



**"Sharon G Seim"**  
**<sseim@fs.fed.us>**

03/27/2003 10:56 AM

To: clay\_fletcher@fws.gov  
cc: "Bill Shields" <bshields@fs.fed.us>  
Subject: East Fork Crooked River Bridge -- Lynx

Hi Clay,

I've assembled and attached some materials for you regarding the lynx BO you are writing for the E Fk Crooked River Bridge Replacement project. Again, my apologies for not catching some of the discrepancies during my review of the contractor's BA.

The bridge replacement project lies at the boundary between two LAUs:

Orogrande LAU	22,744 acres	40% denning	69%
suitable	31% unsuitable		
Wild Horse LAU	21,746 acres	17% denning	81% suitable
19%unsuitable			

Implementing Alternative 3 of the project, the preferred alternative, would affect approximately 50-70 linear feet of stream bank/channel and 0.05 acres of land, including the removal of some brush and trees. The north and east sides of the project area are adjacent to, and perhaps within, stands classified as lynx denning habitat (see attachment "efkbridge.pdf"). I have not been to the project site, so I am assuming the classification is correct. Neither LAU is below threshold for denning habitat, but the Orogrande LAU is below threshold for suitable habitat. It is difficult to determine in which LAU the denning habitat lies. Assuming the entire 0.05 acres is in the Orogrande LAU, the project would potentially affect 0.0002% of the habitat within this LAU. [Please note that this is a larger percentage than was written into the contractor's BA.] The project would be implemented in March, outside of the critical lynx denning period of May to August.

As you requested, I checked the lynx siting information presented in the contractor's BA. The Earthquake Basin and Lightening Creek sitings are indeed distinct. In addition, I found several other lynx sitings in the Idaho CDC dataset, some of which are closer to the project site (the closest is within 6 miles). In my opinion, some of these sitings may have been bobcat, but others are plausible lynx sitings. I've attached a Word file providing the siting location, elevation, habitat, and any pertinent comments (see "lynx\_locs.doc"). The numbers assigned to these sitings are my own and correspond with a map I made depicting the sitings in relation to the bridge project (see "efklynxsite.pdf"). The Earthquake Basin and Lightening Creek sitings correspond to sitings 9 and 7, respectively, in the attached documents.

I still agree with the conclusions reached in the contractor's BA, specifically: "Based on the small scale of this Project, implementation would not measurably change the amount or type of lynx habitat available within the LAUs. The Project would thus be in conformance with the conservation measures described in Ruediger (2000)." I further agree that "...implementation of the Project May Affect, but would Not Likely Adversely Affect lynx."

