Swan Falls Hydroelectric Project – Recreation Improvements & Habitat Enhancement

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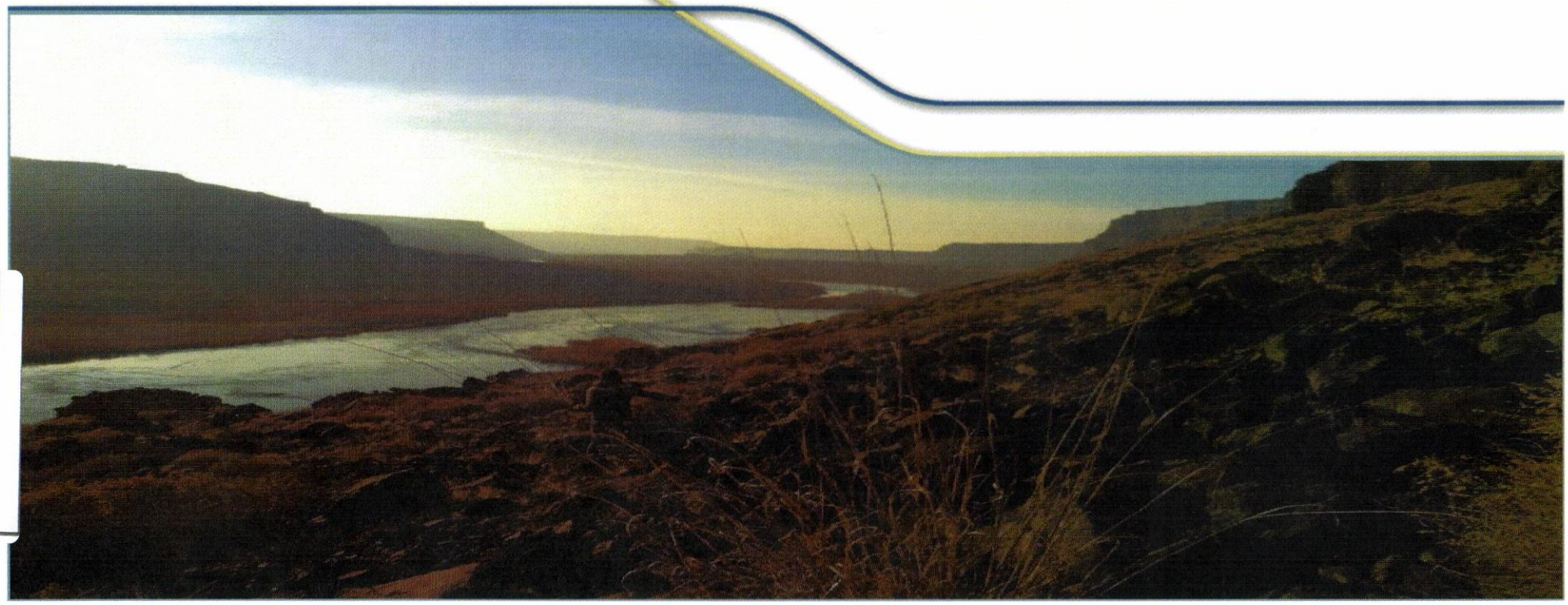

EXHIBIT 23
20140202 ZC-DA-CU-MSP-FP-HD
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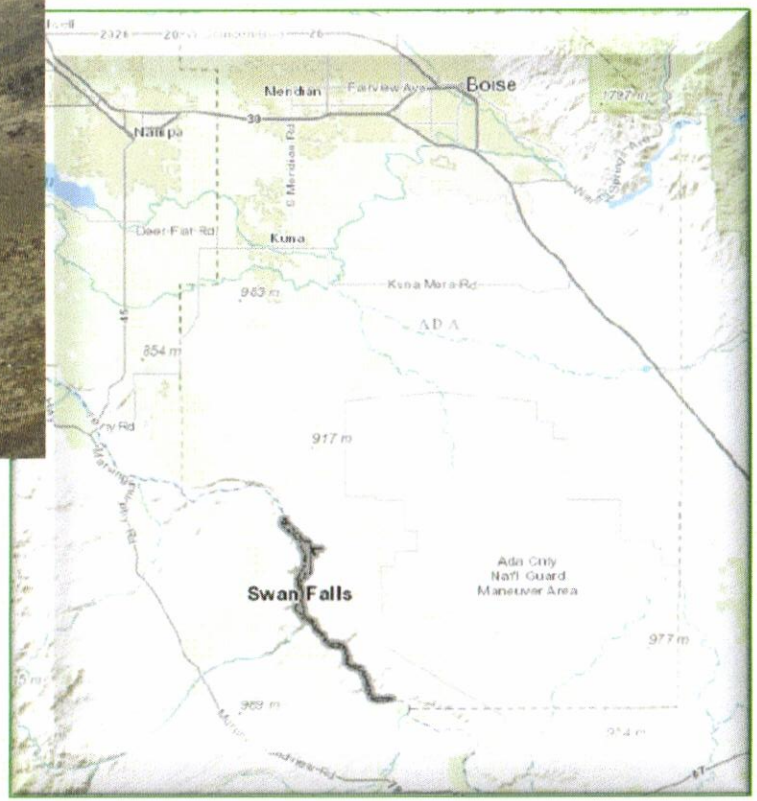
Swan Falls Hydroelectric Project



