OWYHEE

PROPOSED MFP AMENDMENT & FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WILDERNESS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
BOISE DISTRICT
1986

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Boise District
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

October 1986

Dear Public Land User:

This Final Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement is presented for your information. It was prepared after considering public comments that we received on our draft document.

The Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS provides recommendations and an environmental analysis concerning the suitability of wilderness designation for 93,610 acres of wilderness study area (WSA) lands in Owyhee county of southern Idaho. The plan/EIS provides information necessary for the amendment of existing land use decisions contained in the Owyhee Management Framework Plan which pertains to the WSA lands. The EIS was prepared in conformance with the BLM Wilderness Study Policy and planning regulations.

The Bureau of Land Management recommends that 41,665 acres (39,745 BLM acres and 1,920 Idaho state inholdings) in the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area (WSA) are suitable for wilderness designation. It further recommends that 9,840 BLM acres in the remainder of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and 44,140 BLM acres in the Big Willow Spring, Squaw Creek Canyon, Middle Fork Owyhee River and West Fork Red Canyon WSAs are nonsuitable for wilderness designation. The WSAs are located in the vicinity of Juniper Mountain, 70 to 100 miles southwest of Boise, Idaho in Owyhee county. This document analyzes the environmental consequences of these recommendations and alternatives.

The recommendations will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for review and further recommendation to the President. The President will then make recommendations to the Congress of the United States. Congress will make the final decision on whether or not any of these areas are designated as wilderness.

Thank you for your past and future interest and assistance in our effort to manage the public lands.

Sincerely yours,

Gene T. Schloemer

FINAL

OWYHEE WILDERNESS PLAN AMENDMENT

AND

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Prepared By

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Boise District Office

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OWYHEE WILDERNESS PLAN AMENDMENT/EIS

( ) DRAFT (X) FINAL Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/ Environmental Impact Statement

1. Type of Action: ( ) Administrative (X) Legislative

2. Responsible Agencies:

   a. Lead Agency: Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management

   b. Cooperating Agencies: None

3. Abstract: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommends that 41,665 acres (39,745 BLM acres and 1,920 Idaho state inholdings) in the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area (WSA) are suitable for wilderness designation provided special juniper woodland management stipulations are allowed. It further recommends that 9,840 BLM acres in the remainder of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and 44,140 BLM acres in the Big Willow Spring, Squaw Creek Canyon, Middle Fork Owyhee River and West Fork Red Canyon WSAs are nonsuitable for wilderness designation. The WSAs are located in the vicinity of Juniper Mountain, 70 to 100 miles southwest of Boise, Idaho in Owyhee County. This document analyzes the environmental consequences of this recommendation and alternatives calling for all wilderness or partial wilderness in each of the WSAs.

   The five WSAs under consideration are:

	ACRES	
	SUITABLE	NONSUITABLE
WSA ID-16-40, North Fork Owyhee River	41,665*	9,840
WSA ID-16-41, Big Willow Spring	0	6,210
WSA ID-16-42, Squaw Creek Canyon	0	10,780
WSA ID-16-45, Middle Fork Owyhee River	0	14,180
WSA ID-16-47, West Fork Red Canyon	0	12,970
Total	41,665	53,980

   * Includes 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings plus 115 BLM acres outside the WSA boundary.

4. Comments Have Been Requested and Received From the Following:

   See page V-6: Comments on the draft statement were received from those agencies, organizations, individuals, and elected officials listed.

5. Date Draft Statement Made Available to EPA and the Public:
   Draft: May 28, 1982.

6. For further information contact: District Manager
   Bureau of Land Management
   Boise District Office
   3948 Development Avenue
   Boise, ID 83705

SUMMARY

The Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS provides recommendations and an environmental analysis concerning the suitability of wilderness designation for 93,610 acres of wilderness study area (WSA) lands in Owyhee County of southern Idaho (see Map 1, page I-2). The plan/EIS provides information necessary for the amendment of existing land use decisions contained in the Owyhee Management Framework Plan which pertains to the WSA lands. The EIS was prepared in conformance with the BLM Wilderness Study Policy and planning regulations 43 CFR 1600.

The WSA lands under consideration are:

WSA	Acres		
	Total	BLM	Idaho State
ID-16-40, North Fork Owyhee River	51,390	49,470	1,920
ID-16-41, Big Willow Spring	6,210	6,210	0
ID-16-42, Squaw Creek Canyon	10,780	10,780	0
ID-16-45, Middle Fork Owyhee River	14,820	14,180	640
ID-16-47, West Fork Red Canyon	12,970	12,970	0

The following issues have been identified for analysis in this EIS:

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values
2. Impacts on Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands
3. Impacts on Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities
4. Impacts on Cultural Resources
5. Impacts on the Level of Semi-Primitive Motorized Recreation Use
6. Impact on the Degree of Soil Erosion
7. Impacts on the Level of Livestock Use (AUM Levels, Rangeland Operations and Facilities)
8. Impacts on Local Economic Conditions

The alternatives for each of the WSAs were developed based upon:

1. the issues of concern to the public, BLM, and other government agencies with jurisdictional interest in the public lands,
2. the relative wilderness values of the WSAs, and
3. the degree of conflict among competing resource values.

The acres recommended as suitable and nonsuitable under the various alternatives of each WSA are shown below. Acreages include BLM acres and Idaho state inholdings recommended for acquisition through a federal-state exchange.

WSA	Acres Recommended for Wilderness Designation by WSA by Alternative				
	Proposed Action	No Wilderness	Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness With Stips	All Wilderness No Stips.
North Fork Owyhee River	41,665 1/	0	47,995	4/	51,505
Big Willow Spring	0	2/	3/	6,210	6,210
Squaw Creek Canyon	0	2/	3/	4/	12,500
Middle Fork Owyhee River	0	2/	3/	4/	15,300
West Fork Red Canyon	0	2/	3/	4/	14,130
TOTAL	41,665	0	47,995	6,210	99,645

1/ Proposed Action is a partial wilderness alternative with special stipulations for juniper woodland management.

2/ Proposed Action is the No Wilderness Alternative.

3/ No partial alternatives provided.

4/ No alternatives with juniper woodland management stipulations provided.

The Proposed Action and alternatives for the wilderness study areas (WSAs) are presented separately by WSA in this proposed Plan Amendment/final EIS rather than in the combined or aggregated format provided in the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. The Proposed Action for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA contained in this document also differs from that of the draft document. This document recommends that 41,665 acres within the WSA be designated wilderness whereas the draft document recommended that the entire WSA not be designated wilderness. This change resulted from public comment received.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA

Proposed Action

Description: All lands within the area shown as the proposed action on Map 2A are recommended for wilderness designation. Presently there are 39,745 acres of public lands managed by BLM and 1,920 acres of State lands. Also recommended are 9,840 acres of BLM land to not be designated wilderness. The recommendation calls for the enabling wilderness legislation to include special stipulations allowing for juniper treatment over a 20 year period to control juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Juniper treatment within the wilderness area would include 3,050 acres of juniper cutting and burning and 1,100 acres of burning only. Approximately 1,600 acres of the areas treated would be aerially reseeded with native grass species. Ground vehicle access to cutting areas would not

be permitted except along 16.3 miles of existing interior (cherrystem) roads and ways.

Other management actions that would occur within the wilderness area include the placement of unlimbed juniper trees along 9.5 miles of stream to stabilize stream banks. Livestock grazing use would be maintained at the current 3,150 animal unit months (AUMs) level. Existing range projects (12 livestock water reservoirs, three developed springs, two corrals and 21.5 miles of fence) would be maintained. An additional three springs and four miles of fence would be constructed. There are 17.1 miles of cherrystem roads and ways which would be closed and 1.2 miles of access road which would remain open.

On the 1,920 acres of nonwilderness lands, juniper cutting and burning would occur on 1,450 acres and burning only would occur on 600 acres. Approximately 750 acres of treated area would be aerially reseeded. Nine miles of temporary road and one mile of permanent road would be constructed. Unlimbed juniper trees would be placed along 1/2 mile of stream. Livestock use would remain at the current level of 785 AUMs. Existing range improvements (four reservoirs, two developed springs and 2.5 miles of fence) would be maintained. Two new springs would be developed.

Impacts: Implementation of juniper treatments and stream bank stabilization measures would temporarily reduce wilderness characteristics. However, there would be a slight improvement in characteristics on these areas after 20 years. A permanent loss of naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would occur along one mile of new road in the nonwilderness area. Big sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on areas receiving juniper treatment. Areas not treated would improve initially as a result of grazing system implementation but ecological condition after 20 years would decline due to continued juniper encroachment. Mule deer and redband trout populations would increase. Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day livestock management activities. Primitive recreation use would increase from 115 to 170 user days/year and semi-primitive use would increase from 235 to 400 user days/year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced becaue of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income, employment and annual revenues would increase.

No Wilderness (No Action) Alternative

Description: The No Wilderness Alternative (No Action) recommends that all 49,470 acres of BLM land not be designated as wilderness. All resources would be managed under a special recreation area designation. Vegetative treatment would include 7,550 acres of juniper cutting and burning and 2,800 acres of burning only in the juniper treatment areas. Motorized access for juniper treatment would occur along 16.3 miles of existing roads and ways and along nine miles of proposed temporary roads and one mile of proposed permanent road. Unlimbed juniper trees would be placed along ten miles of stream to stabilize streambanks. A fish ladder would be placed on the North Fork Owyhee River.

Other activities include the maintenance of existing range improvements and the construction of six new reservoirs, one spring development and one

mile of fence. Livestock use levels would increase from 3,935 AUMs initially to 4,000 AUMs in 20 years. Four campground/trailhead areas and 30 miles of hiking/equestrian trails would be built to enhance recreational activities. All 21.5 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways and one mile of permanent road constructed for juniper treatment would remain open for motorized use.

Impacts: Implementation of juniper treatments and stream bank stabilization measures would temporarily reduce wilderness characteristics. These values would recover after 20 years except in the northeast portion of the WSA where road construction would permanently reduce wilderness characteristics. Range projects on the southern tablelands would also permanently reduce characteristics. Big sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on treated areas but juniper encroachment would continue on untreated areas. Fish populations would increase but other wildlife populations would remain unchanged. Primitive recreation use would increase to 900 user days/year and semi-primitive recreation use would increase to 900 user days/year. Personal income, employment and annual revenues would increase.

Partial Wilderness Alternative

Description: The Partial Wilderness Alternative recommends 46,075 BLM acres for wilderness designation. The alternative calls for the acquisition through exchange of 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings which would also become wilderness. It recommends that 3,510 acres not be designated wilderness. The wilderness boundary is similar to the Proposed Action except that two areas (western neck and northeastern portion) were recommended nonsuitable in the Proposed Action because of proposed juniper treatments. No juniper treatment or stream bank stabilization measures are proposed in the Partial Wilderness Alternative.

Management actions in the wilderness portion include the maintenance of existing range improvements. No new improvements would be constructed. Livestock use would decrease from the current 3,705 AUMs to 3,315 AUMs because of decreased forage availability. No recreation facilities would be constructed. There are 20.7 miles of cherrystem roads which would be closed.

In the nonwilderness portion, livestock use would remain at 230 AUMs over the next 20 years. No new range or recreation facilities are proposed. The .8 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways would remain open.

Impacts: Under this alternative, there would be no significant change in wilderness characteristics. However, juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would decline. Redband trout populations would be reduced by 10%. Vehicle restrictions would hinder livestock operations. Primitive recreation use would increase to 170 user days/year and semi-primitive recreation use to 370 user days per year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced because of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income would increase, employment would remain unchanged, and annual revenues would decrease.

All Wilderness Alternative

Description: The All Wilderness Alternative recommends that 49,585 BLM acres be designated wilderness. This alternative also calls for the

acquisition through exchange of 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings which would also become wilderness. No juniper treatments, stream bank stabilization projects, new range improvement projects or recreation facilities would be undertaken or constructed. Maintenance of existing range improvements would continue. Livestock use would decrease from 3,935 AUMs to 3,530 AUMs in 20 years because of decreased forage availability. All 21.5 miles of cherrystem roads and ways would be closed to general public use.

Impacts: The impacts of this alternative would not be significantly different from those described for the Partial Wilderness Alternative.

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA

Proposed Action

Description: The Proposed Action recommends that all 6,210 acres of BLM land not be designated as wilderness. Juniper cutting and burning would occur on 950 acres and burning only would occur on 300 acres. Approximately 950 acres of the treated area would be reseeded. One mile of temporary road would be constructed. Livestock use levels would increase from 400 AUMs to 440 AUMs in 20 years. Existing range improvements (two springs and 1.3 miles of fence) would be maintained. No new range improvements are proposed. A hunting camp would be developed along the northeast periphery of the WSA. The .8 miles of existing ways would remain open for motorized use.

Impacts: Under the Proposed Action, the WSA's naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic values would be maintained or slightly improved after 20 years. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from recreation use of access roads and campgrounds. Sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on treated areas but juniper encroachment would continue on untreated areas. Mule deer populations would decrease by approximately five deer because of improved recreation access. Primitive recreation would be less than 15 user days/year while semi-primitive recreation would increase to 70 user days. Personal income, employment and annual revenues would increase.

All Wilderness With Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Description: This alternative recommends that all 6,210 acres of BLM land be designated wilderness. It calls for the enabling wilderness legislation to include special stipulations allowing for juniper treatment to control juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Juniper cutting and burning would occur on 450 acres and burning only would occur on 150 acres. Approximately 550 acres of the treated area would be reseeded. Livestock grazing use would remain at 400 AUMs. Existing range improvements would be maintained. No new range improvements or recreation facilities are proposed. The .8 miles of ways within the WSA would be closed.

Impacts: Wilderness characteristics would be temporarily reduced due to juniper treatment. Characteristics would be slightly enhanced due to road closures and range improvements. Sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on treated areas but juniper encroachment would continue on untreated areas. Vehicle restrictions would hinder livestock management activities. Primitive recreation use would be 20 user days/year and

semi-primitive use would be 70 user days/year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced because of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income, employment and annual revenues would increase.

All Wilderness (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Description: This alternative is the same as that described for the All Wilderness Alternative With Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations except that no juniper treatment would occur.

Impacts: Impacts would not be significantly different than those described for the All Wilderness Alternative (with stipulations) except for the juniper treatment areas. On these areas, juniper encroachment would continue. This would adversely affect ecological condition and forage availability. One to five mule deer would be displaced because of reduced forage.

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA

Proposed Action

Description: The Proposed Action recommends that all 10,780 acres of BLM land in the WSA not be designated wilderness. Juniper cutting and burning would occur on 2,700 acres and 1,100 acres would be burned only. Approximately 2,700 acres of the treatment area would be reseeded. Unlimbed juniper trees would be placed along 3 miles of Squaw Creek to stabilize stream banks. Livestock grazing would increase from 855 AUMs to 885 AUMs in 20 years. Existing range improvements would be maintained (five springs, 5.8 miles fence) and one new spring development would occur. A hunting camp along the southern periphery of the WSA would be developed. The 2.8 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways would remain open.

Impacts: Wilderness characteristics would be temporarily reduced due to juniper treatments. Characteristics would be slightly enhanced from range improvements. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from access roads and campgrounds. Sagebrush-grass communities would be maintained on treated sites but juniper encroachment would continue on untreated sites. Increased recreation access would reduce deer populations by 20-25 animals, but trout populations would increase by 10%. Primitive recreation use would be less than 25 user days/year and semi-primitive use would increase to 245 user days/year. Personal income, employment and annual revenues would increase.

All Wilderness

Description: Under this alternative, there are 11,860 BLM acres which would be designated wilderness. This alternative calls for the acquisition through exchange of 640 acres of adjacent Idaho state lands which would also become wilderness. No juniper treatment or stream bank stabilization would occur. Livestock use would decrease from 855 AUMs to 795 AUMs because of decreased forage availability. Existing range improvements would be maintained. No new range improvements or recreation facilities would be developed. All 2.8 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways and 2.7 miles of boundary roads would be closed.

Impacts: There would be a slight decrease in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment. Solitude opportunities would improve slightly. Juniper encroachment would continue and eventually cause ecological condition to decline on seral juniper sites. Deer populations would remain unchanged, but trout populations would be reduced by 10%. Vehicle restrictions would hinder livestock management practices. Primitive recreation use would be 30 user days/year and semi-primitive recreation use would increase to 220 user days/year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced because of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income and employment would increase slightly but annual revenues would decrease slightly because of reduced livestock use.

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA

Proposed Action

Description: The Proposed Action recommends that all 14,180 acres of BLM land not be designated wilderness. Juniper cutting and burning would occur on 3,550 acres and burning only would occur on 700 acres. Approximately 3,550 acres of the treated area would be reseeded. Juniper trees would be placed along 1.5 miles of stream to stabilize stream banks. Seven miles of temporary road and three miles of permanent road would be constructed. Livestock use would increase from 1,040 AUMs to 1,090 AUMs in 20 years. Existing range improvements would be maintained (two springs and 2.5 miles fence) and five new springs and .3 miles of fence would be developed within the WSA. The 5.5 miles of existing roads and ways would remain open.

Impacts: Juniper treatment would temporarily reduce wilderness characteristics. Characteristics would recover and slightly improve because of range improvements. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from access roads and campgrounds. Sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on treated areas but juniper encroachment would continue on most nontreated sites. There would be a net increase of five deer and trout numbers would increase by 10%. Primitive recreation use would be less than 20 user days/year and semi-primitive use would be 215 user days/year. Personal income, employment and annual revenue would increase.

All Wilderness Alternative

Description: Under the All Wilderness Alternative, there are 14,560 acres of BLM land which would be designated wilderness. This alternative calls for the acquisition through exchange of 740 acres of Idaho state inholdings and adjacent lands which would also become wilderness. No juniper treatment, streambank stabilization projects, new range improvements or recreational facilities would be developed. Existing range improvements would be maintained. Livestock use would decrease from 1,040 AUMs to 955 AUMs because of decreased forage availability. All 5.5 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways and 1.5 miles of boundary road would be closed.

Impacts: There would be a slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment. Solitude opportunities would improve slightly. Juniper encroachment would continue and eventually cause ecological condition to decline on seral juniper sites. Deer populations would be reduced by five deer and trout populations would

be reduced by 10%. Vehicle restrictions would hinder livestock management practices. Primitive recreation use would be 30 user days/year and semi-primitive use would increase to 190 user days/year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced because of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income and employment would increase slightly but annual revenues would decrease slightly due to reduced livestock use.

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA

Proposed Action

Description: The Proposed Action recommends that all 12,970 acres of BLM land not be designated wilderness. Juniper cutting and burning would occur on 1,950 acres and burning only would occur on 650 acres. Approximately 1,950 acres of the treated area would be reseeded. Three miles of temporary road and four miles of new permanent road would be constructed. Livestock use would remain at 985 AUMs. Existing range improvements would be maintained (3.3 miles of fence) and three new springs and .4 miles of fence would be constructed. One hunting camp would be developed along the northeast periphery of the WSA. The four miles of existing ways would remain open.

Impacts: Juniper treatment would temporarily reduce wilderness characteristics. Characteristics would recover and slightly improve because of range improvements. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from access roads and a campground. Sagebrush-grass communities would be restored on treated areas but juniper encroachment would continue on most nontreated sites. Wildlife populations would remain unchanged. Primitive recreation use would be less than 30 user days/year and semi-primitive use would be 200 user days/year. Personal income, employment and annual revenue would increase.

All Wilderness

Description: The All Wilderness Alternative recommends that 14,130 BLM acres be designated wilderness. This alternative calls for the acquisition through exchange of 740 acres of adjacent Idaho state lands which would also become wilderness. No juniper treatment, new range improvement projects or recreation facilities would be developed. Existing range improvements would be maintained. Livestock use would decrease from 985 AUMs to 915 AUMs. All four miles of existing ways would be closed.

Impacts: There would be a slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment. Solitude opportunities would improve slightly. Juniper encroachment would continue and eventually cause ecological condition to decline on seral juniper sites. Wildlife populations would remain unchanged. Vehicle restrictions would hinder livestock management practices. Primitive recreation use would be 45 user days/year and semi-primitive use would increase to 275 user days/year. The value of cultural sites would be significantly reduced because of restrictions on scientific excavations. Personal income and employment would increase slightly but annual revenues would decrease slightly because of reduced livestock use.

FINAL OWYHEE WILDERNESS PLAN AMENDMENT/EIS

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to manage and preserve the wilderness characteristics on 39,745 BLM acres (including 115 acres outside the WSA boundary) in a portion of the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and continue to manage the remaining 9,840 acres in this WSA and 44,140 acres in four other WSAs on Juniper Mountain for uses other than wilderness. This EIS assesses the environmental consequences of managing the entire acreage of the five WSAs as wilderness or nonwilderness and of managing a portion of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA as wilderness.

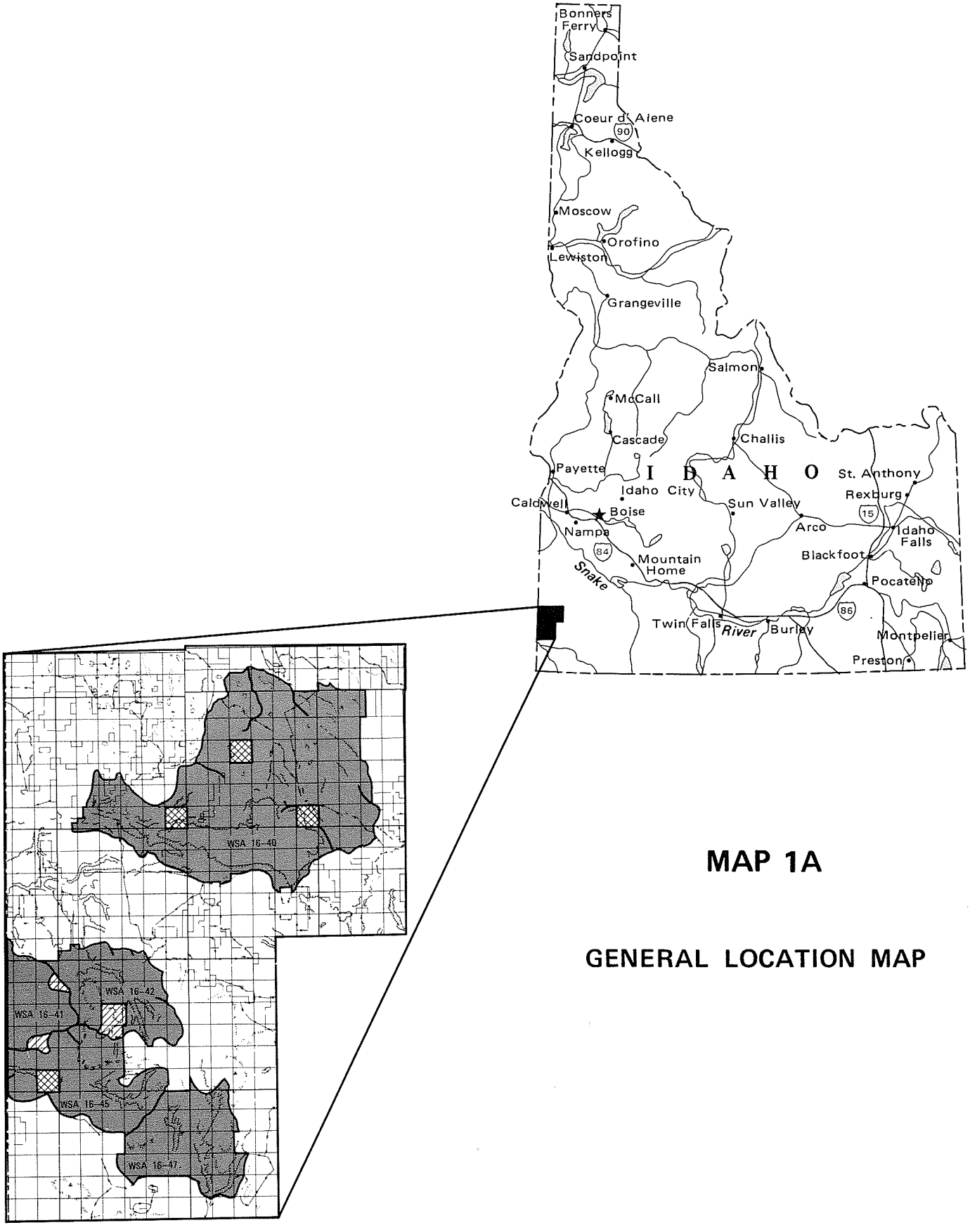
The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) mandates BLM to manage the public lands and their resources under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Wilderness values are identified as part of the spectrum of multiple land use values to be considered in BLM inventory, planning, and management. Section 603 of FLPMA requires a wilderness review of BLM roadless areas of 5,000 or more acres and roadless islands. The BLM inventory process identified wilderness study areas which have the mandatory wilderness characteristics (size; naturalness; solitude and/or primitive recreation opportunities). Suitable or nonsuitable wilderness recommendations for each WSA will be presented to the President by the Secretary of the Interior. The President will then make recommendations to the Congress of the United States. Areas can be designated wilderness only by an act of the Congress. If designated as wilderness, an area would be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the BLM Wilderness Management Policy (1981).

The five WSAs to be considered in this document are listed in Table I-1. The WSAs total 93,610 acres. The intensive inventory acreage was higher (98,955 acres) due to variations in map projections and planimeter accuracy.

TABLE I-1
LIST OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

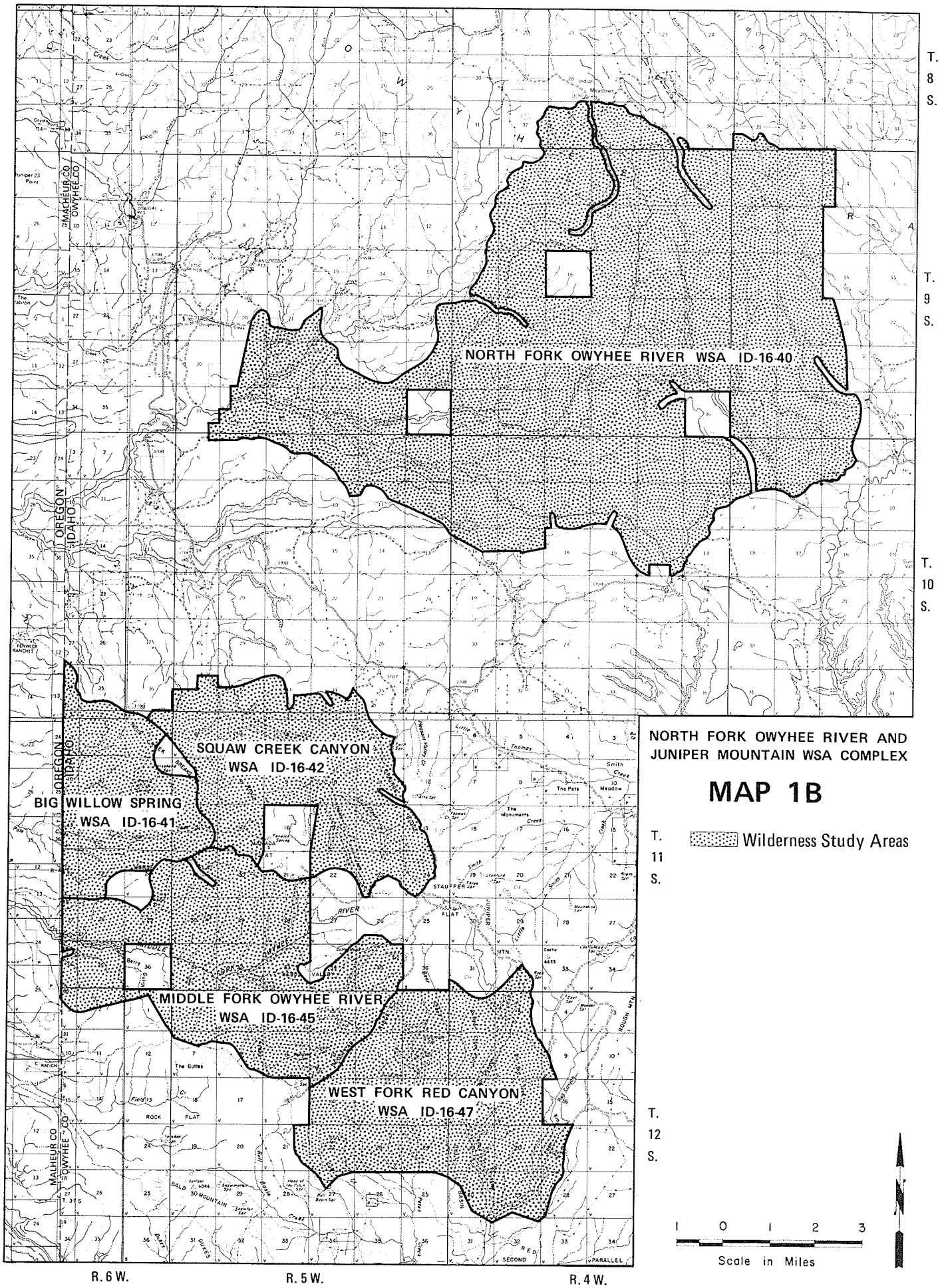
WSA Number	WSA Name	BLM Acres
ID-16-40	North Fork Owyhee River WSA	49,470 acres
	Juniper Mountain WSAs:	
ID-16-41	Big Willow (Horsehead) Spring	6,210 acres
ID-16-42	Squaw Creek Canyon	10,780 acres
ID-16-45	Middle Fork Owyhee River	14,180 acres
ID-16-47	West Fork Red Canyon	12,970 acres

The five WSAs are located in Idaho about 70 to 100 miles south-southwest of Boise in western Owyhee County (Map #1A and 1B). Two of



MAP 1A

GENERAL LOCATION MAP



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER AND JUNIPER MOUNTAIN WSA COMPLEX

MAP 1B

the areas (ID-16-41 and ID-16-45) share boundaries with the State of Oregon. Four WSAs (ID-16-41, ID-16-42, ID-16-45 and ID-16-47) form the western and southern slopes of Juniper Mountain. WSA ID-16-40 surrounds much of the headwaters of the North Fork Owyhee River.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND SCOPING

The scoping process for the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS consisted of the identification of issues and alternatives by the BLM staff, by the public through scoping mailouts and public meetings, and by comments on the draft Plan Amendment/EIS from individuals, organizations and federal, state and local agencies. The mailouts and scoping meetings involved a coordinated scoping effort with the wilderness recommendations for other WSAs affected by the Owyhee Management Framework Plan, the Bruneau Management Framework Plan and the Jarbidge Resource Management Plan.

In March and April of 1981, approximately 400 individuals, organizations, and government representatives were contacted to assist in the effort. There were 22 individuals or organizations who provided written responses during this preplanning effort, 18 of which responded specifically to the issues. On October 8, 1981, a Federal Register notice was published which requested additional public input on wilderness issues and the development of planning alternatives specifically for the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. Public comments were solicited through mass mailing and at public meetings in Boise and Marsing, Idaho, in November, 1981. Five additional responses concerning issues were received as a result of this second public involvement effort. Issues were further defined during the public comment period on the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS in mid-1982 (see Chapter V). The environmental issues selected for analysis in the EIS are as follows:

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values - The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, primitive recreation and scenic quality could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness. The significance of these beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

2. Impacts on Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands - Wilderness designation without special juniper woodland management stipulations would restrict the mechanical cutting of seral juniper trees. BLM range conservationists and wildlife specialists feel that mechanical removal of juniper trees is necessary to restore natural successional patterns to improve wildlife habitat (forage/cover ratio) and livestock forage. The effects of wilderness designation on juniper cutting and the successional pattern within the juniper woodland community is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

3. Impacts on Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities - The removal of juniper trees could have adverse as well as beneficial impacts on wildlife species including mule deer,

sage grouse, fisheries and other nongame wildlife. The effect of juniper removal on wildlife species is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

4. Impacts on Cultural Resources - As a result of cultural inventories in the Owyhee Resource Area and consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the North Fork Owyhee River and Juniper Mountain area is recognized as having the potential for a high concentration of prehistoric archaeological sites. None of these known sites are currently recognized as being significant in and of themselves. But, taken collectively, known and suspected sites make the area significant for cultural resources. Wilderness designation could affect the extent to which scientific information from these sites could be collected. The BLM Wilderness Management Policy requires that cultural resources be generally subject to the forces of nature. Study or management would not normally include any excavation, stabilization or interpretation activities. Such activities would be permitted only on a case-by-case basis for sites judged to be significant (National Register of Historic Places) if the wilderness area's overall wilderness character is not degraded. No excavations are currently planned. However, as additional inventory data becomes available, the desire for excavation is expected to increase. On the other hand, wilderness designation could affect the degree to which these sites are vandalized. The effects wilderness designation would have on the stability and recoverability of archaeological sites is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

5. Impacts on the Level of Semi-Primitive Motorized Recreation Use - Wilderness designation would close some existing roads and ways that are currently being used by hunters and other recreation users. The significance of these closures on the opportunities for semi-primitive motorized recreation use is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

6. Impacts on the Degree of Soil Erosion - The removal or retention of seral juniper trees could affect the level of soil erosion. The effects of removing juniper or not removing juniper on soil erosion is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

7. Impacts on the Level of Livestock Use (AUM Levels, Rangeland Operations and Facilities) - Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by eliminating planned range developments and by restricting the level of grazing use allowed. The effect of wilderness designation on the construction and maintenance of range projects and the level of grazing use allowed within the WSAs is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

8. Impacts on Local Economic Conditions - Wilderness designation could restrict livestock grazing increases. Wilderness designation could also increase the level of recreation use occurring in the area. The effect of changes in livestock use levels and recreation use levels on the local economic conditions is an issue for analysis in this EIS.

The following issues were considered during the scoping process but were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIS. The reasons for setting the issues aside are discussed below:

1. Impacts of Wilderness Designation on the Availability of Mineral and Energy Resources - Wilderness designation would preclude mineral and energy exploration and development. However, there is a low favorability for the occurrence of these resources within the WSAs. As of June 1, 1986, there were no recorded mining claims and no leases issued for energy exploration and development. Oil and gas leases on surrounding areas have not been developed and have not shown any indication of the presence of oil or gas deposits that could be economically developed. In their comments on the draft EIS, the Mineral Exploration Coalition felt that the WSAs could be located in the same mineralized geologic units and structures as the DeLamar Mine, 20 miles north of WSAs, and mines near Carlin, Nevada. However, additional surveys by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and Bureau of Mines (BOM) in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and adjacent areas with similar geomorphology, indicate that the WSAs have little mineral development potential. Based on the low favorability of the WSAs for mineral and energy resources, this issue was dropped from analysis in the EIS. The USGS and BOM will be publishing mineral reports on the North Fork and Juniper Mountain WSAs.

2. Impacts on Threatened or Endangered Species - Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the WSAs. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

3. Impacts of Wilderness Designation on Social Conditions - Concerns were raised regarding the effect of wilderness designation on local social conditions. Since the dominant use within the wilderness areas (livestock grazing) would be allowed to continue at levels occurring at the time of designation, there would not be any significant effect on area ranchers or on adjacent communities. Restrictions on juniper treatment and recreation management would also not affect social conditions. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration in this EIS.

4. Impacts on Air Quality - Concerns were raised regarding the effect of wilderness designation or nondesignation on air quality. Since the wilderness management policy states that BLM will manage all wilderness areas to comply with air quality classifications for that specific area, wilderness designation would not cause the air quality classification to change. On wilderness and nonwilderness areas, prescribed burning would be conducted during periods of high smoke dispersal and would not affect air quality classifications. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further analysis in this EIS.

5. Impacts on State and Private Inholdings - This issue was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation. An additional

consideration in dropping this issue is the intention of the BLM, at the request of the State of Idaho, to exchange for state land inholdings in designated wilderness areas. The BLM is currently under negotiations for the exchange of state sections within the WSAs.

