Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

August 2006

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IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

August 2006

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chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

Thousand Springs State Park is made up of a collection of properties in the Hagerman Valley that have been brought into the state park system over the past 35 years. The first acquisition of property for a state park in the area was made in 1970. The latest state park property acquisition was made in 2001. Today, the entire park contains a little over 1500 acres.

In early 2005, the planning process for the Thousand Springs State Park master plan began. One of the first orders of business for the agency Planning Review Team was to determine if this master planning process was for one (1) or as many as four (4) separate state parks. The decision was made to combine all park properties under the name of one state park—Thousand Springs State Park. Each of the four properties previously identified as individual parks were designated as units. The unit names are Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek, Box Canyon and Niagara Springs. Located within the Billingsley Creek unit is the homesite of renowned author Vardis Fisher. The area around his home, including Fisher Lake, has been designated the Vardis Fisher Day Use Area.

Springs and a Pelican at Crystal Lake

1.1 The Future At Glance

The following excerpts from the 2003-2007 Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP) provide an insight to future recreational needs in Idaho. This document is the most comprehensive source of Idaho information on outdoor recreation and tourism available. It was designed by a multi-agency planning team to assist in the decision-making needs of a variety of tourism providers.

"Use projections should always be viewed cautiously. The preferred recreational activities of today may be the "been there, done that" activities of tomorrow. Recreational habits are influenced by weather, income, population growth, availability and other factors. Even so, it is useful to see what the projections are based on today's patterns."

"J.M. Bowker, Donald B.K. English and H. Ken Cordell developed projection models for the publication Outdoor Recreation in American Life: A National Assessment of Demand and Supply Trends, 1999. It is the only ongoing, comprehensive assessment of outdoor recreation trends in the country. The researchers created models based on today's behavior as sampled through the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment."

"According to the study, demand for water-based recreation activities will grow faster than population growth in the Rocky Mountain Region in the next several years. These activities include non-pool swimming, canoeing and visiting a beach or waterslide. Additionally, the region will probably need additional urban recreation resources for biking, picnicking, family gatherings and walking, as well as the get-away-from-it-all resource of developed camping in coming years."

Dispersed land activities are anticipated to grow in the Rocky Mountain Region in the near future. They include rock climbing, primitive camping, horseback riding, backpacking, hiking and off-road driving. Winter activities continue to grow in popularity, including snowmobiling and downhill skiing. Cross-country skiing is also anticipated to show strong growth in the coming years. Hunting is expected to rise; fishing is projected to grow faster than hunting, and non-consumptive activities are anticipated to have the largest percentage of growth among wildlife-related activities in the next couple of decades. Beyond traditional recreational pursuits, there lie emerging recreational activities that didn't exist 10 or 20 years ago. From adventure racing to zorbing, extreme outdoor recreation is also on the rise.

With growing population and increasing demand for outdoor recreation opportunities, development and management of the finite resources of the state will become more challenging. It is therefore crucial that careful planning, development and management be a part of any large outdoor recreation or tourism project.

1.2 Park And Recreation Planning And Development In Idaho--An Overview

Authority

In 1965, the Idaho State Legislature enacted legislation creating the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). The legislation reads, in part:

It is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Parks and Recreation shall formulate and put into execution a long range, comprehensive plan and program for the acquisition, planning, protection, operation, maintenance, development and wise use of areas of scenic beauty, recreational utility, historic, archeological or scientific interest, to the end that the health, happiness, recreational opportunities and wholesome enjoyment of life of the people may be further encouraged.

The Idaho Park and Recreation Board is responsible for administering, conducting and supervising the IDPR. The Legislature has given the Board the power to:

- Make expenditures for the acquisition, care, control, supervision, improvement, development, extension, and maintenance of all lands under the control of the department.
- Appoint local or regional advisory councils to consider, study, and advise the department in the development, use and maintenance of any areas to be considered as future park sites.
- Cooperate with the federal government and local governments of the state for the purpose of acquiring, developing, extending or maintaining lands that are designated as state parks.
- Construct, lease or otherwise establish public park or recreational facilities and services, and charge and collect reasonable fees to operate these facilities and services.
- Apply to any appropriate agency or officer of the federal government for aid from any federal program respecting outdoor recreation, and obligate the state regarding the responsible management of any federal funds transferred to it for the purpose of federal enactment.

Policy

The Idaho Park and Recreation Board has established operational policies to guide IDPR staff in the acquisition, planning, development, and protection of land for public outdoor recreation use. They are as follows:

Acquisition. Acquisition of recreation lands is vital to the state park system and should occur in tandem with the needs of a growing population. Public use of these acquired areas should be made possible as soon as the department is able.

Planning. Few responsibilities of a state park system are more important than planning. To ensure people's recreating needs will be met by the state park system, there should be current and advance planning for recreation facilities and services. Such planning shall follow the Master Plan Guidelines document adopted by the Board. Planning shall be in conformance with the supply, demand, and needs as outlined in the Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP).

A state park classification system has been adopted to aid in the proper planning, development, and management of park lands. Four classifications have been defined: natural, recreation, heritage, and recreation trailway.

The department shall plan for appropriate conservation-education facilities and activities that will enhance the public's use and enjoyment of the system.

The department shall plan for creative and informative interpretive programs. In the planning, development, and implementation of interpretive programs, the department shall identify and emphasize the values that are of primary importance for each park.

Development. Services and facilities shall be in accordance with the park classification and resource area designations (zoning) of each park. Considerations for facilities and service shall be:

1. Within the park system, provision shall be made for a wide range of interests and activities enjoyed by Idaho residents and tourists.
2. Each park will be developed for as many activities as is consistent with its classification, and will be managed to insure the wise use and protection of the facility or resource.
3. To allow full park use by individuals who may or may not own recreational equipment, IDPR may consider the rental and sale of items appropriate in parks.
4. Park facilities developed to facilitate service and provide recreational opportunity shall be architecturally suited to the theme and purpose of the park.
5. No facilities or services shall be permitted within a park that encourages or contributes to rapid deterioration of the park environment or adjacent property.
6. Access for people with disabilities will be provided in compliance with current ADA standards.

Protection. Lands acquired for the state park system should remain dedicated to that use and protected against exploitation.

Direction

The 2003-2007 Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP) surveyed Idahoans to rank 19 issues in outdoor recreation on their importance. The following were ranked as their top ten issues:

1. Protecting water quality.
2. Protecting existing access to public lands.

3. Protecting natural resources on public lands.
4. Educating youth about natural resources and the environment.
5. Controlling invasive species.
6. Educating adults about natural resources and the environment.
7. Providing recreation safety instruction to youth.
8. Providing outdoor recreation education for youth.
9. Providing access for the disabled.
10. Rehabilitating outdoor recreation facilities.

1.3 Agency Strategic Plan Congruency Analysis

Purpose

The following analysis was prepared, upon the conclusion of the planning process, to emphasize how the resulting park master plan is congruent with the agency's mission and vision statements, and the initiatives of the agency strategic plan.

Agency Mission

The mission of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation is *"To improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship."*

The Thousand Springs State Park master plan has as the basis of its park management concept the balance of recreational use and resource conservation/enhancement. It calls for the expansion of recreational facilities on parcels of disturbed land, the restoration of native grasses, the improvement of water quality and the careful management of valuable natural resources.

Agency Vision

The IDPR vision statement declares, *"The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation will live up to the trust of Idahoans by striving to understand the recreational needs of the people, practicing wise resource stewardship and carefully maintaining facilities. We will promote ethical behavior, safe practices and the sharpening of outdoor skills. While recognizing private property rights the agency will protect access to public lands. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation will continue its role as a leader in outdoor recreation through partnerships, innovation and good work."*

In an attempt to understand the needs and desires of Idahoans for Thousand Springs State Park, approximately a dozen public and stakeholder meetings were held, written comments were solicited and a visitor survey was conducted at the park. All of this information was considered in formulating the draft master plan. Natural, cultural, historical and human resources of the park have been examined during the planning process and recommendations that provide for the careful stewardship of these resources can be found in chapters 3, 5 and 6.

Agency Strategic Plan

The Idaho Park and Recreation Board adopted the agency strategic plan, Working for Recreation—The 2006-2010 Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, on April 25, 2005. From that document, the Board has developed 3 strategic initiatives. They are:

- ***Focus on Core Responsibilities***
  - Consider the day-to-day management of our legislatively authorized parks and programs our first priority
  - Devote a significant share of agency resources to improving the condition of our facilities
  - Determine what outdoor recreation facilities are needed by the public and determine the best way to see that they are provided

- Be responsive to scheduling resources to customer requests through an enhanced reservation system

- ***Address the Issues Associated with Growing Demand***
  - Assure public access for outdoor recreation through key land acquisitions, easements, education and partnerships
  - Provide education, mediation and regulatory programs to enhance user opportunities and experiences
  - Seek ways to bring sustainable funding for outdoor recreation into alignment with demand

- ***Provide Outdoor Recreation Leadership***
  - Assume a leadership role in seeking partnerships with other agencies, NGOs and the private sector to enhance outdoor recreation
  - Improve communication with the public and partners about outdoor recreation opportunities and issues

Board Initiative #1 – Focus on Core Responsibilities notes the need to "determine what outdoor recreation facilities are needed by the public and determine the best way to see that they are provided." Public involvement was solicited throughout the planning process to determine the needs and desires of the public, as well as to receive their input on how to provide for those needs and desires. A detailed listing of input opportunities into the plan is listed later in this chapter in the section titled "Summary of Input."

Board Initiative #2 – Address the Issues Associate with Growing Demand speaks of assuring public access for outdoor recreation through key land acquisitions, easements, education and partnerships. The Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan recognizes the need to meet the growing demands of recreationists and provide access to recreational lands through partnerships. Thousand Springs State Park is a park that is built upon partnerships. Each of its four (4) units is reliant upon partnerships in order to fulfill its mission. At Malad Gorge, IDPR partners with the Idaho Department of Lands on the 40-acre parcel containing the wildlife pond and first tee of the disc golf course. At Billingsley Creek, IDPR partners with the University of Idaho and USDA Agricultural Research Service to provide for aquaculture research and education. At Box Canyon, IDPR partners with The Nature Conservancy in the management of the unit. At Niagara Springs, IDPR partners with the Idaho Department of Fish & Game in management of the day-use/camping area. The Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan encourages the continuation of these partnerships to provide access to quality recreational and educational experiences for Idaho's citizens and visitors.

1.4 Preliminary Policy Statements

Prior to beginning the planning process, the following policy statements were developed to guide participants, to outline planning goals, to establish limits, to identify authorities from which approval must be obtained and to provide a yardstick to measure the success of the final product:

1. The Master Plan (MP) will follow the IDPR State Park Master Plan Guidelines and be consistent with all policies adopted by the Idaho Park and Recreation Board.

2. The MP will follow the direction outlined in the agency's current strategic plan.

3. The MP will comply with the provisions of the Gooding County Comprehensive Plan and land-use/development ordinances, and be approved by the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission. The MP will also be

presented to the Hagerman City Council for its review and comment.

4. Public involvement throughout the course of the master plan process will be pursued in an open, honest and fair manner, utilizing processes and techniques outlined in the IDPR Public Involvement Guide. A Stakeholder Advisory Team will be an integral component of the planning process.

5. The MP will inventory the existing natural systems, and cultural and historical resources within the park's boundaries to determine the limitations and opportunities presented by the sites.

6. The MP will establish the classification of the park using the criteria outlined in the IDPR State Park Land Classification and Resource Area Designation System.

7. The MP will identify and promote recreational activities, compatible with the park's classification, that address the region's recreation needs as identified in the most recent Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP).

8. The MP will explore and recognize the relationship between the park and the local community and be sensitive to the needs of the park's host community.

9. The MP will recognize all existing easements, leases, contracts, agreements and permits that are currently in effect at Thousand Springs State Park.

10. The MP will recognize that the historic use of park lands in the Hagerman Valley by man and animal in ages past, and the draft MP will be submitted to the State of Idaho, acting through its State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, for its review and approval.

1.5 Summary Of Input

Preliminary Open House

A preliminary open house was held at the Billingsley Creek unit of Thousand Springs State Park on March 15, 2005 to announce the master planning process. Park and planning staff were on hand to discuss the master planning process and timeline, solicit applications for the Stakeholder Advisory Team, and gather names for the master plan mail list. Nineteen (19) names/addresses were added to the mailing list from this meeting.

The Planning Review Team

The Planning Review Team (PRT) is a staff team that is assembled on the basis of the park's unique needs and staff's individual expertise. Its purpose is to provide a conduit for department leadership input, review, concurrence and support of the master plan process and product as they evolve. Director Robert Meinen appointed the Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan PRT on February 16, 2005. Team members include Dean Sangrey, Operations Division Administrator; Steve Frost, South Region Manager; Lonnie Johnson, Thousand Springs State Park manager; John Crowe, South Region Development Planner;

Preliminary Open House

Ron Howerton, South Region Engineering Technician; Mary Lucachick, Outdoor Recreation Resource Analyst (water); John Sandy, Special Project Coordinator; and Connie Vaughn, Planner and project manager for the master plan.

The PRT met on April 20-21, 2005 to discuss the park as a whole and each site's purpose. They discussed the management configuration/name for the park and determined that it should be one park, named Thousand Springs State Park, with four management units. The units are Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek (both the upper and lower properties), Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve (Box Canyon) and Niagara Springs (both the Niagara Springs and Crystal Springs properties). The PRT also provided input on park significance and qualities, park classification, issues, vision and goals.

The Planning Review Team assisted with the June 8-9, 2005 Public Input Workshops, June 9, 2005 Staff Input Workshop, and October 26-27, 2005 Management Alternatives Open Houses. They also met with the Stakeholder Advisory Team on August 16, 2005 to provide input into the development of management alternatives and again on November 5, 2005 to craft a preferred management alternative for the plan.

The Stakeholder Advisory Team

The Stakeholder Advisory Team (SAT) consists of 14 interested stakeholders who were selected through an identification and application process. Team members represented management partners in Thousand Springs State Park; federal, state and local agencies; recreationists and interested citizens. SAT members include: Mark Fleming, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game; Lynea Newcomer, The Nature Conservancy; Dr. Madison Powell, University of Idaho Aquaculture Research Institute; Neil King, National Park Service; Kay Hardy, Hardy Foundation; Craig Laughlin, Idaho Power Co.; Max Yingst, Bureau of Land Management; Creed Robinson, Hagerman School District; Bryan Kenworthy, Hagerman National Fish Hatchery; Pete Remmen, IDEA; Frank Erwin, adjacent landowner; Jim Scott, City of Hagerman; Joe Bennett, equestrian, hunter and angler; and Carolyn Coiner, non-game/environmental education.

The SAT met for the first time at an all-day orientation session and tour at the park on May 14, 2005. They met next to participate in the Public Input Workshops held on June 8-9, 2005 in Hagerman and Boise, respectively. The SAT's third meeting was with the PRT on August 16, 2005, when they provided input on development of management alternatives for the park, based on input received from staff and the public. On October 26-27, 2005, the SAT participated in the Management Alternative Open Houses held in Twin Falls and at the park, respectively. The SAT's final gathering before development of the draft plan was with the PRT on November 5, 2005 to craft a preferred management alternative for the plan.

Public Input Workshop

Public Input Workshops were held in Hagerman on June 8, 2005 and in Boise on June 9, 2005. The meetings drew 36 attendees, with the largest turnout being in Hagerman. Additionally, 83 individuals submitted written input. Each workshop began at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the workshop was to collect information from the public regarding park significance and qualities, issues and concerns, and desired experiences and opportunities for the various units of Thousand Springs State Park.

Staff Input Workshop

Thousand Springs State Park staff, as well as other interested agency staff, a representative from the Legislative Services Office, and a representative from Boise State University met on June 9, 2005 for the staff input workshop. Staff gave input on the park's significance, quality and issues, as well as ideas for the park.

Visitor Survey

A park visitor survey was collected in late summer 2005. It queried visitors about their visit to the park and asked for feedback on current and/or future amenities in the park. Eight-five (85) individuals completed the park survey. Results of the survey can be found in Chapter 4 – Current Park Visitor Profile.

Summary of Input

Input from the public (both at workshops and in writing), park staff and planning team members was summarized and posted on the IDPR website on July 22, 2005. A summary of all scoping input received can be found in Appendix A.

Management Alternatives Open House

Public open houses to review and seek written comments on the three (3) management alternatives were held at the City Hall Conference Room in Twin Falls on October 25, 2005 and at the Billingsley Creek unit of the park in Hagerman on October 26, 2005. Of the 19 attendees, the majority of the individuals came to the open house at the park. In the comments received on the management alternatives, the majority was in favor of some variation of the balanced use/heritage concept.

Draft Master Plan Open House

Public open houses were held in Twin Falls and Hagerman on June 8 and June 9, 2006 respectively, to present the draft Thousand Springs State Park master plan and solicit comments on the plan.

City and County Presentations of the Draft Master Plan

A presentation of the draft Thousand Springs State Park master plan was given to the Hagerman City Council on June 21, 2006 and to the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission on June 26,2006.

Management Alternatives Open House

chapter 2

Local Context

Local Context

2.1 Location and Geographic Overview

Location

Thousand Springs State Park is located in the Hagerman Valley of Gooding County in south central Idaho. (See Map 2.1.) The four units of the park dot the southern boundary of Gooding County for a distance of over 20 miles. The Malad Gorge unit is located off Exit 147 of I-84, along the Malad River. A couple miles south is the Billingsley Creek unit, which is accessed off U.S. 30 near the community of Hagerman. Still further south, along the Snake River, is the Box Canyon unit. It is accessed off West Point Road. And finally, to the east, along the north bank of the Snake River is the Niagara Springs unit. It is accessed by way of Rex Leland Highway. (See Map 2.2.)

Geographic Overview

Thousand Springs State Park is located on the Snake River Plain in and around the Hagerman Valley. The Hagerman Valley is a 20-square-mile area that bounds the Snake River with walls rising up to a height of 600 ft. above the canyon floor. The Bonneville Flood carved out the valley 15,000 years ago. Remnants of the flood remain littered across the valley floor in the form of melon gravel—basalt rock that was tumbled in the raging flood waters and carved into "petrified watermelons."

The Hagerman Valley is home of the Thousand Springs region where numerous springs pour from the basalt canyon walls, as well as spring up from underground. The water from these springs travels underground 200 miles over the course of many decades to reach the Hagerman Valley. It comes out of the ground at a constant 58°F. Surrounding the Hagerman Valley is flat, irrigated farmland and dry rangeland.

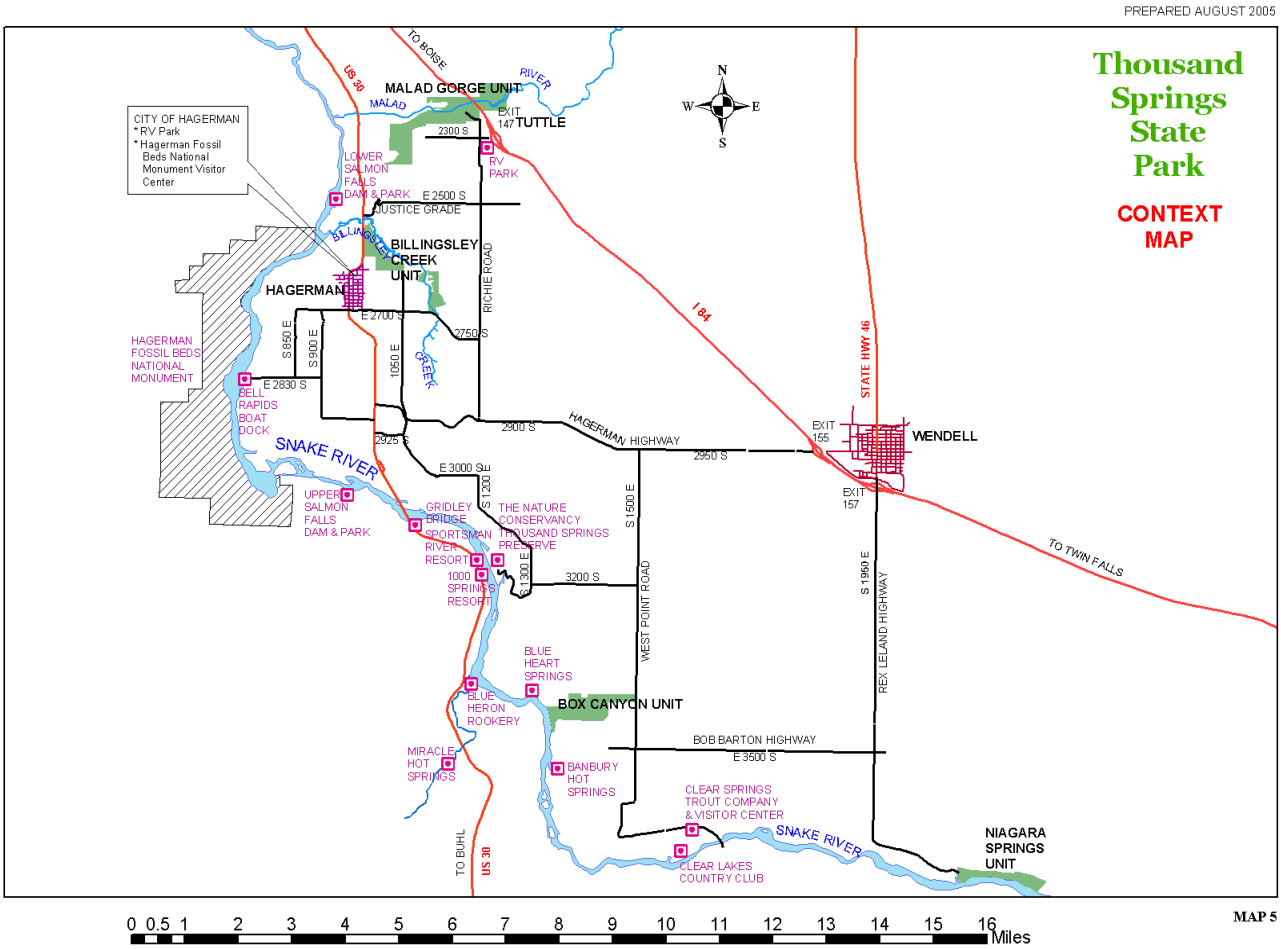
Map 2.1. Counties of Idaho

2.2 Economic Overview

Agriculture is the primary industry in the Hagerman Valley and surrounding area. Farming provides approximately 28% of the total employment in Gooding County. Service-based industries and government provide approximately 15% each of countywide employment, with leisure and hospitality services making up almost one-third of the service-based industries. Total service sales grew by 56% in the 10-year period from 1993 to 2002. In the 20-year period from 1980 to 2000, Gooding County farm employment grew

by 47%, service industry employment grew by 44% and government employment grew by 25%. Since 2000, unemployment has remained below 4% in the county.

Aquaculture, or fish farming, is also an important industry in the Hagerman Valley area. The constant 58°F, oxygenated water that flows from the natural springs along the canyon walls is prized for its fish raising properties. Nearly 85% of all commercial trout sold in the United States come from the Hagerman Valley.



Map 2.2 - Context Map

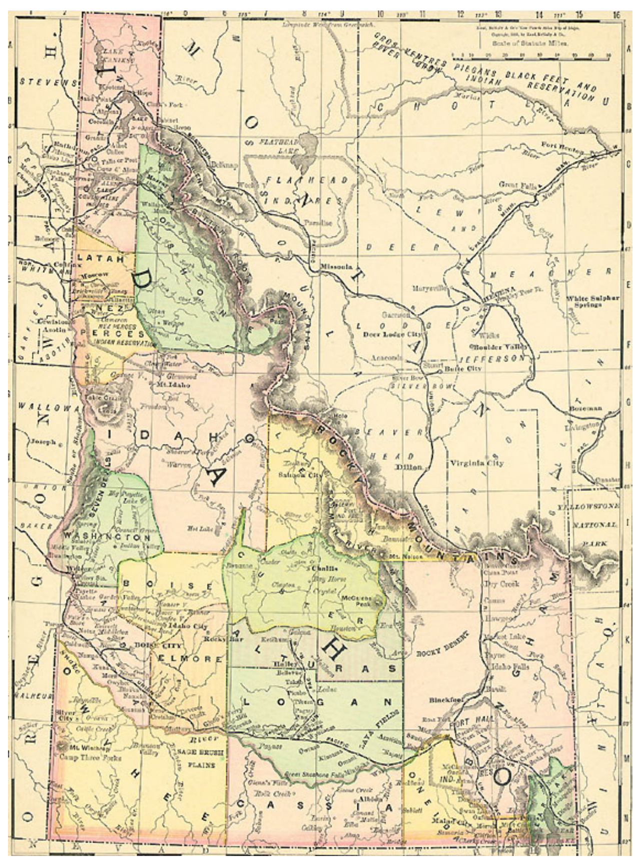
2.3 Regional History

Long before people of European descent came to the Hagerman Valley, the area was a popular hunting, fishing and overwinter site for Native Americans, including the Bannocks, Paiutes and Shoshones. Relatively mild winters and the abundant fishing at Salmon Falls, where upstream salmon migration ended, established the Hagerman Valley as a traditional historic/ prehistoric occupation site.

Wilson Price Hunt and Ramsey Crooks were the first white men known to visit the area. They explored the valley in 1811. The Oregon Trail traveled through the valley from the mid-1840s to late 1860s and brought with it many immigrants who marveled at the Thousand Springs cascading out of the canyon walls and re-supplied food stocks with salmon purchased from the Native Americans fishing at Salmon Falls. The designation "Thousand Springs" goes back to the days of the Oregon Trail.

The Malad River received its name in 1824. Alexander Ross and a party of trappers, commissioned as the Snake Country Expedition, camped alongside what is today known as the Big Wood River in the fall of 1824, while hunting beaver. The second morning of their encampment, they feasted on boiled beaver for breakfast. Shortly afterwards, a number of the party became violently ill. Some of the afflicted were sick only part of the day, but others were sick for several days, and a few still felt the ill effects up to a month afterwards. The group determined that the cause of their malady was the beaver they'd eaten for breakfast. Alexander Ross noted in his journal, "As there was no wood about the banks of the river we supposed these animals must have lived on roots, and in their food have eaten some poisonous roots which although not strong enough to destroy them was sufficiently deleterious to injure us, and from this it was that I named this stream Riviere aux Malades." Riviere aux Malades is translated from French to mean "river of sickness." Ross also noted that when the party roasted the beaver, rather than boiled it, the sickness did not strike. Modern speculation is that the likely culprit of the sickness was a fat-soluble toxin. When the beaver meat was boiled, the toxin was spread from the fat through the water into the meat; but when the beaver was roasted, the fat dripped off the meat into the fire. Today, the name Malad River applies to the 12-mile stretch of river from the confluence of the Little Wood and Big Wood Rivers to the point where the water empties into the Snake River.

Placer mining for fine gold in Snake River bars became the area's earliest industry. During the latter half of the 1800s, the four-mile-wide Salmon Falls Mining District straddled the Snake River through the Hagerman Valley, known at that time as Gouger's Bend. Prospectors began mining along the Snake in large numbers during the spring of 1870. The



1888 Map of Idaho from Rand McNally, Co., "Atlas of the World."

first recorded claim in the area was filed by the California Mining Company on October 1, 1878. Some of the better mining claims yielded up to $50 per day ($1,005 in 2005 dollars). Marlin Brown filed the last mining claim on that stretch of river on May 31, 1884.

Chinese miners also came to the Hagerman Valley to mine for gold. They were willing to work the less productive areas because the money they made (though unappealingly small to Caucasian miners) was more than what they could hope to make in China. Many Chinese miners would work the gold fields to make enough money to retire and then return to China to live off their American revenue. Records show that by 1870, the majority of miners in Idaho were Chinese.

On the heels of placer mining, other commercial ventures were undertaken in the Hagerman Valley. Agriculture proved to be the most enduring. The fertile volcanic soil and mild winters provided good growing conditions, especially after the advent of irrigation, which was first brought into the valley in the late 1800s via a tunnel built by pioneer farmer Al Weatherby.

Another early pioneer, Archie Billingsley, moved into the valley in the mid 1870s with his family and established a large hay operation along the creek that bears his name. The Billingsley Ranch encompassed the present-day Billingsley Creek Wildlife Management Area on the west and extended along both sides of the creek east to include the land on which the Hagerman Cemetery is currently located. Mr. Billingsley's extensive farming enterprise supplied hay to Wells Fargo & Co. Express. The Kelton, Utah to Boise, Idaho freight/stage/mail route had a station on the Malad River, a couple of miles north of present-day Interstate 84. A change in the route of the freight line in 1879 caused the Malad Station to be abandoned and a new station built at Salmon Falls. Archie and Jane Billingsley also owned shares in the California Bar placer mine, which they sold for $1,000 to the California Bar Mining Company. In 1880, the Billingsley family moved north to the Wood River country and settled at present-day Carey.

Many of the geographic features in the Hagerman Valley bear the names of the early pioneers that settled in the valley during the 1870s-1890s. Justice Grade is named after a pioneer family, whose first valley residents were miners. Vader Grade is named after pioneers who came to the valley to farm. Johnson Grade is named after O.P. Johnson, an early cattle rancher, sometimes referred to as "the cattle king." And both the town and valley were named after Stanley Hageman, a pharmacist from Ohio, who opened a drugstore in the valley in 1891. In 1892, Mr. Hageman was tasked with applying for a post office for the growing valley community. It's said that Hageman intended to register the post office as "Hess," naming it after John A. "Jack" Hess, however, that name was already taken. Instead, the post office was named after Stanley Hageman. Through a misspelling of his name, the new post office was registered as Hagerman. Jack Hess became the first postmaster. The first post office building was erected in 1896.

When the community of Hagerman was formed, it was situated in Alturas County, one of the seven original counties of the State of Idaho. In 1889, Alturas County was subdivided and Hagerman fell within the newly formed Logan County. In 1895, Logan County was abolished and its lands transferred into Blaine County. On January 28, 1913, Gooding County was established from a portion of Blaine County, with the city of Gooding as its county seat. Gooding County and the city of Gooding (formerly known as Topanis) were named for Frank R. Gooding, a pioneer sheep rancher, early mayor of the city of Gooding, Governor of the State of Idaho from 1905-1909, and U.S. Senator from 1921-1928.

Hagerman Valley's trademark poplar trees first came to the valley as cuttings, hauled in from Boise. They were brought to the valley in 1880 by pioneer homesteader John Bell. Along with the poplar trees, Bell also brought grape vines and peach trees. Bell also owned a mining claim, as did many of the valley's earliest residents, about a mile north of Billingsley Creek.

Farming began in the Hagerman Valley in 1879. The arrival of the Oregon Short Line of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1882-83 brought with it more farmers to the valley. The railroad grade that crosses Billingsley Creek and goes up the Johnson Grade is the last remnant of the failed branch line off the Oregon Short Line Railroad that was to run from Hagerman to a point beyond Wendell that investors named "Harriman." The failure of that branch line to be picked up by the Oregon Short Line in the early 1900s caused the investors to lose $100,000 and caused businesses in Hagerman to go broke as well.

Maggie Harrington taught the first school in the valley, in 1888, in a cabin near the present-day National Fish Hatchery. In 1892-93, the first small schoolhouse was erected about a half-mile south of Hagerman. A number of other schoolhouses were built in and around the valley in the following years. Around 1910, all schools south of the Malad River were consolidated and a large school built in Hagerman.

The town site of Hagerman sits on the former Ed Crist Ranch. The ranch was purchased by the Stroudt-Sprague Realty Company in the early 1900s and lots sold for $150-$500. By 1910, the town had 3 churches, 3 hotels, 3 general stores, 3 real estate offices, 2 livery barns, 2 restaurants, 2 banks, a hardware store, drugstore, meat market, blacksmith shop, harness shop and a pool hall. Also available for public use were an opera house and 3 additional meeting halls.

In the late 1800s to early 1900s, wild horses still roamed the landscape around Hagerman Valley. In a 1976 article in the Twin Falls Times-News, long-time valley resident J.W. "Win" Condit noted, "Wild horses were around a lot when I was growing up in Hagerman. In the afternoon the high bank on the west side of the Snake River would be a cloud of dust as herds of wild horses would run and slide down the steep banks going to water."

A.D. Foote, a mining engineer looking for a source of electricity for the Trade Dollar Mine in Silver City, first identified the Thousand Springs area as a potential power generation site in 1894. However, technology didn't exist then that could transmit the power over that far a distance, so power production was not pursued until the early 1900s when a need became apparent for it locally. The first hydro generation power plant was built at Lower Salmon Falls in 1908, followed by one at Thousand Springs in 1910 and one on the Malad River in 1911. In 1916 Idaho Power Company was incorporated and bought out the smaller power companies in the Hagerman Valley. Today, a new source of power generation has entered the Hagerman Valley region—wind power. Wind turbines can be seen north of the Hagerman Valley on the mesa above the Snake River.

The first automobile entered the Hagerman Valley in 1912. It was co-owned by Billy Colthorp (for whom the Hagerman city park is named) and Charley Dilatush. Before 1915, roads were built by the locals. All men between the ages of 21 and 45 were expected to either work two days a week on road construction or pay $3 for someone else to do their work. It wasn't until around 1915 that roads were built with public funds.

Commercial fish operations began in the Hagerman Valley in 1928. Jack W. Tingey, a Utah biologist, deemed the constant 58° F. spring water to be good habitat for a large-scale

fish operation. The National Fish Hatchery was established in the valley in the 1930s and the State Fish Hatchery in 1948. Aquaculture (fish farming) remains a productive industry in the valley.

In 1928, Elmer Cook, a local cattle rancher, revealed some fossilized bones that he'd found in the area of the present-day Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument to Harold T. Stearns of the U.S. Geological Survey. Mr. Stearns sent the bones to James W. Gidley of the Smithsonian Institution. During the summer of 1929, Mr. Stearns and Mr. Gidley traveled to Hagerman to excavate for additional fossils in the area that became known as the Hagerman Horse Quarry. They sent three tons of fossils back to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and returned for additional excavations in 1930, 1931 and 1934. The most prolific specimens found on the site were fossils from the earliest-known genus of the modern horse. Many other animal species were found on the site, and in the 1950s and '60s, studies were made of generally ignored fossilized fauna such as mice. Thus far, over 200 plant and animal species have been identified on the site. Established in 1988, the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument has been found to contain the richest known fossil deposits in the world from the late Pliocene epoch (about 3-4 million years ago). In May 1975, the area of the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument known as the Hagerman fauna sites was designated as a National Natural Landmark. In 1980, Niagara Springs was also designated a National Natural Landmark.

On October 17, 1935, a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was established in the Hagerman Valley. The creation of the CCC program was two-fold—conservation of the nation's natural resources and an employment tool for young men who were out of work due to the effects of the Great Depression. The CCC was born out of the Emergency Conservation Work Act, proposed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the beginning of his presidency as part of his New Deal reforms. President Roosevelt signed the Emergency Conservation Work Act on March 31, 1933. The majority of young men who enrolled in the CCC program did not live near conservation projects; therefore, camps were established to house the men where they worked. The Hagerman camp (Camp DG-60/Company 2528) was part of the Division of Grazing, operated out of the Department of the Interior. Typical tasks accomplished by Hagerman camp enrollees included road building; development of parks, playgrounds, bird sanctuaries and wildlife reserves; working to combat soil erosion, grass fires, forest fires and forest diseases; trapping predators; and providing aid to starving livestock and game animals.

Two native Idahoans of national prominence resided in the Hagerman Valley during the early to mid 1900s. Archie B. Teater, an artist renowned for his plein air landscapes, was born in Hagerman in 1901. Teater studied art at the Portland Art Museum in 1921-22, and beginning in the 1930s, studied each winter at the Art Students League of New York. His summers were spent painting in the west, most notably in Jackson Hole, Wyoming and Hagerman, Idaho. Legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed Teater's home/studio in Hagerman overlooking the Snake River. It is the only Frank Lloyd Wright designed building in Idaho. The studio was built in 1953-56 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

Vardis A. Fisher, a nationally renowned writer of regional fiction, was born in Annis, Idaho in 1895. He grew up on a small ranch in eastern Idaho. Fisher began his literary career in 1927, while teaching at the University of Utah, with the publication of Sonnets to an Imaginary Madonna. His first novel, Toilers of the Hills, was published in 1928. From 1928 to 1931, Fisher taught English at Washington Square College of New York University. In 1931, he

Ruins at the Vardis Fisher Homesite

and his family moved back to eastern Idaho, where he continued to write and publish novels. From 1935-1939, Fisher directed Idaho's Federal Writers' Project. During that time he wrote the Idaho Guide (1936), Idaho Encyclopedia (1938) and Idaho Lore (1939), as well as 5 novels. Fisher and his third wife, Opal, moved to Hagerman in 1940, where they lived until his death in 1968. While in Hagerman, Fisher wrote and published 22 novels, including Mountain Man (1965), which was the basis for the movie Jeremiah Johnson.

2.4 Park-Community Relationship

The multiple units of Thousand Springs State Park have a long tradition of working with the local communities to provide special events at the park. A couple of the longest-running events are the St. Patrick's Day Fun Run/Walk and Water Wise, a boating safety event.

The St. Patrick's Day Fun Run/Walk was first held at the Malad Gorge unit of Thousand Springs State Park in 1990. This popular event is hosted by the park each year during the month of March and is sponsored by the Hagerman Valley Chamber of Commerce and a number of businesses in the surrounding communities.

Water Wise promotes safe boating through hand-on education. It is held annually in early summer and includes local boating vendors among its sponsors. In order to provide "safe, boatable" water for the event, the day-use area at Malad Gorge is flooded to a depth of 3± feet and instruction is provided on how to safely boat with kayaks and canoes.

Other popular summer events at the park include the Farmer's Market, Annual Tractor Pull and Blues in the Park Festival at Billingsley Creek, the Buhl Sagebrush Days Fishing Derby at Crystal Lake in the Niagara Springs unit, and the River Cleanup at Box Canyon.

The Farmer's Market begins in May and is held throughout the summer months with local farmers and artisans bringing their wares for sale at the Billingsley Creek garden center. In November, local crafters and artists display their crafts and artwork for sale at the annual Arts and Crafts Fair. Another popular summer activity at Billingsley Creek is the Annual Tractor Pull, an event that harkens back to the unit's agricultural heritage.

September brings the Blues in the Park Festival to Billingsley Creek. Begun in 2002, this festival combines a beautiful location, delicious food, fine beverages and great music from several live bands for an afternoon/evening of entertainment and enjoyment with family and friends. Hagerman I.D.E.A. and local businesses sponsor the Blues Festival.

Buhl Sagebrush Days is an annual celebration of the city of Buhl located south of the Snake River in Twin Falls County. The celebration includes a fishing derby for kids at Crystal Lake in the Niagara Springs unit. While the park hosts the fishing derby, other sponsors include Clear Springs Foods that stocks the lake with fish for the weekend, and local businesses that provide prizes for the derby.

Box Canyon hosts a river cleanup along the Snake River each summer. The cleanup extends from 1 mile upstream of Box Canyon down

river, past Blue Heart Springs, to the Thousand Springs Preserve.

Park staff also work with the local communities in the winter on Free Cross-Country Ski Day at Magic Mountain, southeast of Twin Falls. Park staff help provide ski equipment and instruction.

2.5 Park Chronology

Listed below are the major events in the evolution and time line of Thousand Springs State Park.

1970 – A total 451.13 acres was acquired for what would become Malad Gorge State Park.

1971 – IDPR acquired the 79.6-acre Crystal Springs property from Idaho Power Company for the price of $1.00.

Spring 1973 – Rick Cummins became the first manager of Malad Gorge State Park. He served as park manager until September 1976.

March 1974 – The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) lease for State endowment property was transferred from Hue and Anne Wolfe to IDPR through a lease assignment. IDPR has renewed the 10-year lease with IDL in January 1982, 1992 and 2002. The current lease terminates on December 31, 2011.

1975 – An R&PP Patent was granted to the Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation for 200.44 acres along Malad Gorge and the Malad River.

1975 – A master plan was completed for Malad Gorge State Park and approved by the Idaho Park and Recreation Board at its July 24, 1975 meeting.

1976 – Construction began at Malad Gorge State Park—one of three bicentennial parks in Idaho.

1976 – IDPR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG) for management of the Niagara Springs (Pugmire Park) site. A March 1, 1990 Management Agreement with IDFG superseded the 1976 MOU.

April 1977 – Max Newlin served as manager at Malad Gorge/Niagara Springs for five months, from April 1 to September 1, 1977.

September 1977 – Don Higginson became manager at Malad Gorge/Niagara Springs. He served as park manager until the end of December 1985.

Summer 1979 – Malad Gorge State Park opened to the public.

April 1980 – Niagara Springs was declared a National Natural Landmark.

May 1986 – Dennis Coyle became manager at Malad Gorge/Niagara Springs. He served as park manager until 1989.

December 1989 – Kevin Lynott became manager at Malad Gorge/Niagara Springs. He served as park manager until 2003. While Kevin served as manager, Box Canyon and Billingsley Creek were added to the park, and the group of parks and park properties became known as the Thousand Springs Park District.

1994 – Niagara Springs was given full park status by the Idaho Park and Recreation Board. It was officially listed in Idaho Code as Crystal Springs and Niagara Springs State Parks.

December 1999 – Box Canyon was added to the state park system. The Nature Conservancy purchased the property on behalf of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. It was named Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve.

September 2001 – The Billingsley Creek properties were added to the state park system. They were purchased utilizing bonds through the Idaho State Building Authority.

Fall 2001 – The agency director granted permission for hunting at the Billingsley Creek unit. The Idaho Park and Recreation Board gave formal approval for hunting at its quarterly meeting on August 13, 2002.

2003 – Billingsley Creek and Box Canyon were added to the list of state park properties in I.C. 67-4212. Crystal Springs and Niagara Springs no longer carried separate state park status, but were listed below Malad Gorge State Park with Billingsley Creek and Box Canyon as "state park lands located on the Snake River south of Interstate Highway 84 and east of U.S. 30 in Gooding County."

April 2003 – Lonnie Johnson became manager of the Thousand Springs Park District. He is the current park manager during this master planning process.

2004 – I.C. 67-4212 was amended to reflect Box Canyon's official name—Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve. It maintained its listing as a state park property under Malad Gorge State Park.

March 15, 2005 – The initial open house for the state park master plan was held at the park. Its purpose was to announce the planning process to the public and solicit applications for the plan's Stakeholder Advisory Team.

April 20-21, 2005 – A master plan scoping meeting was held with the staff Planning Review Team (PRT). The PRT determined that this master plan is for one park with 4 units. The Team proposed to name the park Thousand Springs State Park, and recognize the following properties as its 4 park units: Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek (contains both the upper and lower properties), Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve (referred to as the Box Canyon unit), and Niagara Springs (contains both the IDFG Niagara Springs property and the IDPR Crystal Springs property). Stakeholder Advisory Team members were also selected.

June 7, 2005 – A master plan scoping meeting was held with IDPR's management partners for Thousand Springs State Park.

June 8-9, 2005 – Public Input Workshops were held in Hagerman (June 8) and Boise (June 9) to collect scoping information from the public regarding park significance, issues and concerns, as well as desired experiences and opportunities for the various units of Thousand Springs State Park.

June 9, 2005 - A master plan scoping meeting was held with staff of Thousand Springs State Park.

August 16, 2005 – The Stakeholder Advisory Team and Planning Review Team met to provide input into the development of management alternatives for the Thousand Springs State Park master plan.

October 26-27, 2005 – Public Open Houses were held at the park (October 26) and in Twin Falls (October 27) to provide review and comment on the 3 proposed management alternatives for the park.

November 5, 2005 – The Stakeholder Advisory Team and Planning Review Team met to craft a preferred management alternative for the Thousand Springs State Park master plan.

May 18, 2006 – The Thousand Springs State Park draft master plan was presented to the Idaho Park and Recreation Board for its review and approval.

June 8-9, 2006 – The Thousand Springs State Park draft master plan presented to the public

via public open houses held at City Council Chambers in Twin Falls and at the Billingsley Creek unit of the park.

June 2006 - The Thousand Springs State Park Final Master Plan was presented to the Hagerman City Council on June 21, 2006 and to the Gooding County Planning & Zoning Commission on June 26, 2006, with a request for their comments and endorsement.

August 3-4, 2006 – The Thousand Springs State Park Final Master Plan presented to the Idaho Park and Recreation Board at its summer meeting for final Board review and approval prior to publication.

chapter 3

Resource Inventory

Resource Inventory

Snake River Plain

Thousand Springs State Park lies within the Hagerman Valley. Located in the Snake River Plain, the Hagerman Valley is approximately 12 miles long and varies in width from one to four miles. The Snake River Plain dominates the geography of southern Idaho and stretches from the Wyoming border to the Oregon border. The plain is essentially an elevated lava field covered by wind-blown sediment (loess) and ancient lake deposits. The Snake River bisects the Plain in an east-west direction and forms the principle drainage for the region.

Within the fractures and cavities of basalt lava flows courses one of the plain's most remarkable features – the Snake River Aquifer. The aquifer is a huge network of underground water underlying about 10,000 square miles of south central and eastern Idaho. The aquifer stretches from roughly the town of Hagerman northeast to Island Park. It is fed by rainfall and melting snow from a 35,000-square mile area in the surrounding basin and mountains. Many of Idaho's "lost rivers" flow across permeable lava beds before "disappearing" (or percolating) into the ground. The Henrys Fork and the Big Wood River are the only northern tributaries of the eastern and central Snake River – other northerly streams such as the Big and Little Lost Rivers disappear into the lava and feed the aquifer before reaching the Snake River. The underground water moves very slowly at rates estimated to be 2 to 10 feet per day. Water flowing from the springs today may have melted from the Teton Mountains 150 years ago. It is estimated that the total storage capacity of the aquifer may be equal to the present volume of Lake Erie, enough water to exceed four centuries of Snake River flow (Shallat, 1994).

In Thousand Springs State Park and elsewhere in the Hagerman Valley, the Snake River aquifer escapes its subterranean cavities and

Snake River at Niagara.

releases springs which flow from the hillsides down to the Snake River. Filtered by lava rock, the spring waters emerge at a consistent 58˚F and are clear and pure. Over time, the springs and the tributaries they feed have carved small side canyons. For example, Malad Gorge is a side canyon formed by the cutting actions of the Malad River and its springs. The spring waters provide habitat for unique and endangered aquatic species including the Shoshone sculpin - a species found nowhere else in the world.