- ~35 Miles south of Boise
- Federally licensed 1928; relicensed 2012
- 12 mile reservoir
- 1,593 acres w/in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) boundary
- BLM/IPC land ownership primarily

Historic & Existing Uses

- Archaeological evidence indicates early occupation
- Informal public recreation use since mid 1900's
- Operational hydroelectric facility – 1909
  - Included construction crew/operator village, school, boarding house
  - Hydro upgrades 1980s & '90's
- Current IPC facilities
  - Swan Falls Park, restrooms & information kiosk
  - Boat launches up & downstream of dam
  - Powerhouse museum
  - Operator village
  - Dispersed camp sites up & downstream of dam

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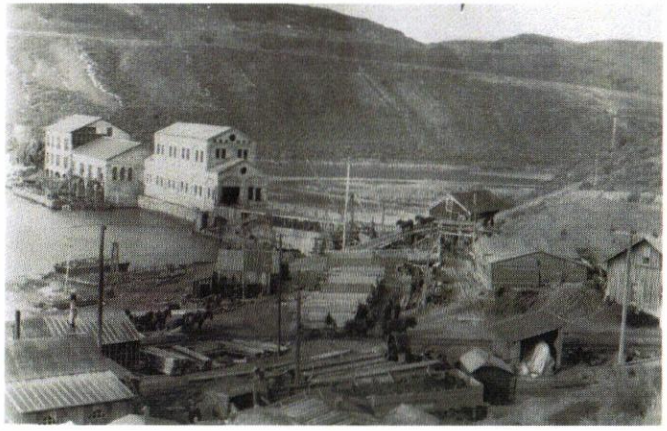

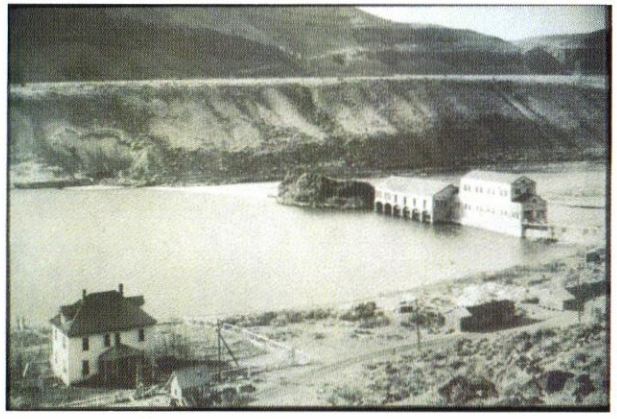

Project Purpose & Need

- Stakeholder consultation identified need for additional/upgraded recreational facilities
- Relicensing studies identified human use effects to habitat & cultural sites
- FERC mandated enhancement measures in 2012 license

FOOT TRAFFIC ONLY
Habitat Restoration
Project

Proposed Recreation Improvements

- Reservoir Boat Ramp
  - New accessible vault toilet
  - Enlarge/define parking
  - Widen & steepen concrete ramp
  - New accessible docks
- Swan Falls Park
  - Repair shoreline
  - New accessible dock system
  - Interpretative signage
    - Power plant & boarding house history
    - Native American
    - Fish and Wildlife
  - Picnic shelter and tables
- Downstream Boat Launch
  - New accessible vault toilet
  - Enlarge/define parking
  - 2 lane concrete ramp (presently gravel)
- Dispersed Recreation Sites
  - Define routes to sites/manage motorized traffic
  - Compacted gravel camping areas
  - Fire rings

