



Recreation Needs Analysis Study Summary

Packwood Lake Hydroelectric Project
Study Report Meeting
August 14, 2007
Olympia, Washington

Goals and Objectives

- Evaluate recreation use and demands
- Identify recreation needs and options
- Provide information to Energy Northwest and recreation resource managers
- Tool to assist in making recreation resource decisions

Methodology

- Review Existing Recreation Supply and Use
- Analyze Recreation Demand/Trends
- Review Relevant Plans and Policies
- Capacity Analysis
- Identify Recreation Needs/Potential

Recreation Supply/Use

- Recreation Supply
 - Facilities
 - Dispersed Sites
- Current Recreation Use (Surveys)
 - Packwood Lake Recreation Use/Activities
 - Trail Use
 - Parking Lot Use
 - Lake Creek

Recreation Demands/Trends

- National/State Trends/Projections
- Historic Trends
- Economic Influences
- Population Growth Projections
- Applicability of Projections
 - Less growth in recreation use/vs. population growth
 - Aging population/inactivity
 - Growth differences based on activity type

Plans and Policies

- GPNF Land and Resource Management Plan (as amended)
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Lewis County Comprehensive Plan

Capacity Analysis

- Ecological
 - Sensitive areas, vegetation loss, sanitation concerns
- Social
 - Visitors perceptions/opinions of area/crowding
- Physical
 - Dispersed sites, parking spaces, percent occupancy, facility conditions, etc.
- Managerial
 - Forest Service standards generally related to ecological and physical constraints

Capacity Analysis/Dispersed Sites

- Existing number of dispersed campsites
 - Existing and near future recreation demand would be met during peak-season weekend
 - Non-Wilderness: 2006/74%, 2030/91%
 - Wilderness: 2006/47%, 2030/57%
- With implementation and enforcement of ecological and managerial constraints
 - Few dispersed campsites at Packwood Lake
 - Current and future recreation demand would not be met during peak-season weekends and weekdays

Capacity Analysis/Trail Use

Pipeline Rd/Trail #74 (Peak-Season WE)	
2006	18 people/day
2030	24 people/day

Trail #78 (Peak-Season WE)	
2006	30 people/day
2030	38 people/day

- Pipeline Rd/Trail #74
 - Use below FS standards for # of encounters
- Trail #78
 - Between Parking Lot and Packwood Lake -exceeds Wilderness “Primitive” Standards (6 encounters)
 - Trail #81 Wilderness – might exceed Wilderness “Transition” Standards (24 encounters)

Capacity Analysis/Parking Lot

- Packwood Lake Trailhead Parking Lot
 - Currently exceeded only on occasion during peak-season weekends
 - Future projections – full more often on peak-season weekends
 - When parking lot is full visitors turn away
 - Limits visitor use at Packwood Lake
 - Never full on peak-season weekdays or during off-season

Capacity Analysis/Facilities

- Visitor Opinions
 - Need Toilets: Current toilets not maintained or usable
 - Trash/ecological concerns

Needs and Potential

- Need/desire to address ecological and associated managerial standards
 - May change visitor experience/ability to recreate at Packwood Lake
 - Will significantly reduce number of dispersed sites
 - Limited options nearby to replace lost dispersed sites to accommodate existing and future recreation demand
- Need Replacement of toilets and trash collection or education options
 - Enforcement of management constraints (less visitor use at Packwood Lake) may reduce need.
- Potential need to revise gate at Pipeline Rd/Trail #74
 - Eliminate motorized public access (Forest Service decision)

Needs and Potential

- Allow exceptions to management standards, or
- Limit visitor use
 - Enforcement – to prevent visitor creation of new dispersed sites
 - Restrictive permit system
 - Reduce parking lot spaces
 - Visitor education/Ranger on-site
- Management decisions – balance impacts to environment and recreation visitors

Study of Barrier Free Access

- FSORAG and FSTAG
 - FS Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines – Motorized and Non-Motorized Access Routes
 - FS Trail Accessibility Guidelines – Non-Motorized
- Dispersed Nature of Packwood Lake Area – may alter nature of area
- Ecological Concerns
 - Terrain, soils, hydrology
 - Drainage/erosion/maintenance concerns
- Results - impractical

Conclusions

- Recreation use at Packwood Lake pre-dates Project
 - No recreation opportunities were eliminated/restored/replaced by Project
- Recreation use declining
 - Closure of FS permitted resort
 - Less demand for dispersed vs. developed activities
- Future dependent on FS management decisions
 - Enforcement of FS Standards – eliminate most campsites
 - Eliminate OHV use of Pipeline Rd/Trail
 - Enforcement of FS Standards will diminish recreation use at Packwood Lake
 - Potentially eliminate/reduce current sanitation needs