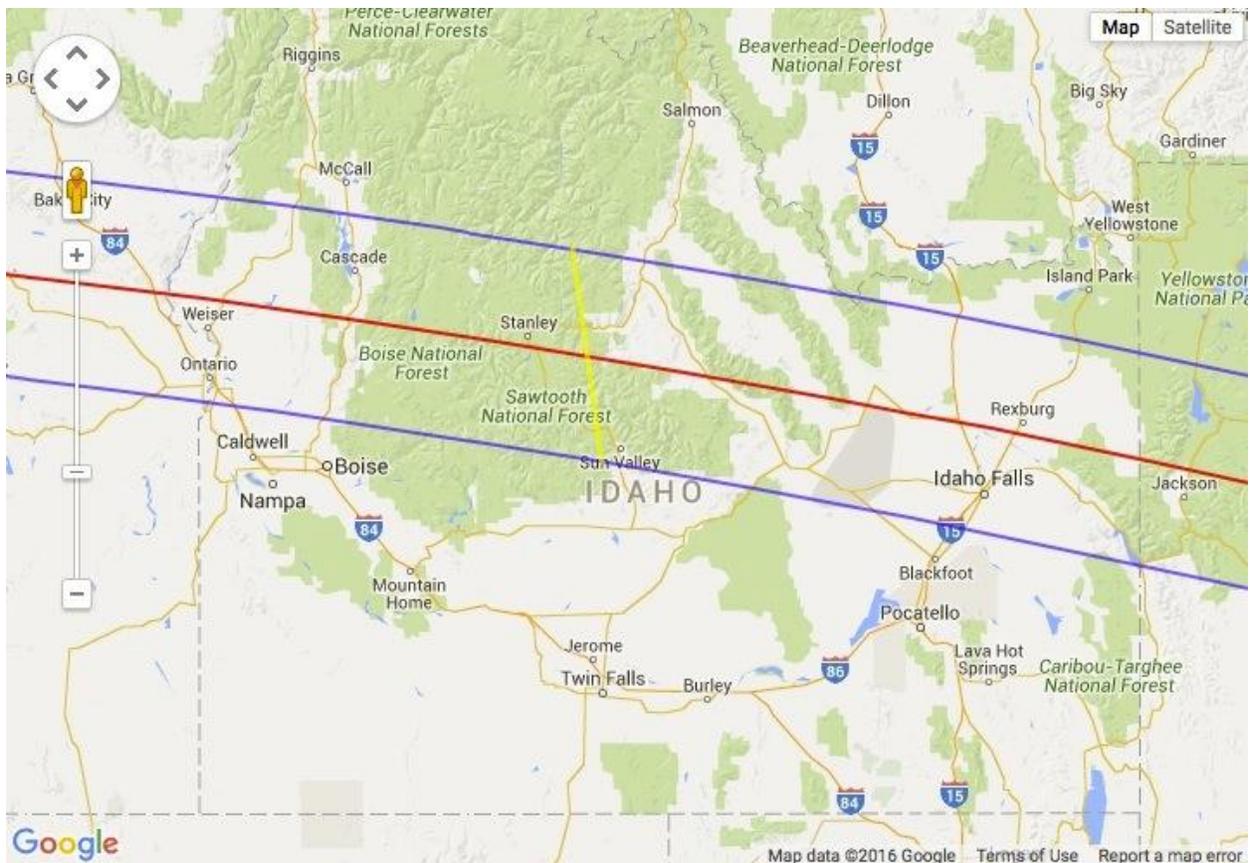




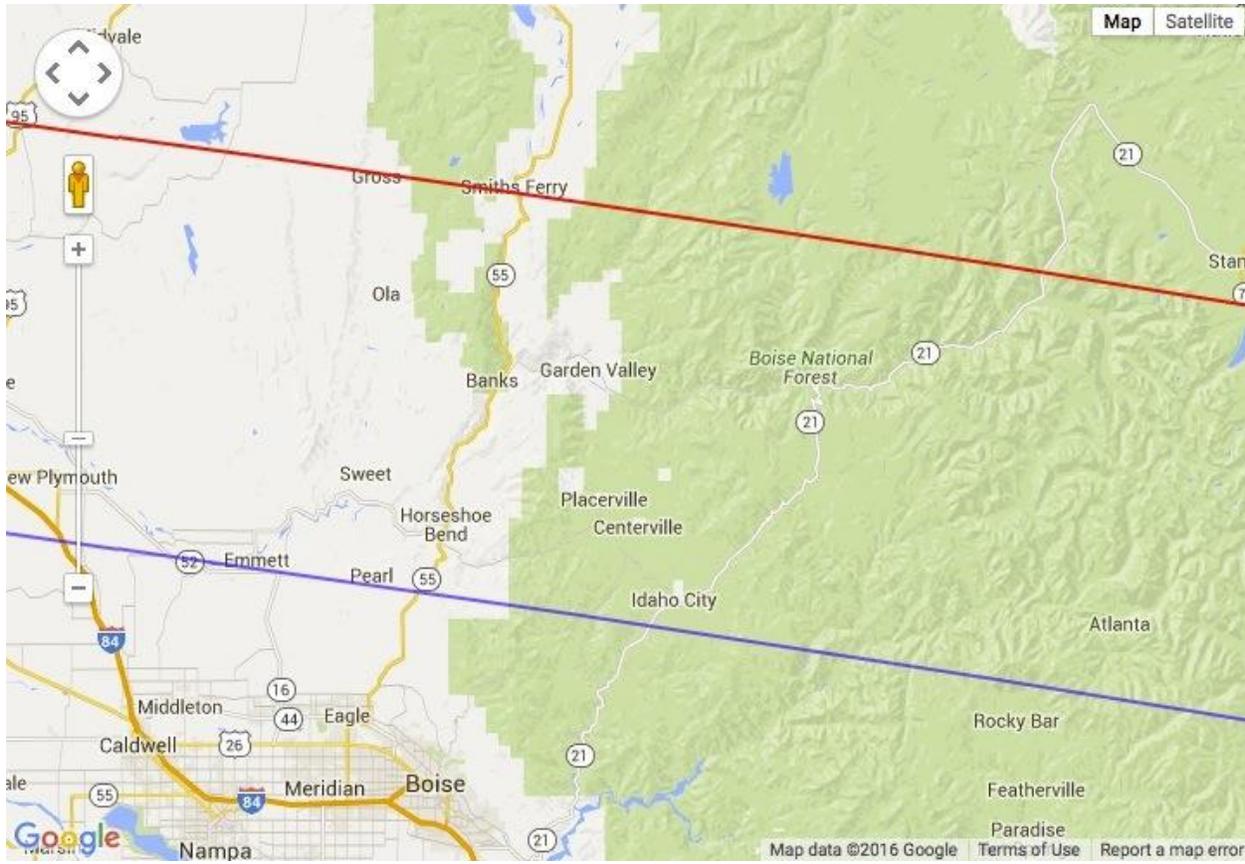
Thank you for contacting the Boise Astronomical Society (BAS), regarding the Solar Eclipse occurring on Monday, August 21, 2017. This event is sure to be well attended at many locations within Idaho, however BAS currently has no plan to host a public access eclipse observing session. We have already received a number of inquiries on the eclipse and will surely receive many more but we simply do not have the manpower, connections and resources to handle the number of people we expect to show up. In fact, we have yet to determine when and where our own club members will gather to observe the eclipse.

Here is some information which will help explain our position and may help you in finding a suitable observing location.

- The path of totality for the solar eclipse lies North of Boise so you will have to travel to a location within that path. Much of the path lies within mountainous and inaccessible areas. (Below: Blue lines indicate path of totality, red line indicates longest totality.)



- The closest accessible location (from Boise) on the red line is Smith's Ferry, Idaho, 57 miles away along State Highway 55. (See next map.) This would be an ideal location but for a limited number of people as Smith's Ferry isn't much more than a wide spot in the road with a single commercial business; Cougar Mountain Lodge - a small road house restaurant. Much of the land around this area is privately owned and forested.



- State Highway 55 is a main artery from Boise to points north, but is mostly a winding two-lane road through the deep Payette River canyon with only a few places to stop. In the summer months, it is normally very busy with tourists from all over the US. Camping along this highway is limited and often full.
- North of the red line is the small town of Cascade with some limited camping nearby.
- The next closest location (from Boise) near the red line is the farming town of Weiser, to the West. The town of Weiser is planning their own events apart from the Boise Astronomical Society. Visit [www.weisereclipse.org](http://www.weisereclipse.org) for more information.