6. Impacts Concerning Low-Flying Military Aircraft - The five WSAs underlie an established military operation area (MOA) and two military training routes (MTRs). The MOA and MTRs are used for training military pilots in low elevation, subsonic flight in mostly fighter-bomber type aircraft. According to the Idaho Air National Guard, between 1500 and 2000 missions are scheduled annually where aircraft reach speeds in excess of 600 knots as low as 100 feet above ground level. In accordance with the BLM wilderness inventory policy, aircraft flights were considered external influences which should be noted but not used in determining whether a roadless area has outstanding opportunities for solitude. This was due in part to the fact that many designated wilderness areas have military over-flights. The wilderness study policy, however, permits the assessment of external influences on the suitability of a WSA for wilderness designation. There is strong disagreement among the public as to the effect of military flights on a roadless area's solitude. It is the BLM's position that such flights are acceptable in areas being recommended suitable for wilderness designation. Regardless of the perceived impact, the fact is that wilderness designation or non-designation would likely do little to change the existing patterns of military aircraft use over southwest Idaho. Conversely, it is not expected that the patterns of military aircraft use would change enough to significantly alter the degree of impact it causes to existing wilderness characteristics. Consequently, no change in impact is expected from implementing any land management action; therefore, this issue has been dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

C. THE PLANNING PROCESS AND SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The five WSAs being studied are covered by this amendment of the Owyhee Management Framework Plan.

Development of the Proposed Action was guided by requirements of the Bureau's Planning Regulations, 43 CFR, part 1600. The BLM's Wilderness Study Policy (published February 3, 1982, in the Federal Register) supplements the planning regulations by providing the specific factors to be considered during the planning sequence in developing suitability recommendations.

The Proposed Action recommends as suitable for wilderness designation portions of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA with high quality wilderness values. In addition, the Proposed Action would limit conflicts between the wilderness resource and livestock use, recreational use, and the potential for reducing juniper encroachment. It makes a suitable wilderness recommendation for a 41,665 acre portion (39,745 acres BLM and 1,920 acres of State of Idaho inholdings) of the

North Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-40) and a nonsuitable recommendation for a 9,840 acre portion of the WSA. It also makes nonsuitable recommendations for the 44,140 acres contained in the Big Willow Spring WSA (ID-16-41), the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA (ID-16-42), the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-45) and the West Fork Red Canyon WSA (ID-16-47).

D. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Alternatives to the Proposed Action Selected for Analysis

The BLM Wilderness Study Policy calls for the formulation and evaluation of alternatives ranging from resource protection to resource production. Therefore, the alternatives assessed in this EIS include: (1) a no wilderness alternative for each WSA; (2) an all wilderness alternative for each WSA without special stipulations for juniper treatment; (3) two partial wilderness alternatives for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, one of which contains provisions for special stipulations to allow juniper treatment; and (4) an all wilderness alternatives with provisions for special stipulations in wilderness legislation to allow for prescribed burning and mechanical treatment of juniper trees in the Big Willow Spring WSAs.

In this document, the no action alternative (as required by NEPA) and the no wilderness alternative are equivalent for each of the five WSAs and have been combined into a no action/no wilderness alternative for each WSA. These alternatives are a continuation of the present resource management and recommend that the WSA lands are nonsuitable for wilderness.

The all wilderness alternative for each of the five WSAs represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The partial wilderness alternatives for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA make suitable or nonsuitable recommendations ranging between an all wilderness and a no wilderness alternative.

Alternatives Considered But Dropped From Analysis

A partial wilderness alternative for each of the WSAs was considered and dropped, with the exception of two partial alternatives for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-40). Partial wilderness alternatives were considered but dropped for the Big Willow Spring WSA (ID-16-41), the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA (ID-16-42), the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-45), and the West Fork Red Canyon WSA (ID-16-47) because boundary adjustments to reduce resource conflicts (vegetation manipulation) would result in proposed wilderness areas of insufficient size and configuration to manage effectively as wilderness.

Other types of alternatives considered for analysis and included in the draft EIS were aggregate alternatives that combined different clusters of WSA-specific all wilderness, no wilderness, and partial wilderness alternatives. Since an aggregated alternative would not change the required WSA-specific analysis of all wilderness, no wilderness or partial wilderness alternatives for each WSA, its analysis

would not provide any additional information necessary to render a decision on wilderness suitability. The lack of statewide and regional issues or resource conflicts makes the analysis of an aggregate alternative unnecessary, so this approach has been dropped in this final EIS. It should be noted, however, that the suitable acreages recommended under each of the all wilderness alternatives presented for the Juniper Mountain WSAs (ID-16-41, 42, 45 and 47) in the final EIS allows for the aggregation of these WSAs into one wilderness area if Congress should so choose. The Committee for Idaho's High Desert (CIHD) has recommended that the entire plateau-canyonland WSA complex and additional non-WSA lands associated with the Owyhee River in Idaho, Oregon and Nevada, including the five WSAs discussed in this EIS, be designated by Congress as one wilderness area of 1.2 million acres. A detailed discussion concerning this alternative is presented in the final Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS. Public comment supporting the 1.2 million acre alternative was provided during the comment period on the draft Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS.

The Owyhee Cattlemen's Association, in conjunction with the Owyhee County Commissioners, proposed alternatives to both a legislative wilderness designation and administrative recreation management designation for each of the five WSAs. Their alternatives identified "Sensitive" or "Unique Areas" for the North Fork Owyhee River Canyon and the major canyons of Juniper Mountain. These areas would be managed by a cooperative agreement between BLM and Owyhee County. Because the alternatives called for no wilderness designation and management objectives similar to those of the existing BLM administrative recreation management designations or other management proposals identified in the no action/no wilderness alternative of each WSA, they were not included for analysis in this EIS.

CHAPTER II
ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action and alternatives for the wilderness study areas (WSAs) are presented separately by WSA in this proposed Plan Amendment/final EIS rather than in the combined or aggregated format provided in the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. The Proposed Action for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA contained in this document also differs from that of the draft document. The change in the WSA's Proposed Action resulted from public comment received on the draft Plan Amendment/EIS: specifically, the evaluation of the WSA's wilderness values in terms of ecosystem diversity. The Proposed Action for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA now calls for designating 41,665 acres as wilderness and 9,840 acres as nonwilderness. The Proposed Action for the four WSAs on Juniper Mountain (ID-16-41, 42, 45 and 47) recommends that all affected lands (44,140 acres) not be designated wilderness.

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSAs cannot be predicted with certainty, assumptions were made to allow the analysis of impacts under the WSAs' Proposed Action and alternatives. These assumptions are the basis of the impacts identified in this document. They are not management plans or proposals, but represent feasible patterns of activities which could occur under the alternatives analyzed.

NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - PROPOSED ACTION: Map Series 2

The Proposed Action recommends that 39,745 BLM acres in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA be designated wilderness. It further recommends that 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area. There would be 9,840 acres of BLM land not designated wilderness (see Map 2A).

The recommendation calls for the enabling wilderness legislation passed by the Congress of the United States to include special stipulations allowing for vegetation treatments to control juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Such treatments would include limited, temporary (20 years) mechanical removal of individual seral juniper trees in combination with prescribed burning to maintain natural sagebrush-bunchgrass openings within the juniper woodlands of the area. No large, mature (between 100 and 200 years) and old-growth (climax, over 20 years) woodland areas would be cut.

1. Wilderness Management Actions

On the 41,665 acres of the WSA recommended for wilderness designation, the following actions would occur:

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 2B):

1) Reestablish fire as an important factor in maintaining the western juniper/sagebrush-bunchgrass ecosystem through tree cutting and prescribed burning. These vegetation treatments would include the 100% removal of young-growth (less than 50 years old) and intermediate-aged (50 to 100 years old) seral juniper from sagebrush-bunchgrass sites for a period of 20 years to restore or retain openings in the woodland canopy; thereafter, prescribed burning (approximately every 20 years) and natural fire would be used to maintain the desired balance between juniper and sagebrush-bunchgrass species. The treatments would be used on approximately ten percent (4,150 acres) of the wilderness area with less than one percent (200 to 400 acres) of the wilderness area being treated in any given year. Treated areas would not exceed 40 acres in size (1/4-mile in width). Cutting would not occur in climax juniper stands (old-growth), mature stands (100 to 200 years of age), within 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses, or on slopes greater than 35%. Treatment areas would exclude rocky canyons and ridgelines and other areas of rock outcrops and shallow soils in the northern hilly region of the wilderness area. The southern plateau would also not be treated. Cutting of trees would be accomplished with chain saws, hand saws or axes as deemed appropriate. Trees would be cut at or near ground level and slash burned to eliminate a "logged" effect. In areas where seral juniper encroachment is limited to small trees and there is sufficient understory vegetation, prescribed burning only would be used. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. No bulldozers would be used to establish fire breaks, roads or trails. Seeding of native grass species through aerial application would occur to supplement natural revegetation on 1,600 acres. Ground vehicle access to cutting areas would not be permitted except along 16.3 miles of existing roads and ways. Foot, horseback and helicopter access would also be used.

TABLE II-1
VEGETATION TREATMENT IN THE NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)							
	Cut and Burn		Burn Only		Cut/Burn Acreage Total		Cut/Burn Acreage Seeded	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action	3,050	1,450	1,100	600	4,150	2,050	1,600	750
No Wilderness Alternative	--	7,550	--	2,800	--	10,350	--	3,800
Partial Wilderness	0	--	0	--	0	--	0	--
All Wilderness Alternative	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*See Appendix A for allotment specific information.

2) Juniper logs (limbs attached) would be implanted along six miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, two and one-half miles of Noon Creek, and one mile of Cabin Creek. Logs would be helicoptered or horse drawn from the nearby cutting areas described above. Logs would be attached to stream banks with steel rods and wires. Natural revegetation and/or planting of willow saplings would occur among log implants. Exposed rods and wires would be removed once revegetation and the silting of logs into the stream banks has occurred. It is expected that logs would be placed along 20% to 40% of the seven miles of stream banks.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 2C and 2D):

Continue the development of grazing systems to manage overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Grazing use would remain at approximately the level occurring at time of wilderness designation (3,150 AUMs; see Table II-2). Use would be distributed among six allotments (Appendix B). Use within the allotments would occur in accordance with rotation grazing systems.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including 12 stock reservoirs, three developed springs, two corrals and 21.5 miles of fenceline. The use of motorized vehicles would not occur for salting and facility maintenance. Only horseback access would be allowed.

3) Additional range improvements would be constructed, including three spring developments and four miles of fenceline. No new roads or other motorizd vehicle access would occur to these new developments.

TABLE II-2
LIVESTOCK FORAGE (AUMs) USE WITHIN
THE NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Estimated Current Active Use (Annually)		Anticipated Use in 20-Years (Annually)	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action	3,150	785	3,150	785
No Wilderness Alternative	---	3,935	---	4,000
Partial Wilderness Alternative	3,705	230	3,315	230
All Wilderness Alternative	3,935	---	3,530	---

*See Appendix B for allotment specific information.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 2E):

1) No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. There are 17.1 miles of cherrystem roads and ways (two-wheel vehicle tracks) within the wilderness area which would be closed to general public recreation use. The remaining 1.2 miles of access road from the WSA's northwest boundary to

Big Springs (T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 19 and 20) would remain open for use. This road would be maintained to allow the passage of two-wheel drive vehicles (see Table II-3).

2) Close the 1.2 mile long southwest boundary road of the WSA and include 115 acres of adjacent BLM land in the wilderness area in T. 10 S., R. 5 W., Sections 11, 12 and 13.

TABLE II-3
MILES OF ROADS/WAYS MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION AND CLOSURE ACTIONS FOR THE NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40 BY ALTERNATIVE

WSA Alternatives	Wilderness		Nonwilderness	
	Maintain	Close	Maintain	Construct*
Proposed Action	1.2	17.1	3.2	1.0
No Wilderness Alternative	---	--	21.5	1.0
Partial Wilderness Alternative	0	20.7	.8	0
All Wilderness Alternative	0	21.5	--	--

* Includes only those roads constructed for woodcutting which would be permanently maintained.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 2A):

Acquire 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings, including:

T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 16 and 36
T. 9 S., R. 5 W., Section 36

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 41,665 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

2. Nonwilderness Management Actions

The 9,840 acres of BLM lands not recommended for wilderness designation in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA would be affected by the following actions:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 2B):

1) Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and prescribed burning would occur on approximately 2,050 acres (35% of the nonwilderness lands of the WSA). Cutting areas would be

approximately 40 acres or less in size and no wider than 1/4-mile in width. Tree cutting would be accomplished with chain saws so that tree stumps are left under eight inches in height. Cutting areas would be burned to eliminate a "logged" affect. Climax juniper within canyons and on rocky ridgelines or other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. Areas which would receive treatment are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass and brush. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites and would receive 100% tree removal. Some shallow soil sites with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites may also be treated with selective cutting. Tree cutting would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of one to five years with prescribed fires being used thereafter every twenty years to maintain openings. Fire control activities would depend on the use of natural fire breaks. Seedings with native or nonnative grass species would occur on 750 acres of the treated lands to supplement natural revegetation. Seedings would be done with aerial application or rangeland drill machinery. The schedule of treatments within the WSA depends upon the scheduling of treatments on surrounding lands. Access to treatment areas would be by foot, horseback, helicopter, along existing roads and ways (3.2 miles), or along newly constructed roads. Ten miles of new roads would be constructed for access to vegetation treatment areas in the WSA's northern, northeastern and westernmost reaches. These roads would be constructed to eight feet in width and to a maximum of six percent (6%) grade. Nine miles of these roads would be temporary and rehabilitated following woodcutting. One mile of road would remain open for recreation use and other multiple use programs.

2) Juniper logs (limbs attached) would be implanted along 40% of a one-half mile segment of Juniper Creek. Logs would be helicoptered or horse drawn from the nearby cutting areas described above. Logs would be attached to stream banks with steel rods and wires. Natural revegetation and/or planting of willow saplings would occur among log implants. Exposed rods and wires would be removed once revegetation and the silting of logs into the stream banks has occurred.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 2C and 2D):

1) Grazing use would continue. Livestock use levels would remain at the current level of approximately 785 AUMs (Table II-2). The use would be distributed among seven allotments. With the exception of the Brown Fenced Federal Range Allotment, which is grazed seasonally, the allotments would be utilized in accordance with rotation grazing systems which would be implemented on both wilderness and nonwilderness lands.

Livestock use levels of the key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements including four stock reservoirs, two developed springs with exclosure fences and 2.5 miles of fenceline. Use of motorized vehicles for salting and facility maintenance on 3.2 miles of roads and ways would continue.

3) Construct new range improvements including two developed springs with exclosure fences. Seedings would also occur on 750 acres in association with some of the woodcutting/prescribed burning actions identified previously (see Table II-1).

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 2D and 2E):

No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. The 3.2 miles of existing cherrystem roads in the WSA's northern and southeastern peripheries would remain open for general public recreation use up to the boundary of the wilderness area (T. 8 S., R. 4 W., Sections 33 and 34; T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10; T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Sections 6 and 7; see Table II-3). One mile of newly constructed road in T. 8 S., R. 3 W., Section 31 and T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Section 6 would also remain open following woodcutting. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted. All vehicle use would have to be confined to existing roads and ways or newly constructed roads.

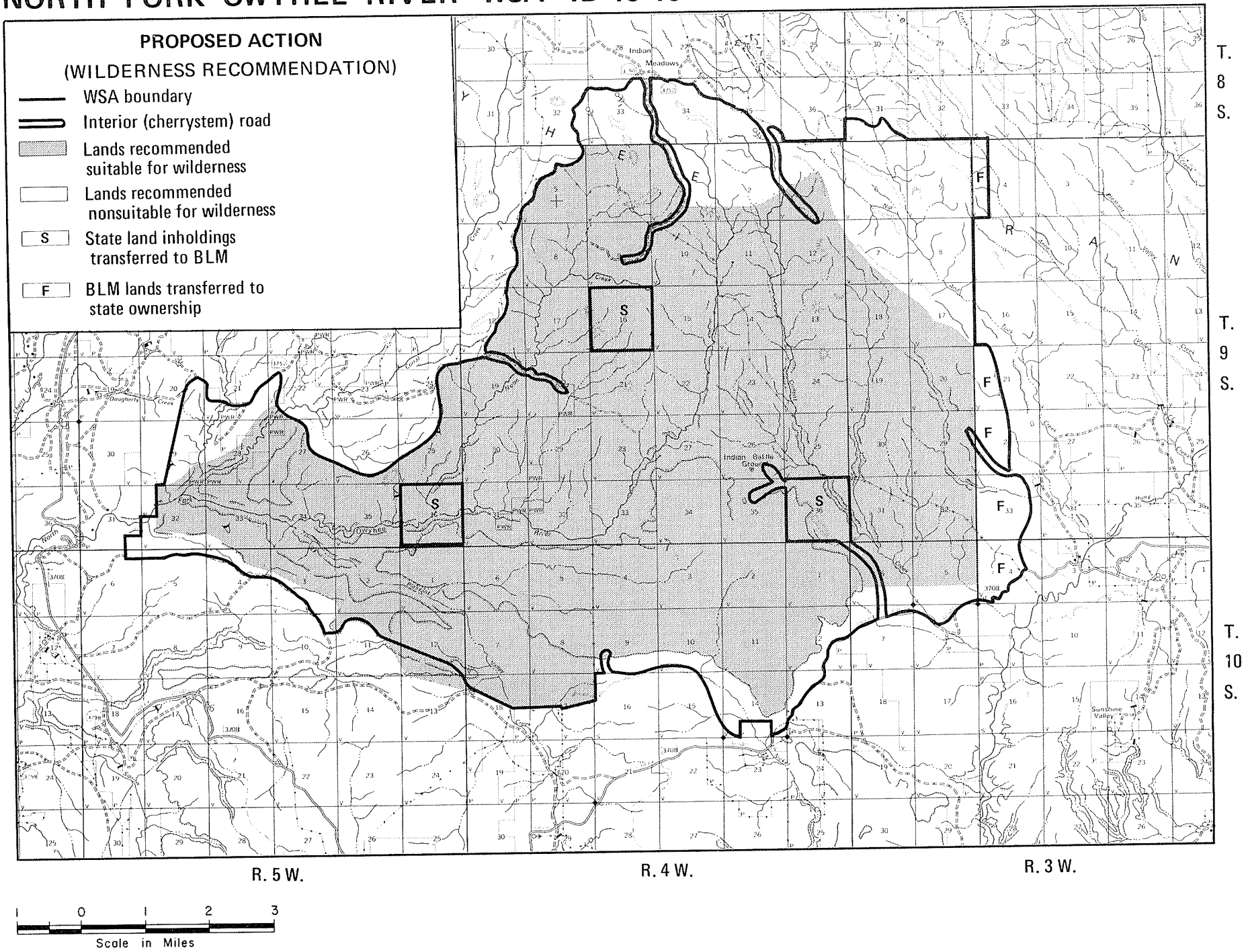
d. Land Exchange Actions:

Transfer 1,400 acres of federal land along the eastern periphery of the WSA to Idaho state ownership, including lands in:

T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Sections 4, 21, 28 and 33
T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Section 4

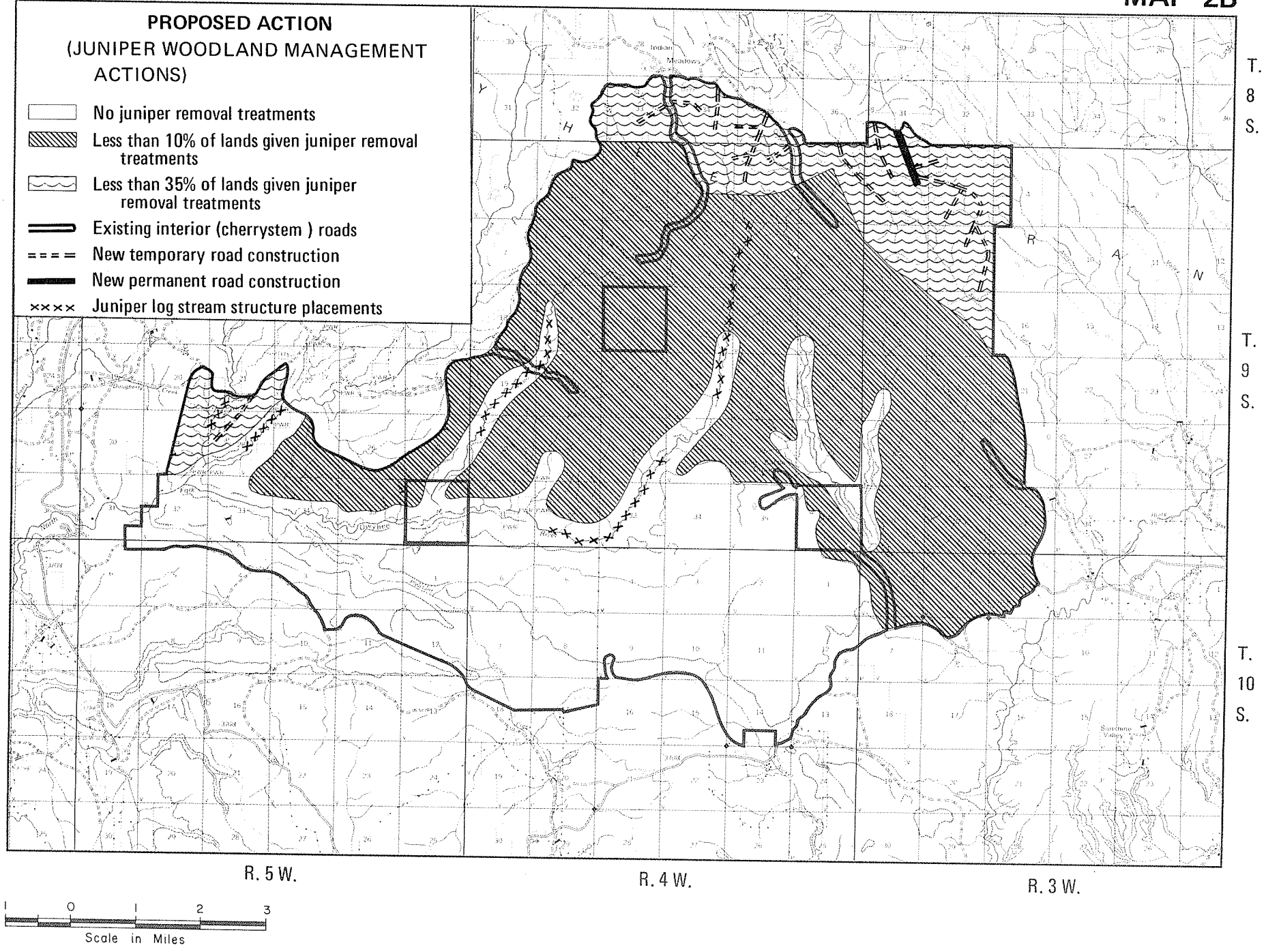
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 2A



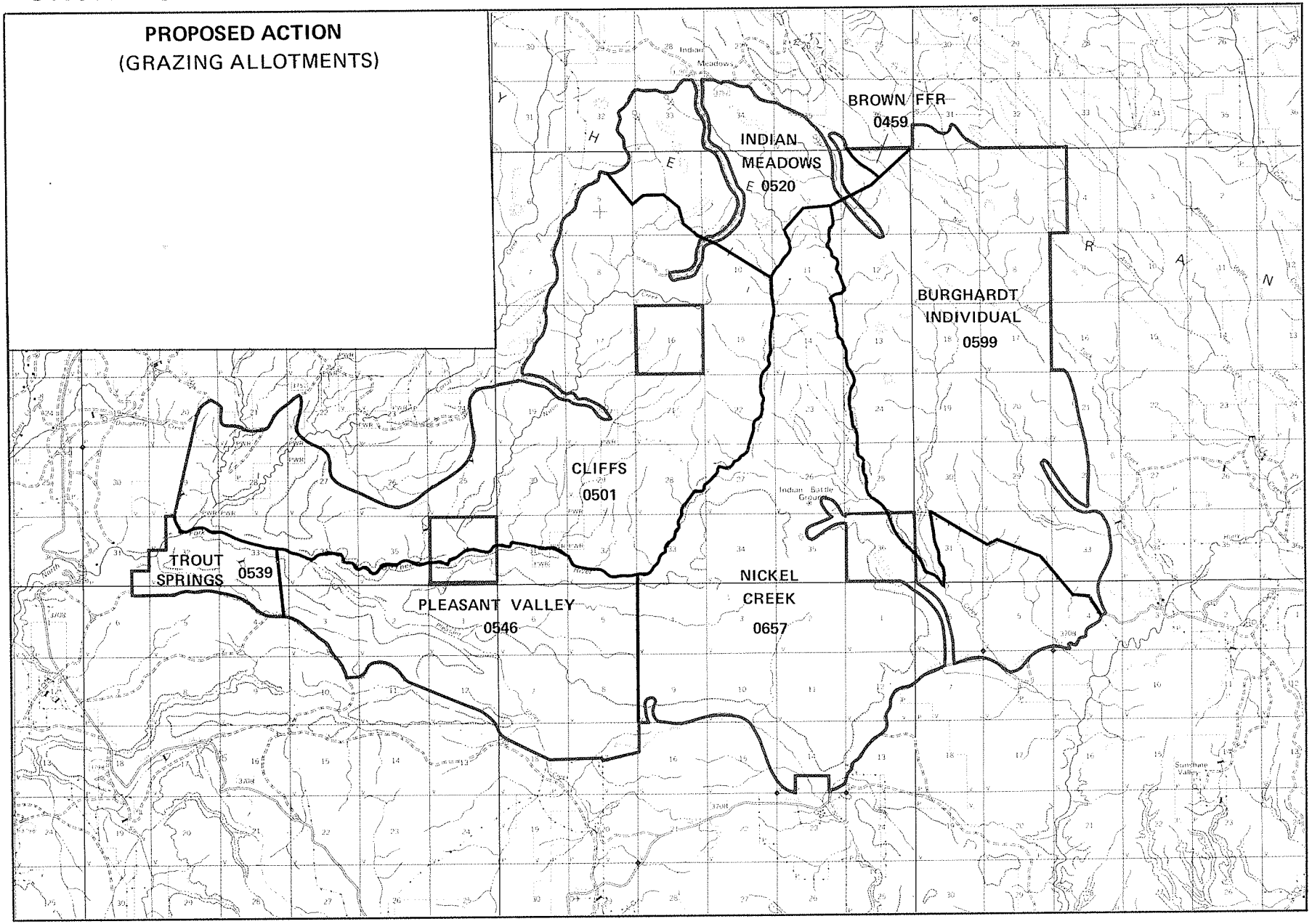
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 2B



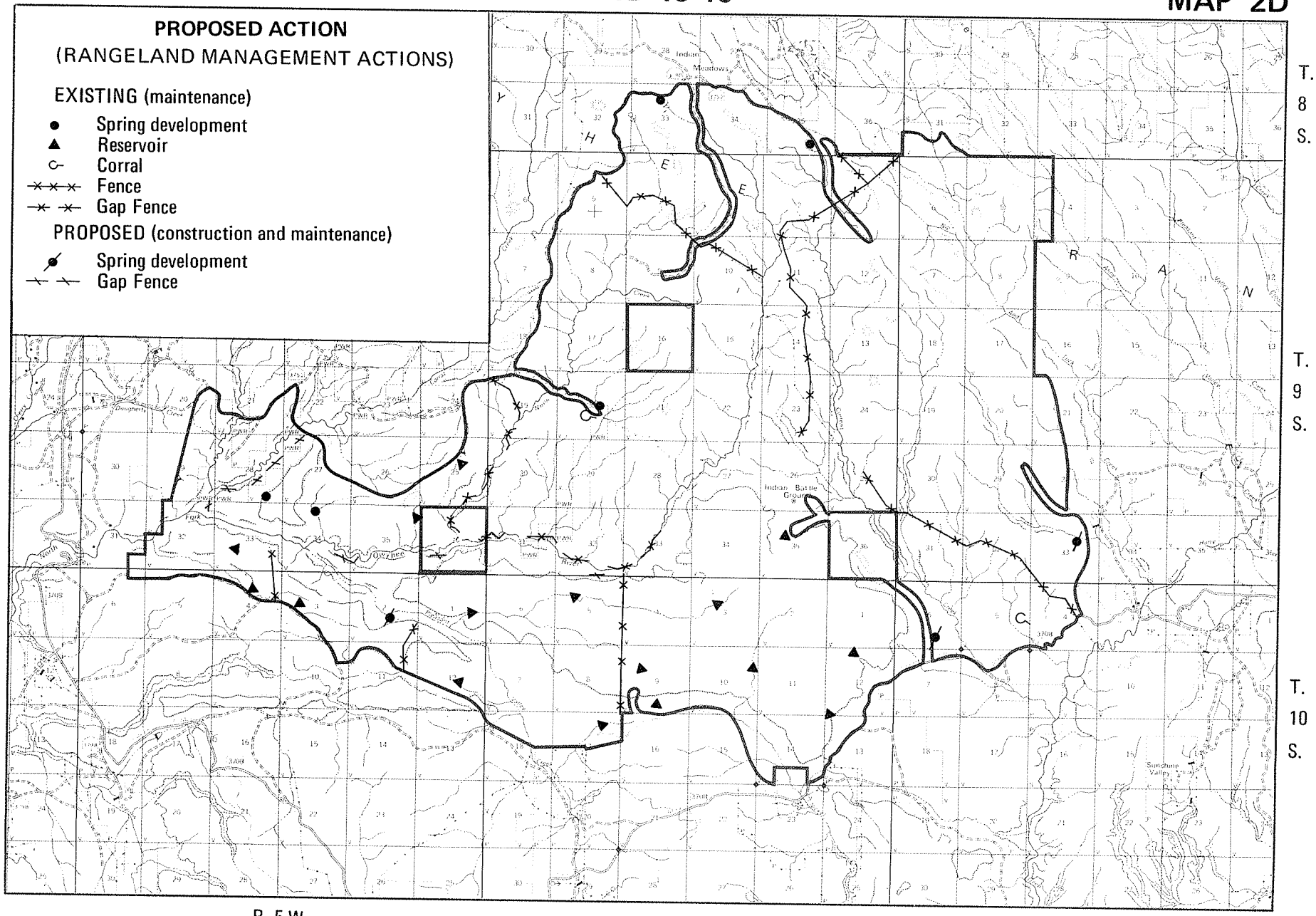
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 2C



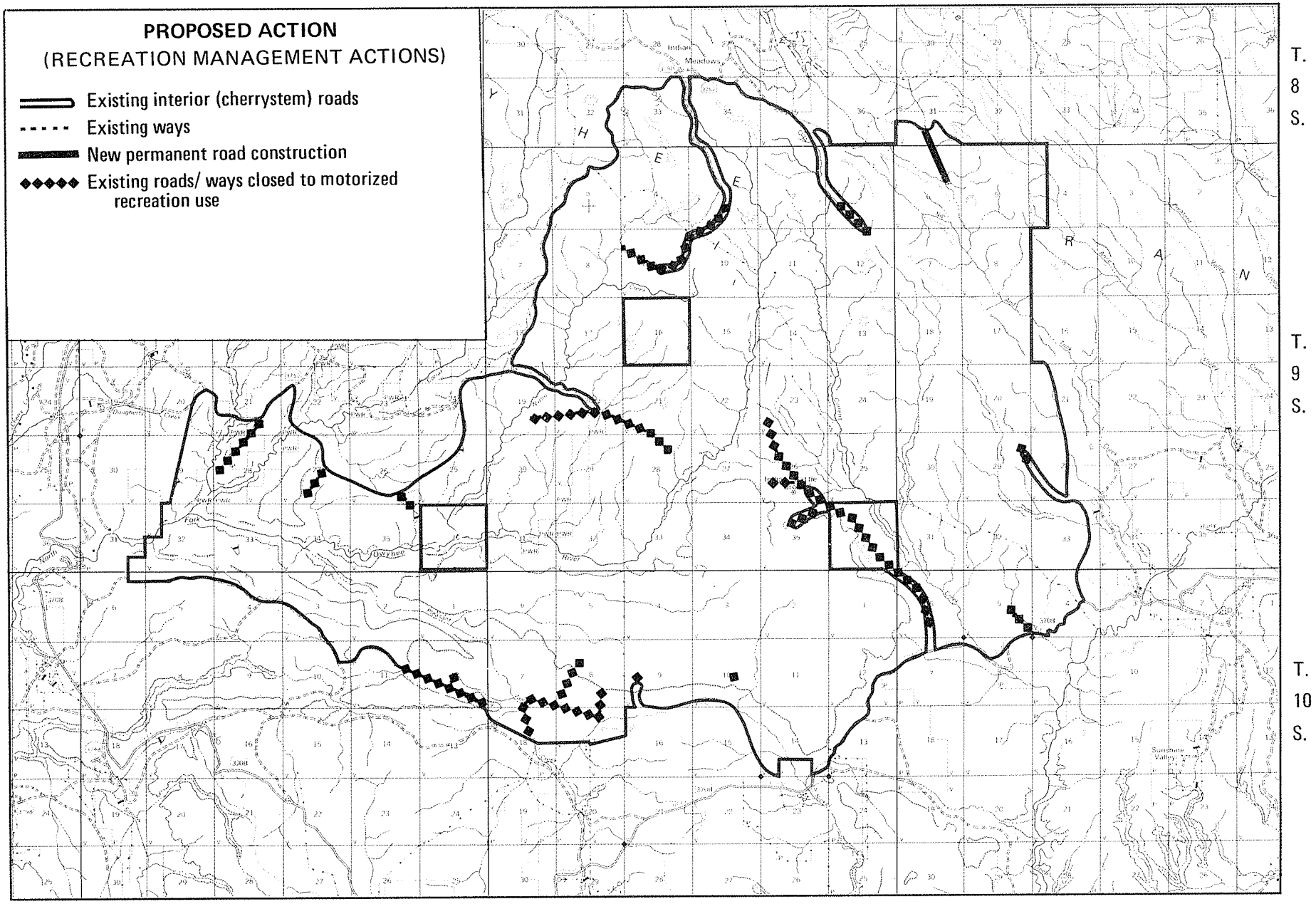
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 2D



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 2E



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - NO WILDERNESS (NO ACTION) ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 3

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends that all 49,470 acres of BLM land in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA not be designated wilderness (see Map 3A). All resources within the WSA would be managed in accordance with the existing special recreation management area (SRMA) designation contained in the Owyhee Resource Area MFP. Nonwilderness management actions for the WSA would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 3B):

Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and prescribed burning would occur on 10,350 acres (Table II-1). Lands over most of the WSA's northern hilly region would receive about a 20% treatment while lands along the northern, northeastern and westernmost peripheries would receive as much as a 35% treatment. No treatments would occur on the southern plateau. Treated areas would be approximately 40 acres or less in size and no wider than 1/4-mile in width. Cutting of trees would be accomplished with chain saws so that tree stumps are left under eight inches or less in height. Cutting areas would be burned to eliminate a "logged" affect. Climax juniper within canyons, on rocky ridgelines or on other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. Areas which would receive treatment are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass and brush. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites and would receive 100% tree removal. Some shallow soil types with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites may also be treated with selective cutting of juniper. Tree cutting would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of 20 years with one to two percent (500 to 1,000 acres) of the WSA being affected each year. Prescribed fires would be utilized on a 20-year schedule to maintain openings. Access to treatment areas would be by foot, horseback, helicopter or along 16.3 miles of existing roads and ways. Ten miles of new roads would be constructed for access to vegetation treatment areas in the WSA's northern, northeastern and westernmost reaches. These roads would be temporary and would be rehabilitated following the cutting period except for one mile in T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Section 6. This road would remain open for recreation and other multiple-use purposes. New roads would be limited to eight feet in width and to a maximum of six percent (6%) grade.

Juniper logs (limbs attached) would be implanted along 20% to 40% of a six mile segment of the North Fork Owyhee River, one-half mile of Juniper Creek, two and one-half miles of Noon Creek, and one mile of Cabin Creek. A fish ladder would be constructed on the North Fork Owyhee River below the confluence of Pleasant Valley Creek to allow upstream distribution of redband trout. The ladder would be constructed using a combination of juniper logs and cement structures limited to several feet in height.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 3C):

Continue the development of grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution and forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Grazing use would continue. Initial livestock use levels of 3,935 AUMs would increase to 4,000 AUMs in 20 years (see Table II-2). Use would be distributed among seven allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under deferred or rest rotation grazing systems.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads or to cherrystem roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including 15 stock reservoirs, five developed springs with exclosure fences, two corrals and 24 miles of fenceline. Continue to use 21.5 miles of existing vehicle routes for salting and facility maintenance.

