



FISHING

# Agency offers proposals for South Fork Boise

Action may limit river access points, areas for camping

On one of the final trips my father and I made together on the South Fork of the Boise River in 1962, we set up camp on a grassy meadow downstream from Cow Creek.

It was a super trip. We enjoyed excellent trout fishing and great camping.

As we were preparing our dinner one evening, Dad casually predicted, "One fine day we won't be able to camp on the river like this. They'll have us in a centrally located asphalt and concrete campground, corralled like cattle."

**May come true**

Well folks, the Boise National Forest is closing in on my father's prediction. If the recently released proposals of what this government agency has in store for us on the South Fork comes to pass, we will indeed be herded into an asphalt and concrete campground.

We will also be severely restricted as to where we can park our vehicles when we fish this fine blue-ribbon trout stream.

The Boise National Forest plans hearings during February in Mountain Home and Boise on the proposals for management of the South Fork of the Boise between Anderson Ranch Dam and Neal Bridge.

As a 40-year South Fork angler, I view some of their proposals as beneficial, some questionable, and some downright depressing.

The proposals in a nutshell:

- A campground and day-use area will be built at the abandoned Reclamation Village site and the rest of the river corridor will be closed to camping.

- Parking will be allowed only at float-boat launching and take-out sites and at designated day-use parking facilities.

- Float-boat launching will be prohibited upstream from Rec Village, to provide a boat-free fishing experience on this section of the river — a proposal that will not be popular with many float-boat fishermen.

Other management proposals include a reservation system for campsites below Danskin Bridge



**Marv Taylor**  
Fishing



with restrictions on party size and a 20-minute interval between launches. Commercial outfitting and guiding will be allowed on this section during periods of low public use after all other planned actions are implemented.

Most of the South Fork anglers I've talked with believe allowing outfitting and guiding on this section of the river — as innocuous as it might seem — is a precedent-setting measure that opens the door for later expansion.

**Sign of times**

It is, I suppose, a sign of our times that something must be done to protect the river from overuse. While most South Fork anglers support some reasonable management techniques, those of us who have fished the river most of our lives and have developed some favorite on-the-river campsites will not look with favor on limiting camping to a single campground at Rec Village.

Eliminating the on-the-river camping at the Car Body Hole, Indian Rock, below Cow Creek, etc., will congest overnight campers into one controllable campground. Is Big Brother watching?

Does a duck quack?

**Moderate**

While there are increasing numbers of anglers fishing the South Fork, in the opinion of most anglers, the pressure of campers and the associated dam-

age to riparian areas are moderate at this time.

Is the Forest Service merely flexing its muscles or do we really need all of the new restrictive regulations?

For more information, or to provide the planners with opin-

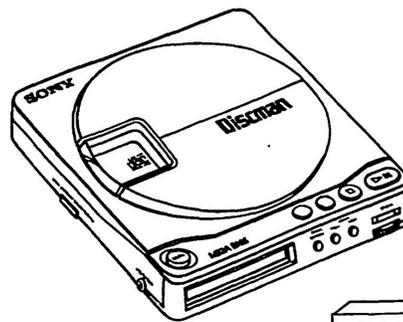
ions, write: Larry Tripp, District Ranger, Boise National Forest, Mountain Home Ranger District, 2180 American Legion Boulevard, Mountain Home, Idaho, 83657.

Marv Taylor is a free-lance outdoor writer from Boise. His column appears on Thursday.

# SUBSTITUTION NOTICE

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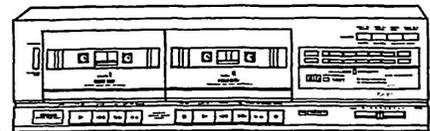
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**Facts about the South Fork Boise River**

**Location:** About 75 miles southeast of Boise, off Highway 20 near Anderson Ranch Dam.

**Fishing:** Quality fishing for wild rainbow trout and whitefish from Anderson Ranch Dam to Neal Bridge.

**Regulations:** Trout season, May 25 to Nov. 30; only three under 12 inches and one over 20 inches; artificial flies and lures

and single-barbless hooks only. Whitefish season, January, February and March (special bait restrictions are not in effect during this time).

**Floating:** The section from Reclamation Village downstream is popular with drift-boat fishermen. A popular whitewater-rafting stretch is from Danskin Bridge to Neal Bridge.

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# Critics 'shoot holes' in proposal for South Fork recreation rules

By Stephen Stuebner  
The Idaho Statesman

Like a race horse with blinders on, the Boise National Forest is galloping toward new restrictions on the popular South Fork Boise River with tunnel vision, critics said Monday night.

About 140 people crowded into the Boise Interagency Fire Center auditorium to discuss proposed recreational restrictions on the fishing and whitewater stream.

It is about 35 miles northeast of Boise and about 25 miles north of Mountain Home.

Recreation use on the river is skyrocketing. A state Parks and

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**Whitewater rafting on the South Fork has increased about 390 percent since 1983.**

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Recreation survey showed that whitewater rafting has increased about 390 percent since 1983. Fish and Game recorded 100,282 angler-hours in 1988 on a trophy rainbow trout stream dubbed one of the nation's top 100 trout streams by Trout magazine.

An angler-hour equals one angler fishing for one hour.

Citizens told Mountain Home

District Ranger Larry Tripp to slow down and broaden his scope to include cattle grazing, river flows, water quality, fish regulations and more.

Tripp said he hoped to devise a recreation management plan for the river by early summer, but public criticism may force him to adopt a new timetable. As it is now, Tripp has proposed 10 specific actions to reduce recreation conflicts and environmental damage on the South Fork.

At the outset of the last of four public meetings on the issue, Tripp asked the public to "shoot holes" through his solutions and

See River/4C

## River

From 1C

devise a few of their own. Written comments will be accepted, also.

The first verbal barbs came after Tripp said issues such as grazing and river flows would be dealt with in other planning arenas: Several people snickered.

"We know the issues are inter-related," said Marti Bridges, a Boise board member of the Idaho Whitewater Association. "The management plan should address the whole river corridor."

Boise fly fisherman David Ralston said the public and the Forest Service need more time to devise a visionary management plan for the South Fork.

"If this a 10-year planning process, then it seems pretty parochial and short-sighted to have only 1½ hours to provide input on this worksheet," Ralston said.

To which Tripp responded,

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**"It's bumper to bumper boats during certain time periods on the weekends. If you advocate doing nothing, make sure you understand the consequences."**

Larry Tripp  
Mountain Home District ranger

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"How big of an elephant do you want to chew on? If we broaden the scope of this planning process, we could run short of funding and manpower. It will be more complex and time-consuming."

Boise fly fisherman Barry Ross said the Forest Service is jumping to conclusions instead of embracing the good qualities of the river canyon.

"The South Fork is a semi-wilderness experience — you're kind of out there all by yourself,"

Ross said. "I think people want to maintain that experience . . . We need to make a few minor improvements, but, basically, they should leave the situation alone."

Tripp disagreed, saying the "do-nothing" approach admittedly used by the Forest Service in the past no longer will do.

"It's bumper to bumper boats during certain time periods on the weekends," he said. "If you advocate doing nothing, make sure you understand the consequences; realize what that means for your recreational experience."

Other solutions or criticisms included:

■ Creating a user fee for improving recreation facilities along the river.

■ Abolishing a proposal to stagger rafters by 20-minute intervals at the Danskin Bridge launch site.

■ Limiting the party size for whitewater boaters instead of the number of craft.