

DRAFT
As of March 2020
Priest Lake Area Plan

Vision Statement

Our vision is to preserve the unique environment of Priest Lake Area (PLA) by protecting the area's abundant natural resources, community's character, air & water quality, while promoting a strong year-round economy and a thriving local community.

Population

Introduction

Based on historical studies, the recreational attractiveness of the Priest Lake Area (PLA), as shown in Figure 1, leads to seasonal population variations around major waterbodies and other developed recreation areas. In addition to the very small year-round residential population (which can be estimated from historic census data), the demographics, and annual seasonal trends of visitors (along with part time residents) has a significant impact to important planning components. This dynamic population analysis is important to both private sector business planning with the related business vitality, and also strongly impacts public facility and service needs and goals. This population component includes an analysis of past, present, and future trends in population, and details such as total population, household size, and demographics. Analysis related to seasonal population variations is covered in the Recreation component of the PLA plan [insert page #].

Existing Conditions

The PLA incorporates multiple census tracts, zip codes, and statistical areas. The analysis herein often draws from data points that contain but are not limited to the PLA. While the data presented below capture our best efforts to understand population in the PLA, general population growth trends, numbers, and graphs very likely fail to capture the complexity and variation of the PLA population.

Population

While data from the upcoming 2020 census will provide more precise numbers, the existing populations of the Coolin (83821), Nordman (83848), and the northernmost portion of the Priest River (83856) zip codes (i.e., that general geographic area which is included in the PLA) have been estimated from data summarized on the U.S. Census Website, using 2000 and 2010 Census Data. This site provides estimates for subsequent years after the census, however, no detail as to their rationalizations for specific changes in our smallest communities was identified. For comparison, data from Bonner County as a whole, the State of Idaho, and the U.S. were also evaluated. These data are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population Trends in the PLA vs Bonner County, the State of Idaho, and the U.S.[CM1]

Source	US Census											
Year	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Population												
United States	281,421,906	308,745,538	311,580,009	313,874,218	316,057,727	318,386,421	320,742,673	323,071,342	325,147,121	327,167,434	?	?
State of Idaho	1,293,953	1,567,582	1,583,828	1,595,441	1,611,530	1,631,530	1,651,523	1,682,930	1,718,904	1,754,208	?	?
Bonner County, Idaho	36,835	40,877	40,849	40,806	40,743	40,899	41,066	41,389	41,855	44,727	?	?
Priest River, Idaho - 83856*	6,283	6,340	6,236	5,986	5,846	6,259	6,284	6,214	6,350	7,101	7,192	7,274
~ Priest River Population in PL Area												
Coolin, Idaho - 83821	230	210	305	403	346	354	293	245	168	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nordman, Idaho - 83848	197	137	94	124	202	217	212	266	249	253	257	260
Total Population, PL Area	427	347	399	527	548	571	505	511	417	253	257	260

* "X" Percent of Zip in PL Area

Housing

Data from these same web queries also indicate that the average household size in our area (as of 2010) was 2.16, and the average age was 52.5. Median household income data were incomplete, but ranged from a low of \$26,667 in Nordman to a high of \$41,582 in Priest River. A more current study by EMSI, however, estimates average income in Nordman increased to \$52,900 in 2018. This higher income number may be the result of retirees who have moved to the area full-time, perhaps after being counted only as part-time residents and/or property owners in past surveys.

Similarly, if the median age was 52.5 in 2010, it may well be over 60 in the 2020 census. Such a conclusion could be supported by anecdotal observations by PLA committee members that many of the resident volunteers who have helped in organizations within the PLA are rapidly aging, and no longer able to contribute the same energy and time commitments as in the past. This lack of manpower is starting to affect important emergency services like fire and ambulance services, because these have historically been run solely by volunteers.

Total housing units in the 2010 census were **1,467**, an increase of 15 percent since the 2000 census. If that trend holds, our 2020 census household numbers would be approximately **1,687**. Understanding household numbers is perhaps more important than year-round residents in the PLA due to the high volume of transient/part-time home owners. For example, if the 2.16 members/household is applied to the **1,687** household 2020 population estimate (a 15% increase over 2010), our year-round and part-time residential base could now be in the range of **3,600**.