The spring water is integral to the many aquaculture operations in the Hagerman Valley. Most of the trout eaten in the United States are raised in fish hatcheries fed by the spring water in the region outlying Thousand Springs State Park. The spring water is also used for irrigation, hydroelectric power and drinking water.

3.1 Climatological Summary

The Hagerman Valley is semiarid with hot, dry summers and cold winters. The area has four distinct seasons, with variable conditions possible during each season. Summer precipitation is sparse with few brief thunderstorms. Annual precipitation is approximately 9.6 inches, the majority of which falls in winter and spring. The growing season is 140 days long.

At the weather station closest to the park, 9 miles north of Hagerman (in Bliss - elevation of 3,265ft,), the mean annual temperature is 50˚F.

The average high temperature in July is 91˚F where as the January average low temperature is 19˚F.

3.2 Regional Geology

The Snake River Plain is a major late Cenozoic tectonic/volcanic feature at the north end of the Basin and Range Physiographic Province (Bonnichsen and Breckenridge, 1982). The plain extends in a crescent shape across southern Idaho for roughly 300 miles and is divided into two main regions identified as the western and eastern Snake River Plain. Thousand Springs State Park is located on the eastern plain. North and east of the town of Hagerman, basalt volcanoes were periodically active during the past half million years and filled the ancestral Snake River canyons with lava. The eastern Snake River Plain is underlain in places by more than a mile of basaltic lava flows.

Displacement started about 17 million years ago by rifting and down warping of the plain. The subsequent stretching of the crust produced a basin that began filling with sedimentary and volcanic rocks of considerable thickness during the Miocene, Pliocene and Pleistocene periods.

Hagerman Valley is in the central Snake River Plain region of the eastern portion of the Columbia Plateau physiographic province. The Columbia Plateau (a basalt plateau) is a major geologic formation that built up over the past 30 million years from volcanic eruptions. Extensive basalt flows of various ages lie to the east and north of Hagerman. In general, the valley walls and land east of the Snake River are primarily igneous in nature (the Snake River Group) while the rock to the west is primarily sedimentary (the Idaho Group).

Geologic and geomorphic features within the Hagerman Valley were also influenced by the Bonneville Flood (15,000 years ago), which produced scoured surfaces of basalt, known as "scablands", and enormous sand and gravel bars (Maley, 1987). The flood carved high bluffs and deposited fields of so-called "melon gravel," lava boulders ranging in size from a compact car to watermelons. The melon gravel bars can be found at river level and up 225 feet above the river.

Mule Deer Inhabit Park Lands

3.3 Wildlife Inventory

Thousand Springs State Park harbors an abundance of wildlife. The following list is not intended as an exhaustive list of all the species found in Thousand Springs State Park; it is likely that the park harbors additional wildlife species. Threatened or endangered species are noted later in this chapter under the section titled, "Issues of Special Concern."

Common small mammals include ground squirrels *(Spermophilus spp. and Ammospermphilus leucurus)*, canyon mouse *(Peromyscus spp)*, black-tailed jackrabbit *(Lepus californicus)*, cottontail rabbit *(Mountain Cottontail: Sylvilagus nuttallii)* kangaroo rats *(Dipodomys ordii)*, marmots *(Marmota flaviventris)*, and wood rats *(Neotoma spp.)*. Predators found in the park are badgers *(Taxidea taxus)*, spotted and striped skunks *(Spilogale putoris and Mephitus mephitis)*, Coyote *(Canis latrans)*, weasels *(Mustela spp.)*, and bobcat *(Lynx rufus)*. Mule deer *(Odocoileus*

herionus) are also regularly found on park lands.

The park also provides nesting and brooding habitat as well as winter cover for ring-necked pheasant (Phasianus colchicus). Other upland bird species include gray partridge (Pedrix pedrix), chukar partridge (Alectoris chukar), and valley quail (Callipepla californica).

Seasonal migrations bring large numbers of waterfowl to the park. During the fall and winter the Snake River and wetland areas teem with large populations of migratory waterfowl including mallards *(Anas platyrhynchos)*, Canada geese *(Branta Canadensis)*, great blue heron *(Ardea herodias)*, Black-crowned Night-Heron *(Nycticorax nycticorax)*, white pelican *(Pelecanus erythrorhynchos)* and double crested cormorants *(Phalacrocorax auritus)*. Additionally, the basalt walls at Malad Gorge, Box Canyon and other units provide excellent nesting areas for birds of prey including golden eagles *(Aquila chrysaetos)*, red-tailed hawks *(Buteo jamaicensis)*, prairie falcons *(Falco mexicanus)*, and great horned owls *(Bubo virginianus)*. Other bird species found within the park are Swainson's *(Buteo swainsoni)*, Cooper's *(Accipiter cooperii)* and sharp-shinned hawks *(Accipiter striatus)*, American kestrel *(Falco sparverius)* and the northern harrier *(Circus cyaneus)*.

The Snake River and its tributaries that drain through the park units such as the Malad River, Billingsley Creek and Box Canyon Creek support aquatic ecosystems. These habitats support endangered springsnails as well as native trout, the white sturgeon *(Acipenser transmontanus)*, Shoshone sculpin *(cottus greenei)* and other fish species.

3.4 Unit Topography and Physiography

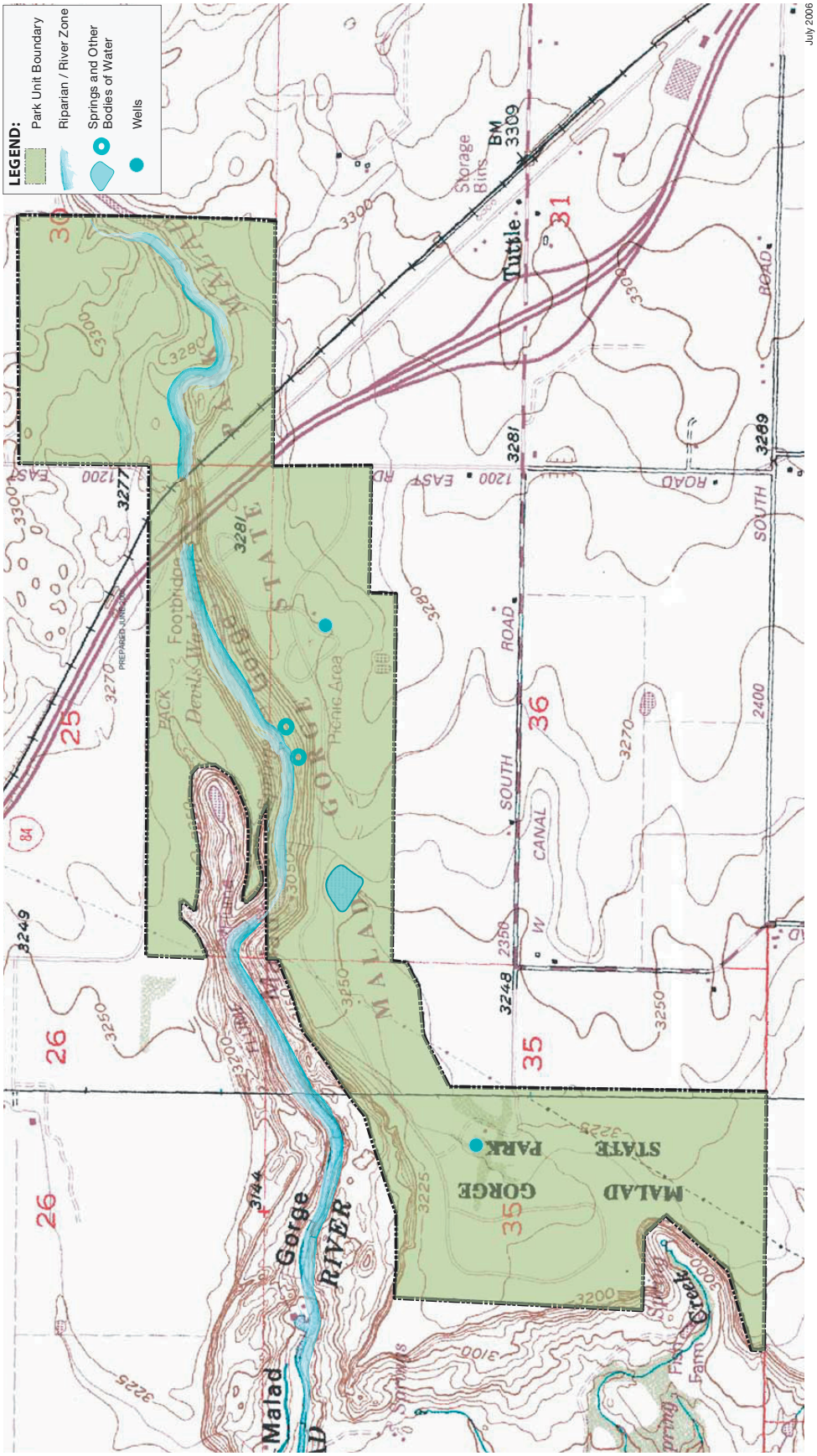
The Hagerman Valley is a broad, flat agricultural area east of the Snake River. The Snake River, flows west and then north through the valley and is located in close proximity to each of the units of the Thousand Springs State Park. Over time, the Snake River eroded between the sedimentary deposits to the west and the basalt bedrock to the east. As a result of the river's erosive force the eastern side of Hagerman Valley is flanked by a resistant basalt cliff 150 to 200 feet high that gives way to a gently sloping plain. This topographic feature is evident at Niagara where the north side of the park is characterized by a nearly sheer cliff band.

The physiography of the 652-acre Malad Gorge unit is distinguished by the vast gorge cut by the Malad River as it drains to the Snake River, 2-1/2 miles downstream. The river crashes down a waterfall and into Devil's Washbowl, before cutting the 250-foot gorge. Outside the Malad Gorge, along the rim, there is little topographic relief.

The Billingsley Creek unit is also distinguished by its namesake, Billingsley Creek, which is the largest stream in Thousand Springs State Park. The creek meanders through the upper unit where it is fed by fresh springs flowing from the hillside above Fisher Lake. The creek flows along the boundary of the lower unit, whose agricultural fields gently slope towards it.

A dramatic canyon and substantial topographic relief characterize the physiography of Box Canyon. The 350-acre canyon lined by 250-foot basalt walls harbors an incredible fresh water spring. The spring is the 11th largest in North America and pours 180,000 gallons of water per minute into the Snake River.

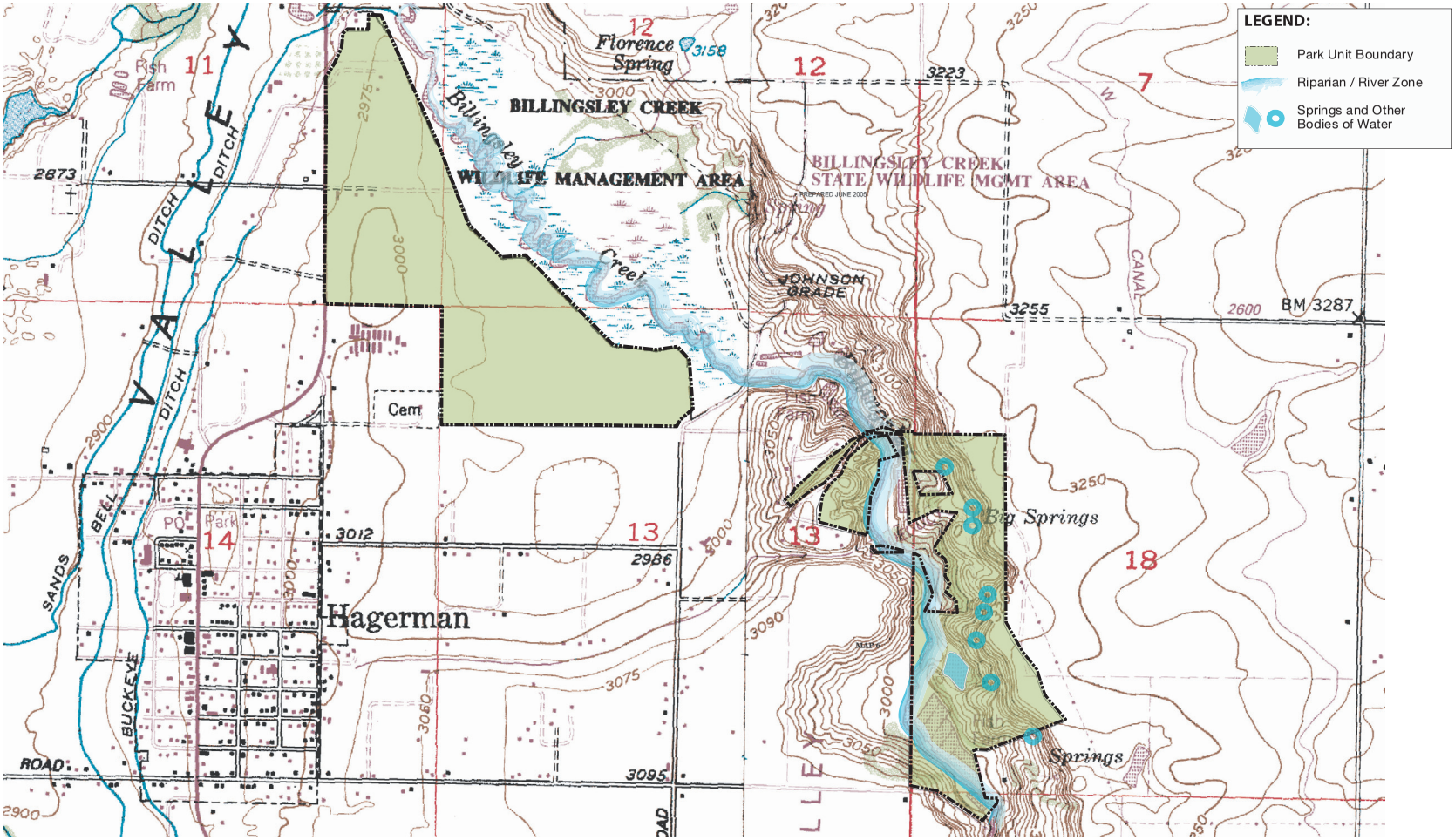
The Niagara unit provides the best opportunity within the park to experience the Snake River Canyon. The park facilities are located at the base of the 350-foot deep canyon so shear basalt form a dramatic backdrop to the campground and other developed areas. Perhaps the most significant physiographic feature of the unit is the Snake River which forms the park's southern boundary.



ANALYSIS MAPS: TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSIOGRAPHY

Thousand Springs State Park

MALAD GORGE UNIT



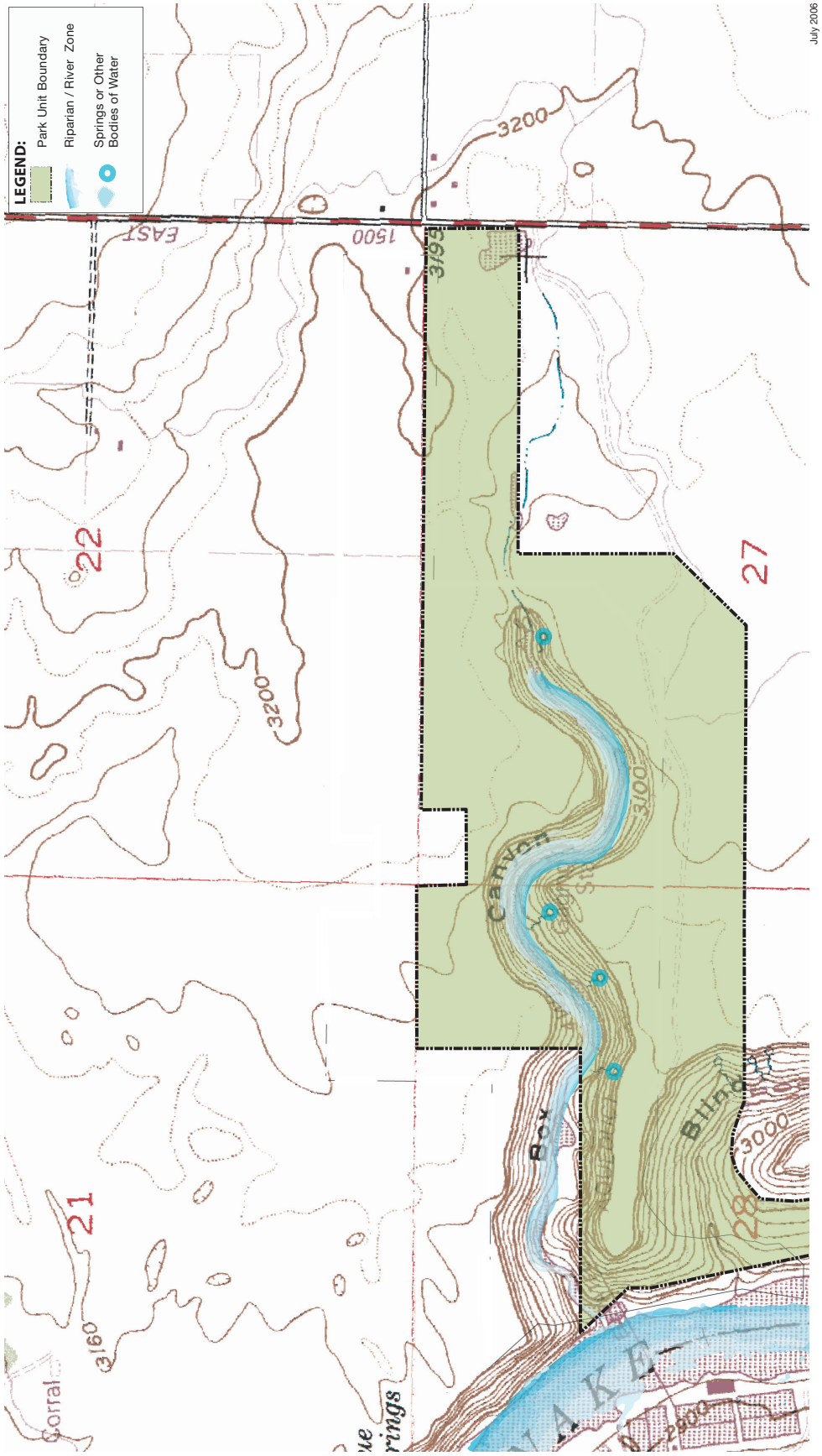
July 2006

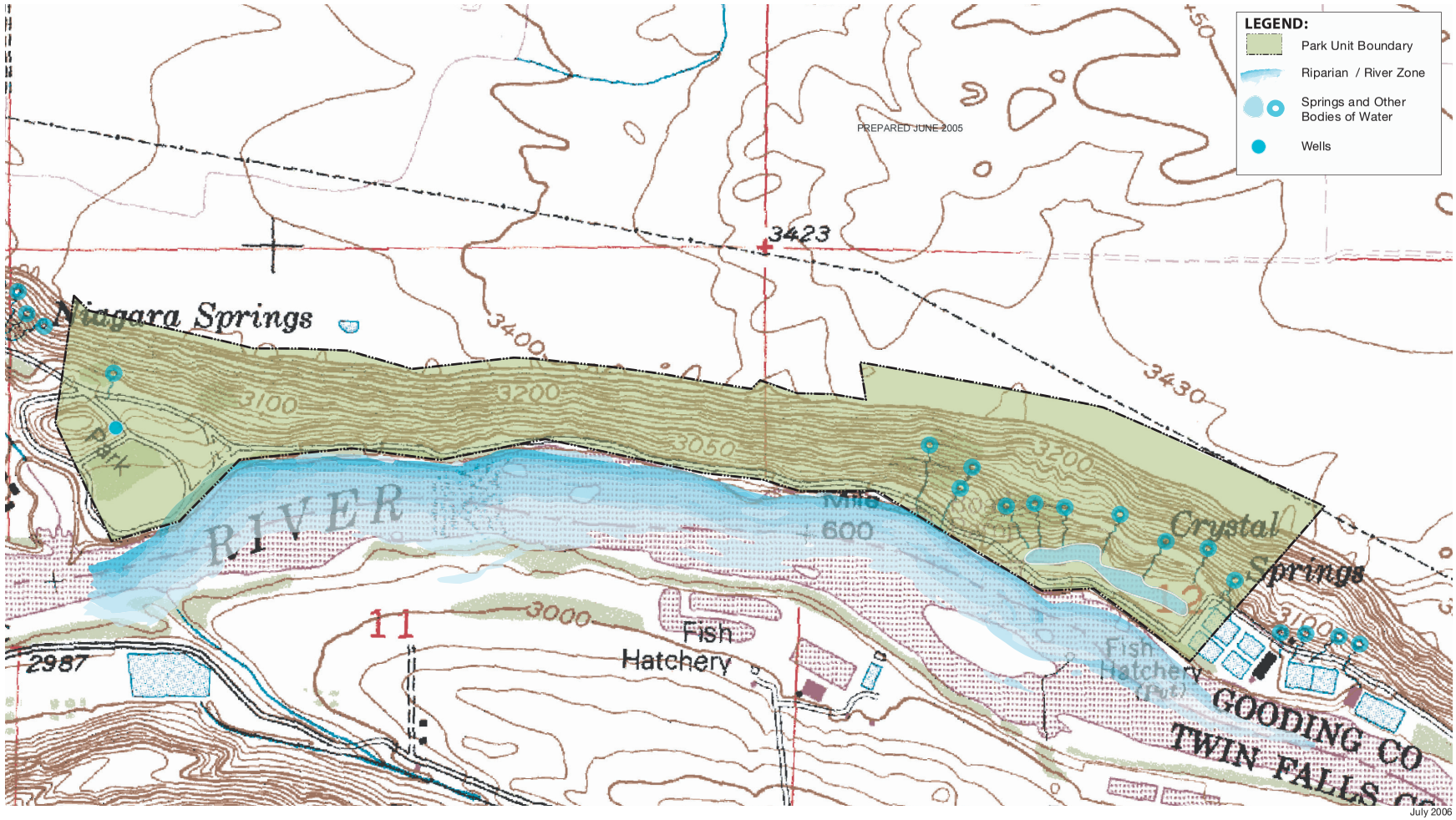
ANALYSIS MAPS: TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSIOGRAPHY

Thousand Springs State Park

BILLINGSLEY CREEK UNIT

Scale: 1" = Approximately 480'


LEGEND:
Park Unit Boundary
Riparian / River Zone
Springs or Other Bodies of Water
July 2006
BOX CANYON UNIT
ANALYSIS MAPS: TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSIOGRAPHY
Thousand Springs State Park
3200
1500
EAST
3199
22
27
21
28
3100
3000
3160
2900
Box
Canyon
Corral



July 2006

ANALYSIS MAPS: TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSIOGRAPHY

Thousand Springs State Park

NIAGARA SPRINGS UNIT

3.5 Unit Soils Inventory

Sand and gravel deposits and thin, poorly developed soils cover basalt flows in the Hagerman Valley. The soils are primarily loessial in origin. Loess is composed of wind-blown particles that have a wide range of composition. Loess is fine and subject to water and wind erosion. The loess soils are good for most climatically adapted crops, and are relatively free of salt problems due to high permeability.

A typical Middle Snake soil profile is light in color, of medium texture, and has lime accumulation zones in the subsoil and substratum. Soil depth varies from 6 inches to 40 inches. Near the Snake River canyon rim the soil depth is usually shallow and gradually grades to bedrock. Basalt outcrops are common in many areas, particularly on the north side of the river.

A description of each of the soil series found within the park follows. Please refer to the soils maps for the location of these soils.

• Ackleton Series
The Ackleton series consists of well-drained, deep soils found on basalt plains and buttes. Slopes range from 0 to 8 percent. Permeability is moderate. (#1, Malad Gorge)

• Chijer Series
The Chijer series consists of deep to very deep soils that are well-drained and found on basalt plains and buttes. Slopes range from 0 to 8 percent. Permeability is moderate. (#31, Malad Gorge)

• Ephrata Series
The Ephrata series consists of very deep, well-drained soils formed in stream terraces. Slopes range from 1 to 30 percent. Permeability is moderately rapid to a depth of 26 inches and very rapid below. (#53, Billingsley Creek)

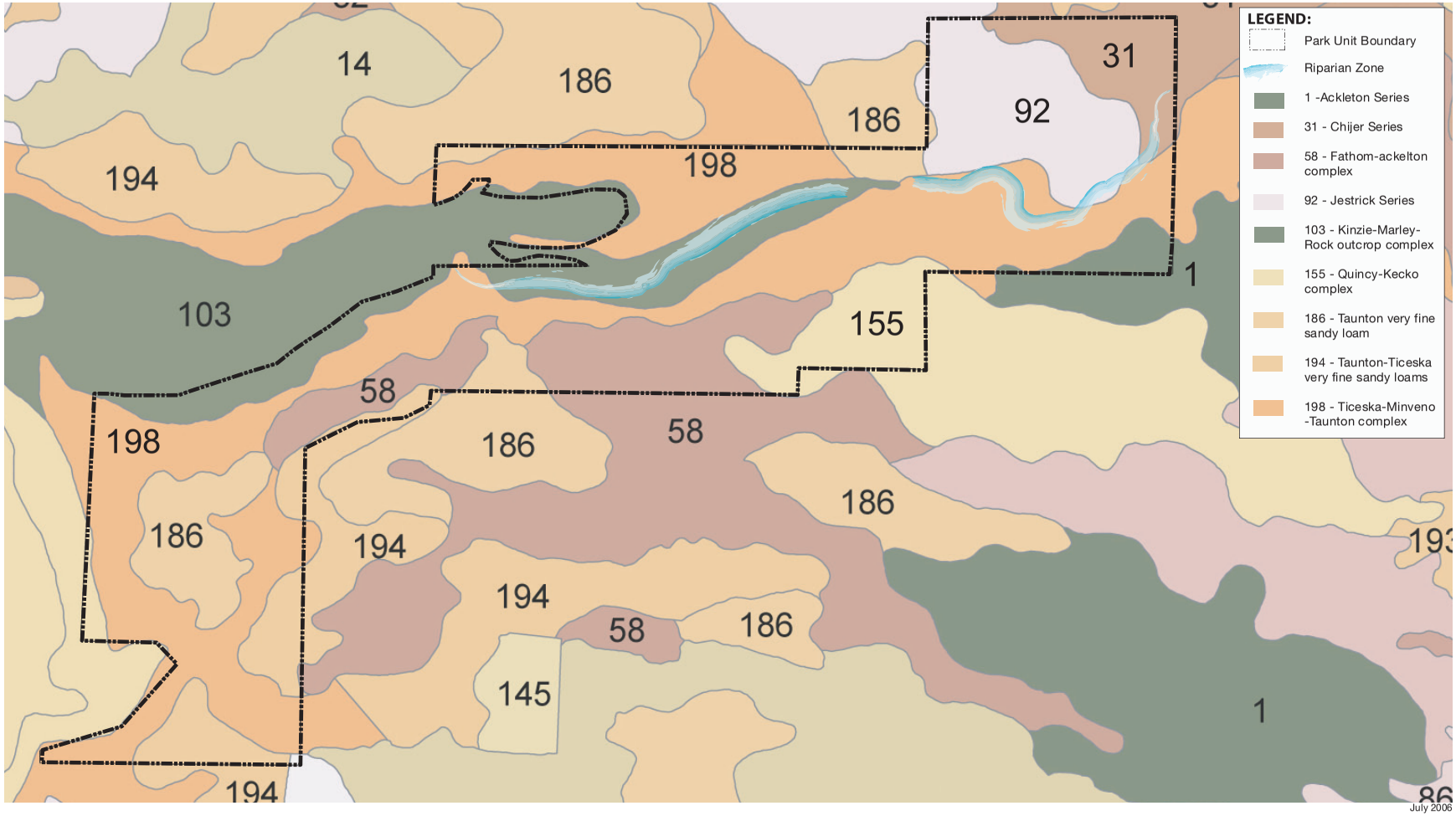
• Fathom Series
The Fathom series consists of deep to very deep, somewhat excessively drained soils found on basalt plains, buttes, and escarpments of stream terraces. Slopes range from 0 to 20 percent and permeability is rapid. (#58 Malad Gorge; #59 Billingsley Creek; #55, #56, and #57 Niagara Springs)

• Fulvaquents Series
The Fulvaquents series consists of very deep, poorly drained soils found on stream and lacustrine terraces. Slopes range from 0 to 3 percent and permeability is moderate. (#66 Billingsley Creek)

• Jestrick Series
The Jestrick series consists of moderately deep to very deep soils that are somewhat excessively drained. Soils are found on basalt plains on slopes ranging from 0 to 12 percent. Permeability is moderately rapid. (#92, Malad Gorge)

• Kecko Series
The Kecko series consists of deep to very deep, well-drained soils found on basalt plains and stream terraces. Slopes range from 0 to 8 percent and permeability is moderately rapid. (#97, Billingsley Creek)

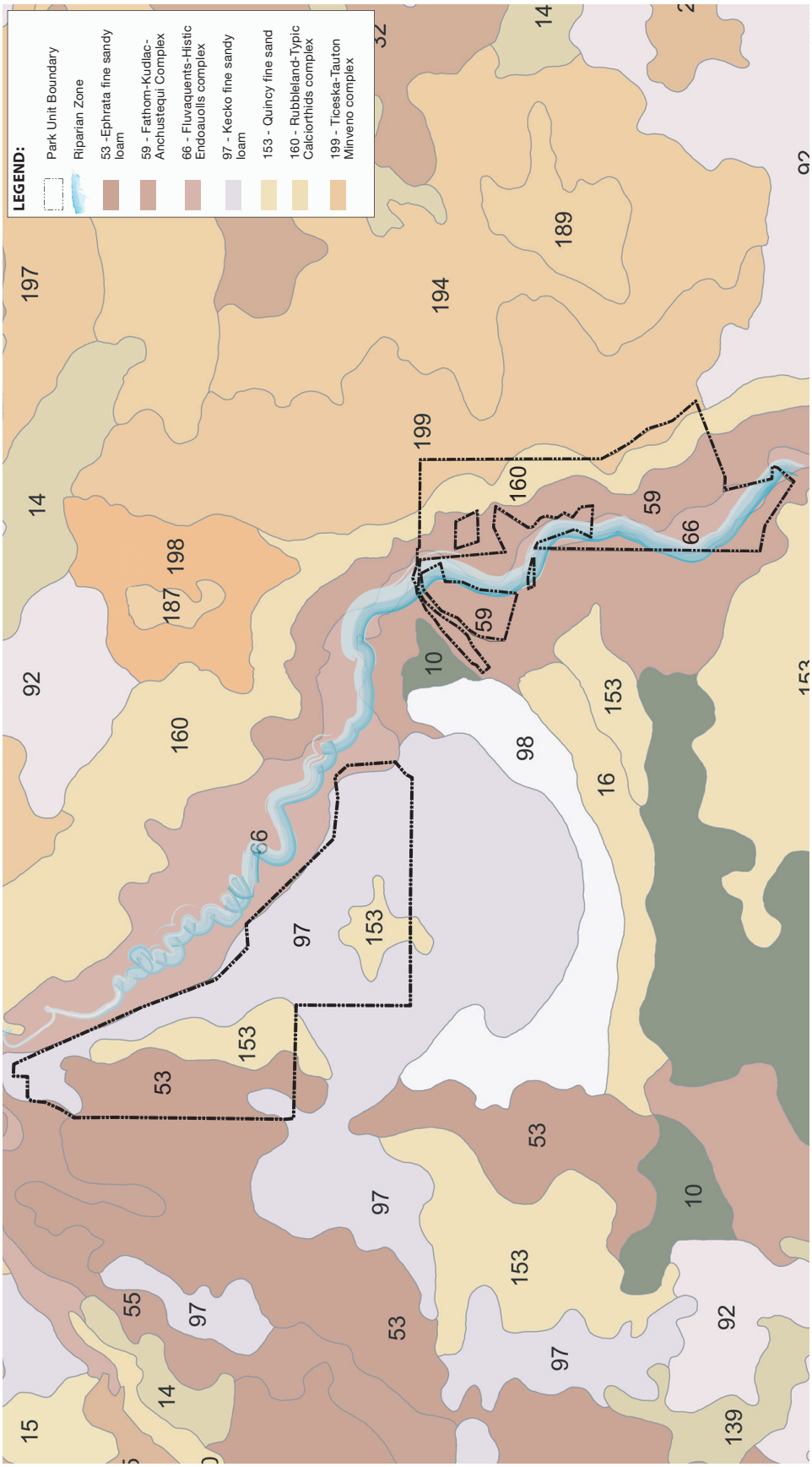
Restored grasses in the Malad Gorge area.



July 2006

ANALYSIS MAPS: SOILS
Thousand Springs State Park

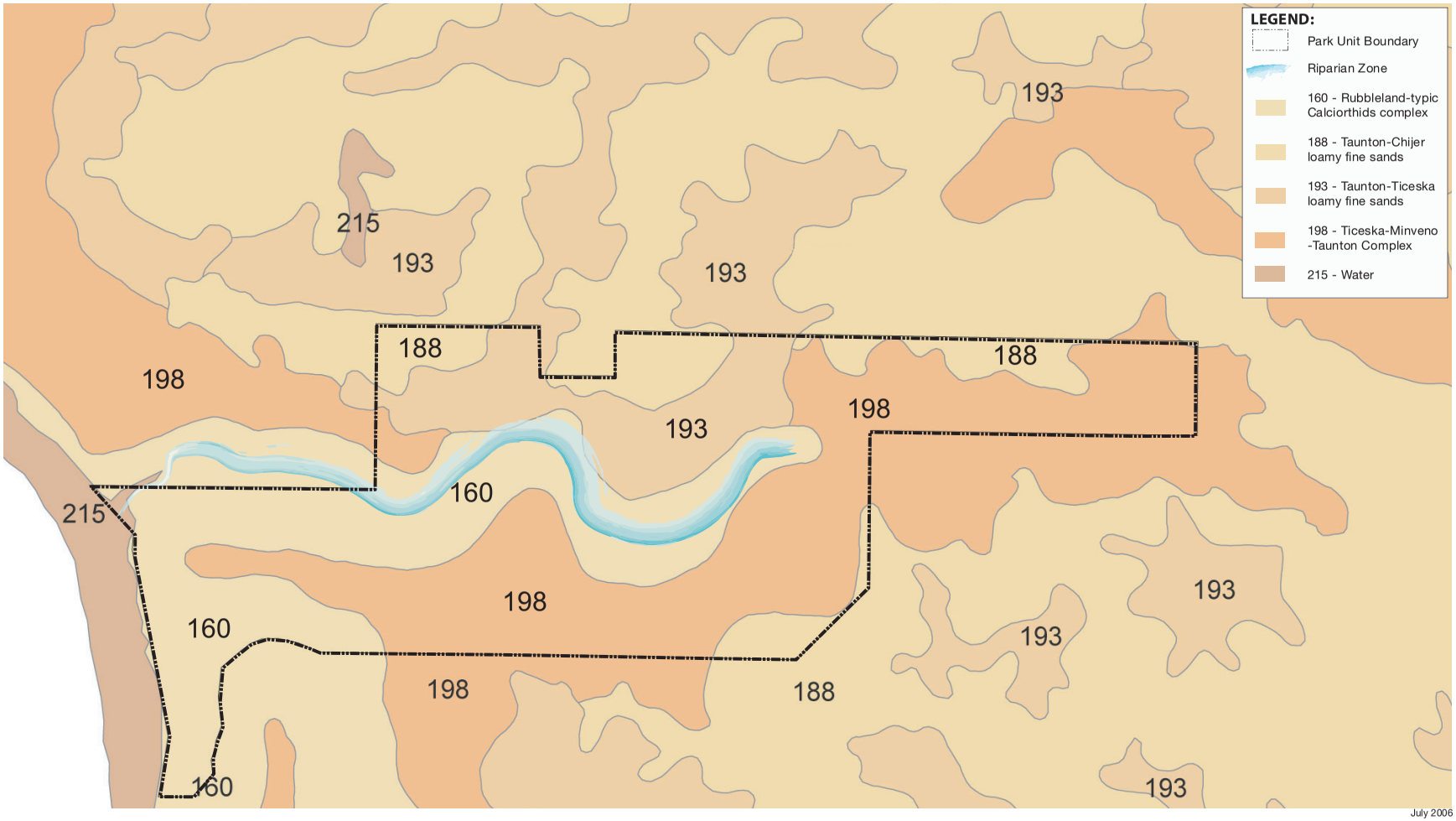
MALAD GORGE UNIT



ANALYSIS MAPS: SOILS

Thousand Springs State Park

BILLINGSLEY CREEK UNIT



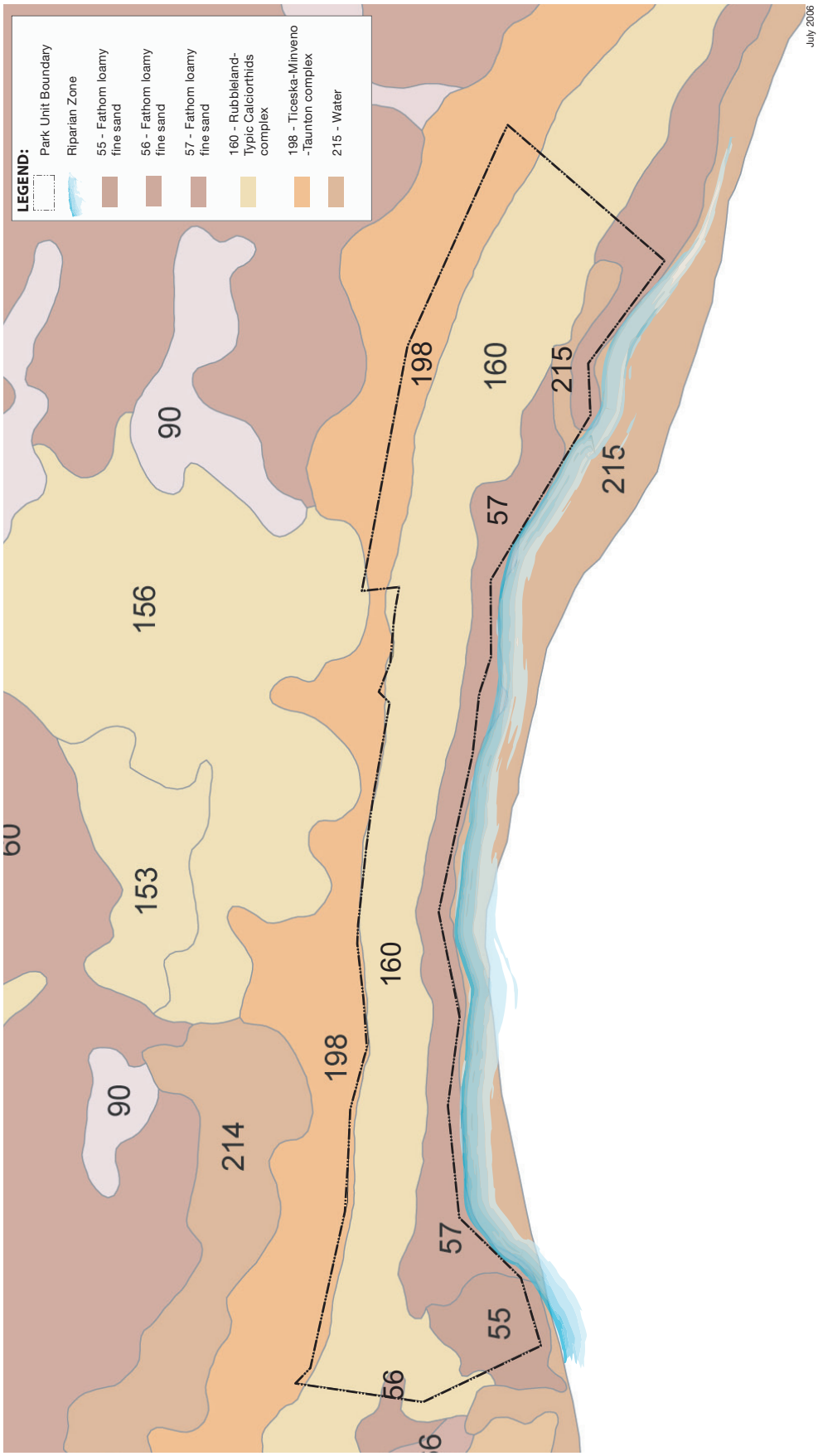
July 2006

ANALYSIS MAPS: SOILS
Thousand Springs State Park

BOX CANYON UNIT

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES

0 200 400 800
Scale: 1" = Approx. 350'



July 2006

ANALYSIS MAPS: SOILS

Thousand Springs State Park

NIAGARA SPRINGS UNIT

- **Kinzie Series**

The Kinzie series consists of moderately deep, well-drained soils found on basalt plains and buttes. Slopes range from 1 to 15 percent and permeability is slow. (#103, Malad Gorge)

- **Quincy Series**

The Quincy series consists of very deep, excessively drained soils found on basalt plains. Slopes range from 1 to 4 percent and permeability is rapid. (#155, Malad Gorge; #153, Billingsley Creek)

- **Rubbleland-Typic Calciorthids Complex**

The Rubbland-Typic Calciorthids complex consists of very deep, somewhat excessively drained soils found in concave areas and on the toeslopes of basalt escarpments. Slopes range from 20 to 65 percent and permeability is moderately rapid or rapid. (#160, Billingsley Creek and Box Canyon).

- **Taunton Series**

The Taunton series consists of moderately deep, well-drained soils found on basalt plains and buttes. Slopes range from 0 to 15 percent and permeability is moderate. (#186, #194, Malad Gorge; #188, #193 Box Canyon)

- **Ticeska Series**

The Ticeska series consists of moderately deep, well-drained soils found on basalt plains and buttes. Slopes range from 1 to 12 percent and permeability is moderate. (#198, Malad Gorge; #199, Billingsley Creek; #198, Box Canyon and Niagara Springs)

3.6 Upland and Wetland Vegetation Inventory

Park vegetation is characteristic of the sagebrush steppe of the eastern Snake River Plain. The dry areas of the park units, along the canyon rims of Box Canyon, Malad Gorge, and Niagara Springs support sagebrush-grass associations. Scattered throughout the park are moist areas including wetlands, springs and riparian corridors that support more diverse vegetation.

Sagebrush Steppe of the Snake River Plain

The upland areas of the Snake River Plain have been classified as the Western Intermountain Sagebrush Steppe (West 1983). Floristic diversity of the sagebrush steppe communities is moderate. Below are listings of plants common to the sagebrush steppe. Please note that this is not intended as an exhaustive list of all the species found in Thousand Springs State Park, it is likely that the park harbors additional plant communities. Rare species are noted later in this chapter under the section titled, "Threatened and Endangered Species."

Common native woody perennials:

Sagebrush *(Artemisia spp.)*

Rabbitbrush *(Chrysothamnus spp.)*

Antelope bitterbrush *(Purshia tridentate)*

Common native grass and forbs:

Bluebunch wheatgrass *(Pseudoroegneria spicata)*

Sandberg bluegrass *(Poa Secunda)*

Idaho fescue *(Festuca idahoensis)*

Great basin wild rye *(Elymus cinereus)*

Wild buckwheat *(Eriogonum spp.)*

Penstemon *(Penstemon spp.)*

Globemallow *(Sphaeralcea spp.)*

Lupine *(Lupinus spp.)*

Phlox *(Phlox spp.)*

Penstemon *(Penstemon spp.)*

Common plants in moist areas of the sagebrush steppe:

Narrow bands of riparian vegetation are found along streams, drainages, spring and other

areas with increased availability of water. Trees, large shrubs, forbs and graminales (e.g. grasses, rushes, sedges) dominate areas adjacent to permanent surface water or with very shallow groundwater. Willow is the primary plant species, but cattail, hackberry, alder, cottonwood, sagebrush and a variety of other shrubs are intermixed.

Willow *(Salix spp.)*

Russian olive *(Elaeagnus angustifolia)**

Cottonwood *(Populus spp.)*

Water birch *(Betula occidentalis)*

Chokecherry *(Prunus virginianus)*

Skunkbush *(Rhus trilobata)*

Wood's Rose *(Rosa woodsii)*

Poison Ivy *(Toxicodendron radicans)*

Golden current *(Ribes aurem)*

Sedges *(Carex spp.)*

Rushes *(Juncus spp.)*

Cattail *(Typha latifolia)*

*Exotic, invasive species.

3.7 Issues of Special Concern

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are four federally listed threatened or endangered animals that occur in the park: the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and three species of freshwater snails, the desert valvata *(Valvata utahensis)*, the Snake River Physa *(Physa natricaria)*, and the Bliss Rapids snail *(Taylorconcha serpenticola)*. Box Canyon's rich aquatic ecosystem supports the three endangered springsnails as well as the Shoshone sculpin *(Cottus greenei)*, a rare fish found only in Idaho.

Also of note is the moss-like plant called cow-pie buckwheat *(Eriogonum shockleyi)* that is found along the canyon rim at Malad Gorge. The plant is listed as rare by the State of Idaho and is only found in four sites in Idaho.

Noxious and Invasive Weeds

The control of non-native, invasive plants is an issue throughout the park. IDPR has implemented a number of eradication measures to suppress weed infestations. Techniques that are currently being employed include manual removal, biological control and chemical application by both park staff and county weed control crews. Noxious weed species in the park that are listed among Idaho's thirty-six recognized noxious weeds include Canada thistle (*cirsium arvensis or cirsium candensis)*, poison hemlock *(conium maculatum)*, puncturevine *(tribulus terrestris),* field bindweed *(convolvuluv arvensis)* and purple loosestrife *(lythrum salocaria)*. Other common invasive species in the park include houndstongue *(Cynoglossum officinale)*, water hemlock *(cicuta maculate)*, Russian olive *(Elaeagnus angustifolia)*, cheatgrass *(bromus tectorum L.)* and mustard. The invasive nature of cheatgrass on the Snake River Plain is what initiated the first native plant restoration project in the park.

Threats to Water Quality and Aquatic Habitat

The Snake River is one of the most polluted and degraded rivers in Idaho and, consequently, the aquatic ecosystem of the Middle Snake River has been severely compromised. Nearly all of the water at Milner Dam is diverted into irrigation canals and a myriad of industrial pollutants are discharged into the Snake River below the dam creating massive algae blooms and depleting oxygen supplies for fish, aquatic insects and snails. Pollution sources include feedlots and dairies, fish waste from hatcheries, agricultural return flows and treated waste from municipal water and sewer treatment plants. Given these threats to the health of the Snake River's aquatic ecosystems, protection of water sources within Thousand Springs State Park is a management priority of IDPR.

In contrast to the Snake River, the water quality of springs flowing from the Snake River Plain aquifer and through Thousand Springs State Park is excellent. The spring water emerges from igneous rock beds which contain no readily soluble materials and is, therefore, low in total dissolved soils. Water from the springs maintains a constant temperature of 58˚F.

