

APPENDIX E

BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION
and
DETERMINATION OF IMPACTS
TO FEDERAL AND STATE-LISTED SPECIES

McCall Municipal Airport Improvements Project

McCall, Idaho

Valley County, Idaho

Report submitted to:

Rainse Anderson
WHPacific, Inc.
9755 SW Barnes Rd, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97225
(503) 372-3533

Prepared by:

Tom Duebendorfer, PWS
PO Box 167
Elmira, Idaho 83865
(208) 290-5992
tdueb@wildblue.net

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This report has been prepared for use by WHPacific, Inc., and their agents. I am qualified to delineate and analyze terrestrial and wetland ecosystems. I have used the site information and proposed development plans as referenced herein. The findings in this report are based on information gathered in the field at the time of investigation, and data from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Idaho Conservation Data Center. If necessary, all appropriate regulatory agencies should be contacted to verify the findings of this report and to obtain required approvals and permits.

I have provided professional services in accordance with the degree of care and skill generally accepted in the nature of the work performed.

Tom Duebendorfer M.A.

At the request of WHPacific, Inc., I completed this Biological Evaluation for the McCall Municipal Airport Improvements Project (Figures 1 and 2). The site is located in McCall, Valley County, Idaho (Township 18 North, Range 3 East, portions of Sections 16 and 21— elevation 5,000 feet). The work will be performed and constructed with financial assistance from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and the City of McCall.

Project Description (more detail is provided in the Construction Methods Section)

The City of McCall, in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is proposing to move a taxiway to become at least B-II compliant. The runway/taxiway separation is currently 200'. The standard for the current airport class (B-II) is 240'. The project involves the demolition of the existing taxiway (50-ft by 5,425-ft) and construction of a new 50-ft by 5,425-ft taxiway located 300 feet east of the runway (centerline to centerline).

Action Area

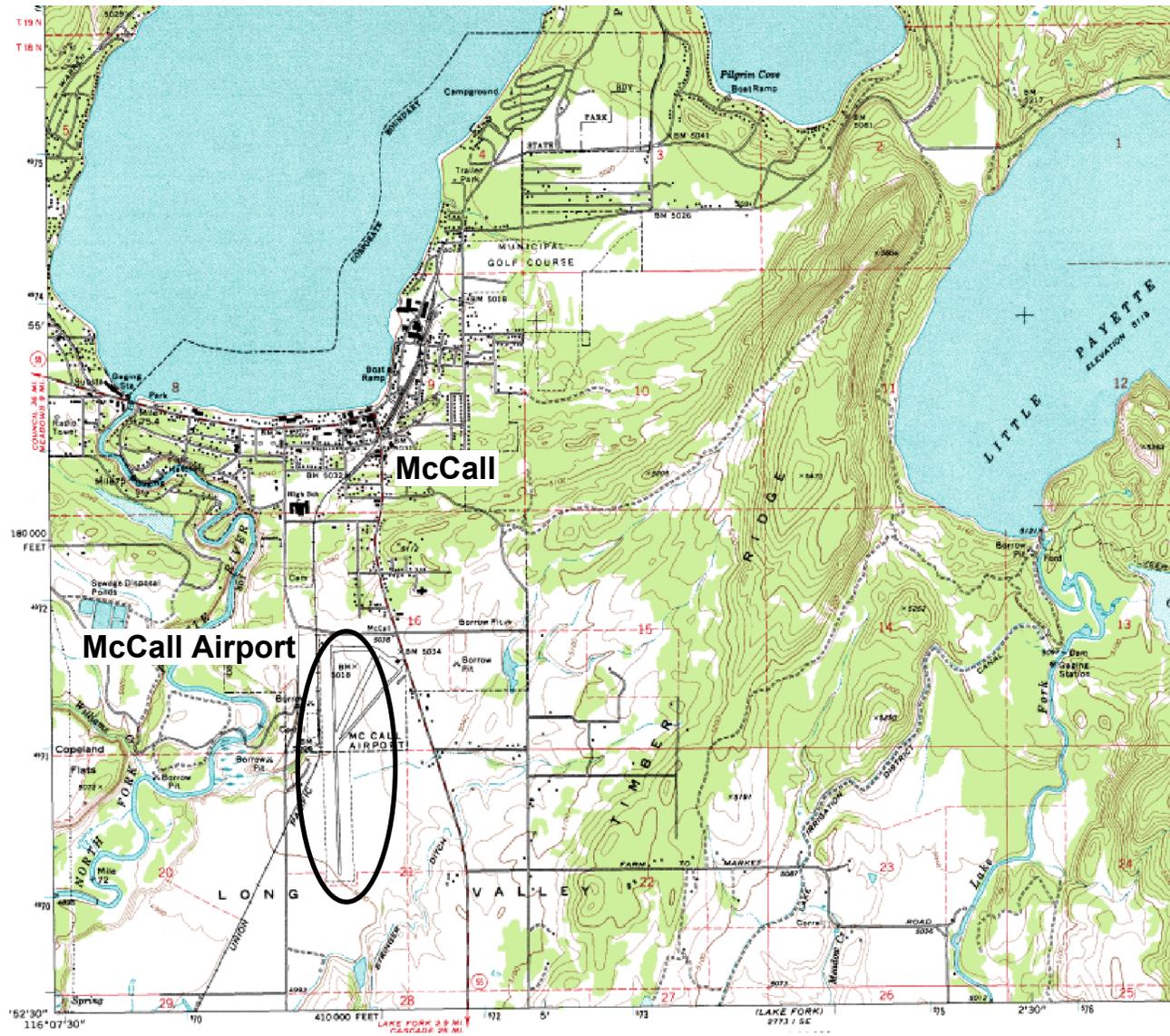
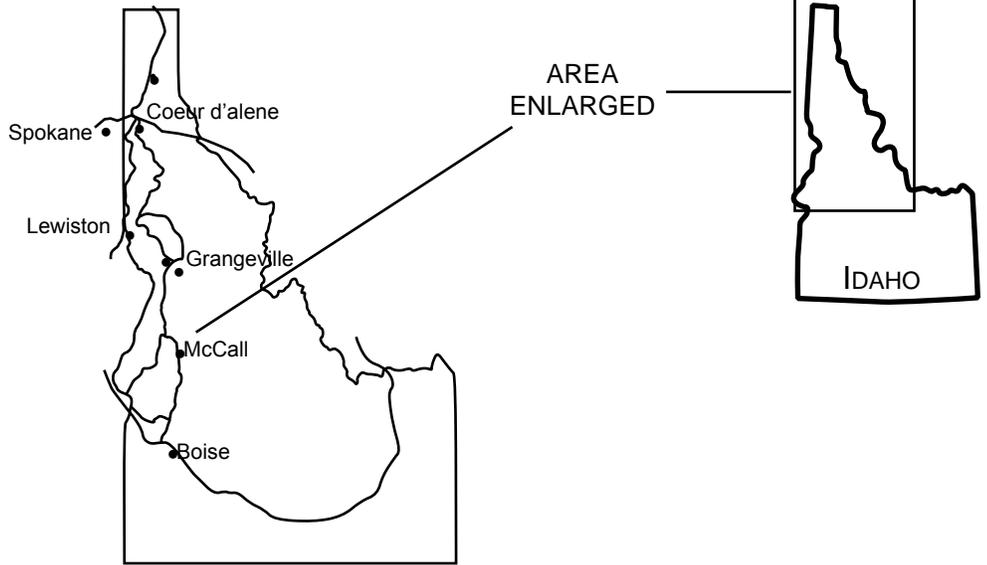
The action area is considered to be the immediate vicinity of the proposed taxiway construction as well as a “noise” area which extends approximately five miles in all directions .

I investigated the site on October 6 and 7, 2008 to observe current environmental conditions, vegetation information, and researched known threatened and endangered species locations, habitat information, and potential for occurrence within the action area.

Vegetation at the airport site would be considered “Non-native Herbaceous Habitat: Disturbed and Invasive Grass and Forb”. There are several ditches that contain wetland plant species (both native and non-native), however, the majority of the area proposed for the taxiway is highly grazed open “pasture”. Dominant plant species in the ditches includes sedges (*Carex nebrascensis*, *C. X stipata*, *C. utriculata*, and *C. spp.*); rushes (*Juncus tenuis congesta*, *J. ensifolius*, and *J. spp.*); water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*); canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*); cattail (*Typha latifolia*); cudweed (*Gnaphalium sp.*).

The open field contains ruderal (or weedy) species including: orchardgrass (*Dactylis glomerata*), smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), ox-eye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), English daisy (*Bellis perennis*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), willow-leaf dock (*Rumex salicifolius*), thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), quackgrass (*Elytrigia repens*), horseweed (*Conyza canadensis*), and cinquefoil (*Potentilla gracilis*). Most of these species are non-natives and typical of highly disturbed, grazed open fields and pastures.

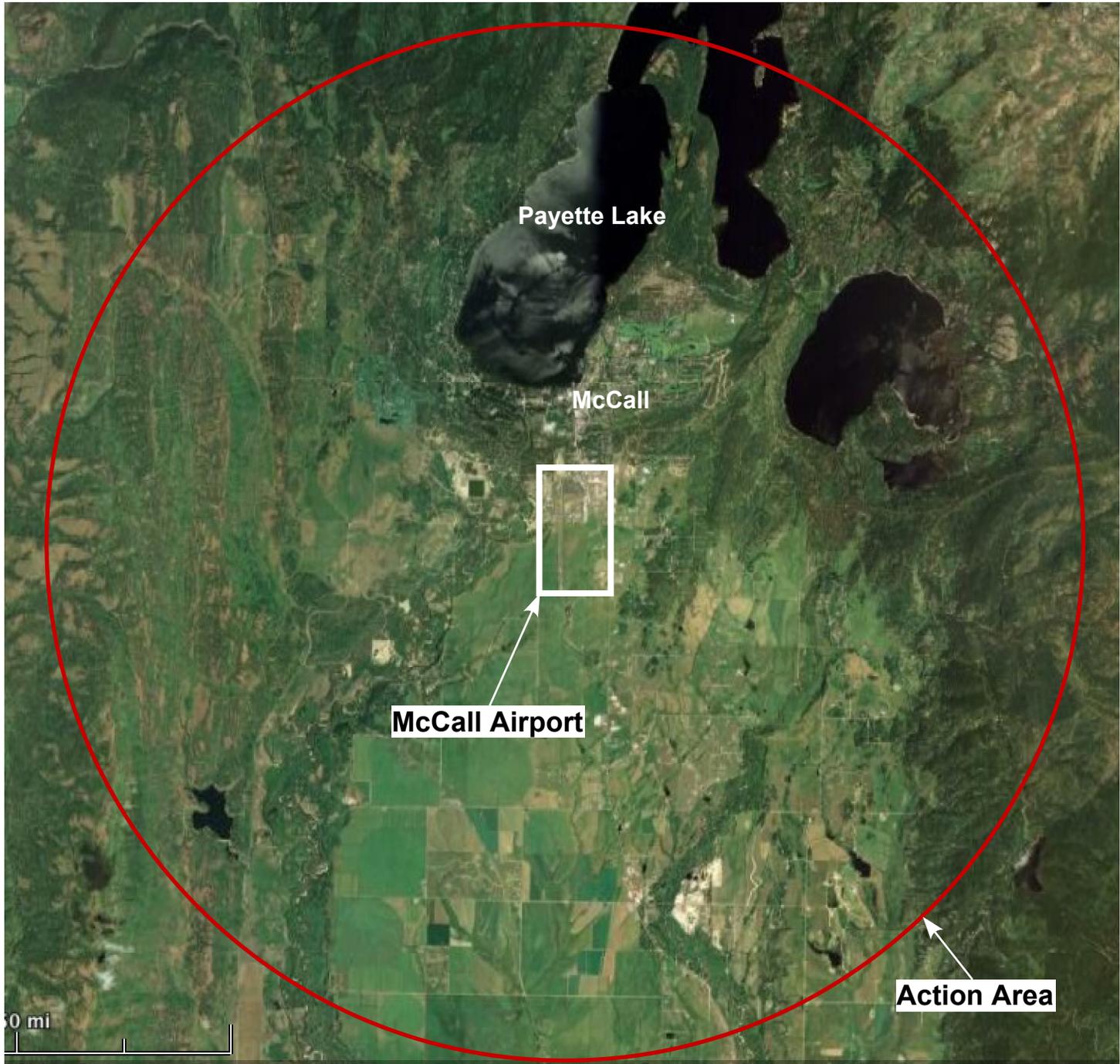
The project area is underlain by soils of the Donnel sandy loam (a very deep, well drained soil); Gestrin loam (very deep, moderately well-drained soil) ; and Melton loam (a very deep , poorly drained soil).



