

# CHAPTER I

## PROPOSED ACTION

### I. INTRODUCTION

Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina, owned by High Plains Marina, LLC, is located approximately three miles north of Pinedale, Wyoming on the Pinedale Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest. All existing facilities are located on the south shore of Fremont Lake in the SE ¼ of section 23, T34N, R109W, (See Vicinity Map). High Plains Marina, LLC operates the existing resort under Special Use Permit issued by the Bridger-Teton NF.

Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina is a lake-based resort providing a large number of services to the public including boat storage and rental, overnight accommodations in duplex cabins or campground sites with full hookups, food service, and boat gasoline and oil. The resort operates from May until November. The resort was also authorized to operate the restaurant from November to May during the winter of 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 to test demand for that service.

Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina has been in operation since the early 1950's when the first Special Use Permit was issued by the Bridger National Forest. High Plains Marina, LLC purchased the resort in 1994 and were issued a 20-year term Special Use Permit. Previous owners of the resort have added authorized structures and facilities over time. Substandard construction techniques and minimal maintenance over time resulted in an infrastructure with unacceptable safety and health concerns at the time the present owners purchased the resort.

The current owners of Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina have made significant improvements to the existing resort facilities including:

- Stabilizing/renovating the existing lodge and reconstructing the decks and walkways around the lodge.
- Replacement of existing docks and boat gasoline storage/service.
- Remodeling the three existing cabins and shower house.
- Addition of six duplex cabins.
- Replacing the existing electrical Service to standard.
- Replacing most of the existing septic tank /drain fields.
- Upgrading the existing culinary water system to current EPA Standards.
- Improvement of the road system.

Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina propose to expand the existing facilities to address health and safety concerns and provide additional services and infrastructure for the recreating public.

## Current Operations

The restaurant and banquet facilities are currently housed in the recently renovated (1995) log structure. Meeting and banquet space are available for rent in the upstairs banquet room, as well as in the restaurant and waterfront deck.

Overnight accommodations are available in 9 duplex log cabins. Electricity is provided to all rental cabins. Toilet and shower facilities are available in the six new cabins, but are not in the original three cabins. A bathhouse provides those services to the three cabins.

Twenty campground sites with full hook-ups are available for rent. The marina provides day use and monthly rental boat slips for boats up to 22 feet. Boats, canoes, kayaks, and windsurf boards are available for rent.

Support Facilities (maintenance shop, laundry, potable water system, etc.) are housed in a 1,000 sq. ft. wooden outbuilding. A new water supply system and a new sanitary system were installed to service the various facilities.

## **II. PROPOSED ACTION**

In order to provide a full range of recreational opportunities and facilities at Lakeside Lodge, a draft Master Development Plan was developed by High Plains Marina, LLC and submitted to the Pinedale Ranger District for consideration and approval. Services and facilities proposed are as follows, (See Proposed Action Alternative Map in Chapter II):

### Existing Facilities to be Retained

Two story restaurant building renovated and stabilized in 1996.

Six 25'x35' duplex log cabins constructed in 1998-2002.

Marina with 31 boat slips, refueling dock, three rock breakwaters, and boat ramp.

Campground Sites (10)

Septic System and Drain Field constructed in 1996.

### Existing Facilities to be Removed

Three duplex log cabins

Utility/maintenance building (1,000 sq. ft.)

Bathhouse (450 sq. ft.)

Campground Sites (10)

### Proposed New Facilities

1. Addition of four 40'X40" duplex log cabins.

2. Addition of thirteen 25'X35' duplex log cabins.
3. Addition of a 40-room, 2.5 story lodge.
4. Expansion of the restaurant from the existing 3,800 sq. ft. to 5,000 sq. ft.
5. Addition of 39 boat slips with a floating breakwater and 10 buoy moorings.
6. Addition of 40 campground sites including hookups.
7. Addition of a 4,000 sq. ft. pavilion to accommodate group picnics, weddings, and other group recreation events.
8. Enlarge the entranceway and provide 242 parking spaces.
9. Move the existing dry boat storage for 40 boats/trailers.
10. Addition of a 2,100 sq. ft. maintenance building.
11. Reconstruct the remaining sewage system where all sewage is pumped to leach fields adjacent to the Fremont Lake road and the entire system has alarms that shut the system down in case of septic tank failure. Monitoring wells would be drilled to insure water quality.
12. Addition of a 2,100 sq. ft. campground site check-in building, which will include Restrooms and showers for campground visitors.
13. Addition of a 15-boat septic holding tank/dump station.
14. Permit Boundary change from 15 acres to 24 acres to encompass leach fields and expanded facilities.