3.8 Scenic Inventory

Thousand Springs State Park presents incredible geologic and hydrologic scenic wonders in a desert environment. The park's diverse landscapes range from vibrantly colored springs and sheer basalt cliffs to open fields and grasslands. The most significant views and scenic resource of each unit are listed below (photo sheets with images of significant visual resources in each unit follow this section).

Malad Gorge

The Malad River cascading down a sixty-foot waterfall into Devil's Washbowl is an exceptional visual resource that captivates visitors. Views of the 250-foot-deep gorge are best from the sturdy bridge that crosses the canyon. The east side of the park unit, where the Malad River winds through a basalt plain filled with contorted, black lava rocks, is also a visual asset. Outside of the gorge and the Malad River, the park unit lacks topographic relief and is characteristic of an open, panoramic landscape. Distant views from the park down Woody's canyon and across to the Idaho Power windmills are also significant and present interpretation opportunities.

Billingsley Creek

Most of the acreage at Billingsley Creek is used for cash crops, and stands as alfalfa hay fields; therefore, views are dominated by an open agrarian landscape. The Billingsley Creek riparian corridor is a scenic resource, especially in areas where visitors can access the creek and view up and down it. The Vardis Fisher home site offers a number of significant views with the lake, springs, creek and Fisher home ruins all intriguing visual resources. Other areas of the upper Billingsley Creek unit are dominated by views of the aquaculture research center and fish hatchery facilities.

Box Canyon

Views down into and within Box Canyon are significant visual resources. The canyon is 1500 – 3000 feet wide and winds for over one mile before reaching the Snake River. The canyon is lined by 200-foot basalt cliffs and talus slopes. Views of the brightly colored freshwater spring (from the rim) as well as the 20-foot waterfall (from the viewing platform) are impressive. Finally, the eastern reaches of the park unit provide access to the Snake River and opportunities to observe waterfowl and other wildlife along the river.

Niagara Springs

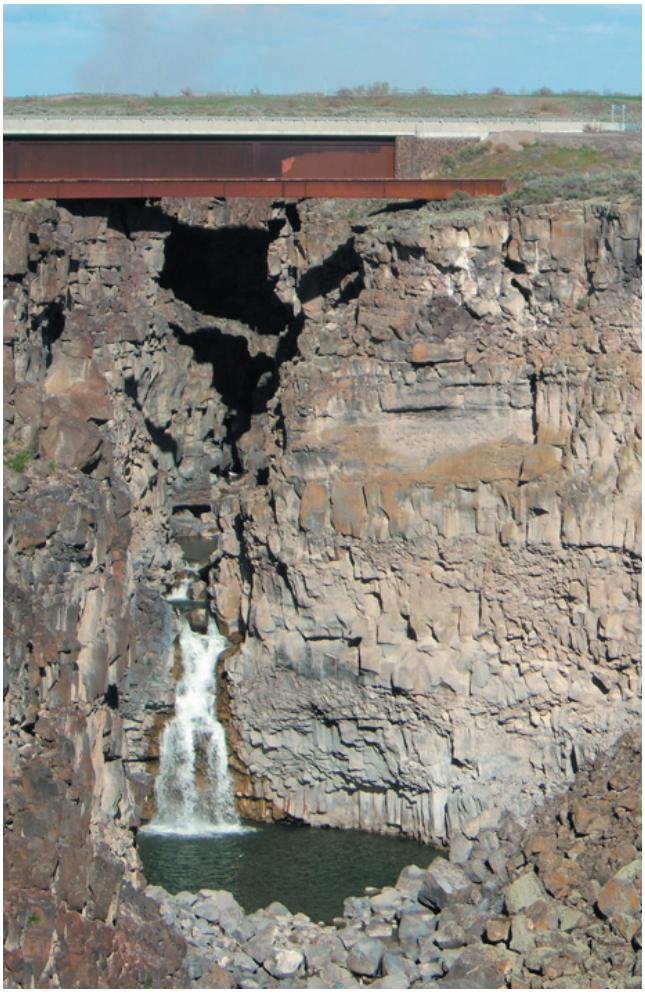
The basalt cliffs and the Snake River bordering Niagara Springs are significant visual resources. Clearing invasive vegetation, namely Russian olive, along the road corridor, would vastly improve views to the Snake River. Just outside the park unit boundary is the national natural landmark, Niagara Springs. At the springs, the water tumbling down the slope at 250 cubic feet per second is a captivating visual resource.

Additionally, Crystal Springs Lake is a natural lake with an outfall that discharges to the Snake River. When the water is clear the lake is a visual asset. Unfortunately, nutrients in the groundwater, hatchery wastewater discharges, and deposited organic sediments promote extensive growth of aquatic plants and algae in the lake. The organic deposits detract from the aesthetic quality of the lake.

Scenic Resources, Malad Gorge

Malad River winding through lava rocks.

Scenic distant view above Woody's Cove.



The gorge, waterfall and Devil's Washbowl are best viewed from the pedestrian bridge that spans the canyon.

The 250-foot deep gorge, lined by sheer basalt cliffs.

Scenic Resources, Billingsley Creek

Fisher home site includes several visual resources including the lake, home ruins, and springs.

Hatchery operations and research facility.

Fresh water springs feeding Fisher Lake.

Open alfalfa fields.

Scenic Resources, Box Canyon

A winding canyon, 1-mile long, leading to the Snake River.

Pristine, vibrantly colored fresh water spring.

A 20-foot waterfall within the canyon.

Pelicans and other wildlife are visible along the Snake River.

Scenic Resources, Niagara Springs

Basalt cliffs of the Snake River Canyon provide a scenic backdrop to the developed areas.

The adjacent Snake River.

Neighboring Niagara Springs, a National Natural Landmark.

When the water is clear, Crystal Lake can be a visual asset. The freshwater springs above the lake are also captivating.

3.9 County Comprehensive Plans And Ordinances

Units comprising Thousand Springs State Park lie wholly within Gooding County; therefore new development within the park comes under review of the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with Section 67-6528 of the Local Planning Act.

Gooding County Comprehensive Plan

The Gooding County Comprehensive Plan was adopted March 8, 1999. The following objectives and policies from the Gooding County Comprehensive Plan addresses elements that should be considered in the Thousand Springs State Park master plan.

Article III. Natural Resources

Section A: Soils

Objective #2 – Encourage land use practices that minimize wind and water erosion.

Policy #3 – Stress the need for detailed soil surveys for use in preliminary planning for agricultural, urban, engineering, watershed, recreation and wildlife use.

Section C: Water Resources

Objective #4 – Encourage development of new and improvement in existing, wetlands and ponds to remove sediment and nutrients from irrigation return flows.

Objective #6 – Encourage water resource developers to consider water-based recreation as a planned use.

Policy #4 – Establish recreational zoning districts adjacent to Snake and Malad Rivers.

Section D: Wildlife

Objective #5 – Prevent undue encroachment on present habitat of game and non-game birds.

Objective #7 – Encourage preservation and protection of the existing valuable aquatic habitat in Gooding County.

Article IV. Land Use

Section A: General

Policy #2 – Establish zoning districts for agricultural, industrial, commercial, residential and recreational purposes.

Section B: Rangeland

Policy #4 – Encourage the continuation of multiple use concepts of public rangelands for the purposes of livestock, recreation and mining, recognizing that livestock has the greatest economic impact on the county.

Policy #5 – After construction or maintenance on any road or highway, the disturbed areas will be seeded to an adapted perennial vegetation mix to curb the spread of noxious weeds.

Section H: Recreation

Policy #1 – Any encroachment or development within three hundred (300) feet of the Snake River Canyon Rim or the Malad River Canyon Rim shall be prohibited without a special-use permit.

Policy #3 – Establish recreational zoning districts adjacent to the Snake and Malad Rivers.

Policy #4 – The increased use of the recreation areas within the county could create unsanitary conditions; therefore, when boat docks, ramps, picnic tables and other improvements are planned, adequate sewage and waste facilities and adequate water supplies shall be planned at the same time.

3.10 Associated Planning Documents

City of Hagerman Comprehensive Plan

The Hagerman Comprehensive Plan was adopted in March 1996. The southern boundary of the lower Billingsley Creek Unit of Thousand Springs State Park falls just outside the Hagerman area of impact. City expansion

is noted in the Comprehensive Plan as being most desirable to the south and east of the city. The Billingsley Creek Unit is located north of Hagerman.

The following objectives in the Hagerman Comprehensive Plan should be considered in the Thousand Springs State Park master plan.

V. Economic Development
Objective #3 – Encourage local and regional tourism development as infrastructure permits.

XI. Recreation and Tourism
Objective #1 – Encourage passive recreation in Hagerman such as bikeways, walkways and the development of natural areas.

Objective #5 – Work on developing travel-related facilities to better serve increased numbers of tourists.

Objective #6 – Identify and develop youth recreational opportunities.

Thousand Springs Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

The Thousand Springs Scenic Byway travels through Gooding, Twin Falls and Jerome counties. The Byway has officially been recognized as a "scenic route" since June 1977. Twin Falls County sponsored the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan. Its intent is to provide guidelines and options for local governments to consider in the collaborative management of the Byway. The plan was published in August 1998.

The lower Billingsley Creek Unit is located along the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway (Highway 30). The corridor management plan is currently undergoing revision. It has been proposed that the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway Committee include the Billingsley Creek Unit of Thousand Springs State Park as a feature along the Byway.

The following goals and strategies in the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway Plan should be considered in the Thousand Springs State Park master plan:

Preservation Goal #2 – Counties and cities along the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway could ensure that new development is compatible with the safe functioning and continued scenic value of the byway.

> *Strategy #1* – Require safe access to the byway.
>
> *Strategy #2* – Mute the impact of parking and loading areas with landscaping.
>
> *Strategy #6* – Limit the type, number, size and spacing of signs to be compatible with the scenic values of the byway.

Marketing Goal #3 – Provide local marketing and promotion of the Byway's resources and opportunities.

Marketing Goal #5 – Provide linkage information on related and adjacent resources and attractions.

Middle Snake River Recreation Opportunities at Risk – An Action Plan for Managing Recreation in the Middle Snake River Corridor

The Middle Snake River Recreation Work Group, a coalition of citizens; resource professionals; local, state and federal government agencies; businesses and recreation groups prepared this Action Plan and published it in October 1997. The plan addresses recreation management and access to recreation opportunities in the 120-mile Middle Snake River corridor that extends from Three Island State Park in Glenns Ferry to Massacre Rocks State Park near American Falls.

The following goals in the Action Plan should be considered in the Thousand Springs State Park master plan.

Goal #1 – Increase opportunities for public access in the Middle Snake River Corridor.

Goal #2 – Maintain and develop facilities to support diverse recreation activities throughout the corridor.

Goal #3 – Plan, coordinate and build a system of trails.

Goal #4 – Protect and preserve the corridor's resources and scenic views.

Goal #6 – Provide quality public information and education opportunities.

Goal #7 – Improve awareness of the economic value of recreation.

3.11 Initial Park Development Plan

Of the four units of Thousand Springs State Park, only Malad Gorge has a previous master plan. It was adopted July 24, 1975. The master plan noted, "Malad Gorge State Park has been set aside by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation for present and future generations based upon the area's outstanding natural, scenic, historic and recreation features, and the ability to meet regional and statewide visitor needs as identified in the 'State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.' Park development and programming shall facilitate both specific and non-specific resource based visitor activities, including both the educational and recreational use of leisure time."

The Malad Gorge master plan classified the park as a Natural Park and stated, "appropriate park use falls predominantly in the aesthetic portion of the recreational spectrum. The park is not intended to accommodate all forms or unlimited volumes of recreational use. Compatible uses will include hiking, nature study, camping, picnicking, and associated resource based programs and activities."

Proposed development in the 1975 master plan included an entrance kiosk, administrative complex with staff housing and a maintenance facility, a picnic area with a large group shelter and playground, a group camp, fishing and wildlife blinds at Justice Pond, a visitor/interpretive center, reconstruction of the Kelton historic area including a restored Kelton stage station, a field school group housing area with a 50-person outdoor program area, and approximately 9 miles of hiking and biking trails.

3.12 Land Ownership, Jurisdiction And Use

Park Land Base

Thousand Springs State Park consists of 4 units, which spread across the Hagerman Valley. Traveling from west to east, the units are Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek, Box Canyon and Niagara Springs. Altogether, Thousand Springs State Park consists of 1,502.18± acres of land. The 692-acre Malad Gorge unit was acquired through numerous warranty deeds, a Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) patent (#11-75-0071) from the BLM, and a lease with the Idaho Department of Lands (#M-7012). Approximately four hundred fifty-one (451.13) acres were acquired from the following private property owners in 1970:

- Hue D. & Anne L. Wolfe 280.62 acres
- Fred & Marjorie Zeller 58.43 acres
- D.H. & Viola Gold 71.45 acres
- James E. & Marvel Farmer 40.63 acres

The R&PP land consists of 200.44 acres, acquired from the Bureau of Land Management in 1975. An additional 0.442 acre was acquired in 1987 through a quitclaim deed from Nettie M. Leach. The current Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) lease for 40 acres of endowment property expires on December 31, 2011.

The upper and lower sections of the Billingsley Creek unit totals 286.48± acres. The lower section, formerly known as Emerald Valley Ranch, was purchased from the Dan and Irma

McFaddan Family on September 28, 2001. It consists of 179.58 acres. The upper section was purchased from Aqua Life, Inc. and A&G, LLC on September 28, 2001. The total acreage for the upper section is 106.88 acres.

The Box Canyon unit is approximately 344.41 acres in size. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchased the property from Earl M. and LaVane M. Hardy/The Hardy Foundation, Inc./The Earl M. and LaVane M. Hardy Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust. The Nature Conservancy then sold the property to the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. The Nature Conservancy will hold its signed warranty deed, which conveys the property to IDPR, in escrow until execution of the December 21, 1999 Land Sale Contract between the two parties.

The Niagara Springs unit contains 179.28 acres in two (2) adjacent parcels. The 79.6-acre Crystal Springs property was acquired from Idaho Power Company in 1971. The Quitclaim Deed for the Crystal Springs property carries a requirement that the land must be used for public recreational purposes or it will revert back to Idaho Power with the repayment of the original purchase price – $1.00. The 99.68-acre Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG) property, which is managed by IDPR, was initially assumed under a 1976 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). On March 1, 1990, a Management Agreement outlining IDPR's management of Niagara Springs for IDFG and IDFG's management of the Taylor "Bear Track" Williams Recreation Area in Lincoln County for IDPR superseded the 1976 MOU. The 1990 agreement "shall continue in full force and effect until cancelled for noncompliance . . . or until cancelled or changed by mutual agreement of the parties."

Adjacent Landowners

The various units of Thousand Springs State Park are bounded primarily by private property. The Malad Gorge unit is surrounded by private property, most of it in agricultural use. The eastern border of the lower Billingsley Creek unit is adjacent to the Billingsley Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA), which is owned by the Idaho Department of Fish & Game. The remainder of the unit is surrounded by private agricultural or commercial use properties. The upper Billingsley Creek unit is surrounded by private agricultural land. The Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve unit is surrounded by private agricultural land, with the exception of a portion of its northwest border, which is adjacent to Bureau of Land Management property. The Niagara Springs unit is bounded by privately owned fish hatcheries to its east and west, private agricultural land to the north, and the Snake River to the south.

3.13 Local Transportation Network

Interstate 84 is the major transportation arterial in Gooding County. Its western route travels through Utah, Idaho and Oregon. I-84 largely follows the westward route of U.S. 30 from just east of Rupert, Idaho to Portland, Oregon. The Malad Gorge Unit of Thousand Springs State Park is dissected by I-84, with the majority of the park lying west of the freeway and a smaller portion containing the site of the old Kelton Stage Stop on the eastern side. Malad Gorge can be accessed off I-84 at Exit 147.

U.S. 30, a minor arterial in Gooding County, can be accessed eastbound off I-84 at Exit 141. U.S. 30 tours the Hagerman Valley and passes by the entrance to the lower Billingsley Creek Unit of Thousand Springs State Park. U.S. 30 travels south of I-84 from Exit 137 to a point east of Burley. The Thousand Springs Scenic Byway consists of U.S. 30 from I-84 Exit 137 west of Bliss to, and including, State Highway 50 headed north to I-84 between Kimberly and Hansen. The stretch of U.S. 93 between I-84 Exit 173 and U.S. 30 in Twin Falls is also designated a portion of the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway.

Major collector routes that move traffic between the units of Thousand Springs State Park include Ritchie Road (1200 E), Hagerman Highway/2900 S/Vader Grade, West Point Road (1500 E), Bob Barton Highway (E 3500 S), Rex Leland Highway (S1950 E) and the portion of E 2700 S/Tupper Grade/E 2750 S that connect U.S. 30 to Ritchie Road. A minor collector, E 2500 S/Justice Grade, also connects Ritchie Road to U.S. 30 in the northern end of the Hagerman Valley and provides the most direct access from Malad Gorge to Billingsley Creek.

3.14 Existing Utility Infrastructure

Potable Water Supply

Potable water is provided by a combination of wells and springs in the park. At Malad Gorge, two wells, one by the restroom in the picnic area and one in the shop/residence area, provide water for each of their respective sites. At Billingsley Creek and Box Canyon, there is no potable water provided for visitors. Water from the Florence Livestock Spring provides water to the Billingsley Creek farm property. It is piped to the manager's residence, garden center, volunteer host site, barn and riding arena; however, since the water comes from an open water source, it is not designated as potable water unless it has been treated. Sanitron treatment units have been installed at the residence and host site. All other water is posted as non-potable. A water hose from the adjacent Tupper property provides water on the Vardis Fisher property. At Niagara Springs, water is provided by a well for the camping/day use area. No water is provided by Crystal Lake.

Irrigation Water Supply

Irrigation water at Malad Gorge comes from the Justice Ditch. The day use area is flood irrigated. A pump has been installed in the ditch to bring water to the grass beside the restroom building. At the Billingsley Creek unit, irrigation water comes from both the Florence Livestock Spring and Billingsley Creek. Water at Box Canyon is provided from a pivot line and a water right on adjacent property. At the Niagara Springs unit, irrigation water comes from Niagara Springs.

Sewage Disposal

Septic tanks, vault and portable toilets provide for sewage disposal in the park. There are 4 septic tanks at Malad Gorge. They are located near the restroom in the picnic area, the residence, the shop and the volunteer host site. The Billingsley Creek unit has a septic tank for the residence, one that services both the garden center and the volunteer host site, and presumably one on the Vardis Fisher property to service the University of Idaho research facility. A portable toilet has also been placed in the lower Billingsley Creek unit. At Niagara Springs, there is a septic tank in the camping/day use area. Vault toilets service Crystal Lake. Box Canyon has a portable toilet.

Electricity

Idaho Power supplies electricity throughout the park.

Building Heat Sources

The Malad Gorge shop and Billingsley Creek garden center are heated with wood stoves. The furnace at the Malad Gorge residence is fueled by propane. The residence at Billingsley Creek is heated by a combination of wood and electricity. The shop at Niagara Springs is heated by electricity.

3.15 Facility Inventory, Analysis And Staffing

Park Facilities

Park Headquarters/Visitor Center

The park headquarters is located at the Malad Gorge Unit in the office/shop building. Approximately one-quarter of the building houses the park's main office. The remaining three-quarters of the building house a 3-bay shop facility. This building currently serves as the only "visitor center" to the park, although it lacks traditional visitor center amenities

(public restrooms, interpretive displays, staffed information desk, etc.).

A second one-room park office is located at Niagara Springs on the north end of the flush restroom building, adjoining the unit's maintenance facility. A public contact kiosk is also located on the road into Niagara Springs.

Staff Housing
Housing for staff of Thousand Springs State Park is available in the Malad Gorge and Billingsley Creek units. A staff residence, built in 1998, is located north of the park office/shop in the maintenance area at Malad Gorge. A volunteer RV host site, built in 2005, is located south of the office/shop building.

At the lower Billingsley Creek unit, a 1980 manufactured home with built-on garage and additional living space is located north of the vehicle storage/shop building.

The Aquaculture Research Facility within Thousand Springs State Park Provides Potential Educational Opportunities

Park Maintenance Buildings
Thousand Springs State Park has three (3) maintenance facilities of varying size located within the Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek and Niagara Springs units. The primary facility is at Malad Gorge. It consists of the 3-bay shop attached to the park office, flammable fuel storage shed, well house and a 4-bay vehicle shed built in 2005.

The maintenance facility at Billingsley Creek is located in the lower half of the unit, next to the manager's residence. It consists of an open 3-bay vehicle storage area with an enclosed shop at the north end.

The Niagara Springs maintenance facility is attached to the north end of the flush restroom building in the middle of the manicured lawn area.

Recreation Facilities
Popular activities at Thousand Springs State Park include hiking, fishing, picnicking, camping, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, disc golf, non-motorized boating, hunting, special events, and gathering with family and friends.

Recreation facilities available at the Malad Gorge unit include trailhead parking and an interpretive kiosk with benches on the south end of the pedestrian bridge that spans Devil's Washbowl, an interpretive trail on the north side of the gorge, and a self-guided driving tour with parking areas and interpretive panels along the south side of the gorge. The day use area provides parking, a restroom, picnic tables, upright barbecue grills, a playground, horseshoe pits, a fire pit with benches, a reservable group shelter and a large open play area. Approximately one-half mile west of the day use area is the wildlife pond, which provides parking, picnic tables, a fish dock, non-motorized boating opportunities and wildlife viewing. Adjacent to the wildlife pond is the

Billingsley Creek Agricultural Area

9-hole disc golf course. East of I-84, in the Kelton Stage Stop area is an interpretive trail.

The Billingsley Creek unit provides parking, an indoor riding arena; a mile-long hiking/biking/equestrian trail; a reservable "garden center" with attached greenhouses for farmers markets, craft fairs, educational programs and special gatherings; a portable restroom; a large grassy area for informal picnics and concerts; picnic tables alongside the creek; fishing; upland game bird and waterfowl hunting; and non-motorized boating on Billingsley Creek, with an Idaho Department of Fish & Game take-out just outside the park unit's northern-most boundary.

Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve has the fewest number of facilities of any of the units of Thousand Springs State Park. Facilities here include parking, a 3-mile-long-loop hiking trail that extends from the park unit's entrance to the Snake River and back, 2 portable toilets and a viewing platform at the falls in Box Canyon.

Facilities available at the Niagara Springs unit include parking, picnic tables, upright barbecue grills, a reservable group shelter, reservable group tent camping near the fireplace and in the rock area, individual tent camping on the manicured lawn, RV camping along the road, horseshoe pits, fishing docks, benches along the north end of Crystal Lake, two (2) single poured concrete vault toilets and a flush toilet restroom building in the manicured lawn area, one (1) single CXT toilet and (1) double wooden vault toilet building at Crystal Lake, non-motorized boating on the lake and a boat launch on the Snake River.

Other Facilities

Other non-recreation facilities located in Thousand Springs State Park include two (2) silos and a barn in the lower section of Billingsley Creek and two (2) silos, three (3) storage buildings and temporary office/research facilities for the University of Idaho Aquaculture Research Institute in the upper section of Billingsley Creek.

Current Park Staffing and Operation

The park is currently staffed with one full-time park manager and one full-time park ranger. The park also hires 5 full-time (40/hours/week.) and 2 part-time (16 hours/week) seasonal staff during the peak use season. Seasonal staff may start working at the park as early as mid to late April and work until as late as early October, depending on the availability of staff and funding. The park has also utilized volunteer hosts, since 2004, during the summer use season. The volunteers generally work at the park from late May (Memorial Day) to early September (Labor Day), depending on the volunteers' availability.

Many portions of the park, such as Box Canyon, Crystal Lake at Niagara Springs and the front portion of Malad Gorge are open year-round, 24 hours per day. Other portions have either seasonal or hourly limitations. At Niagara Springs, the flush restroom building is winterized in October and that section of the park (camping/day use area) is closed for the winter to vehicular access. Users may park at the gate and walk in. The gate and flush restroom building are reopened in March or April, depending on the weather. The Billingsley Creek unit is open year-round, however, its hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

3.16 Existing Land Use Agreements

Malad Gorge Unit

Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) Patent
R&PP Patent #11-75-0071 was issued to IDPR on February 12, 1975 for the purposes of a state park. Rights-of-way excluded in the patent include: a right-of-way for ditches and canals, a railroad right-of-way (H-0648) for the Minidoka and Southwestern Railroad Company, and highway rights-of-way (B1-05429 and I-4457) for the Idaho Department of Transportation. Mineral rights were also excluded in the patent. The United States also retained the right to occupy and use any part or all of the land for power development.

Lease of Endowment Property from the Idaho Department of Lands
IDPR's lease with the Department of Lands (#M-7012) on a 40-acre parcel of endowment property along a southern boundary of the park includes the area containing the wildlife pond. The term of the current lease is from January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2011. The lease payment is $668 annually, due by January 1 of each year.

Temporary Permits
Two (2) temporary permits have been granted in the park for underground fiber optic cable. Permit #P401701 was granted to U.S. West in April 1997. Permit #401702 was granted to WorldCom Network Services in August 1997. Both permits expire on December 31, 2007.

Billingsley Creek Unit

Operating Agreement – University of Idaho and USDA Agricultural Research Service
A 5-year operating agreement was entered into on September 30, 2002 between the Idaho Dept of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), University of Idaho (UI) and USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS). The agreement conveys use of the fish propagation facilities and a portion of the spring water at upper Billingsley Creek for a period of 5 years. It also provides for construction of research facilities by ARS on the site. The current agreement expires on September 29, 2007.

Agricultural Agreement
Annual agricultural agreements for the production and purchase of hay on the lower Billingsley Creek property are issued each fall for the following year's growing season. It is anticipated that annual agreements will continue to be issued until a recreational use is provided for the property.

Box Canyon Unit

Memorandum of Agreement – The Nature Conservancy
IDPR and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement concerning the Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Spring Nature Preserve on December 21, 1999 whereby IDPR and TNC cooperatively manage the property. The agreement is in effect until such time as the Land Sale Contract of December 21, 1999 is executed.

Real Property Purchase and Sale Agreement of December 31, 1998
In accordance with the Real Property Purchase and Sale Agreement between Earl M. and LaVane M. Hardy, The Hardy Foundation, Inc., and The Earl M. and LaVane M. Hardy Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust and the

State of Idaho, the following provisions will be observed by the Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation. The property will be used as a state park or other environmental or aesthetic asset of the state. The property upon which Box Canyon is located shall be named, in perpetuity, "Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve" or some similar name, which shall be subject to the Foundation's approval. Signage to designate the location and use of the property by the State shall be subject to the prior approval of the Foundation as to its location and design.

Niagara Springs Unit

Memorandum of Understanding – Idaho Department of Fish & Game
IDPR and the Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement concerning the management of Niagara Springs by IDPR and the management of Bear Track Williams Recreation Area by IDFG on March 1, 1990. The agreement "shall continue in full force and effect until cancelled for noncompliance . . . or until cancelled or changed by mutual agreement of the parties."

Temporary Permit
A temporary permit (#P402701) was issued to U.S. West for underground telephone cable near Crystal Springs. The permit was issued on March 17, 1997 and expires on December 31, 2007.

3.17 Historical And Cultural Resources

Kelton Road Stage Stop and Bridge
The Kelton Road stretched 232 miles from Kelton, Utah to Boise, Idaho. Used for stage and freight travel, it became the main freight route from southwestern Idaho to the Central Pacific after the opening of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The Road had 19 stations, spaced an average of 12 miles apart. The Malad Station, built in 1864 as a stage stop, was a home station where drivers and sometimes stages were changed. It provided overnight accommodations and meals were $1 each. A bridge was built across the Malad River, north of the present Interstate, to facilitate travel along the road. All that remains of the Kelton Road bridge and Malad Station are foundations and outlines of where buildings sat. Along the old roadway leading up to the Kelton bridge you can see ruts worn into the lava rock by wagon wheels.

Ruts Worn in Lava Rock by Wagon Wheels at Malad Gorge.

Rock Walls and Rock Enclosures
It is believed that the rock walls and enclosures near the canyon rim have a dual history. Originally, it appears the native inhabitants constructed them as an animal jump. The rock walls and enclosures were built like mazes to confuse the animals as they were driven toward them and over the canyon rim. In the late 1870s the rock complexes were converted into a fort by pioneers in the area who feared Indian attacks during the Bannock War. It's likely the rock structures were added to and reinforced. It appears that some of them may have been gun pits.

Oregon Trail Ford
In 1852 the Alternate North Route of the Oregon Trail was established when a ferry was completed over the Snake River near Hagerman. This route allowed emigrants to avoid the more dangerous Three Island Crossing farther west on the river near Glenns Ferry. The Alternate North Route passed through the park to a

crossing of the Malad River approximately ¼ mile north of the Kelton Road bridge.

Vardis Fisher Homesite

Vardis Alvero Fisher was born in Annis, Idaho in 1895 to Joseph and Temperance Fisher. He was raised in northeastern Idaho where he attended school in Annis, Poplar and Rigby. He received his degree from the University of Utah in 1920 and went on to study for a masters degree and doctorate in English, which he received from the University of Chicago in 1922 and 1925 respectively. Upon completion of his doctorate, Fisher taught English at the University of Utah until 1928. He then went to New York to teach English at Washington Square College of New York University from 1928 to 1931. During his teaching years, Fisher began his career as a renowned author with 3 published novels of regional fiction. His second book, Dark Bridwell, was cited as one of the 10 best American novels ever written by the New York Times. One of his best-known books, Mountain Man, was made into the movie Jeremiah Johnson and his novel, The Children of God, was awarded the Harper Prize Novel Award in 1939. However, it was after Fisher moved to Hagerman in 1940 that he wrote the majority (22) of his 36 books. Fisher's Hagerman home was located on the knoll overlooking the pond locally known as Fisher Lake in the upper Billingsley Creek unit of Thousand Springs State Park. The Fisher home site property has been named the Vardis Fisher Day Use Area in recognition of Fisher and his contribution to literature. Fisher built the house and outbuildings on the property and spent 28 years there with his third wife Opal. He died at that site on July 9, 1968, at the age of 73. Some years after his death, his house burned to the ground. The foundation of the house, with its fireplace, and the outbuildings are all that remain on the site.

Fisher's Hagerman homesite overlooks Fisher Lake in the upper Billingsley Creek unit of Thousand Springs.

Medicine Wheel

A circle of rocks, located near the Kelton Stage Stop, has been identified as both an ancient medicine wheel and a children's playhouse. The formation is claimed by Joseph J.S. Feathers, ethnographer of the Delaware Nation of Idaho to be a 9,000-year-old Delaware (Lenape) medicine wheel. It is also claimed by local resident and former legislator Vernon Ravenscroft to be a "playhouse" created in the late 1960s by the small children of an artifact hunter who occupied their time by building the formation while their father searched the ruins of the stage stop for historical artifacts. A conclusion on the actual genesis of the rock formation has yet to be reached.

3.18 Archaeology And Paleontology

Archaeology

The earliest continual habitation of the Hagerman Valley is believed to have begun about 15,000 years before the present (B.P). Paleo-Indian (15,000 B.P.–8,000 B.P.) and Archaic period (8,000 B.P.–1,500 B.P.) projectile points have been found in the region, as have stone tools, remnants or trace habitation structures and other artifacts. These earliest inhabitants were big game hunters. As history progressed, native inhabitants formed small groups foraging on game, fish and wild plants. At the time European peoples came in contact with native inhabitants of the Hagerman Valley, their food source was tied heavily to the salmon, which ran up the Snake River to Upper Salmon Falls in the spring, summer and fall. The salmon were caught with nets and hooks,

as well as dams and weirs. There is evidence of numerous fishing and camping sites ranging from the Paleo-Indian period to the Proto-Historic period in the vicinity of present-day Hagerman.

Mario Delicio, archaeologist for the Idaho State Historical Society, performed an archaeological investigation in the park from June to October 1973. It covered the area in and around the Malad River canyon. Areas of archaeological/historical interest noted in his report included the rock walls and rock enclosures near the canyon's edge, the Oregon Trail, Kelton Road bridge site and the Kelton Road Stage Station. Details on these sites are noted in section 3.17 Historical and Cultural Resources above.

Paleontology

The area around Hagerman is rich in natural history. The Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, located west/southwest of Hagerman on the west side of the Snake River, is the location of the discovery of a large number of fossils from 3.5 million years ago (late Pliocene epoch). A number of fossilized species, including 16 fishes, 4 amphibians, 8 reptiles, 27 birds and 50 mammals have been located there. Several fossilized freshwater snails, clams, plant and plant pollen species have also been found. The site is significant for its diversity, quantity and quality of fossilized species. Nowhere else has a site been located with as rich and diverse a deposit of fossils from the Blancan age. Within a 6-square-mile area, more than 550 fossil sites have been documented in various sedimentary layers. The most famous of these fossils is the Hagerman Horse. The "horse quarry" at Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument contains the largest single deposit of an extinct species of horse ever found.

At the Malad Gorge unit of Thousand Springs State Park, evidence of ancient horses is found in a cave along the Malad River canyon. Along the roof of the cave are fossilized inverted horse footprints. In October 1990, William A. Akersten, Ph.D., curator and associate professor of Vertebrate Paleontology and Allen McCrady, fossil preparator for the Idaho Museum of Natural History visited the park to examine the horse footprints. They concluded that extinct North American horses, very similar to ones living today, made the prints. Dr. Akersten noted, "The tracks were formed as follows: Sediment filled in a depression on an older basalt (lava) flow. The uppermost part of this sediment appears to be windblown sand. Traces of roots can be found, indicating an established plant cover. While the sand was wet, it was crossed by several horses, which left their tracks. Very soon thereafter the tracks were filled and covered by another, very liquid basalt flow. The heat of the flow baked the upper part of the sediment and produced steam, which created numerous bubbles in the base of the basalt. The softer sediment has now eroded out from between the two basalt flows exposing the underside of the younger flow with the natural molds of the tracks."

chapter 4

Recreation Supply & Demand

Recreation Supply & Demand

4.1 Area Market Breakdown

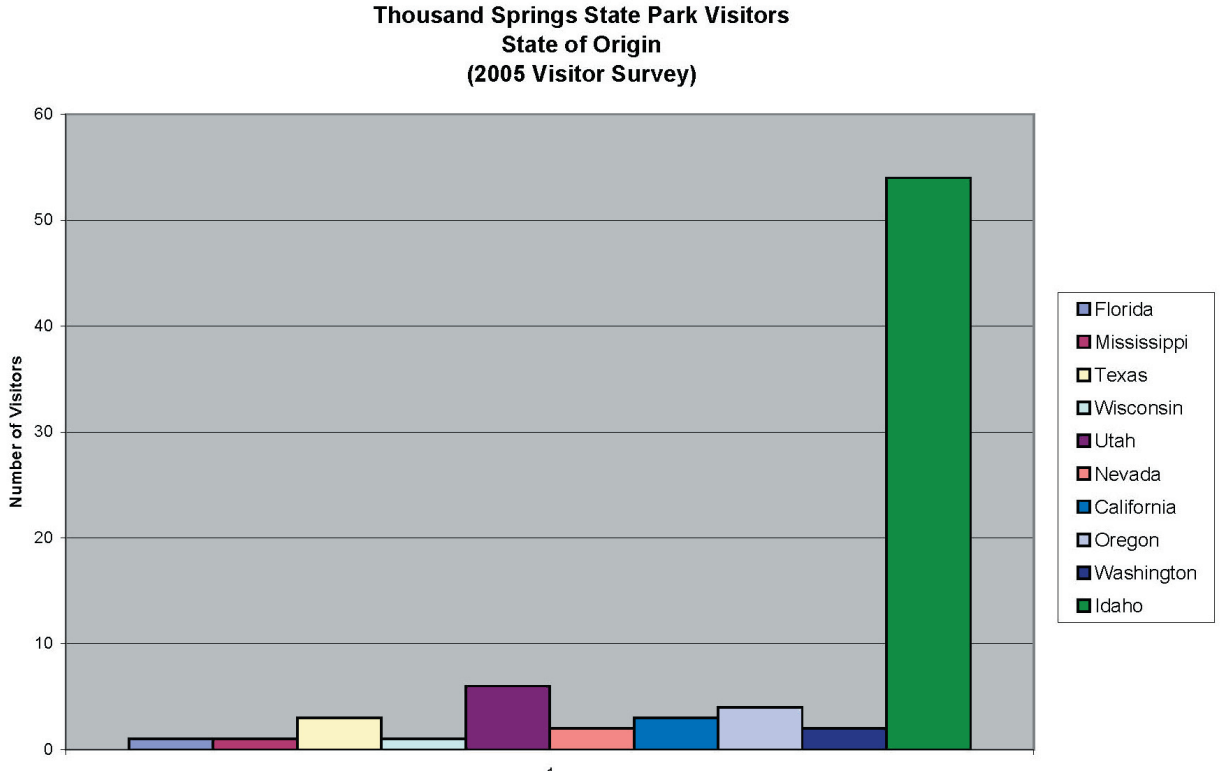
Thousand Springs State Park hosts an average of over 100,000 visitors a year. In the most recent survey of visitors, the majority of park visitors (70%) came from Idaho, and nearly half of all visitors (45%) came from the region surrounding the park. Another 19% of visitors came from the capital city of Boise and surrounding communities.

Easy access to the Malad Gorge unit off I-84 draws a number of out-of-state visitors. Of the 30% of Thousand Spring State Park's visitors coming from outside Idaho, the majority (22%) came from western states, i.e., Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon and Washington. Other out-of-state visitors in 2005 came from Texas, Florida, Mississippi and Wisconsin.

4.2 Area Population and Growth Projections

The population in Gooding County, and Idaho, grew dramatically during the 1990s. From 1990 to 2000, the Gooding County population grew by 21.7%, whereas the entire state's population grew by 28.5%. The state's high growth rate was more than double the national average of 13.2% and ranked Idaho as the fifth fastest growing state in the nation for the decade. It was also the largest growth rate in the history of the state.

Since 2000, population growth has slowed, although it continues to climb. In the timeframe between the 2000 census and July 1, 2005, population has increased by 10.4% in Idaho. During the same time period, the



Top 10 Adult Activities		
Rank	**Activity**	**# of Adults**
1	Walking	64.3
2	Hiking	55.3
3	Watching wildlife other than birds or fish	51.8
4	Swimming in a pond, lake or river	44.8
5	Viewing fish	35.9
6	Bird watching	35.9
7	Biking	35.1
8	Four-wheel driving (Jeeps, pickups, SUVs, etc.)	33.4
9	Golf	33.3
10	Outdoor photography	33.1

Top 10 Youth Activities (as reported by adults)		
Rank	**Activity**	**# of Youth**
1	Swimming in a pond, lake or river	38
2	Hiking	33.3
3	Swimming in a public outdoor pool	33.2
4	Walking	29.8
5	Biking	25.3
6	Watching wildlife other than birds or fish	22.3
7	Running	22
8	Water-skiing or other towing water sports	18.6
9	Outdoor basketball	18.4
10	ATV riding	18.2

Top 10 Activities with Dogs (as reported by adults)		
Rank	**Activity**	**# of Dogs**
1	Walking	28.8
2	Hiking	25.3
3	Four-wheel driving (Jeeps, pickups, SUVs, etc.)	11.1
4	Running	9
5	Biking	8.2
6	ATV riding	6.1
7	Horseback riding	505
8	Cross-country skiing	303
9	Snowshoeing	301
10	Snowmobile riding	2

When Idahoans were asked how long they would be willing to travel for a daytime activity or overnight stay, they responded as follows.

	Travel Time	**% of Respondents**
Less than a Day	1 to 2 Hours	51.8
	2 to 3 Hours	29.2
	Less than 1 Hour	9.9
	3 Hours or More	9

	Travel Time	% of Respondents
An Overnight Stay	2 to 3 Hours	36.8
	3 to 4 Hours	21.8
	1 to 2 hours	20.4
	4 to 5 Hours	8.2
	5 to 6 Hours	5.6
	7 or More Hours	3.6
	6 to 7 Hours	2.1
	Less than 1 hour	1.6

	Travel Time	% of Respondents
At Least 2 Nights Away from Home	3 to 4 Hours	22.7
	2 to 3 Hours	16.7
	5 to 6 Hours	15.8
	7 or More Hours	15.7
	4 to 5 Hours	14.6
	6 to 7 Hours	10.8
	1 to 2 hours	3.2
	Less than 1 hour	0.5

Gooding County population increased by 2.1%. Population trends for Idaho show higher growth near urban areas and lower growth or population decrease in the more rural areas of the state. Gooding County, though rural itself, sits adjacent to Twin Falls County, the urban hub of the region. Overall, population in Gooding County and the surrounding adjacent counties saw an increase of 5.9% between 2000 and 2005.

Population projections for 2005-2010 predict an annual 2.3% growth in Gooding County and a 17.3% growth for the state of Idaho. Overall, population in Gooding County and the surrounding adjacent counties is projected to increase 13% between 2000 and 2010.

4.3 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation

A contemporary assessment of outdoor recreation and tourism in Idaho is provided in the Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP) 2003-2007. According to its stated purpose, Idaho's SCORTP "identifies existing resources and systems, general outdoor recreation and tourism participation patterns and trends, issues and problems, and provides recommendations for strategic solutions to those problems."

The Idaho outdoor recreation demand assessment in the 2003-2007 SCORTP gives results of the outdoor recreation survey conducted in 2002. The survey reports on the outdoor recreation activity participation of Idahoans over the prior 12 months. The results are for statewide activity. Regional activity reports were not included.

Of the 4,000 surveys mailed out, approximately 25% were returned in time for tabulation. Below are the ranked listings of the top 10 outdoor recreation activities for adults, youth and activities with dogs.

4.4 Area Recreational Opportunities

Thousand Springs State Park is located in a region that offers a number of outdoor recreation experiences on public and private land. The area has 11 golf courses—three 9-hole courses in Jerome, Gooding and Burley and eight 18-hole courses in Buhl, Jerome, Twin

Falls (3 courses), Kimberly, Rupert and Burley. The closest course to the park is the 9-hole Gooding Country Club in Gooding.

Located within the region are six Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) that provide hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities. The three WMAs closest to the park are the Billingsley Creek WMA, which is located adjacent to the Billingsley Creek unit of Thousand Springs State Park; the Hagerman WMA, located off Highway 30 south of Hagerman; and the Niagara Springs WMA, located along the Snake River downstream from the Niagara Springs unit of the park.

Both the Hagerman National Fish Hatchery and the Hagerman State Fish Hatchery are located south of Hagerman, off Highway 30. The Hagerman National Fish Hatchery raises over 1.2 million steelhead and 130,000 rainbow trout annually for stocking in Idaho. Fish and wildlife viewing, fishing for rainbow trout and hiking are popular recreation activities at the national hatchery. The Hagerman State Fish Hatchery raises rainbow trout, coho salmon and steelhead for stocking throughout the state. Visitors to the state hatchery are able to view large rainbow trout, golden rainbows, sturgeon, and tiger muskies in a show pond. In the adjacent Hagerman WMA, visitors can fish for trout, bass, bluegills and carp.

The rivers, lakes and streams of the region are popular fishing and boating areas. Boating opportunities include white water rafting on the Snake River, canoeing and kayaking on rivers, motor boating and water skiing on lakes, and boat tours of the Snake River and the adjacent springs of the Thousand Springs region. Hot springs in the region are also popular recreation destinations for swimming and soaking in the hot water. Local area hot springs include Sligar's Thousand Springs Resort near Hagerman, Banbury Hot Springs and Miracle Hot Springs near Buhl, and Nat-Soo-Pah Hot Springs south of Twin Falls, near Hollister.

Each of the four commercial hot springs in the region provides camping, with campsites ranging in number from 13 to 75 per campground. According to the Idaho RV guide, published by the Idaho RV Campgrounds Association, there are 36 public and private campgrounds in the region, ranging in size from 7 sites at the Lake Cleveland Forest Service campground near Albion to 189 sites at the Twin Falls County Fairgrounds near Filer. Four private campgrounds are located in the Hagerman area. The largest private campground in the area is Anderson Camp, east of Twin Falls alongside I-84. Along with camping, Anderson Camp offers a Waterslide Fun Center that includes a water park, miniature golf and arcade games.

Winter outdoor recreation in the area consists primarily of alpine and cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. The region contains two ski resorts, Magic Mountain Resort near Twin Falls and Pomerelle Ski Resort near Albion. Other advertised winter recreation areas are the Gooding County Snow Park near Gooding; Diamondfield Jack Snowplay Area, Penstemon Nordic Ski Trail, Rock Creek Canyon Nordic Ski Trail, Wahlstrom Hollow Nordic Ski Trail and South Hills Snowmobile Trail near Twin Falls; Burley Area Snowmobile Trails near Burley; City of Rocks Snowmobile Trail near Almo; and Howell Canyon Snowmobile Trails near Albion.

The region abounds with natural history and scenic wonders. Among the unique geologic features of the region are Balanced Rock—in Salmon Falls Creek Canyon south of Buhl, Caldron Linn Canyon—along the Oregon Trail near Burley where the Snake River is forced through a 40-foot high passage, Gooding City of Rocks—shale and sandstone rock formations near Gooding, the Great Rift—the largest, deepest, most recent volcanic rift system in the continental U.S. located near Burley and the Shoshone Ice Caves—large lava caves with year-round ice floors north of Shoshone.

Another natural wonder of the area is the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument near Hagerman, which contains a treasure trove of fossils from the late Pliocene epoch.

Other attractions to the area include numerous historical museums/sites, wineries, a lavender farm and the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway, which begins at I-84 near Bliss and follows U.S. 30 through Twin Falls to Idaho 50 and north on Idaho 50 to I-84. It also follows along U.S. 93 north from Twin Falls to I-84.