Recreation Factors

As noted above, our year-round and part-time residents comprise only a small percentage of the seasonal population base. Recreation factors relating to population are covered in detail in the Recreation component of the Priest Lake Area plan.

[CM1]This number does not include any of the PR zip code area, and will need to be adjusted once the PLA boundary is firmed up.

Future Conditions

The community plan for the Priest Lake Area shall be designed to protect the quality of the environment and the quality of life for its citizens, including opportunities for education, available housing, and reliable work opportunities in the area. As growth continues, community services including law enforcement, fire protection, adequate sewage disposal, emergency services, and road infrastructure shall be available.

Policies:

- The area plan shall keep current with Federal, State, and County population data and use available resources to analyze community needs and land use planning.
- Population and demographic forecast data shall be used to evaluate housing, education, road infrastructure, and service needs.
- Apply the results of this analysis to the PLA plan to maintain alignment and support its vision statement.

Economic Development

This chapter includes an analysis of the economic base of the Priest Lake Area including employment, industries, and jobs.

Existing Conditions:

Due to the unique boundary extents of the PLA, data specific to this area was difficult to obtain. Although the PLA boundary incorporates a portion of the Priest River zip code area, an examination of the economic conditions measured in that area did not align with the economic opportunities in the heart of the Priest Lake Area due to the fact that the data includes the incorporated city of Priest River. To get a more comparable look at the local conditions of the PLA, a study conducted for the Nordman zip code area indicated an economic base associated with public land access, a closer match to the opportunities available in the Priest Lake Area as a whole. According to economic modeling group, EMSI, numbers show that the top three industries for the Nordman area are local government jobs, residential building construction and civilian federal government work. To provide further backing for this succinct subset of data, it was compared to the economic base for the entirety of Bonner County. According to the Idaho Department of Labor, construction-based jobs have become an economic foundation for Bonner County due to the county's ever-growing population and tourist base [Idaho Department of Labor, *Workforce Trends*, November 2019].

Likewise, being surrounded by the diverse natural landscape of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, and due to its prominent geographic location, the economic base of the area shares a distinct relationship with recreational based businesses. Along the Highway 57 corridor, a visual inventory guides travelers to resorts, marinas, food establishments, and recreation-based industries. These local establishments, combined with the government jobs associated with the management of locally abundant public lands, provide the primary economic base for the PLA.

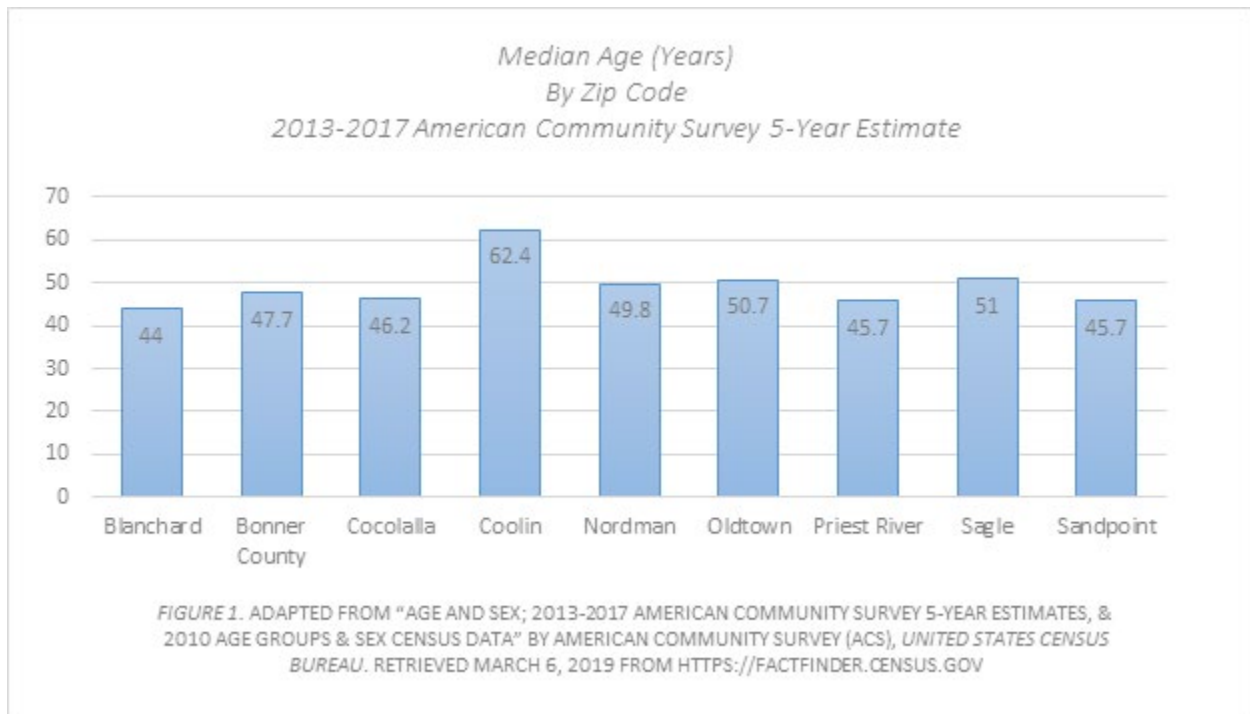
Seasonal Employment Factors:

