enough management presence (low enforcement)
- Issue related management vs. ecosystem management (i.e., user group management vs. land first management)
- Sheep herding resulting in resource damage and litter
  - Overall mismanagement
  - Taking up other wildlife
  - Dogs harassing other recreation users/wildlife/pets
- Need better management of sheep losses
  - Need to formalize guidelines for “taking” sheep
- Management regarding allotments; enforcements of sheep herding
- Motorized activity leading to diminished wilderness ethic
- BLM could be more aggressive in overall management ethic (USFS is revered, BLM is not)
- Conflicting ecosystem management between USFS and BLM
- Need to restrict motorized activity to existing roads
- More signage and better enforcement of existing
- Hunters concerned with total management of environments – as a whole
- Public needs to know how hunters and fishers contribute to recreation (e.g., license, taxes, etc.)

Focus Group 9  
ATV Users – Hailey, Idaho  
May 16, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Four wheel driving
  - Hunting
  - Motorcycling
  - Fishing
  - Camping
  - Hiking
  - Equestrian
  - Rock hounding
  - Mountain biking
- Zone B:
  - Four wheel/ATV riding
  - Hunting
  - Motorcycling
  - Fishing
  - Camping
  - Hiking
  - Equestrian
  - Jeep driving
  - Rock hounding
  - Mountain biking
  - Bird watching

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 4   being close to nature
- 3   being on my own
- 1   enjoying meeting new people
- -   learning about the area's history
- 2   developing my skills and abilities
- 1   enjoying risk taking adventure
- 2   escaping every day responsibilities
- 3   enjoying the scenery
- 4   being with friends or family
- 1   to learn more about the things here
- -   gaining a sense of self-confidence

- -   developing personal spiritual values
- 4   reducing built up mental stress
- 2   enjoying the solitude
- 2   enjoying physical exercise
- 1   teaching others about outdoors
- 1   feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

- Increased skills/abilities
- Increased mental well being
- Increased sense of responsibility for personal life
- Freedom from urban living
- Increase understanding of importance of recreation and tourism
- Decreased hypertension

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness of recreation impacts
  - Stewardship ethic developed
  - More trail maintenance groups
- Community
  - Group of meeting areas
  - Ease of access (group rides)
  - Bonding with friends and family
  - Unites different people
- Economic
  - Local amenities
  - Local businesses benefiting from equipment sales
  - More tourism making a better economy

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Mountain views
  - Remote lakes
  - Diverse views
  - Wildlife
- Social
  - Solitude
  - Old mines
  - Access

- Administrative
    - Accessibility
    - Less management is better
6. Management concerns
- More management (occasional presence)
  - Fear of special interests seizing control – need more management attention
  - Private land issues – need more management
  - Land use – livestock area issues – need more communication
  - Better maintenance of “high use” areas (e.g., democrat area)
    - Need for more facilities at these sites, existing is inadequate
  - Communication between management and public
    - (e.g., closures, restrictions, etc.)
    - Need more signage and information
  - Land users need to keep all the issues in mind and become stewards, not just advocacy groups

Focus Group 10  
Tourism Group – Hailey, Idaho  
May 18, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - ATV riding
  - Motorcycling
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Cycling
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking
  - Running
  - Winter sports
  - Target shooting
  - Partying
- Zone B:
  - Camping
  - Hunting
  - Farming/ranching
  - Partying
  - Four wheeling
  - Snowmobiling
  - Horse riding

2. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased stewardship of resource/changing trend of more accountability and responsibility of caretaking
  - Community awareness of landscape/education wheels in motion
  - Increased demand means better management and pushes management to respond with better stewardship programs
  - Environmental awareness is raising the bar for rangers to manage the landscape better
  - Trending towards recreation outpacing ranching interests on public lands
  - Increased desire to preserve open spaces
- Community
  - Better attitudes
  - Plenty to do leading to overall happiness
  - Community vitality (physically and mentally) – makes community more diverse
  - Close bond with land
  - Community bonding on public lands
  - Promotes healthy community identity (to outsiders)
  - Physical fitness
  - Education opportunity