4.5 Current Park Visitor Profile

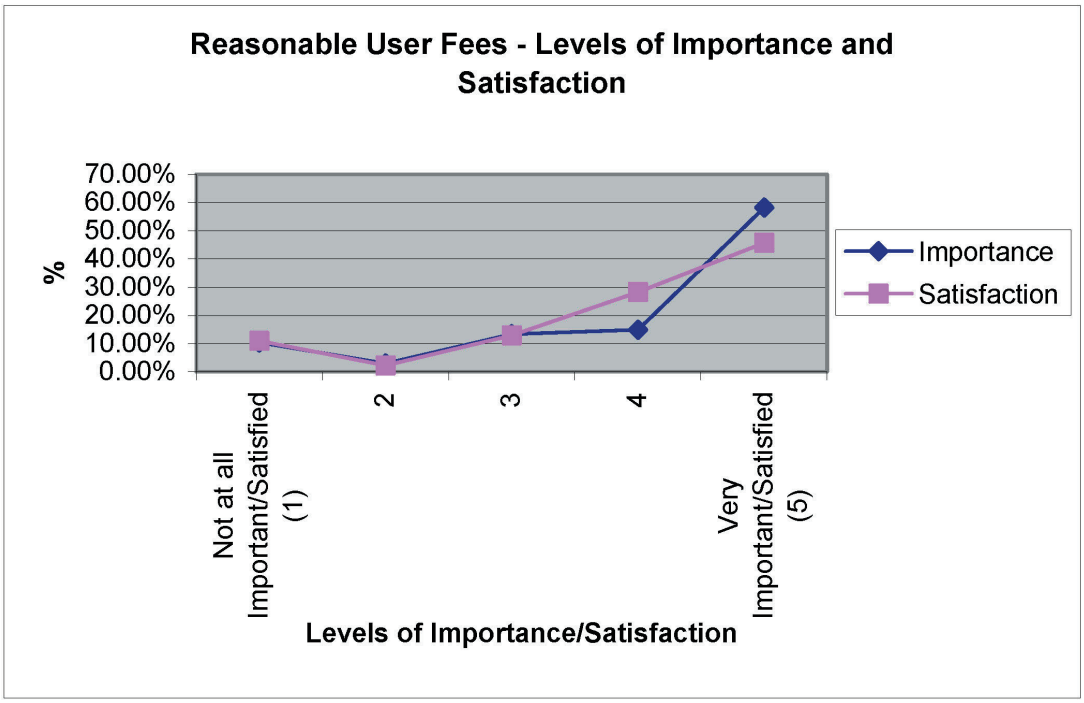
A park visitor survey was distributed to park users at each of the Thousand Springs State Park units during summer/fall 2005. Surveys were administered on randomly selected dates, which included one holiday weekend, two weekdays and two regular weekend days. Of the total surveys distributed, 84 were completed and returned. A copy of the blank survey form and complete survey results are located in Appendices B and C, respectively.
Of the total respondents to the park's visitor survey, 42.2% of visitors were coming to the park for the first time. The majority of visitors surveyed (90.5%) were day-users; however, 9.4% of the visitors stayed in the park overnight.

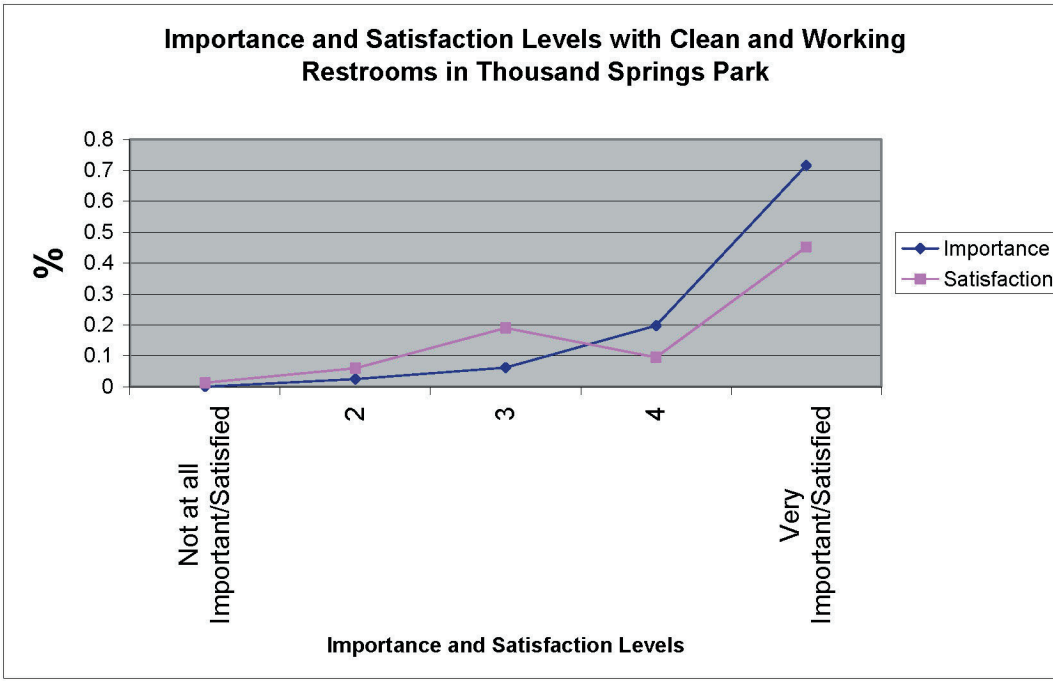
Nearly one-quarter (22.6%) of the park's visitors are local area residents, whereas an almost equal amount (23.8%) visited the park while just passing through the area. Some visitors (13.1%) were in the area to visit friends and family, although others (8.3%) came just to visit the park. Approximately 6% of the visitors surveyed stopped by the park while in the area visiting other attractions and another 1.2% stopped while in the area doing business. The remaining 25% of the visitors were in the area for other reasons when then stopped at the park.

The average party size among survey respondents was a group of 4. The average visiting party contributed just over $80 to the local economy (expenditures within a 50-mile radius of the park).

Most (85.7%) visitors came to the park in an automobile. Fifty-three percent (53%) of visitors were male; 47% were female. Their ages ranged from 1 year old to 93 years old.

Special events, such as the Blues Festival, were major attractions to bring people to the park. Other activities, such as fishing and enjoying





the park's scenery, were both attractions to the park and favorite pastimes while visiting.

Among visitors surveyed, 12% reported some level of disability among members of their party. Difficulties with mobility, both walking distances and wheelchair accessibility, were the most common problems. Blind visitors were also mentioned on 4% of the surveys.

The majority of park visitors came to the park on the weekend, with one-third visiting on Saturday and one-tenth visiting on Sunday. Seven percent (7%) of visitors were at the park on both Saturday and Sunday. Thursday was the highest weekday for visitation, with one-quarter of the visitors coming that day.

The majority of park visitors are employed at day shift jobs (39.3%) or jobs with flexible schedules (22.6%). Nearly 24% of the park's visitors are retired.

Visitors asked to rank their opinion of importance and satisfaction on a variety of park characteristics and attributes used a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) to record their assessments. Park characteristics and attributes that ranked highest in importance to visitors responding to the survey included clean working restrooms (4.6), overall park condition (4.55), well-maintained grounds and facilities (4.16), and reasonable user fees (4.07). Items of least importance to survey respondents were retail/souvenir shops (1.65), yurts (2.0), cabins (2.09), and sewer hook-ups (2.08). Visitors' mean satisfaction exceeded their level of mean importance on each of the 27 areas queried except 2; those were on clean working restrooms (4.60 importance to 4.13 satisfaction) and reasonable user fees (4.07 importance to 3.96 satisfaction). It's important to note, however, that both characteristics still scored above the median point in satisfaction. Areas where visitors' opinion of importance most closely matched their satisfaction were on overall park condition (4.55 importance to 4.53 satisfaction), park map or brochure (3.50 importance to 3.54 satisfaction), camping (3.75 importance to 4.0 satisfaction) and safety/security (3.75 importance to 4.07 satisfaction)

Friends and family are the most important source (31%) of information about the park for visitors, followed by highway signs (24.4%) and a previous visit (20.7%).

Visitation numbers for Thousand Springs State Park from 1996 to 2005 were as follows:

1996	104,704 visitors
1997	116,550 visitors
1998	110,004 visitors
1999	103,353 visitors
2000	113,857 visitors
2001	109,559 visitors
2002	112,063 visitors
2003	96,266 visitors
2004	98,828 visitors
2005	103,860 visitors

4.6 Historic Park Visitation Statistics

Unlike some parks that have a steady increase in visitation over the years, Thousand Springs State Park's visitation has been up and down over the past 10 years, with the biggest drop in 2003 and a steady climb in visitation since that time. A number of variables have influenced the park's visitation, such as cost of gasoline, quality/quantity of fish stocking at Crystal Lake and the weather. Prior to 1996, visitation had been steadily increasing at Thousand Springs State Park for 5-6 years. Low fish stocking at Crystal Lake caused the decrease in the number of visitors to the park in 1996. Visitation in 1997 rebounded, even with the Niagara Springs unit being closed most of June due to flooding. Increased interpretive programming is credited with part of the 1997 growth in visitation.

Visitation dropped in 1998 with the institution of camping fees at Niagara Springs, low fish stocking in Crystal Lake and a drop in interpretive program attendance. In 1999, visitation dropped at parks throughout the state. It was noted that group reservations were a significant factor in decreased visitation at the Niagara Springs unit. A 10% increase in visitors was recorded in 2000, due in large part to the increased local involvement and support of the park. Group day-use reservations doubled at Malad Gorge and ADA fishing access was added to Niagara Springs. A lower number of park-sponsored events led to a decrease in visitation in 2001. The motorized vehicle entrance fee (MVEF) was first collected at the Malad Gorge unit of Thousand Springs State Park in 2003 and during that year visitation figures dropped dramatically. Idaho also experienced its second warmest year on record in 2003, with nine consecutive days of 100°+ temperatures in the Hagerman Valley. Since 2003, visitation has increased annually at the park, even with a targeted emphasis on collection of the MVEF at the Malad Gorge unit in 2005.

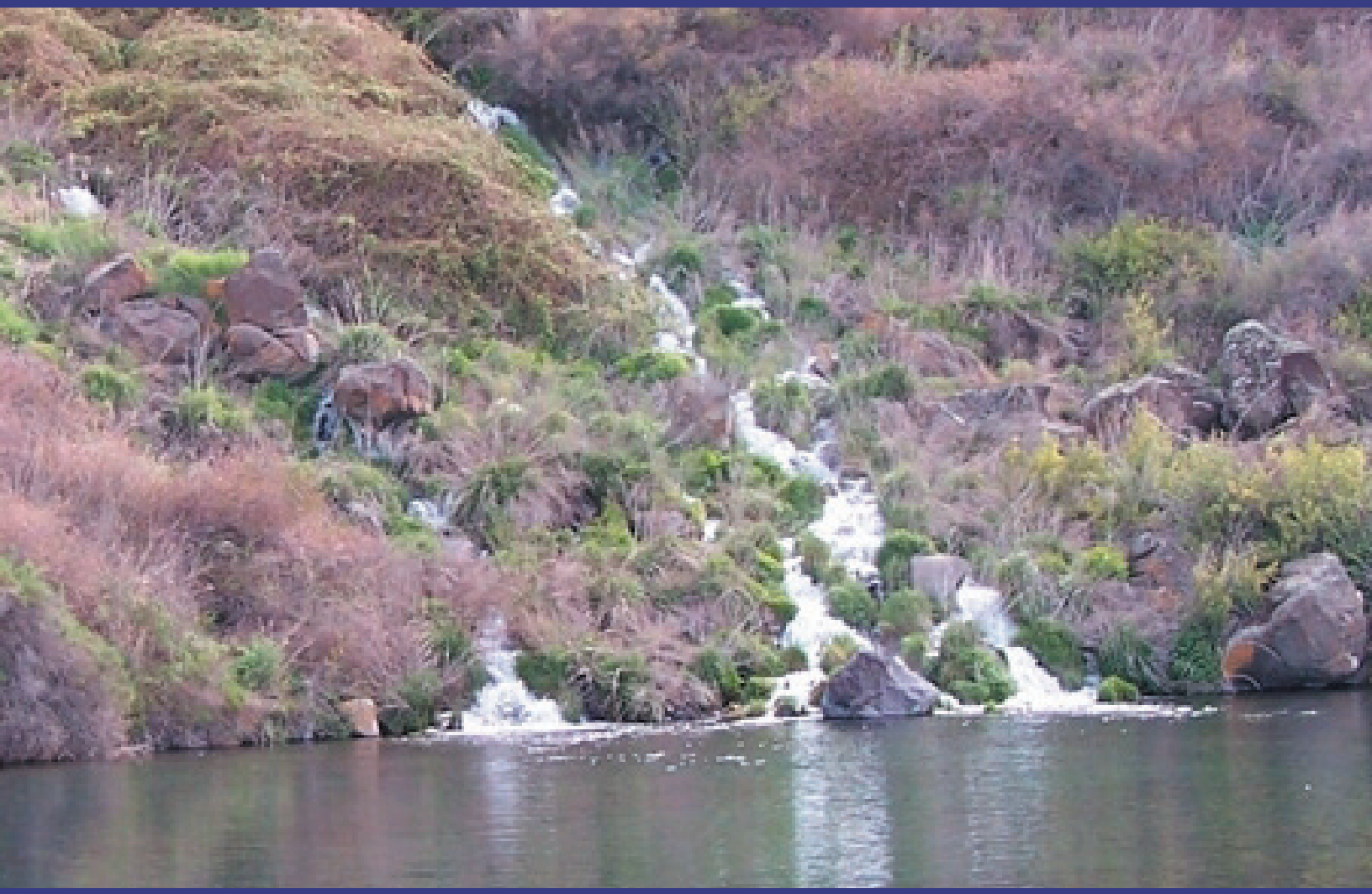
The addition of new units to the park has not had a dramatic influence on the park's visitation. That is largely because the addition of park units has not yet included the development of those units for visitor activities. Low staffing at the park has also influenced the park's ability to respond to visitor service opportunities.

4.7 Projected Park Visitation

Until such time as the park is fully developed and staffed, visitation is expected to continue to rise and fall in correlation to weather conditions and the economic variables of travel/tourism. Population growth in the region, coupled with good signage and marketing of the park, has the potential to increase park visitation by 2%-10% over the next ten years. This regional population growth is expected to have a substantial impact on park visitation, since nearly half of the park's current visitors are from the local region.

chapter 5

Significance, Classification, Mission and Goals/Objectives



Significance, Classification, Mission and Goals/Objectives

5.1 Park Significance

The free-flowing fresh water springs and other water sources are the most distinguishing features of Thousand Springs State Park. The park is significant because it ensures the preservation and public enjoyment of springs, creeks, rivers and other water resources within the Hagerman Valley.

The park harbors geologic and hydrologic wonders set within a desert landscape. The picturesque park units offer a diversity of recreation opportunities ranging from nature study to horseback riding. The park also serves as a convenient and rich setting for educators interested in bringing learning outside and focusing their curriculum on the natural and cultural heritage of the Hagerman Valley. The park units are unified by their water and geologic "stories" and their common ties to the Snake River aquifer.

The preserved park lands and their associated water rights and water resources are important given the increased agricultural dewatering of the Snake River aquifer. The state park units buffer development and disturbance and help maintain the water quality of the tributaries that flow into the Snake. The park also provides habitat that sustains a number of plant and animal populations including threatened and endangered/rare plant, animal and fish species. Furthermore, the park's location within a migratory bird flyway and waterfowl wintering zone adds to its natural resource value.

While the park units are unified by their natural resources and recreation and interpretive value, each unit also contains a number of distinguishing features that contribute to the park's overall significance. Significant aspects of each unit are highlighted below.

Malad Gorge

The Malad Gorge unit harbors abundant water resources including springs, a hanging lake and the Malad River, one of the world's shortest rivers. These water resources provide high quality aquatic habitat for native trout and other species. The unit boasts an extraordinary desert landscape where the Malad River cascades through a dramatic gorge. Cultural resources at Malad are also significant and provide opportunities to interpret the Kelton Stage Route, Oregon Trail and Native American occupation of the Hagerman Valley.

Billingsley Creek

The fresh spring water flowing through this unit carries tremendous aquaculture and research potential. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Idaho and IDPR for development of the upper unit for aquaculture research will likely result in a multi-million dollar facility that will allow for replication of stream morphology, critical fisheries research as well as engaging educational programming. Historically home to the famous Idaho author, Vardis Fisher, the Billinglsey Creek unit also contains cultural resources that are significant on the state-level and warrant interpretation.

Box Canyon

Water resources distinguish this unit, too. Box Canyon contains the 11th largest free-flowing spring in the world. A new addition to the state park system, Box Canyon is a relatively undisturbed site with healthy flora and fauna. Pockets of plants and animals within the unit warrant further study and may prove to be

Waterfall in Box Canyon

regionally significant ecosystems. The park is unique from a recreation perspective in that it provides for quiet immersion and solitude in a natural setting.

Niagara Springs

This unit is distinguished by its location along the Snake River and its water-based recreation opportunities. The unit provides access to the river and popular recreation uses like camping and fishing. Niagara is the most heavily used of all the units and provides the largest revenue base. The unit is also adjacent to Niagara Springs, a National Natural Landmark located on Idaho Department of Fish and Game land.

5.2 Park Classification

Park Classification System

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation has adopted a classification establishing four park categories *(IDPR, State Park Classification and Resource Area Designation System, 2005)*. The categories are: Natural Park, Recreation Park, Heritage Park, and Recreation Trailway. Each classification has unique criteria, a distinct purpose, compatible uses, appropriate development intensity, and specific management principles. In determining the classification of a park, consideration is also given to any national, state, and regional designations, which may already exist in regard to the park. A classification system allows the programming, orderly development and appropriate use of the park lands based on management policies.

Classification of Thousand Springs State Park

Thousand Springs State Park has been classified as a Natural Park. Water, including crystal clear springs draining from the Snake River Plain aquifer, is the character-defining feature of the four units within Thousand Springs State Park. Other natural resources, including abundant and visible wildlife, healthy native habitats, and unique geologic landscapes are also among the park's most significant features.

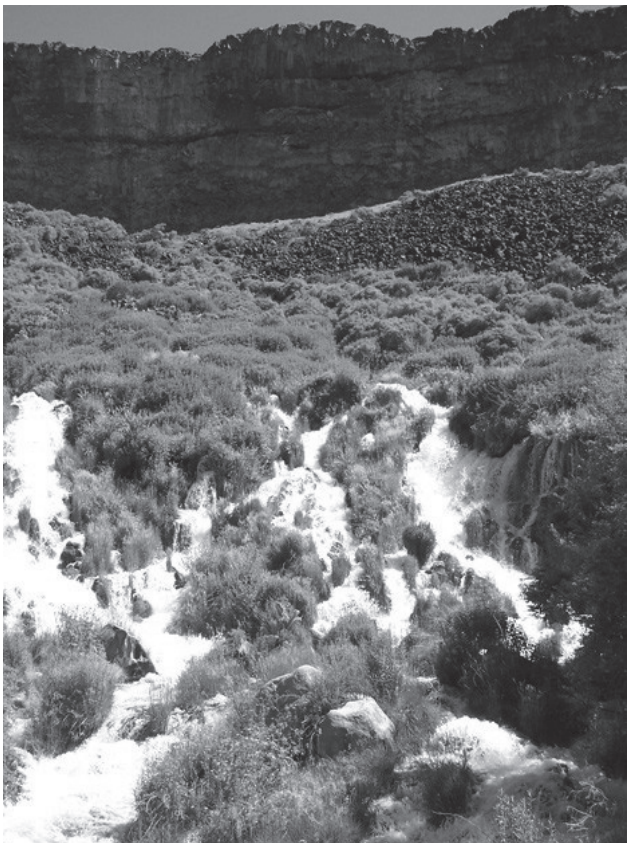
The individual park units also feature significant historical and recreational features. For example, the upper unit at Billingsley Creek contains the home site of Vardis Fisher, a renowned Idaho author. Niagara Springs offers excellent opportunities for camping and fishing. When viewed collectively, however, the four units are unified by and distinguished by their water and other natural resources. Given this commonality, it is most appropriate to assign the park the single classification of a Natural Park.

Natural Park Purpose of Establishment

Natural Parks are established to maintain the ecological integrity of areas of Idaho possessing exceptional resource values that illustrate Idaho's natural history. Natural Parks provide for the use and enjoyment of these resources in a manner that will enhance the understanding, appreciation and stewardship of these resources for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Desired Visitor Experiences

Visitors to Natural Parks will be offered the opportunity to find solitude, a leisure atmosphere, observation/study of natural features, positive experiences in natural surroundings, and a friendly and safe



Niagara Springs, a National Natural Landmark.

environment. This includes the development of personal outdoor ethics, development of knowledge of natural processes, and opportunities for directed and/or independent study.

Resource and Site Qualifications

A *Natural Park* must contain natural resources of statewide significance. Statewide significance means that the unit contains unique, natural values of sufficient extent and importance to meaningfully contribute to the broad illustration of the state's natural history. These include natural (botanical, zoological, and geological) and scenic qualities, which are both beautiful and representative of the state.

A *Natural Park* should be sufficiently comprehensive to allow effective management of a community of indigenous flora and fauna. A *Natural Park* should also provide a variety of opportunities for public enjoyment in a natural setting with minimum negative effect to the resource.

A park may contain resource values other than those for which the park received its overall classification. These secondary resources should be of a lesser magnitude than the resources for which the park received its overall classification. The use and protection of these secondary resources will be addressed by subsequent resource area designations. The existence of these secondary resources should not unduly affect the determination of the overall park classification.

Natural Parks should be established where significant and unique aspects of the state's natural resources exist.

Management Principles

Resource Management

Management will be directed at maintaining the ecological integrity and interpreting the natural values of the unit. Management will seek to maintain balance in the ecological community and reestablish missing elements of that community, such as indigenous plant and animal life to the extent practical.

Compatible Uses

Visitor use includes both interpretation and outdoor recreation in a natural setting. In addition to being an outdoor classroom, a Natural Park is a place for participating in those outdoor recreational activities which can be accommodated without detriment to the natural character and features of the park and do not detract in any way from the natural scene. In the broad sense, park use falls predominantly in the aesthetic portion of the recreational spectrum.

Natural Parks are not intended to accommodate all forms or unlimited volumes of recreation use.

Canoeing at the Malad Unit.

Compatible uses could include hiking, interpretive programming, nature study, individual camping, group camping, picnicking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, equestrian use, boating, swimming and other recreational pursuits which do not significantly degrade from the natural process or aesthetic qualities of the area.

Physical Developments
Facilities required for the health, safety, and protection of users, as well as those consistent with compatible uses shall be provided. Location, scale and design of all facilities shall be complementary to the environment and to the values being preserved. Facilities should support customer services, enhance the visitor's experience and provide for staff operational needs.
Typical development might include: group campgrounds, individual campsites, lodges, marina facilities, boat launches, swimming beaches, visitor/interpretive centers, program areas, trails, trailhead facilities, staff housing areas, maintenance yards, and other similar facilities.

5.3 Park Mission Statement

The staff at Thousand Springs State Park will strive to provide high quality recreational services for our park visitors. We will do what is necessary to protect the unique natural, historical and cultural resources that are found in Thousand Springs State Park and to encourage the park visitors' understanding and appreciation of these resources.

5.4 Park Vision Statement

The following vision statement was developed to guide the master planning effort as well as the future management of the Thousand Spring State Park. The overarching statement addresses all four units of the park.

> *Unified by the springs of the Snake River Plain aquifer, the units of Thousand Springs State Park offer visitors a variety of memorable recreation and educational experiences. The park provides opportunities to access some of the last undeveloped springs; to experience the region's unique geologic landscapes, plants and wildlife; and to understand its provocative history. The interpretation and protection of these resources will foster appreciation among park visitors for Idaho's natural and cultural heritage.*

5.5 Park Goals and Objectives

Goals
The following goals and objectives were developed with the input of park and department staff, stakeholders and the public. The goals and objectives will guide park management towards realizing the park vision. The goals and the majority of the objectives apply to all park units. It is noted when the objective applies to a specific park unit.

A. **Natural Resources:** Inventory, protect, and where appropriate restore the natural character of the landscape and water.

Objectives:

1. Maintain water quality of all fresh water sources by buffering sources from facility and other development and by restoring disturbed areas.

2. Work to increase the amount of native habitat park-wide. Restore native flora in disturbed areas not used for recreation or programmed for development. Furthermore, concentrate development in disturbed areas in order to minimize impacts on native flora.

3. Continue to partner and pursue new partnerships for natural resource conservation and restoration on park lands and adjoining properties.

4. Continue programs to control invasive species in riparian and upland areas. Develop a natural resource management plan that more closely examines noxious weed control and upland and riparian restoration strategies.

5. Involve volunteers and school groups in restoration projects in order to cultivate more of a stewardship ethic among area residents.

6. At Malad, build two retaining ponds, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, to filter agricultural run-off and improve Snake River water quality. Develop signage to interpret the ponds' function.

7. At Billingsley Creek, recruit partners to coordinate with the restoration of the creek hydrology within the upper and lower units

B. Access and Circulation: Provide a means to direct visitors to, through and between park units utilizing a variety of transportation options.

Objectives:

1. Improve park unit entrances by developing clear signage and a welcoming sense of entry.

2. Improve directional signage off interstate, highway and local roads leading to and between the park units.

3. Work with area partners to develop educational programming and tours that include visits to more than one unit of the park.

4. Establish signed routes between the park which can be traveled by automobile or bike.

5. Develop boat landings and riverside signage at Niagara Springs and Box Canyon in order to improve access from the Snake River and provide for water-based linkages between the two units.

C. Visitor Orientation: Provide a coordinated communication system that educates the visitor about the park's resources, facilities and programs.

Objectives:

1. Manage and promote all units together as one state park – Thousand Springs State Park. Unified park signage will clearly identify all four units as part of the Thousand Springs State Park.

2. Work with area partners to develop a centralized orientation and visitor center either in downtown Hagerman or at Billingsley Creek. The center will orient visitors to recreation and heritage resources of the Hagerman Valley and Thousand Springs State Park.

3. Develop a Thousand Spring State Park brochure that explains the resources found at each of the park units and allows for self-guided tours. Orientation signage and materials at each unit support the park-wide brochure and facilitate clear navigation at and between the units.

D. Recreation Opportunities: Provide a range of recreation programs and facilities that ensure quality visitor experiences for diverse user groups.

Objectives:

1. Expand overnight use opportunities at the park by developing tent camping areas at Malad Gorge and Niagara Springs and group camping area at Billingsley Creek.
2. Expand trail systems park-wide.
3. At Niagara Springs and Box Canyon, develop new recreation opportunities along the Snake River including boat landings, as well as nature observation and picnic areas.
4. Improve visitor comfort and encourage guests to explore the park with the development of group shelters, picnic areas and other destination areas.
5. At Billingsley Creek, construct an amphitheater to host performances and concerts.
6. Conduct an economic feasibility study of potential uses, such as a golf course, for the agricultural fields at lower Billingsley Creek.
7. Provide swimming opportunities in the park, e.g., Fisher Lake.

E. Interpretation and Education: Build a greater appreciation of the natural, cultural and scientific resources, and outdoor recreation through interpretation and skill-building programs.

Objectives:

1. Programming and interpretive materials will focus on fostering an increased understanding and appreciation for the park and Hagerman Valley's natural and cultural heritage resources (e.g., springs, agriculture)
2. Build appreciation for the park's water resources and awareness about the importance of maintaining and improving water quality in the Snake River Plain.
3. Increase the amount of programming (e.g., guided tours, workshops) and develop new interpretive media (e.g., signage, kiosks, exhibits) to educate park visitors about the park and Hagerman Valley's natural and cultural resources.
4. Build covered shelters at each park unit to serve as outdoor classrooms for educational programming.

F. Cultural Resources: Inventory, preserve and interpret cultural resources and where appropriate restore or reconstruct the historic features.

Objectives:

1. Develop partnerships focused on improving IDPR's understanding and interpretation of the park's cultural resources.
2. Leave sensitive cultural artifacts undisturbed and their locations undisclosed.
3. Work with others to restore and/or reconstruct elements of the Vardis Fisher property to make it representative of his life on the site.
4. Research and improve interpretation of cultural and historic resources throughout the park and Hagerman Valley (e.g., Oregon Trail, Kelton Road, Native American occupation, agricultural heritage).

G. Operations and Maintenance: Secure adequate staffing and funding to provide quality maintenance and operational facilities, grounds and visitor services. Educate visitors about hazards and inherent risks.

Objectives:

1. Increase maintenance, administrative and recreation/interpretive staff.
2. Develop signage that clearly articulates hazards or inherent risk of park use. At Billingsley Creek, make visitors aware of hunting use on the adjoining Wildlife Management Area.
3. Expand the Malad Gorge maintenance facility to include more storage and office space. Also, develop smaller, satellite maintenance facilities at the other park units where equipment and supplies can be stored.
4. Work with the city of Hagerman to identify locations to house seasonal employees. If no residences in Hagerman are available for seasonal rent, develop seasonal housing at Malad Gorge.
5. Develop a volunteer host site at Billingsley Creek.
6. Retain existing staff housing at Malad Gorge and Billingsley Creek.
7. Improve staff training so the park staff is better prepared to manage and implement planned restoration projects and expanded educational programming.
8. Ensure that park staff is accessible to visitors (in person or via phone) during hours of operation.

H. Partnerships: Foster partnerships to protect resources, create linkages and enhance the visitor experience.

Objectives:

1. Work with surrounding landowners and partnering agencies to protect water resources and enhance water quality.
2. Develop partnerships and negotiate trail easements to facilitate the expansion of trail systems within, adjacent to and in between the park units. For instance, explore possibilities for providing a connection from Malad Gorge to Highway 30 via the old county road grade, the Idaho Power easement or an easement through Woody's Cove.
3. If deemed feasible, work with The Nature Conservancy, Southern Idaho Land Trust (SILT) and other entities/ agencies to add the Ritter Island and Minnie Miller springs site resources to the State Park system
4. Secure partnerships to research and interpret cultural resources within the park, including the Vardis Fisher home site.
5. Collaborate with area schools and educators to develop educational programming and facilities and to operate the Billingsley Creek greenhouse.
6. Pursue partners to operate and expand the markets at Billingsley Creek.
7. Seek partnerships and other opportunities to control vegetation and improve water quality at Crystal Lake.
8. Work with the University of Idaho and ARS to interpret the aquaculture research facility, riparian and fishery restoration in Billingsley Creek and to maintain water quality and quantity in Fisher Lake.
9. Work with Fish and Game to improve fishing access along Crystal Lake, Billingsley Creek and the Snake River. Also work with Fish and Game to buffer and restore riparian habitat along Billingsley Creek and to create safe hunting opportunities.

I. Economics: Work to become more economically sustainable while preserving resources and being sensitive to local private enterprise.

Objectives:

1. Conduct an economic feasibility study of potential uses, such as a golf course, for the agricultural fields at the lower Billingsley Creek unit. Consider securing a concessionaire to operate the most desirable and appropriate use(s).

2. Evaluate the potential for generating revenue through the leasing of park facilities or areas. Consider leasing the Fisher home site for special events or renting rooms in the new visitor center and Billingsley Creek buildings for conference space.

chapter 6

Resource Area & Facility Designation

Resource Area & Facility Designation

6.1 Resource Area Designations

Introduction

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation is charged with the dual mission of protecting and conserving the resources of the state park system and of providing recreation opportunities and facilities for public use. The classification of Thousand Springs State Park as a Natural Park recognizes the water, geologic, scenic, flora and wildlife resources found within the four units of the park. These natural resources, combined with the park's abundant recreation resources, provide for a diversity of high quality visitor experiences.

Resource area designations identify those lands within a park most suitable for recreational, interpretive and educational opportunities within a framework of resource protection and perpetuation. These designations define the pattern for human activity in a given area. They establish the character of a place by determining what happens, where it happens and to what degree it happens. The resource area designations control use and development, and arrange park activities and facilities in a manner that balances visitor enjoyment of the park with the protection of park resources.

Outdoor recreation ranging from fishing to camping, as well as nature study and wildlife observation, are what attract most visitors to the park. The various park units provide complimentary visitor experiences. For example, those in pursuit of active recreation such as horseback riding and hunting will be attracted to Billingsley Creek while those in search of solitude and immersion in a natural setting are more likely to visit Box Canyon. Given their unique set of resources, the individual park units also offer distinct educational and research opportunities. For instance, the Vardis Fisher home site at upper Billingsley Creek is well-suited for writing programs and historical interpretation while Malad Gorge provides an excellent setting for educational programs focused on hydrologic and geologic processes.

Purpose

Some resources such as historic structures, archaeological and paleontological sites, and sensitive riparian and wetland habitats, require greater protection than others. Development and recreational activities have to be limited in these areas. Other sites are suitable for intensive

Vardis Fisher Homesite on Fisher Lake

recreation, camping, trails and interpretive facilities. To integrate land characteristics, protection needs and area-specific suitability for development and/or recreation activities, a resource area designation system has been developed for use in parks statewide. This system considers the unit's classification and purpose, the area's resource values and sensitivities, recreation potential, and desired visitor experiences.

Resource values are the relative importance of historical, cultural and natural resources to society. Resources of national, statewide or regional significance are to be considered of high value and importance. Archaeological and paleontological sites and historic structures are of high value. Specific factors used in evaluating resource values include rarity, endangerment and uniqueness. Resource sensitivity is a term used to qualify the degree to which a resource can be adversely affected by human activity. Cultural and natural resource sensitivities play key roles in determining appropriate development and use in specific areas. The designation of resource areas is based on analysis and integration of resource management and protection objectives, resource constraints, and resource sensitivity information.

Procedure

The resource area designation system was developed to classify all lands managed by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Six levels of protection (or appropriate levels of development/activity) are recognized in this system. These levels span a wide range of resource management strategies, from low resource impact management in the Scientific Area to high resource impact management in the Recreation and Service/Support Areas. All land within a state park shall receive resource area designations during the preparation of the master plan for the unit. Depending upon the unique characteristics of each park, any or all of the six resource area designations may be utilized; however, it should not be expected

View of Hagerman Valley from the Malad Gorge Unit.

that all resource area designations will appear in all parks. Resource areas are designated and their boundaries delineated by the Planning Review Team during the park's master planning process and are approved by the Idaho Park and Recreation Board with its adoption of the plan. Resource area boundaries may be refined during the preparation of subsequent implementation plans by park staff. Resource area changes or relocation of resource area boundaries require staff analysis, justification and Board approval.

Resource Area Designation maps for each of the four units of Thousand Springs State Park have been included following the resource area designation descriptions.

Scientific Area

Description - Scientific Areas encompass resources that have unique or exceptional natural, scenic, and educational value. These may include: outstanding geological formations or features illustrating geological processes; fossil evidence of the development of life on earth; an ecological community illustrating characteristics of a physiographic province or a biome; a biota of relative stability maintaining itself under prevailing natural conditions, such as a climax community; an ecological community illustrating the process of succession and restoration to a natural condition following disruptive change.

Management Objectives - The primary objective is to protect and perpetuate the individual features of unique natural or

scientific significance or areas of land or water which possess inherent conditions of exceptional natural, scientific or educational value. Physical development shall be limited to the facilities absolutely necessary for protection, research, and educational projects, and where applicable for interpretive services. Human access to Scientific Areas is limited to educational and scientific purposes. Appropriate management may include prohibition of use to protect the resource from degradation. This resource area shall be adequate in size to protect the values within the area.

Resource modification can occur in this resource area to maintain or restore these areas in as natural a state as possible.

Resource Area Characteristics - Although Scientific Areas are primarily established to safeguard unique resources, these areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor experience. These areas are isolated, relatively inaccessible and free of all but natural sounds. As visits to these areas must be approved by park staff, visitors to these areas are assured a personal experience that is undisturbed by other park users.

Typical Activities - Activities causing extremely low impact to the natural resources, such as guided interpretive walks and scientific study.

Natural Areas

Description - Lands and waters containing outstanding natural communities and possessing natural integrity. This area encompasses exceptional geologic, wildlife, botanical, lacustrine, riparian, and riverine environments. Natural Areas are established to promote, to perpetuate, and where necessary, to restore the natural character of the land.

Management Objectives - The primary objective is to preserve the resource in a near-natural state. Appropriate management includes protection of the resource from degradation, inappropriate development, and over-use. Resource modification can occur in these resource areas only to maintain or restore these areas in as near-natural state as possible.

Resource Area Characteristics - Natural Areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor experience. These areas are secluded, with subdued noise levels and a serene, peaceful environment. In these areas, a visitor may occasionally encounter individuals or small groups seeking a similar experience.

Typical Activities - Activities causing low impact to the natural resources, such as hiking, wildlife watching, photography, cross-country skiing, dispersed picnicking, small-group interpretive walks, and boating activities that do not degrade the environment or detract from the desired visitor experience.

Conservation Area

Description - Lands and waters offering a variety of resource values including: open space, scenic, aquatic, geological, wildlife, botanical, soil stabilization, watershed protection, buffers, etc. Conservation Areas are established to accommodate low to moderate resource impact and dispersed forms of recreation and to act as buffers from or transitions to other resource areas. Conservation Areas are relatively undeveloped.

Management Objectives - The objectives of these areas are to provide for both use and protection of the resource. Facility design and area management should establish limits on use to ensure resource conservation. Resource modification can occur in these areas to provide both moderate levels of recreational opportunity and/or conservation of the natural resources.

Resource Area Characteristics - Conservation Areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor

experience. This transitional area is characterized by dispersed, sporadic activity. Noise levels vary from relatively quiet to fairly noisy, depending upon the occasion. Visitors to these areas will frequently encounter other individuals and groups of park users.

Typical Activities - Activities causing low to moderate impacts to the natural resources, such as mountain biking, picnicking, cross-country skiing, fishing, dispersed swimming, boating and special events. Also included are the activities listed in the Natural Area above.

Heritage Area

Description - These areas encompass structures and features of significant historic, cultural, archaeological or architectural value.

Management Objectives - Preservation of historic and structural integrity is of paramount importance. Emphasis will be placed upon provision of opportunities for education and interpretation in and around areas, structures and features of historic, cultural, archaeological and architectural value. Appropriate management is to facilitate visitor appreciation without degradation of the resource.

Resource Area Characteristics - Heritage Areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor experience. Although able to accommodate groups of visitors, these areas are quiet, passive and thought provoking. During periods of peak use, visitors to these areas are almost certain to encounter other visitors seeking the same experience.

Typical Activities - The Heritage Area is a moderate use area for historic-period preservation, restorations, and interpretation. Activities include those causing low impacts to the resource, such as personal inspection, photography, scientific study, small-group interpretive walks and special events. Recreation-related facilities are generally secondary and will be separated from the site(s)

Canoe Lesson at Niagara

of historic/cultural resources by sufficient buffers. Activities in keeping with the historical period of the historic/cultural resources are encouraged.

Recreation Area

Description - Lands and waters offering moderate to high levels of diverse recreation and development opportunities, with a secondary function of conserving the natural character of the surroundings.

Management Objectives - The primary objective of a Recreation Area is to provide recreation opportunities so that park visitors can safely enjoy the park and its resources. Appropriate management is to facilitate recreation without irreparable resource damage. The highest level of development and activity in a park is intended to occur within this resource area. Recreation Areas are established where the soils, slope, drainage and vegetation can support intensive recreational activities. The landscape within this area can be substantially modified to meet this objective.

Resource Area Characteristics - Recreation Areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor experience. These areas are public and dynamic. They are readily accessible, busy, crowded, noisy and characterized by almost continuous activity. Visitors to a Recreation Area during periods of peak use are certain to encounter

many other visitors engaged in a wide variety of recreational and social activities.

Typical Activities - Typical activities include those causing potentially moderate to high impacts to area resources, such as developed camping; group sports; developed picnicking; boat mooring, launching and beaching; swimming; beach activities; non-motorized trail use; motorized trail use; parking; outdoor interpretive programming; and overnight lodging in dorms, lodges, cabins, yurts or recreational housing. Also included are the activities listed in the Natural and Conservation Areas above.

Service/Support Area

Description - Lands necessary to provide services to park visitors, housing to park employees, and support the maintenance of park facilities, equipment and vehicles.

Management Objectives - The primary objective is to support activities in the other five areas in a safe, efficient, and economic manner. Although activities in this area are essential to the other areas, they are not necessarily aesthetically compatible. Appropriate management is to centralize service, support and maintenance functions in specific, limited areas buffered from activities in the other areas. Facilities in this area should be designed and managed to efficiently accommodate the maximum levels of use anticipated.

Resource Area Characteristics - Service Support Areas have certain characteristics and atmosphere that cumulatively and subconsciously impart the desired visitor experience. Service Support Areas providing visitor services are readily accessible, busy, noisy and characterized by continuous daytime activity. Visitors to Service Support Areas during daylight hours are certain to encounter many other visitors seeking services and engaged in a wide variety of recreational and social activities. Service Support Areas supporting staff functions only, e.g., park maintenance and staff housing facilities, are not open to the public.

Typical Activities - Typical visitor activities include park admission, registration, fee collection, visitor information, retail sales, indoor/outdoor interpretive programming, provision of developed moorage, developed parking, and concession operation. Staff activities include seasonal and permanent employee housing and activities associated with shop buildings, storage yards, fueling facilities, and utility stations.

Resource area designation maps, along with proposed development maps, for each of the 4 units of Thousand Spring State Park can be found starting on page 92.

6.2 Preferred Alternative Selection Process

Introduction

During the master planning process for Thousand Springs State Park, the planning team has incorporated and responded to the issues, concerns, constraints, and opportunities expressed at approximately a dozen public and stakeholder meetings. Written comments, site analysis, scientific information, visitor surveys and other pertinent information were also considered during the early phases of the planning process and informed the creation of the following three management alternatives.

Alternative A: Conservation and Education Focus

This alternative focuses on resource conservation, extensive restoration of native habitats, and expansion of educational programs that explore the park's natural and cultural resources. It would tailor visitor uses to nature study and passive recreational activities that complement resource protection and enhancement efforts. Facility development would be limited and occur in existing

disturbed areas where possible at each unit. Existing operations facilities would be upgraded and new buildings would be constructed to accommodate storage needs and restoration projects. Alternative A would require an increase in the number of staff to support restoration projects and additional educational programs. IDPR would work with other agencies and entities to create a regional visitor center in downtown Hagerman where visitors would be oriented to the Thousand Springs State Park, state park lands throughout Idaho, and other Hagerman Valley attractions.

Alternative B: Recreation Focus

This alternative focuses on providing the broadest range of visitor uses, experiences and facilities while ensuring key resources are conserved. Alternative B would provide a wide range of educational and interpretive programs and recreation opportunities to meet the needs of diverse visitor groups. New facility construction and the expansion of existing operations and maintenance facilities as well as staff housing would accommodate increased visitation and an enlarged park staff. This alternative proposes teaming with public and private partners to acquire and gain access to adjacent land at all units. A regional visitor center would be developed at the Malad Gorge unit.

Alternative C: Balanced Use and Heritage Focus

This alternative provides a balance between resource conservation and the development of many different visitor uses and facilities. Alternative C would provide unique interpretive and educational programs that explore the park and Hagerman Valley's heritage resources as well as a substantial increase in outdoor recreational opportunities. This alternative would require the expansion of existing maintenance facilities and the construction of new satellite maintenance buildings for the storage of equipment and supplies. No new housing would be constructed within the park, as additional staff would be required to live outside the park. This alternative would require the least amount of additional FTE's. IDPR would work with other agencies and entities to create a regional visitor center in lower Billingsley Creek where visitors would be oriented to the Thousand Springs State Park, state park lands throughout Idaho, and other Hagerman Valley attractions.

Review and Selection of the Preferred Alternative

After the three alternatives were developed, public open house meetings were held in Twin Falls and Hagerman in October 2005. At the meetings the management alternatives were presented to the public and feedback was solicited from the participants. Copies of the management alternatives were also mailed out to the Stakeholder Advisory Team (SAT).

Members of the Planning Review Team (PRT) and the Stakeholder Advisory Team (SAT) met on November 5, 2005 to review the comments received and to select the preferred management alternative from among the three initially presented at the public open house meetings. At the meeting, Alternative C (Balanced and Heritage Focus) was chosen as the most appropriate plan to use as a starting point for shaping the preferred alternative. Alternative C was chosen for the following reasons:

- The uses were well-balanced and flexible.
- The plan appeared to be the most feasible and the least expensive to implement.
- Alternative C would draw visitors off Interstate 84 and onto the scenic byway, which runs through the Hagerman Valley.
- The alternative does not preclude major restoration opportunities, especially water resource restoration projects. Furthermore, restoration opportunities would be flexible enough to allow for volunteer participation.

During the course of the November meeting, the PRT and SAT worked together to refine Alternative C for each park unit and to develop the final master plan for Thousand Springs State Park (see the Master Plan Maps for the resulting plan).

The details of the master plan are described in the following sections.

6.3 Proposed Development, Land Use Plan & Facility Designation

Proposed Development

The majority of the proposed development in the master plan for Thousand Springs State Park is geared toward the enhancement of the visitor experience and the provision of new and improved amenities as well as memorable outdoor recreation, educational and interpretive opportunities. Developments including safer and more welcoming park entries, plus roadside signage, will improve access to the park. Proposed new facilities like outdoor classrooms, picnic areas and expanded trail systems will provide for enhanced educational and recreation opportunities.

Development proposals recognize the park's classification as a Natural Park and respect the unit's significant natural resources as well as its open space value. All proposed developments are sited on lands that are currently developed, have been disturbed or are considered appropriate for new development.

Park-Wide Development

Restoration:

Upland habitat restoration projects are proposed throughout the park. The restoration process will follow the model set by the successful native plant restoration at Malad Gorge. Most uplands throughout the park were at one time subject to grazing which diminished the vigor of native grass communities and led to the introduction of non-native species

Park Unit Entrances Will Be Made More Visibile and Welcoming

such as cheatgrass and mustard. Restoration projects will involve the re-introduction and establishment of native grasses such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass and Great Basin wildrye as well as native forbes and flowering plants. Once these native communities are established, shrubs such as sagebrush and antelope bitterbrush will be re-introduced. In wetland areas, berry producing plants and native trees will be restored. Restoration in the riparian corridor will be more focused on problem areas and will require the removal of invasive plants such as Russian olive trees. Invasive plant removal will be followed up with the reintroduction of native shrubs and trees such as cottonwoods and willows in select areas.

Park-wide signage and brochure

Unified signage at the entries to each park unit will be integral to developing a welcoming sense of entry and communicating to visitors that Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek, Box Canyon and Niagara Springs are all part of the Thousand Springs State Park. Roadside signage on arterial roads and along corridors between the park units will direct visitors and improve connectivity between the units. Furthermore, the development of a Thousand Springs State Park brochure will be a key orientation tool for engaging visitors and residents of the Hagerman Valley and educating them about each of the park unit's resources and recreation and educational opportunities.

Regional Visitor Center

IDPR will work with area partners to develop a regional visitor center either at the entrance to

the lower Billinglsey Creek unit or in downtown Hagerman. The center will be staffed by IDPR, partnering agencies, and/or volunteers and will serve as an orientation hub in which area residents and visitors can learn about all the attractions the Hagerman Valley has to offer. Further collaboration with area partners is required to decide on the location and scale of the visitor center.