Since these forest-related activities and summer tourism drive the local economy, employment peaks in late summer and decreases in the winter months. These patterns associated with tourism have influenced the types of businesses that are able to flourish within a seasonally based population. For example, many local businesses close for the early spring months during winter road break-up, whereas others reduce their hours of operation after the summer tourists leave. These fluxes influence unemployment statistics. For example, unemployment peaked at 5% in early 2019 and fell to 3.9% by late summer [American Community Survey (ACS), *United States Census Bureau*, Retrieved February 3, 2020]. These seasonal employment fluxes bring challenges not only to the base economy of the area, but also housing challenges. Many resorts report having a difficult time finding workers due to a lack of local rentals. Workforce housing, and lack of year-round employment opportunities has contributed to a

slow growing year round population, and has influenced the demographics of the population that is able to withstand months of unemployment.

Demographic Effect on Local Economies

While Idaho is ranked one of the fastest growing states in the nation, the vast majority of recent population growth has been concentrated in urban counties while Idaho’s rural areas, like Bonner County, have seen a slower growth trend [Idaho Department of Labor, *The Future of Rural Idaho*, July 2018]. This trend is due in part to the aging of the local population (Figure 1). For example, the average age of the Coolin community is 62.4 years old, the highest in all of Bonner County whose median age is 47 years old, and considerably higher than Idaho’s median age of 36.1. The shifting of the average age seems to be driven by two phenomena in the PLA. First, like many other rural communities, many younger workers leave the area seeking better economic opportunities in urban areas. This has been compounded by the lack of housing and year-round work opportunities in the area. Secondly, Bonner County has attracted the attention of retirees interested in moving to a more rural area. The recreational nature of the Priest Lake Area combined with overall affordability makes it a popular destination for retirees moving from other states. [Workforce Trends, Bonner County; Idaho Department of Labor].



Cottage Industries

Home businesses are a growth industry not captured in labor force statistics. Based on an analysis of 2005-2018 American Community Survey data, national trends show a 3.7% increase in overall self-employment across the nation [US Census Bureau, *Retrieved August 16, 2019*]. As internet services may

become more accessible in the future, it is reasonable to anticipate an increase in the percentage of individuals working from home in rural areas. As such, telecommuting enables many individuals to live remotely without the need for local employment opportunities.

Agriculture

As farmland diminishes across rural America, the community recognizes the need to protect agricultural pursuits within the PLA. The term protection should be perceived as an opportunity to support agriculture as a business, and on a voluntary basis protect farmland as a land use in the community. The term is not used as a means of restricting a property owner's rights to the use of their land but rather, "the preservation, conservation, management and improvement of lands which are part of viable farming operations, for the purpose of maintaining current uses; such as farming, timber, wildlife management, recreation lands to remain in agricultural production" as defined. The classification of agricultural production covers establishments (e.g., farms, ranches, dairies, greenhouses, nurseries, orchards, hatcheries) primarily engaged in the production of crops, plants, vines, or trees (excluding forestry operations) and the keeping, grazing, or feeding of livestock for the sale of livestock or livestock products. Agricultural production also includes establishments primarily engaged in the operation of sod farms, cranberry bogs, and poultry hatcheries; in the production of mushrooms, bulbs, flower seeds, and vegetable seeds; and in the growing of hydroponic crops. The community recognizes these establishments as an integral part of living and working in a rural community.