**Maximum Capacity of the Resort**

The following table compares the existing and proposed PAOT (People at One Time) capacity of the resort for the Proposed Action:

<u>Resort Facilities</u>	<u>PAOT</u>	<u>Existing Capacity</u>	<u>Proposed Capacity</u>
Cabins (25'X35')	6 people/cabin	(9x6) 54 people	(19x6) 114 people
Cabins (40'X40')	8 people/cabin	(0)	( 4x8) 32 people
Lodge	3 people/room	(0)	(40x3) 120 people
Campground sites	3 people/unit	(20x3) 60 people	(50x3) 150 people
Restaurant		35 people	80 people

Total Number of Lodging Units = 113 units

Total Number of People At One Time (Lodging) = 416 people  
Total Number of People At One Time (Restaurant) = 80 people

### **General Character and Layout of the Resort**

The overall theme of the site will be rustic in nature and the facilities will be designed to blend in with the surroundings. All buildings will be constructed of log, stone, and/or other natural materials. The cabins, lodge and other buildings will be built in several phases over the next ten to fifteen years. Each facility will incorporate the general character of the present day log cabins. The area surrounding the facilities will be landscaped with grass, shrubs and trees. Natural vegetation will be retained and native vegetation used where possible.

Roadways and parking areas will be centrally located to service the greatest number of facilities while altering the minimum amount of land. Granite boulders, trees, shrubs, and other landscaping will be used to minimize the visual impact of roadways and parking areas.

Boat slips will generally be geared to average sized sail and motor boats. Several slips will accommodate boats up to 26 feet.

All utilities will be underground and all disturbed areas will be reclaimed and landscaped as development progresses.

### **Operating Season**

Summer/Fall – The resort would be open providing full services seven days per week from May 1<sup>st</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Winter/Spring – The resort would be open providing reduced services from November 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>. The facilities that would remain open are as follows:

Restaurant – Open 4-5-days per week from Wednesday/Thursday thru Sunday.

Cabins – 2-3 cabins open 7 days per week

Lodge – 10-12 rooms open 7 days per week

## **III. PURPOSE AND NEED**

The purpose of the Master Development Plan for Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina is as follows:

- 1. To provide high quality and unique recreation services and opportunities for the using public.**

Lakeside Lodge Resort and Marina offers its customers a unique experience by providing overnight accommodations, food service facilities, and boating and fishing opportunities

adjacent to a large and scenic lake. Since all of the major lakes in the Pinedale area are located on National Forest or other government lands, there are limited opportunities for the public to experience the services provided at Lakeside Lodge in that type setting. The town of Pinedale and a few local resorts do provide some of the same services, but not in that type setting.

There is a demand for the services provided at Lakeside Resort. Currently there is a waiting list for boat slips in the marina of 25 people, the occupancy rate for the rental cabins is at 90%, and the campground sites are full for most of the summer.

By improving the quality and appearance of the facilities and by adding additional services, the quality and quantity of recreation experiences and opportunities will be improved at Lakeside Lodge.

**2. To improve environmental conditions resulting from substandard construction and maintenance.**

The visual resource effects of the resort will be improved through the use of native materials, colors that blend into the environment and through re-vegetation/landscaping. Sedimentation/erosion will be reduced by improving drainage from the roads and around facilities, as well as prompt re-vegetation of exposed soils. Septic systems for the restaurant and campground sites will be built to current standards reducing the possibility of lake contamination.