Proposed developments within each of the park units are listed below. Proposed development maps, along with resource area designation maps, for each of the 4 units of Thousand Spring State Park can be found starting on page 92.

Malad Gorge Unit

Entrance Development:

Relocate fee collection and orientation information to the unit boundary so they are clearly visible to visitors entering the unit.

Restoration:

Expand existing native plant restoration to encompass both the north and south rims of the gorge. Retain the disc golf course and the day use area, but restore landscapes around these areas to native flora where possible. Restore wetland habitat around the pond. Restoration efforts will also involve monitoring the Malad River corridor and annual projects to remove invasive plants and to restore native riparian vegetation.

Facility Development:

Trails

Expand the trail system to include a connection to the northeast side of the unit via the existing sidewalk and roadway that passes under I-84.

Interpretive/Educational Facilities

Upgrade and/or develop new interpretive and orientation signage in the following three areas: the parking area for the east side trails, within the existing interpretive kiosk/structure, and at the overlook on the gorge's north rim. Additionally, develop signage to interpret the siltation ponds. Construct a simple group shelter beside the restored pond and wetland to serve as an outdoor classroom for educational programming and to accommodate picnicking.

Other Recreation Facilities

Develop a tent camping area with approximately 10-12 sites. Campground amenities are limited to restroom and water facilities. Also, construct an overlook above Woody's Cove. *(Note: the camping area development proposal is contingent on analysis of existing camping opportunities in the Hagerman Valley and the determination that camping at Malad Gorge will not be in direct competition with area businesses).*

Maintenance/Operations:

Renovate and enlarge the existing maintenance facility or construct a new building to provide more space for equipment storage and work areas. The upgraded or new facility will serve as the maintenance and administrative headquarters for the park. Also construct two siltation ponds, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and local landowners, to improve water quality.

If housing is required to accommodate new seasonal employees, private sector options will be considered first. If no housing opportunities emerge within Hagerman, seasonal housing

Interpretive Signage at Billingsley Creek Unit

may be developed at Malad Gorge in the vicinity of the maintenance facility.

Billingsley Creek Unit

Entrance Development:

At the lower unit, move the entrance road approximately 300 feet to the north to create a more inviting gateway to the park unit. Also redesign the entrance into the upper unit to create safer access. (Note: the development proposal at the entrance to the upper unit will be contingent on collaborations with adjacent landowners as well as the University of Idaho and Agricultural Research Service).

Restoration:

Work with partners, including Fish and Game and the University of Idaho to improve water quality and riparian habitat along Billingsley Creek. Restoration will include naturalization of the disturbed creek edge and improvement of the fishery through the upper unit. Until another use is identified, retain agricultural practices in the lower unit. Identify small areas (for a total of approximately 15 restored acres) within the lower unit that may be suitable for native plant restoration. Upland restoration efforts may be expanded depending on what use is ultimately selected for the fields. IDPR will limit access to the creek and will maintain a buffer between the park and Wildlife Management Area (WMA) along the riparian corridor.

Vardis Fisher Home Site:

Stabilize the ruins of the Fisher home and clean up the site so it is safe for public use. Restore historic landscape features related to circulation including the stairs leading up to the home and other walkways. Develop a small picnic area (2 tables) along the lakeshore. Develop an overlook and a small parking area (3-4 cars) perched above Fisher Lake. Shoreline fishing is currently the only recreational activity available at Fisher Lake; however, IDPR will work with the University of Idaho and Agricultural Research Service to provide additional recreational opportunities on the water. Other

Children Enjoy the Blues Festival at Billingsley Creek

additional water-based activities may include SCUBA diving, belly boats, etc. The springs above the lake will remain inaccessible and the proposed trail in their vicinity will be diverted from the pristine water source.

Facility Development:

Amphitheater

Build an amphitheater into the hillside below the barn. The open-air facility will provide bench seating for approximately 300 people and will be used for concerts, festivals and performances.

Trails

Expand the existing trail system to include trails that loop around the perimeter of the lower unit's fields. Additionally, construct a new trail through the upper unit that links the Fisher home site with a proposed trail easement between the two units. Trails will be built for multiple uses including hiking, biking and equestrian uses, and will remain non-motorized. IDPR will also work with Fish and Game to explore the possibility of developing a trail through the adjoining WMA.

Interpretive/Educational Facilities

Construct a simple group shelter along Billingsley Creek to serve as an outdoor classroom for educational programming and to accommodate picnicking. Develop new interpretive and orientation signage at the park unit entrance, at the Fisher home site, and at the

aquaculture research facility (the later signage will be developed in collaboration with ARS/ University of Idaho). During hunting season, all developed areas along the creek will be posted with safety information.

Also, develop new signage, exhibits and programs focused on the interpretation of the Hagerman Valley's heritage resources (e.g., agricultural history, fresh water springs). The existing barn will be used to display these materials and to accommodate expanded educational and interpretive programming.

Other Recreation Facilities
Develop a new group campground and picnic area north of the manager's house in the lower unit (6-8 large group camp sites). Visitor amenities will include a large restroom facility as well as multiple shelters to accommodate large groups (e.g., family reunions), campfire rings, and a tent camping area. Campsites will be designed to accommodate RVs and other large vehicles. Space for a volunteer host site will also be provided in the camping area. Development in the northern section of the lower unit will also include a picnic area (5 tables) along Billingsley Creek. Develop additional picnic areas (2-5 tables) along Billingsley Creek in the upper and lower units. Conduct an economic feasibility study of potential uses for the agricultural fields in the lower Billingsley Creek unit. Consider securing a concessionaire to operate the most desirable and appropriate use(s). A golf course is among the possible uses that will be considered.

Existing facilities such as the manager's house, barn, horse arena, and market building will all be maintained. Expansions are planned for the equestrian and marketing facilities. Uses of the other bbuildings may shift throughout the life of the plan. For example, IDPR may use the barn for educational and interpretive purposes.

Maintenance/Operations:
Construct a satellite maintenance facility to store equipment and materials.

Box Canyon Unit
Entrance Development:
Make the entrance to the park unit more inviting with a Thousand Springs State Park/ Box Canyon entry sign. Develop a satellite parking area closer to rim (approximately 1/2 mile from the park entrance) for those with "special needs" including school groups and those with mobility issues. Gate the road at the entrance parking area, so it remains closed to all vehicular traffic other than maintenance equipment and groups or individuals with special permission. (Note: IDPR will monitor comments to gauge whether the satellite parking for special groups only meets the needs of all visitors. If the need is identified, the satellite parking could be opened on a limited basis to the general public.)

Restoration:
Monitor and maintain the quality of the riparian corridor within the canyon and initiate restoration of upland habitat where needed on the entire site. (note: The Nature Conservancy has initiated a project to restore Blind Canyon).

Facility Development:
Trails
The access drive remains closed to traffic and serves as a multi-use trail open to pedestrians, bikes and equestrian use. Construct a new trail along the north rim. Also build a short stretch of trail (approximately 800 feet) off the access drive to provide access to a nature observation area along the Snake River.

Interpretive/Educational Facilities
Develop new interpretive and/or orientation signage at the following 4 locations; the parking area, on the rim, within the canyon and along the Snake River. Construct a simple group shelter set back from the rim to serve as an outdoor classroom for educational programming and to accommodate picnicking.

Other Recreation Facilities
Develop two overlooks on the canyon rim. Along the Snake River, develop a nature observation area with benches and interpretive signage as well as a boat landing for small watercraft (e.g., rafts, canoes, kayaks).

Maintain the existing platform in the canyon bottom. However, when it deteriorates, construct a new platform using more durable, local materials like stone.

Maintenance/Operations:
At the park entrance construct a satellite maintenance facility to house restoration equipment. Screen the facility from the road and entrance drive.

Niagara Springs Unit
Entrance Development:
Move entry station east to the park boundary in order to create a safer park entrance.

Restoration:
Restore pockets of riparian vegetation and remove invasive plants along the Snake River corridor. Restoration and invasive plant removal will improve views to the river from the trail and road.

Trail in Box Canyon

Facility Development:
Trails
Develop a new trail connection between the Niagara and Crystal Lake areas. The new trail will extend around the north side of Crystal Lake and provide for improved fishing access.

Interpretive/Educational Facilities
Develop new interpretive and/or orientation signage at the converted maintenance building in the Niagara campground and along the Snake River. Also, work with Fish and Game to upgrade signage, access and interpretation at Niagara Springs.

Other Recreation Facilities
Develop small picnic areas (2-3 tables) along the Snake River at Crystal Lake and Niagara. Also develop a boat landing outside of the camping area for small watercraft. Retain the existing number of campsites at Niagara, and establish a new tent camping area (8-10 sites). Visitor amenities in the tent camping area are limited to restroom facilities and designated campsites. (note: If the demand arises, develop a picnic area, overlook and parking on the plateau above Crystal Lake).

Maintenance/Operations:
Construct a small maintenance facility outside of the Niagara Springs camping area and convert existing maintenance structure to a restroom and interpretive kiosk.

Costs and Priorities
Three levels of priority have been assigned to proposed development at Thousand Springs State Park. Actions within each level are presented in a recommended sequence. Development will occur as funding becomes available. Availability and timing of grant funds may also dictate actual time of implementation. As facilities are developed, it would be prudent to evaluate how they are used to determine what unforeseen improvements might

Table 6.1 Proposed Development Costs and Priorities

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	PRIORITY LEVELS AND COST ESTIMATES		
	PRIORITY 1	*PRIORITY 2*	*PRIORITY 3*
Park-wide			
Park Brochure	8,000		
Signage (4 park unit signs, 4-6 roadside signs)	25,000		
Regional Visitor Center		$1,500,000 to 2,000,000	
Sub-Total	**33,000**	**$2,000,000**	
Malad Gorge			
Re-locate fee collection station and orientation	2,000		
Restoration projects	60,000	3,000	(annual or bi-annual cost)
Expand trail system		908,000	
Interpretive Signage (4) (e.g. wayside, kiosk)	10,000		
Group Shelter (outdoor classroom)		20,000	
Tent Camping Area (10-12 spots, w/ restroom, water)			155,000
Overlook			6,500
Renovate/Enlarge the maintenance facility (add approx 3000sq ft)		250,000	
Sub-total	**72,000**	**$1,181,000**	**$161,500**
Billingsley Creek			
Build new entrance drive and parking area	125,000		
Re-design upper unit entrance		50,000	
Restoration projects (riparian and upland)			60,000
Historic structure stabilization (V. Fisher home site)			10,000
Construct 4 picnic areas	10,000	10,000	
Fisher Lake Overlook and small parking area (3-4 cars)			16,500
Construct an outdoor amphitheater with restroom	400,000		
Expand trail system		125,000	
Group Shelter (outdoor classroom)	20,000		
Interpretive/Information Signage (4) (e.g. wayside, kiosk, safety posting)	10,000		
Interpretation/Education development (exhibits for barn, program content)	12,500		
Group campground – 6-8 RV sites (water, restrooms, shelters, campfire rings, tent camping area)	1,400,000		
Garden Center remodel/Expanded markets	200,000		
Equestrian facility upgrades	100,000		
Construct a satellite maintenance facility		30,000	
Sub-total	**2,277,500**	**$215,000**	**$86,500**

Table 6.1 Proposed Development Costs and Priorities

Box Canyon			
New parking area for special groups (busses, 8 cars).	40,000		
Build 2 gates on the road	5,000		
Restore native upland flora/Monitor and protect riparian corridor vegetation (one-time cost)	200,000		
Restore native upland flora/Monitor and protect riparian corridor vegetation (annual cost)	6,000		
Expand trail system			75,000
Nature observation area (sign, 2 benches)		3,000	
Interpretive/Information Signage (4) (e.g. wayside, kiosk)	10,000		
Group Shelter (outdoor classroom)	20,000		
2 Overlooks	15,000		
Boat Landing		2,500	
Viewing platform in canyon bottom			10,000
Construct a satellite maintenance facility		30,000	
Sub-total	**296,000**	**35,500**	**85,000**
Niagara Spring			
Re-located fee- collection station	2,000		
Restoration (invasive removal, pockets of new plantings along Snake R.)		50,000	
Expand Trail System		70,000	
Interpretive/Information Signage (4) (e.g. wayside, kiosk)	10,000		
Develop picnic areas (small, 2-3 tables)	5,100		
Construct a boat landing for small watercraft (kayaks, canoes)	2,500		
Tent Camping Area (8-10 spots, w/ restroom)			125,000
Overlook, picnic area (2 tables), and parking area (5 cars) above Crystal Lake			19,200
Construct a satellite maintenance facility		30,000	
Sub-total	**19,600**	**$150,000**	**$144,200**
Totals (by priority)	**2,698,100**	**3,581,500**	**477,200**
TOTAL for all Proposed Development	**$6,756,800**		

also be appropriate to accommodate visitors within the constraints established by the plan. The cost estimates associated with the proposals are broad in scope but consistent with the level of detail developed in the plan. Cost estimates are based on 2005 construction dollars and do not include design fees or contingencies. See Table 6.1 for a rough estimate of development costs and a prioritization of the projects.

Note that costs estimates are also based on many assumptions at this stage of planning. The estimates represent the best professional judgment of IDPR and planning consultants based upon their experience with similar facilities in the Idaho State Park system. The actual costs might differ substantially after the gathering of more information and the preparation of detailed designs. Also the total cost for all proposed development is inflated considerably because it includes an estimate for the regional visitor center. The visitor center is proposed as a joint project with area partners so the cost should actually be divided among these partners.

6.4 Proposed Land Acquisition and Partnerships

IDPR is interested in collaborating with a number of adjacent landowners to negotiate trail easements or to acquire neighboring properties. The proposed easements and acquisitions are desirable because they would improve access to and between the units and protect significant area resources:

- If it is deemed feasible, work with The Nature Conservancy, Southern Idaho Land Trust (SILT) and others entities/agencies to acquire the Ritter Island and Minnie Miller springs site and add these resources to the State Park system.

- Explore possibilities for developing a connection from Malad Gorge to Highway 30. Potential routes include the old county road grade, Idaho Power easement or an easement through Woody's Cove.

- Work with BLM to obtain a trail easement to Blue Heart Springs. If resources are available and the need is identified, develop a trail from the Box Canyon unit to the springs.

- At Billingsley Creek work with adjacent landowners to secure easements that will allow for a trail connection between the upper and lower units. Also work with landowners to redesign the entrance to the upper unit.

In order to achieve the goals of the plan and to protect water and other natural and cultural resources in the Hagerman Valley, IDPR has identified the need to develop a number of partnerships. Below is a listing of projects identified in the plan that will require collaboration.

- At Billingsley Creek, operate the greenhouse in cooperation with area schools and expand the outdoor and indoor markets.

- Work with Fish and Game to restore riparian and upland habitat along Billingsley Creek in the buffer zone between the park unit and the Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Also collaborate on the development of a trail through the WMA that links the two Billingsley Creek units.

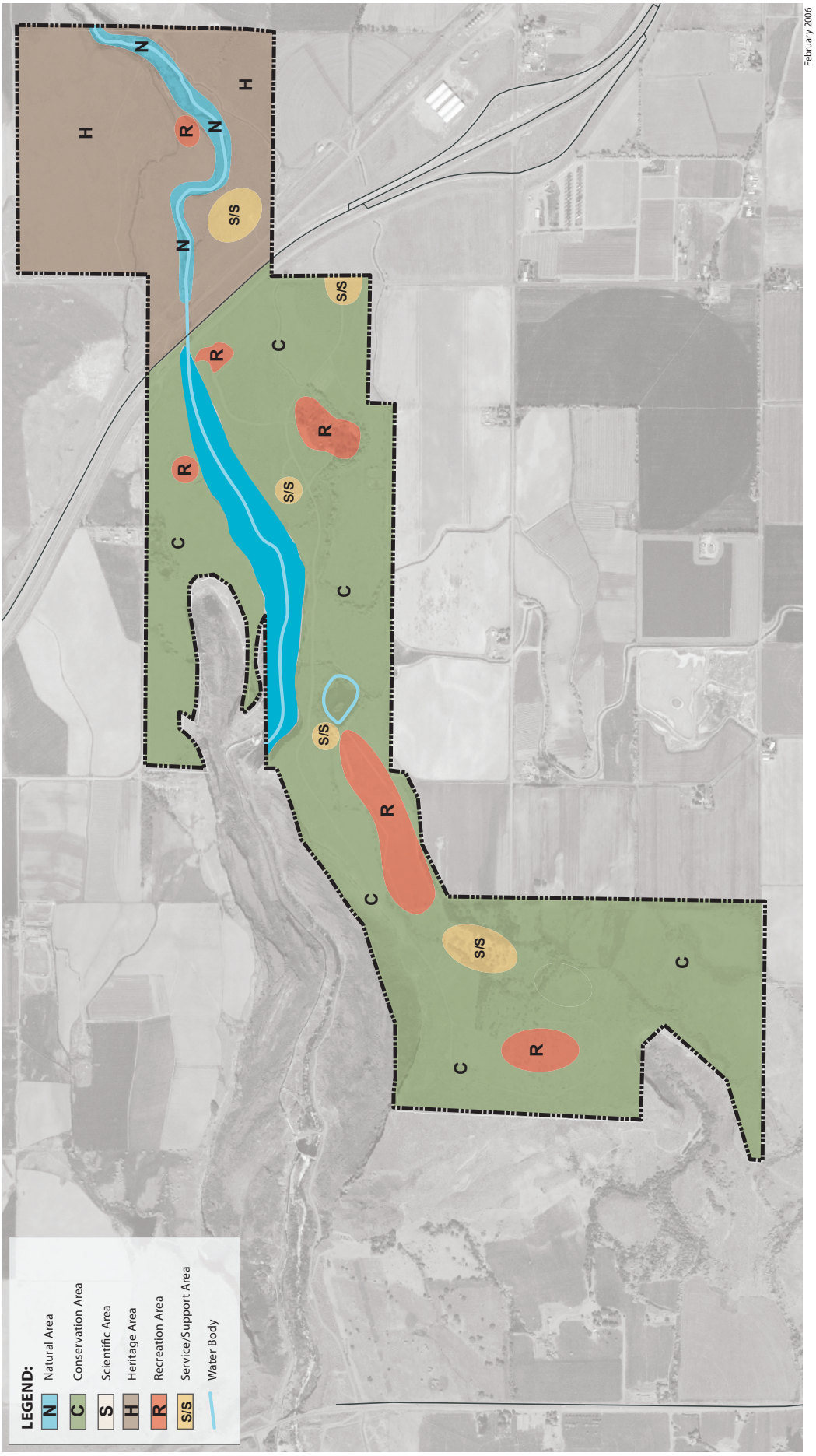
- Work with the University of Idaho and ARS to interpret the aquaculture research facility, riparian and fishery restoration in Billingsley Creek and to maintain water quality and quantity in Fisher Lake.

- Seek partners for the interpretation, stabilization and potential restoration of the Fisher home site.

- At Box Canyon, work with BLM to encourage the continuation of upland and riparian area restoration on their adjacent

lands.

- Work with others to research cultural resources (e.g., Kelton Road, Native American sites) east of I-84 at the Malad Gorge unit and elsewhere in the park.
- At Niagara Springs, partner with Fish and Game and Idaho Power to implement a number of projects including; upgrading signage, improving access and interpretation of the Niagara Springs, developing an outdoor classroom, restoring riparian habitat, and improving fishing access around Crystal Lake and along the Snake River.
- Seek partnerships and other opportunities to control vegetation and improve the water quality of Crystal Lake. Restoration will require sediment removal combined with other nutrient and pollutant removal techniques in order to restore fisheries, aesthetics, scuba diving, and primary contact restoration.

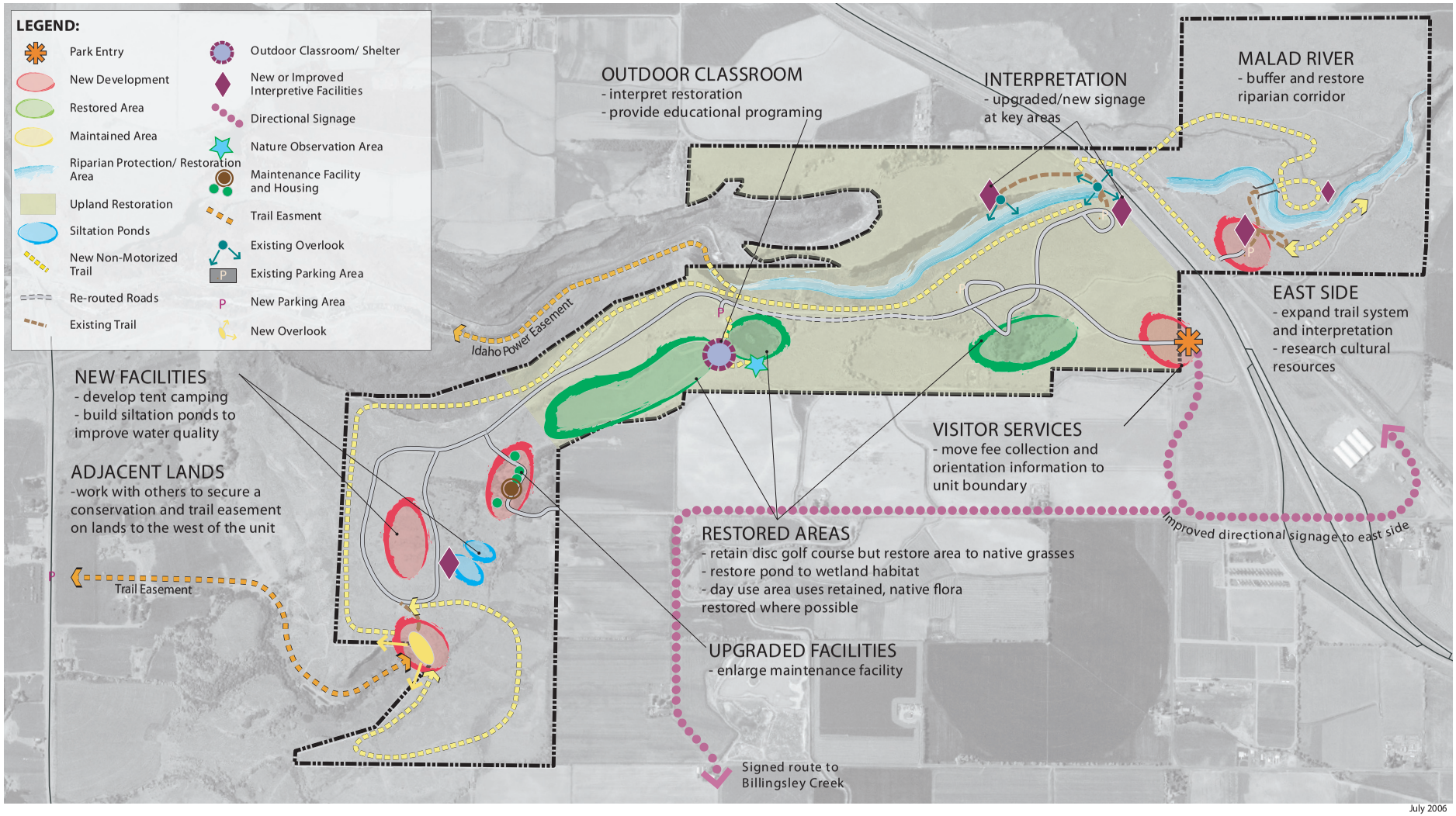


February 2006

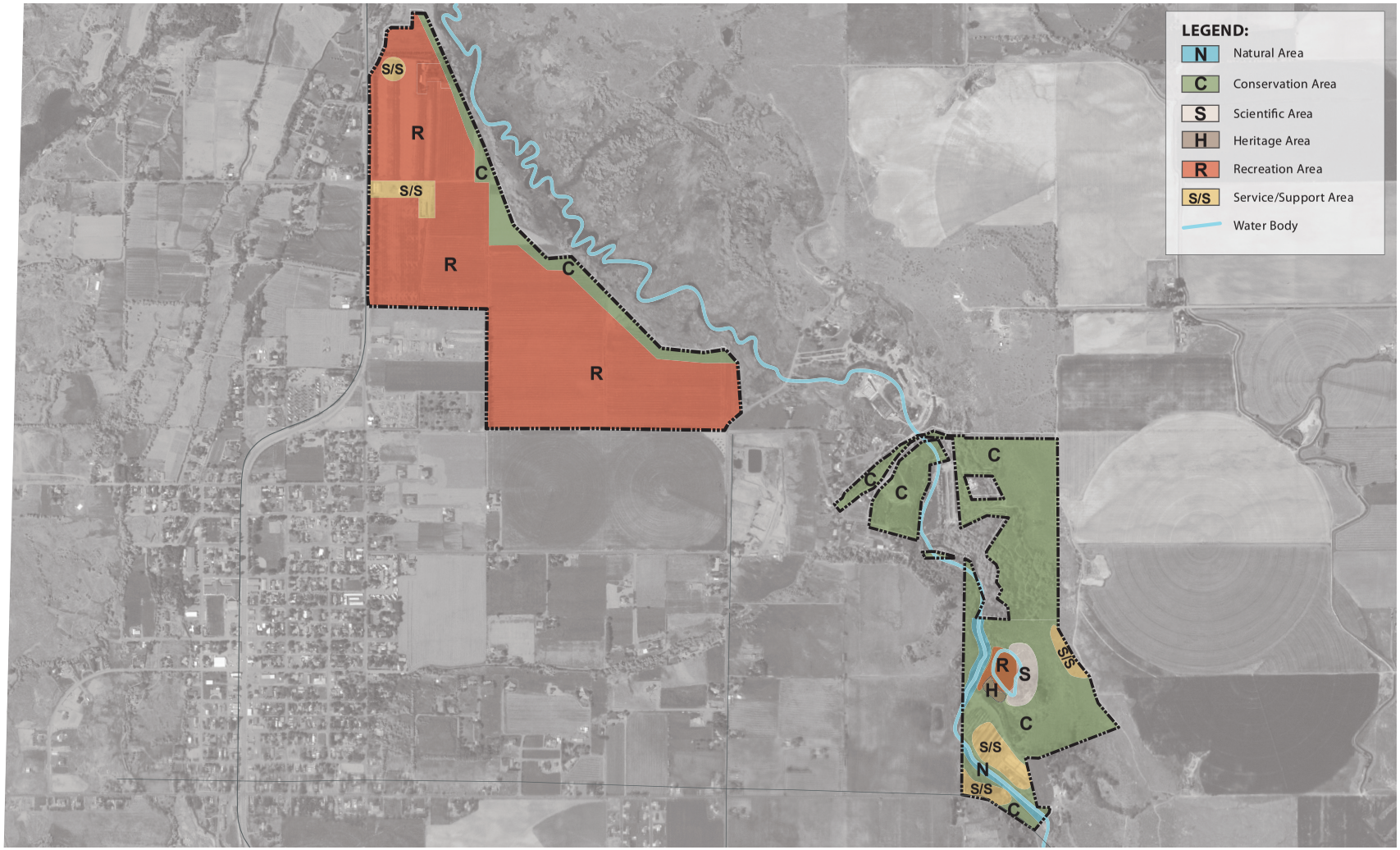
RESOURCE AREA DESIGNATION MAP

Thousand Springs State Park

MALAD GORGE UNIT


LEGEND:
Park Entry
New Development
Restored Area
Maintained Area
Riparian Protection/ Restoration Area
Upland Restoration
Siltation Ponds
New Non-Motorized Trail
Re-routed Roads
Existing Trail
Outdoor Classroom/ Shelter
New or Improved Interpretive Facilities
Directional Signage
Nature Observation Area
Maintenance Facility and Housing
Trail Easment
Existing Overlook
Existing Parking Area
New Parking Area
New Overlook
OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
- interpret restoration
- provide educational programing
INTERPRETATION
- upgraded/new signage at key areas
MALAD RIVER
- buffer and restore riparian corridor
EAST SIDE
- expand trail system and interpretation
- research cultural resources
Idaho Power Easement
NEW FACILITIES
- develop tent camping
- build siltation ponds to improve water quality
ADJACENT LANDS
-work with others to secure a conservation and trail easement on lands to the west of the unit
Trail Easement
VISITOR SERVICES
- move fee collection and orientation information to unit boundary
Improved directional signage to east side
RESTORED AREAS
- retain disc golf course but restore area to native grasses
- restore pond to wetland habitat
- day use area uses retained, native flora restored where possible
UPGRADED FACILITIES
- enlarge maintenance facility
Signed route to Billingsley Creek

July 2006



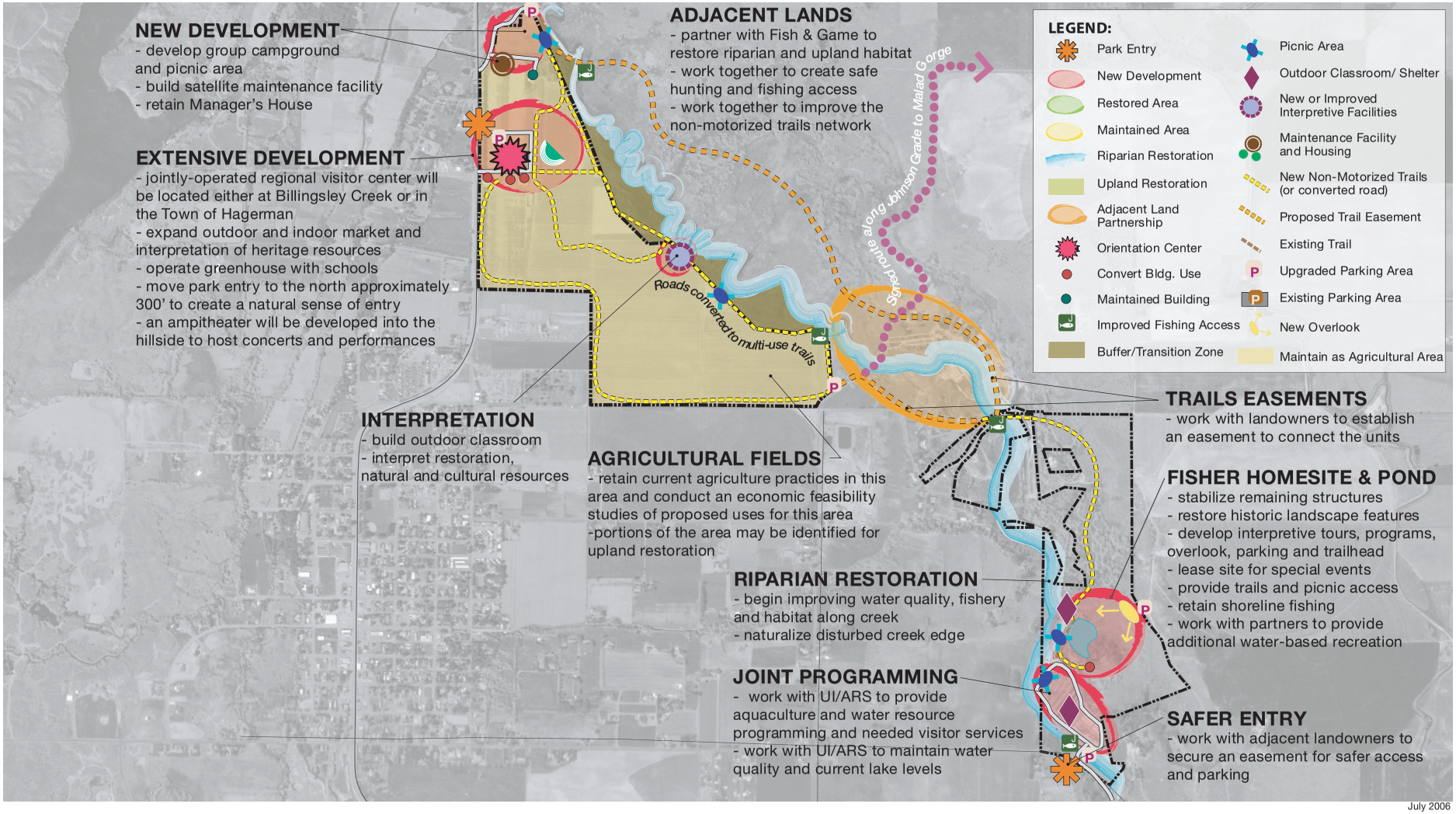
February 2006

RESOURCE AREA DESIGNATION MAP
Thousand Springs State Park

BILLINGSLEY CREEK UNIT

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES

0 240 480 960
Scale: 1" = Approximately 480'



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MASTER PLAN
Thousand Springs State Park

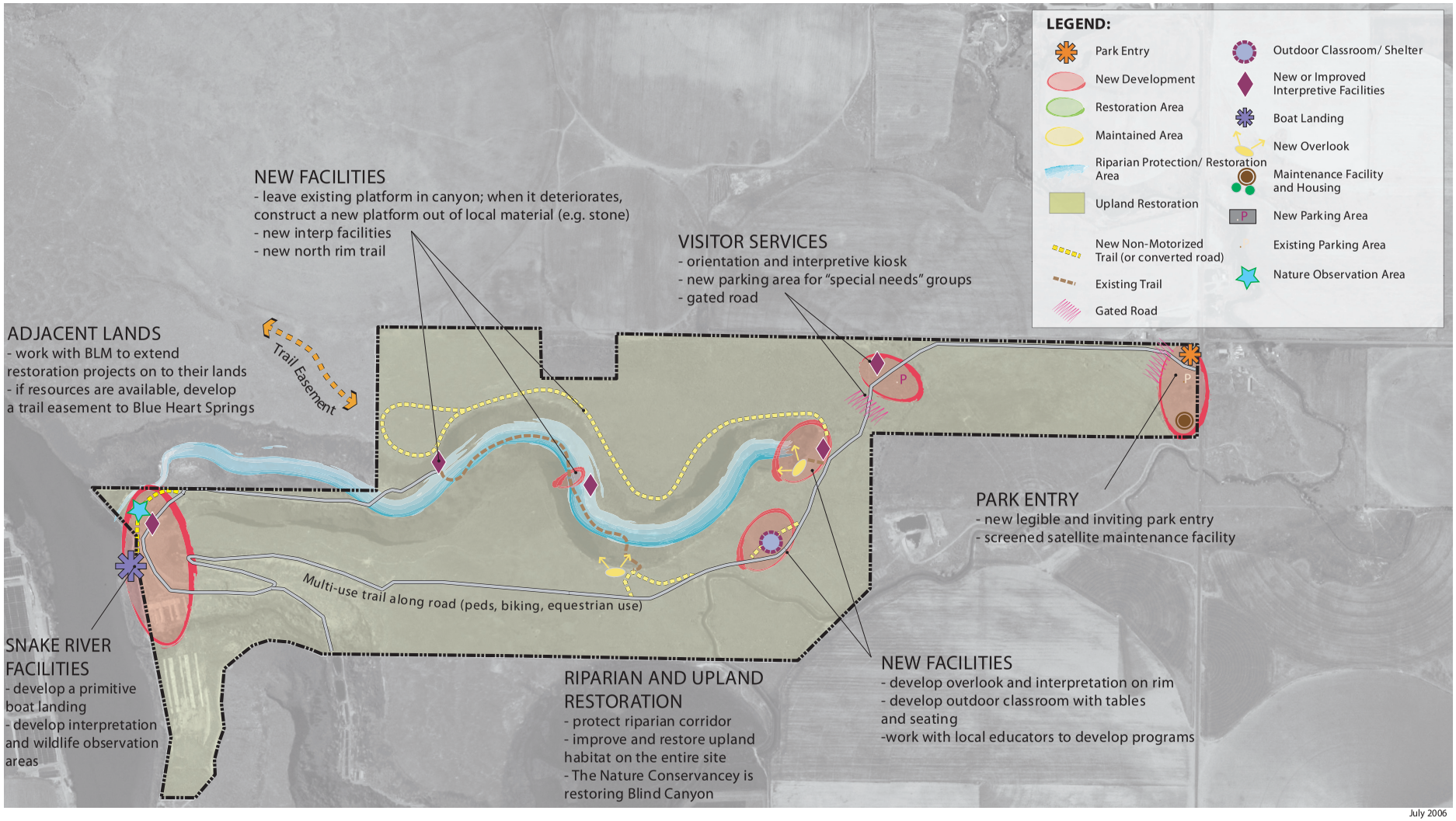
BILLINGSLEY CREEK UNIT

February 2006

RESOURCE AREA DESIGNATION MAP

Thousand Springs State Park

BOX CANYON UNIT


LEGEND:
Park Entry
New Development
Restoration Area
Maintained Area
Riparian Protection/ Restoration Area
Upland Restoration
New Non-Motorized Trail (or converted road)
Existing Trail
Gated Road
Outdoor Classroom/ Shelter
New or Improved Interpretive Facilities
Boat Landing
New Overlook
Maintenance Facility and Housing
New Parking Area
Existing Parking Area
Nature Observation Area
NEW FACILITIES
- leave existing platform in canyon; when it deteriorates, construct a new platform out of local material (e.g. stone)
- new interp facilities
- new north rim trail
VISITOR SERVICES
- orientation and interpretive kiosk
- new parking area for "special needs" groups
- gated road
ADJACENT LANDS
- work with BLM to extend restoration projects on to their lands
- if resources are available, develop a trail easement to Blue Heart Springs
Trail Easement
PARK ENTRY
- new legible and inviting park entry
- screened satellite maintenance facility
Multi-use trail along road (peds, biking, equestrian use)
SNAKE RIVER FACILITIES
- develop a primitive boat landing
- develop interpretation and wildlife observation areas
RIPARIAN AND UPLAND RESTORATION
- protect riparian corridor
- improve and restore upland habitat on the entire site
- The Nature Conservancey is restoring Blind Canyon
NEW FACILITIES
- develop overlook and interpretation on rim
- develop outdoor classroom with tables and seating
-work with local educators to develop programs

July 2006

February 2006

RESOURCE AREA DESIGNATION MAP

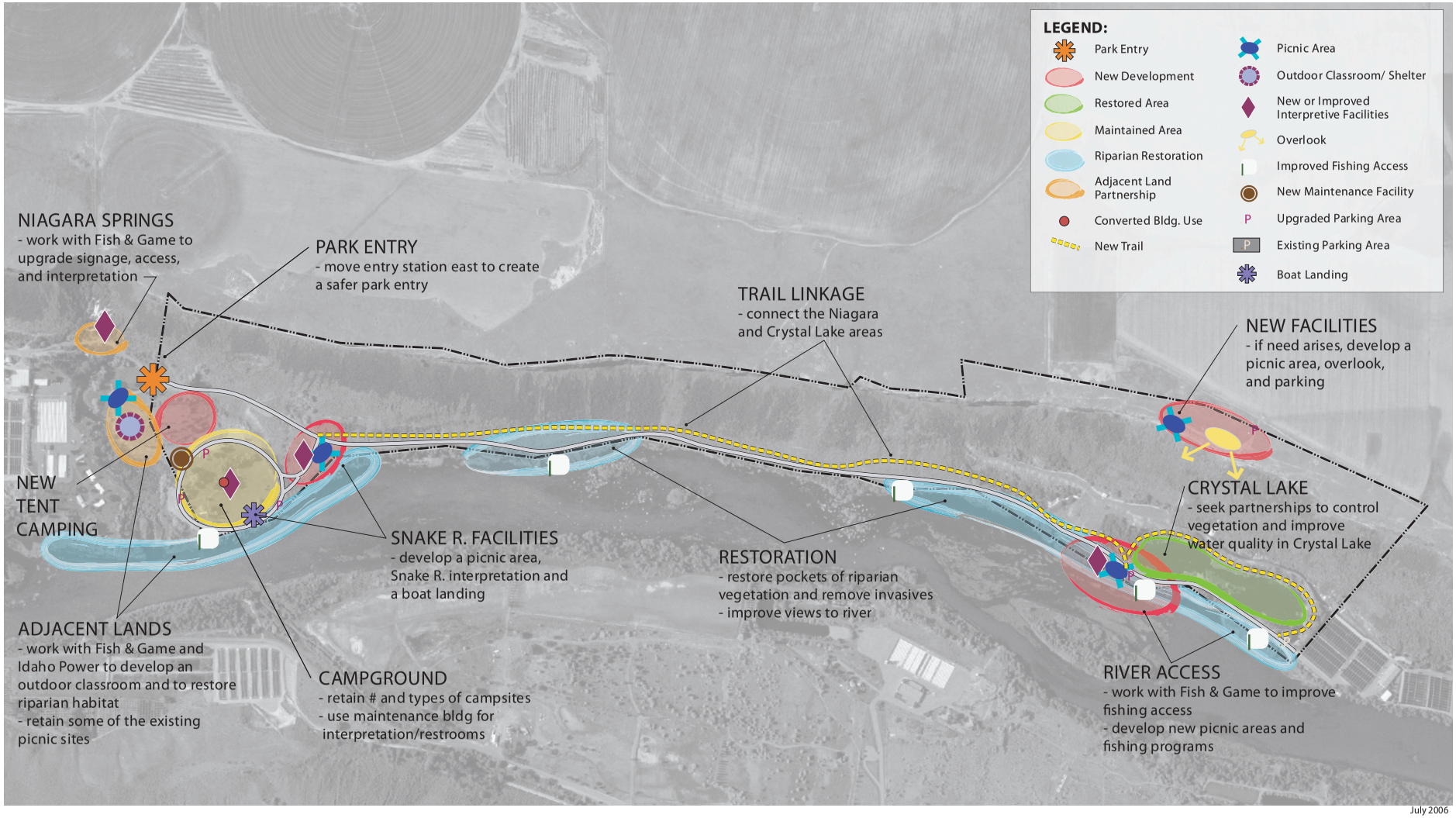
Thousand Springs State Park

NIAGARA SPRINGS UNIT

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES

0 150 300 600

Scale: 1" = Approximately 300'


LEGEND:
Park Entry
New Development
Restored Area
Maintained Area
Riparian Restoration
Adjacent Land Partnership
Converted Bldg. Use
New Trail
Picnic Area
Outdoor Classroom/ Shelter
New or Improved Interpretive Facilities
Overlook
Improved Fishing Access
New Maintenance Facility
Upgraded Parking Area
Existing Parking Area
Boat Landing
NIAGARA SPRINGS
- work with Fish & Game to upgrade signage, access, and interpretation
PARK ENTRY
- move entry station east to create a safer park entry
TRAIL LINKAGE
- connect the Niagara and Crystal Lake areas
NEW FACILITIES
- if need arises, develop a picnic area, overlook, and parking
NEW TENT CAMPING
SNAKE R. FACILITIES
- develop a picnic area, Snake R. interpretation and a boat landing
RESTORATION
- restore pockets of riparian vegetation and remove invasives
- improve views to river
CRYSTAL LAKE
- seek partnerships to control vegetation and improve water quality in Crystal Lake
ADJACENT LANDS
- work with Fish & Game and Idaho Power to develop an outdoor classroom and to restore riparian habitat
- retain some of the existing picnic sites
CAMPGROUND
- retain # and types of campsites
- use maintenance bldg for interpretation/restrooms
RIVER ACCESS
- work with Fish & Game to improve fishing access
- develop new picnic areas and fishing programs

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Appendices

APPENDIX A.
SUMMARY OF INPUT

Collecting input is an integral part of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's (IDPR) master planning process. During the initial inventory and analysis phase of the planning process, a series of meetings with the general public, stakeholders, and IDPR staff were held in order to ensure that all interested parties could provide input on the Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan. Ideas and concerns expressed at the Planning Review Team meeting (April 2005), the Partner Stakeholder meeting (June 2005) and the IDPR Staff Input meeting (June 2005) as well as at the Public Input Workshops (June 2005) are summarized below. Input submitted via written and email comments have also been included in this summary.

Park Significance

The following ideas emerged as common themes when groups were asked to articulate the significance of Thousand Springs State Park:

- The park units act as buffers and are essential for preserving free flowing springs and maintaining the water quality of the tributaries that flow into the Snake River.
- Preservation of the park land and the water rights is important given the increased agricultural dewatering of the Snake River Plain aquifer.
- Water within the parks is a valuable resource for aquaculture, recreation and wildlife
- Park provides access to public lands and opportunities for public use. As development in the Hagerman Valley grows the importance and open space value of the park units will increase.
- Together the park units form a "string of pearls" – a collection of public lands unified by their unique hydrologic and geologic characteristics and within close proximity to one another.
- The park units provide habitat for a number of plant and animal populations including threatened and endangered plant, animal and fish species.
- The park is located within a migratory bird flyway and waterfowl wintering zone
- In addition to its conservation value, the park presents wildlife viewing and nature study opportunities.
- The park units are scenic resources – geologic and hydrologic wonders set in a desert landscape.
- The park units offer diverse recreation opportunities
- The park offers a setting for educational and interpretive programming - Places where educators can bring learning outside and focus on the natural and cultural heritage of the Hagerman Valley.
- Archeological evidence suggests prehistoric settlement occurred on and around the park land.
- Located within a tourism zone, along a Scenic Byway and in close proximity to the town of Hagerman - the park is a heritage tourism asset.

Overall Park Qualities - Common To All Park Units

Assets and qualities common to all units of Thousand Springs State Park are summarized below. The qualities are broken down in categories and are listed in no particular order.

Natural Resources

- Provides wintering habitat for waterfowl and raptors
- A variety of non-game wildlife use the park
- Prevalent game species include upland birds and waterfowl
- A variety of plant life and dramatic topography has protected natural communities from disturbance
- Park provides a large amount of acreage for wildlife habitat management and could support additional upland game hunting
- Park units support unique "mirco-ecosystems" (e.g., Box Canyon, Malad Gorge, Fisher Lake, and side canyon)
- Units contain a number of free flowing fresh water springs

Visitor Experience/Recreation

- Provides access to scenic resources and opportunities for a diversity of recreation
- Mild climate and long shoulder seasons allows for year-round use
- Ongoing visitor survey will offer insight into public's attitude about the parks

Education/Interpretation

- IDPR staff offers interpretive park tours (at all 4 units). Information for self-guided tours is provided when no one is available to lead a tour
- Each park unit offers a different geologic story for interpretation and a water story with common ties to the Snake River aquifer
- Area outlying the park is also rich in cultural and natural resources and could complement park interpretive programming (e.g., Frank Lloyd Wright designed artist studio near Hagerman - Archie Teater Studio, Hagerman Horse Range, Ritter Island)

Operations

- Volunteers are an important asset.
- Volunteer groups help with mowing, fee collection, visitor services, computer work, and weed control
- Volunteers also improve visitors' experience by serving as a walking kiosk

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- A scenic byway connects several of the park units
- Attractions such as the large fish hatcheries, National Fossil Beds and hot springs draw visitors to the area
- Park manager maintains 17 partnerships and the park hosts 14 events annually (volunteers help tremendously with events)
- Partner and neighboring land owner, Idaho Power, is upgrading many areas for public access

Qualities for each park unit

Assets and qualities specific to each of the park units within the Thousand Springs State Park are summarized below (in no particular order).