Future Conditions

There is a historic relationship between public land and the Priest Lake Area. While the culture of this relationship may mean something different from one person to the next, there is no escaping the integral relationship between public lands and its influence on the local community. In forecasting the future of economic development in the area, it became clear that maintaining the quality of all natural resources is an essential economic development strategy for the PLA. While economic opportunities are important to the community, one unwavering principle is that future economic development shall not degrade the condition of the PLA's current air, water, open spaces, and natural areas for recreation that contribute to a healthy community.

Since obtaining data for a made up boundary is an imperfect science, much of the aforementioned analysis was compared to the experiences of residents who have lived in the area for most of their lives. As some government jobs have declined in number, resorts, marinas, food establishments, and recreation-based businesses continue to play a major role in the area, and are forecasted to be a significant economy in the future. As this occurs, the PLA must provide a path for new recreational opportunities and new industries to serve as the base source of employment for residents. Realizing that the main economic draw of the PLA relates to the natural beauty of its surroundings, heavy industry is not compatible with the geography of the area. Rather, resorts, marinas, food establishments, and

recreation-based businesses are encouraged to continue to grow and provide the primary economic base for the PLA.

Maintaining a reasonable level of economic activity year-around has been a challenge in the Priest Lake Area since forest management practices have changed over the last 20 years. Future land use regulations should attempt to address the seasonal flux of tourism. One economic strategy is to identify businesses that offer year-round opportunities for recreation in order to help balance seasonal employment factors. One way to achieve this is to encourage businesses that offer winter recreation opportunities such as, but not limited to, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing. Land use regulation should attempt to encourage trail connectivity from private lands to public lands and identify appropriate locations for winter sports.

Goals:

1. Policies shall support cottage industries and small start-up businesses that allow for local employment opportunities.
2. Future residential land use policies shall provide options for workforce housing.
3. Public uses such as community centers and rec centers should be identified and encouraged to develop in appropriate zones.
4. Land use regulation should attempt to encourage trail connectivity.
5. Policies shall support Ag businesses as a viable industry.
6. In the Priest Lake Area, space will be targeted for the growth of businesses, professional and technical services without adversely impacting the integrity of residential neighborhoods or the value of rich natural resources.
7. Future commercial and industrial developments shall provide adequate access to road systems.
8. Commercial and industrial areas shall be located in defined areas which encourage clustered development and discourage sprawl and strip development.

Policies:

1. New Economic development shall occur only in areas deemed appropriate in the Land Use component of this plan.
2. Development standards for all Commercial & Light Industrial facilities shall minimize specified conditions with respect to emissions of noise, light, glare, smoke, odor, dust, particulate matters, vibrations, traffic, and hours of operation.
3. Commercial and industrial areas shall be located in defined areas which encourage clustered development.
4. Policies shall protect local aesthetics by prohibiting off premise signs, and limiting the size of commercial signs.
5. Land use codes should be reviewed and revised to permit home based businesses while still protecting the residential nature of neighborhoods.

Natural Resources

The Natural Resources Component includes an analysis of the uses of water bodies, to include rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and geothermal waters; vegetation, to include wetlands, forests, pasture, range and cropland, generalized vegetation, and sensitive species; soils, to include prime and non-prime farmland, and soil properties; fisheries, to include hatcheries, stream segments and shorelines of concern, sensitive species and populations; wildlife, to include habitat, general species and sensitive species; minerals, to include metals and non-metals; beaches and shorelines, to include locations and facilities; watersheds and aquifers, to include location and size; and climate, to include general statistics and general history.