**3. Continue to improve safety of the facilities for the using public and employees.**

High plains Marina, LLC has already corrected much of the substandard conditions that existed when they were issued the Special Use Permit. There are still conditions, however, that need improvement at the resort to improve public safety. The septic systems for the restaurant and the existing campground sites need to be brought up to currently approved DEQ standards, the water system needs improvement, and the entrance road and parking areas need improvement providing safer and easier access.

**4. To add additional facilities and services providing an economically viable business opportunity.**

Based on the history of recreation resorts on the Pinedale Ranger District, it is difficult to operate an economically viable business. The summer recreation season is short resulting in many months where the resorts are idle. The Special Use Permit requires the resorts to maintain facilities to current standards, minimize environmental effects, and provide attractive, safe facilities for the using public. This results in a situation where the resorts have to generate a significant amount of revenue in a short time to be able to meet the requirements of the Special Use Permit and provide safe, enjoyable recreation opportunities.

It is important then to allow the resorts to provide a diversity of recreation services as well as opportunities to lengthen the season of use, in order to provide the quality services desired by the public.

#### **IV. DECISION TO BE MADE**

The decision to be made is whether or not to approve all or part the proposed Master Development Plan, and will be made by the Forest Supervisor, Bridger-Teton National Forest.

#### **V. COMPLIANCE TO THE BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN (LRMP)**

The Bridger-Teton National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, (Forest Plan), was approved in 1991. It is the legal management document and provides long-term direction for managing National Forest Lands contained within the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The Forest Plan contains the overall direction and actions needed to move toward the desired future state. The National Forest Lands are categorized into Desired Future Condition Areas (DFC's) based on topography, land and resources. Each DFC has its own management direction and Standards/Guidelines, which is designed to meet current and future resource objectives. Copies of the Forest Plan can be reviewed in detail at the Pinedale Ranger District office.

The area currently occupied by the resort and the proposed expansion are located in Desired Future Condition (DFC) 9B in the Forest Plan. This DFC is for Special Use Recreation Areas and is managed for permitted, private recreation homes, Special Use Permittees, and others offering services to the public, including related roads and sites, (See pages 226-231, Chapter 4 in the Forest Plan).

DFC 9B contains the following guidance for proposals of this type:

Management Emphasis: Cabins and buildings are visible, but blend into surroundings.

Privately Owned Facility Standard: A similar architectural theme will be followed for all structures within the development. Vegetation management plans will be developed for each special-use area to define a program for maintaining a desired vegetative mix and character. Operation and possible expansion of the existing recreation special-use facilities will be authorized when needed to meet public demand.

Visual Quality Prescription: The Visual Quality Objectives are Partial Retention and Modification. Facilities are often dominant, but harmonize with the natural setting.

Facility Safety Standard: Safe drinking water standards must be met at facilities with water systems. Facilities will be designed and maintained to meet structural and utility safety requirements.

The Proposed Master Development Plan is consistent with DFC 9B direction. Therefore the proposal is consistent with the Forest Plan.

## **VI. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

In January of 2001, a Scoping Document was prepared and mailed to State, Federal, and local agencies, as well as local political entities and the public. The purpose of the document was to explain the Proposed Action and to identify initial comments/issues about the proposal. The comments and issues received have been used throughout the analysis process to assist in the final decision.

Thirty-one written responses were received during the 30-day Scoping period. Five of the comments were from government agencies, including the US Fish & Wildlife Service, various Wyoming state agencies, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Town of Pinedale. The remainder of the comments came from private citizens, most of which live or own property in the Pinedale area.

A follow up meeting was held in 2001 with EPA, the Town of Pinedale, High Plains Marina, the Sublette County Sanitarian, Wyoming DEQ, and the Forest Service. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the proposal in detail, discuss the Watershed Management Agreement, and discuss issues related to the Proposed Action. The meeting resulted in the development of two issues and an amendment to the Watershed Management Control Agreement between the Forest Service, the Town of Pinedale, and the EPA.

A public meeting was held in the spring of 2002 to discuss the status of the analysis as well as identify any additional issues that may have come up.