McCall Airport Project T18N, R 3 E, Section 16, 21

1 mile
USGS Map

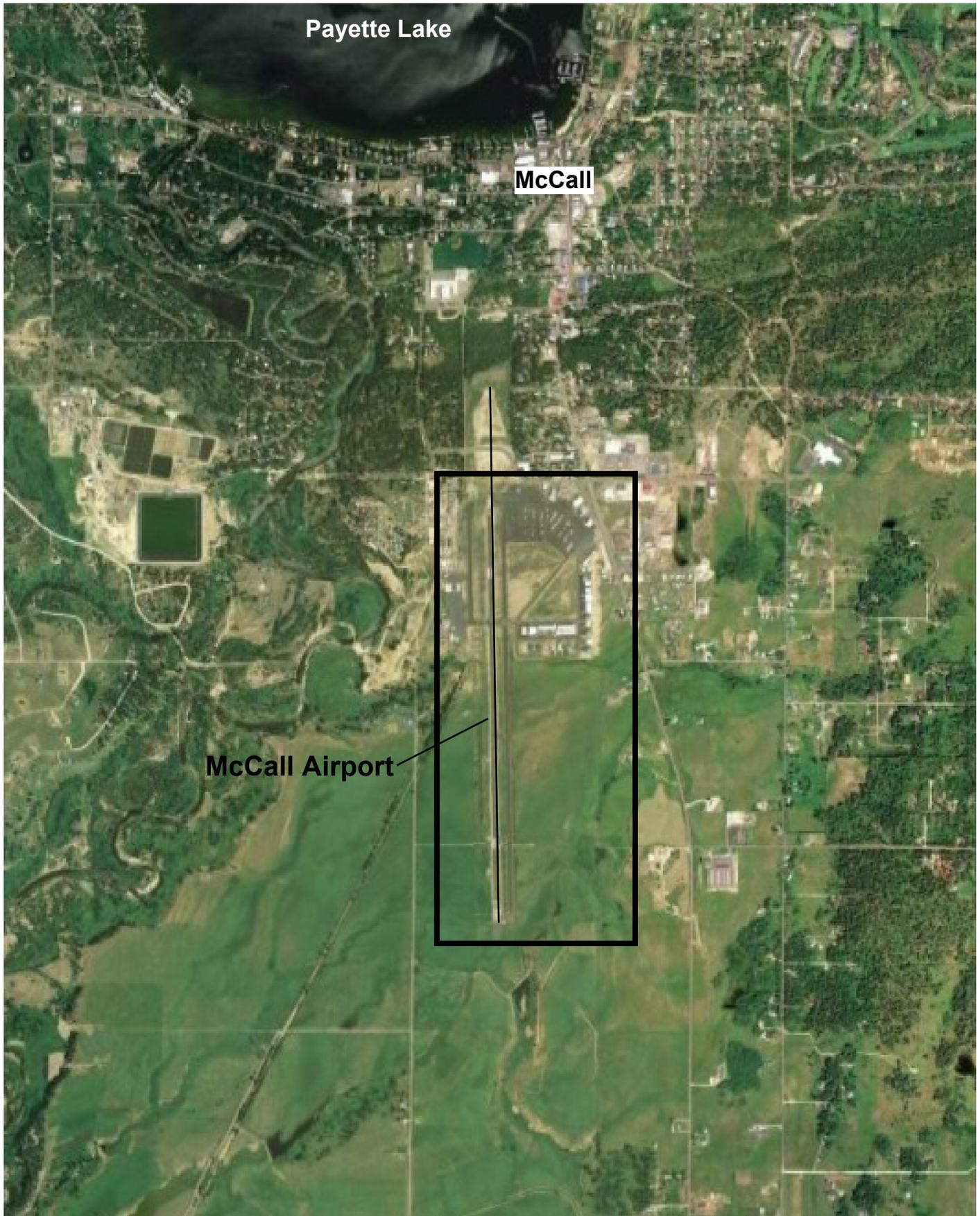
Figure 1.
Vicinity Map
McCall Airport Improvements Project



McCall Airport Project T18N, R 3 E, Section 16, 21
White Circle indicates Action Area of 5 miles radius

1 mile

Figure 2.
Action Area
McCall Airport Improvements Project



McCall Airport Project T18N, R 3 E, Section 16, 21

no scale

Figure 3.
Aerial Photograph
McCall Airport Improvements Project

Project Description

The project involves the demolition of the existing taxiway (50-ft by 5,425-ft) and construction of a new 50-ft by 5,425-ft taxiway located 300 feet east of the runway (centerline to centerline) (Figure 3). The new taxiway will require excavation of existing ground to the depth of the proposed pavement section. The pavement section will include subbase material, base aggregate, and an asphalt surface course.

The erosion and sediment control measures (BMPs) may include, but are not limited to silt fencing at the south end of the project and straw bales in ditches to trap sediments before leaving the project site.

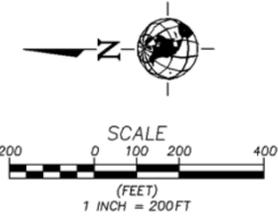
Based upon a review of existing site conditions, it is likely that impacted wetland and waters will occur and will require authorization through the Army Corps of Engineers in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Wetland mitigation credit may be available from a proposed mitigation bank in the area. Alternatively, project-specific off-site mitigation may be needed. WHPacific recommends purchasing mitigation credits equivalent to the 1.39 acres of impact from the Green Ranch mitigation bank (as detailed in the Environmental Assessment). If the bank does not work out in a timely fashion for any reason, WHPacific recommends the Blackhawk Enterprises site as a viable back up.

Necessary wetland permits will be obtained from federal and state agencies. Construction will also require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for water quality protection during construction to be covered by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality general permit for construction stormwater discharges.

Equipment and Staging Area

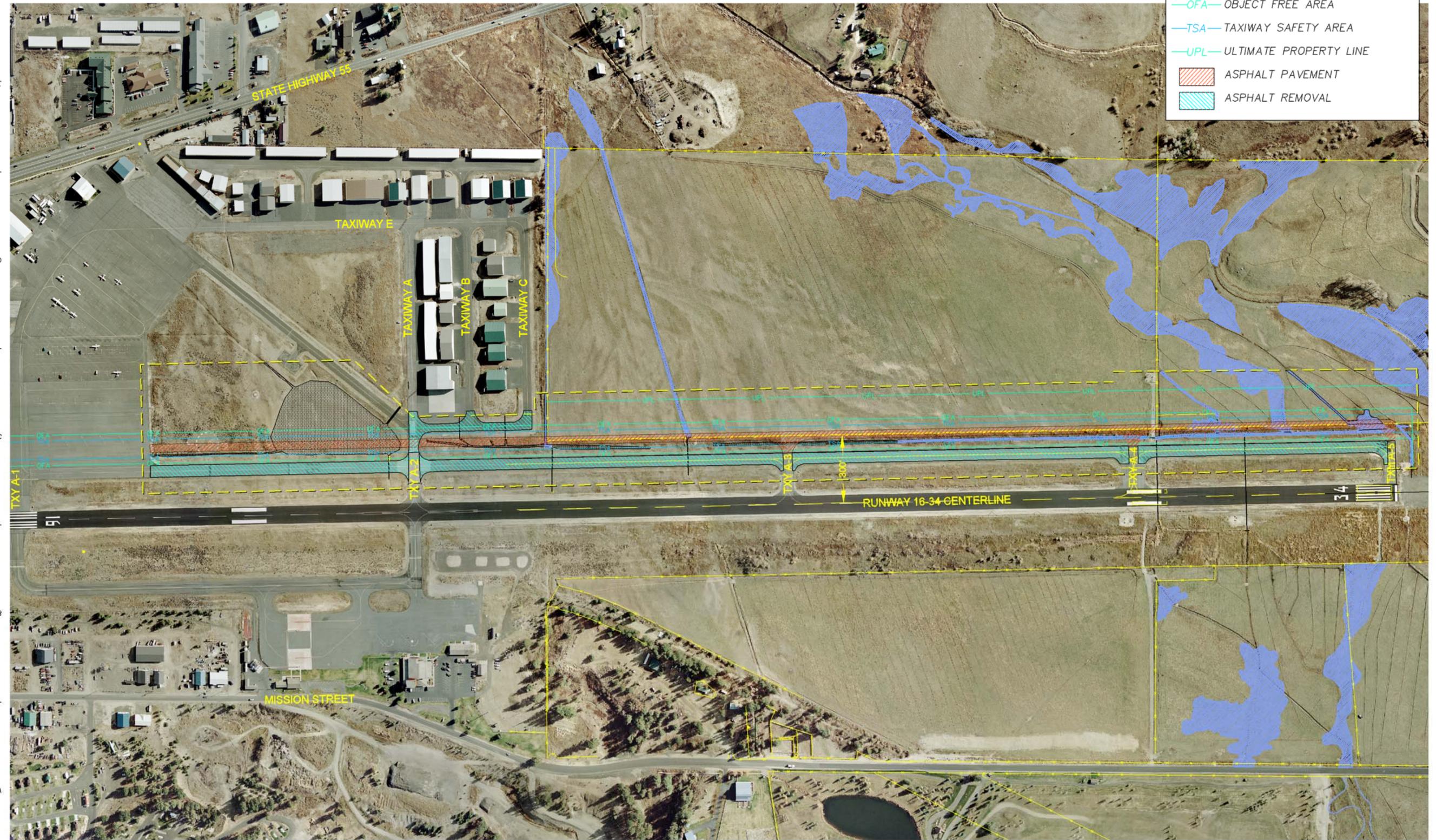
Standard, heavy construction equipment will be used on the project and should include a front loader, track hoe, grader, end/belly dump trucks, and paving machine. The contractor staging area will be located outside the runway and taxiway OFAs.

