Draft Decision Notice
and
Finding of No Significant Impact

Sun Valley Resort
Cold Springs Chairlift Replacement
and Associated Projects
Environmental Assessment

January 2018
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USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region
Sawtooth National Forest, Ketchum Ranger District
Blaine County, Idaho

January 2018

Introduction/Background

This Decision Notice documents my decision and rationale for approving the proposed projects on the Sawtooth National Forest (SNF). My decision does not apply to projects located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. The project area is located within Sun Valley Resort, Blaine County, Idaho on lands managed by the SNF and BLM Shoshone Field Office (SFO) (collectively, the agencies). My decision is based on and supported by the January 2018 Sun Valley Resort Cold Springs Chairlift Replacement and Associated Projects Environmental Assessment (EA).

Sun Valley Company (SVC) operates under a special use permit (SUP) administered by the SNF’s Ketchum Ranger District. The SNF Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), revised in 2003 and amended in 2012, provides general standards and guidelines for the operation of SVC regarding its activities and operations on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The SUP and associated Winter Operating Plan, as well as other resource management documents, provide more specific guidance for annual winter ski area operations and projects. Approval of the proposed projects would officially amend the existing Sun Valley Resort (Bald Mountain): 2005 Master Plan – Phase 1 Projects.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the projects is to improve the guest experience at SVC by improving access to skiable terrain. These recreation enhancement projects would meet the need to improve skier circulation in the Cold Springs chairlift area and the overall guest experience for those seeking diverse terrain offerings. The overall goal of these projects is to enhance the guest’s recreation experience on public lands by improving the resort’s infrastructure.
The Cold Springs chairlift is one of the more accessible and widely used lifts at the resort, especially for egress from the Seattle Ridge area. Constructed in 1970, the existing fixed-grip double chairlift is the oldest lift at Sun Valley and the last double chairlift on Bald Mountain. The location of the existing lift bottom terminal also limits guest distribution across existing terrain within the SUP area. Under existing conditions, the Cold Springs chairlift is located on both NFS and BLM lands.

**Decision and Reasons for the Decision**

After thoroughly considering the Purpose and Need for Action, issues, range of alternatives and analyses presented in the EA, as well as public comments that were received, **I am approving Alternative 2 – the Proposed Action** with the inclusion of all Project Design Criteria (PDC) identified in Table 2.1 of the EA and included in Appendix A of this document. The Selected Alternative includes replacement of the Cold Springs chairlift and the removal of approximately 70 acres of overstory vegetation on the north facing terrain to create gladed skiing, some of which will be located on BLM lands. Other elements of Alternative 2 included in the EA are located on BLM lands and are addressed in the BLM Decision Record. The attached figure identifies components of the Selected Alternative.

The Selected Alternative, along with my decision to require PDC, meets all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. With the application of PDC, the project will not result in any unacceptable effects to NFS lands. Failure to comply with the required PDC will constitute a breach of the project approval and could temporarily suspend construction and/or operations on the facilities approved by this decision.

SVC is required to prepare and submit for Forest Service approval several documents prior to beginning any approved construction activities. For example:

- Project construction and grading plans
- Pre-construction erosion control/drainage management plans
- Post-construction revegetation and rehabilitation plans

**Alternative 2 Description**

The Selected Alternative includes the following projects that occur entirely or partially on NFS lands.

**Replacement and Realignment of Cold Springs Chairlift**

The existing Cold Springs chairlift, a fixed-grip double chairlift, with an existing capacity of 1,200 people per hour (pph), will be upgraded to a detachable quad chairlift with a capacity of approximately 2,400 pph. The alignment will be moved east of the existing chairlift location, allowing SVC to provide lift service to new terrain within their existing SUP boundary. Only the top terminal and approximately 550 feet of the chairlift corridor will be located on NFS lands (see attached figure).