The following Issues were developed based on the comments received during the Scoping period and subsequent meetings:

**ISSUE #1** – The increased sewage from the proposed septic tanks and drain fields will leach into Fremont Lake, affecting water quality and the Town of Pinedale’s Water System.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** Mitigation Measures 2 & 3 were added to the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 to minimize adverse effects of sewage treatment. Alternative #2, #3, and #4 were developed and analyzed to reduce the potential water quality effects in Fremont Lake. (See Chapter II).

**ISSUE #2** – The proposed Master Development Plan violates the Watershed Management Control Agreement between the Town of Pinedale, the US Environmental

Protection Agency, and the USDA Forest Service, which will result in decreased water quality in Fremont Lake.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The Proposed Action does not violate the Watershed Management Control Agreement. (See Chapter III).

**ISSUE #3** – The increase in recreation visitors to the resort as a result of the Proposed Action will increase the amount of trash, will increase the number of pets, and will trample out vegetation along the lakeshore, causing increased sedimentation and a lowering of the water quality in Fremont Lake.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** Mitigation Measures 9 & 10 were added to the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 to lessen effects of increased recreation use to a level of non-significance. (See Chapter II).

**ISSUE #4** – The proposed Master Development Plan will increase the number of boats, increasing the likelihood of oil and gasoline spills into Fremont Lake.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The existing boat gasoline facility has already been reconstructed to meet State of Wyoming DEQ Standards. These measures will minimize the potential of spills and will contain spills if they occur. (See Chapter III).

**ISSUE #5** – The proposed boat septic holding tank/pump station will increase the likelihood of sewage spills directly into Fremont Lake, degrading water quality.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The proposed system is being successfully utilized in other marinas throughout the nation with minimum potential of sewage spills. (See Chapter III).

**ISSUE #6** – The proposed Master Development Plan will destroy valuable cultural resources in that area.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** A cultural resource inventory has been completed and significant cultural resources have been identified. Alternative #3 and #4 were developed and Mitigation Measures 11 & 12 were added to the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 to protect cultural resources. (See Chapter II).

**ISSUE #7** – The proposed Master Development Plan will unacceptably degrade the esthetics on the south shore of Fremont Lake.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** Mitigation Measures 4, 5, 6, and 7 were added to the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 to minimize the visual resource effects. Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 were developed to reduce the Visual Resource effects. (See Chapter II).

**ISSUE #8** – The increase in traffic to and from the resort will create safety problems and increase road maintenance.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** This issue was analyzed and the conclusion was that the effects will be within acceptable limits. A road maintenance plan will be jointly developed with Lakeside Lodge, the Town of Pinedale, and the Pinedale Ranger District. (See Chapter III and Chapter IV).

**ISSUE #9** – The increase in recreation visitors will increase noise in the area, affecting the existing summer-home owners and the recreating public.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The effects of increased recreation use were analyzed and the conclusion is the effects will be within acceptable limits. (See chapter III and Chapter IV).

**ISSUE #10** – The proposed Master Development Plan may affect habitat or the existence of Threatened or Endangered (T&E) species of wildlife and fish.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The analysis concludes that effects to T&E wildlife species will be “no effect”. (See Chapter III and Chapter IV).

**ISSUE #11** – The proposed Master Development Plan will affect habitat or the existence of Sensitive species of wildlife and fish.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The analysis concludes that effects to Sensitive wildlife species will be “no effect”. (See Chapter III and Chapter IV).

**ISSUE #12** – The proposed Master Development Plan will unacceptably affect an important migration route and winter range of mule deer.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** The effects to mule deer migration were analyzed and effects were determined to be minimal. (See Chapter III and Chapter IV).

**ISSUE #13** – The increase in recreation use at Lakeside Lodge will cause increased use of the Sandy Beach Swim Area, causing an increase in trash and negatively affecting or restricting use by local residents and other recreationists.

**DISPOSITION OF THE ISSUE:** Mitigation Measures 8, 9, & 10 were added to the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternatives #2, #3, & #4 to lessen effects of increased recreation use to a level of non-significance. (See Chapter II).