

# 1 INTRODUCTION

As the 1995 Social Assessment for the Kootenai National Forest was completed, a downward trend in the volume of timber cut on the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) was accelerating: from 1986 through 1990 timber volumes usually exceeded 200 MBF per year, but volume dropped to the range of 110 MBF to 174 MBF between 1991 and 1994 and then to between 50 MBF and 100 MBF in the years between 1995 and 2002. Some residents of Lincoln and Sanders counties perceive these numbers as the canary in the mine, signaling danger to the relationship of nearby communities with the KNF. Others evaluate this trend as indicating a new balance in the relationship of communities and natural resources. Neither of these assessments tells the whole story.

The 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment (KNFSA) (Russell and Downs, 1995) described some of the socioeconomic factors that influence how different groups of residents interpret such numbers and assess the relationship of their community and lifestyle with the KNF. That social assessment suggested that context factors such as views about nature in general, lifestyles, social differences, population dynamics, and economic processes influence how people view the KNF, assess its management issues, and evaluate desired futures for community-forest relationships.

Many of the broad-context factors were established in the 1995 assessment allowing this update to focus on specific issues that are of concern for the line officers and staff of the KNF. The specific issues identified as the focus for this social assessment are as follows:

- Perceived benefits and uses of United States Forest Service (USFS) lands in Lincoln and Sanders counties.
- The relationship of Lincoln and Sanders County governments with the USFS.
- The organization and resource management issues among new interest groups in the counties.
- Community dependency on the KNF and resources for adaptation.
- Communication and collaboration with local governments and interest groups.

## 1.1 Background for the Update

Since the 1995 KNFSA new literature and updated demographic, socioeconomic, and other data have become available. This information is useful background since it examines notable changes in the socioeconomic environment of the two counties. A Data Appendix updates relevant demographic and socioeconomic data while the body of the report discusses notable trends and issues in these data. Similarly, there is relevant literature published since the 1995 report that offers additional information about the socioeconomic environment of the forest. Key issues and findings from this literature are summarized as part of developing the background for discussion of the primary topics for this update.

## 1.2 Recent Literature

The recent literature of concern for this update is composed of localized studies that address the socioeconomic context of the KNF and the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) (Parker, et al., 2002) and regional studies that concern socioeconomic conditions in Northwest Montana and the Pacific Northwest. The 1995 KNFSA and the 2002 Social

Assessment for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest represent the local studies for review. The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project (USFS, 1998) and the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002) are the regional documents discussed.

### 1.2.1 REGIONAL STUDIES

The Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment – CBSEA -- (Barney & Worth, 2000) and the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project – ICBEF -- (USFS, 1998) assessment of social and economic conditions each address communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The ICBEF used quantitative measures to examine 543 communities in 98 counties of the Interior Columbia Basin. This project, "... was designed to aid in identifying communities within the project area that may be economically and socially vulnerable to shifts in the management of Forest Service and BLM-administered lands" (USFS, 1998). This study examined impacts to standardized industry category data for agriculture, wood products, manufacturing, and mining, but not non-standardized or recreation related industries. The report acknowledges the importance of these other industries in the larger regional economies, but the focus is on the specialized industries within these communities. The purpose of the CBSEA project was to: "... evaluate what socio-economic impacts due to changing demographics, market shifts, and federal land use decisions have been felt by rural, resource-dependent towns and counties. Community vitality is measured for 99 counties with the results presented in the form of a regional index" (Barney & Worth, 2000).