The approved Cold Springs chairlift will attract guests of all ability levels due to the variety of trails that feed into the area and proximity to the central mid-mountain hub, including the Roundhouse Gondola and Restaurant. This replacement will enhance the overall guest experience for those seeking diverse terrain offerings. The replacement will also reduce SVC’s maintenance costs and improve general mountain circulation.
Additional North Facing Ski Terrain

With the replacement and realignment of the Cold Springs chairlift, approximately 380 acres of north facing terrain currently within the SUP area but not lift-served or skied regularly would become lift-accessible. Of these 380 acres, 175 acres are located on NFS lands. To improve the diversity of terrain available at Sun Valley with gladed skiing, SVC will implement a vegetation management prescription included in the 2005 Vegetation Management Plan and refined in 2017 to address existing conditions. The north facing stands that will be treated are Douglas fir/subalpine fir, and the Proposed Action will implement a modified version of “Treatment Prescription 1: Thinning,” which will result in average spacing for mature trees of approximately 20 x 20 feet. Additionally, “Treatment Prescription 2: Patch Cut and Plant” will be implemented to treat heavily infected dwarf mistletoe patches. Depending upon the degree of infection, the patch cuts (essentially mini-clearcuts) would vary in size from about 0.5 to 1 acre in size. From a silviculture perspective, these openings will serve as a sanitation cutting to remove diseased trees. For skiing, they will resemble open glades surrounded by trees. In addition to these two prescriptions, a “connect the dots” treatment would be required to transition between the patch cuts and thinning areas to enhance the skiing opportunity.

Rationale for My Decision

In reaching my decision I relied heavily upon an Interdisciplinary (ID) Team comprised of Forest Service and BLM resource specialists who analyzed the effects of the three alternatives documented in the EA. I considered the following issues and concerns: anticipated effects to recreation, scenery, wildlife, vegetation, and watershed and aquatic resources. I also understand that certain resources were not carried forward in detailed analysis for the EA; however, those resources were considered by the ID Team and determined to be eliminated from detailed analysis with rationale. I also reviewed the PDC included in the EA, reviewed public comments received during the Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) scoping/comment period process, and considered how the Selected Alternative would respond to the stated Purpose and Need.

In reviewing the qualitative and quantitative effects on the human and biological environment presented in the EA, I find they have been adequately addressed and disclosed. I considered impacts to the full range of resources affecting the human, biological, and physical environments. I have reviewed the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. Through the application of appropriate PDC identified to minimize impacts to the resources of concern, I feel confident that potential impacts have been thoroughly assessed and disclosed.

I recognize that guests of Bald Mountain appreciate the history of the ski area and the Cold Springs chairlift; I share this appreciation. However, the chairlift is old and needs to be replaced. It is a matter of operational efficiencies and maintenance costs. The Forest Service in general is facing similar situations across the country, and I do not see this as being any different.

I also understand that there are those in the community that currently ski the north facing terrain in its currently uncontrolled, unmaintained state and enjoy solitude that it provides. My decision will allow SVC to include this terrain within its operational boundary to allow the skiing public to enjoy these public lands in a controlled setting. My decision does not change the SUP boundary or operational boundary to include Turkey Bowl. In partnership with SVC, the Forest Service wants SVC to provide the best recreation experience possible within the SUP area. The SUP area and the management area that it is
within are meant to provide developed recreation by the Forest Plan, and I firmly believe my approval of this project will further promote that desired condition.

Overall, I believe my decision will improve the experience of guests to the SNF within the SVC SUP area in conjunction with the stated environmental impacts.

Other Alternatives Considered

Three alternatives were considered in detail in the preparation of the EA. These alternatives included: taking no action, replacing and realigning the Cold Springs chairlift, and replacing the Cold Springs chairlift in its current alignment. Other alternatives were proposed early in the EA process. These concepts included an alternative alignment a “few hundred yards north” of the Proposed Action bottom terminal location, replacing the lift in its existing alignment, but moving the top terminal closer to the Roundhouse Restaurant, realigning the proposed chairlift to follow the “Gun Tower” ridgeline and relocating the bottom terminal near the “Triangle,” and relocating the lift one drainage further north. Each concept was thoroughly considered by the agencies and, for various operational, recreational, and environmental factors, none were carried forward into detailed analysis.