NOTE: No Access Fees

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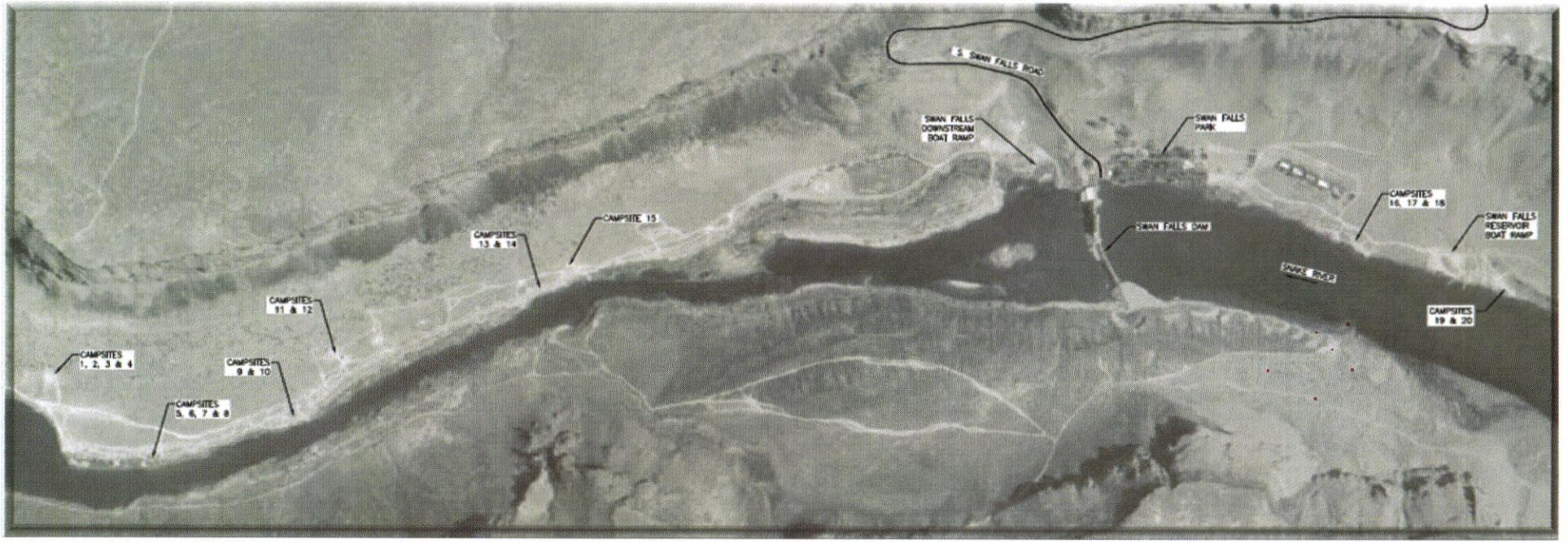
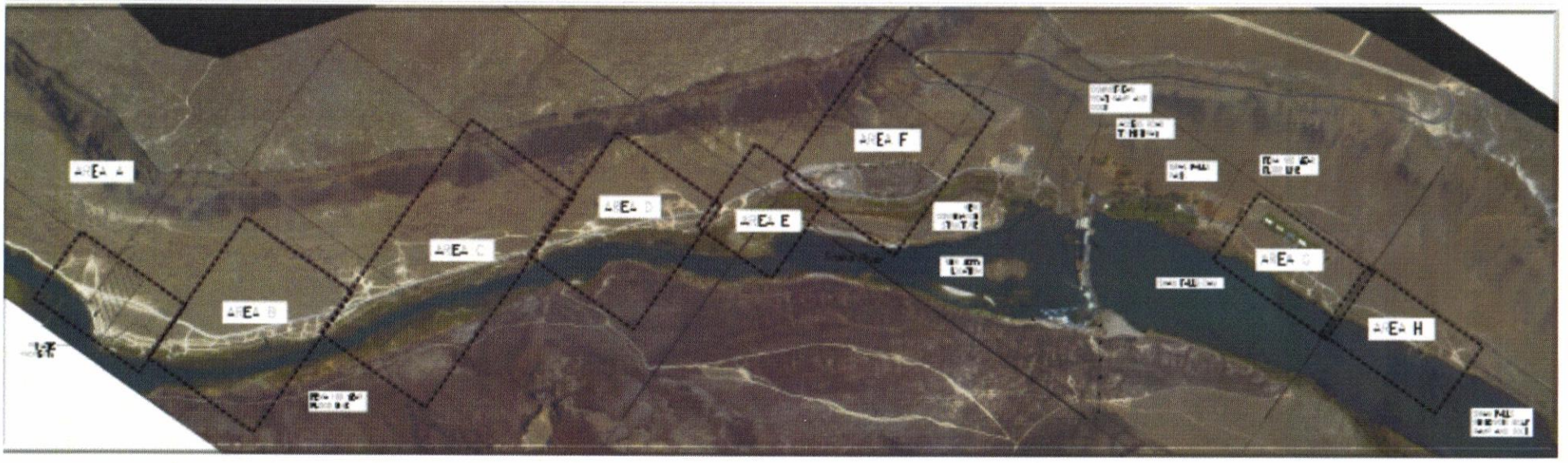