DWG INDEX:
 T1-T1-GEN.PLOT
 X-307ME.LAND
 34256-NEW
 X-0673ME.LAND0209008



LEGEND

- WETLAND
- STORMWATER DETENTION BASIN / NON-WETLAND DRAINAGE DITCH
- STUDY AREA
- CULVERT
- OFA OBJECT FREE AREA
- TSA TAXIWAY SAFETY AREA
- UPL ULTIMATE PROPERTY LINE
- ASPHALT PAVEMENT
- ASPHALT REMOVAL



[Path: P:\City of McCall\034256\Drawings\Civil\34256-Surv-wet-CIL.dwg] [C-1]
 Date: 3/5/2010 12:15 PM Author: hutchison [Plotter: DWG6_EPlot.pc3] [Scale: Half Size.ctb]

WHPacific

3501 W Elder Street, Suite 200
 Boise, ID 83705
 208-342-5400 Fax: 208-342-5353
 www.whpacific.com

CITY OF McCALL, IDAHO
 McCALL AIRPORT
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - 300' SEPARATION

McCall SCALE: IDAHO PROJECT NO. 34256 DRAWING FILE NAME: 34256-Surv-wet-C11

GRAPHIC

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LAST EDIT: 3/5/2010	PLOT DATE: 03/05/10		
DATE BY REV#	REVISION	CK'D APPR	

Construction Sequence and Timing

Phase I – North Half of Taxiway

June 2012	Secure staging area; setup erosion and sediment control measures; relocate windsock and segmented circle; relocate perimeter fence.
July 2012	Remove existing asphalt from hangar taxiways/taxilanes; excavate proposed taxiway; relocate and extend storm sewer lines; construct new drainage ditches/channels; begin subbase construction.
Aug. 2012	Place subbase and base aggregate; place asphalt concrete surface course.
Sept. 2012	Grade new taxiway shoulders; complete pavement markings; remove existing taxiway and grade new infield area; area clean up.
Nov. 2012	Complete final project closeout documents.

Mitigation will occur concurrently with Phase I of the project.

Phase II – South Half of Taxiway

June 2013	Secure staging area; setup erosion and sediment control measures.
July 2013	Excavate proposed taxiway; relocate and extend storm sewer lines; construct new drainage ditches/channels; begin subbase construction.
Aug. 2013	Place subbase and base aggregate; place asphalt concrete surface course.
Sept. 2013	Grade new taxiway shoulders; complete pavement markings; remove existing taxiway and grade new infield area; area clean up.
Nov. 2013	Complete final project closeout documents.

Listed Species

Federal

The United State Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) species list for Valley County include: gray wolf (experimental/non-essential), Northern Idaho ground squirrel; Canada lynx; bull trout, spring/summer chinook salmon; steelhead trout (all threatened [+ designated critical habitat for chinook and steelhead]); and yellow-billed cuckoo (candidate) (14420-2009-SL-0041). However, a project specific request resulted in the identification for potential impacts to only two species: bull trout and the Northern Idaho ground squirrel (Appendix A).

Bull trout

Since there are no streams or creeks in the project area that harbor or could potentially harbor bull trout, there will be no further discussion relating to this species.

Northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS)

Because modeled NDIGS habitat is present within the vicinity of the project area, field studies for its presence/absence were undertaken by Dr. Yensen (Department of Biology, The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho) in June 2009 (see Appendix C).

State

“Species of Special Concern” are now replaced by “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” (sometimes referred to as at-risk species) as defined by the Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) which was approved by the USFWS in 2005. Table 1 list the common and scientific names and (protection) rankings of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need provided by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG); Fish and Wildlife Information System (FWIS), that have been reported to occur within a 5 mile radius of the McCall airport (see also Appendices A and B). Figure 4 shows the locations of these species relative to the airport. Unless cited otherwise, the species information discussed in this section is from the IDFG website of publications.

Table 1.
Species of Greatest Conservation Need that occur within a 5 mile radius of the McCall airport

Common Name	Scientific Name	CWCS	Global	State	BLM	USFS R4
A spur-throat grasshopper	<i>Melanoplus payettei</i>	1	G2G4	SNR		
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	1	G5	S3B,S4N	Type 1	T
Black-backed woodpecker	<i>Picoides arcticus</i>	0	G5	S3	Type 5	
Blue Grosbeak	<i>Guiraca caerulea</i>	1	G5	S1B		
Columbia Spotted Frog*	<i>Rana luteiventris</i>	0	G4	S3S4	Type 1	S
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	1	G5	S1B,S2N		S
Flammulated Owl	<i>Otus flammeolus</i>	1	G4	S3B	Type 3	S
Gillette's Checkerspot	<i>Euphydryas gillettii</i>	1	G2G3	SNR		
Great Gray Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	0	G5	S3	Type 5	S
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	1	G5	S1B,S2N		
Mountain Quail	<i>Oreortyx pictus</i>	1	G5	S2	Type 3	S
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	0	G5	S4	Type 3	S
Pristine Pyrg	<i>Pristinicola hemphilli</i>	1	G3	SNR		
Pygmy Nuthatch	<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>	1	G5	S2S3	Type 5	
Shiny Tightcoil	<i>Pristiloma wascoense</i>	1	G3	SNR		
Thinlip Tightcoil	<i>Pristiloma idahoense</i>	1	G2G3	SNR		
Upland Sandpiper	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	1	G5	S1B	Type 4	
Western Toad	<i>Bufo boreas</i>	0	G4	S4	Type 3	
White-headed woodpecker	<i>Picoides albolarvatus</i>	1	G4	S2B	Type 4	S

* the Great Basin population of this species is also considered a “Candidate” for federal listing (candidate species have no protection under the Endangered Species Act [ESA]).

Note: Appendix B provides the definitions for the agency categories and their respective species rankings.

A Spur-throat Grasshopper (*Melanoplus payettei*)

The IDFG information for this species identifies the location for this species as “McCall on Big Payette Lake”. The observation date was 1910, cited in a 1936 report. The species has not been collected since 1961. It is included in the CWCS list because of lack of essential information pertaining to status. Its habitat is “dry grasses”. Because the site contains “dry grasses”, and is near the city of McCall, the McCall airport site could potentially harbor this species.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Relative to recovery population goals set in 1986 (4 breeding pairs; USFWS 1986) numbers of nesting eagles in Zone 15 ($n = 38$) exceeds target numbers by 950% – the greatest margin of any zone in the state (IDFG 2006). Although Table lists the bald eagle as threatened under the ESA, it has been de-listed, but still is afforded protection by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA).

Bald eagles are well documented in the McCall area. The proximity of the lakes and rivers in the area coupled with relatively natural riparian vegetation along banks of the waterbodies provides excellent habitat for nesting, roosting, and feeding for this species. Observations of wintering bald eagles has been clearly documented for years. There is an active bald eagle nest within 1.5 miles (nest site ##15I01802) of the airport, and the nest has been active for numerous past years (Figure 4).

Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*)

This species is ranked S3 which indicates it is “vulnerable” and at moderate risk because of restricted range, few populations, declines, or other factors that make it vulnerable to rangewide extinction or extirpation.

Black-backed woodpecker habitat includes coniferous forests (primarily spruce/fir), especially in windfalls and burned areas with standing dead trees. It is found less frequently in mixed forests, and rarely in deciduous woodlands in winter. The nearest locations observed of this species relative to the McCall airport are in the Ponderosa State Park (in the peninsula of Payette Lake, 4 miles northeast of the airport), in 1975; and at Little Ski Hill, in Adams County (3.8 miles northwest of the airport), in 1985. Due to its mobility, it is likely that this species could move through the airport area from one forested habitat to another.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*)

This species is listed as “critically imperiled for breeding” (S1B). This species inhabits open country, found in thickets and stretches of underbrush at the edges of fields and pastures. It may nest in hayfields or thickets adjacent to sagebrush foothills. The nearest documented observation of this species (1985) relative to the airport is within 0.6 miles of the proposed project as one individual (probably) as a part of a migrating group. This sighting was not of one of the “imperiled” nest sites. There are no “thickets” on the east side of the airport near the location of the proposed taxiway; however west of the runway there are scrub-shrub habitats. Therefore, due to its mobility, it is possible that this species could move from scrub-shrub habitats from the west across the airport area to similar preferred habitats (hayfields or thickets).

Columbia Spotted Frog (*Rana luteiventris*)

Although not on the CWCS list, this species is listed as BLM Type 1 (the most protected ranking). The current BLM Type 1 listing is probably the result of the prior attempt to federally-list this species. After a determination that listing the species is not warranted, the proposed listing was removed by the FWS in August 2002 (Fed Reg. Vol 67, No. 169). However, the Great Basin population of this species being a “candidate” for federal listing under the ESA.

The spotted frog (formerly *Rana pretiosa*) was recently shown to consist of two distinct species, the Columbia spotted frog (*R. luteiventris*) and the Oregon Spotted Frog (*R. pretiosa*) (FWS Mountain-Prairie website). The Columbia spotted frog is closely associated with water, including the marshy edges of ponds, lakes, slow-moving cool water streams and springs. The frogs are aquatic specialists and more dependent on permanent aquatic habitats than other frog species (the majority of sightings and captures have occurred while the frogs were submerged in water) (Fed Reg 67:169). It does not regularly frequent ponds and lakes where water is warm enough to allow for extensive growth of emergent vegetation, such as cattails.

The closest documented observation of this species to the airport is 1.3 miles northeast. The location is vague (use of the name “McCall”) and the observation was made in 1918. The observation location is very close to Payette Lake. Since then no other observations have been documented. Although ditches (and disturbed creeks) exist in the proposed taxiway area, there is no permanent water habitat that this species favors for breeding.

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)

The common loon winters along coasts, coastal waters, and may be found in inland lakes, rivers, and large reservoirs. In Idaho, loon nests have never been confirmed—however birds with breeding plumage have been observed in northern Idaho Panhandle and southeastern Idaho lakes. The State includes both breeding and non-breeding rankings, and the common loon is considered sensitive in Region 4 of the USFS.