Public Involvement

In May 2017 a NOPA was mailed or emailed to 57 community residents, interested individuals, government officials, public agencies, and other organizations, initiating a 30-day comment period. The thirteen comment letters received during scoping were utilized by the ID Team to identify substantive issues and to consider potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. These substantive comments were included in the EA as Appendix A. After reviewing public comments, as well as internal concerns raised by Forest Service specialists, a final list of issues was assembled, which helped guide subsequent analysis. Issues are identified in Chapter 1 of the EA.

Finding of No Significant Impact

After reviewing the EA, I have determined that the Selected Alternative will not, individually or cumulatively, significantly affect the quality of the human, biological, or physical environment. The provisions of 40 CFR § 1508.27 indicate that project significance must be judged in terms of both context and intensity. Based on a review of these provisions, I have determined that an environmental impact statement is not required. I base my findings on the following definitions of context and intensity:

Context

The significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts and varies with the setting. In the case of site-specific actions, significance depends more on the effects in the locale rather than the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant.

The direct and indirect effects analysis contained in the EA focuses on the SVC project area, and extends further for cumulative effects analysis, depending on the resource. An initial screen was conducted to ensure that the Selected Alternative is consistent with the Forest Plan. The EA does not indicate that anything in the Selected Alternative would lead to a precedent at the local, regional, or national level.
Intensity

Intensity is a measure of the severity, extent, or quantity of effects, and is based on information from the effects analysis of this EA and the references in the project file. I have determined that the ID Team considered the effects of this project appropriately and thoroughly with an analysis that is responsive to concerns and issues raised by the public. They considered the environmental effects using relevant scientific information and their knowledge of site-specific conditions gained from field visits. My finding of no significant impact is based on the intensity of effects using the ten factors identified in 40 CFR § 1508.27(b).

1. Consideration of both beneficial and adverse impacts.

I have considered both the beneficial and adverse impacts associated with the Selected Alternative as presented in the EA and this Decision Notice. The Selected Alternative will provide recreational benefits to users of the SNF and will improve recreation opportunities on NFS lands. Any adverse impacts to recreation, scenery, wildlife, vegetation, or watershed and aquatic resources are thoroughly documented in Chapter 3 of the EA and are determined to be avoidable or non-significant. Other issues and resources were not included in detailed analysis in the EA due to a lack of anticipated impacts, or because the resource was thoroughly analyzed through previous analyses and the conditions had not changed. My finding of no significant environmental effects is not biased by beneficial effects of the action.

2. Consideration of the effects on public health and safety.

Although there are inherent risks associated with lift-served alpine skiing, the Selected Alternative does not significantly affect public health or safety.

3. Consideration of the unique characteristics of the geographic area.

There are no unique characteristics of the geographic area affected by this decision.

4. Consideration of the degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be considered controversial.

The term “controversial” in this context refers to cases where substantial scientific dispute exists as to the size, nature, or effects of a major federal action on some human environmental factor rather than to public opposition of a proposed action or alternative.

No scientific dispute exists regarding the Selected Alternative or the analysis contained in the EA. Based on the fact that the Forest Service has analyzed and approved numerous projects of this type, the effects of this project are not considered to be controversial, nor is there scientific dispute about these effects.

5. Consideration of the degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

This project is common at ski areas that operate on NFS lands. The analysis shows the effects are not uncertain, and do not involve unique or unknown risks. Therefore, based on the Forest Service’s experience with implementing these types of activities, as well as the requirement to implement PDC to minimize effects, I have determined that there will not be significant effects on the human environment.
6. **Consideration of the degree to which this action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or that it represents a decision in principle about future considerations.**

I determined that this decision does not establish precedence for future actions with significant risks to the environment. The Selected Alternative is consistent with Forest-wide and Management Prescription Category 4.3 direction, as well as the SVC SUP. Furthermore, the approved projects and activities are common at a developed, four-season resort such as Sun Valley.