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

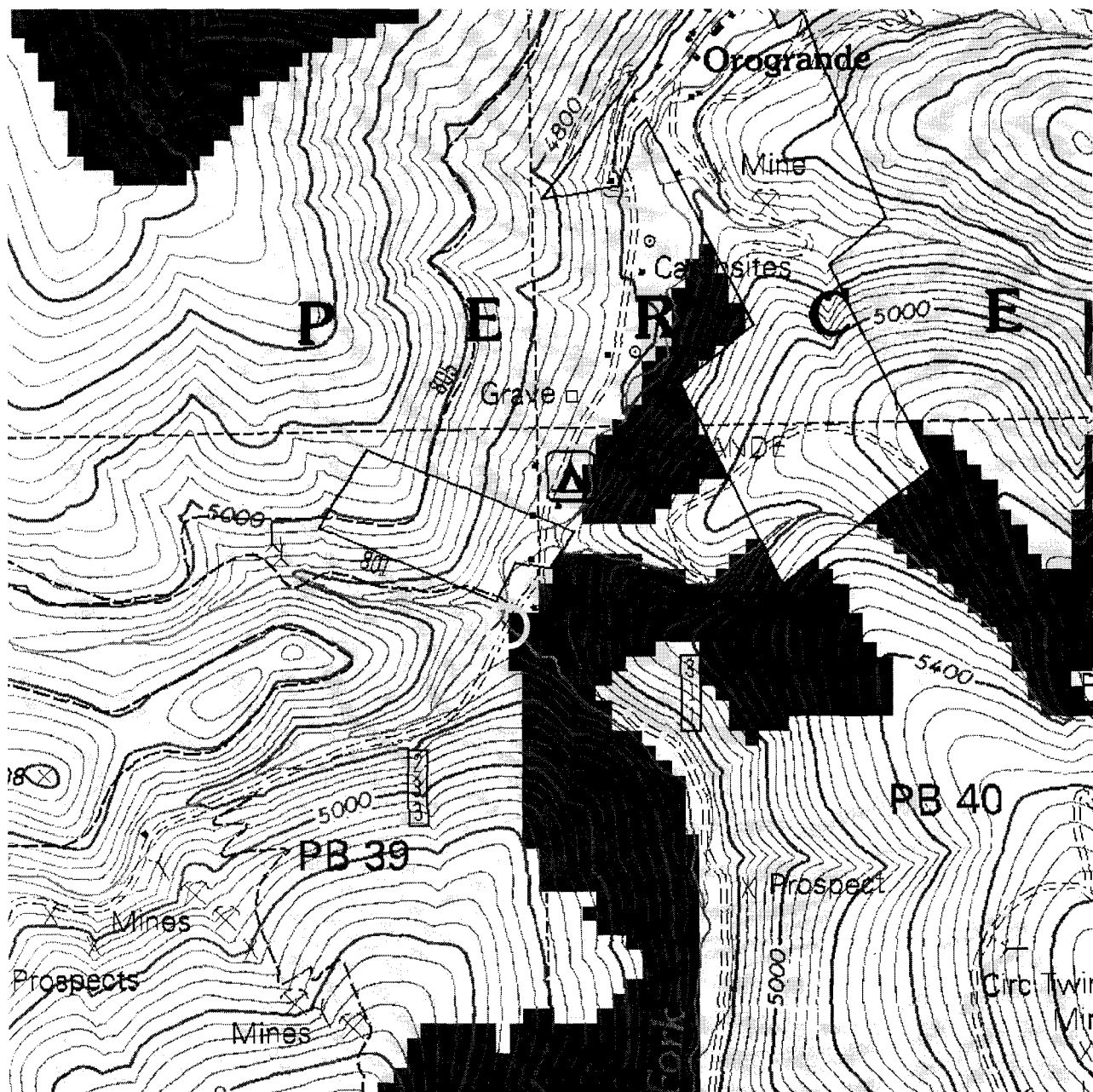
Sharon

(See attached file: lynx\_locs.doc) (See attached file: efklynxsite.pdf) (See attached file: efkbridge.pdf)



lynx\_locs.do efklynxsite.pdf efkbridge.pdf

# East Fork Crooked River Bridge Replacement Project in Relation to Lynx Habitat

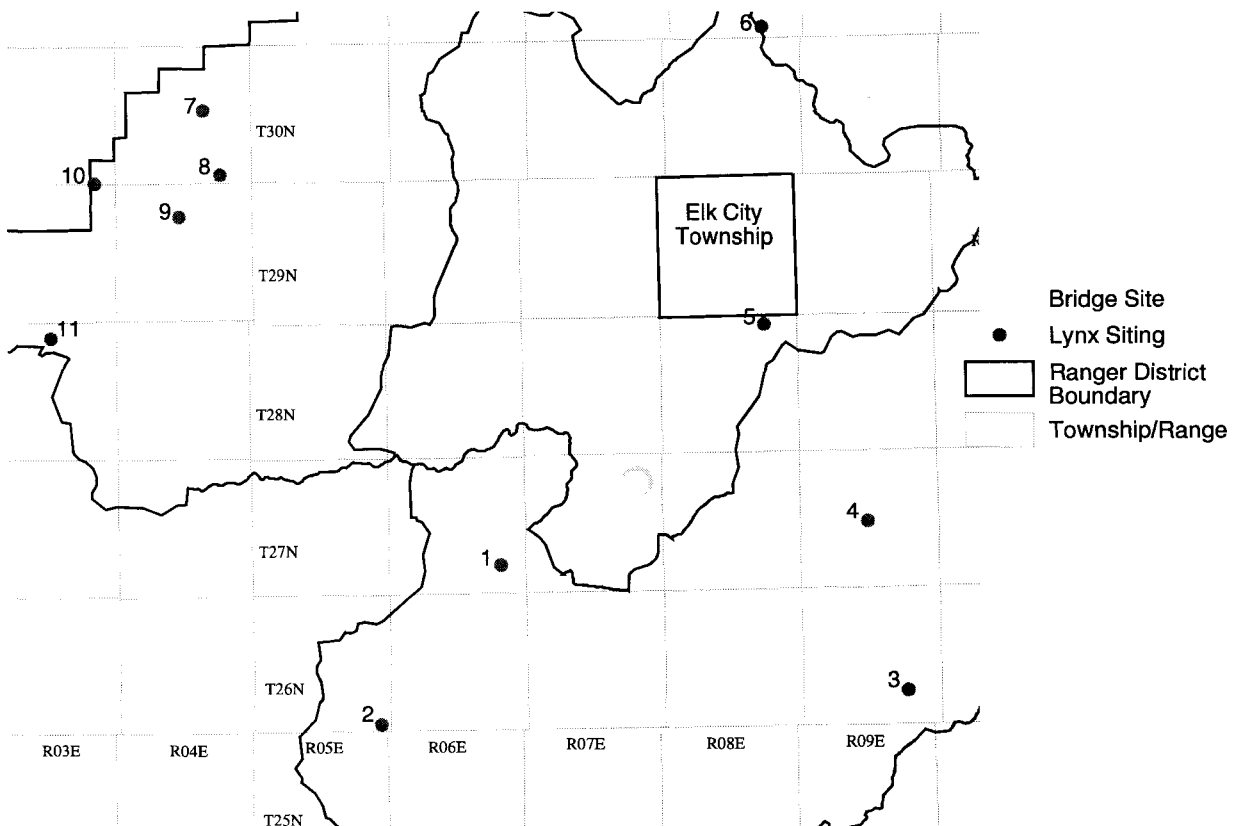


Bridge Site

Lynx Habitat:

- Denning
- Foraging
- Potential but not suitable
- Not potential

# Lynx Siting Information (Idaho CDC Data) in Relation to East Fork Crooked River Bridge Replacement Project



Lynx siting locations (from Idaho CDC data), Nez Perce National Forest, in relation to East Fork Crooked River Bridge Replacement Project. This table is accompanied by a GIS map depicting the siting locations and the project site.