Near the project area, there have been two sightings in Little Payette Lake (in 1976 and 1985); three sightings in Payette Lake (in 1978). No observations were made at the airport location—however, it is likely if the birds were found in the nearby lakes, they could potentially cross the airspace over the airport en route to other preferred open bodies of water.

Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*)

Listed for State vulnerable breeding and USFS Region 4 sensitive, this species is highly migratory. This nocturnal owl breeds in montane forests and winters in central Mexico and south. In summer, it is considered relatively abundant in certain localized habitats in Idaho. Flammulated owls are “obligate” cavity nesters, using cavities often made from other woodpeckers. They prefer mid-elevation old-growth or mature stands of open Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir.

Relative to the McCall airport location, in 2005, there was one confirmed vocalization “observation” about 4.2 miles northwest of the airport in the Goose Creek area. The airport area is not preferred habitat, however, being a migratory species, it is possible that flammulated owls could pass over the airport en route to other habitats.

Gillette's Checkerspot (*Euphydryas gillettii*)

This butterfly is considered Globally imperiled/vulnerable (G2G3), but Statewide is unranked (SNR) due to lack of essential information. In montane parts of the northern Rockies, it occurs in isolated populations which fluctuate greatly in abundance from year to year. It is associated with open clearing in mesic habitats often near small streams or marshes. The primary host larval plant is honeysuckle (*Lonicera involucrata*), with valerian (*Valeriana occidentalis*), lousewort (*Pedicularis* sp.), speedwell (*Veronica wormskjoldii*), and snowberry (*Symphoricarpus*) as alternate host plants. Except for snowberry, these species were not observed near the airport site—however these host plants may not be all-inclusive and other host plants may be utilized by the butterfly.

Locations in the proximity of the airport include one observation (in 1960 by a non-expert) and one specimen taken by an expert in 1983 at a location near the junction of State Route 55 and Forest Road 451, (about 3 airmiles northwest of the airport). Thus it is possible that the checkerspot could potentially occur within the action area.

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*)

Although not listed by the CWCS, this owl is an USFS sensitive species. It is the largest owl in the North America, and mostly nests in forest habitat types (lodgepole pine/Douglas fir/aspen zones) in broken-topped snags, vacated stick nests, and man-artificial nest structures. It has been noted that great gray owl nesting attempts have been associated with open and often wet meadows (Atkinson, 1989). Mortality is often caused to non-flying young by great horned owl and northern goshawks. The primary prey of great gray owls includes ground squirrels, voles, pocket gophers, and hares.

Besides numerous observations of one to three individuals (from the early 1980's to late 1990's), there are three reports of nests occupied by great grays: one (found in 1989) is located 2.3 miles due east of the airport (south of Little Payette Lake on an artificial nest platform), and the other two (found in 1994 and 1998) are 4.4 and 3.6 miles (respectively) northwest of the airport in the Bear Basin area. To facilitate breeding, numerous artificial nest platforms have been erected by the Raptor Research Center of Boise State University in the Bear Basin area (Atkinson, 1989).

Due to these recent observations, it is highly likely that great gray owls use the adjacent forests for nest sites as well as the open ground in the lower areas surrounding McCall and the vicinity for feeding.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

This species is ranked Statewide as S1B, S2N indicating breeding and nonbreeding populations are imperiled. In Idaho, the merlin is a common migrant and locally abundant winter resident but a rare breeder. They hunt in open country and feed on small to medium-sized birds, rodents, insects, and bats. Nesting habitat is shrub-steep dominated by sagebrush with nests usually in junipers. They may also use abandoned nests from other birds.

Although specific nesting habitat described above is lacking in the McCall airport area, one individual was sighted in 1983, from a vague location (simply "Payette Lake"), with the coordinates about 4.7 miles north-northeast of the airport on the Payette Lake peninsula.

Thus while the bird is wide-ranging during its wintering habits, it is probably unlikely that merlins frequent the project area.

Mountain Quail (*Oreortyx pictus*)

Although secure, common and widespread globally (G5), in Idaho, the Mountain quail is imperiled due to restricted distribution and low population size (S2). It is a year-round resident in the mountains of western North America with primary range in the Sierra Nevada and Cascades. In Idaho, they are restricted to a few scattered sites ranging from Lewiston to Riggins, primarily adjacent to the Salmon River (IDFG 2006).

Dramatic declines in numbers have been documented in these eastern populations. However, the amount of riparian and agricultural habitat suitable for quail appears stable—the reasons for long-term declines are unclear (IDFG 2006). Transplant studies have been undertaken by IDFG in attempt to rejuvenate population numbers.

Mountain quail breed and winter in xeric to mesic shrub-dominated communities both of which occur within a 5 miles radius of the airport site. Nearby observations include sightings of up to 20 individuals, 0.8 and 1.6 miles

southwest of the runway, and 2 birds found 2.8 miles due east of the airport in 1990. Because habitat is present and sightings of these birds has occurred relatively recently, it is likely that Mountain quail are in the vicinity of the airport project.

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Although not listed by the CWCS, and with a Statewide rank of “apparently secure” (S4), this species is listed by Region 4 of the USFS as sensitive. It is a large raptor of northern forests, and the largest North American accipiter. It maneuvers well through dense woods, taking prey such as squirrels, grouse, crows, and rabbits. Its habitat is varied, though apparently prefers mature forests.

Local sightings include a nest (located 2.8 miles west-southwest of the airport) with an adult and juvenile in 1980 and again in 1994) and a sighting 4.2 mile due west of the airport. Both observations are in forested areas. Since goshawks can utilize numerous types of habitat and have been observed breeding and occupying areas within 5 miles of the airport, it is likely that goshawks would be intermittently present in the project area.

Pristine Pyrg (*Pristinicola hemphilli*)

This is an aquatic snail which inhabits small springs, seeps, outflow channels, and spring-influenced stream reaches located in semiarid sagebrush-dominated habitat with basalt substrates. Occasionally sites are in dense Douglas fir forests. Most of the sites are undisturbed, with cobble substrates, and shallow, cold clear water. Although the CWCS lists this species as “unranked” (SNR), it is listed on the website as “imperiled” S2. Thus information regarding the distribution and status of populations is limited.

One sighting (in 1993) has been documented approximately 3.4 miles northwest of the McCall airport. While it is possible that this species could be found in the vicinity of the airport, its preferred habitat does not appear to be present at the location of the proposed taxiway.

Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*)

The IDFG website and the CWCS list this species as “critically imperiled” (S1); however, the FWIS status indicates “imperiled” and “vulnerable” (S2S3). It is a year-round resident of ponderosa pine forests, and in Idaho the populations have been in decline for the last 40 years. They nest in dead pines and live trees with dead sections. Unlogged forests are preferred. Loss of habitat (i.e., ponderosa pine forests are likely contributors to the observed population declines.

Two sightings (one in 1993 at the Payette National Forest headquarters building in McCall) and one (west of Bear Basin, south of Forest Service Road 452 in 1995) are about 1.5 mile north and 3.3 miles northwest of the airport, respectively. One vocalization (documented in 1999) is located about 2.8 miles southeast of the airport northeast of Lake Fork, near Hatties Creek. Since this species has been shown to be present in the vicinity of the airport, it is likely that pygmy nuthatch individuals may be present near the project area at intermittent times.

Shiny Tightcoil (*Pristiloma wascoense*)

This terrestrial snail is Statewide unranked (SNR), although the IDFG website identifies the ranking as “possibly extinct” (SH). Information pertaining to the status of this species is lacking in Idaho. Very little is known about its habitat requirements except that records indicate it occurs in mid to high elevation Douglas fir and ponderosa pine forests.

One poorly described observation (a specimen; no date) was logged as occurring in the peninsula of Payette Lake about 3 miles north of the airport. It appears unlikely that the species would occur at the airport project area.

Thinlip Tightcoil (*Pristiloma idahoense*)

This terrestrial snail is Statewide unranked (SNR), although the IDFG website identifies the ranking as “critically imperiled” (SH). Rangewide its populations numbers are low and declining. Its habitat is moist valleys, ravines, gorges, and talus sites in low elevation Douglas fir and ponderosa pine forests.

One poorly described observation (a specimen; in 1901) was logged as occurring in the peninsula of Payette Lake about 3 miles north of the airport. Due to its apparent specific habitat requirements, it appears unlikely that the species would occur at the airport project area.

Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)

This sandpiper is listed as “critical imperiled breeding” (S1B). There is a lack of essential information pertaining to its Idaho populations. Most of the breeding populations are in the Great Plains. Breeding is suspected in Valley County, but there have been no recent records of upland sandpiper in Idaho. Feeding and nesting habitat is upland prairie habitat, including croplands, pastures, wet or high-elevation meadows, very often near forest edges.

One upland sandpiper was observed in 1986 in the Copeland Flats area (approximately 2.5 miles west of the airport).

Western Toad (*Bufo boreas*)

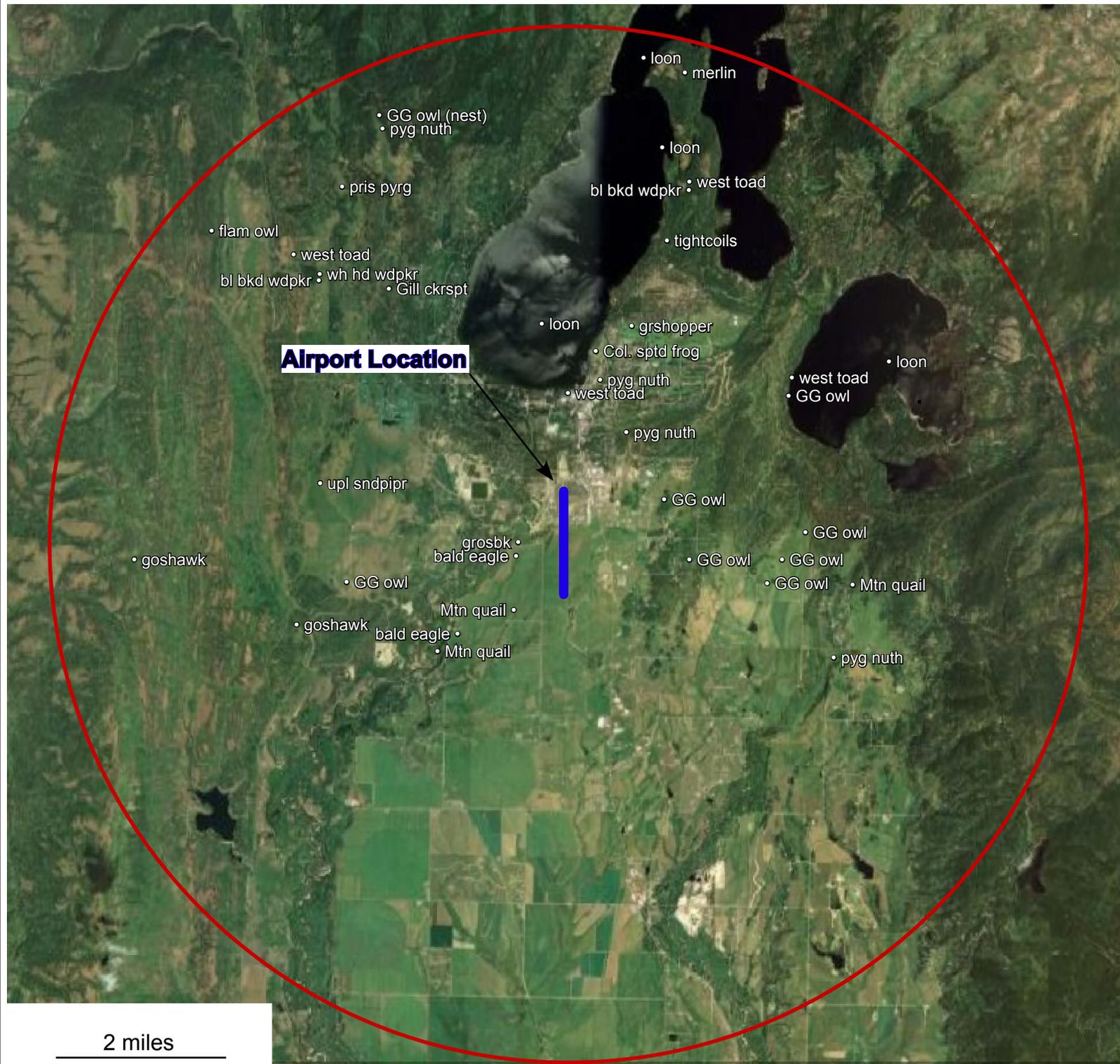
Although not on the CWCS list, this species is listed as BLM Type 3 (regional/state imperiled) whereas the Statewide rank is “apparently secure” (S4). Western Toads are primarily terrestrial but can generally be found within a fair proximity to water. Their habitats range from mountain meadows to brushy desert flats.