7. **Consideration of the action in relation to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.**

The Cumulative Effects analyses presented for each resource throughout Chapter 3 in the EA discloses past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions with potential to lead to effects which are cumulative in nature. Due to avoidance, project-specific PDC, and the implementation of BMPs, this analysis does not identify any cumulatively significant impacts that are anticipated to result from implementation of the Selected Alternative.

8. **Consideration of the degree to which the action may affect listed or eligible historic places.**

Cultural resources were initially to be included for detailed analysis due to the possibility that ground disturbance related to construction of the proposed infrastructure could impact archeological sites. However, as indicated on Chapter 1 of the EA, no eligible sites or findings are recorded within the project area; therefore, no effects to eligible heritage and cultural resources are anticipated to occur as a result of implementation of the Selected Alternative. Additionally, as stated in the PDC (Appendix A), if undocumented historic and/or prehistoric properties are discovered during ground disturbing or planning activities associated with construction, they will be treated as specified in 36 CFR § 800.11 concerning Properties Discovered During Implementation of an Undertaking.

9. **Consideration of the degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical habitat.**

There will be “no effect” to North American wolverine or whitebark pine. The Selected Alternative “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect” Canada lynx.

The Selected Alternative will result in vegetation clearing in potential Canada lynx habitat. It is expected that the habitat loss will not preclude lynx movement and foraging capability across the ski area, nor across the Lynx Analysis Unit, considering that the lynx habitat within the project area is structurally influenced by management activity at SVC. The heavily modified landscape coupled with consistently high levels of human presence make occupancy by Canada lynx unlikely. The Selected Alternative is consistent with Section 7(d) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Record of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ESA Informal Section 7 Consultation is contained in the project file.

There is no designated critical habitat within the project area.

10. **Consideration of whether the action violated federal, state, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.**

I have reviewed the EA, the Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation, and the project file and have determined that no federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or requirements for protection of the environment will be violated with implementation of the Selected Alternative, including: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ESA Informal Section 7 Consultation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clean Water Act
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Section 404 Permit; Idaho Department of Environmental Quality National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit; Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands; and Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

This decision is consistent with the Forest Plan as required by the National Forest Management Act and all other laws, regulations, and policies that govern Forest Service actions. Site-specific PDC (Appendix A) and Forest Plan standards and guidelines will be applied, as appropriate, to meet Forest Plan goals and desired conditions. While the Forest Service assumes no responsibility for enforcing laws, regulations, or ordinances under the jurisdiction of other governmental agencies, Forest Service regulations require permittees to abide by applicable laws and conditions imposed by other jurisdictions. The project was designed to conform to the Forest Plan and all other laws, regulations, and policies, including: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; ESA Informal Section 7 Consultation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit; Idaho Department of Environmental Quality National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit; Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands; and Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

Opportunity to Object the Proposed Project

This proposed project is subject to the objection process pursuant to 36 CFR Part 218, subparts A and B. Objections will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project during a comment period in accordance with § 218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted, timely, and specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.

Incorporation of documents by reference is not allowed, except for the following items that may be referenced by including date, page, and section of the cited document, along with a description of its content and applicability to the objection: 1) All or any part of a federal law or regulation; 2) Forest Service directives and land management plans; 3) Documents referenced by the Forest Service in the proposed project environmental analysis document that is subject to objection. All other documents must be included with the objection.

At a minimum, an objection must include the following: objector’s name and physical mailing address; signature or other verification of authorship upon request; identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed; name of the proposed project; name and title of Responsible Official; and name of national forest unit(s) on which the project will be implemented (§ 218.8(d)).

Objections, including attachments, must be filed via mail, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., excluding federal holidays) to: Reviewing Officer, Nora Rasure, USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, 324 25th Street, Ogden, Utah 84401, to the attention of Objections or Email: appeals-intermtn-regional-office@fs.fed.us. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or MS Word (.doc). In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.
Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the publication of a legal notice in the *Magic Valley Times News*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. The regulations prohibit extending the time to file an objection.