- Economic
    - Recreation drives economy – brings people here and keeps them here
    - Local businesses
    - Potential work through grants and public spending
    - Stability of economy – recreation serves to balance summer and winter swings of economy
    - Increased quality of service (healthy food, outfitters)/vitality of niche markets (e.g., healthy food)
    - Diverse and creative people allow for niche markets to succeed – employment opportunities come from this
3. Important resource settings
- Physical
    - Open space
    - Diverse trails and terrain
    - Accessibility of public lands to population
    - Limited crowding on trails
    - Variety of flora and fauna
    - Diverse landscapes
    - Public lands and waterways
  - Social
    - Limited crowding
    - Access through public lands
    - Cooperation between user groups – especially between long term residents
    - Willingness for user groups to work together to maintain trails
    - Diverse community lifestyles (e.g., conservative(motorized) vs. liberal(non-motorized))
  - Administrative
    - Lack of large parking areas
    - Good potential for BLM management
4. Meaning/importance of the Wood River Valley:
- Lifestyle/heritage (i.e., “this resource is everything to me”)
  - Ability to share the lifestyle with others
  - Economics – without the land, there is no reason to live and work in the valley
  - Desire to share enthusiasm
  - Help foster sense of stewardship/pass to next generation
  - Preserve the resource for the future
  - “it’s different here” – land sets the place apart
  - Sharing of social bonds
  - Common thread is recreation
  - Land/resource is a pull factor – connects mentalities from just working to really appreciating and valuing the resource

5. Management concerns

- Long-term vs. short term residents (i.e., ability to get along vs. power struggle/conflict)
- Bringing different ideas from other parts of U.S. – learning lessons from other regulations/restricted access ideologies
- Need education for new comers for how things are/can be done here – again, learning from other parts of the country
- Outsiders/newcomers using resource and neglecting local tourism business
  - Lack of stewardship/community ethos
- Concerns over how to educate visitors to care for and not abuse the land
- Need to “streamline” the information process in order to send certain users to appropriate “zones”
- Need to learn from past mistakes (e.g., allowing development along river; could have made a greenway instead)
- Responsible development to maintain access to public lands
- Frustration with federal government over slow response to trail development
  - Trails create main crux of livelihood
- Need more trails to match demand in order to maintain experience
  - Considerations for zoning
- New residents “external” to Wood River Valley mentality (e.g., trying to change precedent)
- Need to educate (now) here in the Wood River Valley – target those responsible
- Enforcement of regulations
- Do better in responsiveness than the Forest Service (learn from what has/is happening)
- Get Wood River Valley to take ownership of management of resource before the focus goes outside the Wood River Valley
- Increased sales/proportion of motorized recreation equipment leads to changing trends in recreation use/management/impact
- Greenhorn as an example of private landowners not understanding public land management (e.g., residents complaining and demanding their preferences for use)
- Accessibility to river; green space
- Need a committee that works with BLM and USFS to maintain access and open roads
- Do not want to lose access to public lands (urgent need)
  - Creates conflict as land is lost and crowding increases

Focus Group 11  
Equestrians – Hailey, Idaho  
May 17, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Horseback riding
  - Hiking
  - Fishing
  - Walking
  - Hunting and scouting
  - Mountain biking
  - Motorcycling
  - Sightseeing/pleasure driving
  - Target shooting
  - Dog walking
  - Gathering cows/sheep
  - Canyon parties
  - Wildlife observance
- Zone B:
  - Hiking
  - Horseback riding
  - Hunting
  - Horse training
  - Mountain biking
  - Motorcycling
  - Four wheeling
  - Gathering cows/sheep
  - Camping
  - Canyon parties
  - Wildlife observation

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 14 being close to nature
- 4 being on my own
- - enjoying meeting new people
- - learning about the area's history
- 5 developing my skills and abilities
- 1 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 6 escaping every day responsibilities
- 10 enjoying the scenery

- 4   being with friends or family
- -   to learn more about the things here
- 1   gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 1   developing personal spiritual values
- 6   reducing built up mental stress
- 6   enjoying the solitude
- 11   enjoying physical exercise
- 1   teaching others about outdoors
- 2   feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

- Meat from hunting
- Personal time alone
- Increased health through physical exercise
- Being with my horse

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Advocacy groups increasing awareness of environmental issues
  - Increased stewardship concerns/keeping lands preserved for uses
  - Trickle effect with the management of recreation and open space to the outcome of clean air
  - Mobility of equestrian users allows for maintenance of resource (i.e., equestrian users are better able to pack out litter)
- Community
  - Local advocacy/stewardship groups
  - Shared interests leading to community cohesiveness
  - Recreation for those with limited mobility
  - Time with friends
  - Lack of social interaction
  - Increased community health
  - Horses for search and rescue
  - Horse equation – teaching others about horses
- Economic
  - Increased value through training and selling horses
  - Local “horse” related businesses (e.g., feed shops, horse doctors)
  - Supports local farming
  - Overall community health
  - Overall horse industry (locally and nationwide)
  - Supports local economy (e.g., jobs, industries, tourism)

