

Snake River Management Plan



Teton County/Jackson Parks and Recreation

2016 Annual Usage Report

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Introduction

The Snake River through Jackson Hole (SRJH) in Teton County, Wyoming includes the roughly 33 miles of river between Grand Teton National Park and Bridger-Teton National Forest from Moose to Hoback. The river offers residents and visitors outstanding opportunities for boating, fishing, and riverside recreation, with spectacular views of the Teton and Gros Ventre mountain ranges. Teton County developed a Final River Management Plan (Plan) in 2015 after 1.5 year public process. The Plan addresses recreation access, facilities, and public use to protect or enhance the quality of recreation opportunities and other resource values in the corridor. The Final Plan includes adaptive management processes to make adjustments or amendments to meet Plan goals and objectives. It calls for an Annual Report to document use, describe the status of management, and make recommendations.

The 2016 Annual Report addresses actions concerning capacities, commercial use management and commercial allocations. Within specific topics, the document sometimes splits out information for different river segments (Moose to Wilson; Wilson to South Park, and South Park downstream). Annual Report includes public comments from a questionnaire and recommendations for the 2017 year.

Use Levels and Capacities: Actions C-1 through C-4

This section of the report will review 2016 use levels relative to plan capacities, organized by the three river segments (Moose to Wilson; Wilson to South Park; and South Park downstream) and types of use (commercial scenic; commercial fish; commercial small boat trips; and private).

Other sections below address additional issues related to commercial use, including, commercial use certification, the commercial registration system, and allocation.

| Capacities | | 2016 Status | 2017 Recommendation |
|------------|--|--|---|
| C-1 | Commercial fishing trip and boat limits | Large groups permitted to launch outside of designated peak use time (8:30 am - 11:00 am). | No changes to limits. Continue to monitor large groups and number of large groups launching at any given time. Consider setting maximum number of boats launched per hour. |
| C-2a | Commercial trip and boat limits from Moose to Wilson | The County allowed commercial scenic “special event” trips larger than the standard limits (see below) during nonpeak use periods. Rules allowed up to 5 per year; only one was utilized in 2016 | No change. |
| C-2b | Commercial scenic boat limits from trip Wilson to South Park | Allow multiple large groups per day. Continue to require all large groups to declare start time and launch outside peak use period. | No change. |
| C-3 | Commercial small boats and boat limits | The County enforced these limits and they appeared to effectively prevent large flotillas of small boat commercial trips (common in past years). | No change. |
| C-4 | Large private boating groups | Private groups larger than 15 were encouraged to contact Teton County to schedule trips and use off-peak periods. At least one large group registered their trips as recommended. | No change. |

Public comments on use of registration calendar to avoid groups

- *We used it a little, but mostly to see if it was feasible to go Wilson to South Park.*
- *For raft trips you need to have a “trip time” so people can make plans. It also consolidates our trips into one or two launch times. Minimize our impact.*
- *No, not for that purpose, as fishing boats stayed out of the large groups way*
- *In order to run our operation, we have to set our schedule months in advance. We rely on individuals to book into trips already going. People often book the day of, so in order to have staff on hand, it needs to be scheduled out. We do not run custom trips as a rule, so the calendar doesn’t do anything to help us plan trips.*
- *I couldn’t avoid crowded times or dates as the fishing clients, for the most part, determine when we do trips.*
- *Yes*
- *No (x 2)*
- *Not really. We spent way too much time looking at the county calendar and literally becoming a full time job in order to secure access. It is really hard when you are small business and you are paying someone many hours to simply work on county calendar.*

Public comments on the experience taking or meeting large groups in 2016

- *Wilson bridge to much “chaos” with large busses and big rafts.*
- *There usually wasn’t enough capacity in the pool to take large groups*
- *We don’t meet any large groups.*
- *This is a very leading question. For the companies that take large groups, they are going to have a positive response. For the people who don’t take large groups, you are going to have a negative response. There are more companies who don’t take groups than do, and because of that I imagine you will have more people telling you that groups are a problem when they are not. I feel like a question like this leads people to complain about things that are not necessarily happening. I think the best feedbacks you can get for a question like this are from the people that are at the ramps everyday (Logan, Dale, etc.). We talked and stayed in touch with them all the time, asking them if there are things we can do better or things we are not doing that we need to do. The response was very much the same....our groups were well managed, our guides were very conscious of space on the ramp, and often times we were more efficient and quicker than people launching one raft.*
- *We live in Jackson Hole, people come here to experience its beauty, that isn’t going to change and in fact its happening at a larger scale. Group launches are the best way to accommodate these things. Two 15 minute impact at the ramps and 2 minutes passing a given user on the river. If you have full boat launches you have less boats on the river. Right now you have people out there with a boat with 2 people on it with the same impact as a group launch.*
- *We don’t usually handle large groups as a rule. We have a few companies that have scheduled set departures with us, but we usually try to launch them in the late afternoon when we can have the river to ourselves. Often, we are the only ones there at that time.*
- *Didn’t have any large groups.*

- *We're trying not to accommodate these types of trips but had a few small ones that we teamed up with other certified outfitters and all went smoothly.*
- *It was fine on the fishing side as we always had to check in the Megan before we took the bookings.*
- *Very pleased with the SRMP and outfitters in working together with groups.*
- *Small groups only with the drift boat. No comment*

Moose to Wilson Capacities: Actions C-5 and C-6

Daily commercial use levels from Moose to Wilson for 2016 are compared to the advisory capacities in Figures 1 (fishing), 2 (scenic), and 3 (both sectors; next page). Monthly averages for fishing and scenic commercial trips per day are given in Table 1 (next page).

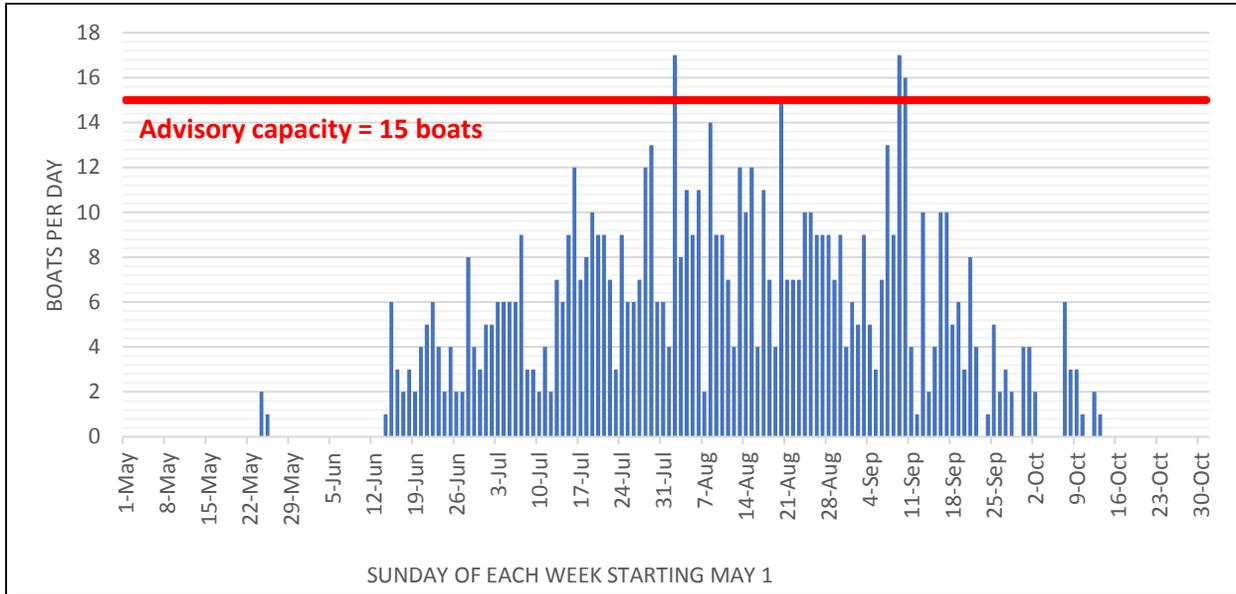


Figure 1. Daily commercial fishing use levels from Moose to Wilson for 2016.