Future Conditions

The quality of the natural environment defines the Priest Lake Area. Containing the lake that has long been known as Idaho's "Crown Jewel," the Priest Lake Area includes a rare combination of impressive Rocky Mountain geology, a unique gradient climate, contributing pristine watersheds, clear lakes, and profuse native flora, which all yield rich wildlife diversity. This combination results in recreational, educational, and sustainable livelihood opportunities that attract many visitors and support area residents. Our scenic views, excellent water quality, and other environmental features such as dark skies provide important quality-of-life values for residents. Many residents have strong, traditional connections with lands, waters, and wildlife that go back for generations.

This component strives to honor this relationship by both supporting traditional uses and practices, and by promoting wise stewardship of our natural environment. The goals and policies of this chapter reflect this commitment to conservation of the environment, in relation to land uses that intersect with important natural features. Further, this component strives to improve the stewardship of these valuable resources which not only provide important livelihoods, but have enabled memorable family strengthening and character building outdoor experiences for both visitors and residents for generations. The PLA community is committed to recognizing the interconnectedness of environmental, economic, and social factors in negotiating sustainable land-use outcomes, by both improving forest and watershed health, and fostering vibrant economic growth that both benefits from and acts to continually improve the rich ecosystems and associated surrounding resources.

It is fully acknowledged that a balance must be found between conservation efforts, economic trade-offs, and private property rights. However, future generations deserve the same or improved natural resource opportunities that were entrusted to us. Therefore the Priest Lake Community is further committed to promote wise resource stewardship in residential, commercial development, and related operations, while discouraging damaging, exploitative, or non-sustainable resource practices. The county recognizes that natural resources, such as pure water, clean air, and diverse wildlife are

important to preserve and once lost they may not be recovered. Bonner County will strive to manage its natural resources to attain the greatest long term public benefit for the Priest Lake Area. This important balance will support natural systems and landscapes, expand growth in the tourism-related economy, and help maintain property values. The Natural Resource component of the PLA plan establishes the goals and policies that will support the ongoing quality of life desired in the PLA.

Vegetation Policies:

1. Construction plans for development, infrastructure improvements, and forest restoration projects will include a landscaping plan that emphasizes minimizing the area disturbed and revegetating disturbed areas using native plants and drought tolerant species and controlling invasive species.
2. The County will pursue weed-control strategies in its public rights of-ways when soils have been compacted or disturbed.
3. The County will support public education programs to help residents and organizations learn the importance of, and how to identify and control invasive weeds.
4. The PLA desires to protect the thermal water quality of its watersheds by encouraging policies to retain native vegetation, especially larger shade producing trees and shrubs, within shoreline setbacks. When native, mature vegetation must be removed, policies should incentivize landowners to replace trees and shrubs with similar native species that would protect waterways from solar radiation.

Forest & Land Health Policies:

1. Educate and encourage property owners to participate in fuels reduction and other measures that leave large healthy forest stands and thin smaller dense stands and brush to reduce risk to human safety and property while enhancing forestry and ecosystem health.
2. New developments in forested areas will be assessed in terms of vulnerability to wildfire and will be required to adhere to fire wise practices that enhance forest and ecosystem health.
3. Forest restoration and fuels reduction projects will consider the risk to and from nearby adjacent landowners' property, resources, and environmentally sensitive features.
4. Encourage effective outdoor lighting which is designed to preserve and protect the quality of dark skies in rural areas.

Soils Policies:

1. Subdivisions and other development proposals shall consider mitigation measures for drainage, erosion, sedimentation, excessive compaction, and related issues with regards to the soil type, substrate, and slope.
2. Encourage the conservation of topsoil in construction and best management practices to prevent erosion and its impacts. Immediate seeding, mulching, and planting with native and beneficial species after ground disturbance will be strongly encouraged.
3. In areas of shallow or poor soils where standard septic systems are not feasible, very low density development, a centralized treatment facility, and/or technologically advanced environmentally sensitive sewage systems will be preferred.