3) Develop additional range improvements. Additional improvements would include six reservoirs, six spring developments with exclosure fences and one mile of fenceline. Seedings would also occur on 3,800 acres in association with some of the woodcutting/burning actions previously identified in Table II-1.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 3D):

Develop public recreation use facilities and road access for recreational activities (both primitive and semi-primitive motorized and nonmotorized). Facilities such as trails, bridges, signs and campsites would be provided for the convenience and enjoyment of visitors. Four campground/trail head areas and 30 miles of hiking/aquestrian trails would be built. Trail heads would be located at Big Springs (T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Section 20), the western-most periphery of the WSA (T. 10 S., R. 5 W., Section 6), the southwest periphery of the WSA (T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Section 6), and Tobacco Meadow (T. 10 S., R. 4 W., Section 35). The trail systems would traverse areas of the North Fork Owyhee River, Corral Creek, Current Creek and Noon Creek Canyons. All 21.5 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways would remain open for public use (see Table II-4). Reconstruct and maintain 1.2 miles of the Big Springs access road for two-wheel drive vehicles and construct a bridge crossing on Noon Creek (T. 9 S., R. 5 W., Section 34). Also reconstruct and maintain three miles of the Nickel Creek Canyon-Indian Battle Ground access road (T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Section 6; T. 10 S., R. 4 W., Section 1; T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 35 and 36) for the passage of two-wheel drive vehicles. Maintain four miles of the two northern cherrystem roads for two-wheel drive access (T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10; T. 8 S., R. 4 W., Sections 33

and 34). Leave open for public access one mile of new road developed for woodcutting in T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Section 6.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 3A):

1) Acquire 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings, including:

T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 16 and 36
T. 9 S., R. 5 W., Section 36

2) Transfer 1,400 acres of federal land along the eastern periphery of the WSA to Idaho state ownership, including lands in:

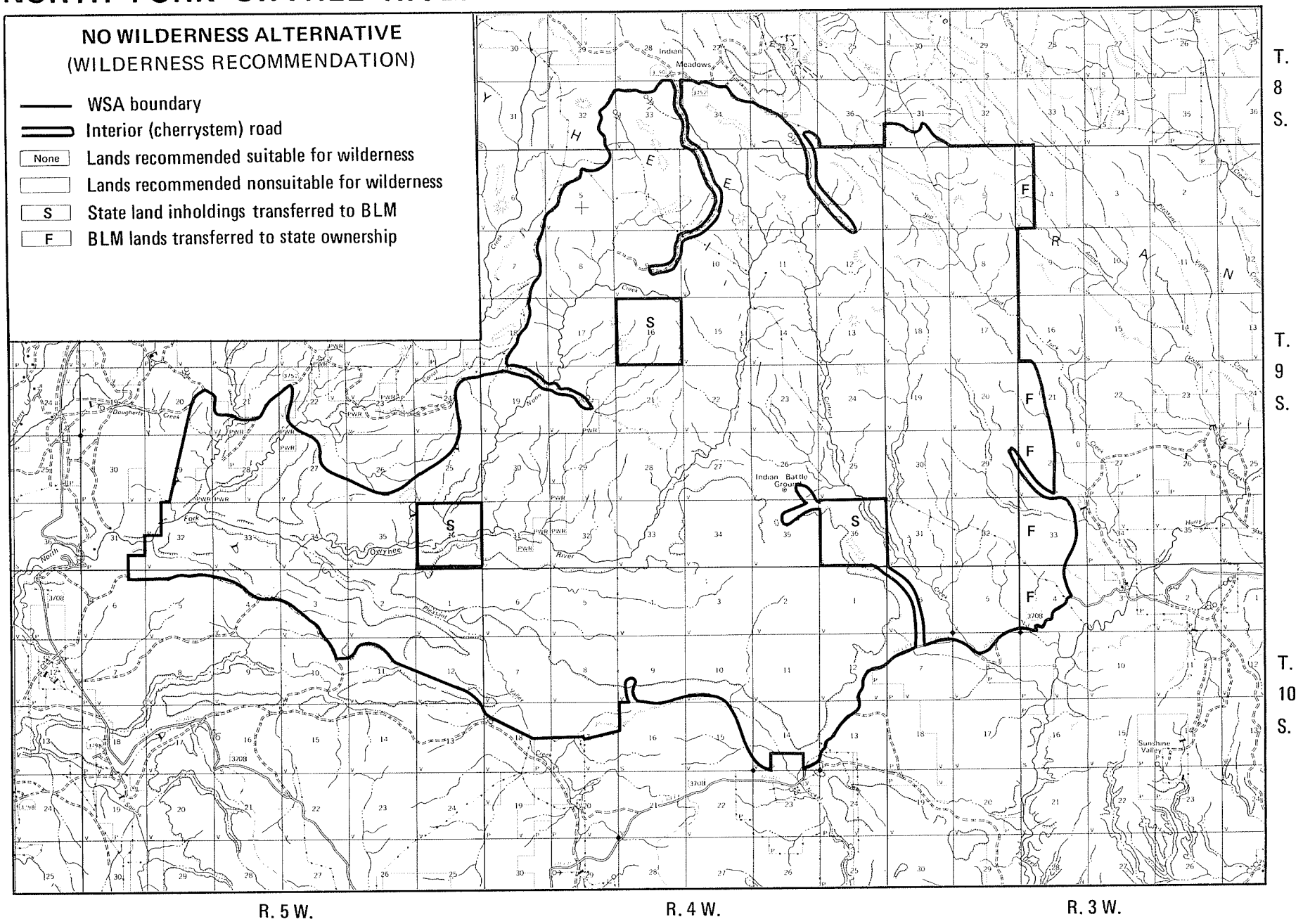
T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Sections 4, 21, 28 and 33
T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Section 4

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 49,470 acres of WSA lands contained in the North Fork Owyhee River SRMA. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

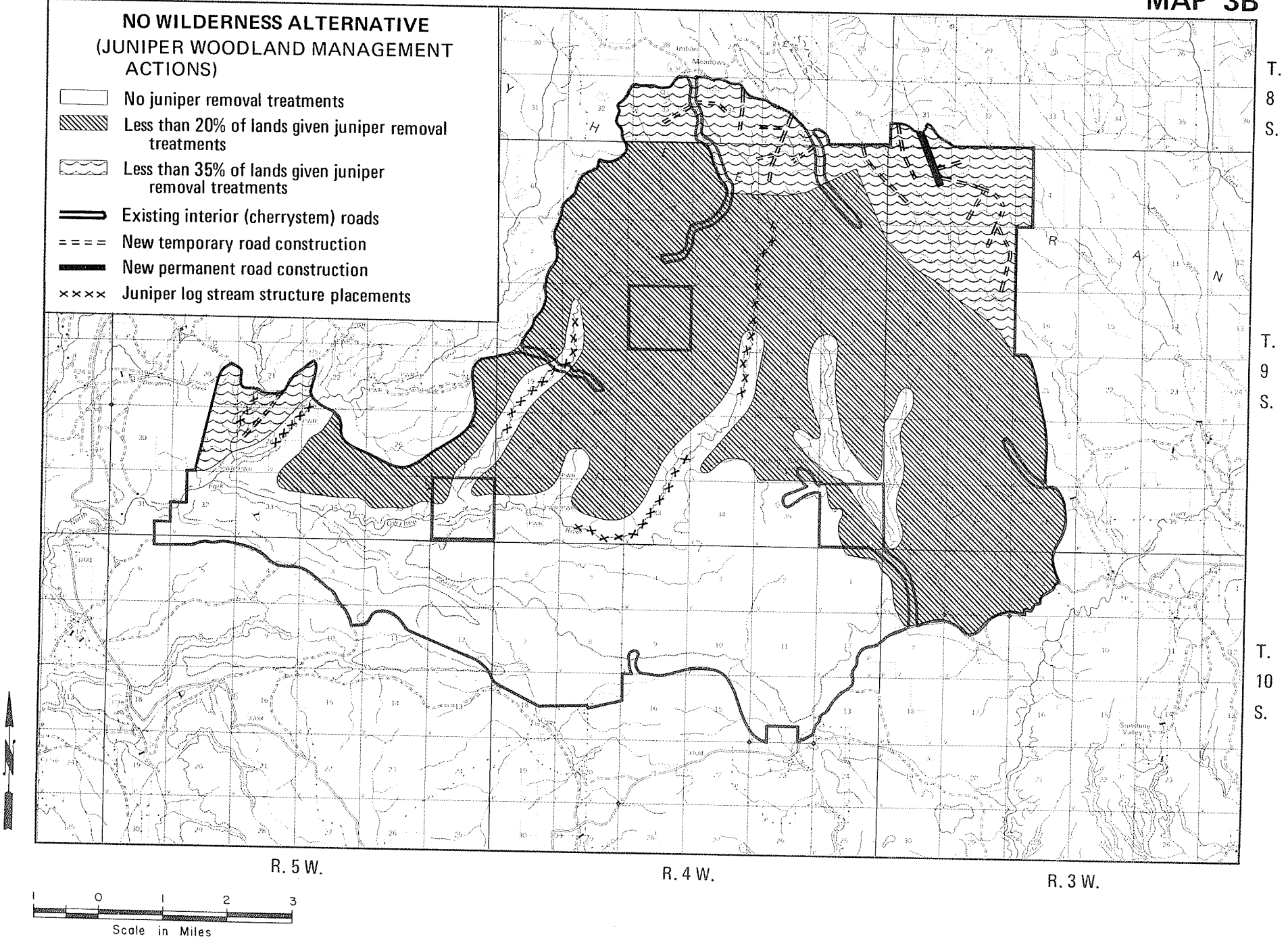
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 3A



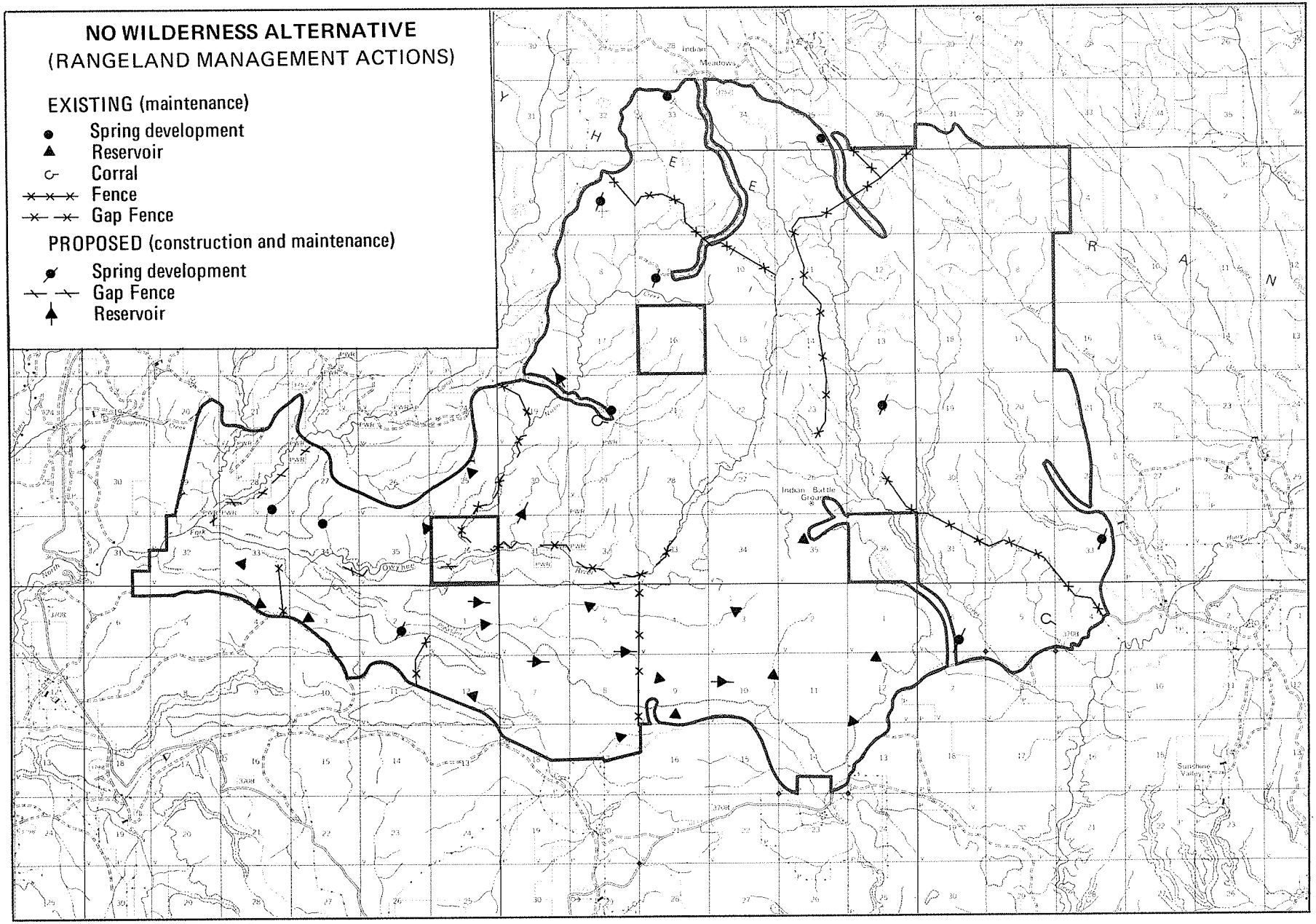
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 3B



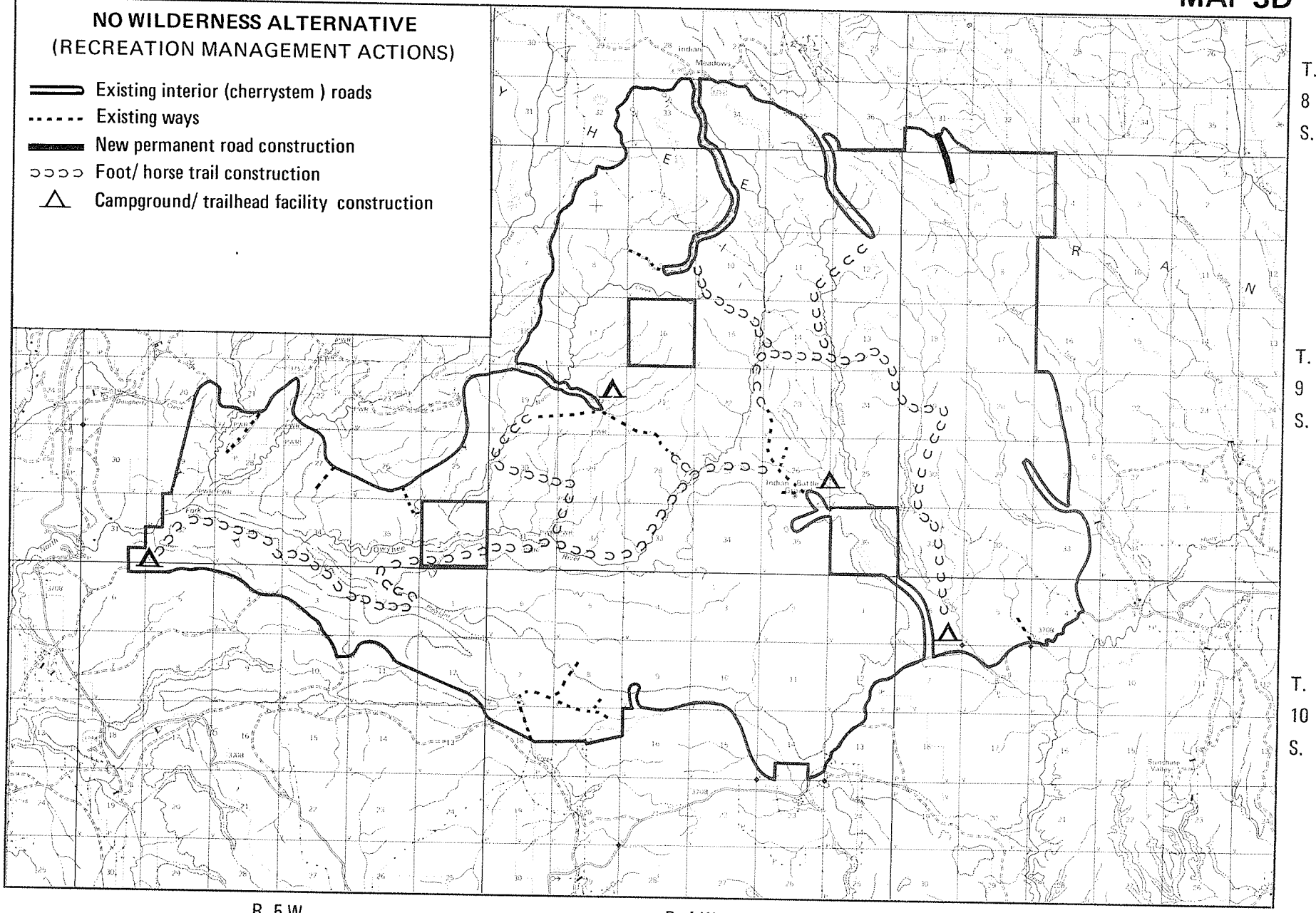
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 3C



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 3D



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 4

The Partial Wilderness Alternative recommends 46,075 BLM acres in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA for wilderness designation. It further recommends that 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area. There would be 3,510 acres not designated wilderness (see Map 4A).

1. Wilderness Management Actions

Management actions for the 47,995 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions:

No juniper vegetation treatment projects or stream bank stabilization projects would be undertaken. Existing ecological condition would be subject to changes occurring only from natural processes.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 4B):

Rangeland management actions concerning allotment grazing systems would be as described under the Proposed Action. Livestock use would decrease from 3,705 AUMs to approximately 3,315 AUMs (Table II-2) over a 20 year period. Livestock use of the forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Maintenance of 13 stock reservoirs, five developed springs, two corrals and 23.5 miles of fenceline would continue. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur from horseback. No new livestock facilities or range improvements would be constructed.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 4C):

No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. There are 20.7 miles of cherrystem roads and ways which would be closed to general public recreation use (Table II-3). Close the 1.2 miles southwest boundary road of the WSA and include the 115 acres of adjacent BLM land in the wilderness area in T. 10 S., R. 5 W., Sections 11, 12, and 13.

d. Acquisition (Land Exchange Actions) (Map 4A):

Acquire 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings, including:

T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 16 and 36
T. 9 S., R. 5 W., Section 36

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 47,995 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The

inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface diturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

2. Nonwilderness Management Actions

The 3,150 acres of BLM lands not recommended for wilderness designation in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA would be affected by the following actions:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Action:

No woodland management actions would occur.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 4B):

Grazing use would continue. Anticipated livestock use levels would remain at apporixmately 230 AUMs (Table II-2) in 20 years. The use would be distributed among four allotments. Use within these allotments would be in accordance with rotation grazing systems which are implemented on wilderness and nonwilderness lands of the affected allotments. Livestock use levels of the forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Maintenance of existing range improvements would continue, including work on two stock reservoirs and .5 miles of fenceline. Use of motorized vehicles for salting and facility maintenance on .8 miles of roads and ways would also continue. No new range improvements would be proposed for nonwilderness lands under this alternative.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 4C):

No recreation management facilities would be developed. The .8 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways in the southern periphery of the WSA would remain open for general public recreation use (Table II-3). These roads would be maintained for two-wheel drive access.

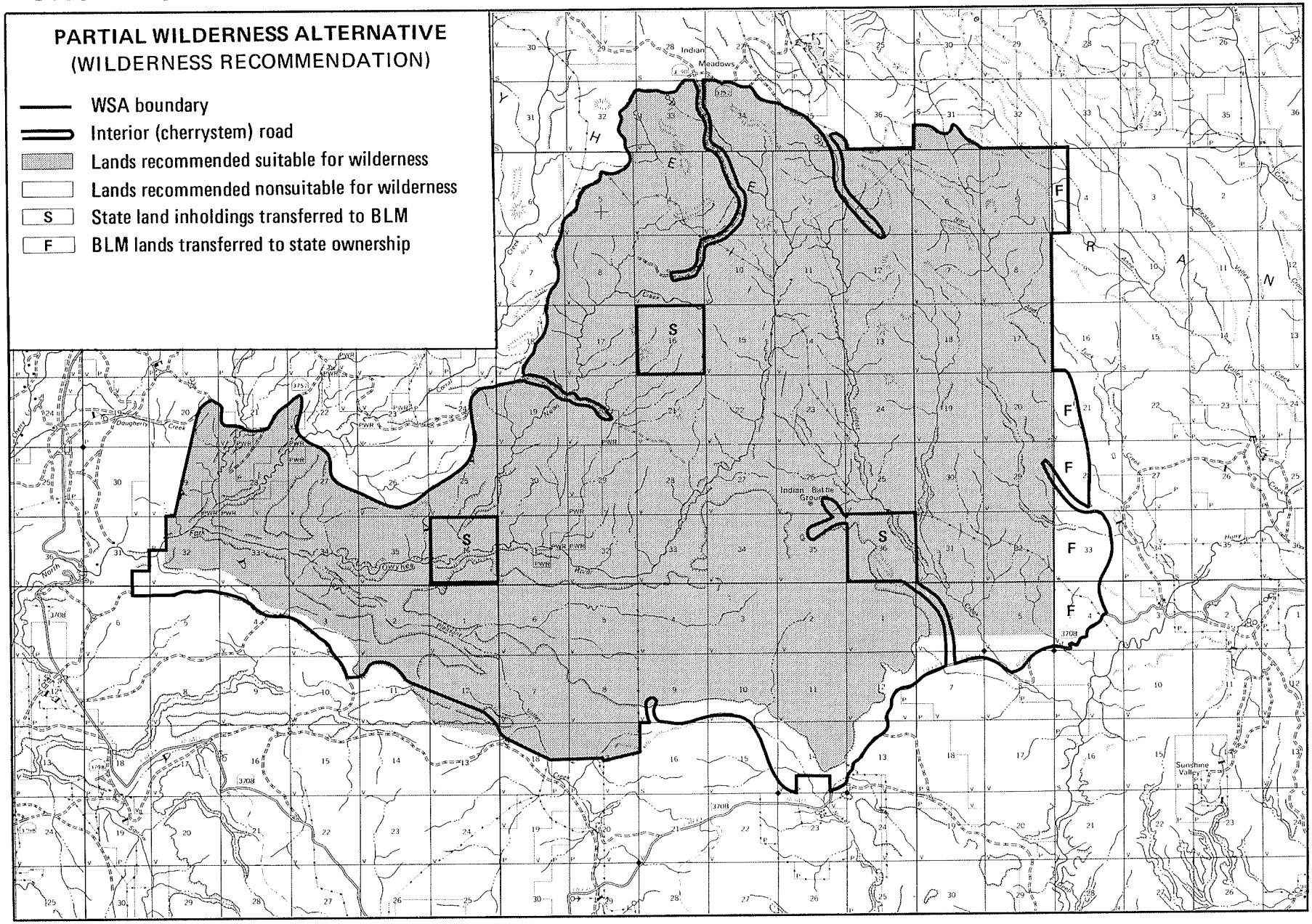
d. Land Exchange Actions (Map 4A):

Transfer 1,400 acres of federal land along the eastern periphery of the WSA to Idaho state ownership, including lands in:

T. 9 S., R. 3 W., Sections 4, 21, 28 and 33
T. 10 S., R. 3 W., Section 4

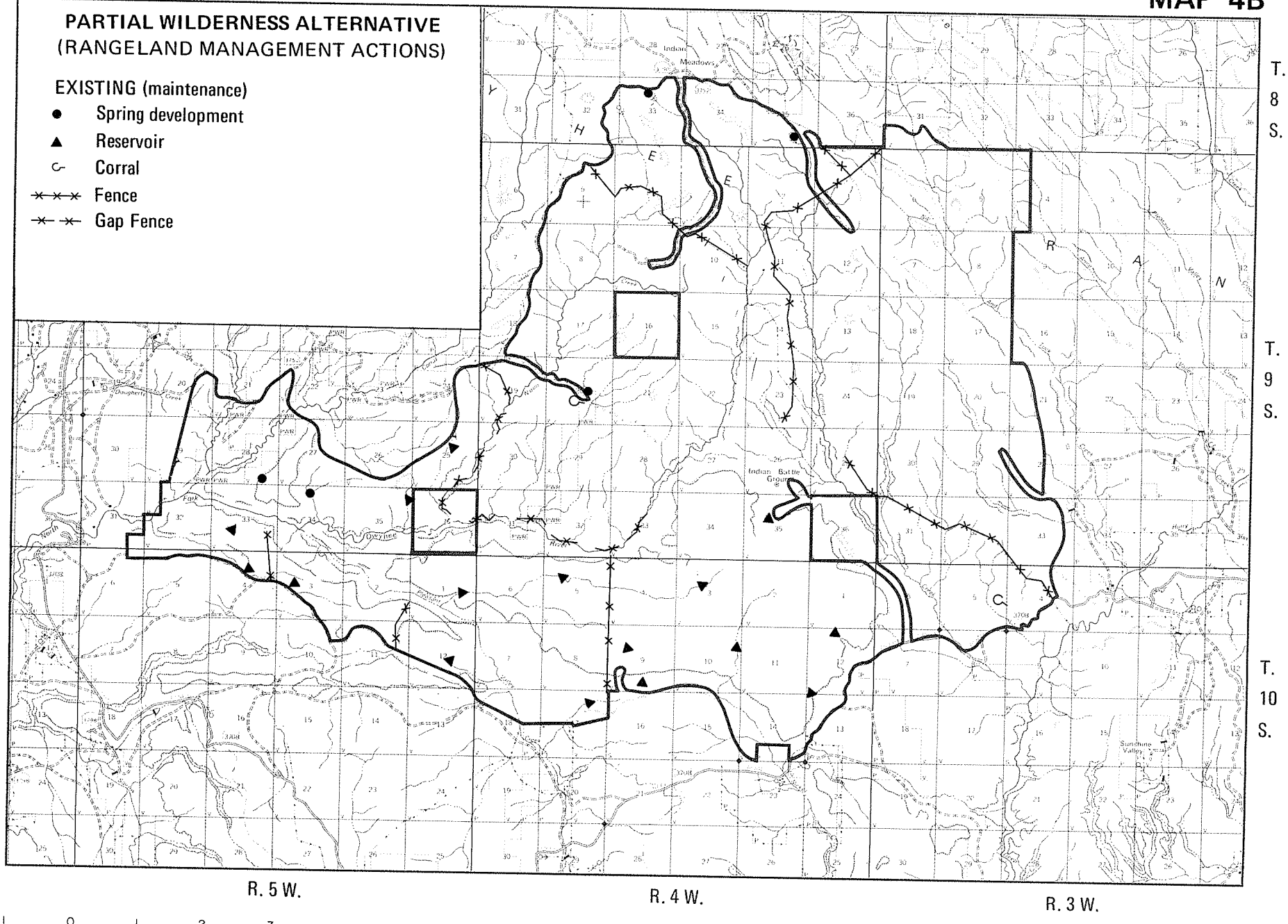
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 4A



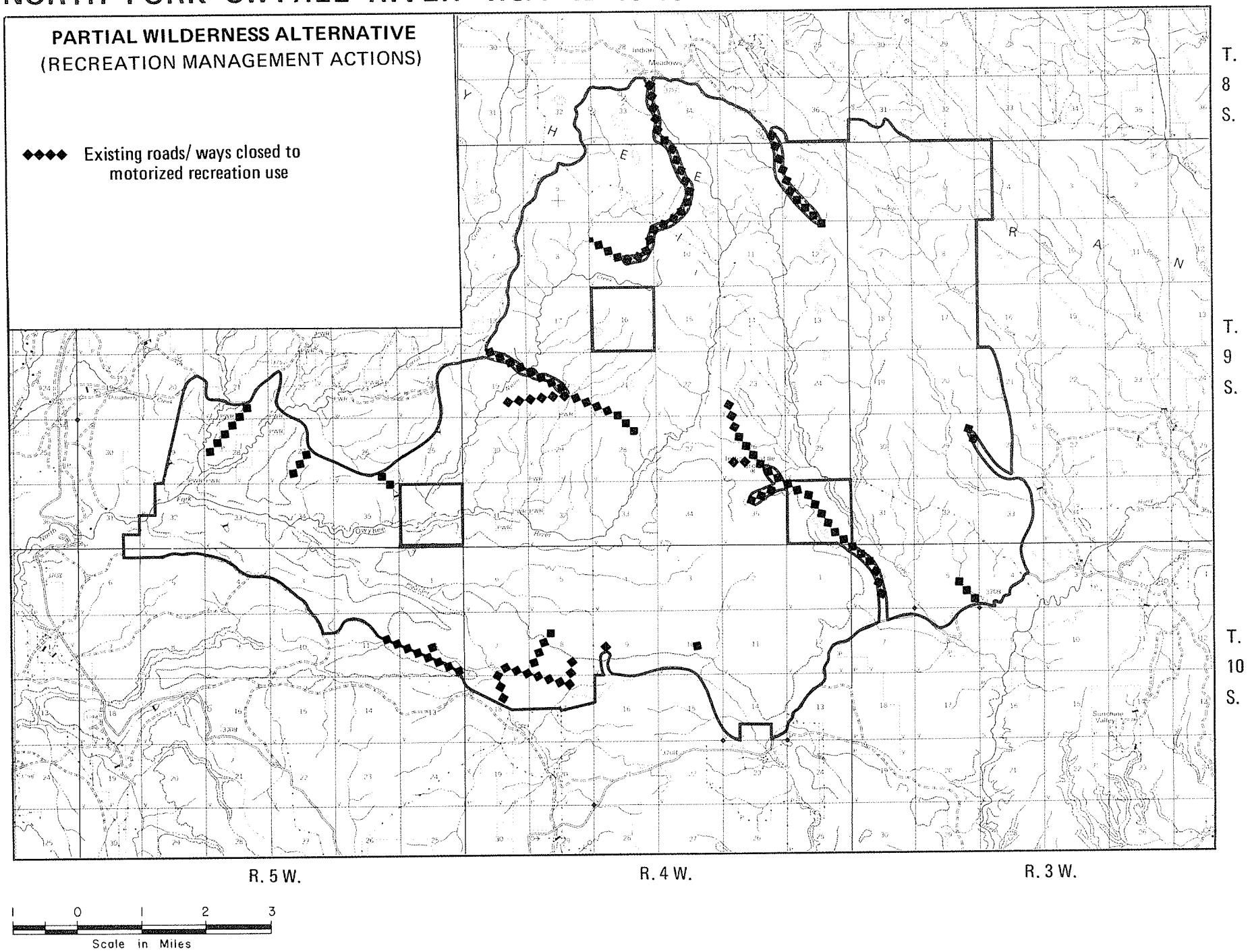
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 4B



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 4C



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 5

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends that 49,585 BLM acres in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA be designated wilderness (see Map 5A). It further recommends that 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area.