- The next closest location (from Boise) near the red line is the small town of Stanley (Elev. 6,253'), in the high mountains on State Highway 21. There is a motel and a few cabins in town and camping at nearby Redfish Lake. The very scenic Sawtooth Mountains are here.
- Other locations close to the red line in readily accessible areas are in Eastern Idaho; Rexburg and Idaho Falls. These are both farming communities.
- Keep in mind that much of Idaho is a summer vacation destination for many parts of the country which means that highways will be busy and camping facilities will be mostly full, even without the eclipse. Campsite and motel reservations are a must.
- For the most part, overnight camping in Idaho is allowed only in designated campgrounds and not alongside the highway, for safety reasons. (Restricted camping areas are posted.)

- The Boise metropolitan area has a population of around 670,000 and many of them will be heading for the mountains to see the eclipse, most likely up State Highway 55. I'm guessing that traffic on this road on the day of the eclipse will be very slow or worse if there is an accident.
- Summer is forest fire season in Idaho, both lightning and human caused. With the drought in the West over the past 5 years, we've had fires every summer. These fires create very smoky skies, even at high elevations and even when the weather forecasts indicate that it's clear. Also, the smoke sometimes blows in from fires in surrounding states. As the event approaches, be sure to monitor Northwest fire conditions as well as weather forecasts. See: <http://www.idahofireinfo.com/> Fire conditions can sometimes result in temporary mountain road closures.
- Since Idaho has no previous experience with an event of this magnitude, my recommendation would be to avoid the mountain road observing sites as traffic and unforeseen conditions could leave you trapped in an isolated area and prevent you from reaching the most desirable observing location in time to observe the eclipse.

David Olsen  
President, Boise Astronomical Society

Note: Interactive eclipse path map accessible at NASA Eclipse Website:  
<http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEgoogle/SEgoogle2001/SE2017Aug21Tgoogle.html>