Air, Water, & Other Environment Features Policies:

1. The County will maintain and update a county-wide inventory of natural resources that houses publicly available datasets related to environmental assets for use in project planning and review.
2. Development projects and subdivisions, including the placement of lots, alignment of roads, and installation of other structures and infrastructure, will be designed to minimize alterations to natural landforms, hydrology, and native vegetation and to maximize the conservation of environmentally sensitive features.
3. Policies for development will encourage the protection of watersheds, floodplains, wetland, and riparian areas, and will consider hazards that are inherent to floodplains, floodways, steep slopes, and areas of geological instability. Development should not occur on lands deemed unsuitable for health, safety and property damage, such as due to flooding, inadequate drainage, avalanches, severe erosion potential, and unfavorable topography such as steep slopes.
4. Best management practices for waterway setbacks, earth-moving activities, and road construction should be instituted to reduce erosion and sedimentation into waterways, including snow storage and drainage plan reviews.
5. Encourage policies and practices that provide open space to protect the finite resource base of the area's natural environment – including air, groundwater, surface water, soil, plant and wildlife habitats, agricultural lands and aquifers, watersheds, and wetlands.
6. Require any proposed development, including ground surface disruption, to abide by all current and applicable County, State, and Federal rules and regulations that apply to ground, surface, and air quality.
7. Proximity and density of development around lakes and waterways and the ability to protect water quality from development impacts shall be examined when developing future zoning maps, land use standards, and individual applications.

Recreation

The recreation component includes an analysis of parks, public lands, and campgrounds; parkways and scenic drives; trails; water-related recreation, including marinas/boat access, beaches/public access, fishing, and other water-related recreation activities; and other recreation activities, including biking, downhill and cross country_skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hiking, camping, golf, horseback riding, ORV, astronomy/stargazing, hunting, and shooting ranges. A list of these recreational opportunities can be found in Bonner County's general comprehensive plan. This chapter aims to provide policy guidance that would help maintain and promote recreational opportunities as a viable economic mainstay for the community.

Introduction

Economic development and environmental stewardship are ideas that work hand-in-hand in the Priest Lake Area, where a large variety of businesses thrive because of the recreational attractiveness of the area. Since many economic opportunities depend on the environment, it is imperative that future economic development takes into account the recreational goals and policies of this plan that seek to connect recreation with future development.

Current Conditions

A study published in 1996 by the United States Forest Service (USFS), *Human Dimensions of Priest Lake*, found almost a quarter of a million visitors utilized this region in the summer months. Of these surveyed visits, approximately 26% indicated they were year-round or second home/lessee property owners in the area.

Of those visiting in 1995, 64% indicated they spent 1 or more nights in the PLA, with most staying an average of 4 nights. Seventeen (17) percent of the visitors stayed at their second homes or at a leased cabin. Thirteen (13) percent used the homes of friends or relatives, a hotel/motel/resort or B&B. "Vacation", "recreation", and "leisure" were the most often mentioned primary reasons for coming to the PLA for all recreationalists. Visitors indicated that viewing natural scenery added the most to their experiences in the PLA, and scenery was the highest rated feature of all uses, followed by motorized boating. Thirty-six percent of all users stated that the beauty and wilderness were what made their most important place in the PLA special to them. Eighty-two percent of all users indicated "they would miss the area considerably" if they could no longer use it.

Across the larger Idaho Panhandle National Forests (as of 2014), over 1M visitor use days were recorded. Therefore, it is unlikely that use in the PLA has decreased since the 1996 study was published. Maintaining and providing for continued recreational opportunities in the PLA is an essential economic strategy.

Future Conditions

The number of visitors using the area for recreation purposes demonstrates the importance of maintaining the area's outstanding healthy forests, watersheds, clear lakes, scenery, and native wildlife and fisheries. As the area's population and visitation inevitably increases, there will be a greater need/pressure to identify areas for businesses to establish to service the community, as well as, protect access to recreational opportunities while development occurs. The goals and policies in this plan strive to promote our need for diverse recreational opportunities while preserving the area's scenic character and ecological systems.

Goals:

1. Identify future areas where restaurants, lodging, services, community centers, and specialty shops could establish to meet the demands of recreational users.
2. Water-based commerce, along the shoreline should be encouraged, so long as its operations do not degrade adjacent property values, degrade water-quality, or violate noise or light ordinances. These businesses must be properly licensed, insured, and where appropriate bonded like all commercial ventures in Bonner County.