Management actions for the 51,505 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions:

No juniper vegetation treatment projects or stream bank stabilization projects would be undertaken. Existing ecological conditions would be subject to changes occurring from natural processes.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 5B):

Rangeland management actions concerning allotment grazing systems would be as described under the Proposed Action. Livestock levels would decrease from 3,935 AUMs to approximately 3,530 AUMs (Table II-2). Livestock use levels of the forage plants would not exceed 50% utilization of the current year's annual growth. Maintenance on 16 stock reservoirs, five developed springs, two corrals and 24 miles of fenceline would continue. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur on horseback. No new livestock facilities or range improvements would be constructed.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 5C):

No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. All 21.5 miles of cherrystem roads and ways would be closed to general public use (see Table II-3). Close the 1.2 mile southwest boundary road of the WSA and include 115 acres of adjacent BLM land in the wilderness area in T. 10 S., R. 5 W., Sections 11, 12, and 13.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 5A):

Acquire 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings, including:

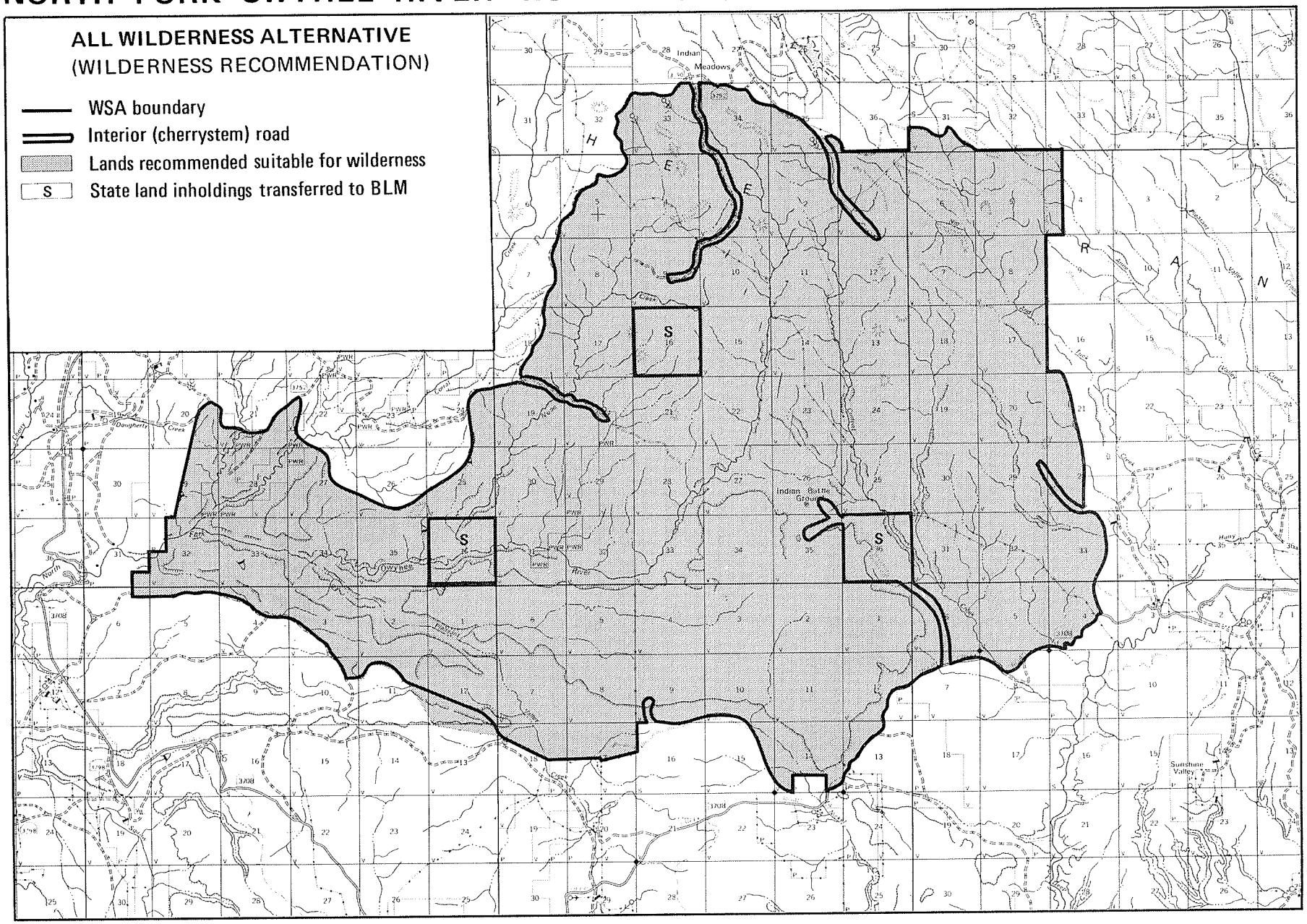
T. 9 S., R. 4 W., Sections 16 and 36
T. 9 S., R. 5 W., Section 36

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 51,505 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

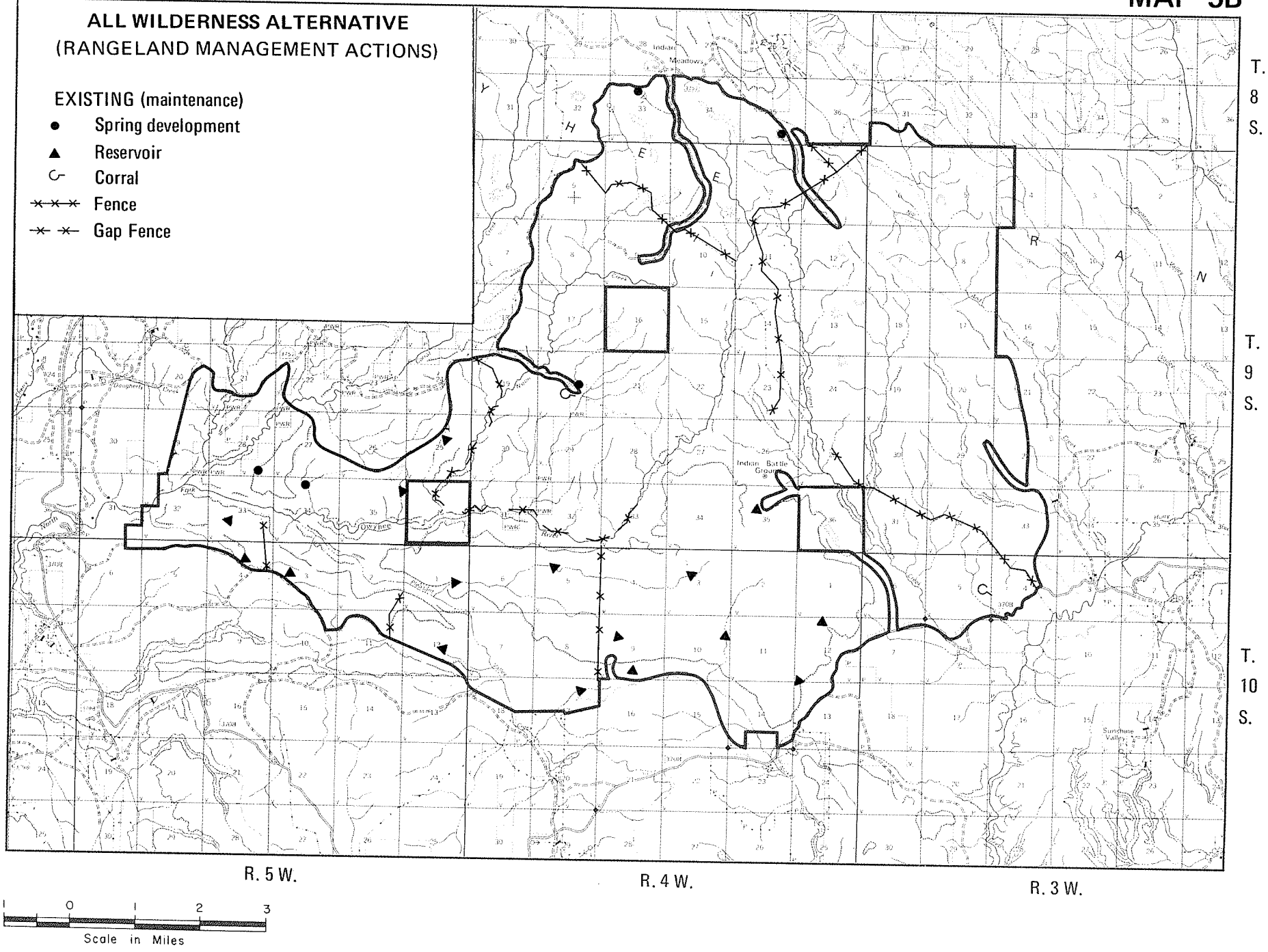
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 5A



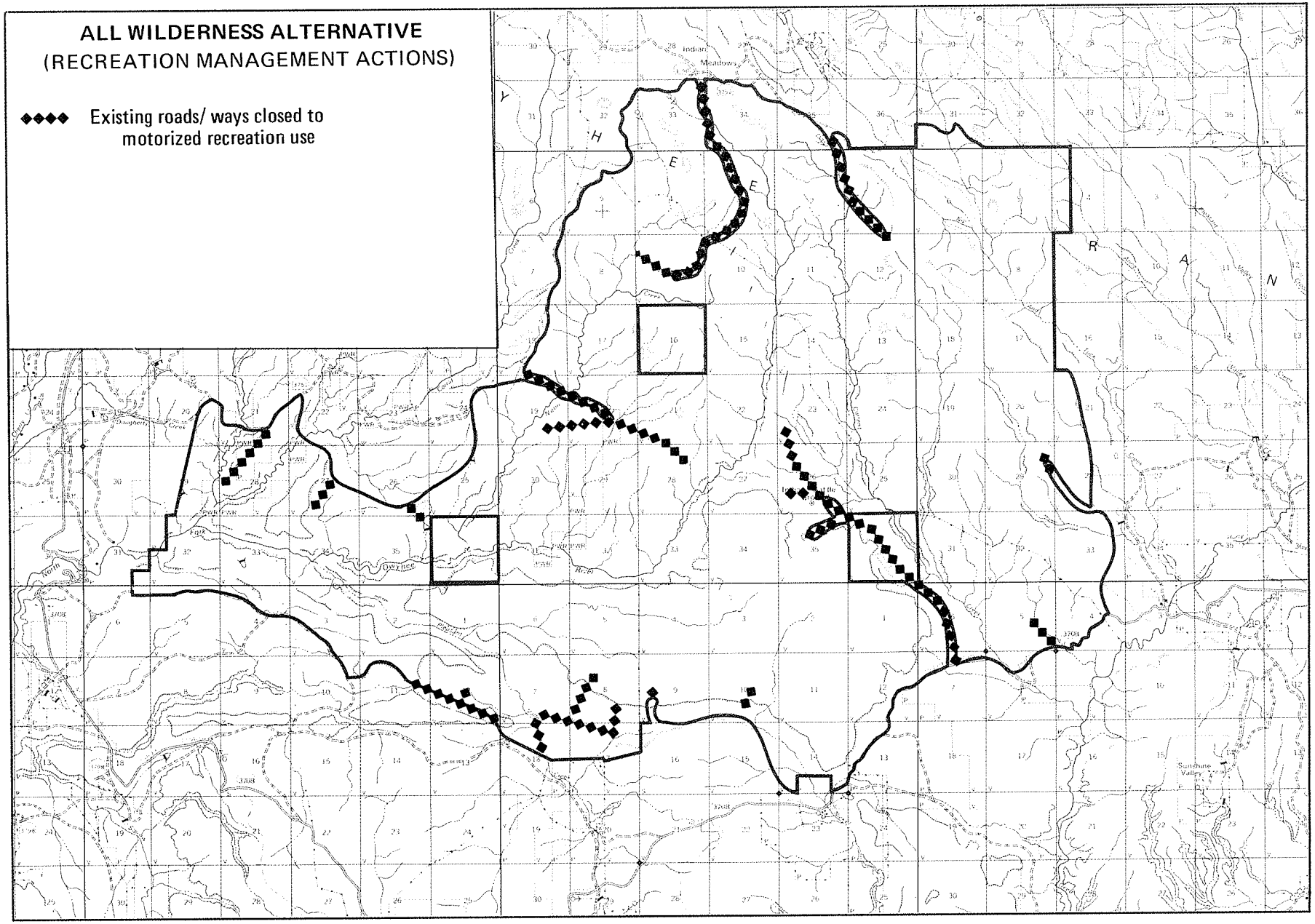
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 5B



NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-40

MAP 5C



BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA - PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative): Map Series 6

The Proposed Action recommends that 6,210 acres of BLM land in the Big Willow Spring WSA not be designated wilderness (see Map 6A). The nonwilderness management actions for the WSA are as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 6B):

Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and/or prescribed burning, would occur on 1,250 acres (approximately 20% of the WSA; see Table II-4). Areas which would be treated are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Some shallow soil sites with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites would also be treated. Vegetation treatments would utilize mechanical methods (tree cutting) and/or prescribed burning. Mechanical methods would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. The primary mechanical method would be tree cutting with chain saws to produce fuel wood products and fence posts.

Vegetation treatments would be designed to produce a vegetation pattern where a minimum of 40% of the land would be retained in juniper and no more than 60% would be retained or returned to sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Climax (old-growth) juniper stands within canyon areas and on rocky ridgelines or other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. No cutting of juniper would occur within a minimum of 50 feet to 150 feet of perennial and major intermittent stream courses depending upon surrounding slope aspects. These stream course buffer zones would be narrower on north-facing slopes and wider on south-facing slopes. The vegetation treatments would not exceed 1/4-mile in width but could be of any length depending upon topographic and/or soil limitations. No mechanical methods of treatments would occur on slopes greater than 35%. It is expected that most treated areas would be 40 acres or less in size. Deep soil sites containing mostly young-growth and intermediate-aged seral juniper would have 100% tree removal whereas selected sites with mature juniper would have trees selectively removed. Prescribed burning of slash would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. All areas receiving prescribed burning without prior mechanical removal of trees would be opened for salvage of fuel wood products. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of one to five years (250 to 500 acres being cut per year) with prescribed fire being used every 20 years to maintain openings. The woodcutting treatments scheduled for the WSA depends upon the scheduling of treatments on surrounding lands.

There would be 2.5 miles of road constructed to cutting areas to assist public access. One mile of road would be temporary and would be rehabilitated following the cutting period and 1.5 miles of road would be retained for recreation and other multiple use purposes.

TABLE II-4
VEGETATION TREATMENT IN THE BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)							
	Cut		Burn Only		Cut/Burn Acreage Total		Cut/Burn Acreage Seeded	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	---	950	---	300	---	1,250	---	950
All Wilderness With Stipulations	450	---	150	---	600	---	550	---
All Wilderness With No Stipulations	0	---	0	---	0	---	0	---

* See Appendix A for allotment specific information.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 6C):

Implement a grazing system aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Livestock grazing would continue. Use would occur in one allotment. It is anticipated that livestock use levels could increase from 400 AUMs to 440 AUMs in 20 years (see Table II-5). Use within the allotment would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including two developed springs with exclosure fences and 1.3 miles of fenceline. The use of motorized vehicles on .8 miles of existing ways would continue to occur for salting and facility maintenance.

3) Approximately 950 acres of seeding would occur in some of those areas previously identified for woodcutting/prescribed burning projects (Table II-4).

TABLE II-5
LIVESTOCK FORAGE (AUMs) USE WITHIN
THE BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Estimated Current Active Use (Annually)		Anticipated Use in 20-Years (Annually)	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	---	400	---	440
All Wilderness With Stipulations	400	---	---	400
All Wilderness With No Stipulations	400	---	---	400

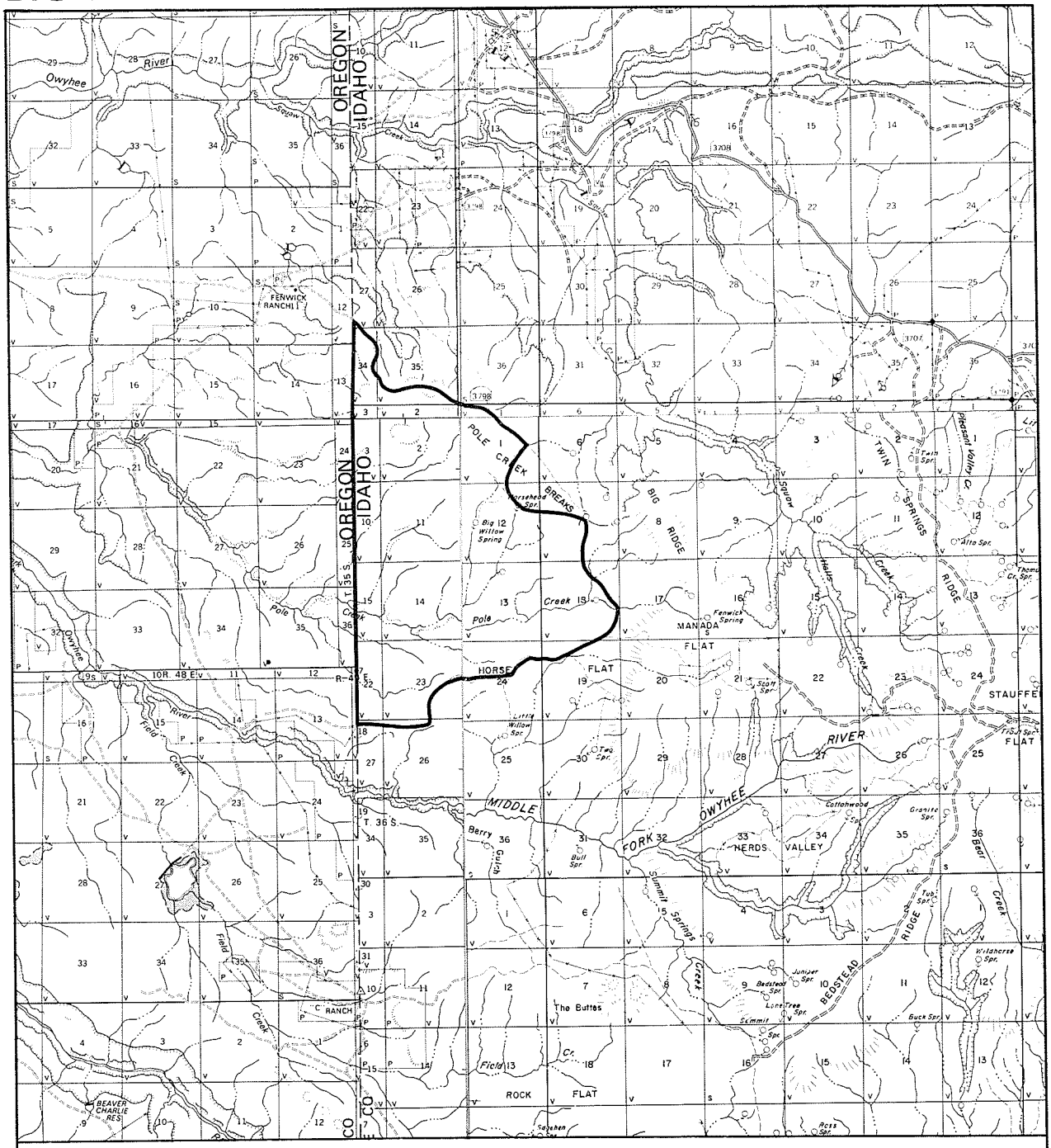
* See Appendix B for allotment specific information.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 6B):

Develop a hunting camp, including toilet facilities, fire pits and tables, along the northeast periphery of the WSA in the vicinity of Big Willow and Horsehead Spring (T. 11 S., R. 6 W., NW1/4 Section 12). Keep the Big Willow Spring access ways (.8 miles) open for general recreation use. Retain 1.5 miles of road used for woodcutting access open for general recreation use in T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Section 18 and T. 11 S., R. 6 W., Section 13 along the northern rimrock of Pole Creek Canyon. The area would be open to off-road vehicle (ORV) use. Vehicle traffic would not be restricted to existing roads, ways nor trails. However, little ORV use is expected because of the dense juniper woodlands and/or topography except along the southern periphery of the WSA..

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 6A



PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

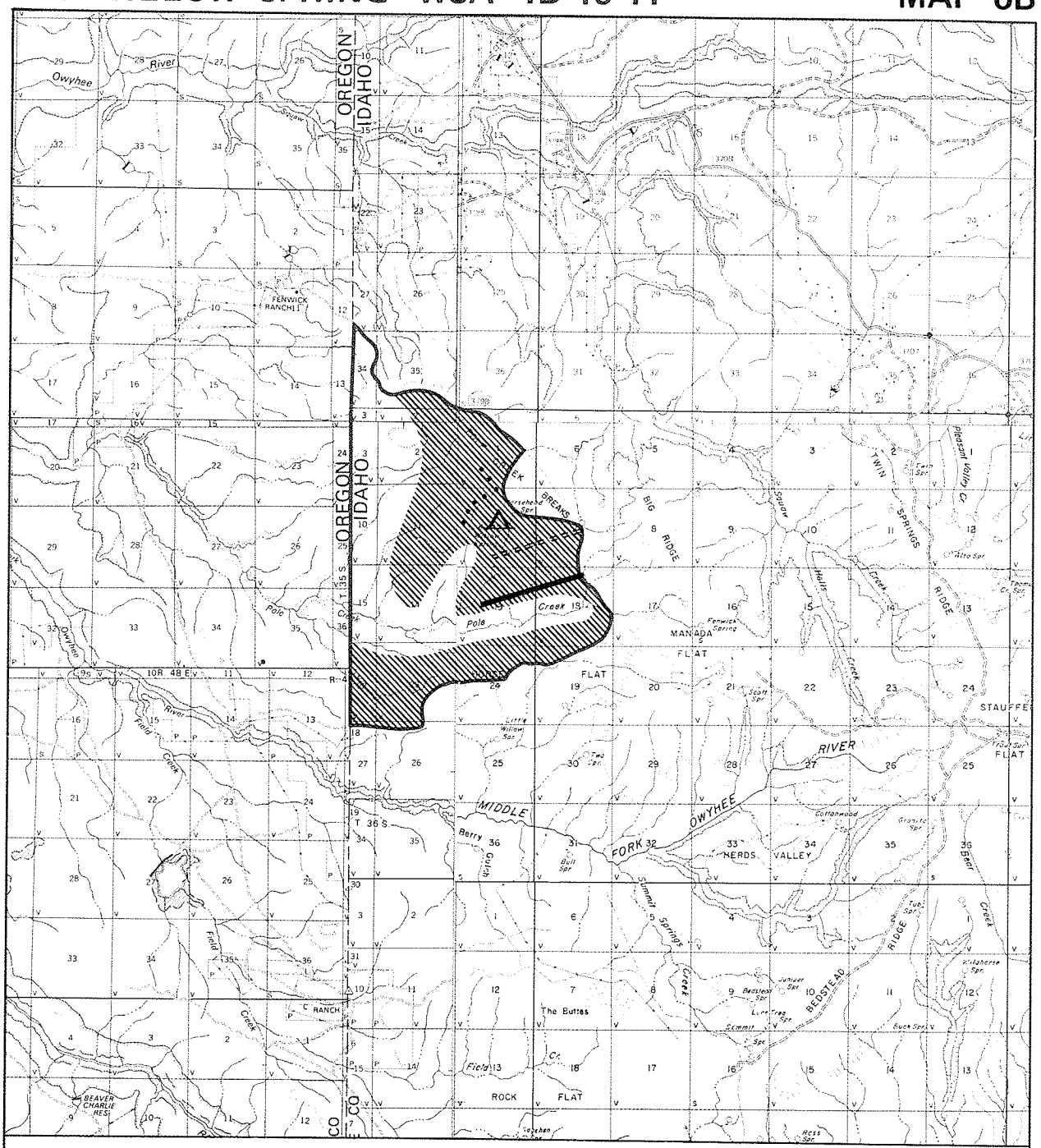
- WSA boundary
- None — Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 6B



PROPOSED ACTION

(JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/ RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

- No juniper removal treatments
- Less than 20% of lands given juniper removal treatments
- New temporary road construction
- New permanent road construction
- Existing ways
- Campground facility construction

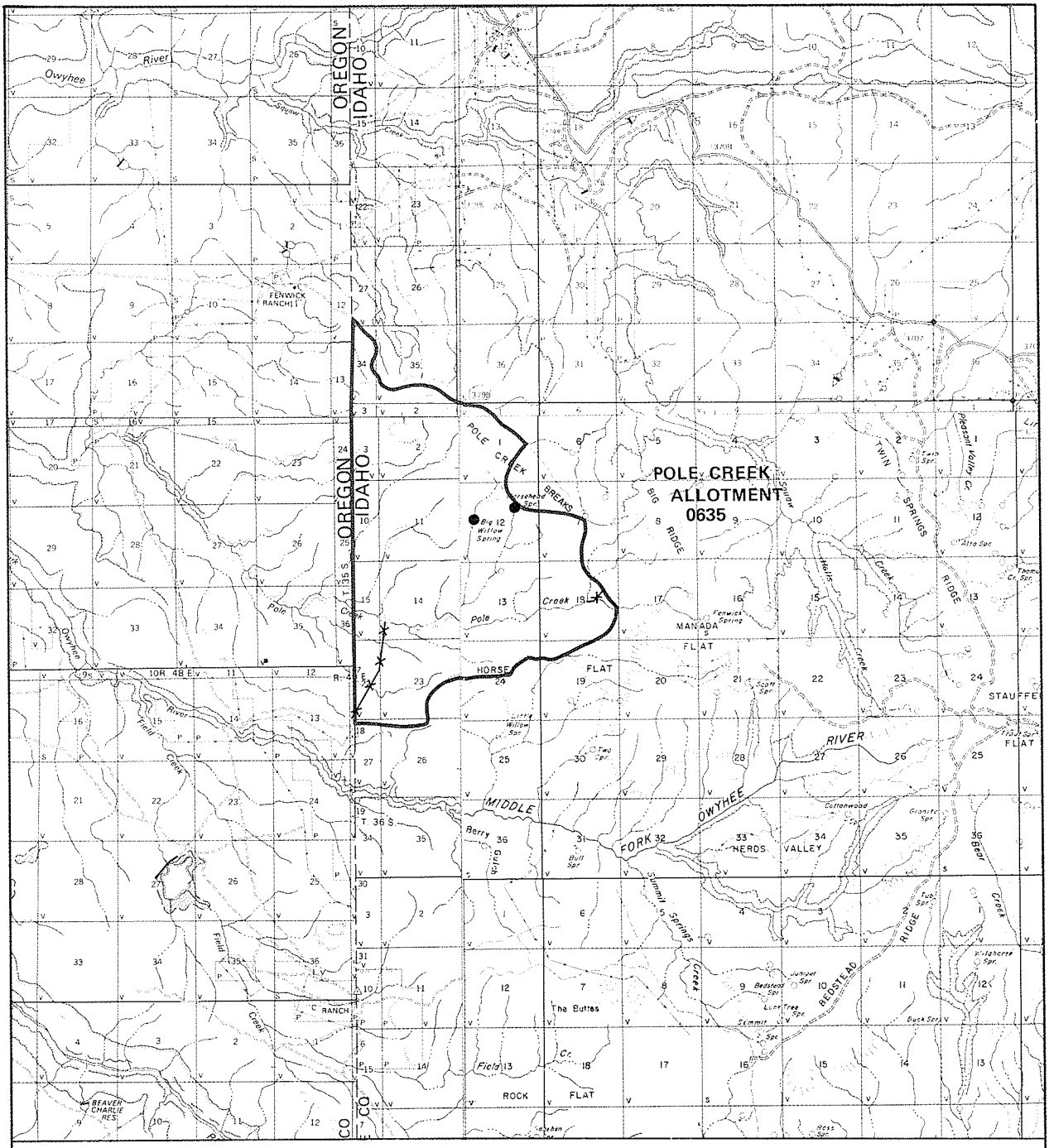
R. 6 W. R. 5 W.

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 6C



T. 10 S.

T. 11 S.

T. 12 S.

PROPOSED ACTION

(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- ● Spring development
- ×——× Fence

R. 6 W. R. 5 W.

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA - ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE WITH SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS: Map Series 7

This alternative recommends that all 6,210 acres of BLM land in the Big Willow Spring WSA be designated wilderness (see Map 7A). The recommendation calls for the enabling wilderness legislation passed by the Congress of the United States to include special stipulations allowing for vegetation management to control juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Such management would include limited, temporary (10 years) mechanical removal of individual seral juniper trees in combination with prescribed burning to maintain natural sagebrush-bunchgrass openings within the juniper woodlands of the area. No large, mature and old-growth climax trees would be involved in the treatments. The management actions for the 6,210 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 7B):

Reestablish fire as an important factor in maintaining the western juniper/sagebrush-bunchgrass ecosystem through tree cutting and prescribed burning. These vegetation treatments would include the 100% removal of young-growth (less than 50 years old) and intermediate-aged (50 to 100 years old) seral juniper from sagebrush-bunchgrass sites for a period of ten years to restore or retain openings in the woodland canopy. Thereafter, prescribed burning (approximately every 20 years) and natural fire would be used to maintain the desired balance between juniper and sagebrush-bunchgrass species. The treatments would be used on approximately 450 acres (10%) of the wilderness area with less than one percent (20 to 40 acres) of the wilderness area being treated in any given year (Table II-4). Treated areas would not exceed 40 acres in size (1/4-mile in width). Cutting would not occur in climax juniper stands (old-growth), mature stands (100 to 200 years of age), within 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses, nor on slopes greater than 35%. These areas generally include rocky canyons and ridgelines and other areas of rock outcrops and shallow soils in the northern hilly region of the wilderness area. Cutting of trees would be accomplished with chain saws, hand saws or axes as deemed appropriate. Trees would be cut at or near ground level and slash burned to eliminate a "logged" effect. Some areas, where seral juniper encroachment is limited to small trees and there is sufficient understory vegetation, would be prescribed burned only. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. Seeding with native species using aerial applications would occur on 550 acres of the treated lands. Access to cutting areas would be by foot, horseback, helicopter or along .8 miles of existing ways. No new temporary roads would be constructed to cutting areas.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 7C):

Continue the development of a grazing system aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Grazing use would remain at approximately the level occurring at time of wilderness designation (400 AUMs; see Table II-5). Use would be within one allotment. Use within the allotment would occur under a deferred rotation grazing systems.

   Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels have been reached, livestock would be removed from the affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including two developed springs and 1.3 miles of fenceline. Access for salting and facility maintenance would be on horseback.

3) Develop no additional range improvements.

c. Recreation Management Actions:

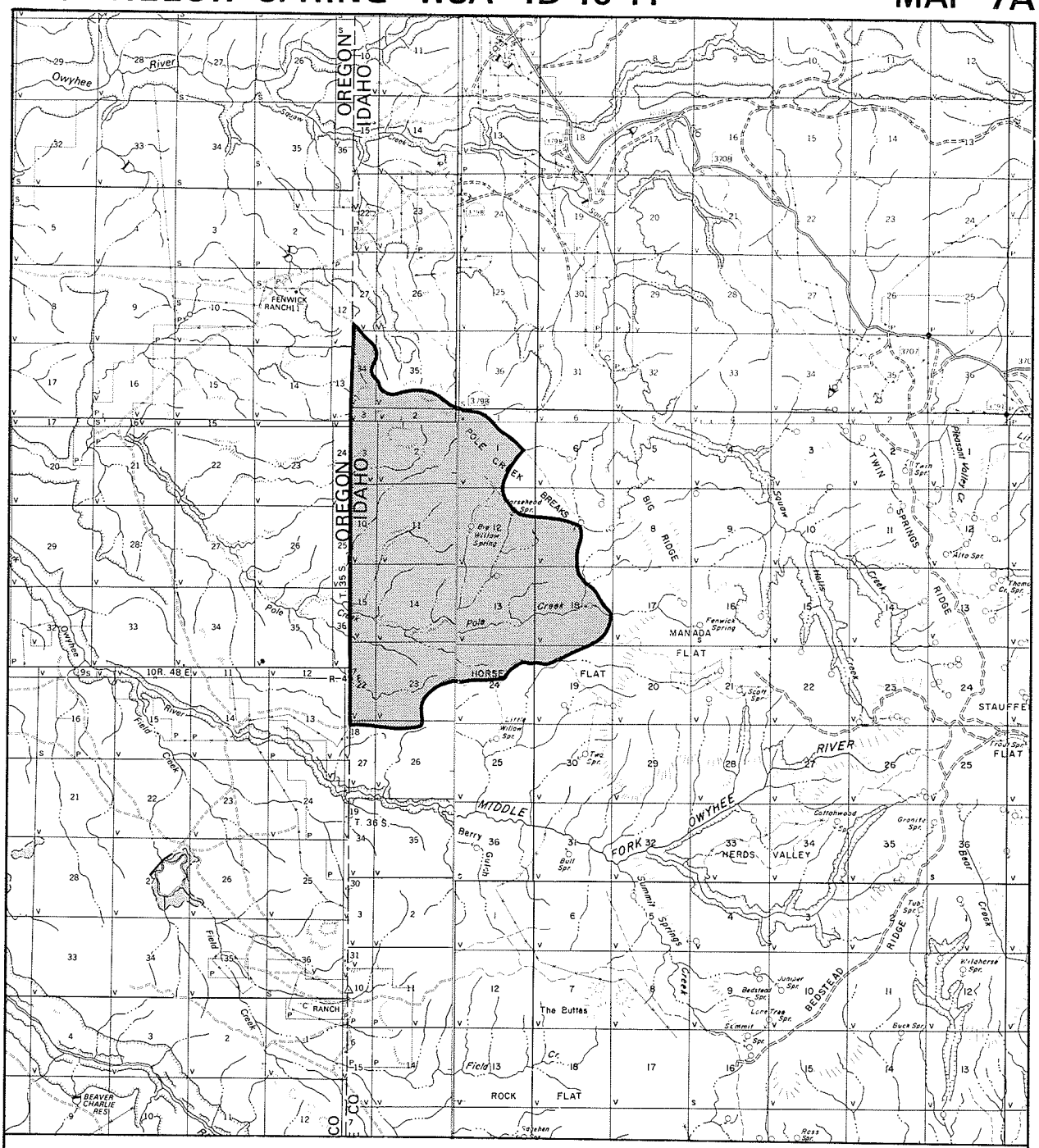
   No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. The .8 miles of ways within the WSA would be closed to general public recreation use. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted.

d. Cultural Resurce Management Actions:

   Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 6,210 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 7A



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
WITH SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS

(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness

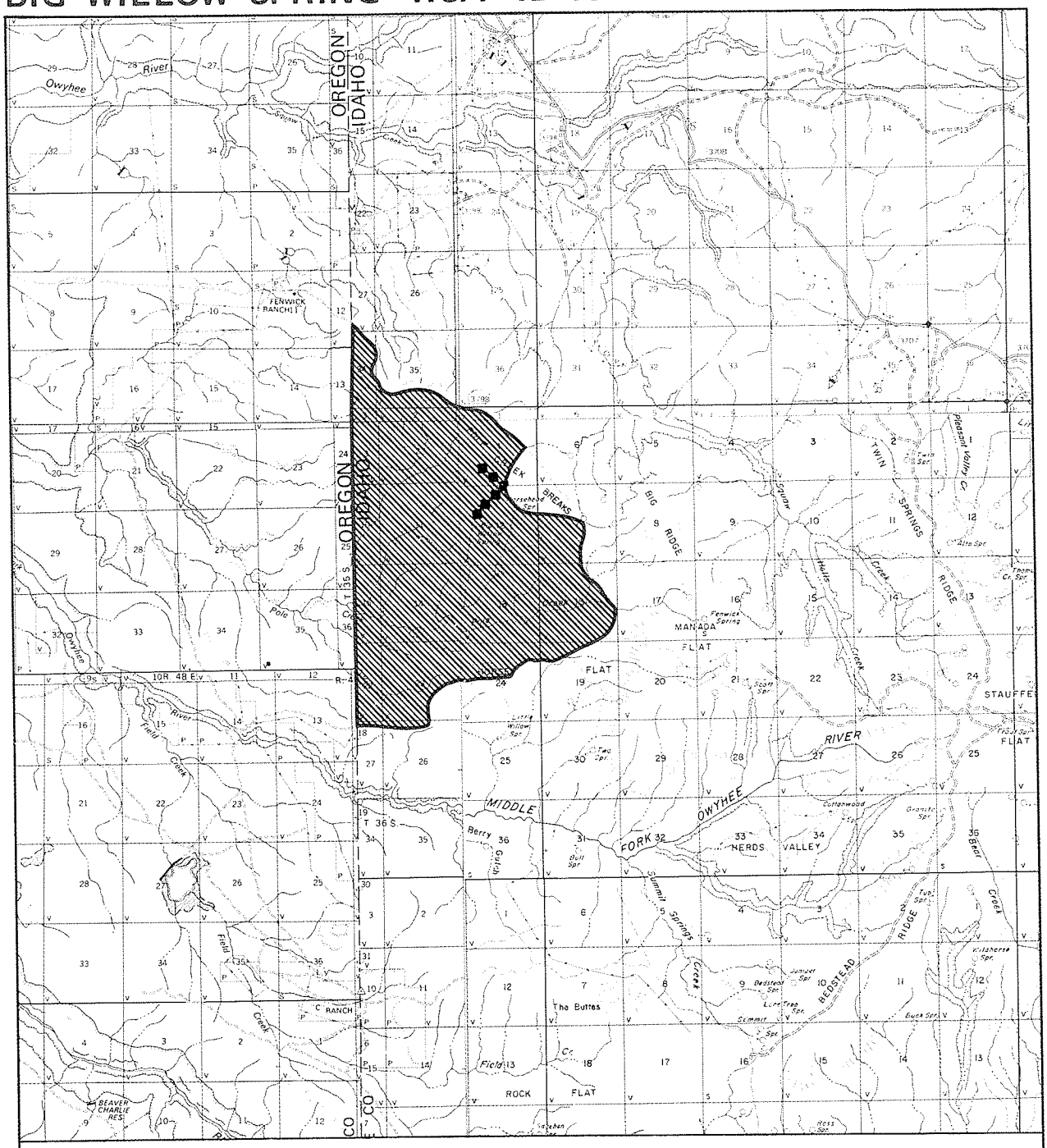
N

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 7B



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
WITH SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS

(JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/ RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

- No juniper removal treatments
- Less than 10% of lands given juniper removal treatments
- ◆◆◆◆ Existing ways closed to motorized recreation use

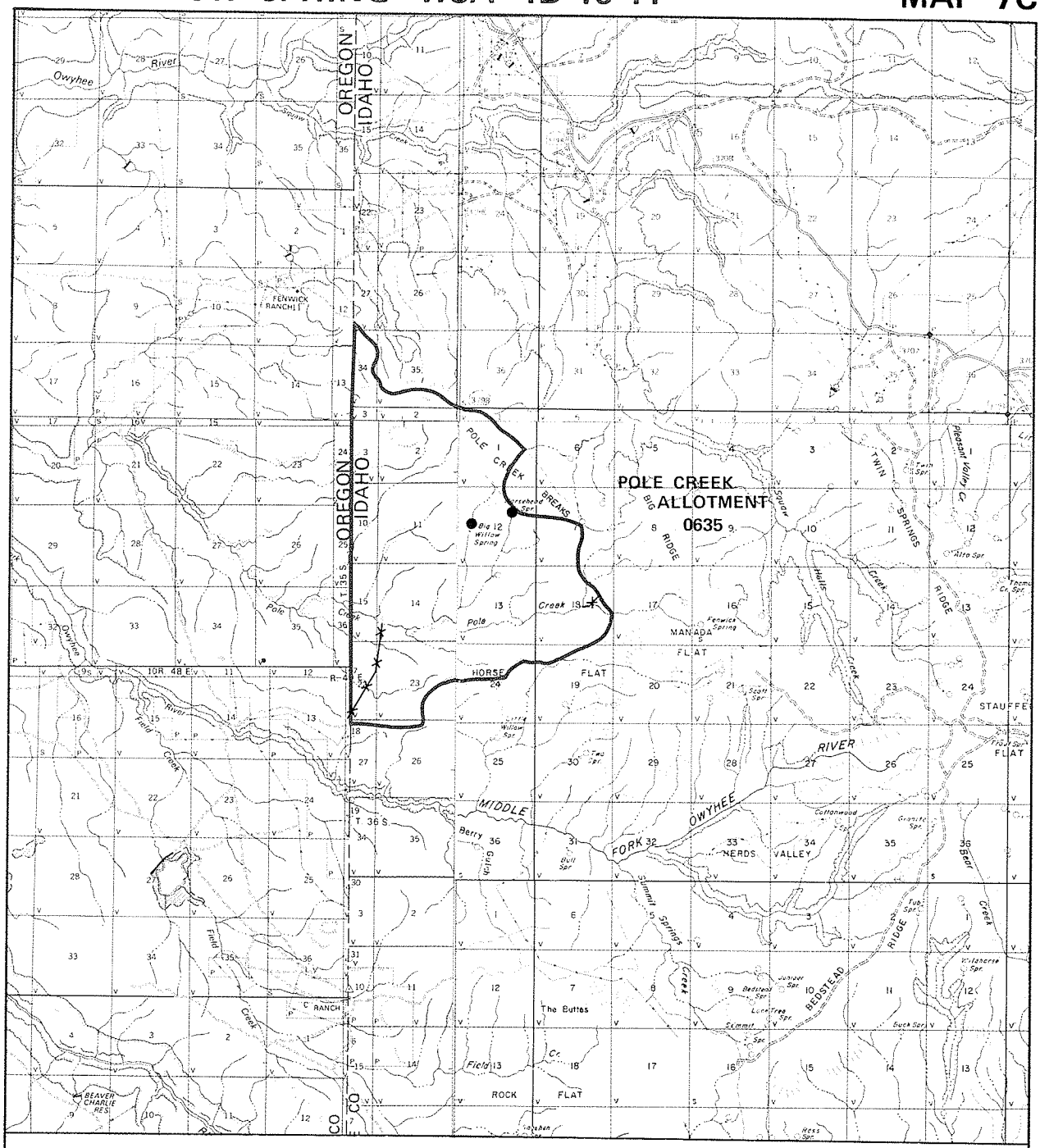
N

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 7C



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
WITH SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS

(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- ● Spring development
- —×—×— Fence

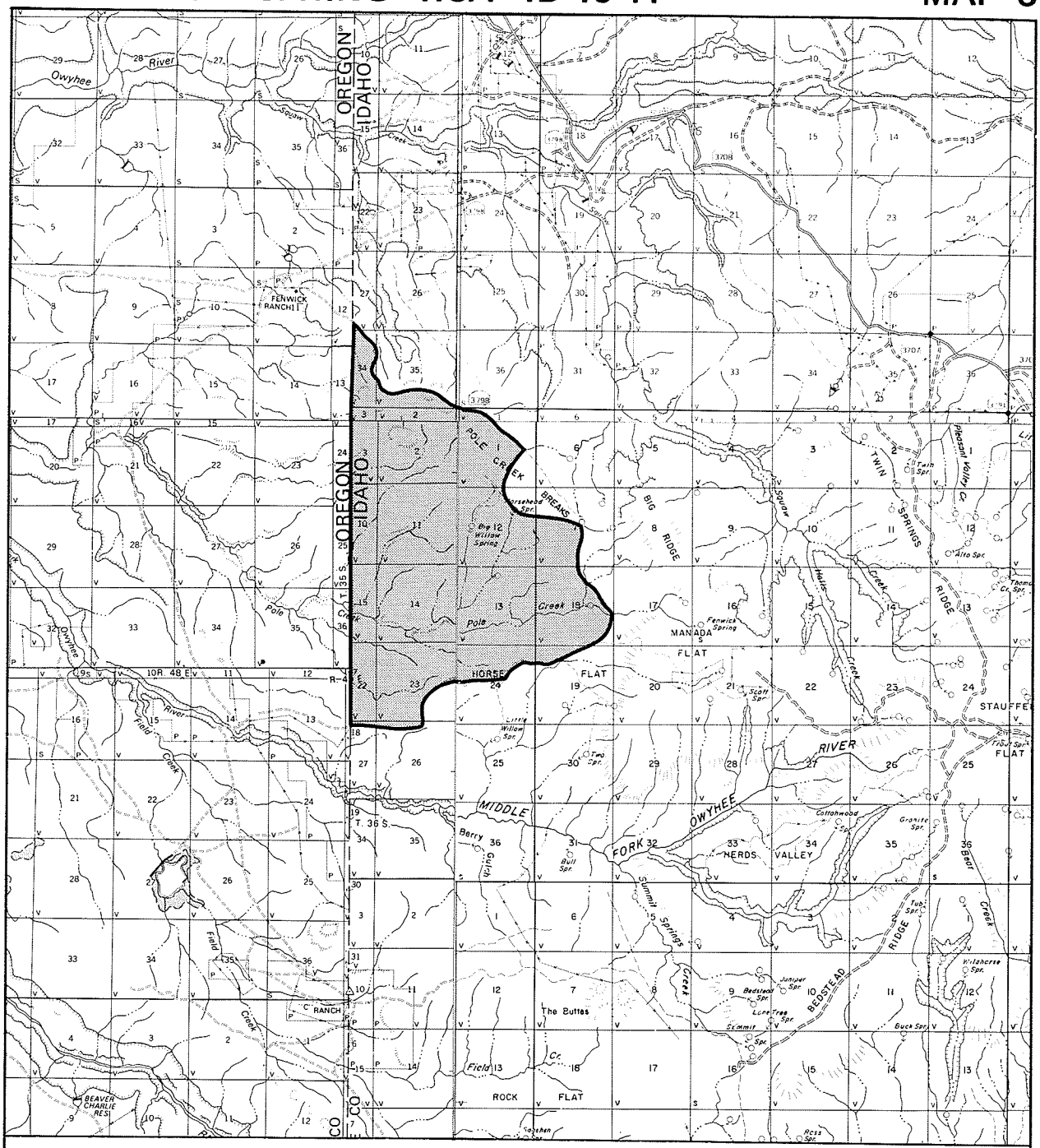
1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA - ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE (NO SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS): Map 8

This alternative recommends that all 6,210 acres of BLM land in the Big Willow Spring WSA be designated wilderness. Management actions for the wilderness area would be as previously described under the All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations except that no vegetation treatments to remove seral juniper would occur. The ecological condition of juniper woodland communities would be subject to changes resulting only from natural processes.

BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA ID-16-41

MAP 8



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
WITH NO SPECIAL JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT STIPULATIONS

(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness

N

0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

SQUAW CREEK CANYON
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA - PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative): Map Series 9

The Proposed Action recommends that all 10,780 acres of BLM land in the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA not be designated wilderness (see Map 9A). The nonwilderness management actions for the WSA are as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 9B):

1) Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and/or prescribed burning would occur on approximately 3,800 acres or 35% of the WSA (Table II-6). Areas which would be treated are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Some shallow soil sites with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites may also be treated. Vegetation treatments would utilize mechanical methods (tree cutting) and/or prescribed burning. Mechanical methods would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. The primary mechanical method would be tree cutting with chain saws to produce fuel wood products and fence posts.

Vegetation treatments would be designed to produce a vegetation pattern where a minimum of 40% of the land would be retained in juniper and no more than 60% would be retained or returned to sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Climax (old-growth) juniper stands within canyon areas and on rocky ridgelines or other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. No cutting of juniper would occur within a minimum of 50 feet to 150 feet of perennial and major intermittent stream courses depending upon surrounding slope aspects. These stream course buffer zones would be narrower on north-facing slopes and wider on south-facing slopes. The vegetation treatments would not exceed 1/4-mile in width but could be of any length depending upon topographic and/or soil limitations. No mechanical methods of treatments would occur on slopes greater than 35%. It is expected that most treated areas would be 40 acres or less in size. Deep soil sites containing mostly young-growth and intermediate-aged seral juniper would have 100% tree removal whereas selected sites with mature juniper would have trees selectively removed. Prescribed burning of slash would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. All areas receiving prescribed burning without prior mechanical removal of trees would be opened for salvage of for fuel wood products. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of one to five years (250 to 500 acres being cut per year) with prescribed fire being used every 20 years to maintain

openings. The woodcutting treatment schedule for the WSA depends upon the scheduling of treatments on surrounding lands.

Seven miles of road would be constructed to cutting areas to assist public access. Three miles of these roads would be temporary and would be rehabilitated following the cutting period while four miles would be retained for recreation and other multiple-use purposes. New roads would be limited to eight feet in width and to a maximum of six percent (6%) grade.

2) Juniper logs (limbs attached) would be implanted along 20% to 40% of a three mile segment of Squaw Creek. Logs would be horse drawn from the nearby cutting areas described above. Logs would be attached to stream banks with steel roads and wires. Natural revegetation and/or planting of willow saplings would occur among the implanted logs. Exposed rods and wires would be removed once revegetation and the silting of logs into the stream banks has occurred.

TABLE II-6
VEGETATION TREATMENT IN THE SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)							
	Cut		Burn Only		Cut/Burn Acreage Total		Cut/Burn Acreage Seeded	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness	---	2,700	---	1,100	---	3,800	---	2,700
All Wilderness	0	---	0	---	0	---	0	---

* See Appendix A for allotment specific information.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 9C):

Implement grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Livestock grazing would continue. It is anticipated that livestock use levels would increase from 855 AUMs to 885 AUMs in 20 years (Table II-7). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures

by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including five developed springs with exclosure fences and 5.8 miles of fenceline. The use of motorized vehicles on 2.8 miles of existing roads and ways would continue to occur for salting and facility maintenance.

3) Develop one spring development with exclosure fence. Seedings would occur on 2,700 acres of the land affected by woodcutting/ prescribed burning projects (Table II-6).

TABLE II-7
LIVESTOCK FORAGE (AUMs) USE WITHIN
THE SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Estimated Current Active Use (Annually)		Anticipated Use In 20-Years (Annually)	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	---	855	---	885
All Wilderness	855	---	795	---

* See Appendix B for allotment specific information.

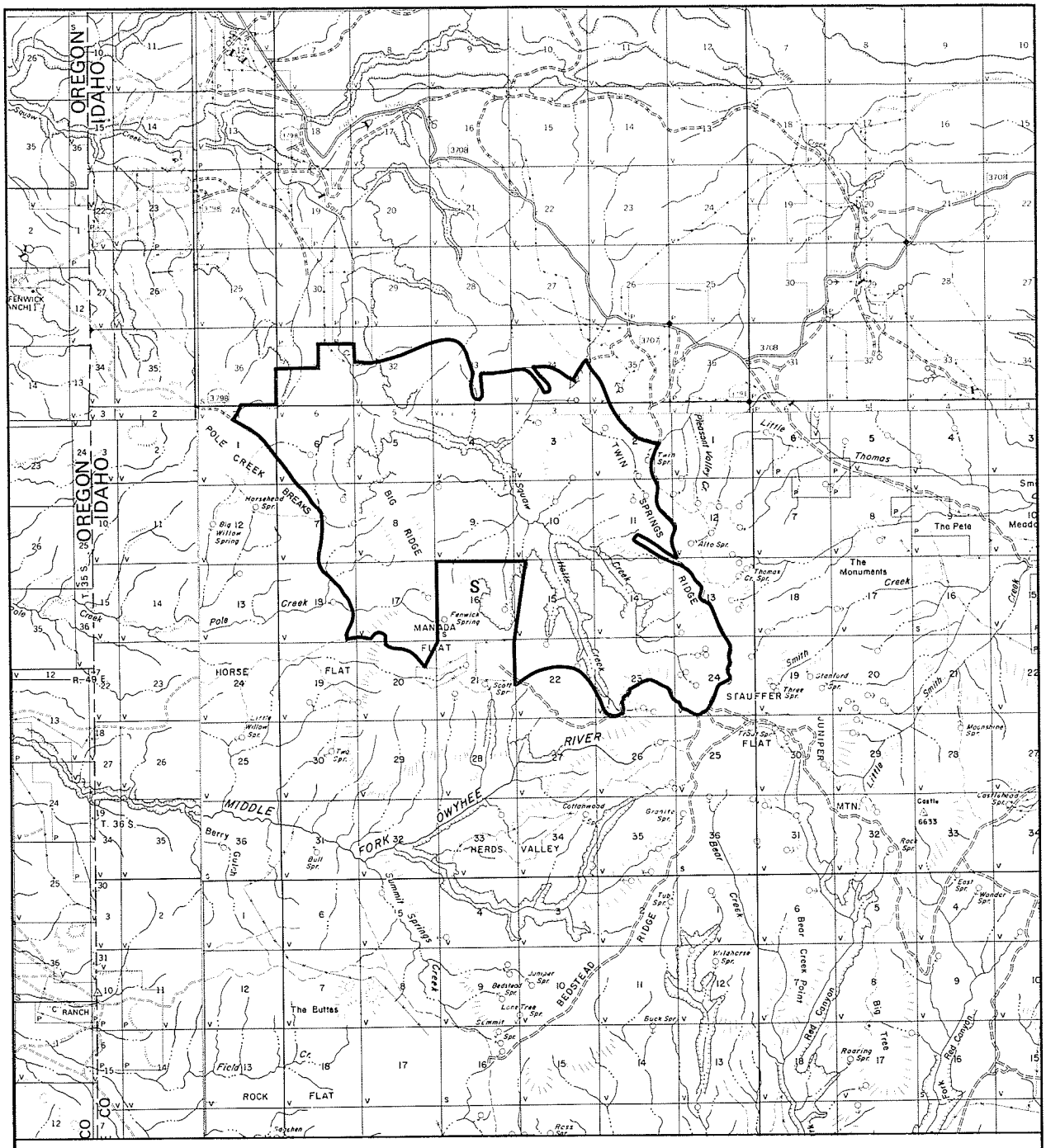
c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 9B):

Develop a hunting camp, including toilet facilities, fire pits and tables along the southern periphery of the WSA in the vicinity of Hills Creek (T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Section 22). Keep existing cherrystem roads and ways (2.8 miles) open for general public recreation use. Retain four miles of road used for woodcutting access open for general public recreation use in T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 14 and 23 along the rimrocks of Squaw Creek Canyon and Hills Creek Canyon. The area would be open to off-road vehicle (ORV) use. Vehicle traffic would not be restricted to existing ways, nor trails. However, little ORV use is expected because of the dense juniper woodlands and/or topography.

d. Acquisition (Land Exchange Actions) (Map 9A):

Acquire 640 acres of Idaho state lands through a federal-state land exchange in T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Section 16.

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42 MAP 9A



PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

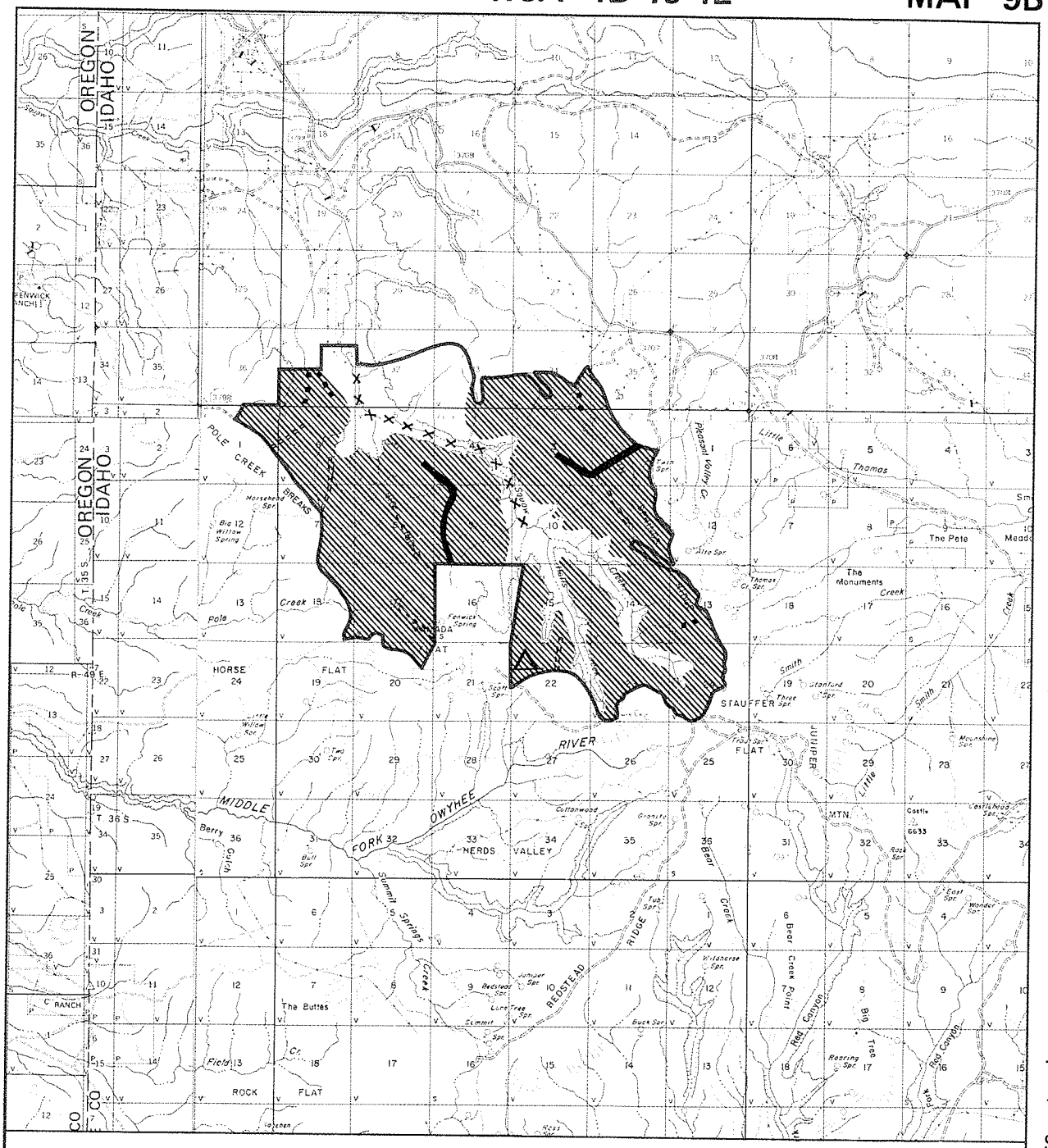
- WSA boundary
- None — Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

R. 6 W. R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

Scale in Miles

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42

MAP 9B



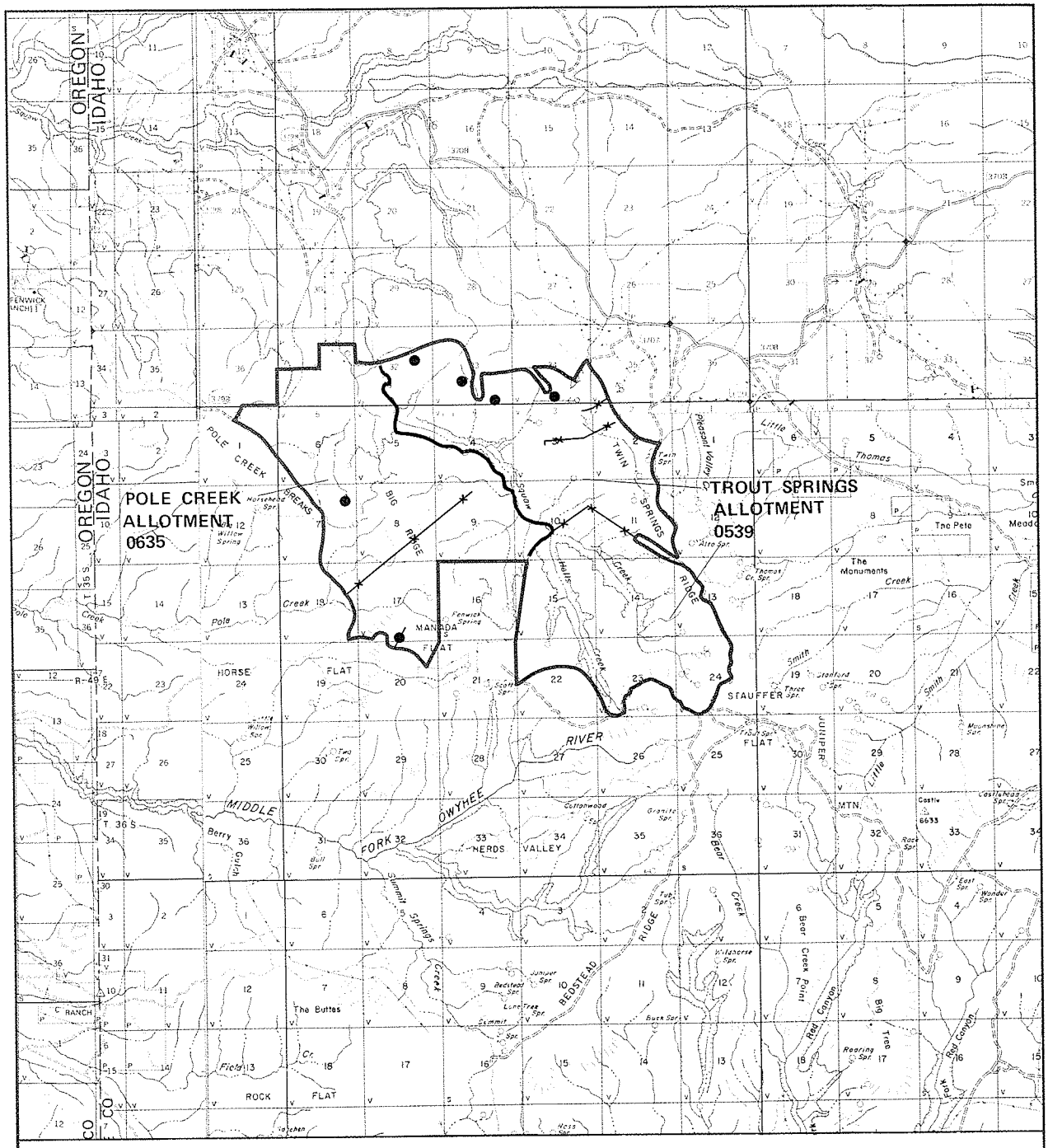
PROPOSED ACTION

(JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/ RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

- No juniper removal treatments
- Less than 35% of lands given juniper removal treatments
- × × × Juniper log stream structure placements
- = = = = New temporary road construction
- New permanent road construction
- • • • • Existing ways
- Existing interior (cherrystem) roads
- △ Campground facility construction

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42

MAP 9C



T. 10 S.

T. 11 S.

T. 12 S.

PROPOSED ACTION
(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- ● Spring development
- ×–×–× Fence

PROPOSED (construction and maintenance)

- Spring development

R. 6 W. R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA - All WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 10

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends that 11,860 BLM acres within the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA be designated wilderness (see Map 10A). It further recommends that 640 acres of adjacent Idaho state lands be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area. Management actions for the 12,500 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions:

1) No vegetation treatments would occur in the juniper woodland communities to control seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. The ecological condition of juniper woodland communities would be subject to change only as a result of natural processes.

2) No juniper log structures would be implanted along stream banks.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 10B):

Implement grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Livestock grazing use would continue but decrease from 855 AUMs to approximately 795 AUMs (Table II-7). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once the utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from the affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including five developed springs and 5.8 miles of fenceline. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur on horseback.

3) No additional range improvements would be permitted.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 10C):

1) No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. All 2.8 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways would be closed to general public use. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted.

2) There are 1.2 miles of WSA boundary road (T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Sections 6 and 7 and T. 11 S., R. 6 W., Section 1) which would be closed and rehabilitated. The 360 acres of adjoining land between the road and adjacent WSA ID-16-41 would be added to the wilderness area.

3) There are 1.5 miles of WSA boundary road (T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Sections 22 and 23) which would be closed and allowed to continue natural rehabilitation. The 360 acres of adjoining land lying between this road and another road located one-half mile to the south would be added to the wilderness area.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 10A):

Acquire 640 acres of Idaho state land for inclusion in the wilderness area in T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Section 16.

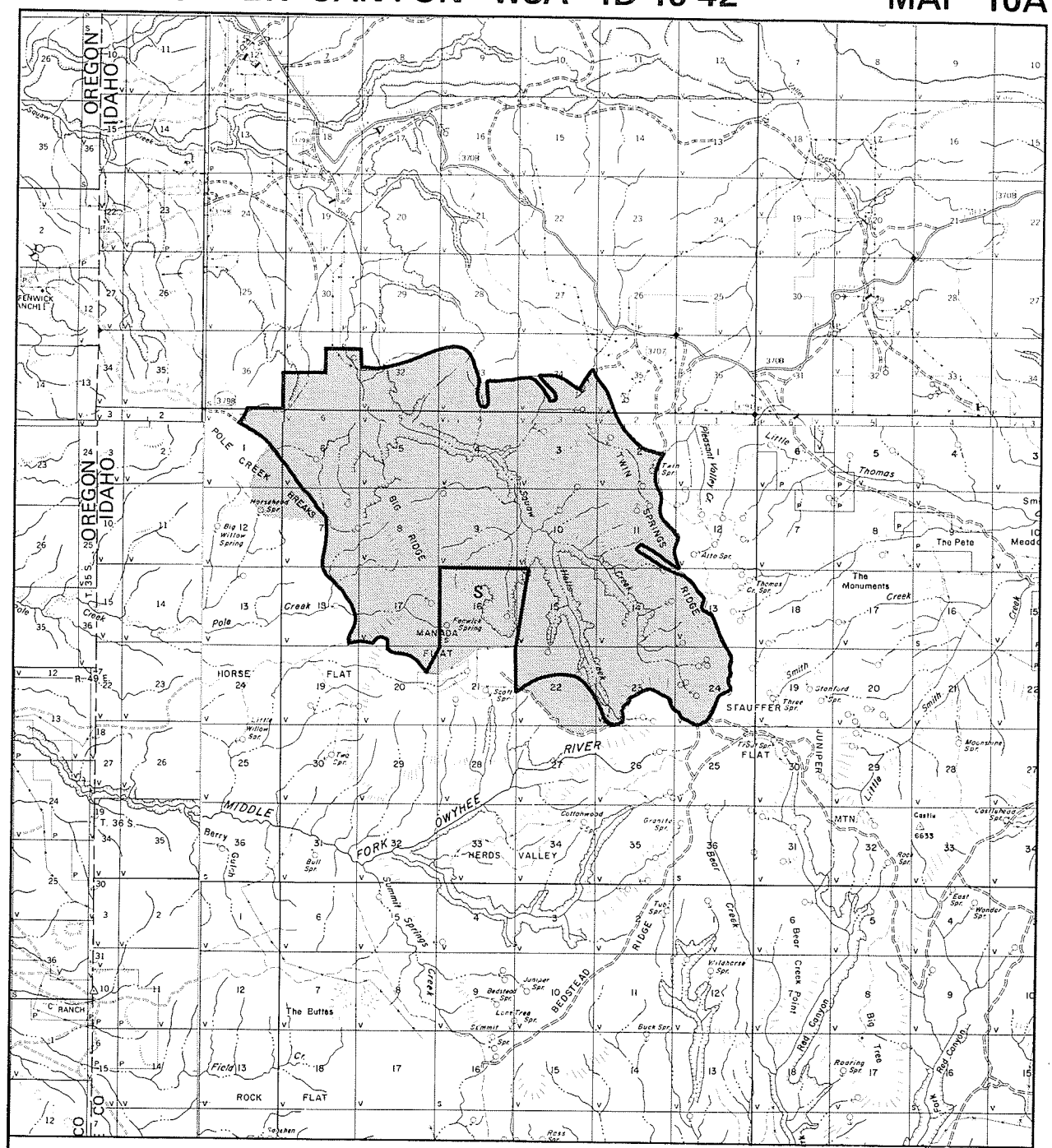
An additional 360 acres of BLM land associated with this acquisition would also be included in the wilderness area.

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 12,500 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42

MAP 10A



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

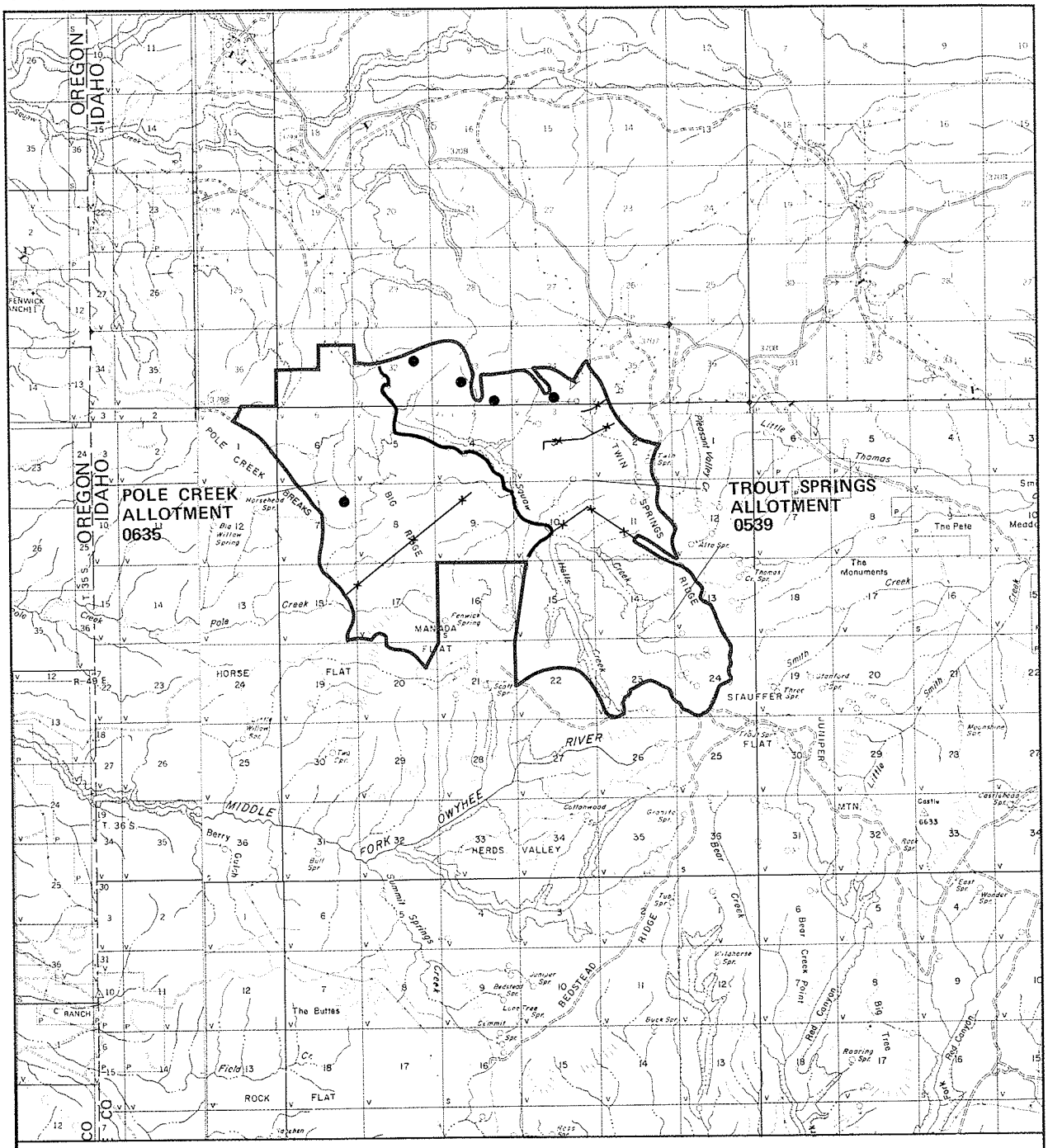
- WSA boundary
- Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

R. 6 W. R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42

MAP 10B



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- ● Spring development
- ×—×—× Fence

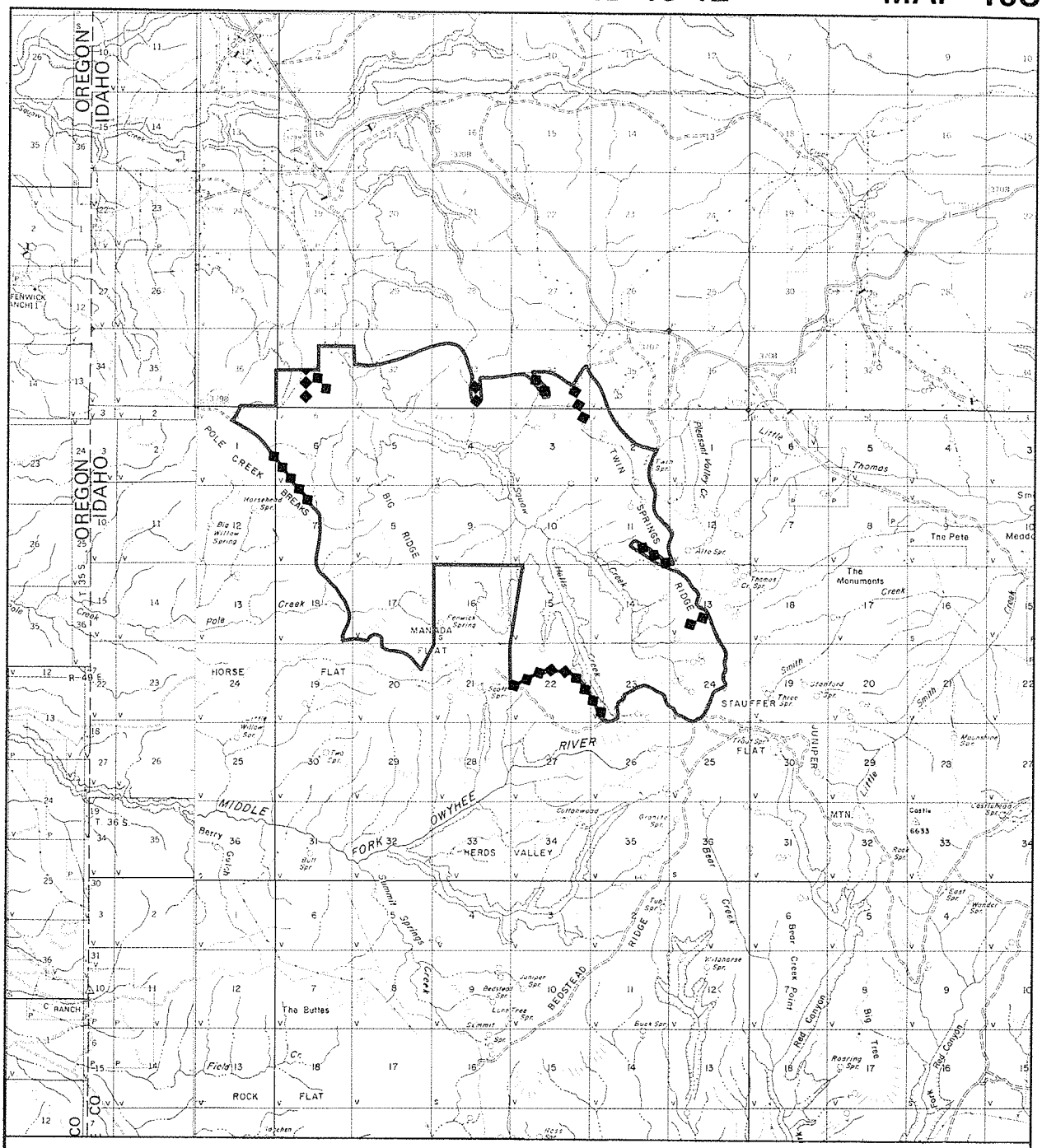
N

0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA ID-16-42

MAP 10C



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

◆◆◆◆◆ Existing roads/ ways closed to motorized recreation use

R. 6 W. R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative): Map Series 11

The Proposed Action recommends that all 14,180 acres of BLM land in the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA not be designated wilderness (see Map 11A). The nonwilderness management actions for the WSA are as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 11B):

1) Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and/or prescribed burning would occur on 4,250 acres (approximately 30% of the WSA; Table II-8). Areas which would be treated are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Some shallow soil sites with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites may also be treated. Vegetation treatments would utilize mechanical methods (tree cutting) and/or prescribed burning. Mechanical methods would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. The primary mechanical method would be tree cutting with chain saws to produce fuel wood products and fence posts.