The ICBEF (USFS, 1998) characterizes communities within the Interior Columbia Basin, focusing on factors that interact with land management planning. The ICBEF analysis categorizes communities using three criteria: geographic isolation, community specialization in certain industries, and association with either BLM or USFS lands. Within each of these criteria, communities were then scaled or classified. Specifically, communities were given a "specialization ratio" based on the number of jobs in industries such as mining, wood products, and agriculture. The scaling of association with USFS/BLM lands communities was accomplished by examining economic contributions from agencies, the amount of surrounding agency lands, and the presence of agency offices in communities. Geographic isolation was assessed by distance from a population center of 20,000 persons or greater (USFS, 1998). Most of the Lincoln County communities (Eureka, Fortine, Rexford, and Troy) were categorized as "isolated" communities, but because Libby's population is greater than 1900 persons, it was categorized as "isolated trade center." All of the Sanders County communities (Hot Springs, Noxon, Plains, Thompson Falls, and Trout Creek) were categorized as "isolated." Employment in specialized industries showed more variation. Eureka, Rexford, and Thompson Falls were categorized as "high" for wood products manufacturing. Plains was categorized as "very high" for agriculture as well as "high" for federal government. Hot Springs and Rexford each were categorized as "high" for agricultural services. With the exception of Hot Springs, communities in Sanders and Lincoln counties are categorized as "high" for association with public lands.

The ICBEF analyzed the potential for impacts resulting from seven draft management alternatives. In general, the findings suggest the higher the classification of a community on any set of criteria (isolation, specialization, association with public lands), the more likely they are to experience impacts. This analysis offers a large-scale comparative analysis on some broad measures that affect resource dependent communities.

The Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment (CBSEA) uses a similar approach to categorize 99 counties within the Interior Columbia Basin and to construct regional measures of “economic vitality” (Barney & Worth, 2000). The indicators of economic vitality were in these broad categories:

- Population e.g., growth, change in youth and retirement populations.
- Income e.g., per capita income, wage and salary income, public assistance payments.
- Labor Force e.g., 24-month unemployment rate, labor force participation.
- Economic Base e.g., natural resource employment, employment growth, output exported.
- Federal Government Influence e.g., public lands, timber harvests, timber tax (PILT).
- Social Indicators e.g. crime rate trends, physicians per 100,000 residents.
- Tribal Characteristics, e.g., population, parent-child population, unemployment, labor force.

(Barney & Worth, 2000).

Broad regional trends for each of these seven categories are described. Each measure within these categories is then categorized as “low,” “medium,” or “high” based on comparison to national or regional averages. Several alternative categorizations are proposed. In general, Sanders and Lincoln counties show moderate to low vitality and they tend to cluster with other rural counties in adjacent states such as Shoshone and Boundary in Idaho. However, Lincoln County was reported among the ICB counties that consistently scored at the lower end of the vitality scales (Barney & Worth, 2000).

The “Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy” (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002) is a discussion of economic development issues in Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders counties. The regional discussion presents an overview of the economy, natural resources, infrastructure, and environmental issues before proceeding to county-specific assessments of economic development issues and potentials. Some noteworthy points regarding the region are summarized below.

Regarding the environment:

- Public lands consume a major portion of each county’s total land area. Private ownership is 23 percent in Flathead County, 33.8 percent in Lake County, 19 percent in Lincoln County, and 32 percent in Sanders County (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002).
- An abundant and generally high quality water supply, significant forested areas on public and private lands, scenic mountain ranges, and diverse wildlife are significant natural assets of the region.
- There are some significant environmental issues, including air quality in some of the mountain valleys, the W.R. Grace superfund site in Libby, and high Total Maximum Daily Loads in some bodies of water.

Regarding population and economy:

- Sixty percent of the region’s population is located in Flathead County.
- The region’s population increased by 22.2 percent in the 1990-2000 decade; however, the majority of the increase was in Flathead County.

- Population composition has changed: the 25-34 age cohorts and the less than 5 years age cohorts have shown declines in the 1990-1996 and 1996-2000 time periods.
- All counties in the region show high rates of unemployment in comparison to comparable areas elsewhere in Montana.
- Natural resource economies, especially agriculture and wood products industries, are declining in their share of total employment and total dollar output.
- Flathead County accounts for the majority of a 36.8 percent increase in the region's personal income.
- Transfer payments increased as a percentage of personal income at rates higher than Montana averages.
- For the 1995-1999 interval, the region had an unemployment rate of 10.4 percent compared to 8.7 percent for Montana; and, unemployment in Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders (aggregate 11.5 percent) was higher than in Flathead County (9.7 percent)
- The agriculture and forestry sectors of the regional economy showed lower percentages of change in employment (24.6 percent and earnings (12.7 percent) than Montana averages (38.8 percent and 17.2 percent respectively). The surrounding counties (Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders) showed negative changes in earning and employment.
- Other economic sectors showed different patterns of change: construction, transportation and utilities, wholesale trade, FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate), and services were generally more comparable to state averages than mining, retail trade, and government sectors that were below Montana averages.
- In addition to discussing infrastructure and other specific population and economic issues for each of the four counties, the report indicates that the region is at an "economic crossroads" (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002). From this crossroads, the paths lead to additional development of tourism and high technology industries. The development of additional transportation, communications, and other infrastructure components are perceived as necessary for future economic expansion (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002).