Within 5 miles of the airport, four occurrences of western toad were reported by the FWIS: one located in 1932, about 3.7 miles northwest of the airport; two (1916 and 1918) on the peninsula of Payette lake (3.5 miles north of the airport); one (in 1983) on the west shore of Little Payette Lake (2.7 miles east of the airport); and one in McCall (along the shoreline of Payette Lake (in 1920) about 1.3 miles north of the airport. Thus it is possible that individuals of western toad may occur within the vicinity of the airport, and there may be sufficient duration open water in the wetland ditches located at the south end of the proposed taxiway that could allow for breeding.

White-headed woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*)

Imperiled due to low breeding in Idaho (S2B), the USFS sensitive woodpecker is a resident of the mountains of the west, preferring mature to old growth ponderosa pine-dominated forests. This species essentially requires an abundance of large-diameter trees, open canopy, and availability of snags and stumps for nesting. It is a poorly studied woodpecker and there is considerable lack of knowledge of its life history.

Within 5 miles of the project area, two sightings have been reported: one (in 1980) about 3.4 miles northwest of the airport at the Little Ski Hill; and one (in 2007) in a McCall backyard, (about 1.2 miles northeast of the airport). Thus it appears likely that this woodpecker travels through the area to forage, but breeding habitat does not appear to be nearby.



2 miles

red circle is 5 mile radius

Species Identifier	Species Name	Sighting Dates
bald eagle	bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	1996 to present
bl bkd wdpkr	black-backed woodpecker (<i>Picoides arcticus</i>)	1975, 1983
Col. sptd frog	Columbia spotted frog (<i>Rana luteiventris</i>)	1918
flam owl	flamulated owl (<i>Otus flammeolus</i>)	2005
GG owl	great gray owl (<i>Strix nebulosa</i>)	1976 to 1998
Gill cksrpt	Gillette's checkerspot (<i>Euphydryas gillettii</i>)	1960, 1983
goshawk	northern goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	1980 to 1994
grshopper	a spur-throat grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus payettei</i>)	1910
grosbk	blue grosbeak (<i>Guiraca caerulea</i>)	1985
loon	common loon (<i>Gavia immer</i>)	1976, 1978, 1985
merlin	merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)	1983
Mtn. quail	mountain quail (<i>Oreortyx pictus</i>)	1990, 1991
pris pyrg	pristine pyrg (<i>Pristinicola hemphilli</i>)	1993
pyg nuth	pygmy nuthatch (<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>)	1993, 1995, 1999
tightcoils	thinlip and shiny tightcoil (<i>Pristiloma idahoense</i> and <i>P. wascoense</i>)	1901
upl sndpipr	upland sandpiper (<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>)	1986
west toad	western toad (<i>Bufo boreas</i>)	1916, 1918, 1920, 1932, 1983
wh hd wdpkr	white headed woodpecker (<i>Picoides albolarvatus</i>)	1980, 2007

Figure 5.
Documents Locations of
State-listed Species
McCall Airport Improvements Project

Table 2.
Likelihood of Impacts to Species of Greatest Conservation Need

Common Name	Last or Most Recent Sighting	Possible Occurrence within 5 miles of airport	Impact?*
A spur-throat grasshopper	1961	yes, but unlikely	no
Bald eagle	recent and on-going	yes	yes
Black-backed woodpecker	1985	yes	no
Blue Grosbeak	1985	yes	no
Columbia Spotted Frog*	1918	yes	no
Common Loon	1978	yes, but only in lakes	no
Flammulated Owl	2005	yes	no
Gillette's Checkerspot	1983	yes	no
Great Gray Owl	1998	yes	yes
Merlin	1983	possible	no
Mountain Quail	1990	yes	yes
Northern Goshawk	1994	yes	no
Pristine Pyrg	1993	yes	no
Pygmy Nuthatch	1999	yes	no
Shiny Tightcoil	no date	possible	no
Thinlip Tightcoil	1901	possible	no
Upland Sandpiper	1986	possible	no
Western Toad	1983	possible	yes
White-headed woodpecker	2007	yes	no

* impacts determined based on potential for occurrence within project area; however these species can move and may move through area. No determinations are based on unlikely effect of airport improvements on species habitat or feeding and nesting requirements. **Yes** determinations are based on clear signs the species uses the airspace (bald eagles, great gray owls, mountain quail), or could potentially use the wetland/ditch areas east of the airport in the taxiway zone (western toad).

Based on the lack of presence, lack of suitable habitat, or impacts to nesting/feeding grounds, there should be no impacts to: a spur-throat grasshopper, black-backed woodpecker, blue grosbeak, Columbia spotted frog, common loon, flammulated owl, Gillette's checkerspot, merlin, northern goshawk, pristine pyrg, pygmy nuthatch, shiny tightcoil, thinlip tightcoil, upland sandpiper, or white-headed woodpecker.

Wintering **bald eagles** are commonly observed in the area from late October to mid-March to perch and feed along the banks of the river and near the lakes, however, construction for the airport improvements is not scheduled to take place during these months—thus there will be *no impacts to bald eagle wintering habits* as a result of the project. No nest sites or potential roosting, or nesting trees will be affected by the project. Since the improvements bring the airport into FAA “compliance”, the addition of the wider taxiway does not necessarily allow for a greater amount of air traffic or larger aircraft—thus impacts to bald eagles as a result of the project should not change from impacts already present.

Great gray owls are known to frequent the area and have been sighted in open field areas east of the airport. However, the taxiway construction should not affect the owls or their potential nesting sites. There is always the potential that airplane/bird strikes could occur. However the owls are largely nocturnal and day use of the new taxiway should not adversely affect their use of the field areas. *Thus there will be no impacts to great gray owls.* Since the improvements bring the airport into FAA “compliance”, the addition of the wider taxiway does not necessarily allow for a greater amount of air traffic or larger aircraft—thus impacts to great gray owls as a result of the project should not change from impacts already present.

Mountain quail have been documented in the areas west of the taxiway - their preferred habitat use, however, appears to be in shrubs areas (which are present west of the airport, but not east where the proposed taxiway is proposed to be constructed. *Thus there will be no impacts to mountain quail.*

Western toads are known to utilize both upland and wetland areas. There are wetland areas south and east of the existing taxiway that could potentially be habitat for this species. Any wetland habitat impacted by the taxiway will be re-constructed and/or mitigated in some manner to offset the potential loss of habitat for this species. *Thus there will be no impacts to western toads.*

References and Personal Communications

- Apperson, K. 2008. Personal communication with Kim Apperson. Fisheries Biologist. IDFG. McCall, Idaho. “*no protected fish, no salmonids in North Fork Payette River*”
- Atkinson, E. 1989. Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*). Surveys on the Payette National Forest. Eric Atkinson. Natural Heritage Section. Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program. Wildlife Bureau. December 1989. Idaho Department of Fish and Game.
- Baker, R. 2008. Snake River US Fish and Wildlife Office. *provided species lists*.
- Evans-Mack. D. 2008. Personal communication with Diane Evans-Mack. Nongame wildlife biologist. IDFG McCall, Idaho. *Data retrieval for local documented species, and discussed Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel survey protocols*.
- Holyan, J. 2008. Personal communication with Jay Holyan, Nez Perce Tribe (10/17/08). “*unlikely that wolves would enter McCall Valley floor*”
- Idaho Conservation Data Center, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (website).
- IDFG 2006a. Idaho Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring 2006 Annual Report. Compiled by Rex Sallabanks, Ph.D. Nongame Bird Program Coordinator; December 2006, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program
- IDFG 2006b. July 2006. Project W-170-R-30 Progress Report. UPLAND GAME Study II, Job 1. April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.
- Stephens. G. 2009. Personal communication with George Stephens, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System; Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Boise, ID. *Discussed “Species of Concern Status” compared to new “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” rankings and project logistics. Also Updated Species Location Info (Appendix A)*.
- Vizgardis. R. 2008. Personal communication with Ray Vizgardis, USFWS. Snake River Office, Boise Idaho (10/17/08). *Discussed Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel survey protocols*.

APPENDIX A - Species List Letters from USFWS and ID Department of Fish and Game

From: george.stephens@idfg.idaho.gov
Subject: FW: McCall Airport Project
Date: December 15, 2009 11:36:13 AM PST
To: tdueb@wildblue.net
Cc: angie.schmidt@idfg.idaho.gov

Tom, there are no changes to the list of animal species associated with a 5-mile buffer. There are no "new" plant species or occurrences within a 1-mile buffer.

--Geo.