It is the objector’s responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to § 218.9, which includes: date of U.S. Postal Service postmark or shipping date for delivery by private carrier for an objection received before the close of the fifth business day after the objection filing period; agency’s electronically generated date and time for email and facsimiles; or official agency date stamp showing receipt of hand delivery. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

**Implementation Date**

If no objections are filed within the 45-day time period, approval of the decision may occur on, but not before, five (5) business days from the close of the objection filing period.

**Contact**

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service objection process, contact:

Zachary Poff, Recreation/Winter Sports Manager
Ketchum Ranger District
zpoff@fs.fed.us
(208) 622-0087

To remain unsigned until final

KIT MULLEN
Forest Supervisor
Sawtooth National Forest
Selected Alternative

Existing:
- Chairlifts
- Summer Trails
- Roads
- USFS & BLM Boundary
- SUP Boundary
- Facilities
- Snowmaking

Proposed:
- Chairlift
- Chairlift Removal
- Biking Trail Realignment
- Lower Broadway Extension
- Expanded Operational Boundary
- South Facing Terrain
- North Facing Terrain

Lower Broadway Extension (vegetation removal, grading, and snowmaking)
## Appendix A. Project Design Criteria and Best Management Practices

### Recreation
Where appropriate, fencing, padding, flagging, signage, and other safety mechanisms will be used to alert skiers to the location of potentially hazardous infrastructure.

SVC and the Forest Service will develop a boundary management and signage strategy to educate guests entering the backcountry on private property trespass concerns.

### Scenery
All projects shall be designed to meet the Forest Service Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) and remain in compliance with the Class III objective per the BLM’s Visual Resource Management (VRM) System.

To the extent possible, the appearance of human-made openings will simulate existing natural openings on public lands, when appropriate, considering other resource impacts (e.g., removal of wildlife habitat). For example, when practical, edges along lift corridors and trails shall be non-linear, and changes in tree heights along the edges of openings must be gradual rather than abrupt.

Hard edges shall be softened by selective removal of trees of different ages and heights to produce irregular corridor edges.

The design materials, color, and location will blend with the characteristic landscape. The use of natural or neutral colors and non-reflective surfaces will be considered for structures.

All exterior lights at new or remodeled facilities will be downcast and shielded to minimize fugitive light.

Structures will be constructed of materials which blend with the landscape character as is practicable. Lift components shall meet FSM 2380 policy for color and reflectivity, which is 4.5 on the Munsell neutral value color scale. Additionally, lift components shall meet visual values identified through the Visual Resource Management (VRM) inventory (Manual Section 8410). Colors and building design plans will be submitted to the Forest Service and BLM for approval prior to the beginning of construction.

All structures, facilities, and features will meet reflectivity guidelines. This includes any reflective surfaces (metal, glass, plastics, or other materials with smooth surfaces), that do not blend with the natural environment. They should be covered, painted, stained, chemically treated, etched, sandblasted, corrugated, or otherwise treated to meet the solar reflectivity standards. The specific requirements for reflectivity are as follows: Structures with exteriors consisting of galvanized metal or other reflective surfaces will be treated or painted dark non-reflective colors that blend with the forest background to meet an average neutral value of 4.5 or less as measured on the Munsell neutral scale.

Utilities must be buried and the ground surface must be revegetated when not in a road.

All facilities including trails and signs must meet Forest Service Accessibility Guidelines. Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines: https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/

### Wildlife
Project elements that require vegetation removal will occur after July 31 of the calendar year to avoid disturbance to nesting birds (raptors, migratory birds, and sensitive bird species), elk caving, and mule deer fawning.

Vegetation removal may occur prior to July 31 if wildlife surveys are conducted by a qualified person approved by the SNF prior to the vegetation removal. If active nests are found, vegetation removal can occur after fledging of young. To allow for successful nesting and young rearing for raptors, no project ground disturbing activities shall be allowed within a quarter mile of active raptor nests until after July 31, or as otherwise approved by the Forest Service Responsible Official. To protect breeding adults and young migratory birds in avian cavity nests, a no-activity buffer of 1 acre around detected cavity trees shall be implemented until July 31, or as otherwise approved by the Forest Service Responsible Official. This mitigation measure meets the intent of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (avoiding take of migratory birds) and minimizes direct affects to Forest Service sensitive bird species.