Malad Gorge

Natural Resources

- Dramatic scenery – grows from a little crack to the east into a huge gorge to the west. Extraordinary desert landscape.
- Excellent views – bridge and overlooks allow visitors to experience drama of the gorge
- Unique geologic and hydrologic resources – National Natural Landmark potential
- A cold water refuge for fish; serves as a buffer to silt and sedimentation
- Native, red band trout are undisturbed, no interbreeding since rainbow trout can not make it past the diversion
- Wintering ground for mule deer
- Abundant water resources - springs, hanging lake, and one of the world's shortest rivers
- Grassland restoration has been successful and serves as a park-wide model

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Convenient access off of I-84
- Provides good biking and hiking in a serene setting
- Popular day-use park facilities that accommodate families/groups (playground, restroom, picnic area, interpretive kiosk, trails)
- Overlook facilities bird watching
- Multiple recreation opportunities including: scenic viewing, disc golf, climbing, fishing, interpretation, picnic, hiking, paddling instruction, St. Patrick's Day Fun Run

Education/Interpretation

- Historical interpretation of Kelton stage/ Oregon trail
- Multiple interpretive resources/topics including the Malad River history, political history of the park's acquisition, as well as archeological (Native American prayer wheel), geological and paleontological resources
- Views to windmill offer opportunity to interpret the history of energy production – hydroelectric to windmills

Operations

- Administrative headquarters and park residence are located on site
- Practice of flood irrigation still used (a traditional practice that is on the decline, but was beneficial because it recharged the aquifer)

Land Acquisitions/Partnerships

- none mentioned

Billingsley Creek

Natural Resources

- Fresh spring water provides optimum oxygen content and temperature (58 degrees) for growing trout – excellent research and aquaculture potential
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between University of Idaho and IDPR for development of the upper parcel for aquaculture research. A new Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facility is planned. The multi-million dollar facility will allow for the replication of stream morphology and other important research. The facility will be open to educational tours.
- Riparian habitat

- Shade and water in a desert landscape is unique

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Given proximity to Hagerman and location along a Scenic Byway (Highway 30), the site has good potential as an orientation hub
- Abundant facilities that are unique among park units (e.g. riding arena, farmers market building, barn, ranger residence)
- Developable land base, it is essentially a clean slate
- Large open spaces are well-suited for family picnics, camping and special events
- Good wildlife viewing potential
- Garden center available for rent
- Riding arena available for state and regional events
- Events include the Blues Festival and farmers market
- The best hunting among the park units
- Good fishing and floating along the creek
- Fisher Pond offers excellent views and is desirable for swimming

Education/Interpretation

- Educational programming is currently offered
- Multiple interpretive resources/topics including the history of the McFadden Farm and the home of Vardis Fisher, an author of statewide significance

Operations

- Park ranger residence is on site
- Alfalfa farming generates revenue

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Established partnerships with Fish and Game, University of Idaho and ARS

Box Canyon

Natural Resources

- Contains the 11th largest free-flowing spring in the world – a tremendous water resource
- Unique geologic formations (e.g. lava rocks, cliff walls)
- Valuable as a relatively undisturbed site with healthy flora and fauna. Pockets of plants and animals warrant further study – could be unique ecosystems.
- Limited use around important scientific study areas including the head of the spring. Also restricted use around the lower pond irrigation head gate to minimize safety hazards.
- Excellent views with great overlook potential
- The Nature Conservancy has restoration projects planned for the site
- Raptor nesting and more birds of prey due to proximity to the Snake R.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Limited access and uses (hiking, biking, bird watching, fishing)– yet unique opportunity to climb down into the canyon
- Site is largely undeveloped and is an open slate in terms of facility development
- Tremendous overlook potential given scenic resources – water fall, creek, spring
- Provides public uses in area dominated by private lands

- Proximity to the Snake River, potential access from the river

Education/Interpretation

- Good potential for archeological and natural history educational and/or interpretive programming

Operations

- none mentioned

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- none mentioned

Niagara Springs

Natural Resources

- Sheer canyon wall is an interesting geologic feature and a scenic backdrop to the park setting
- At park entrance are the Niagara Springs – a National Natural Landmark – the springs, however, are on Fish and Game land

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Provides access to the Snake River (boat ramp)
- Popular fishing spot - Neighboring hatcheries provide fish stock for the lake
- Only overnight group campground in the park
- Provides numerous recreation opportunities and facilities including fishing, camping, picnic shelter, restrooms, SCUBA
- Family and ADA fishing facilities
- Park allows visitors to view springs up close

Education/Interpretation

- none mentioned

Operations

- Most heavily used park and the biggest revenue base
- Aquaculture
- Seasonal worker collects fees

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- none mentioned

Overall Park Issues

Issues and concerns common to all units of the Thousand Springs State Park are summarized below (in no particular order).

Note: Articles in The Idaho Statesmen led to an abundance of comments regarding the "park" name and in particular the name of the Vardis Fisher homesite within the Billingsley Creek unit – the content of these comments is summarized below under the "park name" heading.

Park Name

- Should the name of Billingsley Creek be changed? Proposed changes to the name include:
    - Naming it after Vardis Fisher, the author who inhabited part of the property
    - Naming it after both the creek and the author e.g. Fisher-Billingsley or Vardis Fisher State Park at Billingsley Creek
    - Not naming the park after Vardis Fisher
    - Split the Billingsley Creek unit into 2 units with separate names – the lake and homesite could be named after Fisher (e.g. Fisher Place, Fisher Lake) and the lower unit would remain Billingsley Creek

- All 4 park units, Malad Gorge, Billingsley Creek, Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve and Niagara Springs should be managed as the Thousand Springs State Park

Natural Resources

- Water quality has deteriorated in recent years - irrigation waste water impacts pure spring water and pollutes the Snake River
- Need to protect and enforce water rights and to preserve springs and the clean water that drains through the park to the Snake River
- Agricultural dewatering - water supply is declining – wells and springs are drying up
- Need to control noxious weeds (e.g., cheat grass, mustard)
- No natural resource management plan is in place to dictate the protection of threatened and endangered (T&E) species and direct management of natural resources. Similarly, there is no management plan for cultural resources.
- While there is a desire to conduct more restoration work, there is a lack of funding to support such efforts

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facility Development

- Park units are not signed clearly and can be difficult to find – Need a unified signage system. It is difficult for area visitors to navigate from Malad Gorge to Hwy. 30 and the other park units. Orientation signage and information is minimal.
- Need a system for orienting people to the park and the area's resources. People are unaware of what the HagermanValley has to offer.
- Is there a need for a Visitor Center for Thousand Spring State Park and other area attractions? Where could it be developed?
- Park units lack an arrival sequence.
- "Iron Rangers" are not effective – need to have a ranger presence and provide personal contact with visitors. Ranger presence would reduce vandalism and allow for a safer visitor experience. People are more likely to pay when a ranger is present and programs are offered– feel like their money is going to something.
- Struggle to keep up with increased visitation with limited staff and limited facility development.
- Need to be cognizant of not impinging on private enterprise through the development of new recreation facilities and programs.
- Visitors not aware the park unit they are visiting is part of a larger park in the area – challenge to communicate that all units are part of one park – Thousand Springs State Park.
- Challenge to physically link all four units – physically, thematically and operationally.
- Hunting only at Billingsley, need more hunting access and programs park-wide (for upland game birds and waterfowl).
- Lack of potable water at Box, Billingsley, Crystal and Malad restrict development and complicate provision of needed visitor services.
- Potable water and restrooms are needed at each unit
- There are diverse recreational demands and user types.

- There is a demand for increased fishing and hunting access.
- Limited camping exists by the river.
- Evaluate impacts of development (e.g., parking, new access points) on surrounding private property.
- Park units inadvertently lead to people trespassing onto neighboring private lands.
- Park provides only limited handicap access.
- Need to be careful to not infringe on private revenue opportunities.

Interpretation/Education

- Limited interpretation park-wide.
- No interpretation plan.
- Need to protect, restore and interpret cultural resources.
- Aquaculture is not interpreted.
- Need to identify the thematic linkages between the park units.

Operations

- Lack of staffing and operating budget– need more FTEs. Limited staff is forced to react to problems and finds it difficult to manage resources proactively, plan events, conduct public outreach, and properly maintain buildings and equipment.
- Need an FTE devoted to interpretation/ education and other visitor services
- Need administrative help – someone that knows the parks and can assist with reservations, billings, interviews, timesheets, answer phones, updating brochures.
- Need more labor to be proactive and to ensure equal maintenance of the park units.
- Irrigation structures (e.g.. head gates) present a safety hazard
- Office location is not visible or easily accessible by the public. Few opportunities for visitors to interact with staff.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Need to identify and prioritize potential parcels for acquisition.
- Need to acquire additional land to provide better connections between park units and to ensure the protection and preservation of water resources, habitat, and public access.

Individual Park Unit Issues

Issues and concerns specific to each park unit within Thousand Springs State Park are summarized below (in no particular order).

Malad Gorge

Natural Resources

- Threat of wildland fire ignition.
- Cowpie buckwheat, an endangered species, is found at nearly every viewing point and is vulnerable to disturbance.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Lack of access/signage/orientation to land east of I-84.
- Traffic flow into park is problematic – 90 degree turn at entry.
- Access to the back of the park is limited since gates are locked at 4pm.
- Lack of opportunities to explore the gorge - Access to gorge is restricted and people want to climb down to the bottom.

- Unit is often perceived as a Highway rest stop rather than a state park.
- Fee area is too small, nearly half of visitors just drive by it.
- There is a demand for camping.

Education/Interpretation

- Limited interpretation of cultural resources.

Operations

- Protect water rights and discourage hydropower claims.
- Roads present a safety hazard - No barriers, close to the rim edge, slick in the winter.
- How should sediment ponds be developed and utilized? Will they lead to a mosquito problem? What will happen when they dry up?

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- none mentioned

Billingsley Creek

Natural Resources

- Limited natural habitat for wildlife, lots of invasive species.
- Siltation of creek jeopardizes water quality.
- What should be done with the two ponds to reserve the water rights and define the water usage?
- Fishing has declined.
- Need to restore creek hydrology (currently channelized).
- How will the fish hatchery's planned use of Big Spring affect water quality and quantity at Fisher Lake? Also need to consider visual impacts. Fisher Lake and other resources need to be studied to understand the impacts of the ARS/U of I development.
- Lombardy poplars along Hwy. 30 are dying.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Current layout is confusing – unclear what the buildings are for, lack of directional signage.
- Site now lacks a park "feel".
- How should existing buildings be used in the future? Also, how should the agricultural fields be managed?
- Formerly the McFadden Farm – this portion of the park unit used to support a driving range, mint farm and nursery. Future uses have been promised prior to the initiation of the master-planning project.
- Lack of trails.
- Limited handicap access and facilities (no universally accessible fishing opportunities).
- Need improved boat take out/put in on Billingsley Creek.
- Need a public float area (e.g., tubes).
- People want to rent stalls to board horses – are horses a liability IDPR is willing to accept?
- Need additional access points to unit.
- Surrounding development may present conflicts for hunting programs.
- There is no clear connection between the upper and lower units at Billingsley Creek - Should the two Billingsley Creek properties be connected? By a trail or by a signed auto route or by water?
- Should the upper Billingsley Creek

parcel be closed to the public given safety/security concerns?

- How will IDPR be recognized as landowner for the research facility?
- Difficult to access creek on the Vardis Fisher property.
- Should Fisher Lake be open for recreation (swimming, boating, SCUBA, fishing, etc)?

Education/Interpretation

- Lack of educational programs - How to interpret and/or preserve the agriculture history of Billingsley Creek?
- Vardis Fisher – his life, his works, his home – should be interpreted.
- How should ruins of the Vardis Fisher home be treated?

Operations

- Dangerous egress, no turn-off lane on Hwy. 30 (60 mph).
- Contrasting land uses nearby at Norwood Estate (agriculture and residential uses).
- Insufficient equipment and staff to run a farm.
- Lack of staff for events and activities.
- Location and development of aquaculture research center remains unclear.
- Earthen dike at Fisher Lake is failing.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- The hatchery operation may present safety hazards. How will the open raceways be secured, yet public access to Fisher Lake ensured? Current University of Idaho's "Stay Out" sign is hostile.
- Need more communication with Univ. of Idaho and ARS to better understand planned development for the Billingsley Creek property. IDPR, ARS and Univ. of Idaho need to work together on the development of Billingsley Creek to ensure that the state park and the research facility are compatible and complimentary. Need to coordinate facilities and programs.
- Fish and Game does not desire more users on adjacent land (Billingsley Creek Wildlife Management

Area); prefer to focus on habitat enhancements (e.g. native grass and shrub restoration).

- Develop relationship with Fish and Game to coordinate management goals.
- Need to acquire land in order to connect the two Billingsley Creek properties.
- Need to investigate private in-holdings on upper property and impacts on access.

Box Canyon

Natural Resources

- Threat of wildland fire ignition.
- Natural resources require careful evaluation and monitoring to ensure their protection and enhancement and to minimize impacts from visitor use.
- Upland habitat is in poor condition.
- Steep canyon poses erosion problems.
- Poison ivy is pervasive.
- Need to survey for and monitor threatened and endangered species within the canyon.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- No handicap accessible facilities.

- Minimal facility development (no place to sit, no water, no orientation, no maps and no interpretation).
- Lack of health and safety precautions (e.g., rim, irrigation head gates).
- No access to the Snake River.
- North rim access is controlled by BLM.
- Access to unit is limited and requires a walk in - Should parking area be moved in closer to the rim?
- Overlook can be slippery and present a safety hazard.
- Unit is increasing in popularity.
- Can't account for the number of visitors.
- Main attraction is the spring at the mouth of the canyon, the canyon also offers a scenic experience.

Education/Interpretation

- none mentioned

Operations

- need to keep road from Blind canyon.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Need to coordinate land transfer and future management with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to ensure that IDPR is self-sufficient when TNC leaves. Will TNC's planned restoration be completed before property turns over to IDPR?

Niagara Springs

Natural Resources

- Siltation and pollutants drain from the Crystal hatchery and compromise Crystal Lake's water quality.
- Pelicans are eating the fish in the lake.
- Problems with aquatic vegetation and large algae blooms.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Entrance road is dangerous – narrow, commercial traffic, high speeds, too tight for a trail along road corridor.
- RVs are parking on land that is not leased by the state.
- Could a trail be built to access the rim above the lake? Would a trail up to the ridge lead to contamination of the spring water flowing to Crystal Lake?
- Snake River flows are typically too low for the boat ramp to be of use. At high water, however, some people kayak the river and put in at Niagara.
- Idaho Power's free area (managed by Fish and Game) is adjacent to IDPR's fee area. People will park in the free area and walk into the state park to avoid paying the entrance fee.
- Poorly designed RV camping, confusing entry, and dangerous pedestrian circulation.
- Lack of trails and safe walking areas.
- Smell of settling pond by toilet.
- Need additional individual camps.

Education/Interpretation

- none mentioned

Operations

- Need a staff person stationed at the campground during evening hours.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Should IDPR work with Fish and Game to improve the visitor experience of the Niagara Springs?

Opportunities, Ideas & Desired Experiences – Parkwide

Input provided on future management including ideas, suggestions, potential opportunities and desired visitor experiences is summarized below (in no particular order).

Natural Resources

- Water resources are protected and efforts are made to improve the water quality of the Snake River.
- Preserve open space and protect sensitive natural resource by encouraging lower impact, nature-based recreation such as hiking, hunting, fishing, photography.
- No programs or project should be considered that do not enhance the natural qualities of the park.
- Agricultural portions of the park could be converted to more ecologically sustainable crops such as native plants – native seed could then be sold to agencies for use in their restoration projects.
- Increase the amount of native flora coverage in the park.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/ Facilities

- Develop a park-wide orientation brochure as well as an overall Thousand Springs State Park map that depicts all of the units.
- Provide clear and uniform signage for all units – entrance to parks should be well-defined, standardized and unified. Upon entry visitors should know they are entering a unit of Thousand Springs State Park.
- Orient visitor to the Hagerman Valley at one visitor center staffed by Fish & Game, IDPR, NPS and USFWS. Also, utilize on the three portals of Bliss, Twin Falls and Hansen Bridge to orient visitors to the valley.
- Explore opportunities to connect all the units – physical as well as interpretive links. Consider signed bike and driving routes.
- Define one park unit as the park headquarters (either Malad Gorge or Billingsley Creek).
- Provide additional camping facilities; yet avoid direct competition with local businesses. Consider other types of overnight facilities including yurts and cabins.
- Camping facilities will include showers.
- Expand access and education opportunities on the Snake River (e.g. boating, fishing, riverside trail).
- Allow for a diversity of experiences at the various park units to encourage repeat visitation.
- Proposed new and/or expanded park uses and facilities include:
    - Archery
    - Equestrian trails
    - Water events
    - Greenhouse to raise native plants – nursery managed as an outdoor education program
    - Wildlife viewing
    - Golf course and/or Driving range
    - Camping (additional primitive camping sites)
    - Trails
    - Amphitheater
    - Sports fields

- o Bike trails
- o Picnic Areas
- o Special Hunts (e.g. Youth hunts)
- o More trails through a variety of landscapes
- o Group camping and shelters
- o Package tours – A full day tour (of all units) with camping at Niagara
- o Equipment rentals at park units to facilitate exploration (e.g. bikes, canoes)

Education/Interpretation

- Standardize interpretive signage and facilities among units
- Develop interpretive bike and/or driving routes between the park units
- Disperse educational and interpretive programming among the park units.
- Park units could serve as outdoor classrooms and allow educators to bring programs outside.
- Partner with University of Idaho to conduct oral interviews of people connected to park units. Expand interpretation of the Hagerman Valley and its residents.
- Partner with local schools to facilitate science instruction in the park. Work with students to conduct a plant and animal inventory and encourage students to provide management recommendations
- Proposed new and/or expanded interpretive/educational topics:
  - o Water and the significance of the Snake River aquifer and the springs
  - o Water in relation to aquaculture and agriculture (dairy farms) is a valley-wide story.
  - o Geology
  - o Evolution of the park landscape – from Native American occupation, to the Oregon Trail to the present
  - o Native Americans and western pioneers
  - o Educate visitors about what the park should look like in terms of native vegetation. Interpret restoration techniques and their purpose.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Cooperative management of park units and other access points along the Snake River corridor.
- IDPR and NPS have an agreement to serve the public together and NPS is willing to consider the possibility of developing a joint 'meet and greet' facility or Visitor Center. Other agencies/organizations in the area may also be interested in partnering including – USFWS, Fish and Game, Southern Idaho Land Trust. At the center, visitors would receive area and park-specific information free of charge. The following locations were suggested for the joint visitor facility:
- Billingsley Creek - centrally located to downtown Hagerman
- Malad Gorge – easily accessible contact point for park off I-84
- Could the community support a Learning Center at one of the park units?

- Explore partnerships with USDA on developing/funding a noxious weed management program.
- Work with University of Idaho and Boise State University to support research, education and to recruit interns or graduate students.
- Engage the community and local schools in the restoration and enhancement of the park's natural setting.
- Partner with the Sawtooth Science Institute and other environmental education organizations to facilitate more on-site educational programming.
- Important to keep the community engaged in the park's development.
- Acquire additional land to expand IDPR's string of pearls. Other potential properties include Ritter Island, Minnie Miller, Blue Heart Springs, and Hot Springs.
- Work with Southern Idaho Land Trust (SILT) and other potential partners such as Univ. of Idaho to explore shared use/ management of Ritter Island. Potential joint uses of the island include: retreat center, environmental education center, special events, conference meetings in the historic barn and conference events on the grounds, controlled access to the Snake River for guided canoe tours, employee housing.
- IDPR could potentially trade Bear Track Williams property between Richfield and Carey with Fish and Game in return for the Niagara Springs property.
- Opportunities for collaborative educational program on sites and in classrooms between NPS, Univ. of Idaho, ARS, Fish and Game, College of So. Idaho.
- Formalize MOU for working relationship between Chamber of Commerce.
- Partner with concessionaires to provide improved visitor services.
- Partner with scenic byway to promote the area and improve the visitor experience.

Operations

- Manage each park unit independently.
- Manage park units as a system with complimentary uses.
- Parks could generate additional revenue to support programming, maintenance, etc.
- Conservation Reserve Emergency Program (CREP) for wildlife could be a revenue generator.
- Volunteer hosts at each park unit.
- Ensure a staff presence at each park unit.
- Improve primary operation and maintenance (O&M) areas at Malad Gorge and Niagara Springs and identify locations at the other units that could support satellite O&M areas.
- Explore opportunities/market for running a retreat center at a park unit.
- Recruit additional volunteers - establish a "Friends of Thousand Springs" organization to engage the community and solicit volunteer help.

Opportunities, Ideas & Desired Experiences – for each park unit

Ideas, suggestions, potential opportunities and desired visitor experiences specific to each park unit within Thousand Springs State Park are summarized below (in no particular order).

Malad Gorge

Natural Resources

- Expand grassland restoration – plant more native grasses, protect the cowpie buckwheat and escalate efforts to reduce cheat grass.
- Clean out wildlife pond and make it accessible and usable.
- Build sediment ponds to improve water quality, provide wildlife habitat (hold water, allow sediment to settle before spilling into Malad River) – Assess if proposed ponds (within Fish and Game's boundary) is a sanctioned use of the land and determine how they will be managed over the long-term.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Unit could serve as the park headquarters and orientation point. A visitor contact station or visitor center could be constructed at the front gate or at the rim overlook.
- Proposed new park uses include: hang gliding, tent camping, hunting on the east side of I-84 and hiking and biking opportunities away from the road.
- Expansion of the trail system to include a trail along rim, a trail by Woody's Cove to the SE corner of the rim, and a trail to the bottom of the gorge.
- Connect to Billingsley Creek (along Johnson Grade).
- Re-design road to be safer (pull away from rim) and to more clearly direct visitors to the rim and overlooks.
- East of I-84 improve directional signage, parking and build walking bridge across Malad River to provide deeper access into the lava rock setting.

Education/Interpretation

- Living history interpretation of the Kelton Stage/Oregon Trail.
- Better signage and self-guided interpretation of Kelton Stage area.
- Proposed new interpretive topic include the interpretation of the Hagerman Valley – its agricultural history, modern land uses, climate, fisheries, power generation, etc.
- Develop an education/Interpretation and/or Visitor Orientation Center.
- Introduce raptor interpretation/identification programs.

Operations

- Provide housing for seasonal employees.
- Protect prayer wheels and other cultural resources in the Kelton Stage area.
- Improve boundary fencing.
- Restrict access to under freeway bridge.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Acquisition of neighboring land would facilitate expansion of the park unit's trail system.
- Work with Idaho Power to interpret various power sources - Hydropower and windmills.

Billingsley Creek

Natural Resources

- Restore habitat along the riparian corridor and restore alfalfa fields to native upland vegetation.
- Upland vegetation could be enhanced and the riparian corridor and creek channel restored.

- Plant trees to replace dying Lombardy poplars along Hwy. 30. Also plant trees within the park to create more shade.
- Unit could serve as a habitat/nesting area as long as no hunting is permitted in the SE corner.
- Pump more water into Billingsley Creek in order to correct siltation problem.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Concentrate development on the lower parcel – put Hagerman civic facilities such as pools, driving range, tennis courts there.
- Provide improved access to the creek and additional parking for boaters and better signage demarcating parking areas.
- Establish reservable hunting blinds, managed by IDPR.
- Expand trail system to include a loop trail through the park – a mowed path west of the property along the trees and irrigation ditch as well as trail connections between the two parcels. New trail system offers diverse trail experiences (e.g., interpretation, solitude, biking).
- Utilize overlooks on SE corner of property.
- Develop staging areas at trailheads – signage, restrooms, parking, etc.
- Additional proposed uses include wagon rides, pumpkin patch, special hunt programs (e.g. disabled, youth), sports fields (soccer, softball, baseball), community gardens, building rentals for groups and/or concessionaires.
- Establish park as a heritage events stop (e.g., craft outlet and visitor center, market, special events).
- Develop use schedule for equestrian arena and begin charging by the horse rather than the car.
- Active recreation opportunities that promote and support local recreation business like bike, kayak, canoe and horse rentals.
- Provide large group facilities (e.g., mixed camping, cabin, bunkhouse, RV facilities) including a screened pavilion, shower, and restrooms.
- Convert manager's residence to a retreat facility, landscape around it could be restored to more native habitat.
- Develop a special events area with parking as well as public restrooms and a food preparation and service booth and an amphitheater for outdoor plays and events.
- Open Fisher Lake to multiple uses including swimming, fishing, SCUBA diving, boating.
- Leave Fisher Lake pristine and protect the watershed – do not allow boating, fishing, swimming, motorized vehicles there, or any commercial development and limit public use.
- Develop a small campground by Fisher Lake.

Education/Interpretation

- Provide living history (interpretive farm like "Sturbridge Village") – interpret Hagerman Valley's farming traditions, showcase historic farming equipment (An offer has been given to display antique farm equipment).
- Develop a Farm Heritage Center with events, market, museum and greenhouse.
- Construct a large environmental education building.

- Establish a summer residency program for Idaho writers or graduate students at Vardis Fisher property.
- Develop an interpretive kiosk on the Vardis Fisher site .
- Construct a memorial (stone) to honor Fisher.
- Proposed ideas for the reconstruction/ restoration of the Fisher homesite include: reconstruction of the exterior of Fisher's house, building a deck on the foundation, clean-up ruins and make them safe, build a nature trail around property and lake, restore vegetation.
- Interpret Vardis Fisher (papers are at BSU) and partner with others to run lectures, retreats and writing workshops on site, public tours.
- Use interpretative facilities and programming to recognize Vardis Fisher's contributions to the state of Idaho.
- Establish a 'Vardis Fisher Day' or 'Month'.
- Do not use the Fisher homesite to interpret the life and art of the author.
- Use site for demonstrations of restoration and other agricultural techniques. Also route interpretive trails through restored areas.
- Interpret aquaculture and fisheries research on the park property.

Operations

- Work with Idaho Dept. of Transportation to improve safety of access of Hwy. 30 (e.g., slow speed to 45 mph from 60 mph or add a turnout lane).
- Concentrate park staff housing here.
- Use existing large buildings to accommodate local agricultural businesses and to add value to locally grown products by packaging and distributing the products through an on-site outlet and/or an Idaho Product outlets throughout the state.
- Introduce fishing education programs for adults and children to learn fishing techniques.
- Restore old entry to Fisher house or build an observation deck on old floor or build a model of the original house.
- Repair earthen dike at Fisher Lake.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Cooperate with schools to run greenhouse and grow native plants and other trees and shrubs suitable for re-vegetating disturbed sites.
- Partner to arrange hunting on the Fish and Game's WMA. This would improve safety with hunters shooting away from the park.
- Develop a shared visitor center on site (w/ Fish & Game, NPS, USFWS, etc.).
- Maintain relationship with Fish and Game at Billingsley and explore opportunities together for additional access and hunting opportunities. IDPR could provide the access to hunting and Fish and Game could provide the hunting habitat on the neighboring WMA.
- Work with Fish and Game to restore portions of Billingsley Creek.
- Work with the Vardis Fisher Society at Boise State.

Box Canyon

Natural Resources

- Minimize impacts to natural resources.

- Head of spring is managed as a scientific resource area and use is limited to avoid contamination of water source.
- Grassland restoration of uplands.
- Resume use of decreed water right (investigate possibility of water banking is or using it for grassland restoration).

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Permit primitive camping.
- Construct a defined overlook with a hard ground surface.
- Improve existing trails and expand trail system in and around the canyon.
- Parking is kept away from Canyon rim.
- Move parking in closer to provide more convenient access to canyon rim.
- A permanent building would provide needed visitor services (e.g. restroom, water, maps).
- Provide a river pullout access along the Snake River.
- Develop restroom facilities.

Education/Interpretation

- Offer guided interpretive tours to educate about the geology, natural resources and archeology of the canyon.

Operations

- Limit the number of users (this idea, however, may conflict with park legislation).

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Build partnership with BLM and investigate possible acquisition or lease of their land to the north.

Niagara Springs

Natural Resources

- Water quality of Crystal Lake is improved.

Visitor Experience/Recreation/Facilities

- Shelf above lake on canyon rim is developed – facilities include picnic sites, overlook, trails, camping.
- Rock climbing is permitted on the cliff face.
- Re-designed park entry (possibility of locating additional campsites on closed sections of road).
- Provide additional individual camping.
- Build an additional shelter.
- Develop a shelter/picnic area on the dike.
- Redesign campground.
- Develop a car/zip line to allow visitors to experience the canyon.

Education/Interpretation

- none mentioned

Operations

- Construct a new maintenance facility and office for an additional ranger.
- Rehabilitate existing office and restroom.
- Develop a more efficient watering system and plant more drought tolerant turf grass.

Land Acquisition/Partnerships

- Consolidate management among involved agencies (IDPR, Fish and Game, Idaho Power).

- Acquire the neighboring Niagara Springs and manage the National Natural Landmark.
- Work with partners to assess the feasibility of getting more water from the spring to flow into the lake and improve water quality. Recruit the help of ARS and University of Idaho to strategize ways to improve the lake's water quality.

APPENDIX B.
VISITOR SURVEY FORM

Case #: ☐☐☐☐ Park #: ☐☐

Section 1. Your visit to the park

1. Was this your first visit to this park?: 1. ○ Yes 2. ○ No

2. What type of visit did you make to the park?

1. ○ Day use visit 2. ○ Overnight visit

If it was an overnight visit, how many nights did you/your party stay at the park?

☐☐

3. What was the primary reason for making the trip to this geographic area? (*Select only one*)

1. ○ To visit this Park
2. ○ To visit other attractions
3. ○ To visit friends and family
4. ○ To do Business
5. ○ Just passing through
6. ○ I live around here
7. ○ Some other reason

The "other" reason is: ☐

4. How many people are in your visiting party

☐☐☐

5. What specifically attracted you/your party to this park?

☐

6. a. **Are you traveling with pets?** 1. ○ Yes 2. ○ No

b. If yes, what type of pet(s) is it/are they?

1. ○ Dog(s) 2. ○ Cat(s) 3. ○ Other

Specify 'Other' above: ☐

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Section 1. Your visit to the park (Continued).

7. What was the condition of the grounds/natural resources of the park?

1.	○	Pristine	4.	○	Slightly Overused
2.	○	Good	5.	○	Trampled
3.	○	Acceptable	6.	○	Other

Please explain the "other" above:

8. Which facilities or recreation opportunities (trails, picnic areas, camping structures, river etc.), if any, did you have difficulty using for your recreation experience in the park, and why?

1.

2.

3.

9. a. How many people in your party, if any, had disabilities that hampered their use of some of the facilities or opportunities in the park that you visited?

b. If there were people with disabilities in your party, please describe their disabilities, and how those disabilities hampered their access to specific facilities or recreation opportunities.

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Section 1. Your visit to the park. (Continued).

10. Did you observe any safety hazards while visiting the park?

1. ○ Yes 2. ○ No

If you answered "Yes" to the above question, please explain:

11. Please list the two most enjoyable recreation activities that you participated in at the park.

1.

2.

12. a. Was there a recreation activity that you participated in at the park which did not live up to your expectations?

1. ○ Yes 2. ○ No

b. If your answer to the above question is "Yes", please list the activity and explain why it did not meet your expectations.

13. Which of the following modes of transportation did you use to get to the park?

1. ○ Car 2. ○ Bus 3. ○ Bicycle

4. ○ On foot 5. ○ Motorcycle 6. ○ RV

7. ○ Other

The "Other" above is:

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Section 1. Your visit to the park (Continued).

14. If there are any recreation facilities, services or opportunities that are not currently available at the park that you visited, but which you believe should be provided to enhance your recreation experience at the park, please list no more than three.

15. Approximately at what time did you/your party arrive at the park?

16. Please indicate the day(s) of the week of your visit to the park.

1.	○	Monday	4.	○	Thursday.	7.	○	Sunday
2.	○	Tuesday	5.	○	Friday			
3.	○	Wednesday	6.	○	Saturday			

17. What was the MOST IMPORTANT source of information through which you learned about this park? Please mention ONLY ONE SOURCE of information – the MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE.

1.	○	The Internet	7.	○	Brochures
2.	○	Maps	8.	○	Friends and Family
3.	○	Highway Signs	9.	○	The Idaho Travel Guide
4.	○	Phone call to State Park Agency/Park	10.	○	Radio
5.	○	Television	11.	○	Newspaper/Magazine
6.	○	The Idaho State Park Guide	12.	○	Previous visit

13. ○ Other:

18. **To which one of the following employment categories do you belong?**
(*This is for the person filling in the survey.* ***If you belong to more than one category****, please select* ***only*** *the category which best describes your* ***free time availability***).

i. ○ Employed Full/Part Time, between 8/9am and 4/5pm
ii. ○ Employed Full/Part Time, between 5/6pm and 7/8am
iii. ○ Employed Full/Part Time, with irregular/flexible schedules
iv. ○ Retired
v. ○ Student
vi. ○ Homemaker
vii. ○ Not employed

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Section 2: **Importance of some park characteristics and your satisfaction with them in this park.**

19. Questions: **The following are two-part questions. On the left are questions about the importance of park characteristics IN GENERAL to you. On the right, we ask you to tell us your level of satisfaction with those same characteristics in THIS PARK. If this park does not have those characteristics, please fill in their general importance to you, on the left hand side, and then just mark the 'Don't Know/NA column on the satisfaction side.**

Park Characteristic	Importance: Not at all Important (1)				Very Important (5)	Satisfaction: Not at all Satisfied (1)				Very Satisfied (5)	Don't Know N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	0
Clean working restrooms -----	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Visitor / Historical Information Center ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Well-maintained campsites --	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Retail/Souvenir shops --------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Boating facilities ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fish cleaning stations --------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Yurts ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cabins ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sewer hook-ups ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Group facilities ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reservation system ---------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Helpful park staff ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reasonable user fees --------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Well-maintained grounds and facilities ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning opportunities -----	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Directional & safety signs --	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Safety and security ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ease of the check-in process at campgrounds ---	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Park map or brochure ------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Historical/Heritage experiences ----------	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Section 2 Contd: Importance of some park characteristics and your satisfaction with them in this park.

19. Questions: The following are two-part questions. On the left are questions about the importance of park characteristics IN GENERAL to you. On the right, we ask you to tell us your level of satisfaction with those same characteristics in THIS PARK. If this park does not have those characteristics, please fill in their general importance to you, on the left hand side, and then just mark the 'Don't Know/NA column on the satisfaction side.

Park Characteristic	Importance: Not at all Important (1)				Very Important (5)	Satisfaction: Not at all Satisfied (1)				Very Satisfied (5)	Don't Know N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	0
Trails	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Camping	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fishing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Swimming	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Boating/Canoeing/ Kayaking	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Beach/Waterfront opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Overall park condition	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

20. Please enter all spending inside the park by you and the other members of your party (combined). Enter spending to the nearest dollar, including pre-paid deposits for camping, equipment rentals etc., but excluding any annual registration fees. Please enter a zero if you did not spend any money in a particular category.

1. Beverages & Snacks ☐☐☐☐☐
2. Equipment Rentals ☐☐☐☐☐
3. Tour Services ☐☐☐☐☐
4. Camping fees ☐☐☐☐☐
5. Fuel (in park) ☐☐☐☐☐
6. Souvenirs ☐☐☐☐☐
7. Entry fees ☐☐☐☐☐
8. Other ☐☐☐☐☐

Please specify "Other" above: ☐

21. Please enter the total expenditure by you and the other members of your party (combined), outside the park but within 50 miles radius from it, during this trip. Examples of such expenditure could be: commercial accommodations, restaurants, groceries, movies, laundry, shopping and souvenirs outside the park, parking fees, vehicle repairs, gas and other transportation expenses, etc.

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Section 3. Information about you

22. a. If you are a U.S. resident, what is your zip code? (*The person filling in the survey*).

. **b. If you do not reside in the U.S., then what is your country of residence?** (*The person filling in the survey*).

23. Please give the gender (M=Male; F=Female); and the ages of each member of your party.

1.	a. Gender	b. Age		4.	a. Gender	b. Age	
2.	a. Gender	b. Age		5.	a. Gender	b. Age	
3.	a. Gender	b. Age		6.	a. Gender	b. Age	

24. Comments on the overall quality of the facilities, services, recreational opportunities and settings of the park you have just visited. It can also be about anything else you would like to tell us concerning your recreational experiences at this park and our role in those experiences.

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APPENDIX C.

THOUSAND SPRINGS PARK SURVEY RESULTS

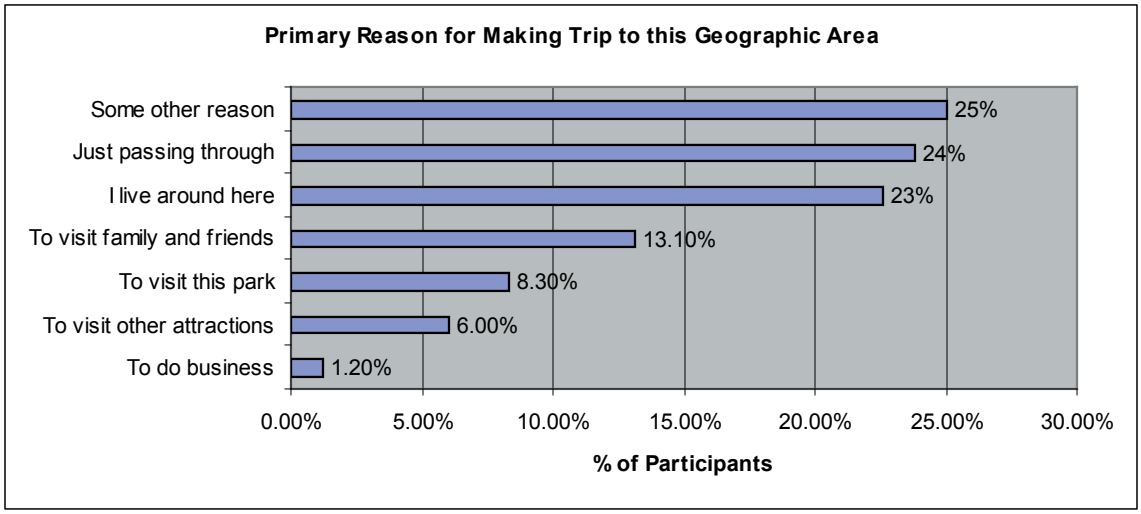
First time visitors to Thousand Springs: 42.2% Not first time, 57.8%, N=83

Day use visitors: 90.5%, **Overnight**: 9.5%, N=84

Primary reason for making the trip to this geographic area:

To visit this park:	8.3%
To visit other attractions:	6.0%
To visit friends and family:	13.1%
To do business:	1.2%
Just passing through:	23.8%
I live around here:	22.6%
Some other reason:	25.0%

N=84



N=84 (100% of the sample answered this question)

Means (Descriptive Statistics)

Mean number of overnights: 1.36, N=11

Mean party size: 3.99, N=80

Mean number of disabled per party: 0.39, N=49

Mean total expenditure outside the park but within 50 miles of it: $80.35, N=68

Mean expenditure on beverages in the park per group: $5.54, N=56

Mean entry fees per group: $11.55, N=66

Mean camping fees: $22.15 (only those who stated amounts for camping), N=9

Other mean group expenses in park: $3.5, N=40

What specifically attracted you /your party to this park?

1. Blues Festival: 16.9%
2. Fishing: 9.6%
3. The beauty/scenery/peacefulness of the park: 7.2%
4. The gorge/Box Canyon: 6.0%
5. The springs/waterfalls: 4.8%
5. Encouragement of family and friends: 4.8%
5. Viewing from the Highway/Road signs: 4.8%
8. It is close to home: 3.6%
8. Word-of-mouth: 3.6%
10. Hiking and walking in the park: 2.4%
10. Shade and the river: 2.4%
10. Food: 2.4%
13. Relaxing recreation available: 1.2%
13. I live around here: 1.2%
13. Organized group trip: 1.2%
13. Guidebook: 1.2%

The rest had no comments.

Did you observe any safety hazards while visiting the park?

Yes: 10.0% N=8

No: 90.0% N=72

What type of safety hazards did you observe?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Missing (No comments given)	73	86.9
	Beer	1	1.2
	Broken bottle in grass and sand. Bottle and caps litter	1	1.2
	By the waterfall	1	1.2
	Didn't park in no parking zone	1	1.2
	Near the outhouses in Box Canyon, there was a cliff, but it was clearly marked to help us	1	1.2
	No guards (Handrails) around gorge	1	1.2
	No signs telling people not to climb over canyon walls	1	1.2
	No smoking and no campfires	1	1.2
	Slow distance sightings (?)	1	1.2
	Some of the trails are inclined sharply to the sides in loose gravel and dirt. I slipped in several places	1	1.2
	Sometimes I'm a danger to myself!	1	1.2
	Total	84	100.0

The first and second most enjoyable recreation activities you participated in at the park

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Missing (No comments given)	25	29.8
	1 River 2. Camping with flush toilets	1	1.2
	1. Amazed at scenic value. 2. Extremely good geology	1	1.2
	1. Beauty. 2. Easy access	1	1.2
	1. Birthday party 2. Renasunts (?)	1	1.2
	1. Excellent music! 2. Good friends	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Cookout	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Float tubing	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Picnic	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. 'Picknecking' (?)	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Sightseeing	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Bird-watching	1	1.2
	1. Fishing 2. Camping	1	1.2

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

1. Gorge 2. Lawn	1	1.2
1. Hiking 2. Fishing	1	1.2
1. Listening 2. Sitting	1	1.2
1. Music !!	1	1.2
1. Nature walk up to water falls above hatchery 2. Strolling through the trees in a relatively serene and natural setting	1	1.2
1. Outdoor BBQ 2. Being by the river	1	1.2
1. Photography 2. Enjoying the landscape, springs and geology	1	1.2
1. Picnic 2. Overlooks to springs	1	1.2
1. Picture taking 2. Viewing	1	1.2
1. Pictures 2. Wildlife	1	1.2
1. Played in water 2. Outdoor cooking	1	1.2
1. Swimming 2. Camping	1	1.2
1. Swimming in the river. 2. Sitting around the camp fire	1	1.2
1. Trees 2. Grass. All of it	1	1.2
1. Trees 2. Local people 3. Blues	1	1.2
1. Viewing 2. Maps	1	1.2
1. Waterfall 2. Pond/fishing	1	1.2
1. Awesome sight. 2. Beautiful	1	1.2
1. Blues 2. Fish	1	1.2
1. Blues 2. Having fun	1	1.2
1. Drink beer 2. Dance	1	1.2
1. Eating in a treed setting 2. Visiting with relatives	1	1.2
1. Fishing 2. “Sight-seeing” - springs/waterfalls	1	1.2
1. Fishing 2. Camping - other times	1	1.2
1. Fishing 2. Hiking	1	1.2
1. Great music! 2. Great food!	1	1.2
1. Hiking. 2. Enjoying the beauty	1	1.2
1. I use the arena to work with my young horse. 2. I like to walk the Creek path	1	1.2
1. Kayaking 2. Photography	1	1.2
1. Peaceful and relaxing 2. Restful	1	1.2
1. Seeing the gorge 2. Walking the trail	1	1.2
1. Swimming 2. Hiking	1	1.2
1. Walking 2. Scenery	1	1.2
1. Watching the falls. 2. Walking around the boat docks	1	1.2
Blues Fest	1	1.2
Blues music	1	1.2
Company	1	1.2
Fishing from the re-stocked lake	1	1.2
Information	1	1.2
N/A. Weather did not permit. However, the spring is quite beautiful	1	1.2
None	1	1.2

	Only here once - Blues in the park	1	1.2
	Peace and quiet walking and canoeing	1	1.2
	Picnic	1	1.2
	River	1	1.2
	Walking the road when the gate is closed	1	1.2
	Was here to relax and enjoy the music	1	1.2
	Total	84	100.0

Was there a recreation activity you participated in at the park that was below expectation?