Policies

1. Policies should work to balance the economic benefits of recreational opportunities with the impact on local housing, fire services, medical services, and search and rescue operations. Affordable housing for seasonal workers should be considered when planning for enterprises that serve the recreational needs of the area.
2. New developments should be encouraged to preserve open space and wildlife habitat using such means as voluntary conservation easements, parking at trailheads, and other measures.
3. Promote policies that preserve healthy trees, protect wetlands, rivers and streams, lakes, and other natural features that add to the recreational attractiveness to the area.

Land Use

The goals and policies that are presented in this chapter has been informed by the information collected throughout this document, through input from the community, and in conjunction with supporting documentation in the general Bonner County Comprehensive Plan. They represent priority topics discussed during the update of the land use plan, and comprehensively address the areas of land use; residential neighborhoods; commercial development; transportation; natural resources; and agriculture. The goals contained in this chapter are meant to complement and strengthen the statements in the general comprehensive plan and provide a more specific framework for future development in the Priest Lake Area.

Goal: To maintain the character of the Priest Lake Area.

- Designated land uses shall be provided by this plan. This plan encourages clustered development and prohibits amendments to the map that are not adjacent to the desired designation.
- Land uses should be consistent with existing development, and blend with existing communities.
- Minimize the development of residential projects which create isolated neighborhoods.
- New locations for recreational type businesses should be identified in appropriate areas, and land use regulations shall support existing businesses that serve the needs of residents and tourists.
- As development occurs along Highway 57 and East Shore Rd, implementation of larger building setbacks, and buffer strips should be considered in order to maintain the scenic corridor.
- Landscape buffers to improve aesthetic cover and minimize noise shall be encouraged and implemented where industrial or commercial land uses occur.
- Locate the densest residential areas away from the lake and close to shops, services and transportation hubs
- Encourage expansion of sewer districts away from the lake.
- Avoid creating dense (<1 acre) residential areas within 1000 ft. of shorelines.
- Encourage bicycle, pedestrian, ski, ATV, snowmobile, access in the development of facilities and transportation plans. Including consideration to link paths and trails to recreation areas, service areas, and systems of adjacent jurisdictions.
- Limit high density development to the areas within the sewer districts that are not State, Federal or commercial timber lands.
- Encourage land use decisions to consider input, especially scientifically or historically based input, on projects affects to the further degradation of the lake.
- Encourage education of the potential impacts to the lake? Retaining vegetation; erosion control, storm water management.

Goal: Allow for the continuation of agriculture as a distinct land use and a viable sector of the economy.

- Land use regulations should attempt to protect larger parcels in the Agricultural/Forestry zoning districts in order to preserve agricultural uses as a viable and sustainable economic base in the community.
- Protect existing farm operations and farmland from fragmentation by discouraging the encroachment of non-agricultural uses.

Goal: To maintain the attributes that make Priest Lake, the “Crown Jewel” of Idaho.

- Regulations should protect natural lakes, rivers and streams while at the same time protecting the rights of the private property owners for the reasonable use and enjoyment of their properties.
- Direct new development to areas away from shorelines that are served by sewer now or within the timeframe of the Plan.
- Provide for smaller lot sizes in sewered areas that are away from shorelines to allow for development that would protect ground and surface water and associated riparian zone ecosystems.
- Zoning districts should foster compact development patterns near transportation hubs and services. Sprawl shall be avoided, as should high density development on shorelines.
- When development occurs near shorelines, steps to retain natural shoreline hydrologic processes, and native vegetation in setback buffer areas should be encouraged.

Goal: Encourage citizen involvement in the on-going land use decision-making process and provide opportunities for citizen participation in the implementation, review, and amendment of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

- Encourage the County to participate in land use decisions initiated by other governmental agencies, including the conversion of public to private lands.
- Promote stakeholder awareness of pending land use changes in their area including zoning changes and variances.

PRIEST LAKE LAND USE

(To address Priest Lake Area needs)

The proposed land use matrix below lists general uses and characteristics of each of the map designations important to the Priest Lake Area (PLA). Since the map covers 1.1 million acres, the map is general in nature, and it is recognized that some areas may have more moderate slopes or include transportation features that cannot be mapped on this scale.

Map Designations

1. Commercial: *Examples: retail stores, Gas station/minimarts, professional office, personal services,* The Commercial classification is reserved for those areas of the County where commercial activities can take place. These areas require primary transportation routes, urban like water and sewer services, fire and police services and appropriate buffering from residential activities.