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Fresh air
  - Wildlife habitat
  - Diverse wildlife
  - Wildflowers
  - Vast openness
  - Four seasons
  - Riparian zones
  - Lack of man made sounds
  - Diverse habitat zones (e.g., forest to desert)
  - Extensive trail system
- Social
  - Mines/mining roads spur historical interest
  - Opportunity for newer riders to get started
  - Cooperation between trail users
- Administrative
  - No management (“[you can] do what you want”)
  - Current facilities (e.g., parking, toilets) in northern parts of valley
  - Multiple use trails – no exclusions
    - Allows for maintenance (mainly relevant for USFS lands)
  - Lack of signs and fences
  - Pleasant interactions with managers

6. Management concerns

- Newer roads detract from experience
- Fence building (private land owners)
  - Limiting access to previously used areas
  - Relatively newer trend
- Land easements – “what can be done [to get more]”
- Parking not available where trails are accessed by foot
  - Overall inadequately of current parking for horse trailers with turnarounds
- Development and availability of trails – concerns over loss of trails
- Concern over carrying capacity
  - High levels of crowding may potentially lead to conflict between different users
- Safety concerns over motorized users and mountain bikers
- User conflict
  - Motorcycles more courteous than mountain bikers
- Garbage dumping (Townsend as an example)
  - Litter in general (“[it’s] all over”)
  - Cigarette butts
- Limited awareness of management (e.g., noxious weed concerns)
- Mountain bikers are harder on trails
  - Causing more erosion
  - “wheels” harden trails

- Sheep herding
  - Eating “all” the vegetation (e.g., Townsend)
  - Antiquated herding practices in conflict with changing ecological conditions
  - Politics at play (e.g., state and national politics support sheep grazing)
  - Need more postings and education/information about practices (e.g., times, areas affected, etc.)

Focus Group 12  
Ranchers – Hailey, Idaho  
May 17, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking
  - Motorcycling
  - ATV riding
  - Trail (horse) riding
  - Road biking
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Dog walking
- Zone B:
  - Trail (horse) riding
  - Hiking
  - Gathering cattle/sheep
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Mountain biking
  - Dog walking
  - Motorcycling
  - ATV riding
  - Dog training
  - Varmint shooting
  - Bird watching
  - camping

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 10   being close to nature
- 6   being on my own
- -   enjoying meeting new people
- -   learning about the area's history
- 5   developing my skills and abilities
- -   enjoying risk taking adventure
- 3   escaping every day responsibilities
- 6   enjoying the scenery
- 6   being with friends or family
- -   to learn more about the things here

- -   gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 1   developing personal spiritual values
- 4   reducing built up mental stress
- 7   enjoying the solitude
- 8   enjoying physical exercise
- -   teaching others about outdoors
- 3   feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

*\* For land owners, personal benefits were assessed by asking 'If you own property, what kind of benefits does your land provide or what kind of benefits would you like to provide others'.*

- “open space”
- Access to public lands
- Recreation opportunities provided through private lands:
  - Horseback riding
  - Hunting
  - Fishing

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Wildlife habitat (animals and fish)
  - “Open space”
- Community
  - Land used for “social” recreation (e.g., parties)
  - Wildlife habitat
  - Prefer to not provide access through lands and have the land treated as private land with ranching activities respected
- Economic
  - Local businesses benefit from recreation use on private and public lands
  - Increased land value

5. Management concerns

- Litter
- Open gates
- Unsuccessful attempts for land swaps - leading to polarization between Blaine County and ranchers (very slow progress)
- Concern over removal of livestock on public land
  - Potential to alter the private/public land interface
- Grazing is critical to the overall management and ecosystem of the Wood River Valley (e.g., healthy vegetation, watershed preservation, ecosystem management)