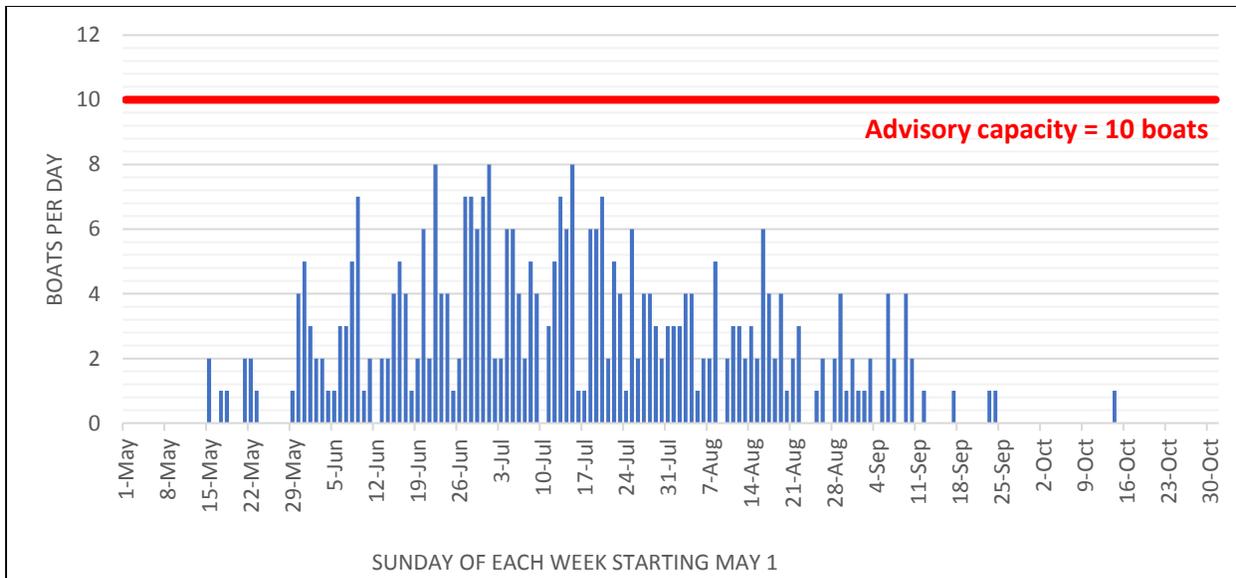


Figure 2. Daily commercial scenic use levels from Moose to Wilson for 2016.

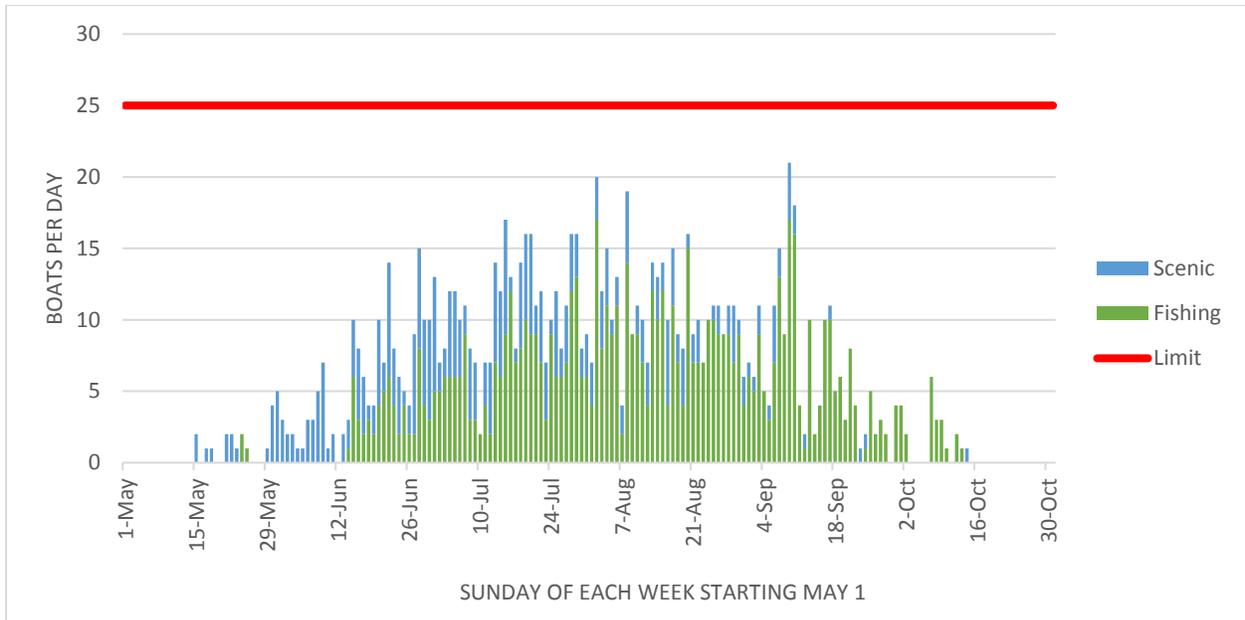


Figure 3. Total commercial use levels from Moose to Wilson for 2016.

Table 1. 2016 Commercial use statistics (boats per day) from Moose to Wilson

| | 2016 | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------|--------|
| | Fishing | Scenic | Total |
| Advisory Capacity | 15 | 10 | 25 |
| Average | 4 | 1.9 | 5 |
| Max (number of days) | 17 (2) | 8 (3) | 21 (1) |
| Daily Averages by Month | | | |
| May | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.78 |
| June | 2 | 3.5 | 5.5 |
| July | 6.7 | 4 | 10.7 |
| August | 8.6 | 2.4 | 11 |
| September | 5.8 | 0.7 | 6.5 |
| October | 0.7 | 0 | 0.1 |

Notes & Updates for 2017

Data gathered in 2015 and 2016 shows consistent usage, with a slight rise in commercial fishing use in 2016. There are a limited number of outfitters that have both the SRMP and GTNP permits necessary to access this segment of river. Despite a handful of days that fishing use rose above the advisory capacity, the total number of boats remained below the advisory level. Recommend continuing to monitor usage trends, and reevaluate in 2018 with a three year average.

Wilson to South Park capacities: Actions C-7 and C-8

Daily 2016 commercial use levels from Wilson to South Park are shown in in Figures 4 (fishing), 5 (scenic), 6 (small boat) and 7 (all sectors; next page). They are compared to 1) original recommended capacities, and 2) the capacity levels that were chosen for 2016. Monthly averages for fishing, scenic, and small boat commercial trips are given in Table 2.