## 1.2.2 LOCAL STUDIES

The KNFSA and the IPNF social assessment (IPNFSA) describe features of the social environments of communities in Montana and Idaho that are adjacent to National Forest lands. Each of these works uses similar methods to develop findings. Additionally, the content of the information is similar, but there are some key differences in the types of data presented and discussed. To facilitate comparison of the documents, we have organized this summary using common categories that are not necessarily represented in the organization of each document. These categories are: community characteristics; community concerns about forest management; community-forest management; and, Tribal and forest relationships and issues.

### 1.2.2.1 THE 2000 IPNF SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

The 2002 Social Assessment for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest is relevant for this work because it describes a nearby social environment and its relationship to the IPNF that is similar to the social and ecological environment of the KNF; and, the IPNF is now combined with the KNF into a single planning zone to complete the revision of the Forest Plans. Below is a brief summary of major points regarding the social environment and community-forest issues described in the IPNFSA (Parker, et al., 2002).

The IPNF is within nine counties in three states. The Idaho Counties are: Boundary, Bonner, Benewah, Kootenai, Shoshone, Latah and Clearwater counties. Portions of Lincoln County in Montana and Pend Oreille County in Washington are also within the IPNF. Among the Idaho counties, Bonner (36,835) and Kootenai (108,685) account for the largest share of the Census 2000 total population of 178,333. These two counties also have the highest population increases within the region growing 38.4 percent and 55.7 percent respectively since the 1990 census. Spokane, located some 35 miles from the IPNF, has a total population of 417,939. Coeur d'Alene (34,515), Sandpoint (6835), and Bonner's Ferry (2515) are the other areas of population concentration in this portion of Idaho. In comparison, Lincoln (18,837) and Sanders (10,227) counties in Montana have a Census 2000 combined total population of 29,114 with Libby (2,626) being the largest population center. However, Flathead County communities such as Kalispell (17,149) and Whitefish (6292) are population centers that use the resources of the KNF.

#### 1.2.2.1.1 IPNF CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES

The IPNFSA identifies several noteworthy characteristics of Idaho communities:

- There is a strong regional or “Northern Idaho” identity among communities.
- The IPNFSA argues that there is diversity in the values and preferences within the region creating a “melting pot” type of social organization (Parker, et al., 2002). The components of this melting pot include woods workers, artists, conservatives, and seasonal residents.
- Northern Idaho communities depend on extractive and amenity uses of IPNF resources.
  - Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene exemplify amenity/tourist-based connections with forest resources.
  - St. Maries and Priest River exemplify traditional extraction based economies.
  - The resource extraction economies are not diverse whereas the amenity and retirement based economies are more diverse.
  - Amenity based economies are perceived as less secure than extraction based economies.
  - Maintaining the health of resources (mountains, streams, forests) that can be adversely affected by tourism is perceived as important for local economies and community quality of life.
  - There is a perceived loss of jobs in the extractive resource industries in these Northern Idaho communities contributing to individual and community concern about the nature of local economies.
- IPNF communities are in different states of change, but all are experiencing some transition from extractive to amenity connections with forest resources.
  - Rapid population growth has been a notable source of change, contributing to an increasing social, economic, political, ethnic, and racial diversity.
  - Retirees are perceived to be an important source of increased diversity, although they also are perceived to affect a decline in the tax base, contribute to increased use of recreation resources, and they may have different expectations about forest management.
  - Many communities retain a strong extractive resource identity, although the reality is changing to more amenity and tourist based economies.
  - Most communities exhibit some resistance to changes in their traditional resource extraction culture and social organization.