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- There is a lack of public understanding of ranching (perception of most Wood River Valley recreationists is opposite that of the ranchers)
- The lack of understanding is related to the importance of private landownership
- Concerns over livestock safety related to recreation related wildfires
- Concern over perception of unregulated and completely open access to motorized recreation (relative to the recent and future travel plans)
  - Outside visitors as well as Wood River Valley residents have this perception (especially ATV riders)
- Big concerns over regional trends in motorized recreation (e.g., other areas, AZ, CA)
  - A shift in mentality/mode of recreation and respect for private land
- Loose boundary between private and public land
- Real estate/capitalism/productivity
  - All three are related
  - Feeling that real estate rights threatened
  - Harmful to society
- Recreation does not produce economically, ranching does produce economically
- BLM multi-use practice is shifting to recreation from ranching
  - Bigger concern than livestock grazing (“unprecedented shift”)
- Efforts for winter habitat enhancements leading to more access for snow machines
- Snow machine recreationists are cutting fences
- Camping taking place near corrals
- Losing an overall outdoor ethic to recreationists
  - Hard to reach outside residents with education
  - Sometimes hard to reach local school systems
- In general, trespassing and lack of respect for private land

Focus Group 13  
Youth – Hailey, Idaho  
May 18, 2006

1. Activity

- Zone A:
  - Backcountry skiing
  - Cross-country skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Hiking
  - Biking
  - Swimming
  - Running
  - Fishing
  - Roller skating/blading
  - Sports (team)
  - Horse riding
  - Camping
  - Snow machine
  - Motorcycling
  - Road biking
  - Dog walking
  - Boating
  - Paint ball
  - Ice skating
  - Backpacking
  - Hunting
  - Picnicking
  - Off road/ATV driving

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 2   being close to nature
- 4   being on my own
- 2   enjoying meeting new people
- -   learning about the area's history
- 3   developing my skills and abilities
- 3   enjoying risk taking adventure
- 3   escaping every day responsibilities
- 6   enjoying the scenery
- 3   being with friends or family
- -   to learn more about the things here

- 2   gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 1   developing personal spiritual values
- 3   reducing built up mental stress
- 1   enjoying the solitude
- 7   enjoying physical exercise
- -   teaching others about outdoors
- -   feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

- Increased confidence
- Independence/freedom
- Increased health through exercise
- Increased physical strength
- Increased mental health
- New friends
- Achieving goals
- Being alone
- Enjoying scenery
- Confirmation and development of personal values

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - More money for BLM maintenance
  - Learning about the environment
  - Appreciation/increased awareness of what we have for free
  - Wildlife awareness/respect of wildlife
  - Appreciate weather
  - Appreciation of current “open space”
- Community
  - Meeting new friends
  - Stronger ties with friends and family
  - Commonalities between different backgrounds
  - More supportive of others
  - Bonding with friends/community
  - Understanding/acceptance of others
- Economic
  - Increased jobs
  - Tourism increases during large events
  - Decreased cost to recreate due to easy access
  - Increased money to restore public lands

5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Wildlife still being wild
  - Views
  - Weather – allows for variety of activities
  - Remains beautiful despite increased population
  - Grandeur puts community in proper perspective
  - Easy access
- Social
  - Culture/history of being the first ski resort
  - Historical sites
  - Multiple-use
  - Mining history
  - Entire community participates in outdoor recreation
  - Artifacts found in outdoors/exploration
  - Diverse population
- Administrative
  - Well kept/staffed facilities
  - Cooperative and nice
  - Trails well marked and not overly marked
  - Leave-no-trace etiquette
  - Well kept backpacking areas
  - Community maintenance through stewardship/caretaking/volunteer groups
  - BLM instills ethic in residents
  - Multiple-use

6. Management concerns

- Concerns over how the Quigley will be developed (e.g., will there be access to trails?, is there going to be a golf course?)
- Should there be restrictions on development?
- Concerns over sprawl
- Light pollution
- Recycling in Ohio Gulch/carrying capacity
- Carrying capacity of Wood River Valley
- Increased demand for recreation use and less space
- Better communication over development/public notices need to be better
- Greater concern over wildlife
- Air pollution from people driving instead of walking/biking to trailheads
- Dog waste on trails
- Wealthy, seasonal residents developing and taking access away from year round residents
- Wealthy residents also responsible for driving away the less wealthy residents
- Lack of consideration for youth opinions through management
- More local trail access and information to cut down valley driving
- More trails in general in southern portion of the Wood River Valley

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- Activities for teens to educate and get involved (e.g., environmental education, BLM management practices, teachers to take kids outside for education)
- Targeting young people with education about the value of Wood River Valley lands
- Preserve environment in a way to also preserve cultural history of Idaho (there are few monuments , but there is an abundance of natural history)
- Increased appreciation and knowledge of outdoors to decrease drugs, alcohol, etc.
- Public endorsement of “outdoor lifestyle” by Sun Valley prominent residents (e.g., Tom Hanks)