Yes: 7.0% N=5

No: 93.0% N=66

Activity I participated in at the park that was below expectation, and why.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Missing (No comments given)	80	95.2
	No camping	1	1.2
	Pond - Trash in bushes - Garbage lying around	1	1.2
	Seniors and handicaps have no rights on the docks against the Mexicans	1	1.2
	The lake - It was essentially overgrown with moss and pondweed	1	1.2
	Total	84	100.0

First park facility/opportunity I had difficulty using

Valid			
	Picnic area		
	Camping - There is none		
	Camping		
	Couldn't drive to gorge - Gate locked at 4:00pm and we were too late in our sightseeing		
	Docks. Too many weeds in the lake and river		
	Fishing access is excellent		
	Have not tried cmp (?) but will soon		
	Hiking		
	It was all great and the beauty is 10 fold		
	Need new landscaping		
	No this time		
	No trail exists to get to the water source that feeds the Box Canyon		
	none		
	None		
	Picnic		
	Picnic table		
	The lake - It was essentially overgrown with moss and pondweed		
	The picnic area near Crystal Springs Lake was being watered from noon to 1:00pm (Friday)		
	We had difficulty understanding exactly where the campsites were.		
	Total	N=84	100.0%

Second park facility/opportunity I had difficulty using

Valid			
	Shelter		
	A bike rack installed where the trail enters into Box Canyon would be good		
	About a couple of weeks ago, the decks were too full to use		
	BBQ grill		
	Boating		
	Need new parking rails		
	Total	N=84	100.0%

Third park facility/opportunity I had difficulty using

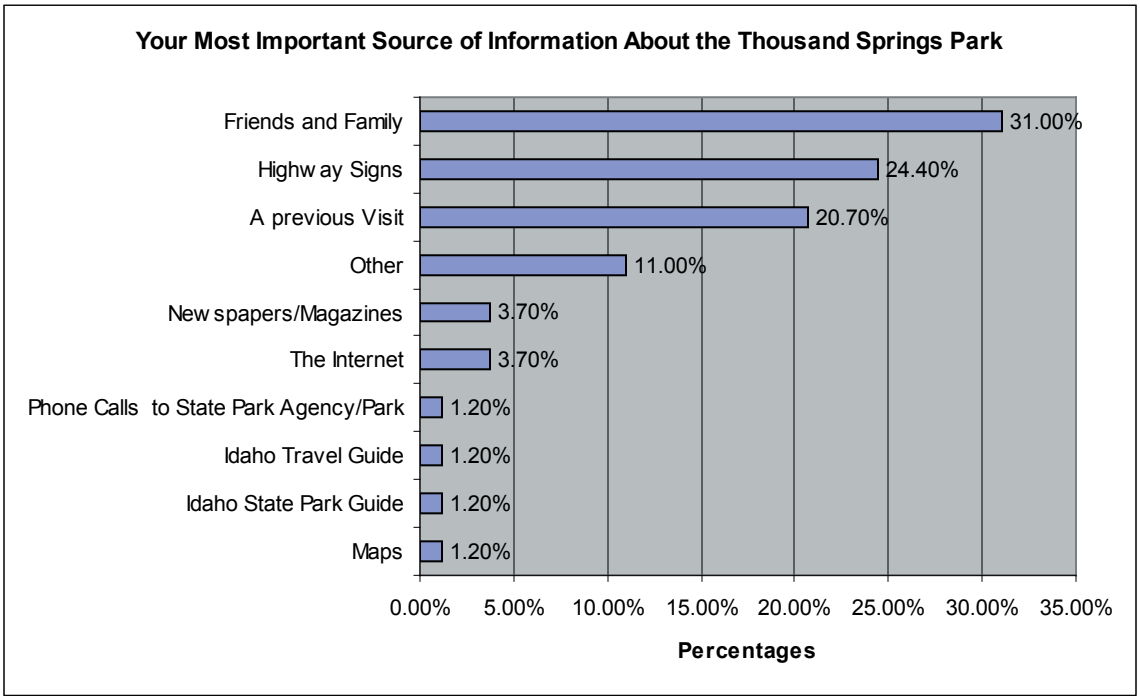
Valid	Need to strictly enforce Handicap & senior rights for dock uses		
	Trail		
	Total	N=84	100.0%

Description of disabilities of party members

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Missing (No comments given)	72	85.7
	Back problems - Can't walk far	1	1.2
	Blind	4	4.8
	N/A	1	1.2
	None	1	1.2
	Older man with short walking capabilities	1	1.2
	They were unable to walk down the river as they were crippled and wheelchair bound	1	1.2
	Too far to walk. No wheelchair ramps	1	1.2
	We had one with a prosthetic leg and one with walking difficulties due to bad knees, and using a cane. The area was very accessible for both. Keep up the good work	1	1.2
	Wheel chair. Getting around to tables and playground	1	1.2
	Total	N=84	100.0

Facilities/services/opportunities needed at the park

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Missing (No comments given)	64	76.2
	1. Benches 2. Water fountain 3. Fire pit	1	1.2
	Camping - Woodstock “way west”	1	1.2
	Camping	2	2.4
	Camping in Billings State Park	1	1.2
	Camping/RV	1	1.2
	Fish cleaning station. Docks into the Snake river	1	1.2
	Food and drinks	1	1.2
	Maps / Trails	1	1.2
	None	2	2.4
	Not enough power. We need 100 amps.	1	1.2
	Pavilion	1	1.2
	Pay phone	1	1.2
	Plant fish more frequently	1	1.2
	Playground and equipment for children	2	2.4
	Restrooms	1	1.2
	The more natural the park can be kept the better	1	1.2
	Visitor Center	1	1.2
	Total	84	100.0



N=82, 97.6%

The 'Other' sources of information on this park

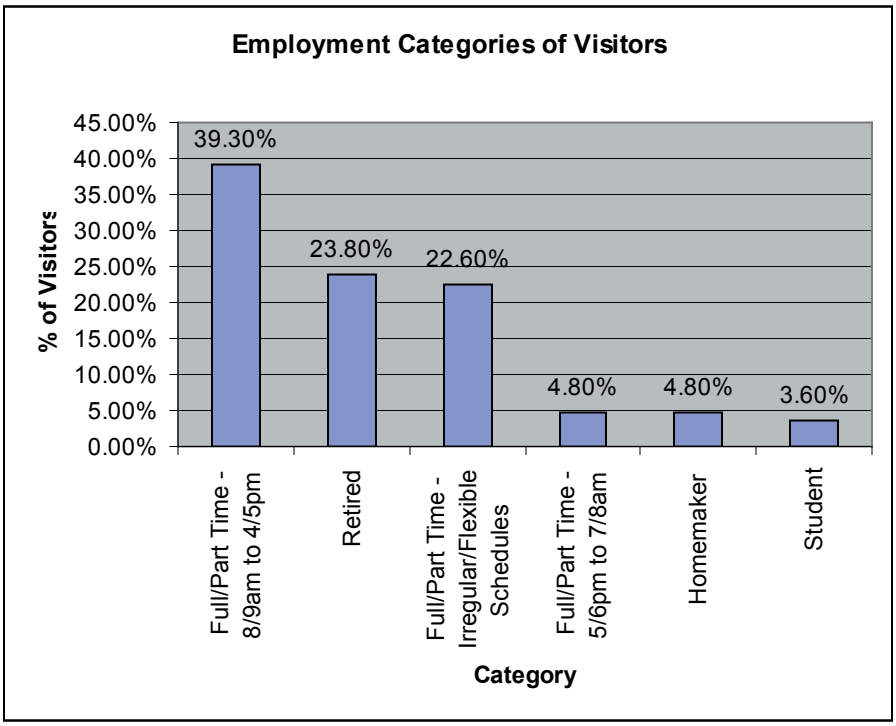
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		73	86.9	86.9	86.9
	Blues in the Park	1	1.2	1.2	88.1
	Drunk guy on the Cuda Patrol	1	1.2	1.2	89.3
	Fish & Game Manual	1	1.2	1.2	90.5
	Hagerman RV	1	1.2	1.2	91.7
	Live in area (close by)	2	2.4	2.4	94.0
	Lonnie	1	1.2	1.2	95.2
	Moon Handbook's : Idaho	1	1.2	1.2	96.4
	Need more advertising for Blues @ the Park	1	1.2	1.2	97.6
	Photography Newsletter for Idaho	1	1.2	1.2	98.8
	Website - Blues in the Park	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

The days of the week of your visit

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Sunday	9	10.7
	Saturday	28	33.3
	Saturday and Sunday	6	7.1
	Friday	4	4.8
	Friday and Saturday	3	3.6
	Friday, Saturday and Sunday	3	3.6
	Thursday	21	25.0
	Wednesday	1	1.2
	Wednesday and Thursday	1	1.2
	Tuesday	3	3.6
	Monday	1	1.2
	An entire 7-day week	1	1.2
	Total	81	96.4
Missing	Missing	3	3.6
Total		84	100.0

Which of these is your employment category?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Employed Full/Part time, between 8/9am and 4/5pm	33	39.3
	Retired	20	23.8
	Employed Full/Part time, with irregular/flexible schedules	19	22.6
	Employed Full/Part time, between 5/6pm and 7/8am	4	4.8
	Homemaker	4	4.8
	Student	3	3.6
	Total	83	98.8
	Missing	1	1.2
Total		N=84	100.0



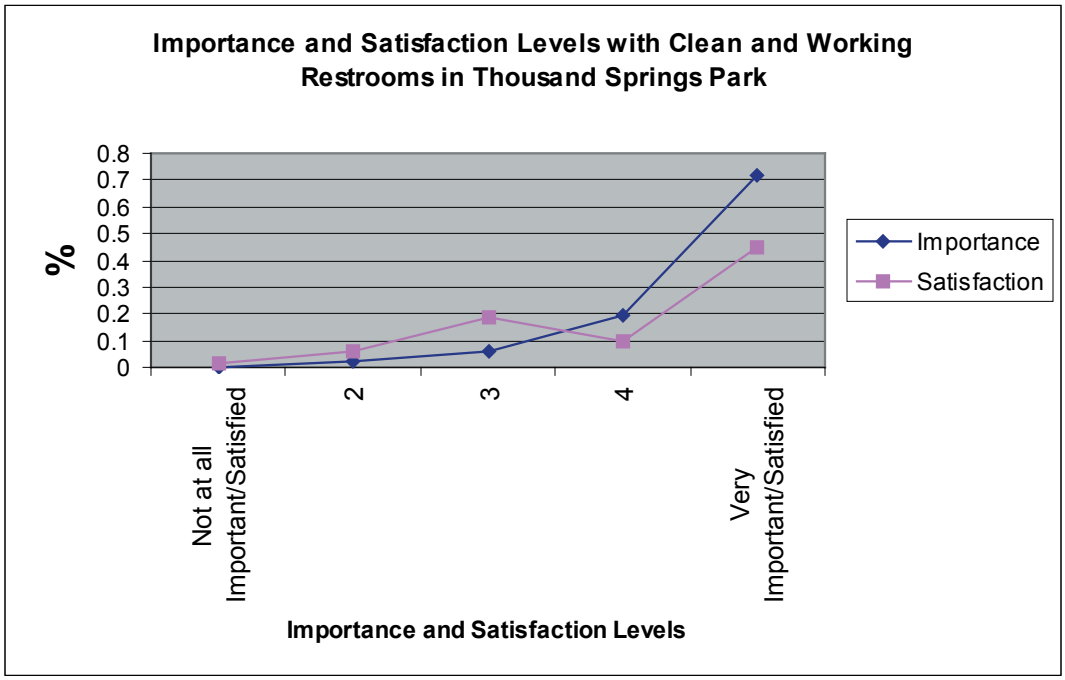
General Importance of Park Characteristics/Attributes to Your Park Recreation Experience, and Satisfaction with those Characteristics/Attributes at 1000 Springs Park

		Mean Importance	N	Mean Satisfaction	N
1.	Clean working restrooms	**4.60**	(81)	**4.13**	(68)
2.	Visitor/Historic Information Center	**3.28**	(67)	**3.32**	(37)
3.	Well-maintained campsites	**3.73**	(59)	**4.03**	(35)
4.	Retail/Souvenir shops	**1.65**	(57)	**3.44**	(16)
5.	Boating facilities	**2.37**	(54)	**3.90**	(10)
6.	Fish cleaning stations	**2.24**	(54)	**3.57**	(7)
7.	Yurts	**2.00**	(51)	**3.80**	(5)
8.	Cabins	**2.09**	(53)	**3.80**	(5)
9.	Sewer hook-ups	**2.08**	(53)	**3.33**	(6)
10.	Group facilities	**2.79**	(53)	**4.00**	(23)
11.	The reservation system	**2.60**	(53)	**3.89**	(19)
12.	Helpful park staff	**3.73**	(73)	**4.56**	(52)
13.	Reasonable user fees	**4.07**	(67)	**3.96**	(46)
14.	Well-maintained grounds and facilities	**4.16**	(73)	**4.53**	(62)
15.	Learning opportunities	**3.02**	(61)	**3.15**	(27)
16.	Directional and safety signs	**3.34**	(67)	**3.78**	(49)
17.	Safety and security	**3.75**	(64)	**4.07**	(44)
18.	Ease of check-in process at campgrounds	**3.58**	(57)	**4.39**	(23)
19.	Park map or brochure	**3.50**	(70)	**3.54**	(39)
20.	Historical/Heritage recreation experience	**3.32**	(62)	**3.80**	(25)
21.	Trails	**3.86**	(58)	**3.94**	(33)
22.	Camping	**3.75**	(53)	**4.00**	(28)
23.	Fishing	**3.56**	(52)	**4.04**	(26)
24.	Swimming	**3.04**	(51)	**4.10**	(20)
25.	Boating/Canoeing/Kayaking	**2.88**	(52)	**4.00**	(13)
26.	Beach/Waterfront opportunities	**3.02**	(49)	**3.88**	(16)
27.	Overall park condition	**4.55**	(75)	**4.53**	(62)

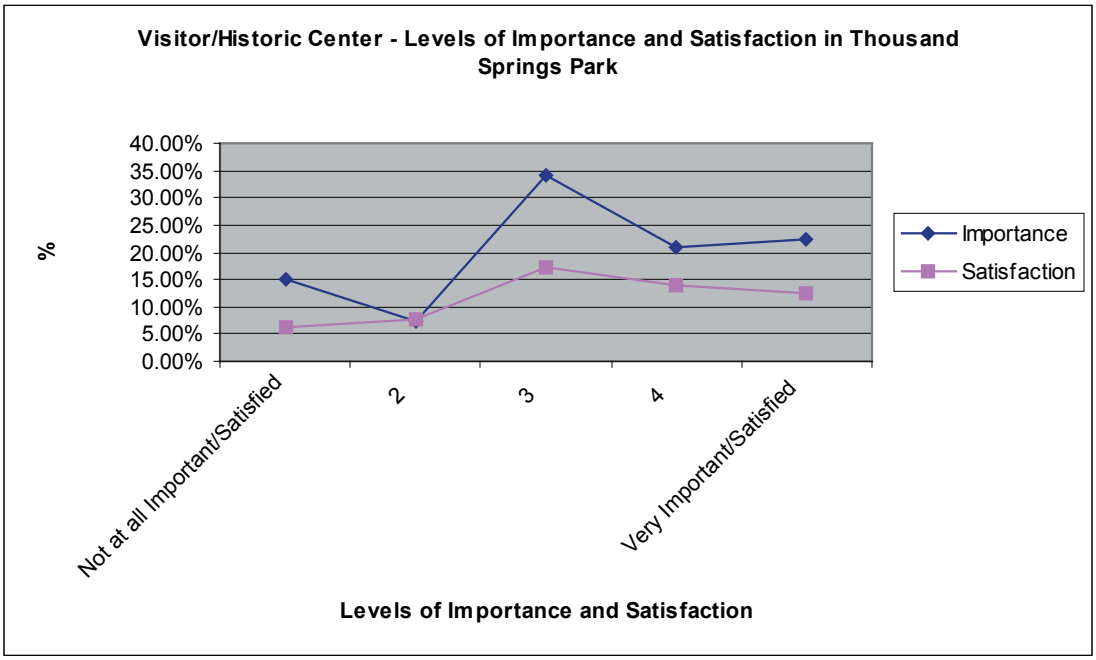
Since respondents had the option of selecting “N/A” or “Don’t know” on the ‘Satisfaction scale’, some of the items had very few useful answers on that scale. For example, on satisfaction with ‘Yurts’ and ‘Cabins’, only 5 respondents gave an answer other than N/A or don’t know. It may well be that these items do not apply to this park and those who did not say N/A did not know what they were saying. However, the satisfaction responses with less than 25 regular responses will not be included in the eventual ‘Importance/Performance analysis. The importance and satisfaction pairs in the Table above are graphically presented in the following graphs. We will mostly be looking at the ‘Very Important/Very Satisfied’ portion of the scale to see whether those who said that an item is important generally, were also satisfied with that item at this park, and whether the item was more important than the level of satisfaction, or vice versa. People will be happier if at least the same percentage of them feel that the satisfaction level and the importance level match on the ‘Very Important/Very Satisfied’ end of the graphic scale (on the right-hand side of the graph). If more people think that the item is important for their park experience, compared to those who think they are satisfied with the item in Thousand Springs, then it means that the staff has work to do to live up to the expectations of visitors on that item. The inverse would mean that the park is pleasantly surprising visitors by satisfying them on the item beyond the level of value they put on the item. Perhaps, a perfect match of the importance and the satisfaction scales on the right-hand side of the graph would be the most desirable, since that park would be satisfying visitors on the item without wasting efforts on ‘over-kill’.

Take a look at the graphs for ‘Safety and security’, ‘maps and brochures’, ‘camping’ and the ‘overall park condition’ and you will see that the park almost achieves this on those items.

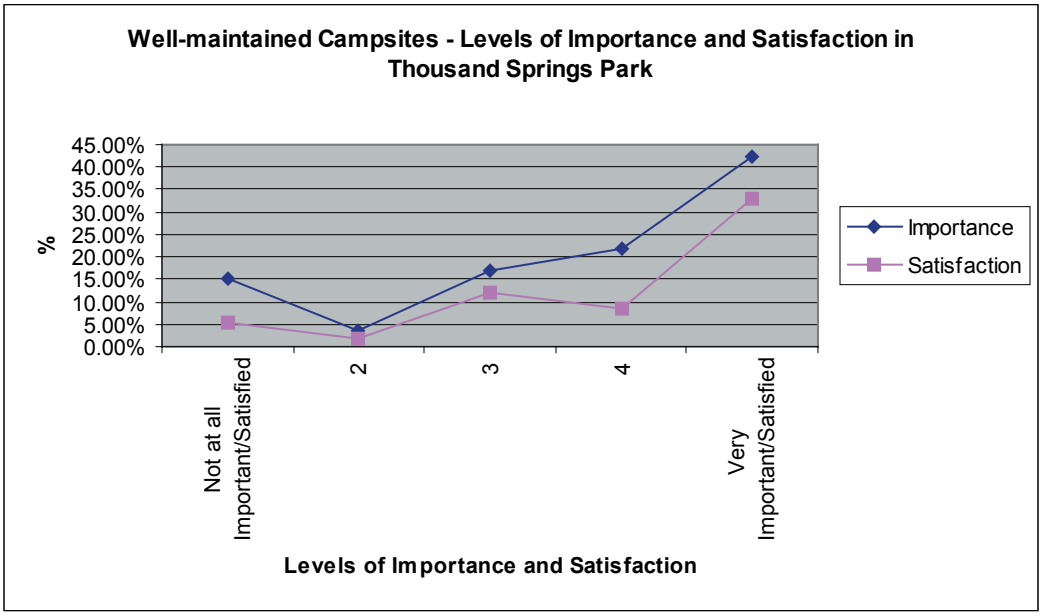
Graphic Representations of General Importance Levels of Park Attributes, and Visitor Satisfaction Levels with the Park Attributes of Thousand Springs Park



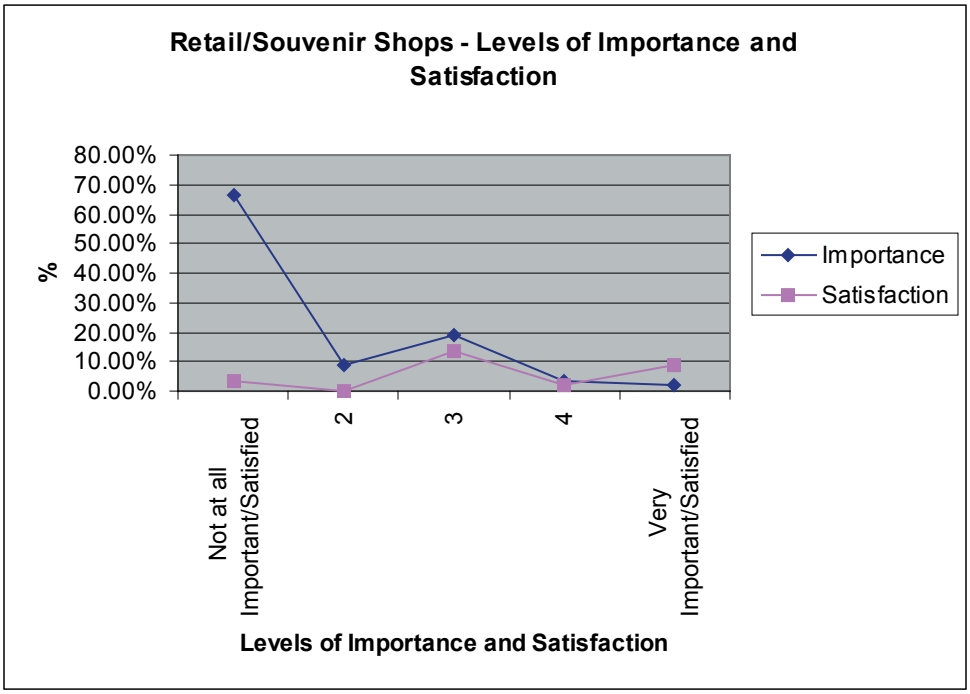
N (Importance)=81, 96.4%
N (Satisfaction)=68, 81.0%



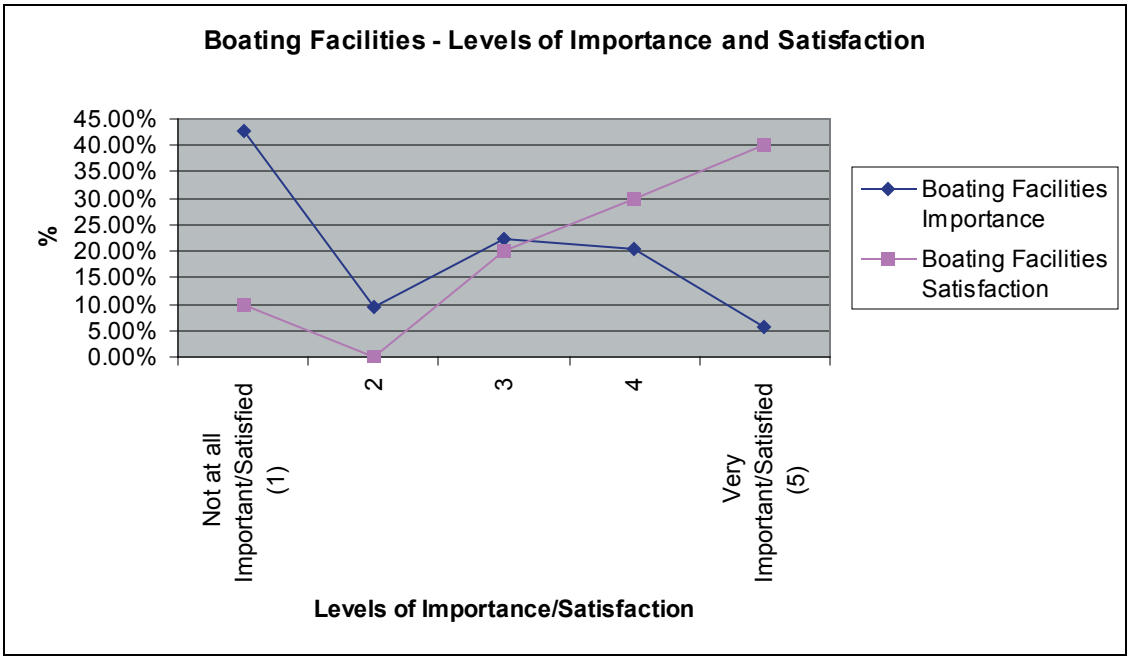
N (Importance)=67, 79.8%
N (Satisfaction)=37, 44.1%



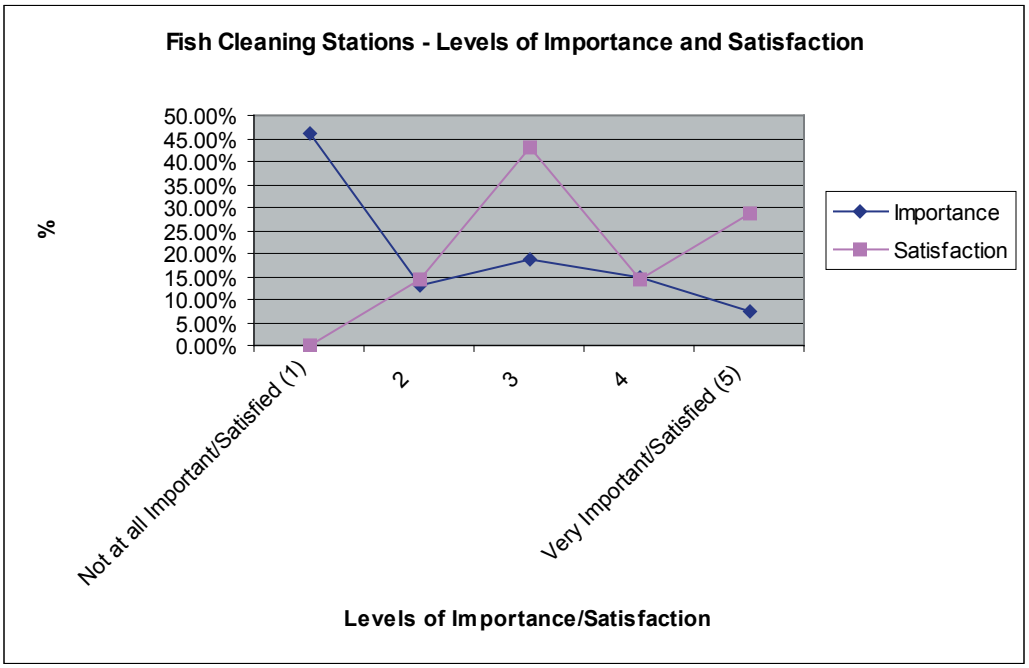
N (Importance)=59, 70.2%
N (Satisfaction)=35, 41.6%



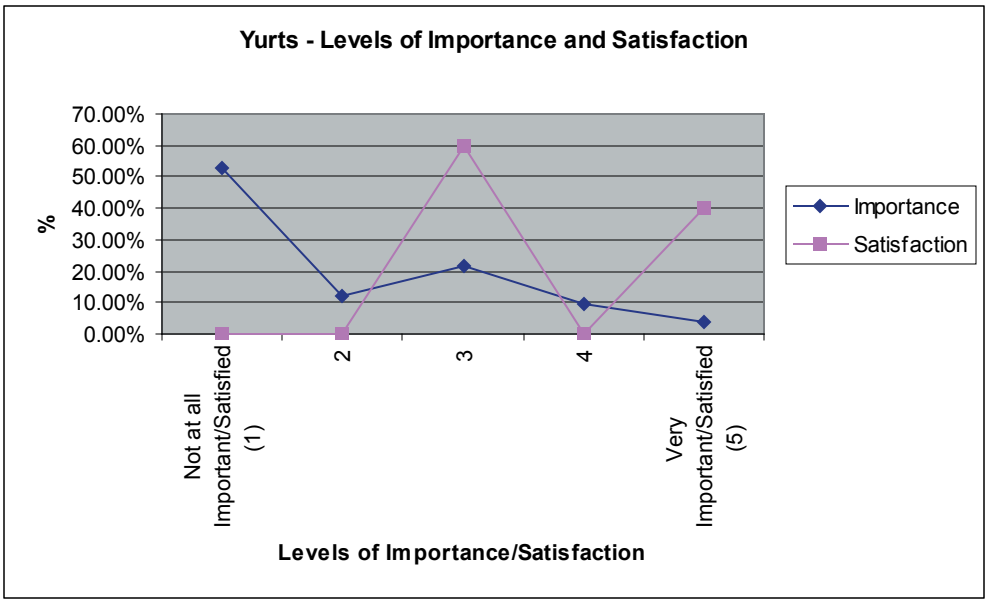
N (Importance)=57, 67.9%
N (Satisfaction)=16, 19.0%



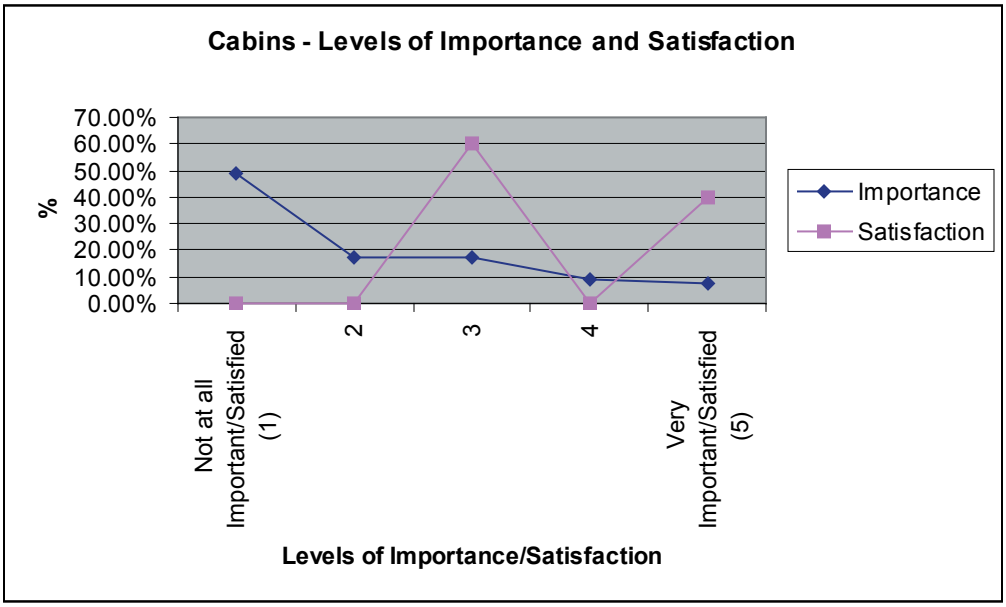
N (Importance)=54, 64.3%
N (Satisfaction)=10, 11.9%



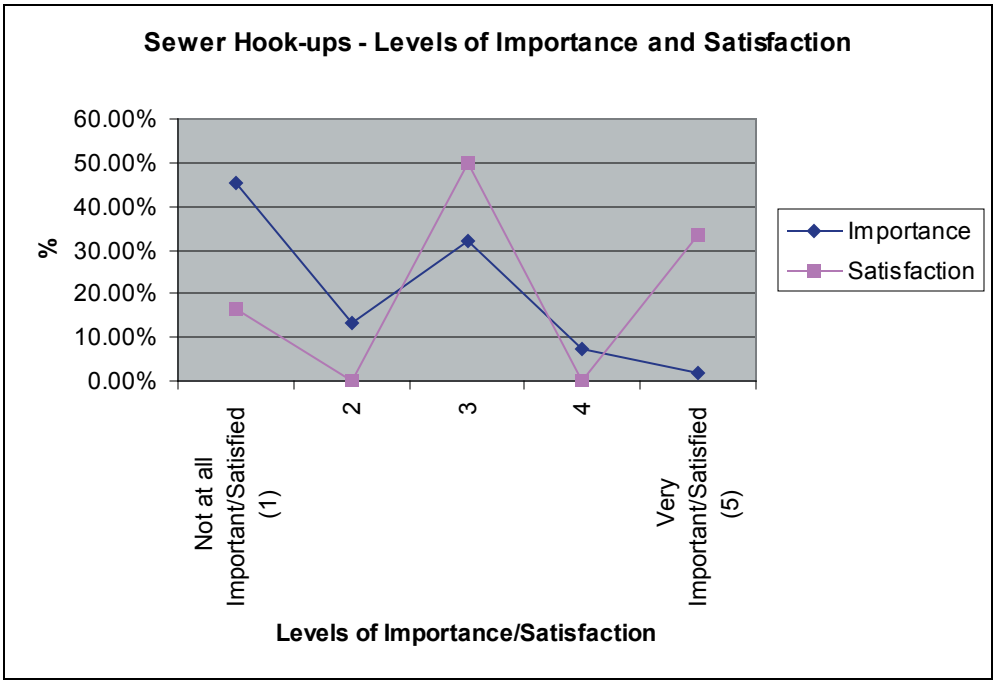
N (Importance)=54, 64.3%
N (Satisfaction)=7, 8.3%



N (Importance)=51, 60.7%
N (Satisfaction)=5, 6.0%

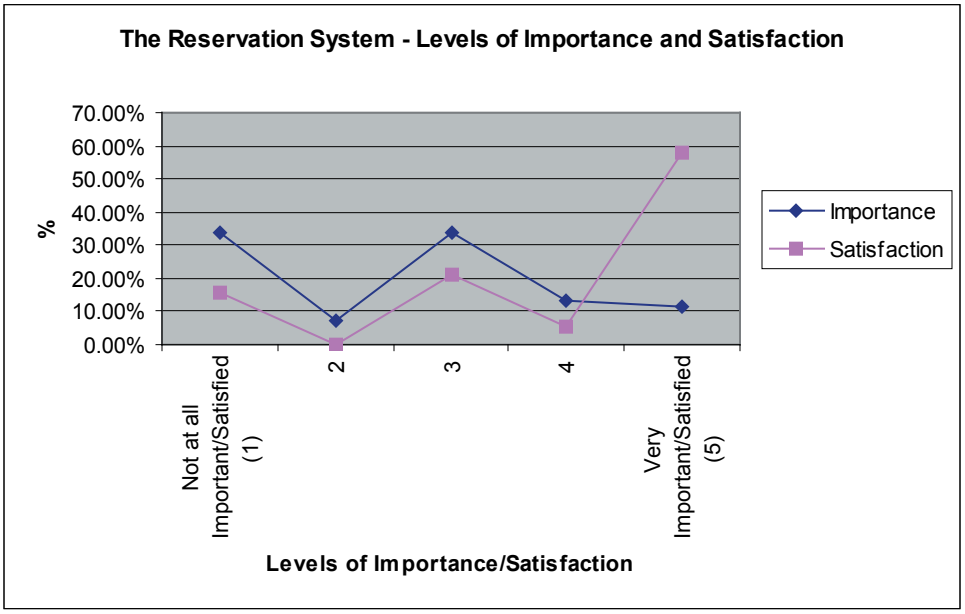


N (Importance)=53, 63.1%
N (Satisfaction)=5, 6.0%

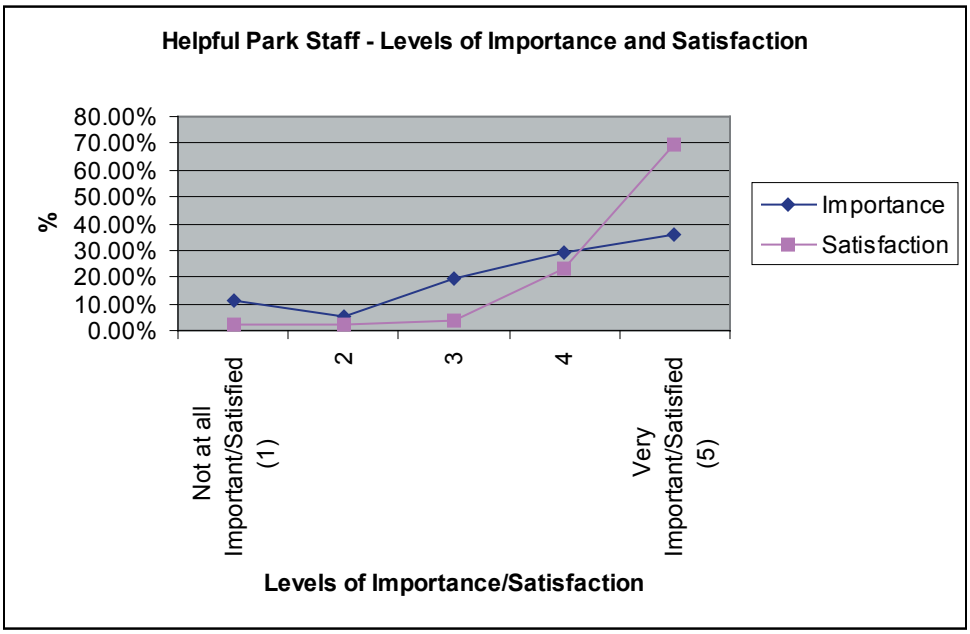


N (Importance)=53, 63.1%
N (Satisfaction)=6, 7.1%

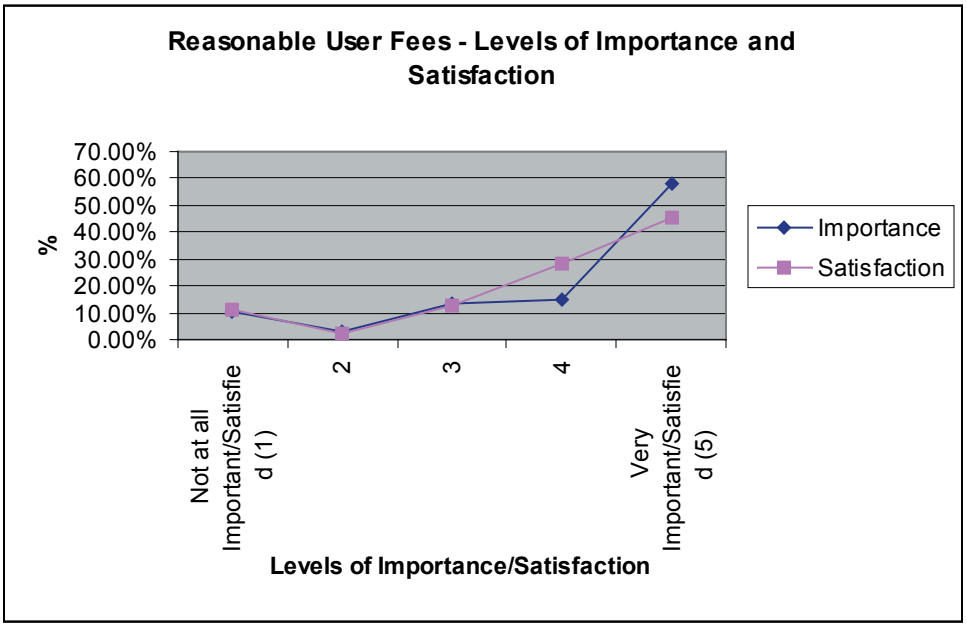
N (Importance)=53, 63.1%
N (Satisfaction)=23, 27.4%



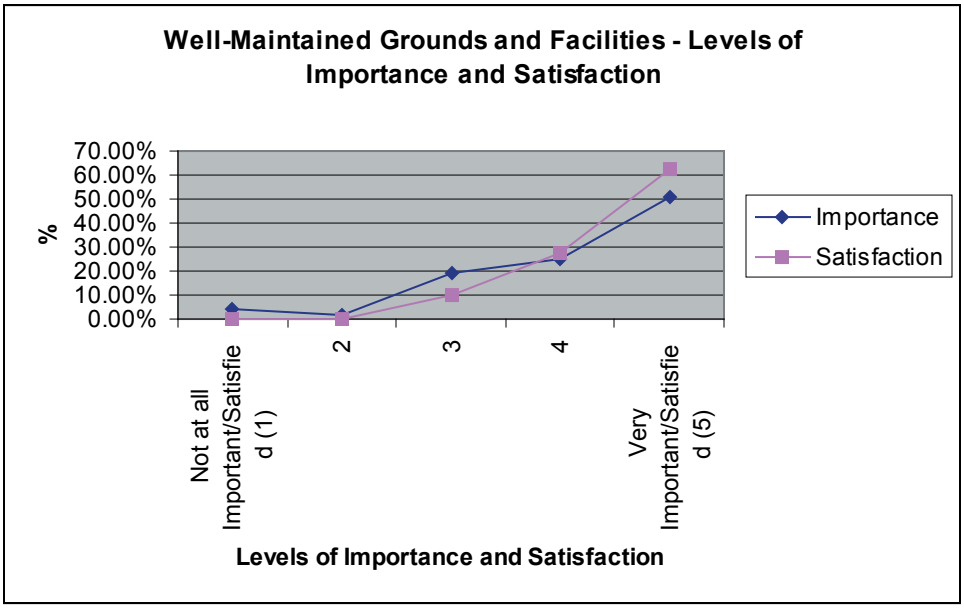
N (Importance)=53, 63.1%
N (Satisfaction)=19, 22.6%



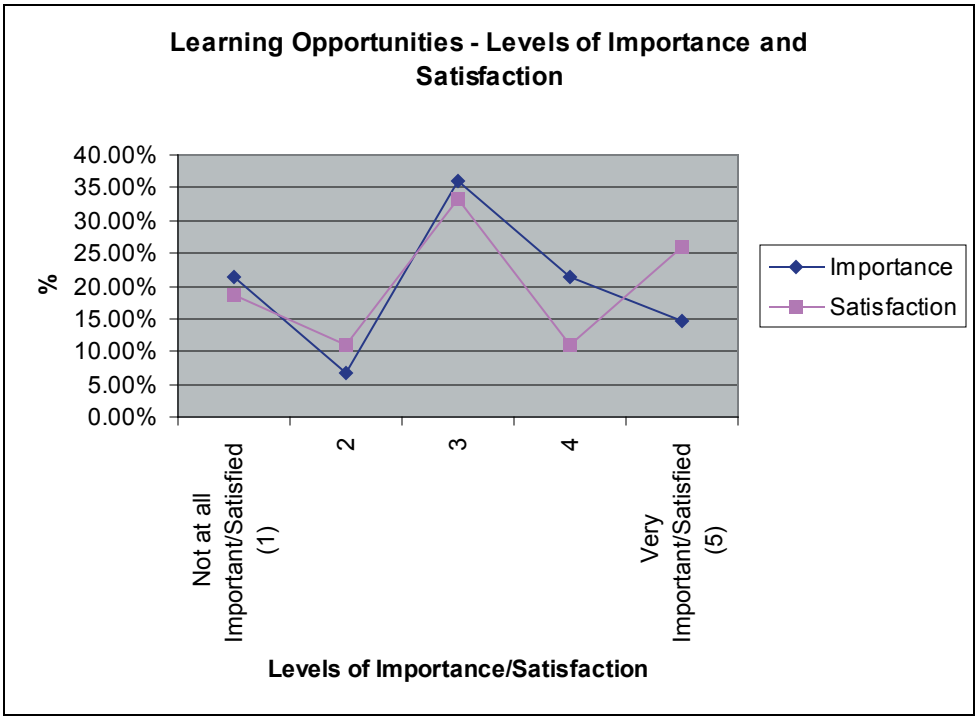
N (Importance)=73, 86.9%
N (Satisfaction)=52, 61.9%



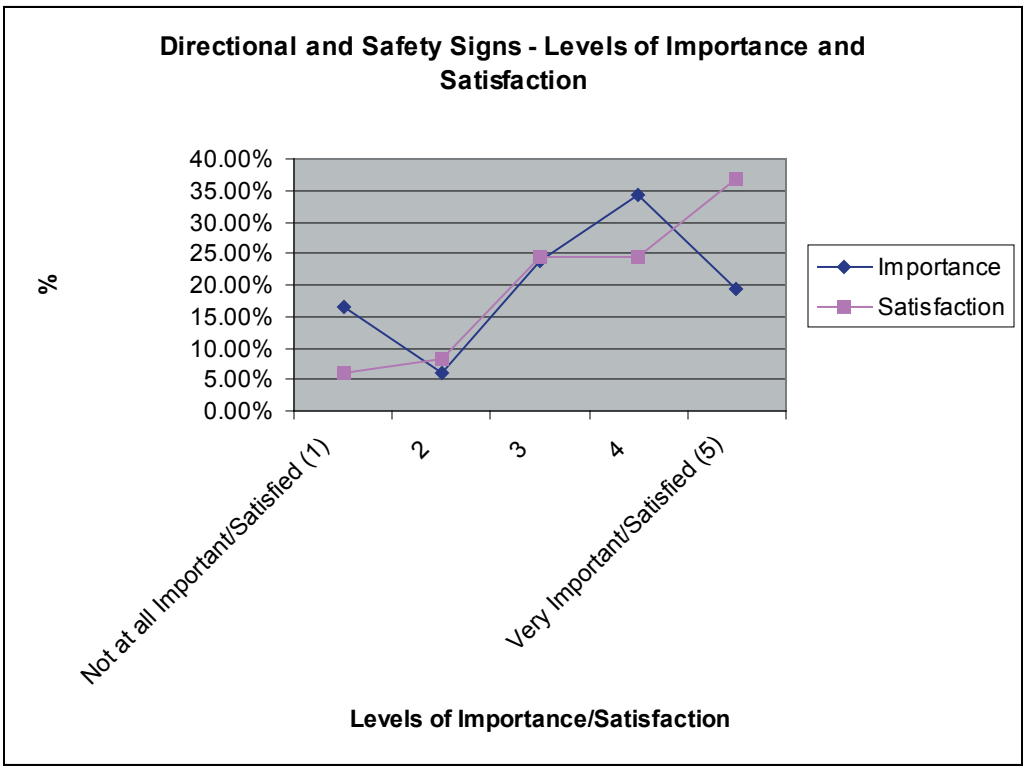
N (Importance)=67, 79.8%
N (Satisfaction)46, 54.8%