- The wages for tourist and amenity employment are perceived as incapable of replacing the more desirable wage in resource extraction industries.
- Bonners Ferry and Silver Valley communities exemplify transitional communities with mixtures of amenity and extractive economies; Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene the amenity based economies and connections with forest resources; and, St. Maries and Priest River maintain some traditional economic and social connections to forest resources.
- Residents attribute decreased timber sales as the source of the change from an extractive resource economy to the amenity/tourist based economy.
  - Global and national markets are also likely contributors to the economic changes affecting job pressures.
  - Nonetheless, residents perceive changes in access to USFS timber resources as a significant factor affecting job loss and economic change.

#### 1.2.2.1.2 IPNF COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT FOREST MANAGEMENT

The IFNFSA also identifies particular forest management issues of concern to local residents. These include the following:

- Local and regional offices and staff are evaluated as different from Washington D.C. offices and staff.
- Residents perceive various barriers to effective forest management, including: litigation and appeals of management decisions; federal-level policy; and, environmental legislation, especially the Endangered Species Act.
- “Neglect” is a theme in community concerns about management of timber and recreation resources and in the restoration of forest resources.
- Community support exists for restoration programs, but there is concern that restoration activities are not proceeding fast enough.
- Residents perceive local managers should manage the KNF with the best possible science, but that is being under-mined by the intervention of special interests and bureaucrats.
- Forest health is an important value for residents, but it has at least two different meanings.
  - Forest health is believed to result from naturally occurring processes that do not require man’s intervention.
  - Forest health is believed to result from man’s intervention through activities such as practicing sustained yield forestry.
- Some issues stand out in community concerns, including:
  - Fire management, including fire suppression, urban-wildland interface issues, and the risks posed to communities from increased fuel loads in the forests.
  - Road closures are supported by a cross-section of residents while opposition is focused among those with resource extraction lifestyles or identities.
  - Residents are frustrated by limited local control and a perception that outside interests have excessive influence over management decisions. Given their local stake in forest issues, residents argue that their sense of stewardship about forest resources should have more weight in management considerations.
- Residents have several specific desires for future forest management, including: setting clear and achievable goals; balanced use of forest resources; increased attention to recreation management; and, more awareness of the people management issues resulting from increased use of forest resources.

#### 1.2.2.1.3 IPNF COMMUNITY-FOREST RELATIONSHIPS

The IPNFSA also describes several issues about the relationship of the Forest Service with local communities.

- Forest management decisions impact everyone, but the effects are experienced more widely in resource dependent communities where perceptions of losing a way of life are pronounced.
- The IPNF is perceived to have social, recreation, and economic benefits to local communities.
- There are also perceptions that IPNF management inhibits community economic development, especially on small scale loggers and others in the timber industry. Similarly, perception exists that forest managers are unconcerned about the loss of lifestyles and economic benefits associated with decreased timber harvests.
- Residents have a mixture of distrust in agency management practices; they also express a desire for agency personnel to practice scientific management that is not influenced by outside interests.
- Residents desire local representatives of the agency and a local presence that understands their unique circumstances and needs.
- There is a desire for public involvement efforts that address the “middle 80 percent” of the population rather than the extremes that appear to dominate current public involvement processes. Some residents commented that too much public involvement was inhibiting management of the forest by the agency experts.

#### 1.2.2.1.4 IPNF FOREST-TRIBAL RELATIONSHIPS

Members of the Kootenai, Coeur d’Alene, and Kalispell Tribes have special interests in forest lands and their management.

- Tribal members have ancestral ties to IPNF lands that create a strong sense of attachment and interest in land management issues. Additionally, there are treaty rights that structure relationships between the Tribes and the IPNF.
  - There are places of sacred importance to the Tribes on IPNF lands.
  - The Tribes also value certain plants for traditional uses that express their connection with IPNF lands.
- Tribal elders have traditional knowledge about forest resources that is under-used by forest managers.
- Tribal members have been directly affected by the loss of timber industry jobs in the region.
- Traditional uses of IPNF resources (hunting, fishing, gathering) create competition with recreational users of the same resources.
- Tribal members desire more outreach and greater interactive communication with agency personnel.