Focus Group 14  
Mountain Bikers – Hailey, Idaho  
May 18, 2006

1. Activities

- Zone A:
  - Mountain biking
  - Hiking
  - Trail running
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Hang gliding
  - Road biking
  - Motorcycling
  - Paddling
  - ATV/four wheeling
  - Horse riding
  - Dog walking
  - Mushrooming
  - Camping
- Zone B:
  - Mountain biking
  - Hunting
  - Fishing
  - Hang gliding
  - Hiking
  - Trail running
  - Motorcycling
  - Horse riding
  - ATV/Four wheeling
  - Camping
  - Shooting
  - Partying
  - Road biking
  - Dog walked
  - Mushrooming
  - Unicycling

2. Recreation experiences count:

- 13 being close to nature
- 5 being on my own
- 1 enjoying meeting new people
- 1 learning about the area's history

- 5 developing my skills and abilities
- 3 enjoying risk taking adventure
- 5 escaping every day responsibilities
- 11 enjoying the scenery
- 13 being with friends or family
- - to learn more about the things here
- - gaining a sense of self-confidence
- 7 developing personal spiritual values
- 6 reducing built up mental stress
- 3 enjoying the solitude
- 14 enjoying physical exercise
- 1 teaching others about outdoors
- 3 feeling good about being isolated
- Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal benefits:

- Sense of appreciation for Wood River Valley Lands
- Sharing experiences with friends
- To discover new places
- Decreased stress
- Physical challenge to stay healthy and fit
- Spiritual maintenance
- Sense of perspectives to rhythms of planet
- Hunting leads to healthy food

4. Environmental, community, and economic benefits

- Environmental
  - Increased awareness/respect for wildlife
  - Better awareness and respect leading to better opportunity for stewardship
  - Increased stewardship
  - Increased better land management
  - Increased desire to educate others (e.g., ethics, ownership)
  - Realize the need for minimal impact
  - Decreased dependence on motor vehicles
  - Recreation activity causing the night sky ordinance leads to an appreciation of community ordinances
  - Better understanding of ordinances can lead to other ways to protect the environment through other ordinances
- Community

- Shared experiences
- Opportunity for activity
- Healthy/active community
- Increased awareness/respect for others in community and the environment
- Unique ethos among perspective group
- Increased happiness
- Decreased hostility
- Multi-use management gives way to diverse community
- Good overall harmony between user groups through sharing trails
- Economic
  - Support local business/provides business opportunities
  - Employment
  - Increased tourism
  - Increased fund raising opportunities
  - Increased value (economic) leading to greater desire to live in the Wood River Valley
  - Decreased health costs (healthier people)

#### 5. Important resource settings

- Physical
  - Single track
  - Wildflower observation
  - Smells
  - Wildlife encounters
  - Early season trail access
  - Views
  - Isolation
  - Environmental diversity (e.g., water quality, flora, fauna, geography, geology)
  - Lovely light (sky)
  - No hillside development/open space
  - Lack of noxious weeds
- Social
  - Like-mindedness/common meeting place (i.e., the resource is the “coffee shop” where people gather)
  - Cooperation between user groups
  - Recreation trails/access from past uses – inspires to protect
  - Healthy/active community mindset
- Administrative
  - Hillside ordinance
  - Trail maintenance – well preserved
  - Lack of user fees
  - Opportunity to work with land management
  - New trail development
  - Likeminded managers – proactive managers appreciated, especially by fellow users
  - Lack of oppressive management presence

- Lack of signage

6. Management concerns

- Trail closures
- Sheep grazing
  - Practices harm wildlife, leaving less wildlife available for enjoyment
  - Trails are closed due to wet conditions, but sheep still go – there are no regulations
- Motorized Use
  - Running singletrack leads to destruction of trails
  - Irresponsible, uneducated use
- Need for singletrack trails developed
- Need non-motorized trails developed
- Irresponsible development of private land leading to restrictive access to public lands
- Management too slow to respond to implementation
- Connectability between trails and agencies
- Accessibility to trails from town (need to limit driving)
- Noxious weeds (related to sheep)
- Destruction of land due to increased use
- Need reclamation of past land abuse (e.g., mining, trash dumping)
- Not enough trails to meet the high demand from residents, leading to misuse of present trails
- Lack of education leading to destruction of land
- Limited recreation funding of lands by federal government
- Lack of responsibility with pets – trash on trails from dog owners not remembering to pick up their bags
- Private lands
  - County not enforcing existing regulations
  - Lack of signage to public access
- Subdivisions encroaching public lands which limit access
- New county subdivisions need to have more than one or two roads that are county owned and signed to ensure public has access beyond development