	Location Description	TRS	Date	Elev. (ft.)	Habitat
1	West of Orogrande Summit, Kelly Lake area	T27N, R6E, NE4NW4 S26	09/29/1993	7060	Interspersed subalpine fir
	IDFG employee watched through binoculars for 10 minutes (400-500 yards away). Lynx was hunting near clearings.				
2	Sheep Creek area (imprecise location)	Vicinity of T26N, R5E, S36	1972	4000	(no information)
	Hound hunter saw lynx tracks up Sheep Creek while guiding out of Shep Ranch. Seen in Jan.-Mar. when hunting lions or Sept.-Nov. when hunting elk and mule deer.				
3	USFS Road 451, west of Noble Ck and Big Mallard Ck confluence	T26N, R9E, center S26	1993	5200	Mixed conifer: larch, grand fir, Douglas-fir, subalpine fir
	Fresh tracks seen by USFS wildlife biologist: 3 x 3 inches with characteristic hair around track.				
4	Near confluence of Pat Brennan Ck and Trapper Ck	T27N, R9E, NE4NE4 S21	11/05/1992	5190	Englemann spruce, subalpine fir, lodgepole pine
	Animal running in a clearcut at forest edge.				
5	Mother Lode area south of Elk City	T28N, R8E, S2	11/1995	4100	Mixed conifer
	Saw the same animal on two occasions.				
6	1 mile south of Buck Meadows on Limber Luke Road at Trailhead 835	T31N, R8E, N1/2 S35	6/14/2001	5650	(no information)
	Animal seen on road at distance of ~30 feet.				

	Location Description	TRS	Date	Elev. (ft.)	Habitat
7	~7 miles south of Harpster near confluence of Little Lightening Ck and Lightening Ck  Animal seen crossing road.	T30N, R4E, SE4 S15	08/02/1989	3100	Brushy area, Douglas-fir/mountain maple habitat
8	McComas Meadows between Green Ck and Peasley Ck  Tracks seen by hound hunter.	T30N, R4E, S35	1987	3200	(no information)
9	Earthquake Basin (probably Earthquake Meadows)  One male lynx killed; pelt checked by IDFG personnel.	T29N, R4E, S9 or adjacent sect.	12/07/1991	4850	(no information)
10	Junction of Highway 14 and Mt. Idaho Road  One animal seen walking along road	T30N, R3E, SW4SW4 S36	8/08/2000	2023	Ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir
11	Goodwin Ck  Animal seen at distance of 50 feet on the road.	T28N, R3E, SW4 S3	8/19/2001	5260	Dense brush



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Nez Perce National Forest

Route 2, Box 475  
Grangeville, ID 83530  
208 983-1950  
208 983-2280 TTY

File Code: 2670

Date: December 4, 2002

Bob Ruesink  
USDI Fish and Wildlife Service  
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368  
Boise, ID 83709

RECEIVED BY  
DEC 09 2002  
SNAKE RIVER BASIN OFFICE  
U.S. FWS

Dear Bob:

Enclosed are the biological assessments for the East Fork Crooked River Bridge Replacement Project.

As regulated by 50 CFR 402.10 and 50 CFR 402.13, please consider this a request for concurrence/conferencing on the following ESA listed and proposed species:

Bull trout	"Not Likely to Adversely Affect"
Canadian lynx	"Not Likely to Adversely Affect"
Gray wolf	"Not Likely to Jeopardize Continued Existence"

The Forest has determined that this project will have "No Effect" on the following species; therefore, requests no further ESA Section 7 action at this time:

Bald eagle  
Grizzly bear  
Marfarlane's four o'clock  
Water howellia  
Ute ladies'-tresses  
Spalding's catchfly

This action has been addressed by the Level 1 interagency team under the guidance of the streamlining process. If you have any questions or need further information regarding the activities submitted for consultation, please contact Dave Mays, Fisheries Biologist, or Sharon Seim, Wildlife Biologist, Red River Ranger District, at (208) 842-2245.

Sincerely,

  
BRUCE E. BERNHARDT  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

Cc:  
Daryl Mullinix  
Sharon Seim  
Dave Mays  
Bill Shields  
Joe Bonn (w/o enclosure)  
Red River District Ranger (w/o enclosure)  
Clay Fletcher, USFWS, Boise (w/o enclosure)  
Bob Ries, NMFS, Moscow (w/o enclosure)

COPY



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Printed on Recycled Paper