The IPNFSA closes with several recommendations for forest managers including the importance of maintaining a local presence, consideration of the regional and local nature of community socioeconomic processes, and methods for improving communication with all constituents.

### 1.2.2.2 THE 1995 KNF SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

The 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment (KNFSA) focuses on the social and cultural environment of Lincoln and Sanders counties and their connections with the KNF. The document presents a brief summary of social history, demography, and economy as background to develop the social organization and cultural orientations among the communities within the counties.

#### 1.2.2.2.1 KNF CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES

- The social history of the region shows communities that developed in response to resource development, particularly gold, silver, and timber. Construction of the railroads in Montana also was an important factor contributing to regional development. These communities have a history of “boom-bust” cycles associated with the economics of resource development.
- Lincoln (77 percent) and Sanders (65 percent) counties contain relatively high proportions of public lands, affecting population density, settlement patterns, the available tax base, and patterns of land development.
- The extraction of natural resources (mining, timber, grazing) has made significant contributions to local economies.
- Other notable uses of KNF lands include: recreation (e.g., horseback riding, skiing, camping, snowmobiling); viewing; hunting and fishing; firewood collection; and, birding and other non-extractive uses of resources.
- Lifestyles include those who work in resource extraction industries (timber and mining), ranching, “back to the-land”, retirees, and those with employment in government and private businesses.
- The preservation of the rural character of communities, recreation (especially hunting), scenic beauty, self-reliance, and personal freedom are important values among residents.
- Cross-cutting<sup>1</sup> ties characterize most social relationships, although some groups (e.g., Montana Militia) and individuals limit their social interactions with other who have their same lifestyles and values.
- Key groups affecting the integration of local communities include: churches, service clubs, schools, and especially volunteer fire departments and other emergency services.
- The Montana militia and related groups express some local concerns about limiting the influence of government and extreme self-reliance. These groups are perceived by some to be divisive.
- Residents in each county share concerns about community issues such as population growth, preservation of local lifestyles and communities, overall environmental quality, and the need for infrastructure improvements.

#### 1.2.2.2.2 KNF COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Stakeholder groups in the counties include: timber, agriculture and ranching, guides and outfitters, business interests, recreationalists, subsistence users (e.g., firewood or

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<sup>1</sup> Cross-cutting ties is a term that refers to the nature of bonds in social networks. Cross-cutting or “multiplex” ties describe bonds that have multiple interests in the relationship between individuals or organizations. For example, in rural communities a neighbor may also be the mechanic who may also be the little league coach for one’s children. Cross-cutting ties are usually more prevalent in rural than in urban communities.

mushroom gathering) environmentalists, tribal interests, government, and community development interests.

- Among these stakeholders, at least five sometimes overlapping views exist about the use of natural resources: economic interests perceive forests should be managed for community economic benefits; utilitarian interests perceive forest resources as a “managed farm”; preservation interests perceive “natural processes” as the basis for forest management; multiple use views perceive resources should be managed for a variety of uses, including timber harvesting; and, the bedrock view emphasizes the inherent beauty and contribution of natural resources to the quality of life in the region.
- Each of these perspectives affects how constituents perceive management issues of concern to multiple groups, including: fire management and salvage logging; access issues raised by road closures; wildlife issues, including grizzly bears and wolves; the role and value of wilderness in local ecosystems; forest appearance and environmental quality; and, evaluations of ecosystem management.
- Residents expressed several themes regarding their desired future for the forest: “true multiple use”; practicing “sustained yield” in forest management; increasing the priority of recreation uses and planning; and, continuation of timber lifestyles, although focused on small-scale logging. The use of clear cuts, as a means for large scale logging, was described with mixed assessments, although the most often expressed sentiment opposed large scale clear cuts in favor of selective logging practices.
- Resource interest groups (e.g. Communities for a Great Northwest) and local environmental groups (e.g., Cabinet Resource Group) are frequently in conflict over resource management issues and lifestyles. These groups share many “bedrock values” but their conflicts tend to emphasize their differences rather than their shared values.
- The appeal of forest management decisions by environmental interests and individuals from outside the region is perceived as under-cutting effective management of the KNF.
- The concept of “ecosystems management” is poorly understood and is sometimes interpreted as a variation on the theme of “sustained yield” or as an effort to lessen the importance of “humans” and local communities in considerations about forest management.