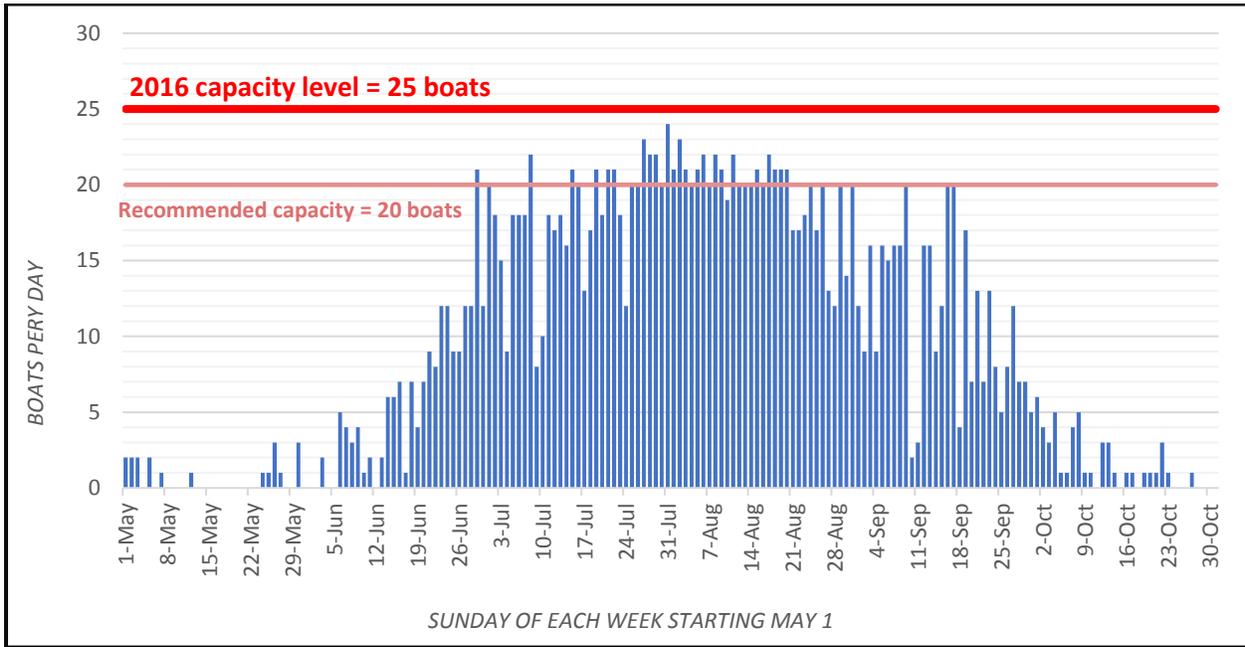


Figure 4. Daily fishing use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

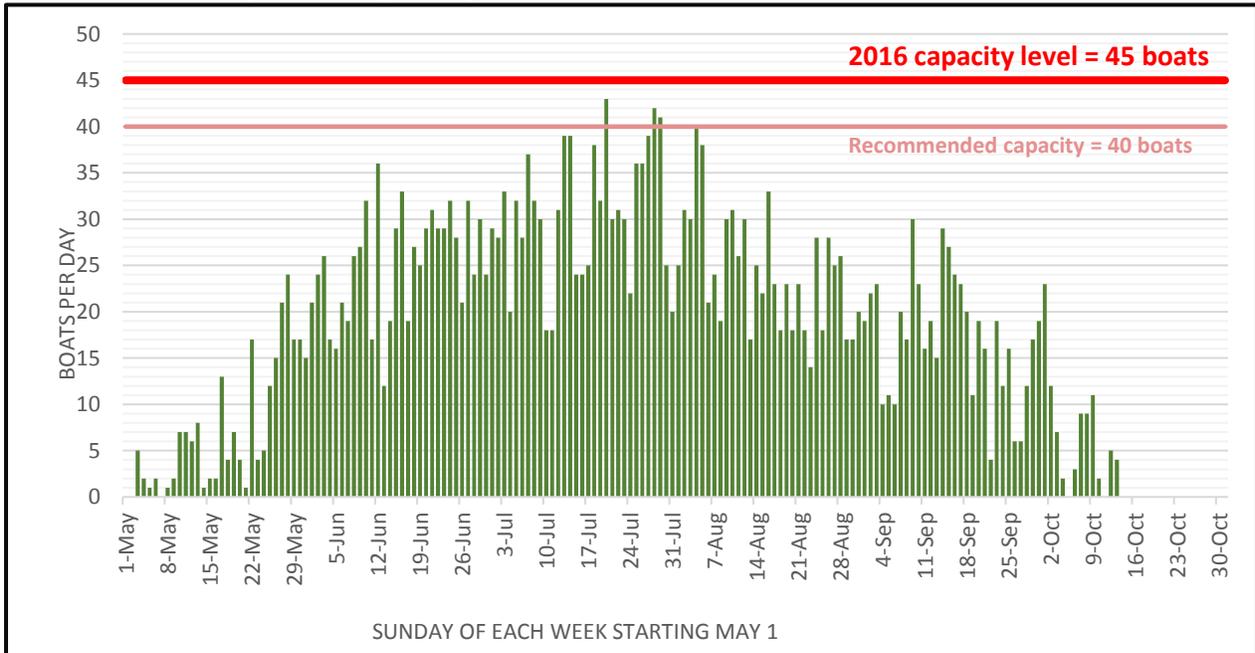


Figure 5. Daily commercial scenic use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

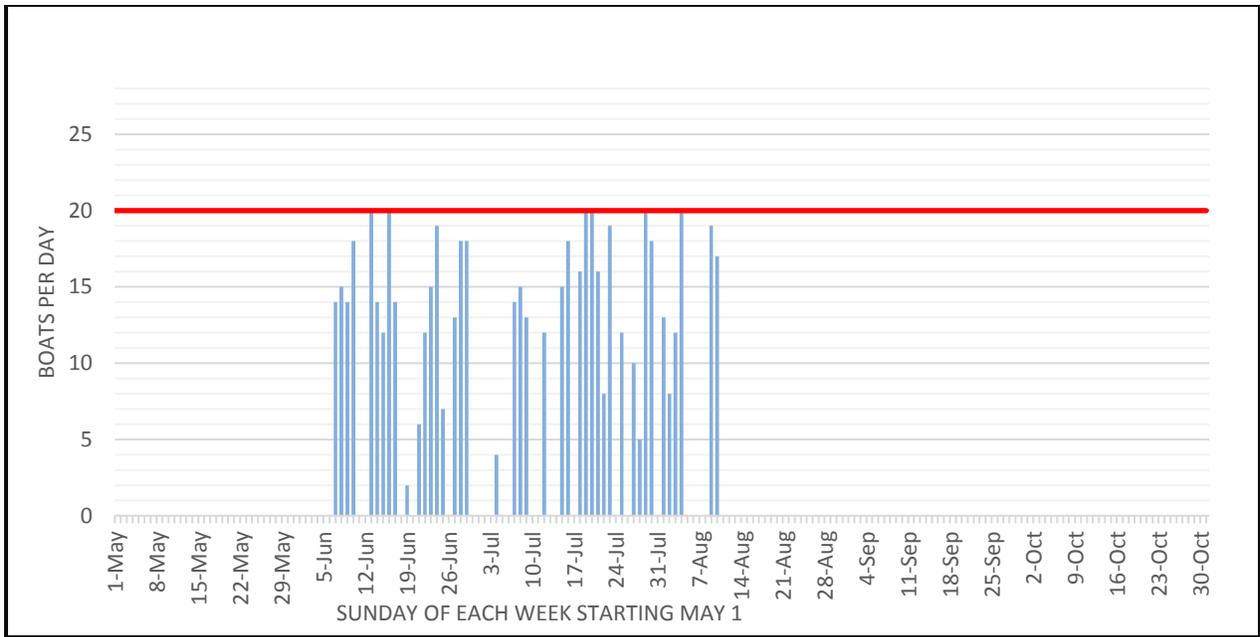


Figure 6. Daily commercial small craft use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

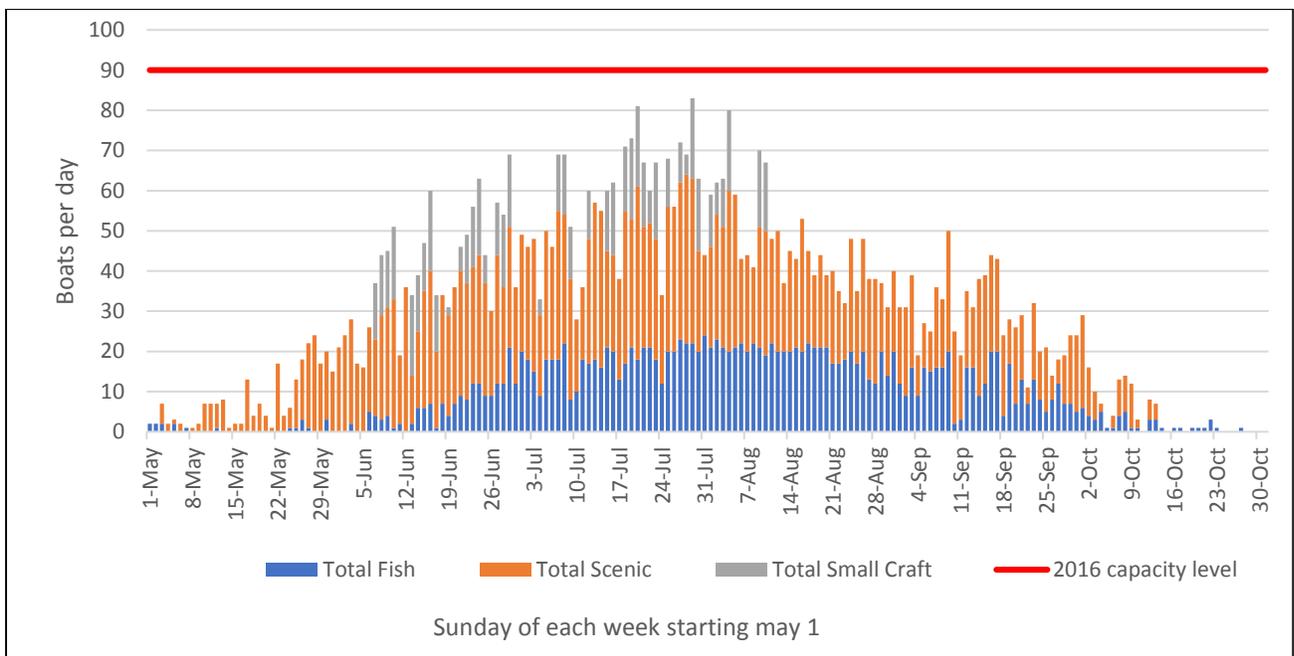


Figure 7. Daily total commercial use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