Appendix D: Wood River Valley planning zones (winter and summer)

Figure 1. Wood River Valley Planning Zones (Winter)

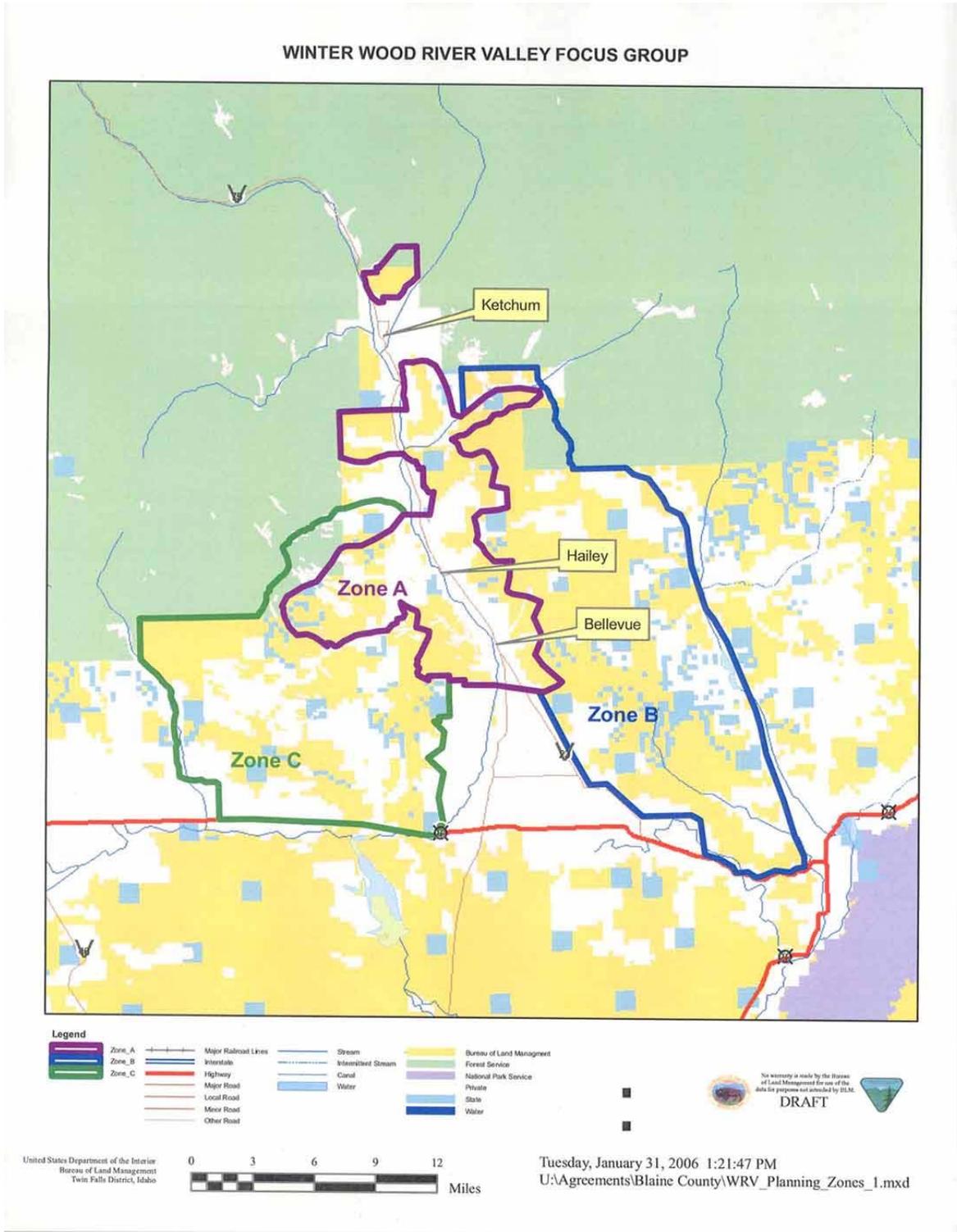


Figure 2. Wood River Valley Focus Group Zones (Summer)