#### 1.2.2.2.3 KNF COMMUNITY-FOREST RELATIONSHIPS

- Residents in both counties express low levels of trust in the USFS as an agency, but higher levels of trust in local Forest Service personnel. Within the KNF, higher levels of trust were expressed for personnel in the District offices than in the Supervisor’s office.
- The agency is perceived as too rigid and bureaucratic in their relationships with local stakeholders; and, decision-making is too centralized and removed from the realities of conditions on particular Districts.
- Residents perceive timber interests, especially larger timber interests, are favored over recreationists and other categories of stakeholders.
- Residents perceive “new” forest managers as guided by “book knowledge” rather than on-the-ground experience with local issues. The “old” styles of managers are perceived to be losing ground to the “new” style managers within the agency.
- Local knowledge is under-used in making forest management decisions.
- “Outside” interest groups have paralyzed decision-making about forest management resulting in adverse affects on forest health.

- Balancing the needs of conflicting and sometimes contradictory views among stakeholders is perceived as a difficult task for local managers.
- The KNF is perceived to be the “only hope” for resolving ongoing conflicts about management issues that will result in better forest management.
- Publics desire more outreach for gathering input regarding management issues.
- Public meetings are perceived as arenas for the expression of long-standing stakeholder conflicts.
- Residents express frustration that local input often appears to have little or no effect on management decisions.

#### 1.2.2.2.4 KNF FOREST-TRIBAL RELATIONSHIPS

- The Kootenai Tribe has historical connections to the lands of the Kootenai National Forest. Places such as Kootenai Falls have cultural importance to Tribal members; and, their interests in such places have special status in considerations about management decisions.
- Tribal members emphasize that treaty rights guarantee access to their traditional lands for their use.
- There is a perceived need to reinforce the importance of treaty rights because other forest users disregard them and some federal agencies under-appreciate their significance.
- KNF lands are used by Tribal members for hunting, fishing, camping, gathering of medicinal plants and plants used for other traditional purposes, ceremonial and religious activities, and recreational activities.
- Tribal cultural resources exist within the boundaries of the KNF and represent a present-day connection with the Tribe’s past. These cultural resources should be protected from predation by recreational and commercial collectors.
- Tribal members often compete with others for the use of the forest and its resources. Commercial huckleberry and mushroom gatherers represent examples of this competition.
- Environmental quality related to mining, timber harvesting, and other extractive uses represent important management concerns for Tribal members.
- There should be more recognition of tribal processes in interactions regarding soliciting responses about forest management issues.

These two local studies suggest both differences and similarities in the communities adjacent to the IPNF and the KNF. A thorough analysis of these similarities and differences is a task that would require some thoughtful comparison and analysis that is beyond the scope of what can be accomplished in this discussion. However, we can suggest some of the obvious comparisons that are indicated by the regional and local data. Table 1: IPNF and KNF County Comparison compares selected demographic and economic variables that suggest some of the similarities and differences among the Idaho and Montana counties.