| | 2015 | | | | 2016 | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|--------------|---------|--------|-------------|---------------|
| | Fishing | Scenic | Small Craft | All Boats | Fishing | Scenic | Small Craft | All Boats |
| Recommended Capacity | 20 | 40 | 30 | 90 | 20 | 40 | 30 | 90 |
| Annual Capacity | 30 | 60 | 30 | 120 | 25 | 45 | 20 | 90 |
| Average | 11 | 20 | 5.1 | 37 | 9.5 | 17.9 | 3.23 | 30.6 |
| Max (number of days) | 30 (1) | 47 (1) | 20 (4) | 81(1) | 23 (1) | 43 (1) | 20 (5) | 81 (1) |
| Daily Averages by Month | | | | | | | | |
| May | 1 | 7.3 | 0 | 8 | 1.7 | 7 | 0 | 7.8 |
| June | 5.3 | 25 | 7.9 | 38 | 5.9 | 25.2 | 8.4 | 39.4 |
| July | 17.3 | 30.4 | 9.1 | 57 | 18 | 30.7 | 8.2 | 56.9 |
| August | 20.3 | 25 | 3.6 | 49 | 19.5 | 24.5 | 2.9 | 46.9 |
| September | 11.4 | 16.9 | 0.1 | 28 | 11.3 | 17.2 | 0 | 28.5 |
| October | | | | | 1.5 | 2.8 | 0 | 4.4 |

Table 2. Commercial use statistics (boats per day) from Wilson to South Park.

Public comments on Wilson to South Capacities

- *The reduction was definitely felt. The reduction of allocated boats from 2 to 1, left us with uncertainty about assured usage. This also translated to only having 4 boats max per day instead of 5 which hindered our ability to accommodate groups of 10 that wanted to stay together. I don't feel the reduced number of boats was noticed by the consumer, they don't see the difference between 25 and 30 when they are spread out over a 4 hour period. I would like to see outfitters with the heavier use return to the 2 boat allocation.*
- *Used registration date for booking, usually in advance.*
- *We turned away a large amount of business due to no capacity*
- *Seemed ok.*
- *On the scenic rafting side, Wilson to South Park capacities are dramatically lower than the capacities in the park which can float over 100 scenic rafts a day. There were not many days when the scenic raft hit its capacity, but because this section is already the most regulated commercial section in the valley for rafts, there is no need to reduce the number further*
- *They are very restricting. We live in Jackson Hole, people come here to experience its beauty, that isn't going to change and in fact its happening at a larger scale. Group launches are the best way to accommodate these things. Two 15 minute impact at the ramps and 2 minutes passing a given user on the river. If you have full boat launches you have less boats on the river. Right now you have people out there with a boat with 2 people on it with the same impact as a group launch.*
- *We had a few days where we required more boats than the available capacity. Sometimes, this was solved by contacting another outfitter, at our expense. Once or twice, we were able to pull the additional pool days at the last minute after the County released the boats back into the pool. Overall I didn't view this as a source of complaint.*
- *The capacities could be upped a little bit for fishing. I didn't have any days I thought were overly crowded on the river with fishing boats but I did have a few days I couldn't run trips because I couldn't get a pool permit.*

- *Based on the reduced fishing daily allotments all seemed to work well from our perspective. We still feel that adding the 5 pool slots is appropriate.*
- *Capacities for fishing should remain the same and scenic should certainly be lowered! Several scenic companies are manipulating the system and overcrowding the boat launches almost entirely themselves. Gives smaller outfitters limited opportunity.*
- *It seemed to me the number of boats per day on river were not as noticeable as the lack of openings on the reservation system. I believe a few more open pool reservations could be manageable.*
- *Capacity is not an issue if there is no law.*

Notes & Updates for 2017

Commercial use on the Wilson to South Park segment of the Snake River is consistent with numbers recorded in 2015, with 2016 monthly averages in each sector being within 1 boat of the monthly average recorded in 2015. This steady level of use over two years is encouraging.

The only challenge that was encountered was that the fishing pool was maxed out on numerous days, while the allocations on those days weren't at capacity. This means that outfitters were not releasing their allocated boats when they were not being used.

In order to address this while also creating stability, the first recommendation is to maintain the 2016 capacity for the scenic and small boat sectors (45 and 20 boats per day, respectively). In an effort to open up more pool spaces for those outfitters not receiving a pre-season allocation, it is recommended that the formula for calculating pre-season allocations be slightly adjusted. This will be addressed further beginning on page 16, Wilson to South Park Allocations.

South Park to Hoback Capacities: Actions C-9 and C-10

Daily 2016 commercial fish use levels from South Park downstream are compared to the advisory capacity in Figure 8 (only three scenic trips were registered on this segment in 2016, so they were not represented with a daily use figure). Monthly averages for all commercial trips per day are given in Table 3.

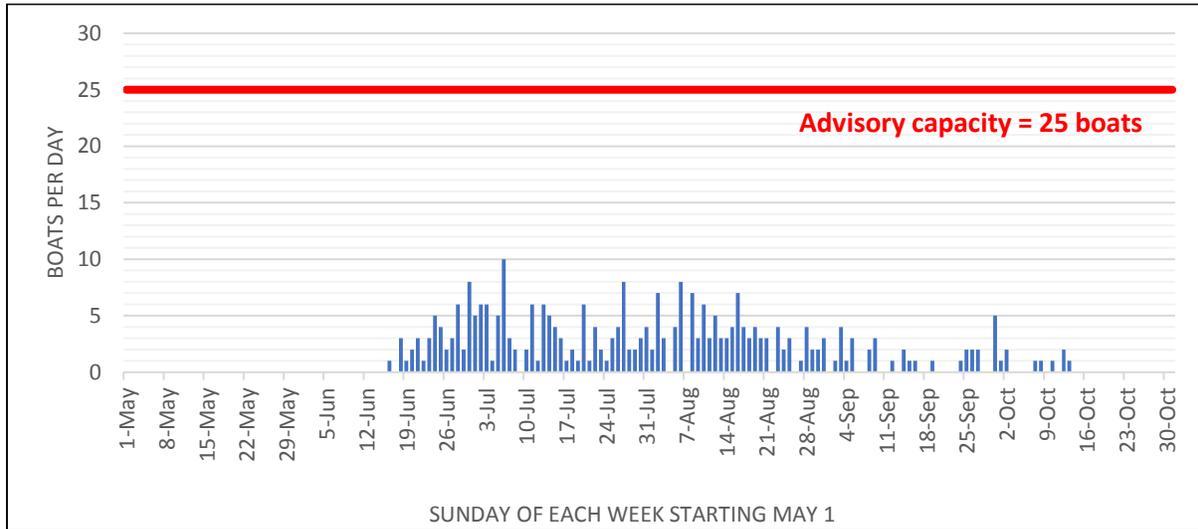


Figure 8. Daily commercial fishing use levels from South Park to Hoback for 2016.

Table 3. 2016 Commercial use statistics (boats per day) from South Park to Hoback.

| | | 2016 | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------|--------|------------|--------|
| | | Fishing | Scenic | Small boat | Total |
| Advisory Capacity | | 25 | 5 | 20 | 50 |
| Average | | 1.6 | <0.1 | 1.9 | 3.5 |
| Max (number of days) | | 10 (1) | 1 (1) | 26 (1) | 33 (1) |
| Daily Averages by Month | | | | | |
| | May | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | June | 1.5 | 0 | 5 | 6.6 |
| | July | 3.5 | 0.1 | 5.7 | 9.2 |
| | August | 3.3 | 0.1 | 0.8 | 4.2 |
| | September | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1.1 |
| | October | 0.3 | 0 | 0 | 0.3 |

Notes & Updates for 2017

Data gathered in 2016 shows a reduction of boats accessing the South Park to Hoback segment, though this could easily be attributed to commercial outfitters accessing via Von Gontrard’s Landing and not being required to log that trip. There are a limited number of outfitters that have both the SRMP and BTNF permits (or use of private lands) necessary to egress from this segment of river. Recommend continuing to monitor usage trends, and re-evaluate in 2018 with a three year average.