N (Importance)=73, 86.9%
N (Satisfaction)62, 73.8%

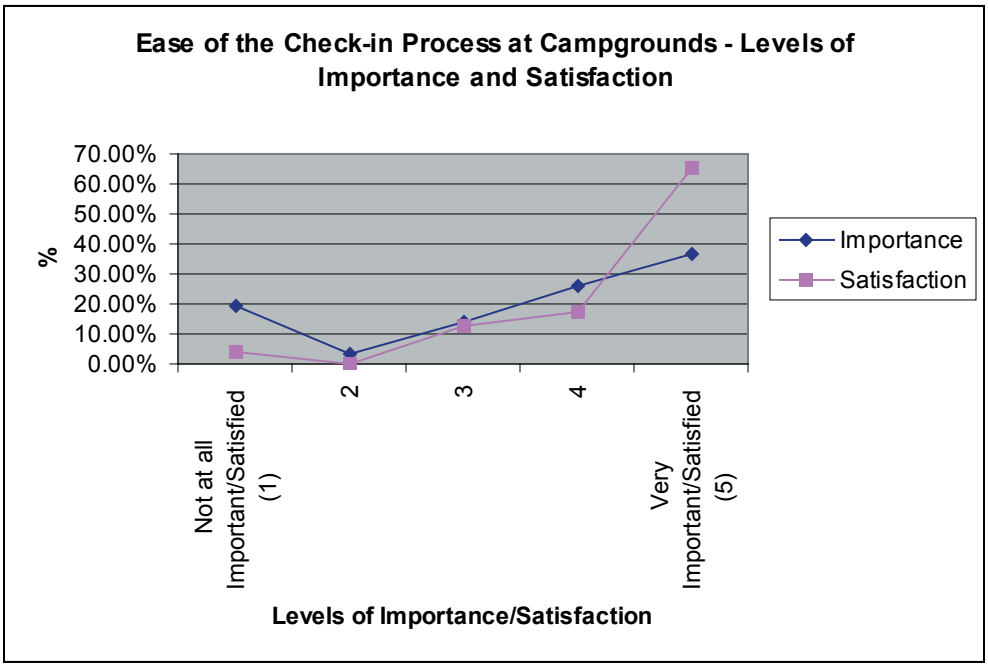


N (Importance)=61, 72.6%
N (Satisfaction) 27, 32.1%

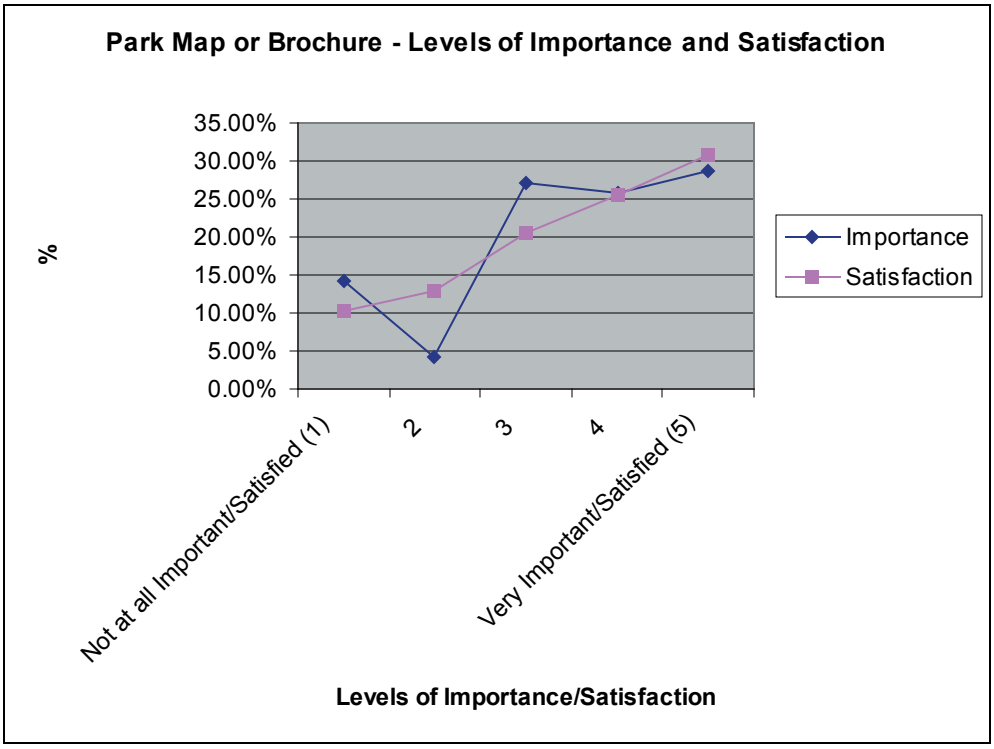


N (Importance)=67, 79.8%
N (Satisfaction) 49, 58.3%

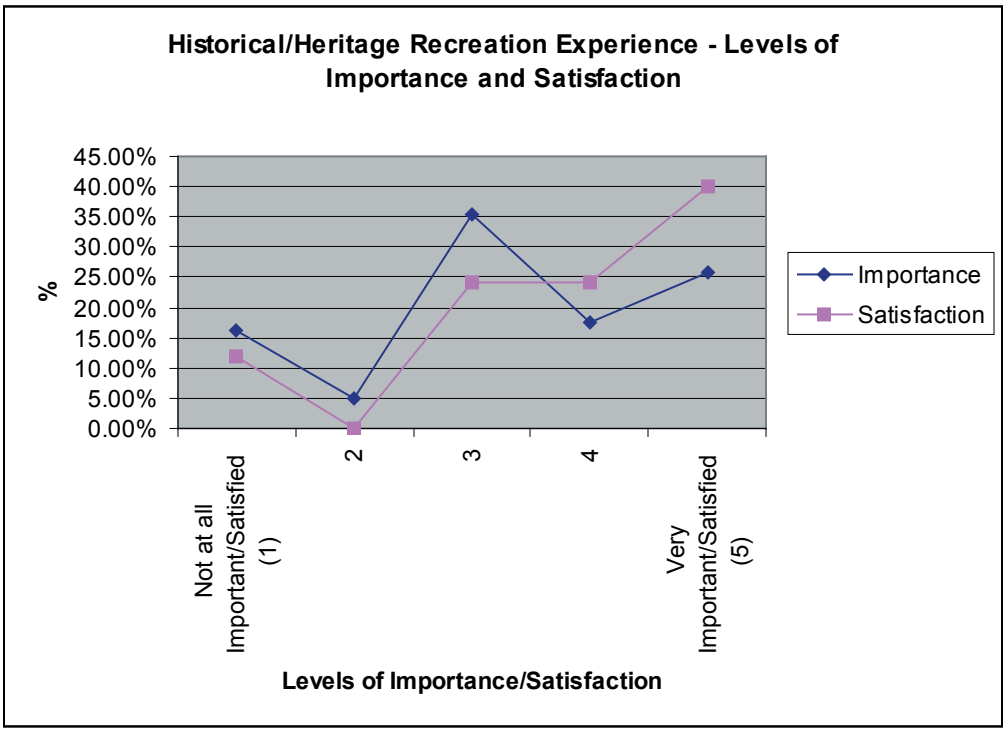
N (Importance)=64, 76.2%
N (Satisfaction) 44, 52.4%



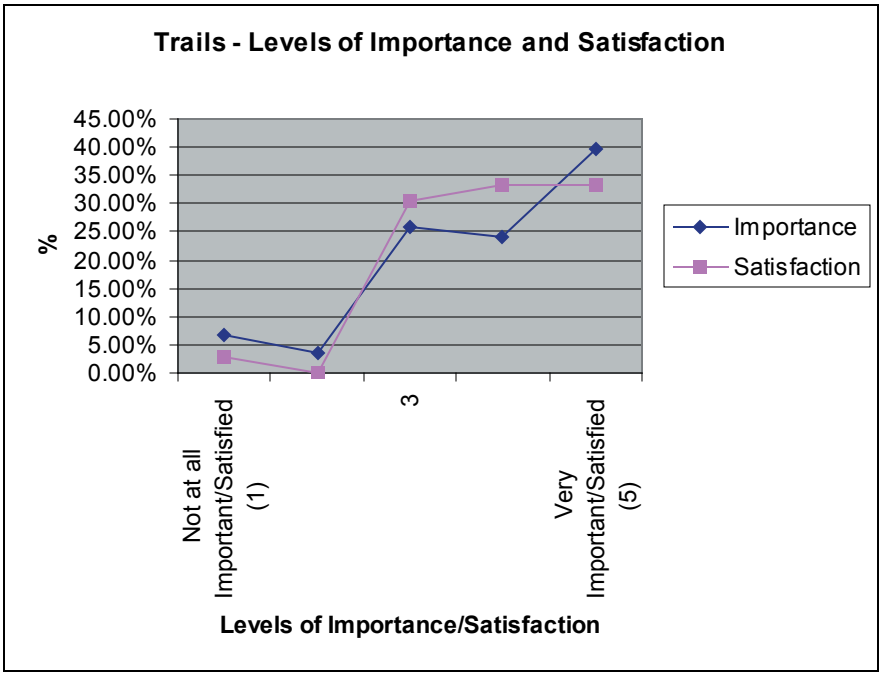
N (Importance)=57, 67.9%
N (Satisfaction) 23, 27.4%

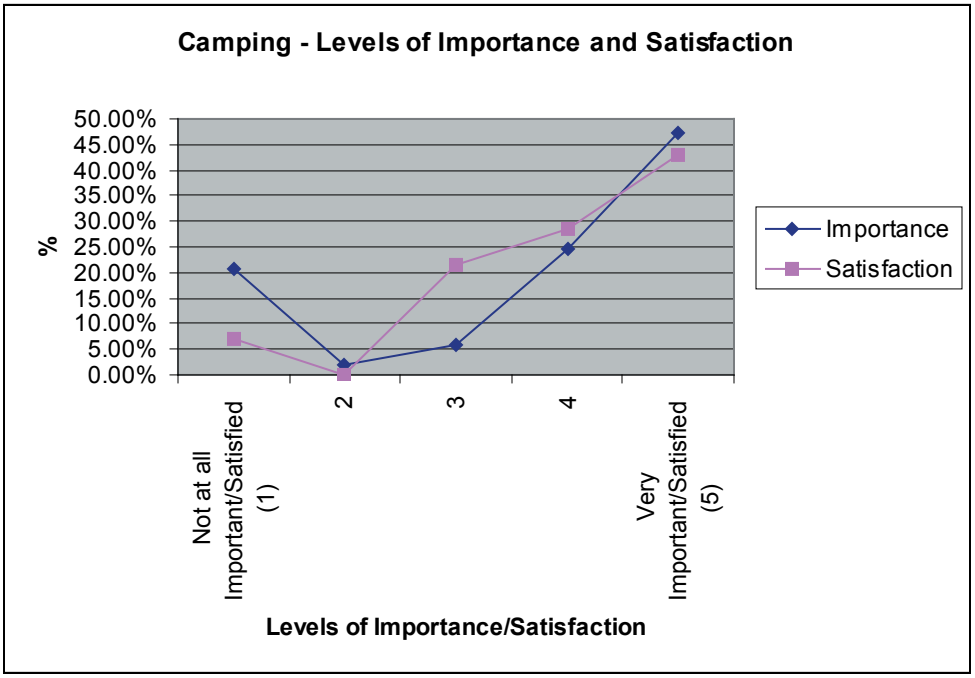


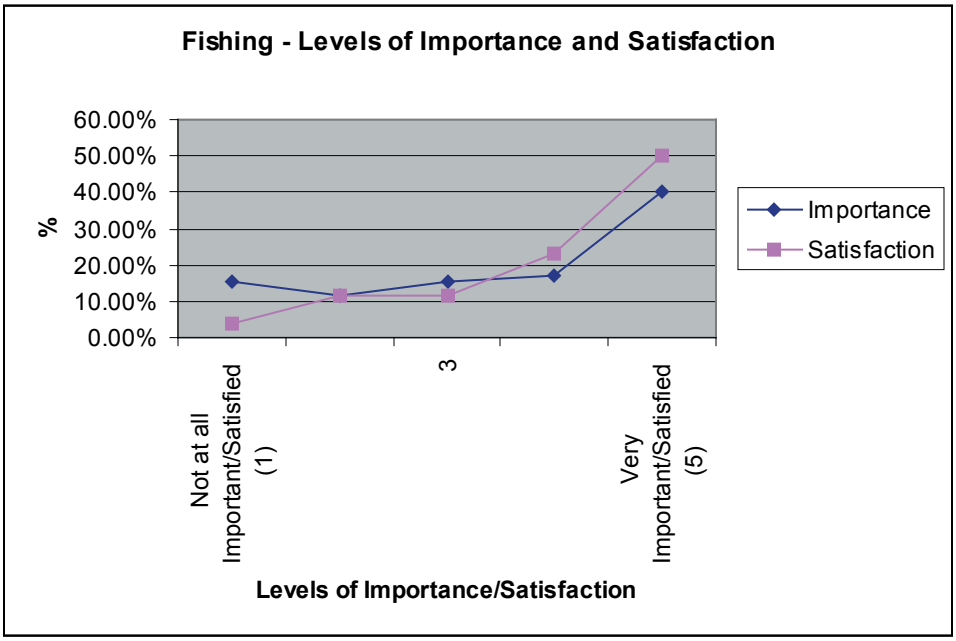
N (Importance)=70, 83.3%
N (Satisfaction) 39, 46.4%

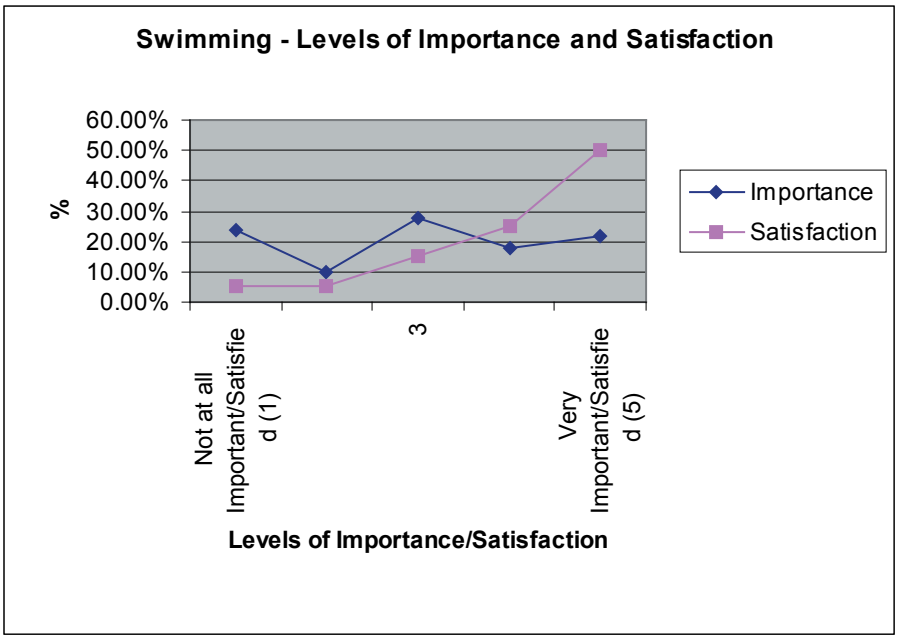


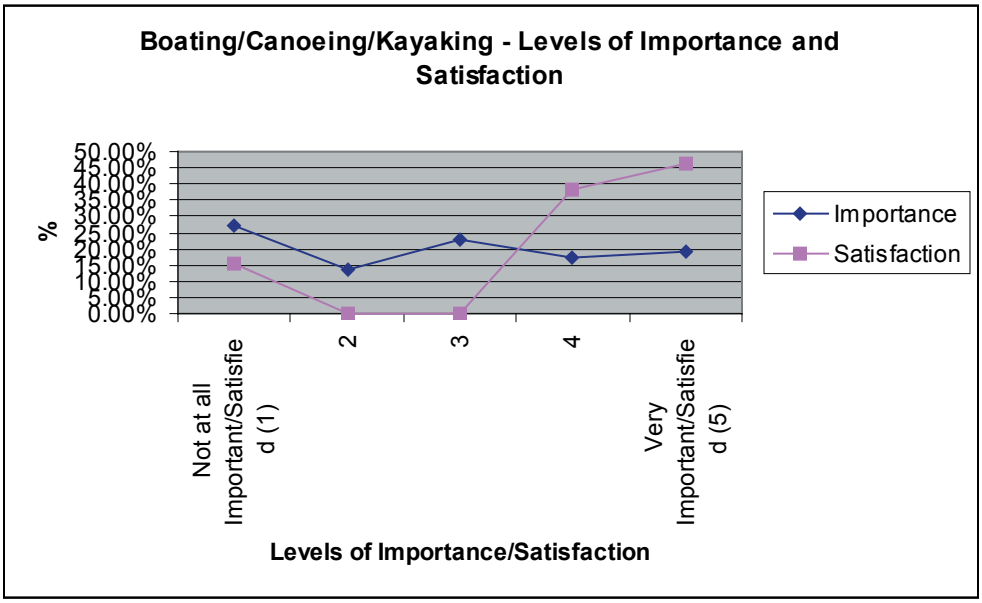
N (Importance)=62, 73.8%
N (Satisfaction) 25, 29.8%

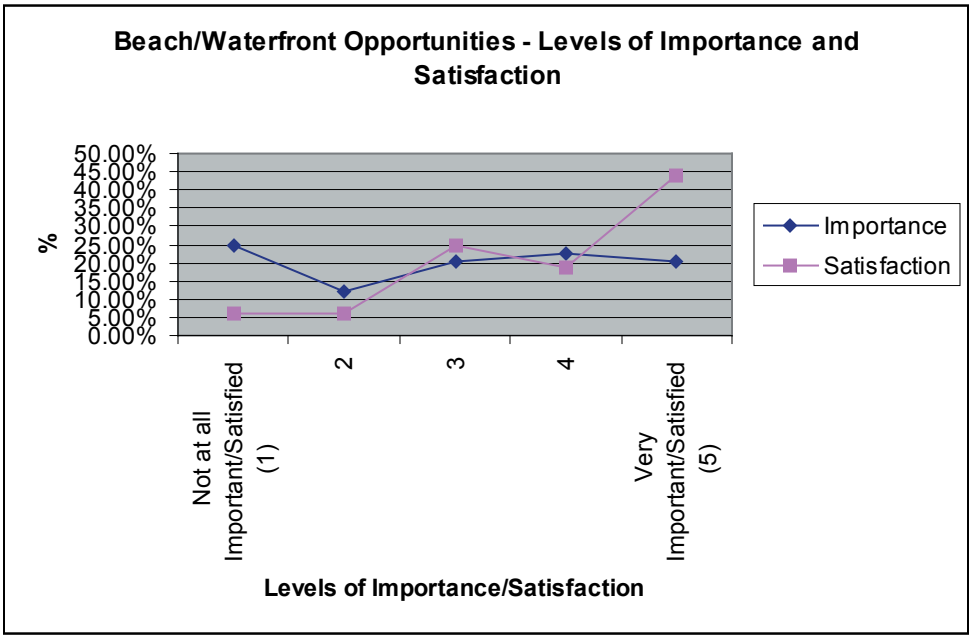

Trails - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
3
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction

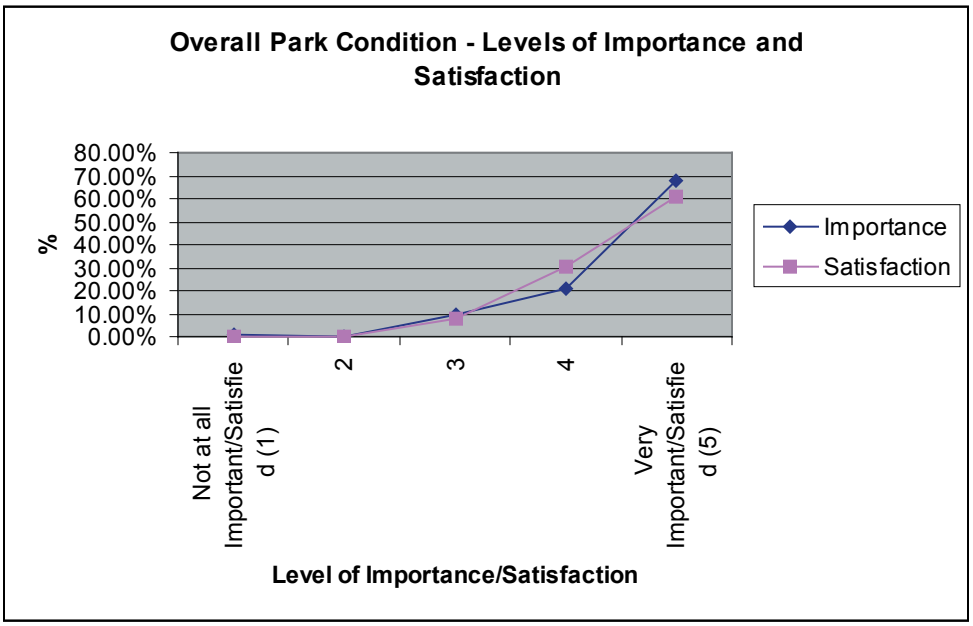

Camping - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
50.00%
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
2
3
4
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction


Fishing - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
3
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction


Swimming - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
3
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction


Boating/Canoeing/Kayaking - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
%
50.00%
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
2
3
4
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction


Beach/Waterfront Opportunities - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
%
50.00%
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
2
3
4
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Levels of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction


Overall Park Condition - Levels of Importance and Satisfaction
80.00%
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
%
Not at all Important/Satisfied (1)
2
3
4
Very Important/Satisfied (5)
Level of Importance/Satisfaction
Importance
Satisfaction

Comments on overall quality of the facilities, services, recreational opportunities and settings of the park you just visited

Valid	
	Beautiful park with well maintained grounds
	Concert was very enjoyable - permanent restroom facilities and drinking water would be great
	Could be more opportunities @ Billingsley Creek. Seems like it is still mostly farmland
	Enjoyed camping area. Beautiful park. The immaculate grounds, the real grass, trees and the sound of the spring were welcome contrast to S.E. Utah. Wish we could have stayed longer
	Friendly, fabulous crew and local people. Thank you! Nice Hagerman people.
	Giving seniors a break on entrance
	Good
	Great area. No camping or RV parking!
	Great that there is no camping. Day use parks are much better
	Have a fee collector
	I hope the parks can be kept in their most natural condition as possible. And please, no motorized use.
	I was happy with the conditions at the park, even though I was not there very long. And it was also my first time there
	It's potential is great. Develop - improve - promote!!
	It was great
	Least development as possible of the Vardis Fisher area. Create a historical trail to the house site. Manage the U of I fish hatchery on Billingsly Cr. as a quality fishery first and foremost.
	Lost and just needed directions
	Nice setting, clean, good boat docks for entering the lake
	Our daughter's wedding was held at Niagara Springs Park. The female park ranger was extremely helpful, friendly and a valuable asset to a wonderful time for us. We got compliments beautiful ceremony.
	Park is in outstanding condition. I live in the area. I would love to buy a 3, 5, 10 (long term) park permit. Taking the time to buy one every year is low on the priority list.
	Park was great. Instead of investing in tour guides, have park rangers do more patrols of camp and picnic sites at busy times to enforce laws on littering. Also invest in signs instructing on how to report crimes
	Please advertise more in the Boise area. I think it would bring a great response
	Scouts
	Seems to be under-staffed for the size of the park. The person at the gate was helpful. We didn't see anybody else!!
	Still rugged and rustic, which I like to see
	Survey too long. Some place to wash your hands! Any toilet in the shade
	Thank you

The picnic area and the boat docks or fishing access were excellent. The toilet closest to the fishing area was full of cobwebs and had flies. Otherwise, its a great park		
This survey is for the Billingsly Creek Park - "Blues in the Park" accommodations and services were appropriate and fine		
User fees very cheap		
Very nice experience. We were satisfied though the grass could have been notred		
Visit was to Box Canyon, which is not meant for overnight camping. So some of the information in the survey is not applicable. We still enjoyed the visit.		
We enjoy going down to Niagara Springs. We have B-day party there and have fun. It would be nice to see the Park Ranger out doing more and overseeing what is going on. A playground in Pugmyer would be good. Lois is exceptional and extremely helpful		
We fish regularly but most of this summer we were catching little to none as lake was not restocked till recently. Put a dock facility on this part of the Snake river for fishermen and boaters as there is nowhere to tie up, even though there are launches		
We had a good picnic		
Worthwhile. Worth seeing. Will definitely recommend to others		
Total	N=84	100.0%

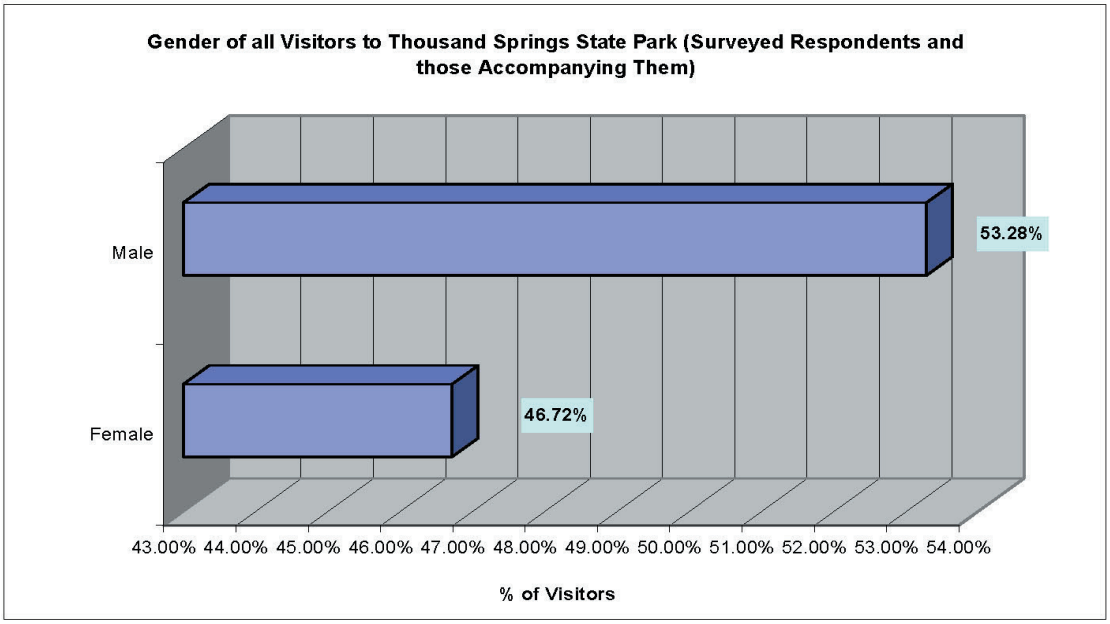
Thousand Springs State Park Visitor Survey
State of Residence

State of Residence	# Visitors Per State	% of Total All Visitors by State	USA Regions	Subtotal of % Visitors by USA Region	Regional % of Out-of-State Visitors	% of All Visitors by Out-of-State/ Idaho
Florida	1	1.30%	South	6.49%	21.74%	29.87%
Mississippi	1	1.30%				
Texas	3	3.90%				
Wisconsin	1	1.30%	Mid-West	1.30%	4.35%	
Utah	6	7.79%	West	22.08%	73.91%	
Nevada	2	2.60%				
California	3	3.90%				
Oregon	4	5.19%				
Washington	2	2.60%				
Total Out-of-State Surveys	**23**			**29.87%**	**100.00%**	
Idaho	**54**	70.13%	**Idaho**	**70.13%**		**70.13%**
Total Surveys Completed	**77**	**100.00%**		**100.00%**		**100.00%**

Region of Idaho	City in Idaho	# Visitors Per Idaho City	% of Total Idaho Visitors	# Idaho Visitors Per Region	Regional % of Idaho Visitors	Regional % of All Visitors
Region 4	Twin Falls	9	16.67%	35	64.81%	45.45%
	Buhl	1	1.85%			
	Gooding	2	3.70%			
	Hagerman	6	11.11%			
	Jerome	9	16.67%			
	Kimberly	2	3.70%			
	Sun Valley	1	1.85%			
	Wendell	5	9.26%			
Region 6	Pingree	1	1.85%	3	5.56%	3.90%
	Idaho Falls	1	1.85%			
	St. Anthony	1	1.85%			
Region 3	Kuna	2	3.70%	15	27.78%	19.48%
	Meridian	1	1.85%			
	Star	1	1.85%			
	Boise	11	20.37%			
Region 1	Post Falls	1	1.85%	1	1.85%	1.30%
	Idaho Total	**54**	**100.00%**	**54**	**100.00%**	**70.13%**

Thousand Springs Long Survey Demograpics (N refers to the number of respondents involved**)**

Gender of all Visitors to Thousand Springs State Park (Surveyed Respondents and those Accompanying Them)	% of Visitors	N
Female	46.72%	107
Male	53.28%	122
Total Visitors	**100.00%**	**229**



Age of all Visitors to Thousand Springs State Park (Surveyed Respondents and those Accompanying Them)	% of Visitors	N
1	0.90%	1
2	2.69%	3
4	1.79%	2
5	1.79%	2
6	3.59%	4
7	5.38%	6
8	4.48%	5
9	3.59%	4
10	1.79%	2
11	4.48%	5
12	5.38%	6
13	1.79%	2

Age of all Visitors to Thousand Springs State Park (Surveyed Respondents and those Accompanying Them)	% of Visitors	N
14	0.90%	1
15	1.79%	2
18	1.79%	2
19	0.90%	1
20	4.48%	5
21	0.90%	1
22	1.79%	2
23	2.69%	3
24	1.79%	2
25	1.79%	2
26	2.69%	3
27	1.79%	2
28	4.48%	5
29	2.69%	3
30	3.59%	4
31	2.69%	3
32	3.59%	4
33	1.79%	2
34	4.48%	5
35	4.48%	5
36	1.79%	2
37	0.90%	1
38	2.69%	3
39	1.79%	2
40	10.76%	12
41	1.79%	2
42	3.59%	4
43	3.59%	4
44	4.48%	5
45	8.07%	9
47	3.59%	4
48	2.69%	3
49	3.59%	4
50	4.48%	5
51	1.79%	2
52	2.69%	3
53	3.59%	4
54	0.90%	1
55	5.38%	6
56	2.69%	3
57	2.69%	3
58	3.59%	4
59	3.59%	4
60	2.69%	3
61	1.79%	2
62	1.79%	2
64	1.79%	2
65	4.48%	5
66	2.69%	3
67	1.79%	2

Age of all Visitors to Thousand Springs State Park (Surveyed Respondents and those Accompanying Them)	% of Visitors	N
68	1.79%	2
69	0.90%	1
72	3.59%	4
73	0.90%	1
74	1.79%	2
76	1.79%	2
77	0.90%	1
80	0.90%	1
93	0.90%	1

Which mode of transportation did you use to get to the park?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Car	72	85.7	85.7	85.7
	Motorcycle	1	1.2	1.2	86.9
	Other	5	6.0	6.0	92.9
	Missing	6	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX D.
PARK SPECIES LIST

Please note that this is not intended as an exhaustive list of all the species found in Thousand Springs State Park it is likely that the park harbors additional plant and animal communities.

Common Wildlife Species

Small mammals:
ground squirrels *(Spermophilus spp.* and *Ammospermphilus leucurus)*
canyon mouse *(Peromyscus spp)*
black-tailed jackrabbit *(Lepus californicus)*
cottontail rabbit (Mountain Cottontail: *Sylvilagus nuttallii)*
kangaroo rats *(Dipodomys ordii)*
marmots *(Marmota flaviventris)*
wood rats *(Neotoma spp.)*

Large mammals:
mule deer *(Odocoileus herionus*

Predators:
badgers *(Taxidea taxus)*
spotted and striped skunks *(Spilogale putoris* and *Mephitus mephitis)*
coyote *(Canis latrans)*
weasels *(Mustela spp.)*
bobcat *(Lynx rufus).*

Upland birds:
ring-necked pheasant *(Phasianus colchicus)*
gray partridge *(Pedrix pedrix)*
chukar partridge *(Alectoris chukar)*
valley quail *(Callipepla californica).*

Waterfowl:
mallards *(Anas platyrhynchos)*
Canada geese *(Branta Canadensis)*
great blue heron *(Ardea herodias)*
Black-crowned Night-Heron *(Nycticorax nycticorax)*
white pelican *(Pelecanus erythrorhynchos)*
double crested cormorants *(Phalacrocorax auritus*

Birds of Prey/Raptors:
golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos)*
red-tailed hawks *(Buteo jamaicensis)*
prairie falcons *(Falco mexicanus)*
great horned owls *(Bubo virginianus)*.
Swainson's hawks *(Buteo swainsoni)*
Cooper's hawks *(Accipiter cooperii)*
sharp-shinned hawks *(Accipiter striatus)*
American kestrel *(Falco sparverius)*
northern harrier *(Circus cyaneus)*

Fish:
rainbow trout (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*)
brown trout (*Salmo trutta*)
brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)
smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*)
largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*)
bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*)
bullhead catfish (*Ictaluras melas, I. Nebulosus*)
channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*)
sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*)
whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*)
chub (*Couesius plumbeus*)
suckers (*Catostomus spp.*)
carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

Upland and Wetland Vegetation

The following plants are common to the Sagebrush Steppe**:**

***Common native woody perennials*:**
Sagebrush *(Artemisia spp.)*
Rabbitbrush *(Chrysothamnus spp.)*
Antelope bitterbrush *(Purshia tridentate)*

Common Native grass and forbs:
Bluebunch wheatgrass *(Pseudoroegneria spicatum)*

Sandberg bluegrass *(Poa Secunda)*
Idaho fescue *(Festuca idahoensis)*
Great basin wild rye *(Elymus cinereus)*
Wild buckwheat *(Eriogonum spp.)*
Penstemon *(Penstemon spp.)*
Globemallow *(Sphaeralcea spp.)*
Lupine *(Lupinus spp.)*
Phlox *(Phlox spp.)*
Penstemon *(Penstemon spp.)*

Common Plants in Moist Areas of the Sagebrush Steppe:

Willow *(Salix spp.)*
Russian olive *(Elaeagnus angustifolia)**
Cottonwood *(Pooulus spp.)*
Water birch *(Betula occidentalis)*
Chokecherry *(Prunus virginianus)*
Skunkbush *(Rhus trilobata)*
Wood's Rose *(Rosa woodsii)*
Poison Ivy *(Toxicodendron radicans)*
Golden current *(Ribes aurem)*
Sedges *(Carex spp.)*
Rushes *(Juncus spp.)*
Cattail *(Typha latifolia)*
*Exotic invasive species

Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

Birds:

bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)*

Freshwater snails:

desert valvata (*Valvata utahensis)*
Snake River Physa *(Physa natricaria)*
Bliss Rapids snail *(Taylorconcha serpenticola)*

Fish:

Shoshone sculpin *(Cottus greenei)*
Wood River sculpin *(Cottus leiopomus)*

Plants:

cow-pie buckwheat *(Eriogonum shockleyi)*

APPENDIX E.
PUBLIC COMMENT SHEETS

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Tim Peterson Today's Date: 6/9/2006

Meeting Location: Billingsley Creek Gardon Center

COMMENTS: Under Operations + Managment / Objectives

2 ~~3~~ 9 The language in this is leading to the elimination of hunting on the park property. The ~~[illegible]~~ continued hunting opportunities was promise made by law makers at the onset of this project.

I see a lot of writing concerning trails, all are non-motorized. One of the largest growing sector recreation for families is ATV's, I would like to see this incorporated into the plan. The local population would use this opportunity daily.

~~[illegible]~~ I also see a planned route up Shoshon grade, this is currenty an unimproved road + monies would have to be given to the Highway District for maintainace + signage for speed control that is an ongoing problem to the residence on that roadway. Also I see no Fire mitigation plan for any of the park sites, particulaly the Malad Park. When a fire occurs there the entire park will burn in less than 2 hours with a prevaling west wind

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? a mailing

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Tuppers Today's Date: 6-9-06

Meeting Location:

COMMENTS: We would like to see tennis courts put in. We already have two womens (Hagerman) teams. We also know that we could get a mens team going. The school could also use them to start a tennis team. We all know that Hagerman gets alot of RV's going through. The tennis courts would be great for their use. Tennis courts would bring more $ into Hagermans businesses. Mark Bailey has looked into government funds to help build them.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? Mailing

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Gregory Kaslo, AIA for The Hardy Foundation Today's Date: June 23, 2006

Meeting Location:

RE: Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve.

COMMENTS:

The Hardy Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 5711
Boise, Idaho 83705
June 23, 2006

Ms. Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

by FAX: 208-334-3741.

The Hardy Foundation has reservations about the extent of the work proposed by the Master Plan. The issues are listed below.

a. To what extent are the proposals consistant with developent in other Nature Preserves? Has there been a review of such Preserves in other countries? If there are features that distinguish the Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve, then great care must be used so that uniqueness is not extingusihed by "improvement".

b. Each word in the official park name is important. For example; "Springs". A "primative boat Landing" is proposed where the spring water discharges into the Snake river. There is already a primatve "boat landing". Only 5 to 10 cfs of the "11th largest free-flowing spring in world" (pg.V-2") reaches the Snake river. Why upgrade an exisitg primative "landing" when the spring water creek is effectively de-watered for the lower ~~two~~ one-thirds of its course?

c. The emphasis on "Entrance Development" should be more carefully explored. Is there a "Nature Preserve Environmental Impact Statement" to evaluate "group access"? Has the use of small electric, (ie. quiet) vehicles been considered? Is the Nature Preserve designed to be primarily a social or an educational experience?

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Gregory Kaslo, AIA, Spokesperson for the Hardy Foundation, Inc.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity?

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Gregory Kaslo, AIA Today's Date: June 23, 2006

Meeting Location: RE: Niagara Springs Unit

COMMENTS:

Rim View Trout Company
1301 Vista Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Ms. Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan.

by FAX: 208-334-3741

The diagram on pg. VI-16 (Draft Master Plan, May 2006) may suggest alterations to a viewing area immediately below Niagara Springs or immediately above the diversion structures that distribute water to both the restoration and the commercial hatchery operations that are located directly downstream of the spring source.

Local law enforcement records should be reviewed in order to evaluate the wisdom of enhancing access to fish hatchery water sources.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerly,

Gregory Kaslo, AIA
Rim View Trout Company, V.P.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity?

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): DAN YORE Today's Date: 6-23-06

Meeting Location: HAGERMAN

COMMENTS: The multiple use concept has been the focus from the beginning idea. The McFadden property would make an ideal bird hunting preserve. The existing habitat could be managed to provide everything the birds and wildlife would need. ALL other uses could happen until hunting season. A draw and fee system could be used to control the use and create monies. This would create public hunting in one of the last few available places in this area.

Thank you for this comment opportunity

Dan Yore

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? _____

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): GARY K. TUSSEY Today's Date: 6-17-06

Meeting Location: STATE PARK

COMMENTS: Hunting was promised, And A promise Must be Kept !!

The Location of the interpretive Center will Not work At Suggested Location

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? I Live In Hagerman

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Glenn Shearmaker Today's Date: June 8, 2006

Meeting Location: Twin Falls

COMMENTS: Good plan overall!
Most developments will improve customer service, opportunities to recreate, and provide education in natural resources.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? email/web site

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): JERRY WILSON Today's Date: 6-8-06

Meeting Location: CITY COMMERCE

COMMENTS: REALY INTERESTED IN DEVELOPMENT OF DISC GOLF COURSES. FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY. NEED MORE COURSES. THANK YOU

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? _____

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): MILO PARKER Today's Date: 6-9-06

Meeting Location: BILLINGSLEY CREEK

COMMENTS: 1. SHOW 2650 S. ON THOUSAND SPRINGS STATE PARK CONTEXT MAP
2. CONTROL PELICANS BEFORE THEY CONTROL FISHING IN PARK WATERS.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? OPEN HOUSE NOTICE AT SENIOR CENTER

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Delores Smith Today's Date: 6/9/06

Meeting Location: Billingsley Crk. Park

COMMENTS: (1.) Please speed up work to raise large pipe on Billingsley so you can drift under it. Too mucky for me to portage.

(2) Control the noxious weeds (eg puncture vine or goat heads) etc. on all the parks.

(3.) Begin replacement with natural species.

(4) Improve walking trail systems.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? _____

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

Name (optional): Mike McIntosh Today's Date: 6-9-06

Meeting Location:

COMMENTS: My only comments are directed to the Billingsley area. The other parks have, I feel have a value as recreational destinations. However I think the best use for Billingsley Creek is habitat, at least on the lower end abutting the W.M.A. I would not put a interpretation site where you propose one, as it would be next to existing hunting.

I don't think farming hay is the best use for the area. Native brush and other habitat species would be a better use.

How did you hear about this public comment opportunity? Friend

Please hand in comments today or submit comments **no later than June 23, 2006** to:

Connie Vaughn
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Connie Vaughn, project manager,
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Dear Ms. Vaughn:

We would like the construction and maintenance of public tennis courts to be a part of the proposed Thousand Springs State Park. Tennis is growing in popularity here in Hagerman. For the past five years Hagerman has fielded teams in the Magic Valley Women's Tennis League. We now have teams playing at the 2.5 and 3.0 National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) levels. We have had Hagerman teams in the Magic Valley Spring Mixed Doubles League for the last two years. This year there are over 30 players from the Hagerman area playing in Magic Valley Leagues.

Tennis is a lifetime sport. It is enjoyed by players from 5 to 95. Tennis is an inexpensive sport to play if public courts are available. According to Consumer Reports (January 2005), tennis ranks among the top five activities for most calories burned per workout. In a mere half hour of singles tennis, you'll burn more calories than someone who uses a rowing machine, or rides a stationary bike, or does yoga or plays golf. Tennis can help you get fitter—and have fun doing it. What's more, tennis is a heart-healthy sport, as documented by a recent study at Johns Hopkins University that showed that middle-aged men who stayed active in tennis—more than any other activity—had a significantly lower incidence of cardiovascular disease as they aged. Further, The Cleveland Clinic, the nation's top-ranked heart care facility, has called tennis "an ideal sport for a healthy heart."

Money is available through the United States Tennis association (USTA) to help with the construction and maintenance of public tennis courts. The construction of four to six courts would allow local league teams to host matches here in Hagerman. This would bring tennis players to Hagerman from all over the Magic Valley every week. We could have junior tennis programs and field teams to play in the state junior tennis circuits. A family could head out to the courts for some healthy, exciting time together. Tennis courts would provide opportunities for a lifetime of fitness and fun for the Hagerman community.

The following are some of the people who would like to see tennis courts built at the Thousand Springs State Park.

Signature Printed Name

(60 signatures initially collected, however, the original letter was lost in the mail)

APPENDIX F.
LETTERS OF SUPPORT

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
MAGIC VALLEY REGION
319 South 417 East
Jerome, Idaho 83338

James E. Risch / Governor
Steven M. Huffaker / Director

June 22, 2006

Connie Vaughn, Project Manager
Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0065

Re: Draft Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan

Dear Connie:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) appreciate the opportunity to review the *Draft Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan* and to having the opportunity to participate in the Stakeholders Working Group. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

We commend Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) for their involvement of stakeholders in developing the Draft Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan. We agree with your classification of the park as a **Natural Park**, and with your assessment that when viewed collectively, the Malad Gorge, Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve, Billingsley Creek, and Niagara Springs Units are "*unified and distinguished by their water and natural resources*".

The abundance of water on all four units provides users a variety of fishing opportunities. The Billingsley Creek and Niagara Springs units are important fisheries receiving substantial fishing pressure by local and non-local anglers. Box Canyon likely contains a resident redband rainbow population which also provides a unique fishing opportunity. Hunters and anglers will travel large distances to take advantage of what the Thousand Springs State Park has to offer, provided the existing sporting opportunities are maintained or enhanced. This "public" will make up a large portion of park visitors and should be considered and addressed in your management plan.

Traditional recreational uses such as hunting should be maintained in the park. The Billingsley Creek Unit has maintained hunting since it's acquisition by IDPR. The confluence of the Box Canyon Unit with the Snake River has also continued to attract waterfowl hunters. We recommend the use of safety zones within the park that would prohibit shooting activities near facilities or areas of high public use.

Consumptive outdoor activities such as fishing were not mentioned in the *Recreation Opportunities* section of the plan. Consumptive uses such as fishing are a major recreational activity at Thousand

Springs State Park and should be recognized as an important management consideration in the *Recreation Opportunities* section of the plan.

In the *Partnerships* section you state, "*Work with Fish and Game to improve fishing access along Crystal Lake, Billingsley Creek and the Snake River*", we look forward to working closely with IDPR in the future to improve fishing access in Thousand Springs State Park.

Billingsley Creek Unit

The Billingsley Creek Unit (BCU) borders the Billingsley Creek Wildlife Management Area (BCWMA). This proximity of IDPR and IDFG managed lands offer unique opportunities and challenges. We support IDPR plans to increase the amount of native habitat throughout the park. We recommend that native habitats should be a priority along the eastern boundary of the Billingsley Creek Unit. A combination of native grasses, shrubs, and trees would provide additional and contiguous habitat to that which already exists on the BCWMA, and would also provide a buffer area between users of the two properties. This buffer area should be a minimum of 50 yards in depth from the boundary. The buffer would compliment one of the objectives stated in the *Operations and Maintenance* section of the plan, "*Develop signage that clearly articulates hazards or inherent risk of park use. At Billingsley Creek, make visitors aware of hunting use on the adjoining Wildlife Management Area*".

The plan identifies development of a picnic area and outdoor classroom along the boundary of the BCWMA. We recommend these facilities be developed at least 75 yards from the boundary of the BCWMA. This would decrease the potential for interaction between hunters and fishermen using the BCWMA and users recreating on the BCU. It would also keep the buffer area mentioned above intact. Trails and roads should be developed west of the buffer area.

In the *Economics* section of the plan it identifies an objective of conducting an economic feasibility study of potential park uses, such as a golf course, for the agricultural fields at the BCU. Again, we emphasize the importance of having a buffer area included in the golf course development plan and the feasibility study. Costs associated with potential property damage from geese, deer, and other wildlife that will use the golf course should be considered when conducting the feasibility study.

The Hagerman Valley is renowned for its abundance of waterfowl; it also supports a thriving population of mule deer and other wildlife. Mule deer, geese, and other wildlife depredations on landscaping plants, greens, and fairways are anticipated if a golf course is developed at this site. All responsibility for controlling wildlife depredation will belong with IDPR. Any actions taken to alleviate depredation will be those prescribed by IDFG.

The Magic Valley Regional Fishery staff has been working to restore a successful brown trout fishery on Billingsley Creek from Vader Grade to the hydroelectric facility. Sedimentation is an issue in most of Billingsley Creek within this section of the creek. Every effort should be made to minimize or reduce activities associated with sedimentation.

Niagara Springs

We support IDPR's objective to increase fishing access along Crystal Lake and the Snake River.

The Niagara Springs Unit provides an easy access fishery that is enhanced by overnight and day facilities. Given the current users frequenting this unit, efforts to enhance fishing opportunities at Crystal Lake and the Snake River could include increased parking, fishing dock replacement, aquatic vegetation control, controlled shoreline access, and established shoreline trails. Access for disabled persons would be welcomed. This unit has drawn anglers from around Idaho when surplus rainbow trout are available.

Box Canyon

We agree with IDPR that management direction for the Box Canyon Unit should be to preserve the natural resources of the area. Developing a boat landing site along the Snake River to increase access to lower Box Canyon should have a priority of not impacting the natural characteristics and resources of the canyon. A wildfire that starts at the mouth of the canyon would quickly move up the canyon. Campfires should be restricted in this area. Litter at boat landings can be a problem, the amount of potential refuse that can be transported is much greater via a boat relative to what can be transported in a backpack. An increased need for maintenance and associated operational costs can also be expected once a boat landing is developed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Draft Thousand Springs State Park Master Plan. Please contact Mark Fleming, Regional Wildlife Habitat Manager, or myself at this office.

Sincerely,

David Parrish
Magic Valley Regional Supervisor

Cc: IDFG (NRPB)
IDFG (BOW)
ECc: IDFG (R4 staff)

PARKS and RECREATION

BE HAPPIER · *Build Family Unity* · **Feel Great** · **take care of latch key children** · reduce unemployment · INCREASE COMMUNICATION SKILLS · *Expand knowledge* · Lose weight · **diminish chance of disease** · build self-esteem · reduce stress · *promote sensitivity to cultural diversity* · **eliminate loneliness** · INCREASE COMMUNITY PRIDE · *Reduce Crime* · **provide safe places to play** · *generate revenue* · **lower health care costs** · MEET FRIENDS · **educate children and adults** · RELAX · **KEEP BUSINESS FROM LEAVING** · ELEVATE PERSONAL GROWTH · **strengthen neighborhood involvement** · **conquer boredom** · provide child care · **BOOST ECONOMY** · curb employee absenteeism · **increase tourism** · **build strong bodies** · ***increase property value*** · **attract new business** · **Preserve plant and animal wildlife** · instill teamwork · live longer · **create memories** · **PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT** · **CLEAN AIR AND WATER** · boost employee productivity · ***look better*** · enhance relationship skills · **decrease insurance premiums** · **CONTROL WEIGHT** · **OFFER PLACE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION** · diminish gang violence · TEACH VITAL LIFE SKILLS · **Provide space to enjoy nature . . .**

THE BENEFITS ARE ENDLESS...™

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