Proposed Habitat Improvements

- Upland habitat restoration
  - Decommission & revegetate ~9 acres of roadbed & ~36 acres of associated uplands
  - Fence or boulder sensitive areas
  - Monitoring program

- Riparian habitat restoration
  - ~25 acres protected by focusing recreation access
  - Monitor & re-vegetate where appropriate
  - Augment hydraulic connection between Snake River mainstem & Swan Falls island side channel


AREA F
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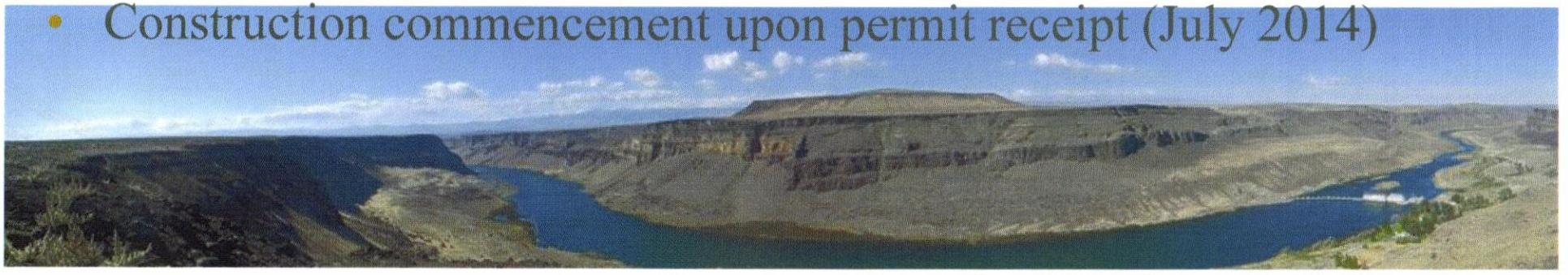
AREA H

Design & Construction

- 100% design submitted w/Master Site Plan application includes
  - Design specifications
  - Erosion control measures
  - Landscaping/revegetation plan
- All work will occur on IPC owned land
- Construction areas surveyed & cleared for cultural & sensitive botanical resources
  - IPC staff & contractors will monitor construction activities
- IPC has applied for all state & federal permits
- IPC will apply for applicable Ada County building permits
- Construction commencement upon permit receipt (July 2014)



Conditional Use & Wildland Urban Fire Interface

- Conditional Use
  - Project area currently zoned Rural Preservation w/WUFI overlay
  - Proposed project not directly contemplated in County ordinance; however, public/quasi-public uses considered as conditional uses

- Wildland Urban Fire Interface Amendment
  - Limited applicability to project area
    - Few structures/infrastructure in or near project area
    - Project area topographically isolated
  - Proposed improvements to existing, uncontrolled dispersed camping address WUFI intent
  - Proposed site monitoring, maintenance, & oversight reduce wildfire risks
  - BLM wildland fire policies include emergency assistance on non-federal lands if potential to affect BLM lands

Summary

- Federally mandated improvements & enhancements developed in close consultation with stakeholders
- Swan Falls area provides recreational opportunities to local & regional populations
- IPC committed to long-term stewardship
- Proposed project will improve visitor experience & safety while protecting natural & cultural resources
- Conditional Use & WUFI amendment approval not contradictory to existing uses