**Table 1: IPNF and KNF County Comparison**

	State		Idaho Counties					Montana Counties	
	Idaho	Montana	Benewah	Bonner	Boundary	Kootenai	Shoshone	Lincoln	Sanders
<b>Land Ownership</b>									
Total Acres	52,960,576	93,048,320	496,640	1,112,064	812,032	796,928	1,685,760	1,727,692	921,925
% Federal Ownership	63.1%	28.8%	12.0%	44.3%	61.0%	31.9%	74.5%	74.6%	51.8%
% USFS Lands	39.0%	18.1%	7.0%	42.0%	60.0%	31.0%	71.0%	73.4%	51.7%
% Private Ownership	31.6%	62.6%	77.6%	39.6%	25.6%	62.1%	22.0%	8.1%	19.0%
<b>Population</b>									
Total Population	1,293,953	902,195	9,171	36,835	9,871	108,685	13,771	18,837	10,227
1990-2000 Population Change	28.5%	12.9%	15.5%	38.4%	18.5%	55.7%	-1.1%	7.8%	18.0%
% White	91.0%	90.6%	88.7%	96.6%	95.2%	95.8%	95.8%	96.1%	91.9%
% Male	50.1%	49.8%	51.0%	50.1%	50.4%	49.5%	49.9%	50.7%	50.5%
% Female	49.9%	50.2%	49.0%	49.9%	49.6%	50.5%	50.1%	49.3%	49.5%
Median age	33.2	37.5	39.2	40.8	38.3	36.1	41.8	42.1	44.2
% Age 24 or Younger	39.2%	35.0%	33.7%	32.2%	36.0%	35.8%	29.6%	30.9%	29.3%
% Age 65 or Older	11.3%	13.4%	14.2%	13.1%	13.4%	12.3%	17.4%	15.2%	16.9%
Average Household Size	2.69	2.45	2.52	2.49	2.61	2.60	2.30	2.40	2.35
Home Ownership Rate	72.4%	69.1%	78.5%	77.9%	78.3%	74.5%	72.6%	76.6%	76.4%
<b>Income</b>									
Median Household Income	\$ 37,572	\$ 33,024	\$ 31,517	\$ 32,803	\$ 31,250	\$ 37,754	\$ 28,535	\$ 26,754	\$ 26,852
Per Capita Personal Income	\$ 23,987	\$ 22,961	\$ 19,595	\$ 19,583	\$ 17,902	\$ 23,436	\$ 19,438	\$ 17,756	\$ 17,108
% Per Capita Personal Income to State			81.7%	81.6%	74.6%	97.7%	81.0%	77.3%	74.5%
% Per Capita Personal Income to U.S.	80.6%	77.2%	65.8%	65.8%	60.2%	78.8%	65.3%	59.7%	57.5%
% Age 5 to 17 in Families in Poverty	14.2	17.8	18.5	18.7	21.4	13.5	22.0	23.8	23.3
<b>Employment</b>									
1998-2002 % Average Unemployment	5.2%	5.2%	11.4%	8.4%	9.0%	7.9%	11.1%	12.5%	10.1%
<b>Wildland Related Sector Dependency (1998 IMPLAN)</b>									
Industry Income as % of Cnty Total			36.36	18.32	37.31	8.6	17.09	29.9	24.61
Timber Industries Income % Cnty Total			33.49	17.93	37.2	7.47	5.74	29.35	23.14
Industry Employment as % of Cnty Total			17.96	7.65	15.91	3.8	12	12.52	9.76
Timber Industry Emp. as % of Cnty Total			16.98	7.31	15.76	3.08	1.85	12.19	8.9

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2000 IMPLAN data

Some noteworthy patterns are in these data:

- Federal lands account for the majority of total land area in Boundary, Shoshone, Lincoln, and Sanders counties.
- Kootenai and Bonner counties in Idaho have significantly larger populations and larger communities than the other counties.
- Bonner and Kootenai counties show higher rates of population increase in comparison to the state rates of growth. Sanders County has more than twice the growth rate of Lincoln County.
- The median age of Lincoln (42.1) and Sanders (44.2) counties is higher than any of the Idaho counties, although Bonner and Shoshone counties are most similar to the Montana counties.
- With the exception of Shoshone County, Sanders and Lincoln counties have higher proportions of older residents.
- Median household income and per capita personal income are lower in the Montana counties than in the Idaho counties.
- Montana counties have a higher percentage of children (age 5-17) in poverty.
- The percentage of annual unemployment shows that for the 1995-2002 time period, the percentage of average annual unemployment was highest in Lincoln, Benewah, Shoshone, and Sanders counties. The remaining Idaho counties have similar, lower unemployment rates.
- Benewah and Boundary counties have the highest “Wildlands Sector Dependency” (timber, mining, grazing) as measured by the percentage of total county income and total county employment. Lincoln and Sanders counties are next highest, followed by Bonner and Shoshone counties.
- Timber output and employment as a percentage of county totals, shows a similar pattern, although Shoshone County has less percentage of timber output and employment than any of the other counties.