In order to avoid disturbance to deer fawning, elk calving, migratory bird nesting, or sensitive bird species nesting, timber cutting (or skidding) will not occur between May 1 and July 31 of any calendar year (except that project activities may occur between July 1 and July 31 if surveys by a Forest Service Wildlife Biologist determine that no effect to these species would result from early implementation).

Raptor nests, wildlife dens, etc. discovered during proposed activities would be reported to the Ketchum Ranger District wildlife biologist and would be protected from proposed activities.
All construction activities should be confined to daylight hours, excluding emergencies.

Construction workers should not be allowed to bring dogs on site during construction.

Ensure that bear safe food storage practices are understood and followed.

Reduce sediment sources (connected disturbed action) on existing and proposed trails and stream crossings to prevent impact to aquatic species.

Where possible, utilize existing roads to reduce impacts to vegetation and soils. Where machinery must leave roads, identify and utilize the most direct and least invasive path feasible to reduce impacts to vegetation and soils.

SVC is encouraged to inform the public on how to avoid and minimize negative human/wildlife conflicts and conflicts between recreational user groups, including hunters.

Large snags, stick nests, or wildlife dens discovered during trail layout or construction/reconstruction activities will be avoided (to ensure that future maintenance activities will not need to remove these habitat features and to minimize future disturbance to wildlife from future recreational trail use).

Large snags (greater than 24” diameter at breast height), particularly those with bird cavities, will not be removed unless they pose an unacceptable safety risk.

**Vegetation**

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, Sensitive and Watch plant species populations shall be avoided or mitigations to minimize adverse effects to individuals and their habitats would be implemented.

Five-needle pines will be avoided during implementation. Proposed Action activities would avoid exposing five needled pine roots, including those near the soil surface. Five needled pine seedlings that can’t be avoided would be salvaged and transplanted by hand to a suitable location.

Staging will be located in previously disturbed areas that are free of noxious weed, and will not be located within RCAs, or within topographic lows where water may concentrate during snowmelt periods. Disturbance of overstory vegetation will be avoided. Rehabilitation/ revegetation of such areas would occur following completion where/as necessary. The staging areas will be identified prior to construction and will be included in the summer construction plan.

Rehabilitation and restoration actions using native species would be implemented on all disturbed areas vulnerable to invasive species immediately following construction and reconstruction activities to prevent the invasion or expansion of noxious weeds.

Noxious weed locations will be treated prior to ground disturbance. Coordination and reporting with Ketchum Ranger District noxious weed program manager will include reporting a Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinate or map of all noxious weed occurrences to ensure that noxious weed treatments are carried out and reported to oversight agencies as per the “Biological Assessment and Biological Evaluation Of Effects From Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Program On Fisheries, Terrestrial Wildlife and Rare Plant Species, Fairfield Ranger and Ketchum Ranger Districts, and Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Sawtooth National Forest, April 6, 2012”. SVC and the agencies shall develop a noxious weed control plan to be included in the summer operating plan. The control plan must include treatment, monitoring and reporting requirements to minimize the spread of noxious weeds within the SUP area. The control plan will be approved by the agencies.

Gravel or borrow material source sites with noxious weed species present shall not be used, unless effective treatment as per the “Biological Assessment and Biological Evaluation Of Effects From Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Program On Fisheries, Terrestrial Wildlife and Rare Plant Species, Fairfield Ranger and Ketchum Ranger Districts, and Sawtooth National Recreation Area, Sawtooth National Forest, April 6, 2012” or other mitigation measures are implemented.

Heavy equipment will be pressure washed to remove all visible plant parts, dirt, and material that can carry noxious weed seeds, and/or invasive life forms, prior to entry into the project area. The same equipment will be cleaned again prior to leaving if warranted.