2. Neighborhood Commercial: *Examples: resorts, restaurants,* The Neighborhood Commercial area is designed to provide light commercial, multifamily or resort type uses to serve the needs of the rural communities and tourist trade (resort areas) without adversely affecting residential neighborhoods. Urban services and primary transportation systems, such as the state highways or major/minor collector roads are required. Conditional use permits shall be required for higher impact uses. *Adjoining neighbors should be provided the opportunity to preview and comment on commercial design plans including building aesthetics, landscaping buffers, and signage.*

1. Building density for resorts on bodies of water is limited to 4 units per acre.
2. In consideration of the seasonal high density usage in resort areas; accommodations will include either sewer or vault toilet systems that keep effluent from being absorbed into the ground or run into the waterbody of shoreline areas.
3. Incorporating healthy native vegetation including well-spaced trees will be strongly encouraged to stabilize soils, help preserve water quality, & shoreline ecosystems in addition to maintaining the character of desirable lake view aesthetics.
4. If on water, the target building setback is preferably greater than 100 ft., allowing for a buffer green space between the shoreline beach and buildings established for lodging or eating or other related resort services. Exceptions would include marine services that might include dockside structures.
5. Best practices will be used for the construction and use of marine fueling facilities to avoid chemical contamination of the water.

3. Light Industrial: *Examples: sawmills, home/shed prefabrication, warehousing, storage units, welding fabrication, boat building, precast concrete, dock building...*

The purpose of the Light Industrial zone is to encourage the development of manufacturing and wholesale businesses that are clean, quiet, and free of noise, odor, dust, smoke and other potentially hazardous waste. The Light Industrial classification is reserved for areas where industrial land uses can occur. Light Industrial operations shall be planned, publicly reviewed and conducted in a manner that protects the health, safety and general welfare of residents, and the integrity of the natural environment.

Due to the intensity of land use, these areas require:

1. Ready access to paved load appropriate roadway with planned accommodation for handling turning radii of commercial vehicles.
2. Appropriate landscape or treed buffers to improve aesthetic cover and minimize noise transferred to nearby communities, residences or recreational areas.
3. Appropriate distancing from sensitive surface water riparian and wetland zones.
4. Light industrial will require full sewer services

4. Residential: These areas may or may not front on bodies of water and may or may not have the availability of urban services.

1. **Lots with improved urban services of sewer and water:** The minimum lot size is one half acre. If bordering a body of water, the minimum watered frontage shall be 100 feet.
2. **Lots without sewer and water:** The minimum lot size is 2.5 acres. If bordering a body of water, the minimum watered frontage shall be 200 feet.
3. **Density** is limited to (1) single family dwelling and (1) accessory dwelling unit per minimum lot size.
4. The **minimum access** requirements are: public roads or private roads that are dedicated to the public. Roads shall be graveled at a minimum and if bordering existing communities, shall have access to primary transportation routes and a system of hard surfaced roads.
5. In rural settings where urban services are not available,, small-scale agricultural uses are permitted.

5. Ag/Forest Land: These areas generally are flat and may contain prime agricultural land soils, soils of recognized state importance, and may or may not feature active farm and ranch operations. This designation encourages the preservation of pastoral farm land, and minimizes commercial and industrial use. All commercial activities taking place within this designation shall be encouraged to be based around agricultural uses, such as agri-education, direct marketing activities, seasonal harvest activities and value added processing. The minimum lot size in this designation shall be 20 acres.

6. Prime Ag/Forest Land: The prime agricultural/forest land is designed to preserve the productive farm and ranch land and timber land to promote its important economic and environmental contributions to the County. This area may have a range of road systems serving it and is generally served by individual sewer and water systems. These areas generally have prime agricultural land soils and soils of recognized state importance and active farm and ranch operations. The minimum lot size in this designation shall be 20 acres.

7. Remote Ag/Forest Land: The remote Ag/forest land (County public lands) is located on mountaintops and remote areas of the County where few or no access roads have been constructed. Included in these areas are most of the state and federal lands, which are managed for forest production. The minimum lot size in this designation shall be 20 acres.