Commercial use management and certification: Actions D-1 thru D-6

| Commercial Use Management | | 2016 Status | 2017 Status |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| D-1 | Require outfitters to meet certification requirements | All outfitters required to complete certification documentation and submit recertification fee. | Require that outfitters be current on all invoices for 2016 (no past due balance) to be considered for recertification in 2017. |
| D-2 | Boat identification requirements | Boat identification numbers were required in 2015, and compliance appeared to be very high. The few problems associated with contrasting colors were resolved with County staff. | The identification numbers made it easy for County staff to monitor use, and allow the public or landowners to identify outfitters should the need arise. Outfitters should also be required to have a decal on each vehicle that identifies the company they are with. The SRMP will provide decals similar the Annual Recertification Decal. |
| D-3 | On-river stipulations for all commercial trip | County staff monitored use at Wilson and South Park in 2016. The focus was ramp organization, boat counts and compliance. Some public comments requested additional services from staff. | County river technicians should continue compliance checks and interacting with each outfitter on the ramp. Add feature to Admin platform of the reservation system to allow for boats to be checked off and time stamped. Ramp congestion was noticeably down in 2016, and staff should continue to managed outfitters and river users on ramps, on the river, or at facilities. The face of the program should be on education as well as compliance. |
| D-4 | Other recommended outfitter practices | Staff and county reinforced on river stipulations and both state and local laws. | The County expects to improve coordinated education efforts in 2017 through Summit on the Snake, kiosks, and staff interactions. |
| D-5 | Penalties for noncompliance with certification or in-season operation requirements. | There were no major compliance problems regarding certification or operations recorded in 2016. A few outfitters had to be reminded of the regulations, but no disciplinary actions were needed other than a few verbal warnings. | Continue to monitor and record use. Utilize changes in reservation software to count boats electronically, and enforce the "three strikes" policy (verbal warning, written warning, permit revocation). |
| D-6 | Develop a voluntary "guide orientation course" to increase professionalism and consistency. | This course has not been developed ye., but staff held a Guide Meeting at Wilson pre-season. Approximately 30% of outfitters were in attendance. | Contingent on funding and staffing, the County will look for opportunities to develop this program in 2017, and will hold Pre-Season meeting at Wilson again. |

Public comment on the certification process

- *It is expensive for the quality and enforcement of the law. We are not getting our moneys worth.*
- *The process is fine, I just feel that there are too many certified fishing people. Many of these one and 2 guide operations have never been a guide on any other stretch of water because they are solo operators and don't have other permits, I don't feel they have the experience, qualifications or level of professionalism that represents the Jackson Hole Fly fishing industry*
- *Invested outfitters have put in years of work and incoming outfitters have a pretty easy road in order to become certified. Don't think it is fair that incoming outfitters have such an easy time and there needs to be a very difficult application process in order to weed out un-invested outfitters.*
- *It seemed to be reasonable. What was the math used to derive the figure used for pre-season allocations?*
- *Was straightforward and efficient.*
- *I'm not aware that there was a set certification process. I feel a little fuzzy on the requirements of the County – it feels very unofficial.*
- *I like it.*
- *The certification process was great.*
- *As long as you send an email to all notifying us of what is required it should be fine.*

Notes & Updates for 2017

Continue to educate both outfitters and private users about the river and appropriate use. Suggest changes to the online reservation system that allow staff to time stamp and “check off” boats as they arrive at the launch. This should include a field for adding the boat number associated with the reservation so that there is digital trail of what occurred at the ramp. Staff will continue to monitor use and report people that are suspected of guiding without a permit. There were two times during the peak season that staff approached a private user that they suspected was guiding and questioned them. In both instances, staff took pictures of the craft and vehicle and documented the incident for future reference. After one of the incidents, the private river user called in to place a complaint about river staff questioning. Staff should continue to monitor and document what happens at the boat ramps. The policy is verbal warning for the first offense, written warning for the second, and the third offense is the loss of the permit and ramp access.

Wilson to South Park Allocation: Actions E-1 through E-4

Allocation is the process of distributing a capacity among outfitters within a sector. The 2016 plan included four actions to allocate Wilson to South Park capacities, as described below.

| Commercial Use Management | | 2016 Status | 2017 Recommendation |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|
| E-1 | Allocate half of commercial fishing and scenic capacities through pre-season allocations | 22 scenic boats and 13 fishing boats were available through pre-season allocations. | No change to capacities. Since the fishing in-season pool was at maximum many days, but the daily capacity was not met, recommend redistributing the allocated boats per the discussion below. |
| E-2 | Allocate remaining commercial fishing and scenic capacities through in-season reservations. | Remaining capacities were distributed through in-season pool reservations per plan. | No changes. 50% of the total capacity remains available through the in-season pool. |
| E-3 | Allocate commercial large fishing and scenic capacities through in-season reservations. | Large groups are permitted with approval from the County, provided they are outside the peak use times (8:30 am - 11:00 am). | No changes. |
| E-4 | Allocate commercial small boat capacities through in-season reservations. | Reduce allocation in in-season reservation pool to 20 per day (but keep limit of 20 for any one outfitter) | No changes. |

Figures 9 and 10 illustrate the usage of the fishing sector in season pool. Due to the high number of days in 2016 (a total of 18 days) that the fishing pool was at maximum (13 boats used), but the total number of fishing boats was under the capacity, it is recommended to reallocate the pre-season pool in 2017. The pool was at maximum while the daily capacity was not, meaning outfitters did not utilize their allocation AND did not release it into the pool. There were only 13 days in which an allocated boat was released back into the common pool. To maintain the integrity in the pool and the diversity of outfitters, the 12 pre-season boats will be reallocated based on a minimum of .75 boats in order to be eligible for 1 allocation. By doing this, outfitters who have a smaller average will be able to utilize the pool, and outfitters that are consistently launching .75 + boats per day will have allocations and utilize less from the common pool.

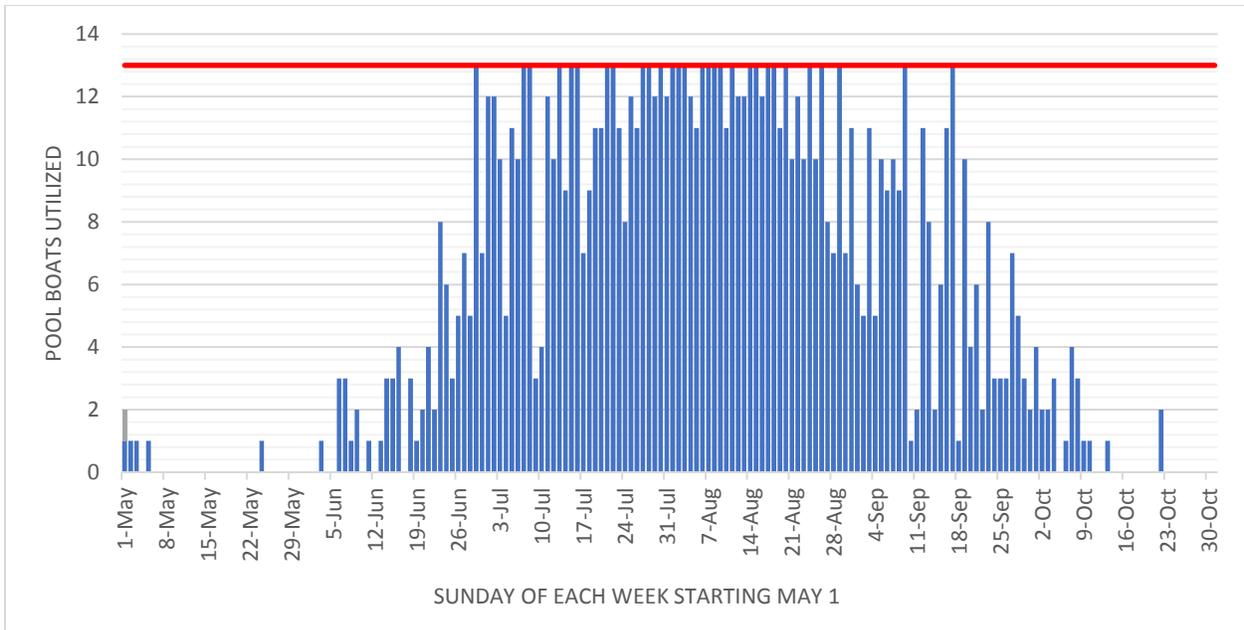


Figure 9. Commercial fishing in season pool use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