George Stephens
Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System—Idaho Department of Fish and Game
600 South Walnut, P.O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707 USA
208.287.2731 (phone)
208.334.2114 (fax)
NEW EMAIL ADDRESS: George.Stephens@idfg.idaho.gov

Species List 14420-2010-SL-0069



McCALL AIRPORT PROJECT
VALLEY COUNTY, IDAHO
SPECIES LIST 14420-2009-SL-0173

updated 14420-2010-SL-0069

<u>LISTED SPECIES</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
Northern Idaho ground squirrel <i>(Spermophilus brunneus brunneus)</i>	Listed Threatened
Bull trout <i>(Salvelinus confluentus)</i>	Listed Threatened
<u>PROPOSED SPECIES & PROPOSED DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT</u>	
None	
<u>CANDIDATE SPECIES¹</u>	
None	

Information on the above species and their management can be found on the Environmental Conservation Online System (ECOS) website at http://ecos.fws.gov/ecos_public/index.do (last accessed February 10, 2009) and the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office website at <http://www.fws.gov/idaho/agencies.htm> (last accessed February 10, 2009).

accessed December 15, 2009

APPENDIX B - E-Mail Correspondence with USFWS, IDFG, and Database Information

From: devansmack@idfg.idaho.gov
Subject: RE: McCall Airport
Date: October 6, 2008 9:14:07 AM PDT
To: tdueb@wildblue.net
Cc: devansmack@idfg.idaho.gov

Tom -

Sorry I missed your call last week, and thanks for sending the scope of work.

A site visit is certainly an appropriate first step to get a feel for the land, layout, and habitats involved. You will then have a better sense of which species, if any, might need follow-up surveys next spring. I can offer information on a couple of the likely vertebrate species you need to consider, but for plants or inverts I'll send you back to the Conservation Data Center in our IDFG headquarters in Boise.

There is modeled northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS) habitat within the project area. (Map attached.) This site has never been surveyed. Lots of other parts of Valley Co. have been, and to be honest I would be surprised if they popped up here, but we've been surprised before. Because this species is federally listed and is extremely difficult to detect, especially if in small numbers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a protocol for surveys. I've attached a summary of the protocol here, but please contact Ray Vizgirdas, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Snake River Office, Boise, ID, 208-378-5243 for the full document. Bottom line, if the habitat is deemed suitable on the ground, the surveys have to be conducted by a person qualified to detect NIDGS at the appropriate time (late April, early May) over multiple visits.

There is an active bald eagle nest within 2.5 km (also on the attached map). The old territory was upstream to the north. The previous nest tree is gone, but this stretch of river has supported eagles for many years. The bald eagle is delisted but in a post-delisting monitoring period and covered under the bald and golden eagle protection act.

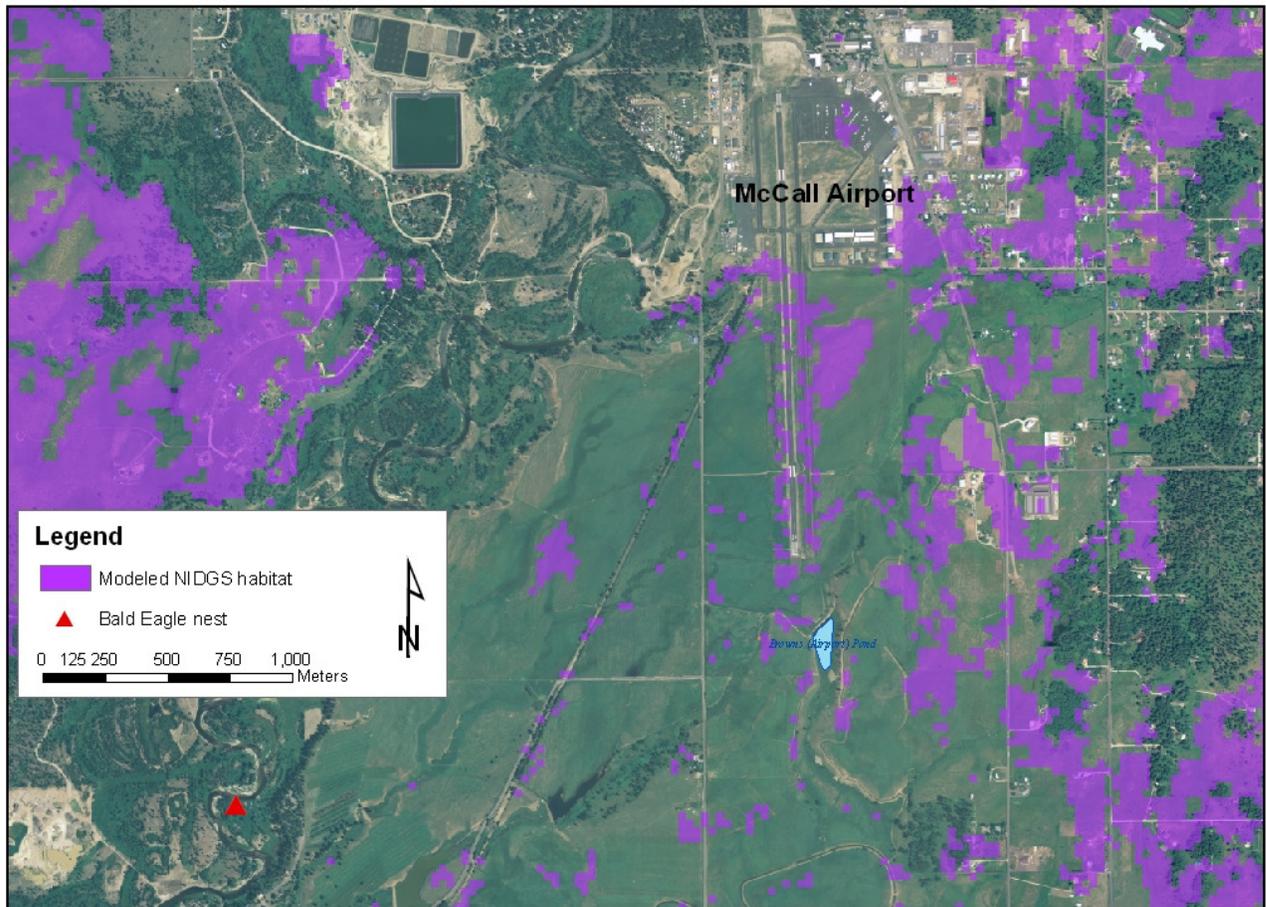
Gray wolf is likely on your list. Not much to offer there. The Nez Perce Tribe wolf recovery program would have info on nearest pack and areas of activity. You can contact them at 208-634-1061; ask for Jim Holyan. or jholyan@nezperce.org I don't anticipate any impacts.

For fish species, you can contact Dale Allen or Kim Apperson in our McCall IDFG office at 634-8137.

Not sure what else to offer at this point. Please don't hesitate to get back in touch if you have other species on your list or want to follow up on eagles or NIDGS.

Diane

Diane Evans Mack
Nongame Wildlife Biologist
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
555 Deinhard Lane
McCall, ID 83638
208-634-8137 (Office); FAX 208-634-4320; 208-869-8656 (Cell)
devansmack@idfg.idaho.gov



NIDGS habitat modeled from known sites as of 2006 based on LANDFIRE Existing Vegetation Types (EVTs), LANDFIRE canopy cover, landtype/soils, slope, and aspect. Modeled by L. Nutt and C. Crist, Boise National Forest, for the NIDGS Technical Working Group.

Map prepared by D. Evans Mack, IDFG, re McCall Airport Project 10/6/08

Survey Protocols for NIDGS

- Surveys shall be conducted by individuals with knowledge of the life history and ecology of the species
- Surveys shall be conducted at the time of year when the species is active and there is the greatest opportunity for positive identification. In some instances, a survey may incorporate a live-trapping component because the species may be present in very low densities over a large area. (captured individuals should have hair clipped from the dorsal portion of the rump and saved as a voucher specimen for future verification).
- Surveys conducted before the species emergence in spring or after all aboveground activities have ceased in late summer may not be considered sufficient. The exception here would be where the individual conducting the survey has a demonstrated proficiency in burrow identification and other NIDGS sign identification.
- Surveys shall be conducted by walking or otherwise closely scrutinizing potential habitat looking for diagnostic sign such as burrows, scat, tracks, feeding residue, and other sign.
- Known populations range in size from 1-100 squirrels. Because of their low densities, squirrels may not be seen during a “quick” one-time only survey. Therefore, several visits may be necessary.
- Any new sites shall be mapped and immediately reported to the IDFG NIDGS Coordinator and USFWS (SRFWO)
- Reviewing vegetation and soil maps should be used in assisting persons to focus their surveys efforts for the species. However, this should not be a means by which to disqualify an area without substantial field verification/surveys to locate squirrels.

From: gstephens@idfg.idaho.gov
Subject: RE: McCall airport request
Date: January 22, 2009 11:49:20 AM PST
To: tdueb@wildblue.net

Tom, I didn't hear from you re: the shapefile, so I got our GIS analyst to produce a spreadsheet containing a list of animals observed within an area (buffer of) 5 miles around the airport. Attached is that spreadsheet.

Our databases contain no known occurrences of special status plants within a mile of the airport.

--Geo.

George Stephens □ Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System □ Idaho Department of Fish and Game □ 600 South Walnut, P.O. Box 25 □ Boise, ID 83707 USA; 208.287.2731 (phone) □ 208.334.2114 (fax)
gstephens@idfg.idaho.gov □ <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cdc>

Element	Cnt_Elemen	First_G_RA	First_S_RA	First_ESA	First_STAT	First_BLM	First_USFS	First_US_1
A Spur-throat Grasshopper - Melanoplus payettei	1	G2G4	SNR					
American Beaver - Castor canadensis	2	G5	S5					
Bald Eagle - Haliaeetus leucocephalus	31	G5	S3B,S4N	E		TYPE 1		T
Barred Owl - Strix varia	1	G5	S4					
Black-backed Woodpecker - Picoides arcticus	2	G5	S3	SC		TYPE 5	S	
Black-capped Chickadee - Poecile atricapilla	1	G5	S5					
Blue Grosbeak - Guiraca caerulea	1	G5	S1B	P				
Bufflehead - Bucephala albeola	1	G5	S3B,S3N					
Columbia Spotted Frog - Rana luteiventris	4	G4	S3S4	SC		TYPE 1		S
Columbian Ground Squirrel - Spermophilus columbianus	10	G5	S5					
Common Garter Snake - Thamnophis sirtalis	1	G5	S5	U		TYPE 3		
Common Loon - Gavia immer	4	G5	S1B,S2N	SC			S	S
Flammulated Owl - Otus flammeolus	1	G4	S3B	SC		TYPE 3	S	S
Gillette's Checkerspot - Euphydryas gillettii	2	G2G3	SNR					
Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel - Spermophilus lateralis	4	G5	S5					
Great Gray Owl - Strix nebulosa	37	G5	S3	SC		TYPE 5		S
Heather Vole - Phenacomys intermedius	2	G5	S4					
Little Brown Myotis - Myotis lucifugus	1	G5	S5					
Long-tailed Vole - Microtus longicaudus	4	G5	S5					
Long-toed Salamander - Ambystoma macrodactylum	13	G5	S5					
Merlin - Falco columbarius	1	G5	S1B,S2N	P				
Mink - Mustela vison	8	G5	S5					
Mountain Quail - Oreortyx pictus	4	G5	S2	SC		TYPE 3	S	S
Muskrat - Ondatra zibethicus	1	G5	S5					
Northern Flying Squirrel - Glaucomys sabrinus	1	G5	S4					
Northern Goshawk - Accipiter gentilis	3	G5	S4	SC		TYPE 3	S	S