Vegetation treatments would be designed to produce a vegetation pattern where a minimum of 40% of the land would be retained in juniper and no more than 60% would be retained or returned to sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Climax (old-growth) juniper stands within canyon areas and on rocky ridgelines or other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. No cutting of juniper would occur within a minimum of 50 feet to 150 feet of perennial and major intermittent stream courses depending upon surrounding slope aspects. These stream course buffer zones would be narrower on north-facing slopes and wider on south-facing slopes. The vegetation treatments would not exceed 1/4-mile in width but could be of any length depending upon topographic and/or soil limitations. No mechanical methods of treatments would occur on slopes greater than 35%. It is expected that most treated areas would be 40 acres or less in size. Deep soil sites containing mostly young-growth and intermediate-aged seral juniper would have 100% tree removal whereas selected sites with mature juniper would have trees selectively removed. Prescribed burning of slash would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. All areas receiving prescribed burning without prior mechanical removal of trees would be opened for salvage cutting of fuel wood products. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of one to five years (800 to 1,500 acres being cut per year)with prescribed fire being used every 20 years to maintain openings. The woodcutting treatment schedule for the WSA depends upon the scheduling of treatments on surrounding lands.

Ten miles of road would be constructed to cutting areas to assist public access. Seven miles of these roads would be temporary roads that would be rehabilitated following the cutting period while three miles would be retained for multiple-use purposes. Any roads would be limited to eight feet in width and to a maximum of six percent (6%) grade.

2) Juniper logs (limbs attached) would be implanted along 40% of a 1.5 mile section of the Middle Fork Owyhee River. Logs would be horse drawn from the nearby cutting areas described above. Logs would be attached to stream banks with steel roads and wires. Natural revegetation and/or planting of willow saplings would occur among the implanted logs. Exposed rods and wires would be removed once revegetation and the silting of logs into the stream banks has occurred.

TABLE II-8
VEGETATION TREATMENT IN THE MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)							
	Cut		Burn Only		Cut/Burn Acreage Total		Cut/Burn Acreage Seeded	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness	---	3,550	---	700	---	4,250	---	3,550
All Wilderness	0	---	0	---	0	---	0	---

* See Appendix A for allotment specific information.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 9C):

Implement grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Livestock grazing would continue. It is anticipated that livestock use levels would increase from 1,040 AUMs to 1,090 AUMs in 20 years (see Table II-9). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including two developed springs with exclosure fences and 2.5 miles of fenceline. The use of motorized vehicles on 5.5 miles of existing roads and ways would continue to occur for salting and facility maintenance.

3) Develop additional range improvements, including .3 miles of fenceline and five developed springs with exclosure fences. Seedings would occur on 3,550 AUMs of those areas previously identified for woodcutting/prescribed burning projects (Table II-8).

TABLE II-9
LIVESTOCK FORAGE (AUMs) USE WITHIN
THE MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Estimated Current Active Use (Annually)		Anticipated Use In 20-Years (Annually)	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	---	1,040	---	1,090
All Wilderness	1,040	---	955	---

* See Appendix B for allotment specific information.

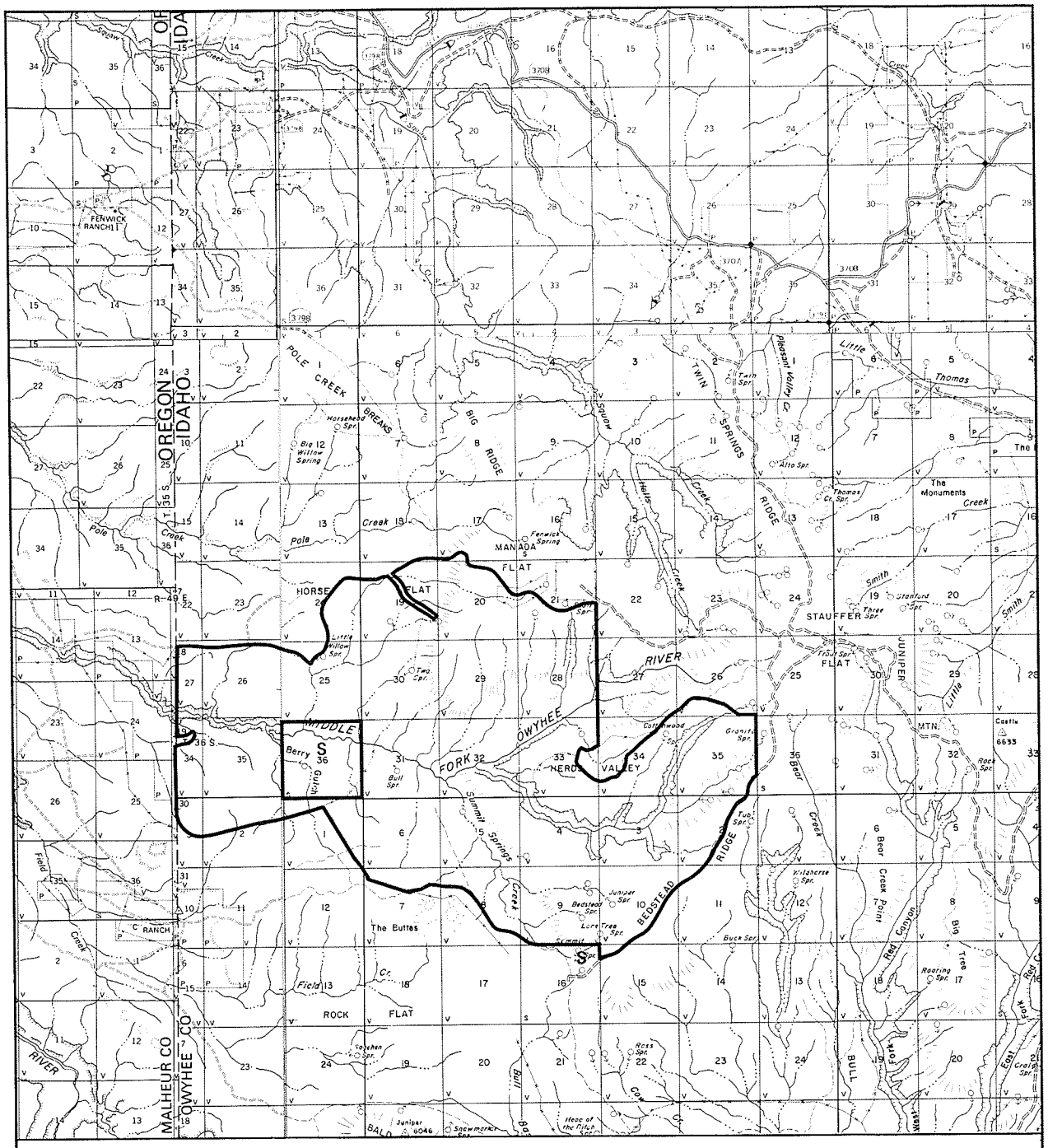
c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 11B):

Develop a hunting camp, including toilet facilities, fire pits and tables along the northern periphery of the WSA in the vicinity of CCC Spring (T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Section 19) and along the southeast periphery in the vicinity of Lone Tree Spring (T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 10). Keep the existing roads and ways (5.5 miles) open for general public recreation use. Retain three miles of roads used for woodcutting access open for general public recreation use in T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Sections 4, 5, 9 and 10 along the eastern edge of the Summet Springs Creek rimrock and in T. 11 S., R. 6 W., Section 25 near the northern rimrock of the Middle Fork Owyhee River. The area would be open to off-road vehicle (ORV) use. Vehicle traffic would not be restricted to existing roads, ways and trails. ORV use is expected to occur.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 11A):

Acquire 740 acres of Idaho state lands through a federal-state land exchange in T. 11 S., R. 6 W., Section 36 and T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 16.

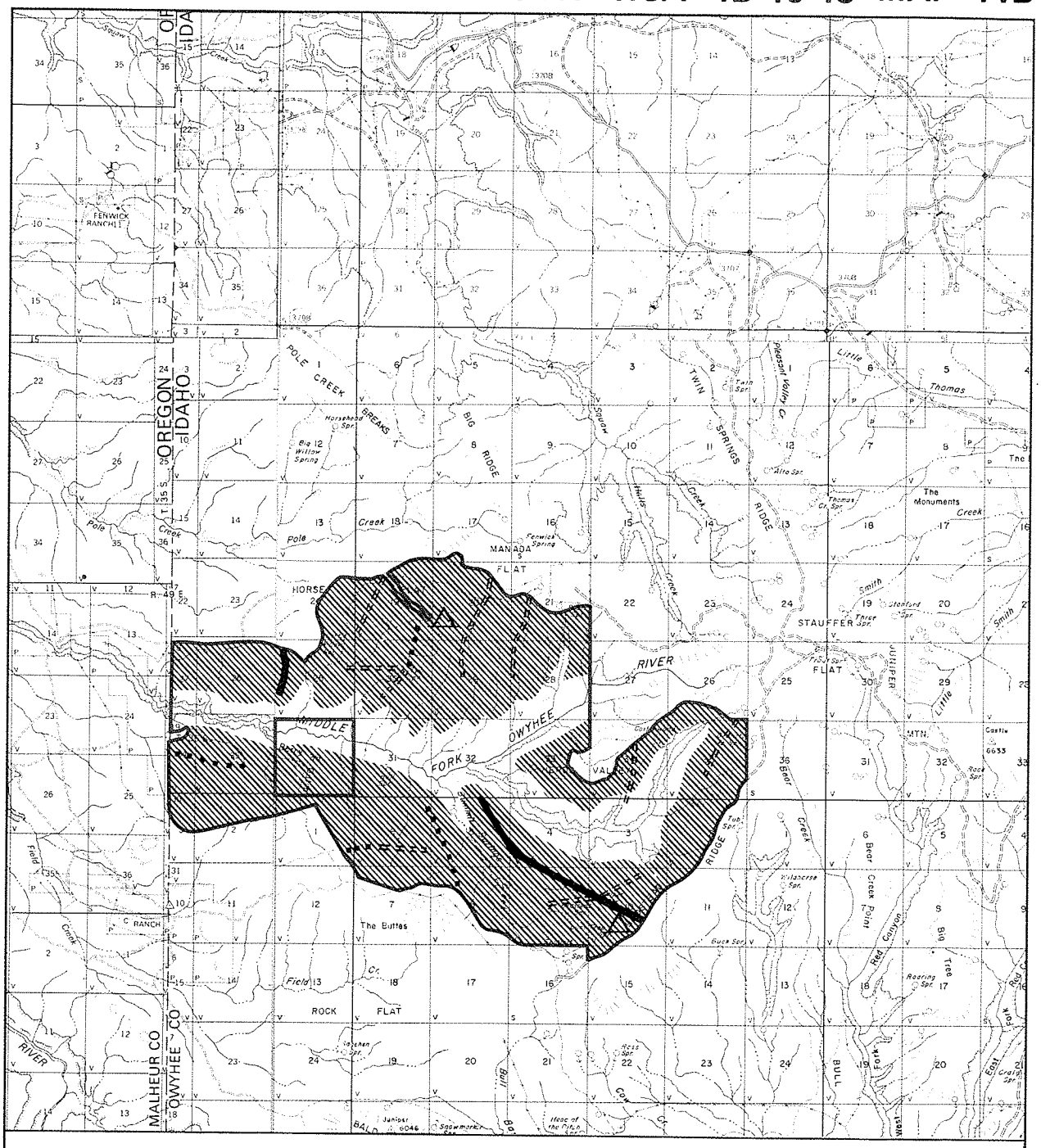
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 11A



PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- None — Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 11B

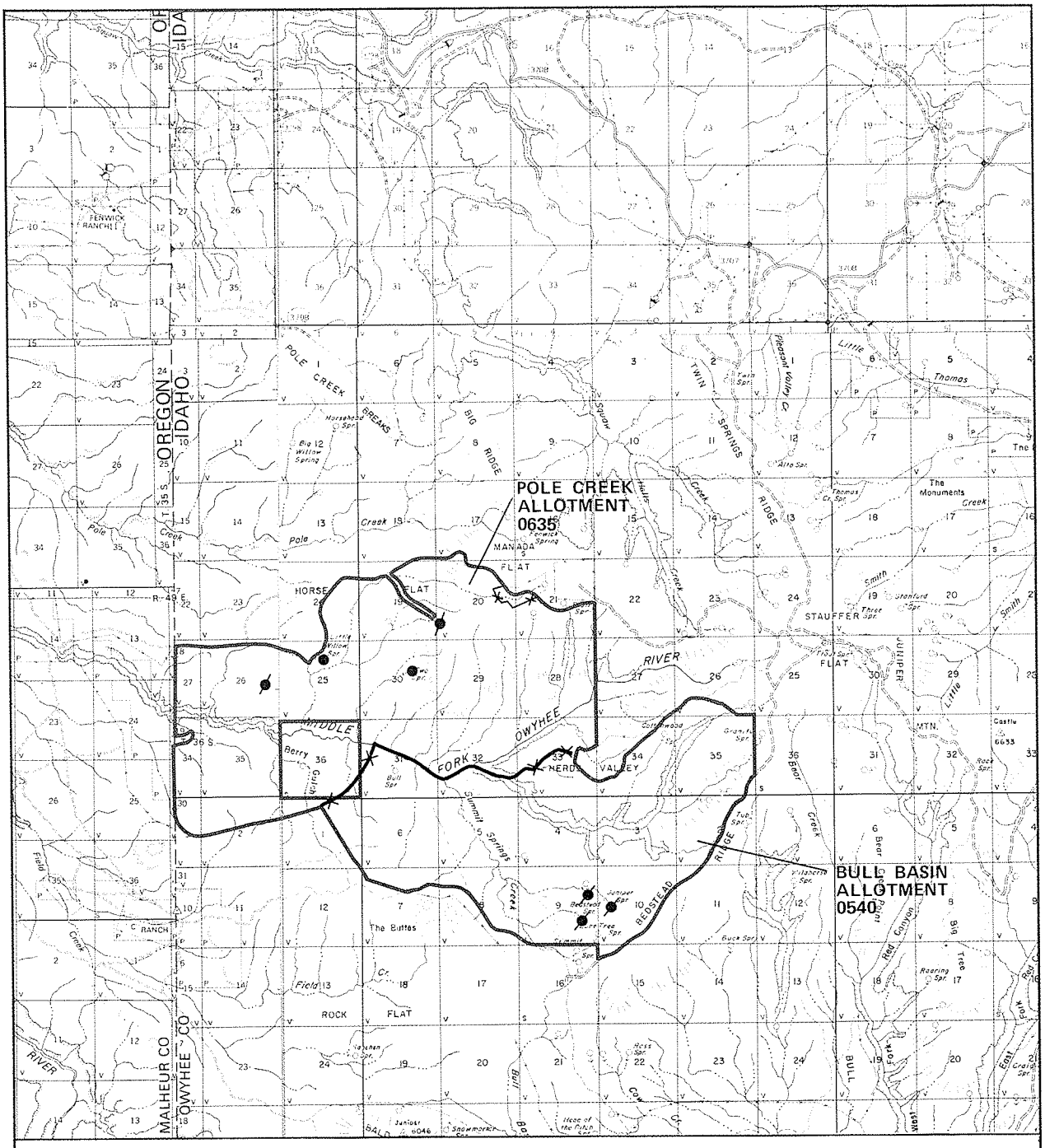


PROPOSED ACTION

(JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/ RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

- No juniper removal treatments
- Less than 30% of lands given juniper removal treatments
- New temporary road construction
- New permanent road construction
- Existing ways
- Existing interior (cherrystem) roads
- Campground facility construction

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 11C



PROPOSED ACTION

(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- Spring development
- Fence

PROPOSED (construction and maintenance)

- Spring development

Scale in Miles

1 0 1 2 3

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA - All WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 12

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends that 14,560 BLM acres within the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA be designated wilderness (see Map 12A). It further recommends that 740 acres of Idaho state inholdings and adjacent lands would be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area. Management actions for the 15,300 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions:

1) No vegetation treatments would occur in the juniper woodland communities to control seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. The ecological condition of juniper woodland communities would be subject to change only as a result of natural processes.

2) No juniper log structures would be implanted along stream banks.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 12B):

Continue the development of grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Grazing would decrease from 1,040 AUMs to approximately 955 AUMs (Table II-9). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once the utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from the affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain existing range improvements, including two developed springs and 2.5 miles of fenceline. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur on horseback.

3) No additional range improvements would be permitted.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 12C):

1) No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. All 5.5 miles of existing cherrystem roads and ways would be closed to general public recreation use. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted.

2) There are 1.5 miles of northwest WSA boundary road and ways (T. 11 S., R. 5 W., Sections 24, 25 and 26) which would be closed and rehabilitated. The 380 acres of adjoining land

between the road and adjacent WSA ID-16-41 would be added to the wilderness area.

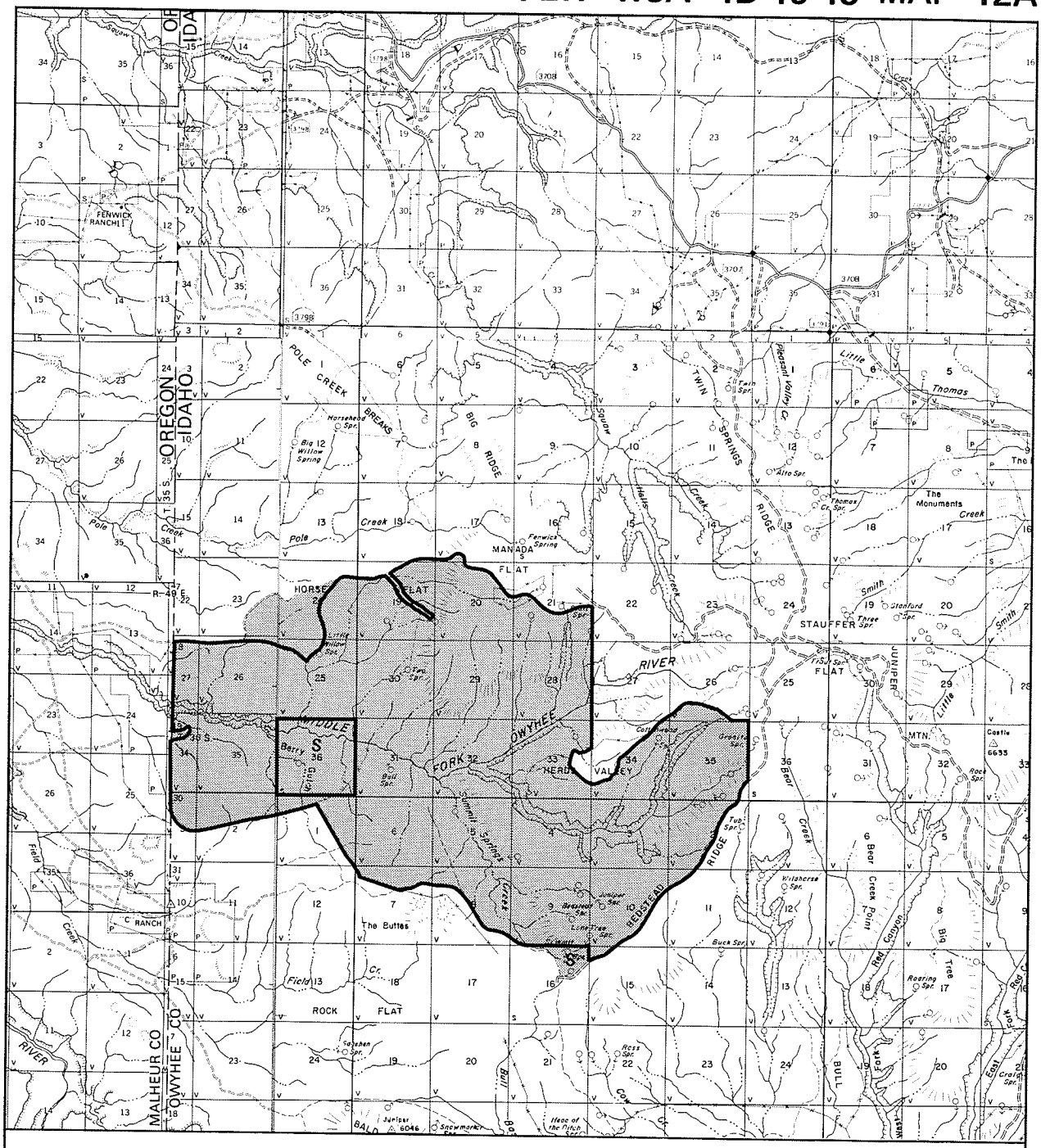
d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 12A):

Acquire 740 acres of Idaho state land for inclusion in the wilderness area in T. 11 S., R. 6 W., Section 36 and T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 16.

e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 15,300 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 12A



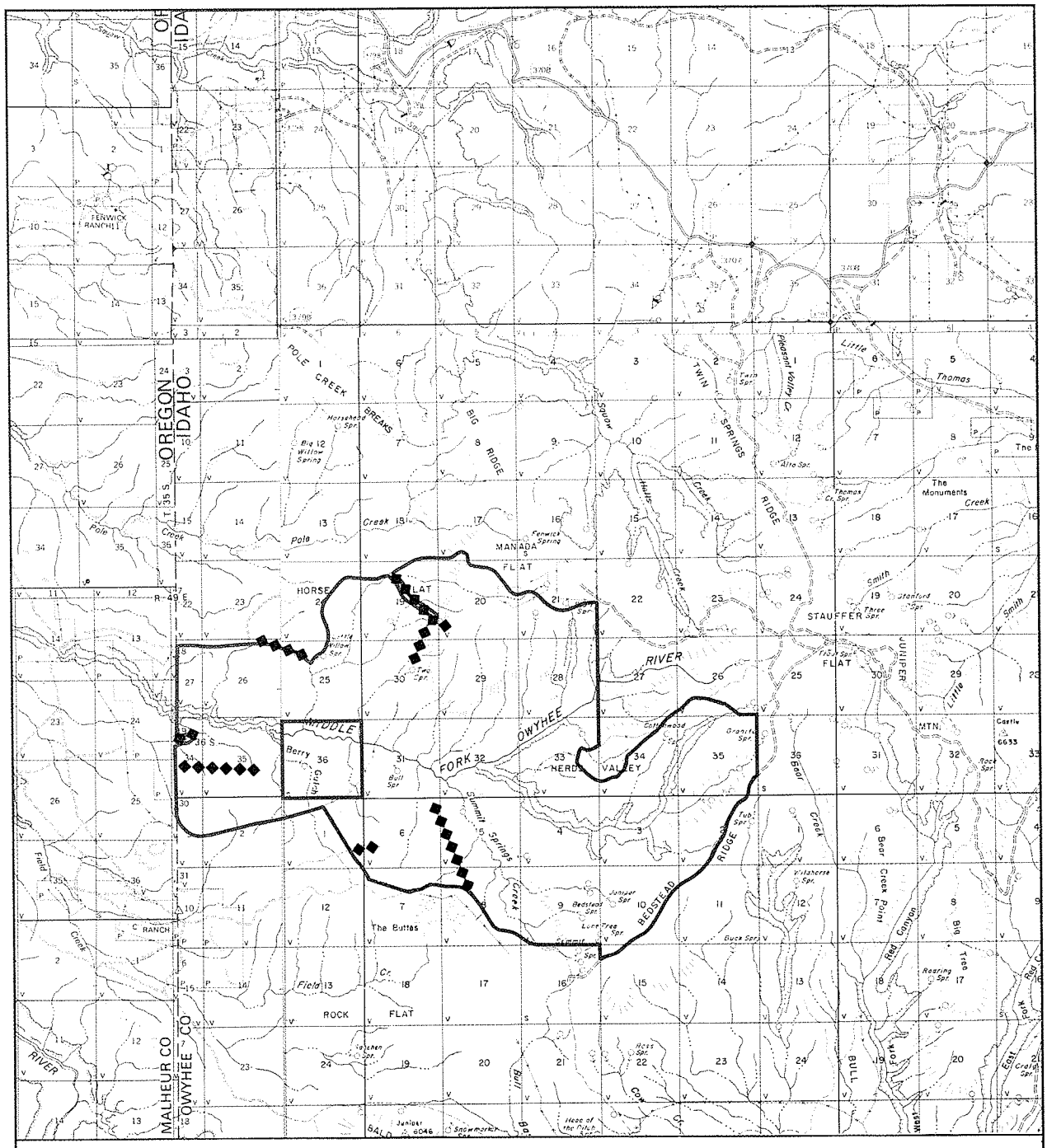
ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

N

0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 12B



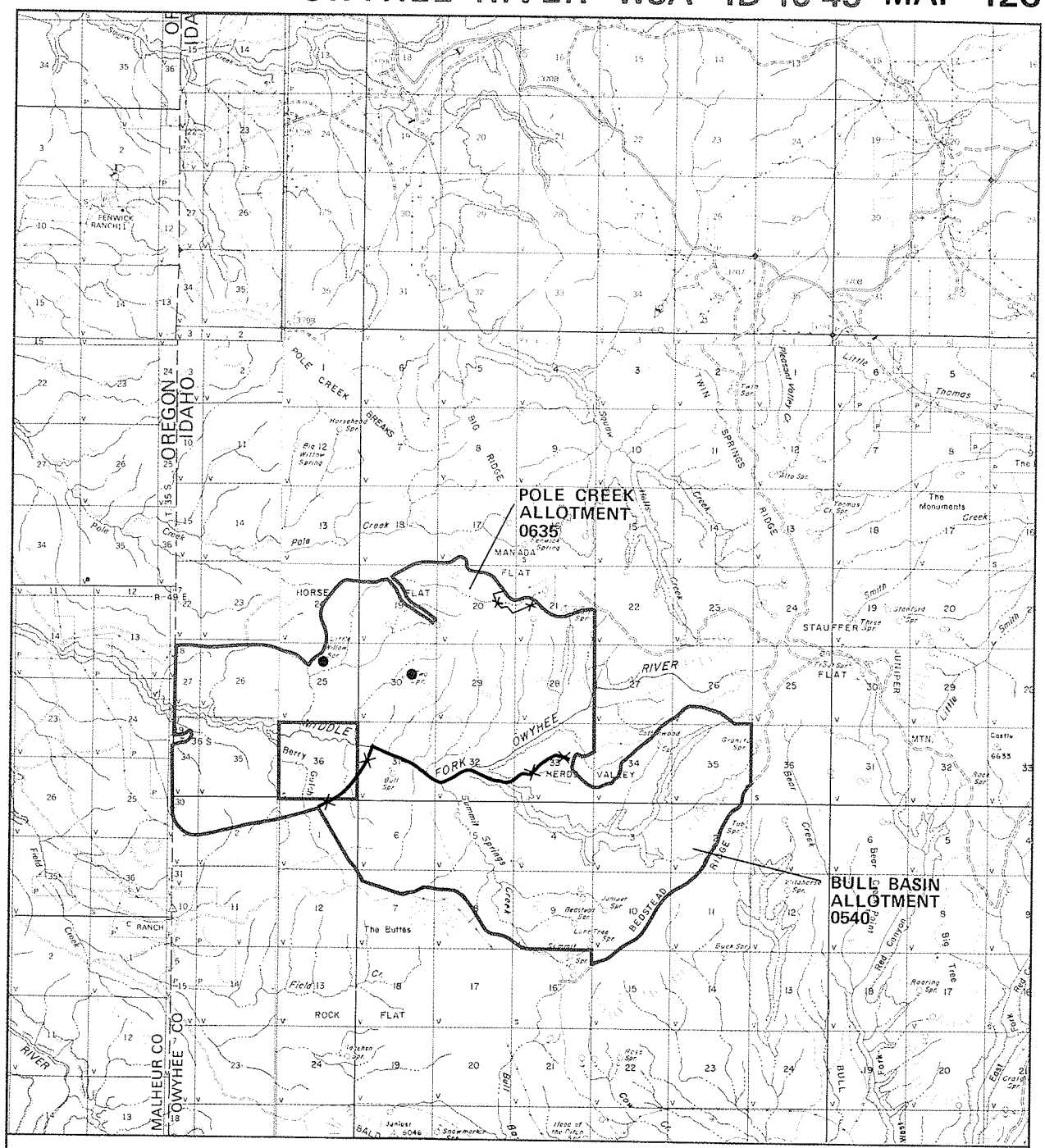
ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

◆◆◆◆◆ Existing roads/ ways closed to motorized recreation use

N

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA ID-16-45 MAP 12C



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

- ● Spring development
- —×—×— Fence

R. 6 W. R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA - PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative): Map Series 13

The Proposed Action recommends that all 12,970 acres of BLM land in the West Fork Red Canyon WSA not be designated wilderness (see Map 13A). The nonwilderness management actions for the WSA are as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions (Map 13B):

1) Vegetation treatments, including tree cutting and/or prescribed burning would occur on 2,600 acres, approximately 20% of the WSA (Table II-10). Areas which would be treated are primarily deep soil sites capable of supporting dense stands of grass. These sites are known as big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Some shallow soil sites with low sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites may also be treated. Vegetation treatments would utilize mechanical methods (tree cutting) and/or prescribed burning. Mechanical methods would be used in areas where the juniper canopy has become dense enough to eliminate the understory vegetation necessary to carry prescribed fire. The primary mechanical method would be tree cutting with chain saws to produce fuel wood products and fence posts.

Vegetation treatments would be designed to produce a vegetation pattern where a minimum of 40% of the land would be retained in juniper and no more than 60% would be retained or returned to sagebrush-bunchgrass communities. Climax (old-growth) juniper stands within canyon areas and on rocky ridgelines or other rock outcrop areas would not be cut. No cutting of juniper would occur within a minimum of 50 feet to 150 feet of perennial and major intermittent stream courses depending upon surrounding slope aspects. These stream course buffer zones would be narrower on north-facing slopes and wider on south-facing slopes. The vegetation treatments would not exceed 1/4-mile in width but could be of any length depending upon topographic and/or soil limitations. No mechanical methods of treatments would occur on slopes greater than 35%. It is expected that most treated areas would be 40 acres or less in size. Deep soil sites containing mostly young-growth and intermediate-aged seral juniper would have 100% tree removal whereas selected sites with mature juniper would have trees selectively removed. Prescribed burning of slash would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Fire control activities would depend upon the use of natural fire breaks. All areas receiving prescribed burning without prior mechanical removal of trees would be opened for salvage logging for fuel wood products. Woodcutting treatments would occur over a period of one to five years (500 to 1,000 acres being cut per year) with prescribed fire being used every 20 years to maintain openings. The woodcutting treatment schedule

for the WSA depends upon the scheduling of treatments on surrounding lands.

Seven miles of road would be constructed to cutting areas to assist public access. Three miles of these roads would be temporary and would be rehabilitated following the cutting period while four miles would be retained for multiple-use purposes. The roads would be limited to eight feet in width and to a maximum of six percent (6%) grade.

TABLE II-10
VEGETATION TREATMENT IN THE WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)							
	Cut		Burn Only		Cut/Burn Acreage Total		Cut/Burn Acreage Seeded	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness	---	1,950	---	650	---	2,600	---	1,950
All Wilderness	0	---	0	---	0	---	0	---

* See Appendix A for allotment specific information.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 13C):

Implement grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Livestock grazing would continue and increases or decreases would be in accordance with forage availability. It is anticipated that livestock use levels could reach 985 AUMs in 20 years (see Table II-11). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur seasonally and as scheduled by a deferred rotation grazing system.

   Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads or to cherrystem roads.

2) Maintain the existing 3.3 miles of fenceline. The use of motorized vehicles on four miles of existing ways would continue to occur for salting and facility maintenance.

3) Develop additional range improvements, including .4 miles of fenceline and three developed springs with exclosure fences. Seedings would occur on 1,950 acres of those areas previously identified for woodcutting/prescribed burning projects (see Table II-10).