To comply with the Forest Service’s 1996 “Weed Free Hay Order,” Noxious-Weed-Free Forage and Straw Rules (Idaho Admin Procedure Act 02.06.31), and the Final Supplementary Rules to Require the Use of Certified Noxious-Weed-Free Forage and Straw (Federal Register Volume 76, Number 140 (8/21/2011). Restoration, rehabilitation, and stabilization projects also will be required to use weed-free straw bales and mulch for project work.

Perform a pre-treatment regeneration survey with special notes on ski-related concerns.

Overstory vegetation removal may include mechanical, hand treatment, helicopter, and/or lop and scatter. No road construction shall occur to remove overstory vegetation.

Use specialized ground and line harvest equipment to remove merchantable materials. Haul on the existing road system. May utilize existing but overgrown old roads if needed.
Retain aspen and large, healthy Douglas-fir and subalpine fir possible.

Preserve shrubs and healthy seedlings, saplings, poles and young mature trees when possible.

Remove potential hazards to skiers including slash piles and logging debris.

Masticate (grind into large chunks) unmerchantable debris (small logging slash and fine fuels) if not appropriate for firewood or other use.

Control weeds according to state law and Forest Service/BLM standards.

Retain snags at levels outlined in Appendix A of the Forest Plan.

Genetically local (at the ecological subsection level) native seeds will be used to reseed all disturbed areas. Seed mixtures will be noxious weed-free. The Forest Service and BLM must approve the seed mixtures prior to implementation.

Where possible, utilize existing roads to reduce impacts to vegetation and soils. Where machinery must leave roads, identify and utilize the most direct and least invasive path feasible to reduce impacts to vegetation.

Avoid trampling of native plant communities through designation of formal paths in heavy use areas, and other appropriate means.

Consider the health and windthrow potential of residual trees as the major selection factors, when possible, during the selection of trees for removal.

A temporary fence outside the dripline of the trees may be required to protect vegetation from injury and compaction.

Directional felling may be specified to minimize disturbance of logging operations.

Ground winching, butt lifting, and directional felling will be required when tree removal is permitted in sensitive areas.

Stumps and slash must be disposed of in a manner approved by the Forest Service. Stumps should be flush cut; however, in some cases stumps may be buried, burned, or hauled off the Forest. Slash may be chipped, burned, or lopped and scattered based on the type and volume of slash, site specific conditions, and other resource objectives.

Boulders should be blasted, buried or removed off the forest. They should not be stockpiled.

SVC and the agencies shall develop a noxious weeds control plan to be included in the summer operating plan. The control plan must include treatment, monitoring and reporting requirements to minimize the spread of noxious weeds within the SUP area. The control plan must be approved by the agencies.

Pretreat areas identified as containing noxious weeds and where ground-disturbance will occur to minimize their spread.

**Watershed and Aquatic Resources**

Prior to implementation of additional snowmaking, SVC must acquire all necessary permitting for water rights and place of use from Idaho Department of Water Resources.

SVC staff will work with the agencies to inspect BMP implementation and effectiveness on a regular basis during project implementation (at least every two weeks, and after any rainfall event of greater than 0.5 inches). BMP inspection reports will be filed regularly with the Ketchum Ranger District and Shoshone Field Office. Any identified deficiencies in implementation or effectiveness will be addressed immediately.

Surface runoff and erosion control measures shall be implemented on all disturbed areas immediately following initial disturbance.

Appropriately spaced water bars and other drainage structures for erosion control will be placed as necessary on all trails.

Water bars shall be 12 to 18 inches deep and constructed by digging a small trench and casting soil material to the downhill side in a berm.

Each water bar shall be in undisturbed vegetation; traverse the disturbed area at a gradient of 5 to 10%, and discharge into undisturbed vegetation on the lower side of the disturbed area. Alternatively, "parabolic slope water bars" may be constructed at this gradient beginning at the center of the road or trail surface and traversing outward to spill into undisturbed vegetation on both sides of the road or trail prism.

Soil-disturbing activities will be avoided during periods of heavy rain or wet soils.
Preclude slash from falling in streams, drainage channels or wetlands, remove all slash or timber that accidentally falls in these areas immediately.