Northern Mockingbird - <i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	1 G5	S1B				
Northern Pocket Gopher - <i>Thomomys talpoides</i>	7 G5	S5				
Northern River Otter - <i>Lutra canadensis</i>	1 G5	S4				
Pacific Chorus Frog - <i>Pseudacris regilla</i>	1 G5	S5				
Pristine Pyrg - <i>Pristinicola hemphilli</i>	1 G3	SNR				
Pygmy Nuthatch - <i>Sitta pygmaea</i>	3 G5	S2S3	SC	TYPE 5	S	
Red Fox - <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	2 G5	S5				
Red Squirrel - <i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	6 G5	S5				
Red-breasted Nuthatch - <i>Sitta canadensis</i>	1 G5	S5				
Shiny Tightcoil - <i>Pristiloma wascoense</i>	1 G3	SNR				
Snowshoe Hare - <i>Lepus americanus</i>	1 G5	S5				
Southern Red-backed Vole - <i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>	7 G5	S5				
Thinlip Tightcoil - <i>Pristiloma idahoense</i>	1 G2G3	SNR				
Upland Sandpiper - <i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	1 G5	S1B	SC	TYPE 4		
Water Shrew - <i>Sorex palustris</i>	2 G5	S4?				
Western Terrestrial Garter Snake - <i>Thamnophis elegans</i>	2 G5	S5				
				TYPE 2 (se. Idaho population only);		
				TYPE 3 (North)	S	
Western Toad - <i>Bufo boreas</i>	5 G4	S4	SC			
White-headed Woodpecker - <i>Picoides albolarvatus</i>	2 G4	S2B	SC	TYPE 4	S	S
Yellow-pine Chipmunk - <i>Tamias amoenus</i>	7 G5	S5				

From: ebrown@idfg.idaho.gov
Subject: FW: CDC Species List and Database Records - McCall Airport
Date: January 26, 2009 2:19:03 PM PST
To: tdueb@wildblue.net

The response to your request for fish species of special concern intersecting the McCall Airport project area and a five mile buffer is attached. Let me know if you have any questions. EB.

Evan Brown, Data Coordinator, StreamNet Project <<http://www.streamnet.org>>, Idaho Dept of Fish and Game <<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>> 208-287-2721



IDAHO FISH AND GAME STREAMNET

600 South Walnut/Box 25 (208) 334-3180

Boise, Idaho 83707-0025 C. L. 'Butch' Otter/Governor; Cal Groen/ Director

Date: December 5, 2010

STREAMNET DATA REQUEST

FOR: Tom Duebendorfer, PWS, PO Box 167, Elmira, ID 83865, (208) 290-5992, tdueb@wildblue.net

RE: Fish species of special concern

Purpose: Biological Assessment

Location: McCall Airport, TRS: Township 18 North, Range 3 East, portions of Sections 16 and 21, 1 mile buffer for plants and 5 mile buffer for animals.

<i>Federally listed threatened or endangered species and other special status fish species present and their status.</i>								
Scientific Name	Common Name	Use Type	Presence	Status:	F	S	USFS	BLM
<i>Catostomus columbianus</i>	Bridgelip Sucker		7					
<i>Catostomus macrocheilus</i>	Largescale Sucker		7					
<i>Cottus bairdi</i>	Mottled Sculpin		7					
<i>Oncorhynchus clarki</i>	Cutthroat Trout		7			G		
<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>	Coho Salmon		7			G		
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	Rainbow Trout		7			G		
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri</i>	Columbia River Redband Trout		7		SC	GSC	S	S
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss x clarki</i>	Rainbow X Cutthroat Trout		7			G		
<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>	Kokanee (Early Spawner)		7			G		
<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>	Kokanee (Late Spawner)		7			G		
<i>Perca flavescens</i>	Yellow Perch		7			G		
<i>Ptychocheilus oregonensis</i>	Northern Pikeminnow		7			G		
<i>Rhinichthys cataractae</i>	Longnose Dace		7					
<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i>	Speckled Dace		7					
<i>Richardsonius balteatus</i>	Redside Shiner		7					
<i>Salmo trutta</i>	Brown Trout		7			G		
<i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i>	Brook Trout		7			G		
<i>Rhinichthys sp.</i>	Dace (Rhinichthys sp.)		7					
<i>Cottus sp.</i>	Sculpin (Cottus sp.)		7					
<i>Catostomus sp.</i>	Sucker (Catostomus sp.)		7					
<i>Prosopium sp.</i>	Whitefish (Prosopium sp.)		7			G		

Federal/State Status	Use Type (Anadromous)	Presence (Resident)
LE Listed Endangered	1 Spawning and Rearing	2 Historical Distribution
LT Listed Threatened	2 Rearing Only	3 Documented Not Present
SC Species of Concern	3 Migration or Present	5 Suspected Not Present
W Watch	5 Not Present	6 Suspected Present
G Gamefish	6 Suitable Habitat Blocked	7 Documented Present
S Sensitive	0 Not Applicable	

From: gstephens@idfg.idaho.gov

Subject: FW: McCall airport request

Date: January 27, 2009 1:57:24 PM PST

To: tdueb@wildblue.net

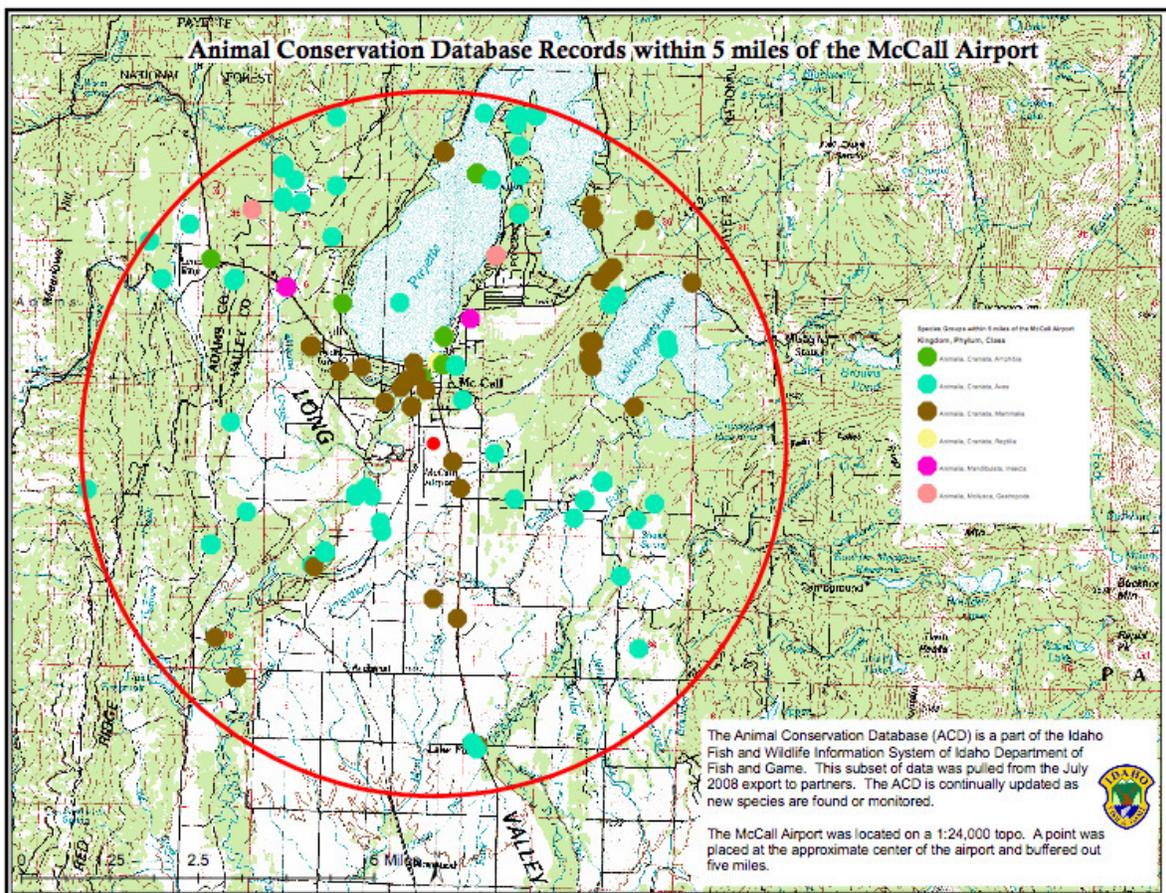
Cc: aschmidt@idfg.idaho.gov

Our GIS Analyst is working from home this afternoon, and she just sent the attachments to me, so I'm forwarding them. The PDF contains a map of the buffered area with the various animal observations as points. The attribute file (*.dbf) can be opened in Excel, and it contains the various attributes of each observation which includes coordinate data.

I gather from our GIS Analyst that not all of the dots are shown on the map; there are just too many of them. She said she took the time to group points taxonomically.. If you can use GIS in the future, it will help us out tremendously. Most of our responses now consist of GIS shapefiles.

--Geo.

George Stephens; Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System; Idaho Department of Fish and Game; 600 South Walnut, P.O. Box 25; Boise, ID 83707 USA



Sarah: The e-mail had an attached file: "mccallairport_5miles(2).xls". I am attaching that file. Putting it into this report is a formatting nightmare (enormous spreadsheet). But Laura wanted all documentation. I am attaching the file by itself as an EXCEL file. You may choose to insert it or we can just have it in our files should the need arise. The map above went with this e-mail.

From: gstephens@idfg.idaho.gov
Subject: RE: No. ID GroundSquirrel - McCall Apt
Date: February 3, 2009 11:37:36 AM PST
To: tdueb@wildblue.net

OK, modeled habitat makes sense. I just checked, and the nearest known Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel occurrences are ~20km from the McCall airport.

Re: What do I think? Diane is the expert on Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel, and if she says a ground survey is appropriate, then I would accept her word as gospel.

--Geo.

George Stephens; Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System; Idaho Department of Fish and Game; 600 South Walnut, P.O. Box 25; Boise, ID 83707 USA
208.287.2731 (phone); 208.334.2114 (fax)
gstephens@idfg.idaho.gov <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cdc>

From: Tom Duebendorfer [mailto:tdueb@wildblue.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2009 12:12 PM
To: Stephens,George
Subject: No. ID GroundSquirrel - McCall Apt

George

I guess I didn't look closely enough - it appears this map is of MODELED habitat. Diane Evans Mack indicated a ground survey would be appropriate (bolded in her email to me below). What do you think? I guess the real question is **if habitat is deemed suitable on the ground**. It's presently highly disturbed heavily grazed pasture with lotsa non-native herbs.