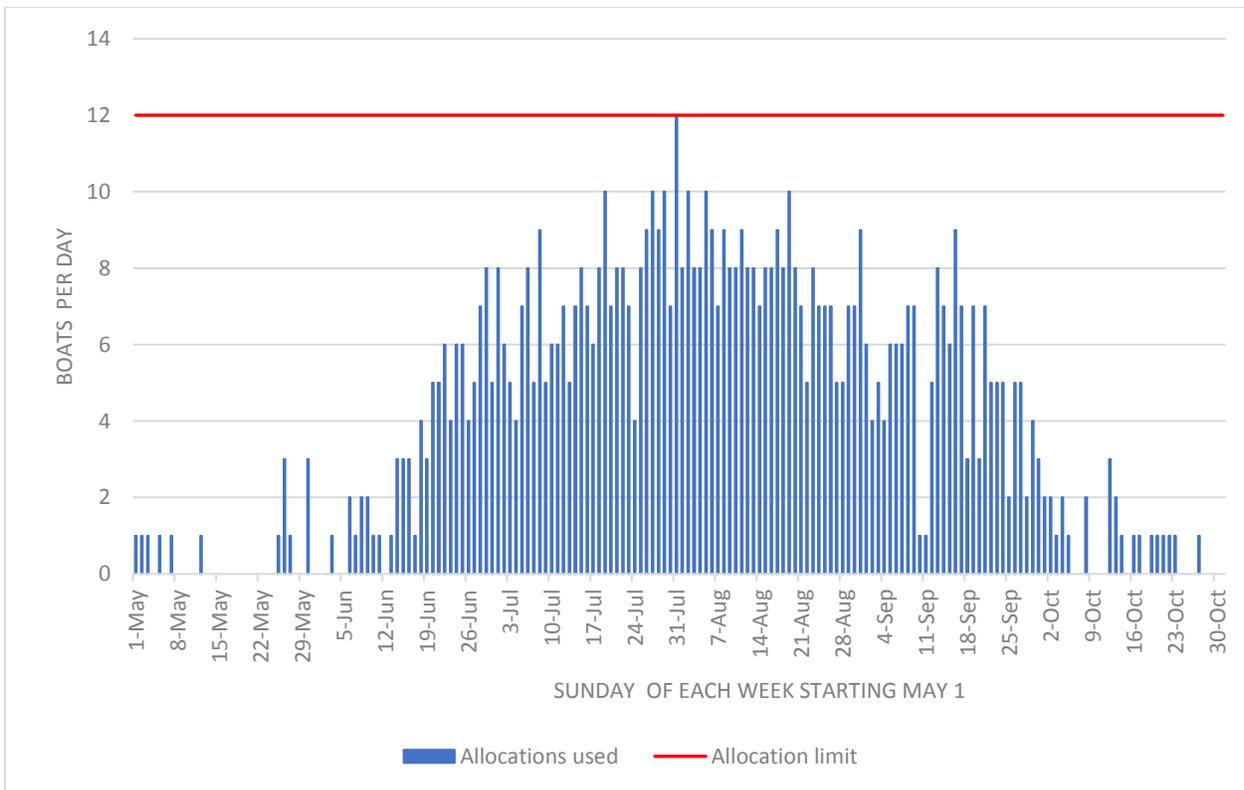


Figure 10. Commercial fishing Pre-Season Allocation use levels from Wilson to South Park for 2016.

Public comment on capacities and allocation system

- *Companies consistently averaging over 1.5 boats per day should be given 2 allocation boats. That way pool is more predictable for small companies.*
- *So far we have gotten an allocation each year. We feel that is appropriate, since we have been doing fishing trips on this stretch since the early 60's. That is long before most of these outfitters even came into the valley.*
- *The reduction was definitely felt. The reduction of allocated boats from 2 to 1, left us with uncertainty about assured usage. This also translated to only having 4 boats max per day instead of 5 which hindered our ability to accommodate groups of 10 that wanted to stay together. I don't feel the reduced number of boats was noticed by the consumer, they don't see the difference between 25 and 30 when they are spread out over a 4 hour period. I would like to see outfitters with the heavier use return to the 2 boat allocation.*
- *The law?*
- *Based on the reduced fishing daily allotments all seemed to work well from our perspective. We still feel that that adding the 5 pool slots is appropriate.*
- *It seems to be working well. There were some days where I couldn't run trips because I wasn't able to obtain a permit from the pool and I don't have an allocation but not many.*
- *The capacities still seem to be drawn up arbitrarily. Cutting capacities one year into the program leaves very limited room to explore the true needs of the outfitters and I have no idea how the private use has fit in to the equation. It still seems to come back to the idea of an "experience" which exists on a sliding scale. I was unimpressed with the hard data provided to arrive at the point we are at, but on some levels, things seem to be the same as they always were.*
- *The capacities seem to be alright, they are a bit restrictive and limit growth of companies. The system is not appropriate in my opinion. Yes, it works fine and I am sure it has benefits. But you have chosen a system that requires the most man hours to operate and manage it seems. Why not give allocations to outfitters, have them report numbers and spot check them time to time? Here you are constantly dealing with cancellations, trip times, emails and so on. Not griping, just seems tedious compared to other systems.*
- *When the Bureau of Reclamation drops water in the fall, it would be very much appreciated if the county would allow more flexibility for the number of rafts that can launch and float at the same time. There are very few people floating the water this time of year; however, when the water drops, it is sometimes necessary to have less people (less weight) in the raft so it is easier for rafts to get through certain sections of the river. It would be great to give staff the ability to approve situations like this on a case by case basis*

Public comments about the availability of boats in the in-season reservation pool

- *There were more days this year that boats were not available in the pool due to the reduced amount of slots*
- *There were more days this year that boats were not available in the pool due to the reduced amount of slots*
- *Seemed to be open most days and tight during the middle of the season. August especially. A few more opportunities for boats during the height of the season I believe could be tolerated. Doesn't seem to be too congested out there.*

- *Based on the reduced fishing daily allotments all seemed to work well from our perspective. We still feel that that adding the 5 pool slots is appropriate.*
- *Most of the time I was able to book a pool permit for fishing if desired. Also, Megan was very accommodating with acquiring an unused pre season allocation if none were available in the pool. Some days I couldn't obtain one.*
- *We didn't seem to have a problem pulling the boats we needed, but we don't run a large scenic float operation either.*
- *It seems to work out I guess. Not over thrilled by it, but we get by.*
- *It would be great to be able to have overbook days (more than the two rafts allowed now) or days where we can use more rafts at the expense of using less rafts later in the week. If the capacity of rafts going forward is going to stay this low, having this flexibility would be greatly appreciated.*
- *Sometimes there were boats available and other times, not. We mostly use our allocation.*
- *We turned away a large amount of business due to no capacity*

Online Reservation System

The online reservation system developed for the Snake River Management Plan has handled the capacity very well, with over 8,000 trips logged in 2016. Each year staff evaluates the system, gathers feedback from outfitters and makes changes as necessary. A couple of the major changes in 2016 were the addition of a pending reservation category when a trip that qualifies as a large group is booked, the system defaults to the last reservation – which creates efficiencies for outfitters booking multiple boats with the same group, and the system “learned” when a boat could be cancelled. If there were at least 4 fishing or 7 scenic boats remaining in the pool the system allowed the cancellation of boats within the 48 hour window.

