

**Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan:
Reference Document
RMS/USFS Partnership
V. 9/8/18 (Final)**

Upper White Salmon Wild and Scenic River (WSR)

Context

Amendatory Act:

- Public Law and Date – P.L. 109-44, August 2, 2005 (Upper White Salmon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act)
- Length – 20 miles
- Classifications – Wild (6.7 miles), Scenic (13.3 miles)
- Special Provisions – None

Other Designated Segments:

- A 7.7-mile segment of the White Salmon River (referred to as the Lower White Salmon) was designated by P.L. 99-663 in 1986. This designated segment flows between its confluence with Gilmer Creek and Buck Creek at river miles 12.7 and 5, respectively.
- Public law 99-663 also authorized the study of 13.5 miles of the White Salmon River located upstream of the designated segment (from Gilmer Creek to its confluence with Trout Lake Creek at river mile 26.2).
- To ensure comprehensive evaluation of the entire upriver portion of the White Salmon River, the USFS expanded the study to include the short portion of the river that begins upstream from its confluence with Trout Lake Creek to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest boundary (approximately 4 miles), and the entire length of the White Salmon River and a principal tributary, Cascade Creek, located on the National Forest (20 miles).
- The entire 38 miles was studied and found suitable for designation (*Upper White Salmon River Wild and Scenic River Study Report and Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement*; USFS LEIS, 1997).

Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP):

- Date – September 2017
- NEPA Documentation – EA and FONSI (October 2017)
- Others Signatory to CRMP – None

CRMP Requirements

1) Description of existing resource conditions, including a detailed description of river values

- Describes regional setting (CRMP 5). Provides additional detail of existing resource conditions for the three outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) and other resources (CRMP 11-32).
- River Values:
 - Describes the absence of in-channel modifications and generally natural shorelines (CRMP 5, 18). Geologic and hydrologic processes are also described (CRMP 13-16, 17-18).
 - Describes water quality in general as high, with low temperatures resulting from its principally groundwater source (CRMP 5). Notes past measurement of temperature and fecal coliform found to be within state water-quality standards, and late-summer turbidity in Cascade Creek due to glacial flour (CRMP 18).
 - Shares outcome of the 2013 resource assessment process through which geology, hydrology, and scenery were found to be ORVs (CRMP 5, 7, 11 (geology), 17 (hydrology), 19 (scenery)). The resource assessment was conducted to identify the ORVs exclusive to the designated (upriver) portion of the White Salmon River and Cascade Creek. Specifically, Forest resource specialists utilized the 1997 LEIS completed for the study and additional analyses, including field visits, to evaluate each potential ORV. Staff used the criteria for determining the significance of river-related values developed by the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council. Refer to Appendix C, Resource Assessment, for further explanation of the process and determination of ORVs (CRMP Appendix C, Resource Assessment 1-12).

2) Desired conditions and goals

- Establishes, through forest plan amendment, a new management area category (MAC) for the area included in the final river corridor boundary. The MAC includes standards and guidelines specific to the Upper White Salmon developed through the environmental analysis supporting the CRMP (CRMP 9).
- Presents the desired future condition as “a broad vision of the desired state for resources in the river corridor” (CRMP 10). Thereafter, the CRMP includes a section for each ORV and resource area regarding its contribution to desired future conditions (CRMP 16 (geology), 18 (hydrology), 24 (scenery), 26 (recreation), 30 (wildlife), 31 (fisheries), 32-33 (vegetation and ecology), 34 (administrative and other uses – grazing)).

3) Development of lands and facilities

- Adds screening criteria regarding guide services, recreation concessions, events and other commercial and non-commercial special uses; specifically: prohibiting any new permanent facilities or infrastructure in wild river corridors, and requiring use to be of a size, scope or duration to protect river values (CRMP 27).
- Provides clearer and more restrictive direction for minerals management, restricting surface occupancy for leasable minerals, and prohibiting inventory, development or authorization of saleable mineral material (CRMP 16-17).