In the event of a spill, the Contractor must abide by all applicable rules and regulations with respect to reporting requirements and cleaning up the spill. The Contractor must also follow any additional procedures required by federal, state, or local agencies. All costs due to spills and spill clean-up must be assumed by the Contractor. All clean-up and other spill related activities must be completed by the Contractor.

For grading projects greater than 1 acre, ensure that grading and erosion control plans meet the basic requirements for stormwater permitting through the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. Portray nearby wetlands and streams on grading plans. Also, show any BMPs or erosion control measures that would be used to protect streams and wetlands.

For projects that involve grading, define grading limits on the ground before construction by placing wattles, sediment fence, construction fence, or other physical barrier along the perimeter of the area to be graded. Ensure that all grading is confined within the specified grading limits.

For logging operations, retain live and dead trees within 100 feet of perennial and intermittent streams, except within designated stream crossings. Locate all landings and skid trails at least 100 feet away from perennial and intermittent streams. Do not skid logs on sustained slopes steeper than 40%. Obliterate skid trails after operations are complete by pulling slash on skid trails; building water bars where needed; placing barriers within skid trails to prohibit mechanized and motorized use; and seeding skid trails with approved seed mix, where necessary, to establish vegetation. A detailed plan for logging practices and methods (including disposal methods, any temporary roads, log decking locations, etc.) will be established prior to implementation in the summer construction plan.

Size culverts to easily pass sediment and debris transported by the stream to be crossed. Do not use culverts less than 18” in diameter to cross any stream channel.

Clearly mark all wetlands within the vicinity of any ground disturbing activities or tree felling and ensure that all equipment operators are aware of their presence. Operate heavy equipment for land treatments only when soil moisture is below the plastic limit, or protected by at least 1 foot of packed snow or 4 inches of frozen soil.

Avoid altering the stream bed and banks and maintain the natural character of the stream.

Do not impact the soil surface of the three wetlands due to the removal/hauling/dragging of timber from glading areas.

Outslope low standard roads to shed water rather than concentrating water on the road surface or in ditches.

Do not locate roads, trails, or other disturbed areas on slopes that show signs of instability, such as slope failure, mass movement, or slumps.

For projects that would increase road traffic, or require road use by heavy construction equipment, apply road surfacing near stream crossings as needed to harden the road surface and minimize sediment delivery to streams.

Do not encroach fills or introduce soil into streams, swales, lakes, or wetlands. Install sediment wattles, sediment fencing, retention basins, or other applications before ground-disturbing activities begin. Favor applications that maintain functionality without maintenance, such as sediment retaining wattles. Service sediment retention applications before leaving the site and remove non-natural and non-biodegradable materials. Favor applications that use natural or biodegradable materials that can be left on-site.

Keep all debris generated by project activities out of ditches, swales, and drainage channels.

The impact area associated with the power line upgrade will be routed around the spring and will avoid any other sensitive areas such as wetlands or seeps, where present.

The impact area associated with the chairlift relocation will avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands, seeps, and springs, where present.

Suitable drainage measures will be installed and maintained to collect and disperse runoff and to avoid or minimize erosion of trail surface and adjacent areas.

Thinning activities will avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands, seeps, and springs, where present.

Erosion control measures and stormwater plans will be implemented at all disturbed areas during construction, including borrow, stockpile and staging areas, as well as refueling areas.

Any unauthorized trails that are causing adverse effects on soil, water quality, and/or riparian resources, will be closed and rehabilitated.
All lands or other disturbed areas will be restored to natural hydrologic flow and characteristic landscape slope and form at the conclusion of harvest in each unit. Restoration may require ripping of skid trails or landings to decompact soils and restore site hydrology, and may require placement of slash and coarse wood debris and closure signage to deter recreational use. Landings and/or skid trails will be seeded and replanted with native species.

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<th>Cultural</th>
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<td>If undocumented historic and/or prehistoric properties are located during ground disturbing activities or planning activities associated with approved construction activities, all construction in the immediate vicinity would cease and they would be treated as specified in 36 CFR § 800.11 concerning Properties Discovered During Implementation of an Undertaking.</td>
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