Public comment on the online reservation system

- *Didn't have any problems with the system.*
- *It would be great to be able to make changes within 48 hours as long as there still is capacity in the pool; especially during the season when it is harder to get in touch with staff to make changes because of weather, delays and other situations that popup.*
- *No problems accessing, reviewing, or completing. Very difficult to make changes or cancelling trips due to weather.*
- *It is our opinion that the registration system should only be used for pool days. It is an onerous task to input every single reservation into this system, essentially amounting to a double entry requirement for our office staff. They have to manage additions and cancellations not only in our in-house reservation system, but they have to make sure it matches the County system. The County system is not streamlined. Just getting to the input process makes you answer the same question twice. Outfitters should be able to pull one pool boat without having to input guest information. Our actual use should back up the use in the system, but the reservation system is not designed to accommodate estimated vs actual use. It seems to require too much input from County employees and our staff to manage last minute changes or changes after the fact. The amount of time required to use the County system in proportion to the number of our guests that float that stretch of river compared to the amount of time required to manage our USFS paperwork is grossly disproportionate. The County system requires much more of our resources – an inordinate amount.*
- *No problems at all.*
- *We didn't have any issues with the online system this past season.*
- *When reporting final numbers the system cannot recognize the difference between launching at private access compared to public access. Our reporting was compromised because the system cannot pickup decipher the difference when billing the outfitter.*
- *It seemed to work out well. A repeat button would be good to have.*
- *So far system seems to function properly.*
- *No Problems that I can remember*
- *It was fine.*
- *System worked good - the one troubling part was when we needed to cancel a reservation, it would not let us cancel them a day in advance.*

Public comment on the technical use of the reservation system

- *There are issues but I will not write them down until consequences are clear.*
- *The online platform worked well and I did not notice any glitches.*
- *With a thorough understanding of the booking processes in the valley, the registration system could be better streamlined to fit the needs of the County and the outfitters. If pre-allocation exists, there should be no need to document this in the system. Require actual use on a monthly or seasonal basis. Outfitters are far too busy in the summer months to be reconciling daily. Monthly is more appropriate. Even trying our best to stay on the top of the registration system, our records have never matched what we have been billed for due to the billing model. There is no way to tell how the boats will be split out at the river and so the information in the reservation system will NEVER be correct. It is entered in the system as reservations are received. The only way to make the reservation system match actual use is to send the County daily reports and make them fix EVERY reservation EVERY day. This is a ridiculous proposal. Ideally, the billing model would be adapted to a percentage of revenue for that stretch of river or a per person rate and the County would open the registration system for pool use only and would streamline the required fields to pull a pool boat. The County can monitor this practice with audits of actual use and random checks. I would suggest that the County solicit specific feedback from each outfitter to more fully understand the industry in this valley.*
- *The system is very difficult to make changes. Can we look into make a bulk update.*
- *The registration system works pretty well. For group entries, it would be nice to be able to reserve 5 rafts at one time vs having to do 5 separate entries for the group.*
- *It would be nice to see how many allocated boats are in use*

Notes & Updates for 2017

Teton County staff has met with software programmers to update the system for 2017, including adding fields for staff to complete for each reservation (check in time stamp and boat/guide info). Staff is also adding a waitlist feature that will allow outfitters to put their name on a list if there are no pool boats left for the day. This should make it easier to allow people to cancel within the 48 hour window if staff knows that there is another outfitter wanting a boat that day. Additionally, staff is exploring monetizing the reservation software. There were considerable times in 2016 that staff had to play “bill collector” with outfitters. It is recommended that there would be an initial cost to book the trip, and then the balance would be automatically charged on the day of the trip. This would eliminate a considerable amount of staff time spent reconciling and invoicing outfitters, eliminate errors as the outfitters would need to make sure that their entry is correct, eliminate the concern than outfitters are booking trips from the pool before they are actually booked, and providing an incentive to cancel the boat and put it back in the pool if the prior reservation cancels.

Facilities, Ramps, Launch Time & Congestion

Feedback gathered from public comment showed that although staff was considerably more hands on in 2016 with regards to ramp management, there is still a sense of overcrowding and congestion at times. There is clearly a trend that can be seen when tracking launch times throughout the day. Launches tend to peak at 9:00 am, and then drop off until mid afternoon. Many of the high number of launches at 2:00 pm consist of the Teton High Adventure Base (groups up to 20 canoes). As ramp congestion continues to be a concern voiced in public comment, it is recommended to continue to monitor the number of boats that launch each hour in 2017. In the future, this information could be used to set hourly limits or schedule launch times.

Figure 10 shows the launch times of each day throughout July 2016, which clearly illustrates the consistently sharp peak at 9:00 am. As improvements are made to the Wilson Ramp, this data can be very useful in determining ramps, availability of parking and staging areas, etc.

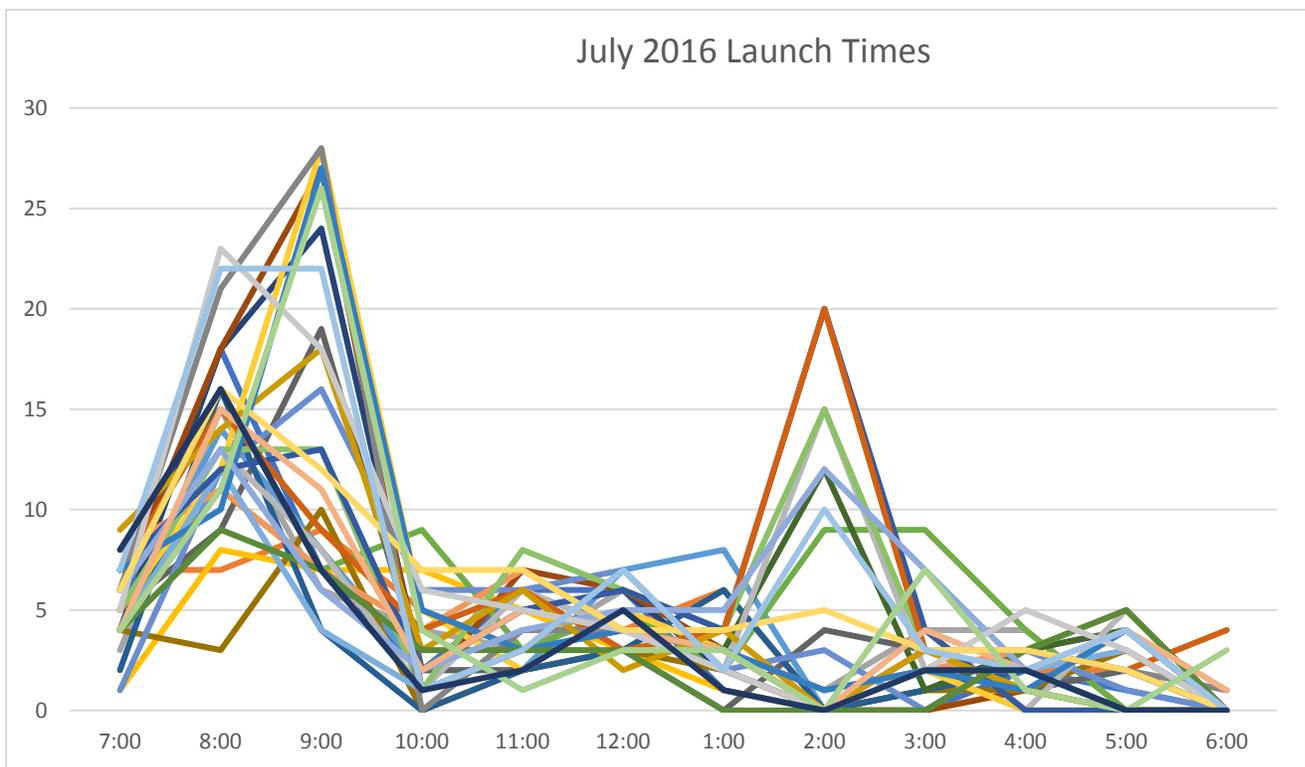


Figure 10. Daily commercial launch times at Wilson in July 2016.