In summary, some of the noteworthy similarities and differences in the IPNF and KNF socioeconomic and cultural environments are as follows:

- The Idaho counties have a higher percentage of private land ownership than the Montana counties with implications for economic development pressures and future demographic changes.
- The IPNF counties have a mixture of urban and rural environments while the Montana counties are entirely rural. This has implications for a variety of relevant issues including the pressure on surrounding resources, differences in lifestyles and values, and differences in the availability of resources for community development.
- Population dynamics in both areas mirror those in other western states: median age is increasing, the population of older age groups is increasing at the same time younger age cohorts are decreasing, and counties with high scenic and amenity resources are experiencing a higher rate of population growth. This will have implications for the types of use and demands for resources for both forests.
- The increase in non-labor sources of income shows the increasing importance of retirees and others with non-wage dependent sources of income within these populations. This may result in an increase demand for professional and other services that will accelerate existing trends in these economies. This may result in a different types of resource dependency that is based on the amenity values that attract and retain retirees and those who provide services to them.

These are a few of the similarities and differences that need consideration when comparing these two regions for planning purposes. This update along with the IPNFSA, the 1995 KNFSA, and other emerging studies offer the data to assess the potential for different socioeconomic outcomes from plan alternatives.

### 1.3 Primary Data Collection for the Update

The topics addressed by this update include the following:

1. The interaction of county governments with KNF managers.
2. New stakeholder/constituent groups and their place in the mix of groups in Lincoln and Sanders counties.
3. The nature of community-forest interactions, including perceived benefits of National Forest lands for local residents.
4. Community assessments of forums for public involvement.

To collect the information to address these issues, several broad categories of constituents were identified for participation in discussions regarding the above topics. Elected county government officials; community business persons and economic development specialists; environmental interests; extractive industry interests; recreational interests; community development interests; watershed groups; and other community opinion leaders. A total of sixty-eight persons participated in these discussions. Six individuals who participated in the 1995 KNF Social Assessment were included in these discussions to provide some continuity in information about stakeholder groups and changes in their management concerns. While the average discussion lasted about an hour, several lasted between two and three hours. Some individuals were interviewed twice to follow up on points that were elicited in the first discussion. Most discussions were recorded, although approximately eighteen interviews were not because of technical problems. Notes were also made during the recordings and index marks were used to identify portions of the files to transcribe. The notes and data were coded by category and then organized into themes for analysis. These themes were used to construct the narrative in the body of the report.

### 1.4 Summary of Key Points

This chapter summarizes selected regional and local literature relevant to this update. The regional studies are the Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment (CBSEA) the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project (ICBEP), and the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy (NRCES). The local studies are the Idaho Panhandle National Forest Social Assessment, and the original 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment. Relevant findings from each of these studies are summarized to update the social, economic, and demographic setting for this update. The ICBEP categorized communities based on multiple criteria to compute a “specialization ration.” The criteria for computing the specialization ratio are community isolation, proximity to public lands, and employment specialization in natural resource industries. Specific communities were examined for their specialization ratios and the higher the specialization ratio the higher the potential for socioeconomic impacts. Most communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties received “high” specialization ratios in at least one category. Noteworthy findings from CBSEA include: communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties have “lower” vitality scores among all counties studied for the CBSEA; the two project counties also cluster with other rural counties in having lower vitality scores, suggesting these counties are more prone to socioeconomic impacts. The NRCES reports on changes in regional populations and economic trends. This

report also suggests some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts based on demographic changes and economic conditions. Collectively, these regional studies suggest some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts within Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Comparisons of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) and Kootenai National Forest 1995 Social Assessment suggest some differences and similarities in the communities adjacent to these forests. Although a thorough analysis of these similarities and differences is beyond the scope of this summary review, important dimensions for comparison are land ownership patterns, population structure and dynamics, income, employment, and wildland dependency measures.