TABLE II-11
LIVESTOCK FORAGE (AUMs) USE WITHIN
THE WEST FOR RED CANYON WSA*

WSA Alternatives	Estimated Current Active Use (Annually)		Anticipated Use In 20-Years (Annually)	
	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness	Wilderness	Non-Wilderness
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	---	985	---	985
All Wilderness	985	---	915	---

* See Appendix B for allotment specific information.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 13B):

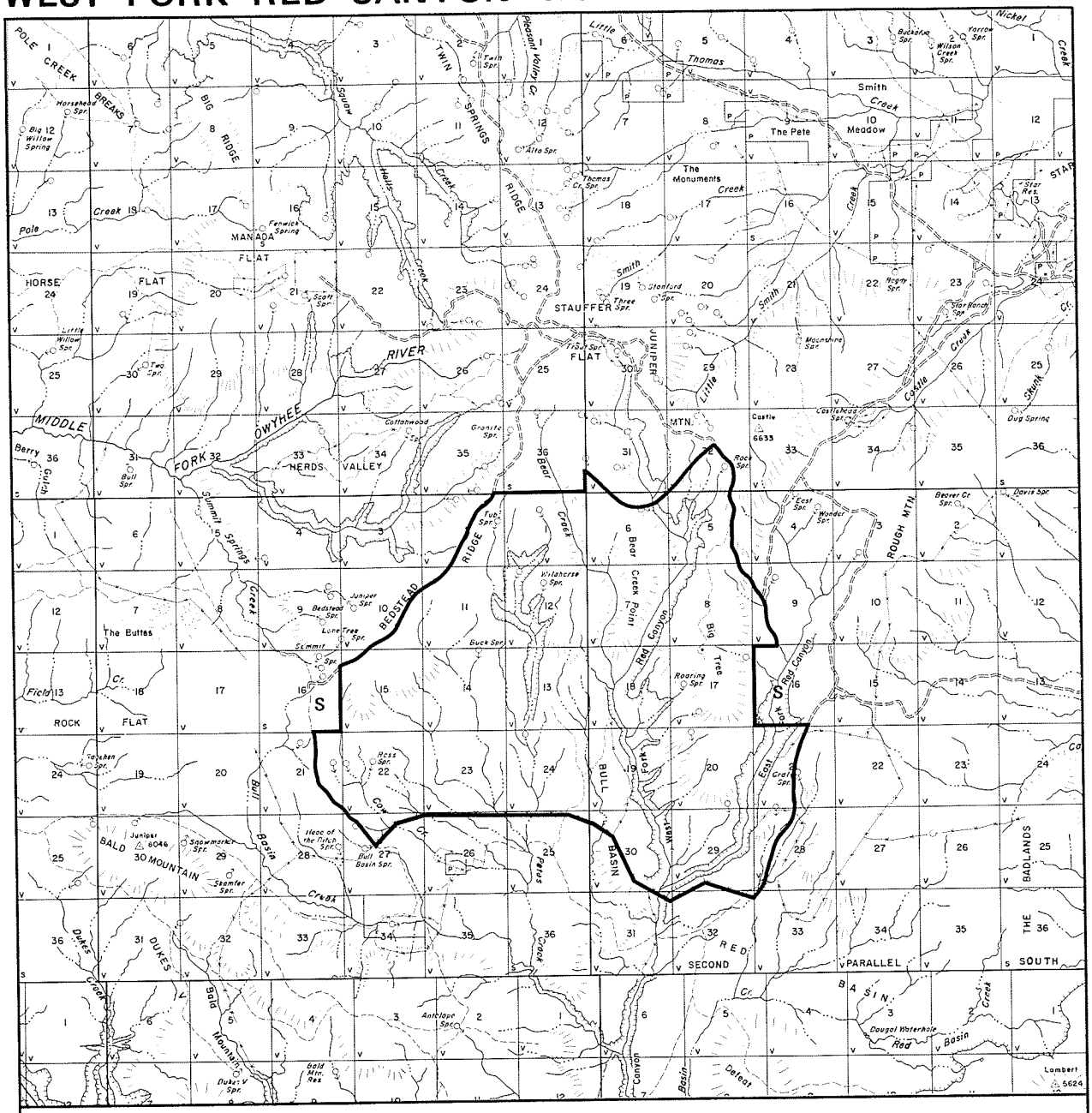
Develop a hunting camp, including toilet facilities, fire pits and tables along the northeast periphery of the WSA on Big Tree Point (T. 12 S., R. 4 W., Section 8). Keep the existing four miles of ways open for general public recreation use. Retain four miles of roads used for woodcutting access open for general public recreation use in T. 12 S., R. 4 W., Sections 6, 7, 17 and 20 on the Big Tree and Bear Creek Points, and in T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 1 in the vicinity of Petes Creek. The area would be open to off-road vehicle (ORV) use. Vehicle use would not be restricted to existing roads, ways and trails. ORV use is expected to occur.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 13A):

Acquire 740 acres of Idaho state lands through a federal-state land exchange including the lands in the following legal subdivisions:

T. 12 S., R. 4 W., Section 16
T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 16

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47 MAP 13A



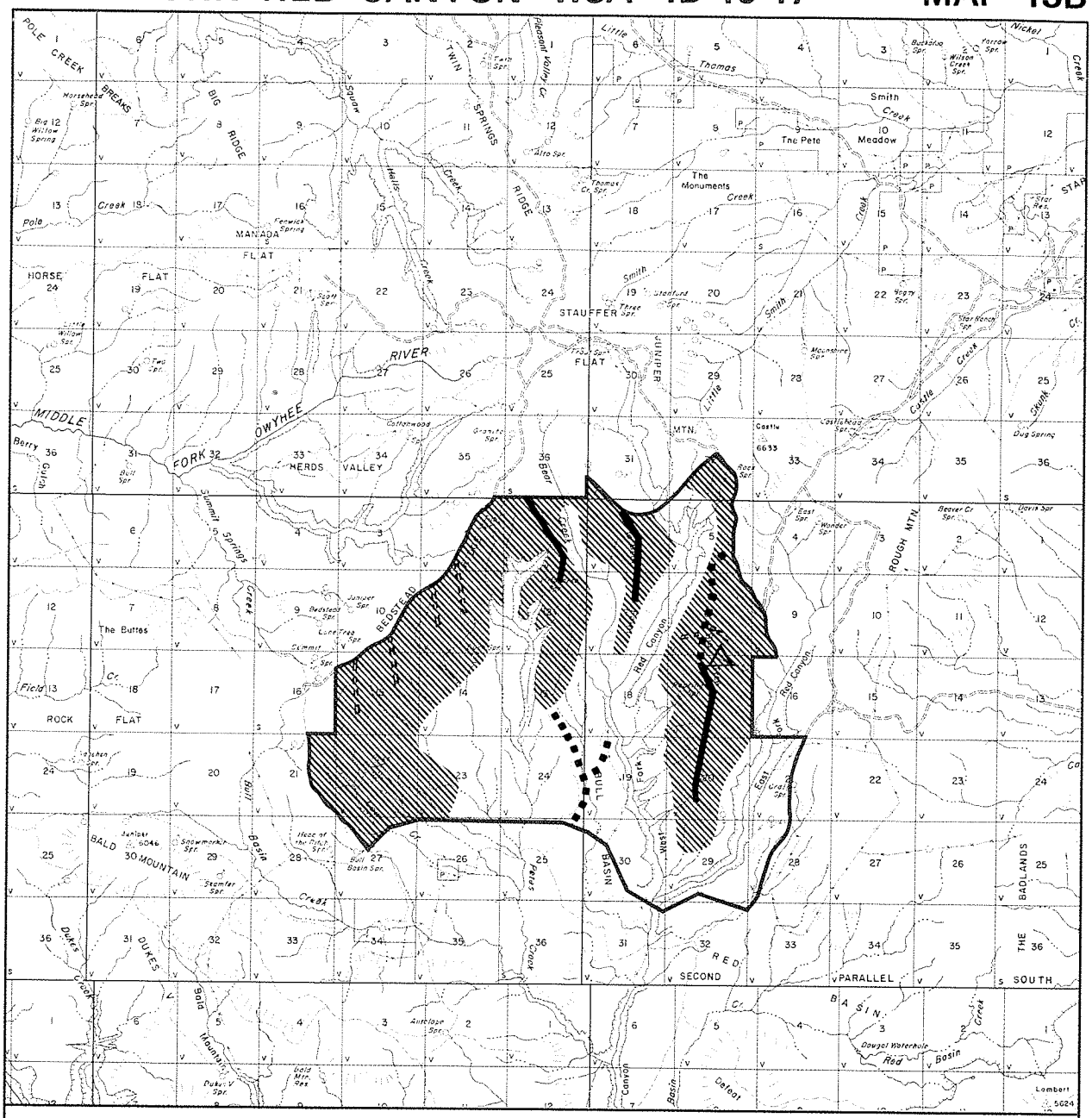
PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- None — Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

N

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47 MAP 13B



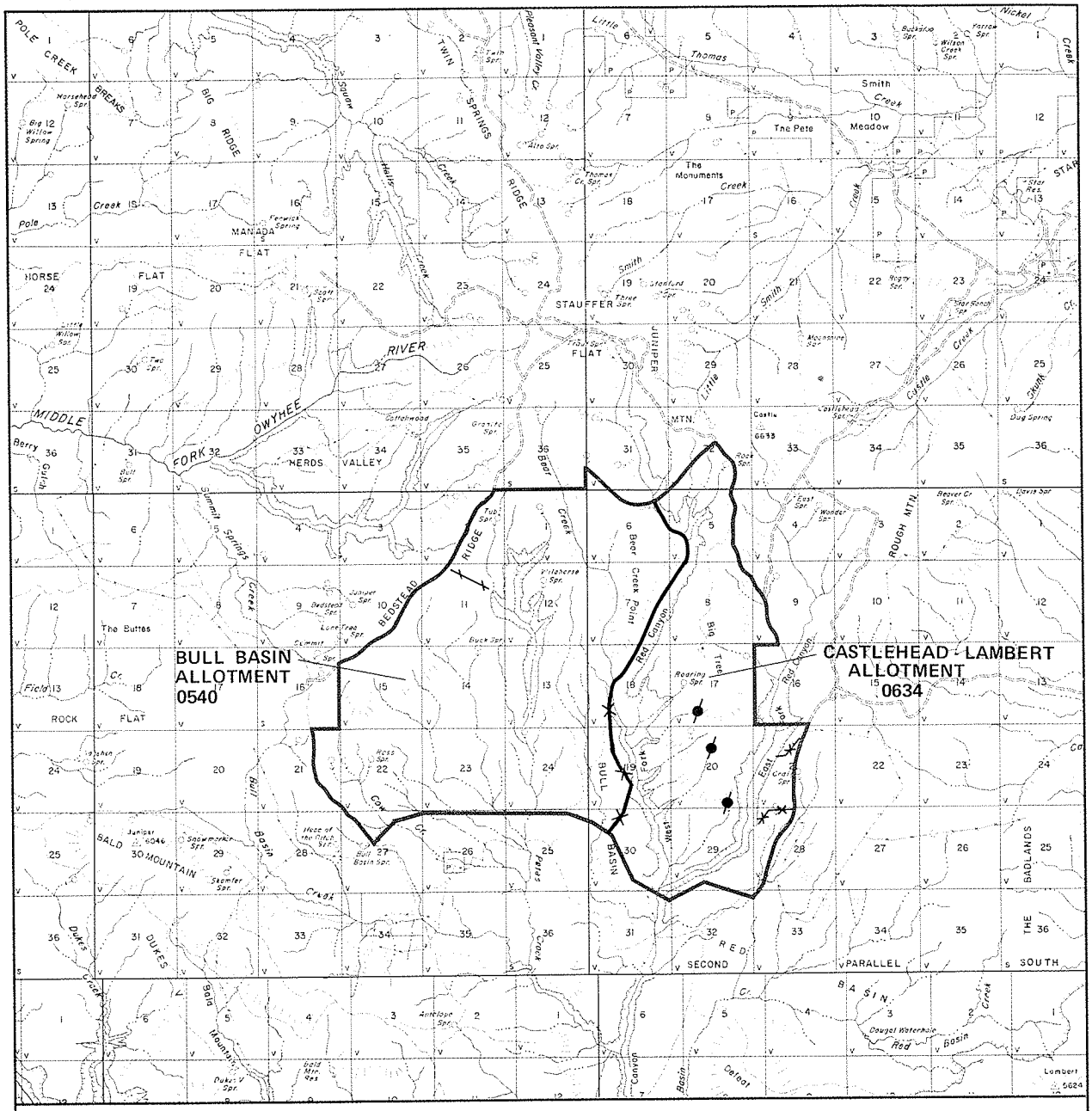
PROPOSED ACTION

(JUNIPER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/ RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

- No juniper removal treatments
- Less than 20% of lands given juniper removal treatments
- = = = = New temporary road construction
- New permanent road construction
- ..... Existing ways
- Campground facility construction

Scale in Miles

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47 MAP 13C



PROPOSED ACTION
(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

Fence

PROPOSED (construction and maintenance)

Spring development

Fence

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA - A11 WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE: Map Series 14

The A11 Wilderness Alternative recommends 14,130 BLM acres within the West Fork Red Canyon WSA be designated wilderness (see Map 14A). It further recommends that 740 acres of adjacent Idaho state lands be acquired through exchange and made part of the wilderness area. Management actions for the 14,870 acre wilderness area would be as follows:

a. Juniper Woodland Management Actions:

1) No vegetation treatments would occur in the juniper woodland communities to control seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. The ecological condition of juniper woodland communities would be subject to change only as a result of natural processes.

2) No juniper log structures would be implanted along stream banks.

b. Rangeland Management Actions (Map 14B):

Continue the development of grazing systems aimed at controlling overall livestock distribution, forage utilization and season of use. Rangeland management actions would include the following:

1) Grazing would decrease from 985 AUMs to approximately 915 AUMs (Table II-11). Use would occur in two allotments. Use within the allotments would occur under a deferred rotation grazing system.

Livestock use levels of key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current year's annual growth. Once the utilization levels are reached, livestock would be removed from the affected pastures by herding the livestock from horseback to adjacent WSA boundary roads.

2) Maintain the existing 3.3 miles of fenceline. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur on horseback.

3) No additional range improvements would be permitted.

c. Recreation Management Actions (Map 14C):

No recreation facilities such as trails, bridges, signs or campsites would be developed. No such facilities currently exist. A11 four miles of existing ways would be closed to general public recreation use. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted.

d. Acquisition/Land Exchange Actions (Map 14A):

Acquire 740 acres of Idaho state land for inclusion in the wilderness area in the following legal subdivisions:

T. 12 S., R. 4 W., Section 16
T. 12 S., R. 5 W., Section 16

An additional 1,160 acres of BLM land associated with the acquisition of Section 16, T. 12 S., R. 5 W., would also be included in the wilderness area.

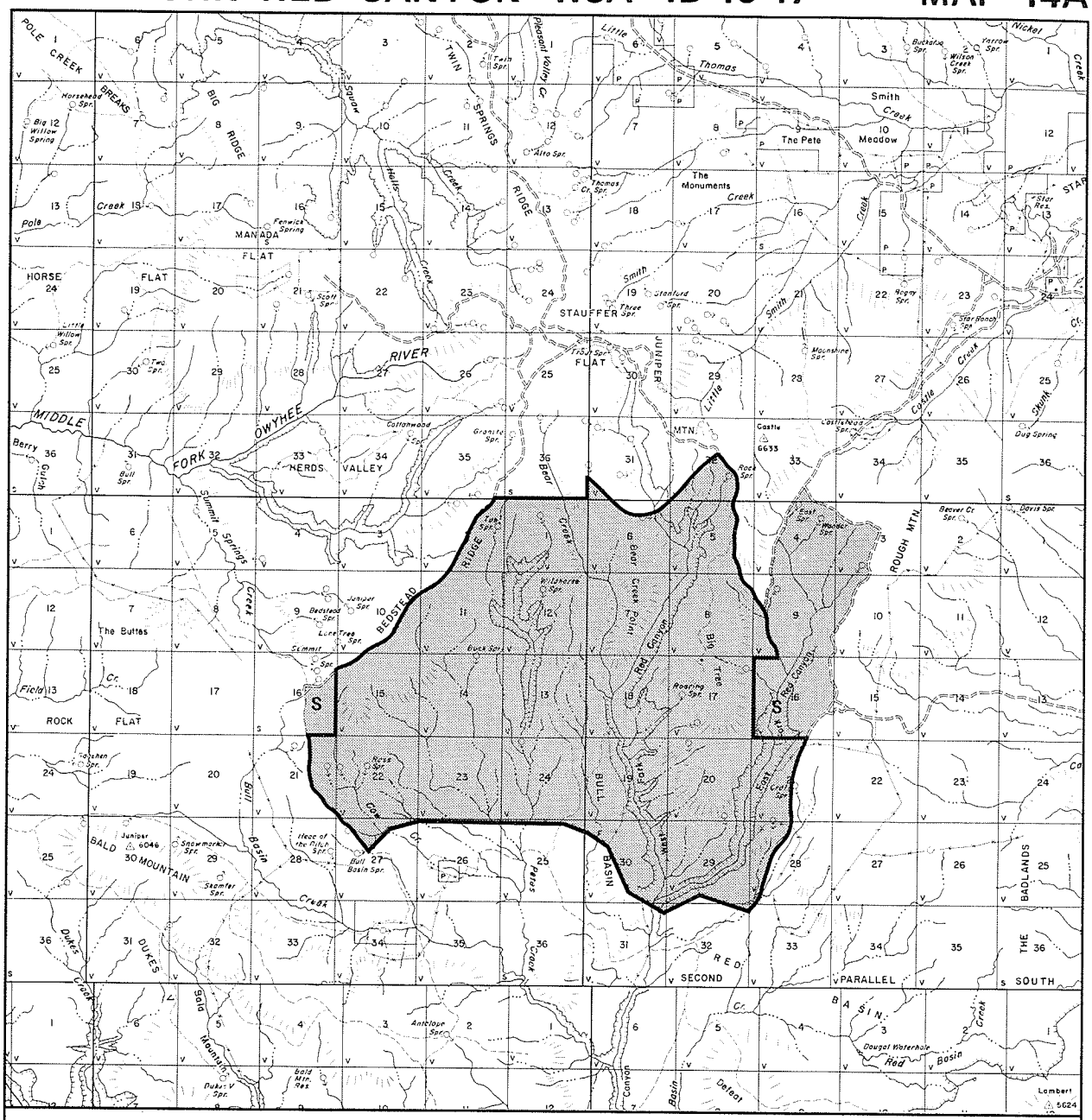
e. Cultural Resource Management Actions:

Do a Class III cultural resource inventory. The inventory would cover 100% of the 14,870 acres in the wilderness area. It would map the location of all prehistoric and historic sites identified. The inventory would cause no surface disturbance. Identified sites would not be allowed to have surface disturbing activities for the management of other resource uses.

COMPARISONS OF IMPACTS

A summary comparison of impacts for each alternative and each WSA is presented in Table II-12 (page II-78).

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47 MAP 14A



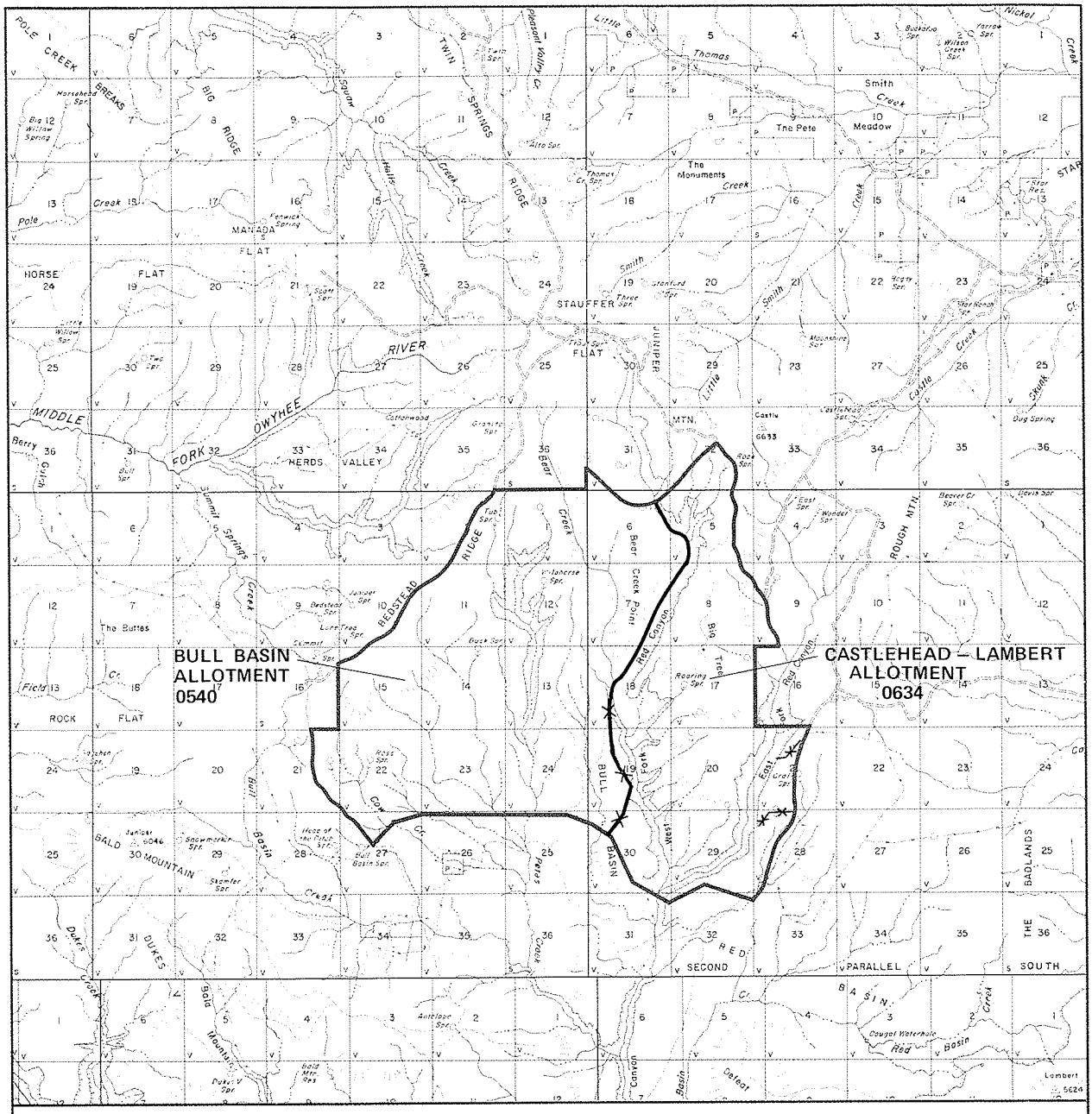
ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION)

- WSA boundary
- Lands recommended suitable for wilderness
- Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness
- S — State land inholdings transferred to BLM

N

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47 MAP 14B



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

EXISTING (maintenance)

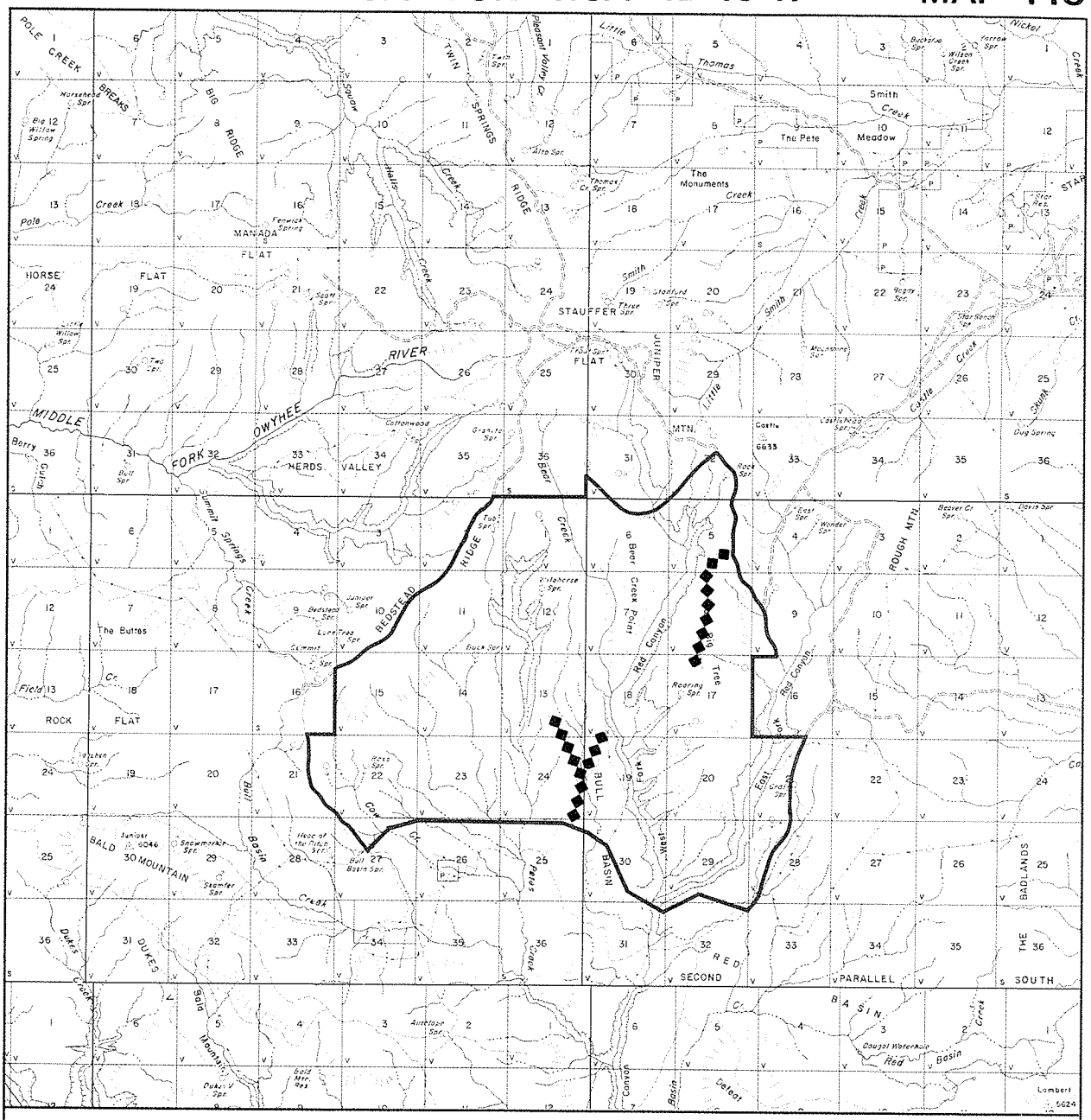
Fence

R. 5 W. R. 4 W.

1 0 1 2 3
Scale in Miles

WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA ID-16-47

MAP 14C



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE
(RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS)

◆◆◆◆◆ Existing ways closed to motorized recreation use

Table II-12A
Summary of Impacts for the
North Fork Owyhee River WSA, ID-16-40

Issues	Current Situation	IMPACTS			
		Proposed Action (Special Stipulations)	No Wilderness	Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness
Wilderness Value	High degree of naturalness. Less than 5% of the WSA impacted by mans' imprints. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Special features also exist. There are 115 annual user days of primitiv recreation use.	Wilderness Portion: Five to 20 year reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality on 4,150 acres of juniper treatment and on 9.5 miles of streambank. Slight improvement or enhancement of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation opportunities. Primitive recreation use would increase to 140 user days/year by 2005. Nonwilderness Portion: Five to 20 year reduction in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities on 6,000 acres of juniper treatment and 1/2 mile of streambank. Permanent loss of naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude along one mile of new road. Improvement in overall scenic quality.	Naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality reduced for 10-20 years on 10,350 acres of juniper treatment and for 10 years on 10 miles of streambank. Beyond 20 years, wilderness values would recover except in the northeast portion of the WSA where road construction would reduce naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Range projects would substantially reduce naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities on the WSA's southern tableland. Primitive recreation use would reach 900 user days/year by 2005.	No significant change in naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and in scenic quality. Primitive recreation use would increase to 170 user days/year by 2005.	Same as described for the Partial Wilderness Alternative.
Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands	Juniper encroachment occurring on big sagebrush-grass sites. Current ecological condition: Poor - 59% Fair - 29% Good - 12%	Big sagebrush-grass communities restored on 4,150 acres within the wilderness area and on 2,050 acres within the nonwilderness area. Juniper would continue to increase in dominance on untreated big sagebrush-grass sites. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 33% Fair - 43% Good - 20% Excellent - 4%	Juniper treatment on 10,150 acres would break up the large homogeneous juniper stands and allow the maintenance of sagebrush-grass communities. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 24% Fair - 47% Good - 23% Excellent - 6%	Ecological condition would decrease on sagebrush-grass sites from juniper encroachment and increases in big sagebrush. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 31% Fair - 45% Good - 20% Excellent - 4%	Same as Partial Wilderness Alternative.
Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities	Approximately 230 deer summer and 80 deer winter within the WSA. There are approximately 485 fish/surface acre in perennial streams.	Mule deer population increased by 70 animals and redband trout numbers increased by 150% on 10 miles of stream. Other wildlife populations unchanged.	Redband trout numbers increased by 150% on 10 miles of stream and distribution improved throughout upper North Fork drainage due to placement of fish ladder. Other wildlife populations unchanged.	Net wildlife populations would be unchanged. Redband trout numbers would be reduced by 10%.	Mule deer populations increased by 5-10 animals. Redband trout numbers decreased by 10%. Other wildlife populations unchanged.
Cultural Resources	High projected density of archaeological sites.	Road building in nonwilderness areas would increase vandalism and theft while closure of the wilderness area to motorized vehicle access would reduce vandalism and theft. Streambank stabilization would halt or slow site deterioration. Wilderness designation would largely prohibit scientific excavations which would reduce BLM's ability to assess and manage cultural resources.	Construction of roads, trails, bridges and campgrounds would increase vandalism and theft. Grazing increases in Indian Meadows Allotment would increase trampling damage. Streambank stabilization would halt or lessen site deterioration. No constraints would be placed on management and scientific excavations.	Closure of 21 miles of roads and ways would reduce vandalism and theft. Reduction in livestock use in Cliffs and Bughardt Allotments would reduce trampling damage. Wilderness designation would largely prohibit scientific excavations which would reduce the BLM's ability to assess and manage cultural resources.	Closure of the area to motorized access and reducing livestock use would reduce damage to cultural sites. Scientific excavations would largely be prohibited which would reduce the BLM's ability to assess and manage cultural resources.
Semi-Primitive Motorized Recreation Use	Approximately 235 user days of use annually. Access includes 30 miles of boundary roads, 11 miles of cherrystem roads and 8.5 miles of ways.	Closure of 17.1 miles of roads and ways. Impacts not significant. Hunting use would be concentrated along vehicle routes remaining open. Some hunting and fishing use transferred to nonwilderness areas. Annual use increased to 400 user days by 2005.	No road and way closures. The development of recreation sites and trails and maintenance of existing roads would increase annual use to 900 user days by 2005.	Closure of 20.7 miles of roads and ways. Impacts not significant. Slight decrease in quality of hunting and fishing opportunities. Annual recreation use would increase to 370 user days by 2005.	Closure of 21.5 miles of roads and ways. Impacts not significant. Slight decrease in quality of hunting and fishing opportunities. Annual use would increase to 370 user days by 2005.
Soil Erosion	Average soil loss of 1.22 tons/acre/year.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year on non-treated areas and .05 to .01 tons/acre/year on treated areas.	Same as Proposed Action.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year.	Same as Partial Wilderness Alternative.
Livestock Operations and Facilities	Sixteen reservoirs, 5 spring developments, 2 corrals and 24 miles of fence. 3,935 AUMs of livestock use. Unrestricted use of motor vehicles for facility maintenance and livestock care.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day livestock management activities in wilderness area. One new spring and one mile of fence constructed. Livestock use maintained at 3,935 AUMs.	Unrestricted use of motor vehicles. Six new reservoirs, 6 springs and 4.5 miles of fence constructed. Livestock use increased to 4,000 AUMs in 20 years.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities in wilderness area. No new facilities constructuded. Livestock use decreased to 3,545 AUMs in 20 years.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities. No new facilities constructed. Livestock use decreased to 3,530 AUMs in 20 years.
Economics					
Personal Income	$49,956	$85,881	$169,073	$50,867	$50,717
Employment (Jobs)	1.4	3.6	7.5	1.4	1.4
Development Costs	0	$83,250	$631,000	0	0
Annual Range Imp. Maintenance Costs	$ 1,200	$3,950-$6,250	$ 1,425	$3,525-$5,875	$3,000-$6,000
Annual Fuelwood Admin. Costs	0	$ 3,050	$ 7,550	$0	$0
Annual Recreation Admin. Costs	0	$ 7,000	$ 30,000	$ 5,000	$ 5,000
Total Annual Revenues	$ 5,312	$ 8,362	$ 12,950	$ 4,786	$ 4,766

Table II-12B
Summary of Impacts for the
Big Willow Spring WSA, ID-16-41

Issues	Current Situation	IMPACTS		
		Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness (Special Stipulations)	All Wilderness (Without Stipulations)
Wilderness Values	High degree of naturalness. Less than 1% of WSA impacted by mans' imprints. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Special features also exist. There are 15 annual user days of primitive recreation use.	Ten to 20 year loss in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude and, scenic quality from 1,250 acres of juniper treatment with recovery of values thereafter. Slight improvement in overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from rangeland management actions. Solitude opportunities permanently reduced from use of recreation access roads and campgrounds. There would be 15 annual user days of primitive recreation use through 2005.	Five year reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from 450 acres of juniper treatment with recovery of values thereafter. Road closures and range improvements would slightly improve wilderness values. There would be 20 annual user days of primitive recreation use by 2005.	No significant change in naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and scenic quality in the central and northern portion of the WSA. Slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality in the southern and eastern portions from juniper encroachment. Primitive recreation use would increase to 20 user days annually by 2005.
Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands	Juniper encroachment occurring on sagebrush-grass sites (72% of WSA). Current ecological condition: Poor - 70% Fair - 15% Good - 15%	Big sagebrush-grass communities restored on 1,250 acres treated. An improvement in condition class would occur on 25% of low sagebrush-grass sites and on climax juniper sites. On untreated seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 22% Fair - 52% Good - 18% Excellent - 4%	Big sagebrush-grass community restored on 450 acres treated. Approximately 25% of low sagebrush and climax juniper sites would improve one condition class. Untreated seral juniper communities would show an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs but continued juniper encroachment would eventually cause ecological condition to decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 34% Fair - 48% Good - 15% Excellent - 4%	Ecological condition would improve on climax juniper communities. On interspersed seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 42% Fair - 43% Good - 14% Excellent - 1%
Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities	Numerous wildlife species, including 30 summer deer and 60 winter deer occur. There are approximately 485 fish/surface acre in perennial streams.	Juniper treatment would enhance habitat and increase deer populations while increased access would reduce populations. There would be a net loss of 5 deer. Other wildlife would remain unchanged.	Juniper treatment, access changes and other actions would not significantly alter wildlife population levels.	Juniper encroachment would reduce habitat and forage availability for mule deer. One to five deer displaced. Other wildlife populations unchanged.
Cultural Resources	Medium to high projected density of archaeological sites.	Road building would increase public use thereby increasing vandalism and theft. Increased livestock use would increase trampling damage.	Wilderness designation would place constraints on study and management of cultural resources. Vehicle closures would lessen damage to sites.	Same as All Wilderness (Special Stipulations).
Semi-Primitive Recreation Use	Approximately 35 annual user days of use. Access includes 10 miles of boundary road and .8 miles of ways.	No road or way closures. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Use would increase to 75 annual user days by 2005.	Closure of .8 miles of way. Impact not significant. Use would increase to 70 user days by 2005.	Closure of .8 miles of way. Impact not significant. Reduced deer numbers would slightly reduce hunting quality. Use would increase to 70 days by 2005
Soil Erosion	Average soil loss of 1.18 tons/acre/year.	Over 20 yeras, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year on non-treated areas and .05 to .15 tons/acre/year on treated areas.	Same as Proposed Action.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year.
Livestock Operations and Facilities	Two spring developments and 1.5 miles of fence. 400 AUMs of livestock use. Unrestricted use of motor vehicles for facility maintenance and livestock care.	Unrestricted vehicle use. Livestock use increased to 440 AUMs in 20 years. No new facilities proposed.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities. No new facilities constructed. Livestock use would remain at 400 AUMs.	Same as All Wilderness (Special Stipulations).
Economics				
Personal Income	$5,512	$ 6,968	$ 6,718	$6,718
Employment (Jobs)	.15	.19	.19	.19
Development Costs	0	$40,000	$11,750	0
Annual Range Imp. Maintenance Cost	$65	$65	$195-$325	$195-$325
Annual Fuelwood Admin. Costs	0	$ 3,800	$ 900	0
Annual Recreation Admin. Costs	0	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$3,000
Total Annual Revenue	$ 540	$ 4,394	$ 1,440	$ 540

Table II-12C
Summary of Impacts for the
Squaw Creek Canyon WSA, ID-16-42

Issues	Current Situation	IMPACTS	
		Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness
Wilderness Values	High degree of naturalness. Less than 1% of WSA impacted by man's imprints. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Special features also exist. There are 25 annual user days of primitive recreation use.	Ten to 20 year loss in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude and scenic quality from 3,800 acres of juniper treatment and 3 miles of stabilization projects with recovery of values thereafter. Slight improvement in overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from rangeland management actions. Solitude opportunities permanently from use of recreation access roads and campgrounds. There would be 25 annual user days of primitive recreation use through 2005.	Slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment. Naturalness unaffected. Slight improvement in solitude opportunities from road closures and land acquisition. Primitive recreation use would increase to 30 user days annually by 2005.
Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands	Juniper encroachment occurring on sagebrush-grass sites (72% of WSA). Current ecological condition: Poor - 78% Fair - 20% Good - 2%	Big sagebrush-grass communities restored on 3,800 acres treated. An improvement in condition class would occur on 25% of low sagebrush-grass sites and on climax juniper sites. On untreated seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor 45% Fair - 39% Good - 15% Excellent - 1%	Ecological condition would improve on climax juniper communities. On interspersed seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 56% Fair - 35% Good - 8% Excellent - 1%
Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities	Numerous wildlife species, including 50 deer in summer occur. There are approximately 485 fish/surface acre in perennial streams.	Juniper treatment would enhance habitat and increase deer populations while increased access would reduce populations. There would be a net loss of 20-25 deer. Redband trout numbers would increase by 10%. Other wildlife would remain unchanged.	Juniper encroachment would reduce habitat and forage availability for mule deer while closure of roads would benefit deer. Net populations would remain unchanged. Trout numbers could be reduced by 10%. Other populations of wildlife unchanged.
Cultural Resources	Medium to high projected density of archaeological sites.	New road building and a campground would increase public use thereby increasing vandalism and theft. Increased livestock use would increase trampling damage.	Wilderness designation would place constraints on study and management of cultural resources. Vehicle closures and decreases in livestock use would lessen damage to sites.
Semi-Primitive Recreation Use	Approximately 155 annual user days of use. Access includes 14 miles of boundary road, 1.3 miles of cherrystem road and 1.5 miles of ways.	No road or way closures. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Use would increase to 245 annual user days by 2005.	Closure of 1.2 miles of road and 2.8 miles of way. Impact not significant. Use would increase to 220 days by 2005.
Soil Erosion	Average soil loss of 1.02 tons/acre/year.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year on non-treated areas and .05 to .15 tons/acre/year on treated areas.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .05 to .10 tons/acre/year.
Livestock Operations and Facilities	Five spring developments and 6 miles of fence. 855 AUMs of livestock use. Unrestricted use of motor vehicles for facility maintenance and livestock care.	Unrestricted vehicle use. Livestock use increased to 885 AUMs in 20 years. One new spring would enhance grazing systems.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities. No new facility construction would limit grazing system effectiveness. Livestock use would decrease to 795 AUMs.
Local Economic Conditions			
Personal Income	$13,988	$16,550	$15,196
Employment (Jobs)	.40	.47	.43
Development Costs	0	$83,500	0
Annual Range Imp. Maintenance Costs	$290	$290	$870-$1,450
Annual Fuelwood Admin. Costs	0	$ 10,800	0
Annual Recreation Admin. Costs	0	$ 5,000	$ 3,000
Total Annual Revenues	$ 1,154	$ 11,995	$ 1,073

Table II-12D
Summary of Impacts for the
Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA, ID-16-45