Public comment on days in 2016 with crowding and congestion at ramps or on the river

- *I didn't hear of any, but guides don't always complain about that sort of thing to me. We mostly use our allocation.*
- *Some crowding at ramps is normal, but the river always creates a natural separation to make it a great trip on the scenic rafting side.*

- *Ramps seem to be working well. Can be a bit crowded on river. Spreading out launch times would help.*
- *I didn't hear that anything to indicate that it was any more congested than usual. I think it would reasonably compare to the 2015 boat ramps – busy in the morning, growing gradually less busy by the afternoon. I think Jay Pistono has done a pretty good job of keeping the ramps congestion and conflict free over the last few years. He's taken the time to be in touch with outfitters before the busy season and has solicited feedback during the season to ensure that his limited time is maximized.*
- *They only day that ever bothers me is the 4th of July. The amount staff compared to the amount of users is too disproportional.*
- *No more than past years.*
- *Most guides and companies I believe work in a manageable fashion most days. Everyone is in this together in a sense. I didn't have too many issues at the ramps*
- *There is no law enforcement so who cares.*
- *No conflicts to report from our outfit.*
- *There is very little room when scenic boats take over the boat launch.*
- *There were a few days where ramp crowding was an issue, mainly between early July and mid August. In my opinion, ramp congestion only occurs with scenic float boats when there are several at a time being launched and 30 some odd scenic floaters wandering around and holding up traffic at the launch. Most fishing guides know how to get their boats in and out as fast as possible*
- *Very pleased with the SRMP and outfitters in working together with groups.*

Comments about South Park Landing ramp and related development

- *We very much appreciate how much the ramp and parking have really addressed the congestion problems that use to exist at Von Gontard's. We are very lucky to have that facility. If there were improvements to be made, would just be continued maintenance on the ramp (rocks that are easier to walk on, make the grade easier to load rafts, etc.)*
- *Instream improvements are needed to slow down the water there*
- *The ramp is unpaved. I thought that a paved ramp was showcased in the draft plans for the site, but wasn't aware that the option had changed until it wasn't completed. The site overall is a much better option than maneuvering through the traffic at the old ramp.*
- *Needs more staff that is concentrating on user education and mitigating user conflicts.*
- *The parking and facilities are great. The actual take out doesn't have that much of an eddy, especially when the water levels are high, which makes launching and takeout difficult. Just a little bit more of a rock weir upstream of the launch area would make a HUGE difference. The landscaping is great but the presence of an actual eddy is far more important. When multiple boats come into South Park at the same time, this becomes more of an issue.*
- *Way to much private parking at the ramp and rigging directly in the path of commercial operation. Staging area needs to be more accessible for private users.*
- *What development are you all referring to?*
- *It is nice.*

- *Nice ramp, seems to be the non commercial use that clogs things up more so than the commercial. Boats sitting while the public boaters run their shuttles*
- *Much improved, experienced fishing guides had no major issues with landing and like the improvements*
- *Biggest problem we encountered there was scenic vans and trailers occupying the ramp while waiting for their boats to arrive, therefore blocking the ramp for others to take out quickly.*
- *Big improvement not only for ramp conflicts but separation it provides to allow for fishing and commercial to be at same ramp.*

Comments about Wilson ramp and potential improvements

- *I am anxious to see the redevelopment happen!*
- *It is fine.*
- *When the Snake Ambassador is there everything goes smoother. There are a few renegades that fall out of step periodically and seem to feel entitled to follow their own protocol.*
- *You did a great job mid season making sure the fishing outfitters had some room to launch. Digging out that channel saved congestion.*
- *Wilson launch is great.*
- *What I don't quite get is that the majority of your staffs time is spent at Wilson, South Park seems to be the place where more conflicts arise. Come up with a low water plan in advance, was a little disappointed with the solution in 2015.*
- *The lower ramp needed to be cleaned out of gravel sooner*
- *I really hope staff and the Commissioners see the effects that South Park ramp has had on congestion at South Park. I think the new facility at Wilson will have an even bigger effect on the congestion since Wilson does not have the upstream and downstream (please floating to Astoria) activity that South Park has. It would be nice to have a better understanding as to when the improvements at Wilson will occur. Over the last two years, I feel like we have been told the Wilson plan was going to be started at the end of the season, and it has not.*
- *Need to find a better staging area for the fishing folks.*

2016/2017 Revenue & Expense Highlights

Throughout the 2016 season staffing was consistently the largest obstacle faced during the Snake River Management Plan. Despite recruiting early in the season and exploring alternative methods of recruitment (internships, job sharing with other TCJPR departments, etc.), the river monitor positions were never staffed at 100%. The budget allowed for 3 seasonal employees working 40 hours per week. In July and August, we had two staff working 40 hours per week. The remainder of the season staff covered peak times at the boat ramps, but were unable to fully cover the available shifts. Additionally, the person who handled the administration of the SRMP took another position and ended employment prior to the end of the season. As such, no administrator of the Snake River Management Plan over the fall and winter months combined with staffing shortages during the summer, resulted in substantial reduction in payroll from the projected budget.

Teton County/Jackson Parks and Recreation strives to find new ways to recruit and retain quality summer staff for the Snake River Management Plan, and has budgeted more hours in 2017. A common concern voiced in public comment was that river monitors couldn't cover all the hours needed throughout the day. The goal for 2017 is to hire more summer seasonal staff to monitor a longer period of day, at both the Wilson and South Park facilities, as well as have staffing as early as May and into October.

At the beginning of the 2016 season, improvements were made to harden the ramp surface at South Park Landing. This surface requires annual maintenance and replacement of damaged concrete planks in order for the ramps to function properly, as well as replacement of any rock/gravel lost during runoff. Until the snow levels decrease, maintenance needed at both Wilson and South Park is unknown. Any excess revenues will continue to be utilized toward site repairs and maintenance, upgrades and capital improvements at river access points.

| | 2015 Season | | 2016 Season | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | REVENUE | EXPENSE | REVENUE | EXPENSE |
| REVENUE: | 2015 Season | | 2016 Season | |
| Annual River certifications | 61,000 | - | 43,221 | |
| River Permits | 63,364 | - | 65,973 | |
| REVENUE TOTAL | \$143,682.00 | | \$109,194.00 | |
| EXPENSES | 2015 Season | | 2016 Season | |
| Salaries, Full-time | - | \$ 12,000.00 | | \$ 12,546.00 |
| Salaries, Part-time | - | \$ 7,200.00 | | \$ 15,217.00 |
| FICA | - | \$ 556.00 | | \$ 1,164.00 |
| Health Insurance | - | \$ 5,073.00 | | \$ 5,073.00 |
| Retirement | - | \$ 1,019.00 | | \$ 1,019.00 |
| Worker's Compensation | - | \$ 221.00 | | \$ 617.00 |
| Employee Share | - | \$ 14.00 | | \$ 30.00 |
| Cell Phone Charges | - | \$ - | | \$ 374.40 |
| Uniforms | - | \$ - | | \$ 343.88 |
| Printing | - | \$ 334.83 | | \$ 344.95 |
| Advertising | - | \$ 975.80 | | \$ 93.00 |
| Marketing | - | \$ - | | \$ 8.45 |
| Background Check Fees | | \$ 70.00 | | \$ 125.00 |
| Trash Removal | | \$ - | | \$ 145.00 |
| Professional/Contracted Services | | \$ 38,890.24 | | \$ 31,913.00 |
| Restroom Cleaning | | | | \$ 14,540.00 |
| Dredging/Ramp Maintenance | | | | |
| Forestry/Tree Removal | | | | |
| Recycling Services | | | | \$ 2,880.00 |
| Weed & Pest | | | | \$ 319.00 |
| Parking/Grading | | | | |
| Restroom Maintenance | | | | \$ 592.00 |
| Portolets | | | | |
| Professional Services | | | | \$ 720.00 |
| In House Services (Labor) | | | | \$ 6,844.00 |
| Facilities | | | | |
| Maint/Repair - Wilson Boat Launch | | \$ 160.86 | | |
| Maint/Repair - South Park Boat Launch | | \$ 553.42 | | \$ 318.00 |
| Misc. Operating Supplies | | \$ - | | \$ 142.00 |
| Restroom | | \$ 755.00 | | \$ 1,325.00 |
| Office Supplies | | | | |
| Mutt Mitts | | \$ - | | \$ 480.00 |
| Trash Bags | | \$ 405.92 | | \$ 434.66 |
| Signage | | | | \$ 4,033.00 |
| TOTAL OPERATIONS | - | \$ 68,229.07 | | \$ 83,310.34 |
| Capital | | \$ - | | \$ 57,815.00 |
| SPET | | \$ 385,935.00 | | \$ 42,717.00 |