Here's the text of her email to me pertaining to the ground squirrel >

Tom -

Sorry I missed your call last week, and thanks for sending the scope of work.

A site visit is certainly an appropriate first step to get a feel for the land, layout, and habitats involved. You will then have a better sense of which species, if any, might need follow-up surveys next spring. I can offer information on a couple of the likely vertebrate species you need to consider, but for plants or inverts I'll send you back to the Conservation Data Center in our IDFG headquarters in Boise.

There is modeled northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS) habitat within the project area. (Map attached.) This site has never been surveyed. Lots of other parts of Valley Co. have been, and to be honest I would be surprised if they popped up here, but we've been surprised before. Because this species is federally listed and is extremely difficult to detect, especially if in small numbers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a protocol for surveys. I've attached a summary of the protocol here, but please contact Ray Vizgirdas, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Snake River Office, Boise, ID, 208-378-5243 for the full document. Bottom line, **if the habitat is deemed suitable on the ground**, the surveys have to be conducted by a person qualified to detect NIDGS at the appropriate time (late April, early May) over multiple visits.

There is an active bald eagle nest within 2.5 km (also on the attached map). The old territory was upstream to the north. The previous nest tree is gone, but this stretch of river has supported eagles for many years. The bald eagle is delisted but in a post-delisting monitoring period and covered under the bald and golden eagle protection act.

Gray wolf is likely on your list. Not much to offer there. The Nez Perce Tribe wolf recovery program would have info on nearest pack and areas of activity. You can contact them at 208-634-1061; ask for Jim Holyan. or jholyan@nezperce.org I don't anticipate any impacts.

For fish species, you can contact Dale Allen or Kim Apperson in our McCall IDFG office at 634-8137.

Not sure what else to offer at this point. Please don't hesitate to get back in touch if you have other species on your list or want to follow up on eagles or NIDGS.

Diane

Diane Evans Mack

Nongame Wildlife Biologist

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

555 Deinhard Lane

McCall, ID 83638

208-634-8137 (Office); FAX 208-634-4320; 208-869-8656 (Cell)

devansmack@idfg.idaho.gov

APPENDIX C - SPECIES RANKING/STATUS

(relevant rank labels for species in this report are listed in *ITALICS*)
(refer to Table 1 in text)

G (global) Ranks are assigned by NatureServe; S (state) ranks assigned by the Idaho Conservation Data Center

“Species of Special Concern” are now replaced by “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” (sometimes referred to as at-risk species) as defined by the Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) which was approved by the USFWS in 2005.

CWCS

I indicates on CWCS list, 0 indicates not on list (however, I chose to include several species not listed by CWCS that have BLM and USFS ratings)

Global (G) or State (S) Ranking

G1 or S1 Critically imperiled: at high risk because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences), rapidly declining numbers, or other factors that make it particularly vulnerable to rangewide extinction or extirpation.

G2 or S2 Imperiled: at risk because of restricted range, few populations (often 20 or fewer), rapidly declining numbers, or other factors that make it vulnerable to rangewide extinction or extirpation.

G3 or S3 Vulnerable: at moderate risk because of restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors that make it vulnerable to rangewide extinction or extirpation.

G4 or S4 Apparently secure: uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.

G5 or S5 Secure: common, widespread, and abundant.

B Breeding: conservation status refers to the breeding population of the species.

N Nonbreeding: conservation status refers to the non-breeding population of the species.

SNR: Not ranked, conservation status not yet assessed

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

no species included in this Biological Evaluation are federally-listed

USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Type 1 Threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate: species listed by the FWS or NMFS as threatened or endangered, or proposed or candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Type 2 Rangewide/Globally imperiled: species that are experiencing significant declines throughout their range with a high likelihood of being listed in the foreseeable future due to their rarity and/or significant endangerment factors.

Type 3 Regional/State imperiled: species that are experiencing significant declines in population or habitat and are in danger of regional or local extinctions in Idaho in the foreseeable future if factors contributing to their decline continues.

Type 4 Peripheral: species that are generally rare in Idaho with the majority of their breeding range largely outside the state (includes sensitive species that have an S1 or S2 ranking, but are peripheral species to Idaho)

Type 5 Watch list: these species are not considered BLM sensitive species and associated sensitive species policy guidance does not apply. Watch list species include species that may be added to the sensitive species list depending on new information concerning threats, species' biology or statewide trends. Includes species with insufficient data on population or habitat trends or the threats are poorly understood.

USDA United States Forest Service (USFS) Region 4

S Sensitive Species. Animal species identified by the Regional Forester for which population viability is a concern, as evidenced by significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution.

APPENDIX D
NORTH IDAHO GROUND SQUIRREL SURVEY RESULTS

17 June 2009

Ms. Sarah Lucas
Aviation Planner
WH Pacific
9755 SW Barnes Rd., Suite 300
Portland, OR 97225

RE: Northern Idaho ground squirrel survey
Proposed taxiway relocation project, McCall, Idaho Airport.

Dear Ms. Lucas:

Please consider this letter a report of my survey for northern Idaho ground squirrels along the route of the proposed taxiway relocation project at the McCall, Idaho Airport.

It is my understanding that the proposed taxiway relocation project will move the existing taxiway to the east to increase the separation between the taxiway and the existing runway from around 200 feet to up to 400 feet. The impact area is about 300 feet east of the existing taxiway.

The project is in an area designated “probable historical distribution” in the northern Idaho ground squirrel recovery plan based upon the types of habitats the species is known to occupy and the historical distribution of those habitats (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2003) and the project area is clearly within the historical range of the northern Idaho ground squirrel. Appropriate habitat certainly exists in the area around McCall, so there could easily be undiscovered populations in the area of the survey.

On 5 June 2009, I met with you and John Anderson, Airport Manager at the Airport Office. After a tour of the airport with Mr. Anderson, I searched the project area for any evidence of northern Idaho ground squirrels. For safety reasons, I was accompanied by you during all activities at the McCall Airport.

The best months for conducting surveys for northern Idaho ground squirrels in the McCall area are usually May and June, and surveys are especially accurate after the young of the year are active above ground in June. Ground squirrels are most active during good weather.

The survey was conducted during early June in good weather in early morning when ground squirrels would be expected to be most active. Thus the timing was ideal or nearly so. We walked slowly out along the east edge of the taxiway, searching the area between the taxiway and the boundary fence. When we reached the south end of the runway, we crossed the boundary fence and returned back to the north, searching likely areas to the east of the boundary fence. As we walked, we carefully searched any potential habitat east of the taxiway for any signs of ground squirrels out to and beyond the 300 foot impact area whenever suitable habitat was seen.

While searching, the procedure was first to scan the area for ground squirrel activity. Ground squirrels often sit on logs, stumps, rocks or other observation posts where they can be readily seen. Then we searched the area by looking carefully for ground squirrels, burrows, runways, feces, badger digs, alarm calls, or other evidence of northern Idaho ground squirrels.

Most burrows of northern Idaho ground squirrels can be distinguished from those of other mammal species in the area by such characteristics as entrance size, angle of entry into the ground, placement of the entrances, etc. However, there is some overlap among species in burrow characteristics and a few burrows will always be ambiguous. While searching on foot, I was also watching for burrows and/or individuals of Columbian ground squirrels (*Spermophilus columbianus*), voles (*Microtus* sp.), yellow-pine chipmunks (*Tamias amoenus*), and northern pocket gophers (*Thomomys talpoides*).

During the survey, I saw no northern Idaho ground squirrels, nor did I find their burrows or any other signs of the species' presence in 2.5 hours spent searching the site. Of the other species mentioned above a few gopher burrows and vole trails were the only evidence noted. In fact, I saw almost no potential habitat during the survey. The area next to the taxiway is very rocky and the area east of the taxiway is flood irrigated, and in fact very wet during our survey. This would make the area unsuitable for a species that depends on well-drained burrow systems. However, I did note that Columbian ground squirrels were present on the bluff further to the east across the pasture.

This negative finding does not mean that northern Idaho ground squirrels could not immigrate into the site at some time in the future, especially if the area were no longer flood irrigated and there was a population nearby. However, I am convinced that ground squirrels are not currently present in the project area immediately east of the taxiway, nor could they live there as long as flood irrigation continues. Consequently, relocation of the taxiway should have no negative impact on northern Idaho ground squirrels.

I hope this information is useful to you. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance.
With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

Eric Yensen

CURRICULUM VITAE (abridged by Duebendorfer)

A. ERIC YENSEN

Revised 15 June 2009

Address: Department of Biology, The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho 83605 USA
Telephone: (208) 459-5335 (office), (208) 459-3643 (home)
FAX: (208) 454-5044
e-mail: eyensen@collegeofidaho.edu

Personal:

Birth: Nampa, Idaho, USA.
Citizenship: USA
Home: 3407 Fair Oaks Circle, Caldwell, ID 83605
Languages: Spanish, moderate fluency

Education:

B.S. June 1966. The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho. Major in biology, minor in philosophy.
M.A. June 1971. Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. Major in systematic entomology, minor in zoology. Thesis: "A revision of the North American species of *Trixagus* Kugelann and *Pactopus* LeConte (Coleoptera: Throscidae)."
Ph.D. August 1973. The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. Major in zoology, minor in botany. Dissertation: "An analysis of a Sonoran desert species diversity gradient."

Present Position:

Professor (1988 to present)
Associate Professor of Biology (1982-1988)
Chair (1985 to 1990; 1993-94, and 2002-03)

Department of Biology, The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho 83605.

[The College of Idaho was known as Albertson College of Idaho from 1991 to 2007.]

Current Courses: Population and Ecosystems Biology, Ecology, Conservation Biology, Mammalogy, Idaho Natural History, Evolution.

Courses previously taught: Vertebrate Natural History, General Zoology, Biodiversity, Museum Techniques, Research Methods in Biology, Ornithology, Endangered Earth, Entomology, courses on field trips.

Museum:

Director, O. J. Smith Museum of Natural History (1982 to 1999). The O. J. Smith Museum of Natural History houses the Department of Biology's natural history collections including significant holdings in paleontology and anthropology. The Museum has public displays and hosts about 3000 visitors annually. There are about 20 regular volunteers and 1-7 work-study or other part-time employees. Currently serving as Biology Department Liaison with the Museum.

Other Appointments

Scientific Advisory Committee, Tunquini Biological Station, La Paz Department, Bolivia.
Affiliate Graduate Faculty, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.
Adjunct Graduate Faculty, Department of Biology, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho

Guest teaching at other institutions:

Instructor, "Curso de capacitación y actualización sobre estrategias para la conservación de la biodiversidad." Bolivian National Academy of Sciences and the National Museum of Natural History of Bolivia. La Paz, 16-27 August 1993. Funding from COTESU (Swiss foreign aid).

additional information on Dr. Yensen is available upon request