4) *User capacities*

- Specifies the type of future recreation opportunities that may occur in the river corridor: hiking, mountain biking, whitewater boating or equestrian uses (CRMP 27).
- Characterizes visitor use in the Upper White Salmon as low, and not a threat to river values. Data collection, monitoring and analysis to support capacity estimates were, therefore, limited (CRMP 28).
- Provides initial visitor capacity estimates by classification, with the capacity of the wild segments based on campsites per acre, varying by the respective wilderness recreation opportunity spectrum class. Capacity of the scenic segments is based on numbers of whitewater kayakers per year, people on the Buck Creek Trail per year, and dispersed campers within the river corridor per primary season of use (CRMP 28).
- Establishes trigger points for monitoring. These are “set relatively low in comparison to visitor capacities to provide a buffer between reexamination of visitor capacities and any negative impacts to river values” (CRMP 28).

5) *Water quality and instream flows*

- Describes water quality in general as high, with low temperatures resulting from its principally groundwater source (CRMP 5). Notes past measurement of temperature and fecal coliform found to be within state water-quality standards, and late-summer turbidity in Cascade Creek due to glacial flour (CRMP 18).
- Explains spring- and glacial-fed flow contributions that form the Upper White Salmon River. Also generally describes streamflow over the water year (CRMP 17).
- Notes Glacier Springs as a community water supply for the town of Trout Lake (CRMP 17-18).

6) *Partnership opportunities*

- Describes an existing partnership with Cascade Mountain School. These high school students helped collect water quality data in 2016-2017 (CRMP 38).
- Recognizes generally the opportunity to include partners in implementation of the CRMP, particularly in monitoring and education efforts (CRMP 5, 38).

7) *Regulatory authority of other agencies*

- Shares the intent to implement the CRMP through “three primary mechanisms: intergovernmental coordination, individual agency action, and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and the public” (CRMP 5).
- Describes federal and state regulatory consultation in the EA (Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Historic Preservation Act) (EA 11-12).

8) *Monitoring strategy*

- Identifies activities “to assess the progress and results of implementing the Upper White Salmon WSR CRMP” (CRMP 35).
- Establishes one or more key indicators for each river value to be monitored, and a related threshold. Also establishes trigger points for each indicator at a level from which “early and responsive management actions” may be taken to prevent a threshold from being reached (CRMP 35).
- Specifies social- and resource-based indicators for scenery, water quality and hydrology. The social-based indicator for scenery is photo point monitoring. Examples of resource-based indicators for water quality include: trail condition, large wood pieces per mile, invasive species presence/absence, temperature, turbidity, E. coli, and dispersed campsite survey. Also establishes indicators to protect the desired recreation experience: trail encounters and wilderness permits (CRMP 36-37).
- Identifies potential management actions to consider should any triggers suggest a threshold is being approached or exceeded (CRMP 36-37).

9) *Other management direction (agency guidance)¹*

- Decision modifies numerous existing standards and guidelines specific to the ORVs and other resource areas to “provide clearer direction regarding the protection and enhancement of river values” while retaining all other existing direction that applies in the MAC (DN 7). Describes the important overlap of existing direction for late-successional reserves and the aquatic conservation strategy (CRMP 34-35).
- Establishes two overarching standards and guidelines that apply to all management activities in the MAC.
- Presents other modified standards and guidelines for the MAC in several locations and formats; specifically, by:
 - ORV/resource area: geology (CRMP 16-17) hydrology (CRMP 18), scenery (CRMP 24), recreation (CRMP 26-28), wildlife (CRMP 30), fisheries (no modified standards and guidelines), vegetation and ecology (CRMP 33-34), administrative and other uses – grazing (CRMP 34).
 - ORV/activity in Appendix A, Upper White Salmon MAC (CRMP Appendix A 1-3)
 - Program area and in tabular format in EA and DN with supporting rationale for the changes (EA 18-22; DN 11-13).
- Provides examples of consistent and inconsistent uses to further clarify and help interpret the standards and guidelines: (CRMP 16 (geology), 18 (hydrology), 24 (scenery), 26-27 (recreation), 30 (wildlife), 31 (fisheries), 33-34 (vegetation and ecology), 34 (administrative and other uses – grazing)).

¹ Only river-specific direction created during development of the CRMP is described in this section. This includes new, modified or deleted direction. Existing (and unchanged) forest- and area-wide direction also applicable in the river corridor is not included in this reference document.