Issues	Current Situation	IMPACTS	
		Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness
Wilderness Values	High degree of naturalness. Less than 1% of WSA impacted by man's imprints. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Special features also exist. There are 20 annual users days of primitive recreation use	Ten to 20 year loss in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude and scenic quality from 4,250 acres of juniper treatment and 1.5 miles of streambank stabilization projects with recovery of values thereafter. Slight improvement in overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from range management actions. Solitude opportunities permanently reduced from use of recreation access roads and campgrounds. There would be 20 annual user days of primitive recreation use through 2005.	Slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment Naturalness unaffected. Solitude opportunities slightly affected. Solitude opportuni- improved from road closures and land acquisition. Primitive recreation use would increase to 30 user days annually by 2005.
Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands	Juniper encroachment occurring on sagebrush-grass sites (72% of WSA). Current ecological condition: Poor - 46% Fair - 52% Good - 2%	Big sagebrush-grass communities restored on 4,250 acres treated. An improvement in condition class would occur on 25% of low sagebrush-grass sites and on climax juniper sites. On untreated seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor 17% Fair - 49% Good - 34% Excellent - 1%	Ecological condition would improve on climax juniper communities. On interspersed seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 38% Fair - 36% Good - 25% Excellent - 1%
Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities	Numerous wildlife species, including 60 summer deer and 20 winter deer occur. There are approximately 485 fish/surface acre in perennial streams.	Juniper treatment would enhance habitat and increase deer populations while increased access would reduce populations. There would be a net increase of 5 deer. Redband trout numbers would increase by 10%. Other wildlife would remain unchanged.	Juniper encroachment would reduce habitat and forage availability for mule deer while decreased access would increase populations. Net loss of 5 deer Trout populations reduced by 10%. Other wildlife populations unchanged.
Cultural Resources	Medium to high projected density of archaeological sites.	Road building would increase public use thereby increasing vandalism and theft. Increased livestock use would increase trampling damage.	Wilderness designation would place constraints on study and management of cultural resources Vehicle closures would lessen damage to sites.
Semi-Primitive Recreation Use	Approximately 135 annual user days of use. Access includes 13 miles of boundary road, 1 mile of cherrystem road and 4.5 miles of ways.	No road or way closures. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Use would increase to 215 annual user days by 2005.	Closure of 7 miles of roads and ways. Impact not significant. Use would increase to 190 user days by 2005.
Soil Erosion	Average soil loss of 1.01 tons/acre/year.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .01 to.07 tons/acre/year on non-treated areas and .05 to .15 tons/acre/year on treated areas.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .05 to .10 tons/acre/year.
Livestock Operations and Facilities	Three spring developments and 2.5 miles of fence. 1,040 AUMs of livestock use. Unrestricted use of motor vehicles for facility maintenance and livestock care.	Unrestricted vehicle use. Livestock use increased to 1,090 AUMs in 20 years. Five new springs and .3 miles of fence would improve grazing system efficiency.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities. No new facility construction would limit grazing system efficiency. Livestock use would decrease to 955 AUMs.
Economics			
Personal Income	$15,085	$ 17,697	$15,894
Employment (Jobs)	.42	.50	.45
Development Costs	0	$119,000	0
Annual Range Imp. Maintenance Costs	$125	$250	$375-$625
Annual Fuelwood Admin. Costs	0	$ 14,200	0
Annual Recreation Admin. Costs	0	$ 5,000	0
Total Annual Revenues	$ 1,404	$ 15,672	$ 1,289

Table II-12E
Summary of Impacts for the
West Fork Red Canyon WSA, ID-16-47

Issues	Current Situation	IMPACTS	
		Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness
Wilderness Values	High degree of naturalness. Less than 1% of WSA impacted by man's imprints. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Special features also exist. There are 30 annual user days of primitive recreation use.	Ten to 20 year loss in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude and scenic quality from 2,600 acres of juniper treatment with recovery of values thereafter. Slight improvement in overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from rangeland management actions. Solitude opportunities permanently from use of recreation access roads and campground. There would be 30 annual user days of primitive recreation use through 2005.	Slight decline in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper encroachment. Naturalness unaffected. Slight improvement in solitude opportunities from road construction and land acqusitions. Primitive recreation use would increase to 45 user days annually by 2005.
Ecological Succession in Juniper Woodlands	Juniper encroachment occurring on sagebrush-grass sites (72% of WSA). Current ecological condition: Poor - 46% Fair - 52% Good - 2%	Big sagebrush-grass communities restored on 2,600 acres treated. An improvement in condition class would occur on 25% of low sagebrush-grass sites and on climax juniper sites. On untreated seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor 30% Fair - 44% Good - 25% Excellent - 1%	Ecological condition would improve on climax juniper communities. On interspersed seral juniper communities, there would be an initial improvement in vigor and density of grasses and forbs, but juniper encroachment would continue and ecological condition would eventually decline. 20-year ecological condition: Poor - 45% Fair - 35% Good - 20% Excellent - 1%
Wildlife Populations Indigenous to Juniper Woodland Communities	Numerous wildlife species occur, including 60 summer deer and 80 winter deer.	Juniper treatment would enhance habitat and increase deer populations while increased access would reduce populations. Net populations would remain unchanged. Other wildlife would also remain unchanged.	Juniper encroachment would reduce habitat and forage availability for mule deer while road closures would increase populations. There would be a net reduction of 5 deer. Other wildlife populations unchanged.
Cultural Resources	Medium to high projected density of archaeological sites.	Road building and campgrounds would increase public use thereby increasing vandalism and theft.	Wilderness designation would place constraints on study and management of cultural resources Vehicle closures would lessen damage to sites.
Semi-Primitive Recreation Use	Approximately 200 annual user days of use. Access includes 8 miles of boundary road and 4 miles of ways.	No road or way closures. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Use would increase to 200 annual user days by 2005.	Closure of 4 miles of roads and ways. Reduced deer numbers would slightly reduce hunting quality. Use would increase to 275 user days by 2005.
Soil Erosion	Average soil loss of 1.03 tons/acre/year.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .01 to .07 tons/acre/year on non-treated areas and .05 to .15 tons/acre/year on treated areas.	Over 20 years, impacts slightly beneficial. Average reduction in soil loss of .05 to .01 tons/acre/year.
Livestock Operations and Facilities	3.5 miles of fence. 985 AUMs of livestock use. Unrestricted use of motor vehicles for facility maintenance and livestock care.	Unrestricted vehicle use. Livestock use increased to 985 AUMs in 20 years. Three new spring developments and .4 miles of fence would improve grazing system efficiency.	Vehicle restrictions would hinder facility maintenance and livestock management activities. No new facility construction would limit grazing system efficiency. Livestock use would decrease to 915 AUMs.
Economics			
Personal Income	$16,797	$19,511	$18,056
Employment (Jobs)	.48	.55	.51
Development Costs	0	$57,750	0
Annual Range Imp. Maintenance Costs	$165	$190	$495-$825
Annual Fuelwood Admin. Costs	0	$ 7,800	0
Annual Recreation Admin. Costs	0	$ 5,000	$ 3,000
Total Annual Revenues	$ 1,330	$ 9,130	$ 1,235

CHAPTER III
DESCRIPTION OF AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The description of the environment covers those resources which are significantly affected by implementing the Proposed Action or alternatives and were identified as issues or concerns by the public, BLM and other agencies. Resource characteristics within the five affected wilderness study areas (WSAs) are very similar; therefore, resource descriptions refer to all the WSAs unless otherwise specified. Specific resource characteristics of the WSAs are addressed under each resource heading.

A. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

The BLM completed a wilderness inventory of roadless areas in the upper drainages of the North Fork Owyhee River and on Juniper Mountain in 1982 using procedures outlined in the BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook (1978). From this inventory, five WSAs were identified. Each WSA was found to contain mandatory wilderness characteristics (size; naturalness; solitude and primitive recreation opportunities) and supplemental wilderness values (special features) which meet the wilderness criteria established by the Wilderness Act of 1964 (Table III-1).

1. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

a. Size and Physical Aspect

The WSAs lie on the high plateau region of southwest Idaho at elevations ranging from about 5,000 to 6,500 feet. The five WSAs range in size from 6,210 acres to 49,470 acres. The largest of the WSAs, ID-16-40, encompasses 49,470 acres of BLM land in the headwaters of the North Fork Owyhee River and Current Creek. The other four WSAs are adjoining areas which cover a total of 44,140 acres on Juniper Mountain. Juniper Mountain lies approximately ten miles south of the North Fork Owyhee River.

1) North Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-40):

The 49,470 acres of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA are dominated by two major topographic features: a southern tableland and a northern hilly/canyon complex. The southern portion of the WSA (approximately 13,000 acres) consists of a flat to very gently rolling tableland with broad, shallow swales intermixed among low ridgelines and/or rock outcrop areas. Cutting a canyon northwestward through the middle of the tableland is Pleasant Valley Creek as it drains into the North Fork Owyhee River. The swales of the tableland are typified by sparse, low sagebrush and grass vegetation covering an expanse of shallow soils and exposed rock rubble. The ridgelines consist largely of exposed basalt bedrock and loose rock rubble areas with small soil pockets

TABLE III-1: SUMMARY OF WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS IN WSAs

WSA Number	WSA Size and Configuration	Physical Features Affecting Wilderness Characteristics			Special Features
		Imprints on Naturalness (Within and Adjacent)	Outstanding Opportunities		
			Solitude	Primitive Recreation	
16-40	49,479 acres 2 - 10 miles wide 13.75 miles long 7 cherrystem roads totalling 11 miles 3 state inholdings totalling 1,920 acres	10.5 miles of ways 24.0 miles of fence 2 abandoned log cabins 16 stock reservoirs 1 metal building-corral-spring complex 4 developed springs 2 abandoned corrals	Large size Good configuration Topographic screening due to numerous rugged hills, canyons, draws, rock outcrops and swales Vegetative screening due to juniper and riparian 30+ miles of canyons minimize corridor effect Dispersion potential due to numerous canyons and draws Limited external influences	Large size Exceptionally scenic Diversity of landforms including vertical-walled canyons, rugged hills, flat plateaus; dense juniper and sagebrush Reasonable mobility throughout WSA due to numerous canyons and draws 30+ miles of canyons reduce any sense of confinement in canyons Variety of recreation opportunities	Scenic values Wildlife values Vegetation Cultural values
16-41	6,210 acres 5 miles long .25 - 3.25 miles wide No inholdings	.8 miles of ways 1.5 miles of fence 2 developed springs	Topographic screening due to rugged, radiating canyons (7+ miles) Vegetative screening due to juniper and riparian	Exceptionally scenic Diversity of landforms, including vertical-walled canyon, plateaus, rugged rock outcrops and hills; juniper and sagebrush	Scenic values Wildlife values Vegetation

TABLE III-1: SUMMARY OF WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS IN WSAs (con't.)

WSA Number	WSA Size and Configuration	Physical Features Affecting Wilderness Characteristics			Special Features
		Imprints on Naturalness (Within and Adjacent)	Outstanding Opportunities		
			Solitude	Primitive Recreation	
16-41 (con't)			Dispersion potential due to radiating canyons and surrounding terrain --- Minimal external influences	Reasonable mobility throughout WSA due to radiating canyons and surrounding terrain --- Variety of recreation opportunities	
16-42	10,780 acres --- 7 miles long --- 1-4 miles wide --- 2 cherrystem roads totalling 1.3 miles --- No inholdings	1.5 miles of ways --- 6.0 miles of fence --- 5 developed springs	Topographic screening due to rugged canyons (10+ miles) and mountainous areas --- Vegetative screening due to juniper --- Dispersion potential due to radiating canyons and numerous surrounding draws --- Minimal external influences	Exceptionally scenic in some areas --- Diversity of landform including rock escarpment, vertical-walled canyons, V-shaped canyons, ridges, flats; juniper and sagebrush --- Reasonable mobility throughout WSA due to radiating canyons and numerous surrounding draws --- Variety of recreation opportunities	Scenic values --- Wildlife values --- Vegetation
16-45	14,180 acres --- 7.5 miles long --- 1-4 miles wide	4.5 miles of ways --- 2.5 miles of fence --- 3 developed springs	Topographic screening due to rugged canyons (10+ miles) and mountains ---	Diversity of landform including vertical-walled canyon, V-shaped canyon, mountains, hills, flats; juniper and sagebrush	Scenic values --- Wildlife values --- Vegetation

TABLE III-1: SUMMARY OF WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS IN WSAs (con't.)

WSA Number	WSA Size and Configuration	Physical Features Affecting Wilderness Characteristics			Special Features
		Imprints on Naturalness (Within and Adjacent)	Outstanding Opportunities		
			Solitude	Primitive Recreation	
16-45 (cont')	2 cherrystem roads totalling 1 mile --- 1 state inholding totalling 640 acres	1 abandoned log cabin	Vegetative screening due to juniper and riparian --- Dispersion potential due to numerous side canyons or draws --- 10+ miles of canyon reduce corridor effect --- Minimal external influences	Exceptionally scenic in some areas --- Reasonable mobility throughout WSA due to numerous side canyons or draws --- Variety of recreation opportunities	
16-47	12,970 acres --- 6 miles long --- 2 - 4.75 miles wide --- No inholdings	4.0 miles of ways --- 3.25 miles of fence	Topographic screening due to rugged canyons (10+ miles) and mountains --- Vegetative screening due to juniper and riparian --- Dispersion potential due to numerous canyons and draws --- 12+ miles of canyon reduce corridor effect --- Minimal external influences	Diversity of landform including V-shaped canyon, mountains, basin; juniper and sagebrush --- Reasonable mobility throughout WSA due to numerous canyons, draws and a rolling basin --- Variety of recreation opportunities	Scenic values --- Wildlife values --- Vegetation

containing narled, stunted, old-growth (climax) juniper trees. Along the southern periphery of the WSA, the tableland's bedrock gives way into a 50 to 200 foot high, steep, rock rubble strewn slope covered with big sagebrush and young-growth to old-growth juniper trees. Along the northern flank of the tableland, the basalt mantle has been eroded away to expose underlying rhyolite rock which extends northward and eastward over the remainder of the WSA. The rhyolite rock has eroded into a highly convoluted topography containing hundreds of large rock outcrop formations interlaced among numerous narrow, twisting drainages. Covering this topography is an expansive juniper woodland community. The drainages shed snowmelt into the canyon systems of the North Fork Owyhee River and Current Creek. The North Fork Owyhee River has carved a 300 foot deep canyon as it flows westward toward the Owyhee River Canyonlands of southeast Oregon. Current Creek has also formed a 300 foot deep canyon as it flows southward into Deep Creek and the Owyhee River Canyonlands of southwest Idaho. Both the North Fork Owyhee River and Current Creek Canyon systems are typified by meandering, sheer walls topped with numerous rock spires and narled, climax juniper trees.

2) Big Willow Spring WSA (ID-16-41):

The Big Willow Spring WSA encompasses 6,210 acres of the lower western slopes of Juniper Mountain. The northern and western portions of the WSA consist of hilly topography typified by a series of shallow, rocky washes defined by numerous rhyolite rock outcrops. The southern and eastern flanks of this hilly topography give way to the sheer-walled, meandering rhyolite canyon system of Pole Creek which reaches a depth of 200 feet in the WSA's western periphery. The canyon rimrock areas contain numerous rock columns or spires. The canyon of Pole Creek sharply dissects and segments the flat to gently sloping terrain of the southern and eastern portions of the WSA into two broad east-west ridgelines at the WSA's western edge. These ridges join the vast expanses of flat plateau stretching across southeast Oregon. The entire WSA is covered with thin to dense stands of juniper trees. In the northern and western reaches of the WSA and along canyon rimrocks, stunted and narled old-growth juniper cling to rock outcrop areas. On the flatter southern and eastern areas of the WSA, juniper woodlands containing intermixed open areas of sagebrush/ grass and stands of young to intermediate-aged juniper occupy the landscape.

3) Squaw Creek Canyon WSA (ID-16-42):

The Squaw Creek Canyon WSA encompasses 10,780 acres of the northwestern slopes of Juniper Mountain. The topography

of the WSA consists predominantly of five broad, north-south ridgelines separated by the canyons of Squaw Creek and Hells Creek and the smaller drainages of Scott Creek and Peach Creek. The canyons begin at the southern and eastern peripheries of the WSA and merge together in its center and north-central periphery. The drainages are typically steep, V-shape canyons with numerous rock outcrops or rock formations, except in the lower reaches of Squaw Creek where 200 foot high, sheer-walled rhyolite rock escarpments dominate the landscape. The entire WSA is blanketed with a dense juniper woodland. Stunted, narled, old-growth juniper trees cling to the rock outcrop areas of the canyons and ridgelines while large, tall, intermediate-age and mature juniper trees occupy the canyons' steep slopes and the ridgelines' deeper soil areas. Open areas of sagebrush/grass are few and exist on the ridgeline areas of the WSA's periphery.

4) Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-45):

The Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA encompasses 14,180 acres of the southwestern slopes of Juniper Mountain. The WSA consists largely of the moderately sloped upper drainages of the Middle Fork Owyhee River. The Middle Fork drains in a east-west direction from the WSA's northeast boundary. At the core of the WSA, the water of the Middle Fork is joined by that of several major north-south drainages including Summit Creek and the South Branch of the Middle Fork Owyhee River, both of which flow in a northerly direction from the WSA's southern boundary. These drainages are surrounded by several broad, flattened ridges. Eight smaller paralleling drainages enter the Middle Fork Owyhee River from the north. These drainages sharply dissect Juniper Mountain into an equivalent number of narrow, north-south ridgelines. In the western periphery of the WSA, the slopes of Juniper Mountain give way to a flat, high plateau which stretches across vast expanses of southeast Oregon. It is at this point the Middle Fork Owyhee River begins to cut a vertical-walled, meandering canyon into the WSA's rhyolite rock. This canyon reaches a depth of nearly 200 feet at the Oregon-Idaho border. The upper elevations of Juniper Mountain, in the northeast half of the WSA, are blanketed with dense intermediate-aged, mature and old-growth juniper woodlands. As elevations decrease in a westerly and southerly direction, juniper become more thinly scattered and sagebrush/grass vegetation dominates the landscape. In the western periphery, vegetative cover is largely sagebrush/grass and widely scattered young-growth and intermediate-growth juniper with pockets of mature and old-growth juniper along the Middle Fork Owyhee River Canyon rimrock and on isolated rock outcrop areas.

5) West Fork Red Canyon WSA (ID-16-47):

The West Fork Red Canyon WSA encompasses 12,970 acres of the southern slopes of Juniper Mountain. The WSA is flanked on its western and eastern peripheries by two long, broad, flattened, north-south ridgelines known as Bedstead Ridge and Big Tree Ridge. Big Tree Ridge is sandwiched between the East Fork Red Canyon Creek flowing south along the WSA's eastern boundary and the West Fork Red Canyon Creek which dissects the center of the WSA. The confluence of the two canyons is at the southern boundary of the WSA. Each of these canyons is 100 feet deep in their southern reaches and 300 feet deep in their northern reaches. Both canyons are V-shaped with steep, rhyolitic rock rubbled slopes. Bedstead Ridge, along the WSA's western periphery, gives way to seven major parallel north-south ridgelines and drainages, including Petes Creek and Bear Creek. Bear Creek empties into the West Fork Red Canyon Creek, whereas Petes Creek carves its own shallow wash across a broad, bowled basin (Bull Basin) occupying the south-central portion of the WSA, west of the West Fork Red Canyon. The upper elevations of Juniper Mountain on the WSA's western and northern peripheries are blanketed by a dense intermediate-aged, mature and old-growth juniper woodland. As elevations decrease in a southerly direction toward the south-central periphery of the WSA, juniper becomes more thinly scattered and sagebrush/grass vegetation dominates the landscape. Much of the Bull Basin area has a vegetative cover consisting largely of sagebrush/grass and widely scattered young-growth and intermediate-aged juniper. Juniper woodlands stretch to the southern boundary of the WSA along the peripheral ridgelines and canyons.

b. Naturalness

Each of the five WSAs possesses a high degree of naturalness. Imprints of man are present in the WSAs but they are substantially unnoticeable. Imprints are widely scattered and consist predominantly of:

1) range improvements, including small stock ponds or reservoirs, barbed wire fences, and water troughs associated with springs ("developed" springs).

2) primitive vehicle routes including two-wheel tracks (ways) and minimally constructed cherrystem roads which penetrate into the interior of the WSAs.

The number of range improvements and vehicle routes occurring in each WSA are listed under the Livestock Grazing and Semi-Primitive Recreation descriptions.

The location, number and relative distribution of man's imprints make for infrequent visual encounters. Visual contact with range improvements and vehicle routes is extremely limited and of minimal impact because of the limited soil and vegetation disturbance associated with their construction, the small size and/or low profile of the developments, and the presence of topographic and/or vegetative screening. On the southern tableland of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, widely scattered stock reservoirs and fencelines are generally obscured by sagebrush or small changes in topography within one hundred feet to several hundred yards. Some water impoundments are visible from long distances yet they appear as lake or marsh areas nestled in the bottom of broad swales. In the remainder of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and in the four Juniper Mountain WSAs, dense juniper woodlands provide screening of imprints (consisting mostly of fences, developed springs and/or vehicle routes). The juniper woodland vegetation limits visual encounters to a matter of several feet in many places. Field studies in 1981 documented visual impact zones for all imprints within the WSAs. These studies determined that less than five percent of any of the WSAs is minimally impacted by man's imprints. No impact was judged to be significant in any WSA as a whole. The amount of visual impact from man's imprints within each WSA is show below:

North Fork Owyhee River WSA	<5% 1/
Big Willow Spring WSA	<2% 2/
Squaw Creek Canyon WSA	<1% 2/
Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA	<1% 2/
West Fork Red Canyon WSA	<1% 2/

1/ 2.5% are impacts (external influences) from major gravel roads along the WSA's southeast boundary and other dirt roads forming the WSA's boundaries.

2/ Includes external influences from adjacent dirt roads forming the WSA's boundaries.

c. Solitude and Primitive Recreation Opportunities

All of the WSAs possess similar natural features which provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. The outstanding opportunities for solitude in each WSA are attributed to the isolated, secluded canyon systems intertwined amidst an expanse of mountainous or hilly topography blanketed with scattered juniper woodlands. These same intrinsic natural features provide a diverse, rugged, scenic landscape with outstanding recreation opportunities for those seeking primitive experiences in backpacking, horse packing (with secondary activities of outdoor photography, wildlife viewing, and botanical studies), hunting and fishing.

The assessment of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation during the wilderness inventory of the Boise District was based upon the following criteria:

Solitude: A WSA is considered to have outstanding opportunities for solitude if it has 1) a large enough size and suitable configuration so topographic relief and vegetative cover can provide plentiful screening among visitors groups and from external influences, and 2) a topographic layout combined with suitable configuration which would tend to disperse visitor groups throughout the WSA. If topographic relief tends to concentrate visitors into small or narrow corridors within the WSA, the corridors must be sufficiently long enough and provide plentiful topographic and/or vegetative screening so as to lessen the impact of the corridor effect.

Primitive Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within a WSA are dependent upon the size of the WSA in relation to its ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions. Exceptional natural features are defined as those topographic and vegetative features which (1) provide excep- tional scenery, (2) create a diversity of landforms, and/or (3) enable a visitor to achieve reasonable mobility within the WSA (nonconfinement). Such natural features would result in a strong recreational attraction to a WSA for one or more types of activities. A WSA is considered to have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation if the overall size of the WSA plus one or more of the factors contributing to exceptional natural features will give a visitor a sense of nonconfinement within an esthetically pleasing area. In WSAs where there are strong corridor effects, the corridor must be long enough to negate the sense of confinement. In addition, the corridor must be exceptionally scenic to make travel within the corridor enjoyable.

WSA Specific Assessments: The wilderness inventory assessment made for each of the five WSAs in this document is presented below.

1) North Fork Owyhee River WSA:

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: The intensive wilderness inventory of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA determined that its rugged canyon and hilly juniper covered topography provides both excellent screening among visitor groups and excellent potential for dispersed recreational use.

It is recognized that the two main canyons within the WSA (North Fork Owyhee River Canyon and Current Creek Canyon) have the potential to concentrate visitors in two narrow corridors of use and increase the opportunity for visitor interaction. However, the length of these two

canyons (17.5 miles total), the canyons' meandering character, the presence of riparian vegetation, and the number and length of tributary canyons would greatly minimize any potential corridor effect.

There are seven side canyons of comparable scenic quality (totalling 12.5 miles in length) which would attract visitors away from the main canyons. These tributary canyons, as well as the main canyons, have the potential to disperse recreational use throughout the rugged hilly areas within the northern two thirds of the WSA. Once dispersed into this hilly area, recreation user groups would be well screened and further dispersed by hundreds of small draws and depressions formed by large rock outcrops or small juniper covered hills. Because of the physical similarity and equivalent physical challenge associated with traveling along these draws, visitors would not tend to concentrate in any one area within the hilly area.

Any visitor groups which concentrate within the two main canyons or seven tributary canyons (particularly in the narrow western land finger dominated by the North Fork Owyhee River Canyon) would be well screened from each other by the meandering, sheer canyon walls and/or dense riparian vegetation. The 30 miles of canyons available for hiking provide numerous isolated campsites which would allow visitors to be out of sight and sound of other visitor groups. Furthermore, the length of the canyons would provide more travel time and distance for visitor groups to adjust their travel rates and campsite locations to avoid interaction while hiking. Visual contact between user groups is generally not possible within the canyons at distances of several hundred feet or less.

The dispersion potential on the southern tableland is limited because of the size and configuration of the plateau and the potential for visitor concentration along the rimrock of the North Fork Owyhee River Canyon. Visitor use would tend to concentrate along the rimrock because scenic vistas of the rest of the WSA are spectacular. Along the rimrock area, as well as over much of the eastern half of the tableland, there are scattered stands of juniper. These juniper stands combined with gently rolling topography dissect the eastern portion of the tableland into five small, isolated, very shallow sagebrush basins or flats. The sparse, low sagebrush vegetation within these basins or flats provides little screening. However, topography and vegetation does provide excellent screening between areas.

In the western portion of the tableland, the terrain is flatter and juniper is sparse. Visitor groups using this portion of the tableland would generally be in visual contact with each other because it is relatively small and

narrow, and sagebrush vegetation is low and sparse. There is not sufficient distance across the tableland to allow visitors to blend or disappear into the landscape except when looking lengthwise across the plateau. The broad open character of the tableland does, however, offer a sense of remoteness or isolation. This sense of isolation is intensified by the fact that the tableland drops off along the southern boundary of the WSA. While hiking at the higher tableland elevations, visitors are unable to see immediate adjacent landforms or external influences. This gives the WSA a sense of geographic separation from the rest of the Juniper Mountain area.

Because of the large size and good configuration of the WSA, the presence of plentiful topographic and vegetative screening over much of the WSA or the sense of vastness achieved on the WSA's tableland, and the ability of topography to disperse visitor use, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive Recreation: The intensive wilderness inventory determined that the WSA offers exceptional scenic natural features and a diversity of topographic and vegetative landforms which allow for reasonable mobility throughout the WSA. These natural features can provide a strong recreational attraction to people interested in backpacking, fishing, hunting and horsepacking.

The main canyons and tributary canyons of the North Fork Owyhee River and Current Creek provide about 30 miles of exceptionally scenic, narrow, sheer-walled, meandering canyons with numerous beautiful reddish-brown rock spires and juniper trees.

The hilly area of the WSA has thousands of individual rock pillars or sculpters intermingled with stands of juniper. The rock formations and juniper stands join together to form a beautiful mosaic of rock and vegetation. The beauty of this area is intensified in the early spring when snow patches and moving water in numerous shallow draws adds to the spectrum of colors.

Because of the lack of understory vegetation, the numerous shallow draws and the moderate elevation changes, mobility throughout the hilly area is relatively easy. No sense of confinement is felt in this area.

Despite the narrow character of the canyons, there is not a sense of confinement or entrapment over much of their length because of the relatively shallow nature of many of the canyons and the numerous side canyons and draws. The canyon terrain allows one to easily escape to the northern

hilly area or southern tableland. Only in the western finger of the WSA, where the canyon of the North Fork Owyhee River is over 400 feet deep and without many side drainages is one generally confined to traveling within the canyon or along the rimrock. The exceptional beauty of this portion of the canyon makes the confinement enjoyable.

The southern tableland provides the visitor with a sense of vastness, remoteness or wide open space. This sense of vastness gives one the ultimate feeling of nonconfinement.

Because of the diversity of exceptional scenic natural features in a large area where topography and vegetation generally do not restrict the reasonable mobility of the visitor, the WSA is considered to have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

2) Big Willow Spring WSA:

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: The intensive wilderness inventory determined that the rugged canyons and juniper covered ridges and breaks of the Big Willow Spring WSA provide both excellent screening among visitor groups and excellent potential for dispersed recreational use.

It is recognized that canyons have the potential to concentrate visitors in narrow corridors of use and increase the opportunity for visitor interaction, especially in canyon systems as short (5 miles) as the one within the WSA. However, because of the fact that the canyon system radiates out from the center of the WSA in a number of different directions and has a meandering, densely vegetated character, the potential corridor effect is minimized.

The radiating canyon system has the potential to disperse recreational use throughout the WSA. Each of the canyons is of equal scenic quality and similar difficulty of travel. Therefore, use is not likely to concentrate in one portion of the canyon system. Once visitor groups have been dispersed to the breaks or ridgeline areas, they would be further dispersed by numerous rugged washes (in the breaks area) or the vegetation patterns of juniper and sagebrush (on the flattened ridge area). Furthermore, the vegetation and/or topography of the breaks and ridgeline areas provide excellent screening between any visitor groups that would be in close proximity to each other.

Any visitor groups which would concentrate in the canyon system (particularly the lower 1.25 miles of Pole Creek) would be well screened from each other by the meandering, sheer canyon walls and very dense riparian vegetation. Because of topographic and vegetative screening, visual

contact between visitor groups in the canyon bottoms would be limited to several hundred feet or less.

The north side of Pole Creek Canyon in its lower 1.25 miles has a number of steep, yet passable, rocky washes which enable users to escape the canyon and disperse to the northern breaks area. Because of the difficulty of travel within the canyons due to dense riparian (shrub) vegetation, the canyons may serve more as scenic vistas for those traveling along the rims rather than as travel corridors.

Despite the small size of the WSA and the short length of canyons in the WSA, the dispersion potential of the radiating canyon system combined with the excellent topographic and vegetative screening throughout the WSA provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive Recreation: The intensive wilderness inventory determined that the WSA offers exceptionally scenic natural features and a diversity of topographic and vegetative landforms which allow for reasonable mobility throughout the WSA. These natural features can provide a strong recreational attraction to people interested in backpacking, fishing, hunting and horsepacking.

The WSA's sheer canyon walls, canyon rims of rock spires intermixed with juniper, and the dense green vegetation of the canyon bottoms join together to create an exceptionally scenic natural feature.

Likewise, the large rock outcrops and juniper mosaic of the northern breaks area is also exceptionally scenic, particularly when there are remnant spring snowpacks adding to the color of the landscape.

The landforms not only provide exceptional scenery but also a diversity of terrain features for visitors to experience. Furthermore, the terrain is such that visitors can readily travel throughout the WSA without being limited by topographic barriers except between portions of the canyons and the southern plateau-like areas. It should be noted, however, that travel in portions of the canyons is extremely difficult because of dense riparian vegetation. It is likely that canyons will be used primarily for scenic vistas to enjoy while hiking along the rims.

Because of the WSA's exceptionally scenic natural features, its diversity of landforms compacted in a small area, and the ability of terrain features and vegetation (except in canyons) to allow reasonable mobility throughout much of the WSA, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

3) Squaw Creek Canyon WSA:

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: The intensive inventory of the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA determined that the rugged, highly dissected mountainous and canyon terrain over the entire WSA plus widespread dense juniper vegetation provides both excellent screening among visitor groups and excellent potential for dispersed recreational use.

It is recognized that the canyon of Squaw Creek has a potential to concentrate visitors in a narrow corridor of use and increase the opportunities for visitor interaction. However, the presence of dense vegetation in the canyon bottom, the number of major tributary canyons or draws radiating away from the main canyon at the core of the WSA, and the topographic and vegetative similarity of surrounding mountainous terrain would minimize the corridor effect.

Any visitor groups that would concentrate within the main canyon of Squaw Creek would be well screened by dense juniper vegetation.

There are five major canyons (including the main canyon) or draws radiating out from a one mile long section of Squaw Creek at the core of the WSA. Because of similar terrain and vegetation characteristics, the tributary canyons have the potential to distribute or disperse recreational use throughout the surrounding ridgeline areas of the WSA. A large tributary system (Peach Creek) entering the lower portions of the main canyon would also help disperse use to the large ridgeline area in the western half of the WSA.

The ridgeline areas of the WSA with their numerous, similar, small ridges would also not tend to concentrate users in any one area. Furthermore, the highly dissected terrain and dense juniper of the ridgeline areas provide excellent screening among visitors, even at very close distances.

Despite the relatively short length of main canyon in the WSA, the excellent dispersion potential of tributary canyons (and draws) combined with the overall size and excellent topographic and vegetative screening of the WSA provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive Recreation: The intensive inventory determined that the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA offers exceptionally scenic natural features and a diversity of landforms which allow for reasonable mobility throughout much of the WSA. These natural features can provide recreational attractions to people interested in backpacking, horsepacking, hunting and fishing.

The canyon of Squaw Creek is divided into two parts: the lower two miles of the canyon which are characterized by high, sheer walls or escarpments, and the upper three miles of the canyon (and over three miles of tributary canyon) which are characterized by steep slopes and rocky crags intermixed with juniper. The canyon, particularly the lower portion, is exceptionally scenic.

The mountainous areas lack the diversity of the canyon. Terrain features and vegetation patterns are similar throughout. The similarity of the mountainous areas, however, is frequently broken by developing canyon areas in the southern half of the WSA which gives a visitor a variety of landforms to cross in short distances.

The presence of a number of major side drainages combined with rugged yet passable terrain allows a visitor to have reasonable mobility to all portions of the WSA.

Because of the WSA's size, its diversity of landform, the presence of exceptionally scenic natural features, and the ability of terrain features to allow reasonable mobility throughout the WSA, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

4) Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA:

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: The intensive wilderness inventory of the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA determined that the rugged canyon and hilly to mountainous, juniper covered topography occurring over much of the WSA provides both excellent screening among visitor groups and excellent potential for dispersed recreational use.

It is recognized that the canyons have the potential to concentrate visitors into narrow corridors of use and increase the opportunity for visitor interaction. However, the length of the canyons in the WSA (eight miles total), the canyons' meandering character, the presence of dense riparian vegetation, and the number and length of tributary canyons and draws would greatly minimize any potential corridor effect in the WSA.

There are 15 side canyons or draws of comparable scenic quality (not all exceptional) totaling over 15 miles in length which would attract visitors away from the main canyons. The tributary canyons, because of their number, even distribution and physical similarity, have the potential to disperse recreational use throughout the WSA. Furthermore, because of the relatively easy access from most of the canyon areas to surrounding ridges, hills and plateau areas, and the ease of mobility in these areas, visitor use can be expected to be even more widely dispersed in the WSA.

The thin to dense stands of juniper plus the rugged, highly dissected character of the topography would provide excellent screening among visitor groups that were at close distances to each other, except in the extreme western portion of the WSA. In the western portion, the rolling topography and low sagebrush vegetation provide limited screening.

If any visitor groups would concentrate within the main canyons or tributary canyons (particularly in the western portions of the Middle Fork Owyhee River Canyon), they would be well screened from each other by very dense riparian vegetation and meandering canyon walls. Visual contact between user groups is generally not possible within the canyons at distances of several hundred feet or much less.

Because of the size and configuration of the WSA, the presence of plentiful topographic and vegetative screening over much of the WSA, and the ability of topography to disperse visitor use, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive Recreation: The intensive inventory determined that the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA offers exceptionally scenic natural features and a diversity of landforms which would allow for reasonable mobility throughout the WSA. These natural features can provide a recreational attraction to people interested in backpacking, horsepacking, hunting and fishing.

The westernmost portion of the Middle Fork Owyhee River Canyon is typified by an exceptionally scenic, narrow, sheer to vertical-walled meandering canyon with numerous beautiful reddish-brown rock spires, juniper trees, and a dense, rich green riparian area.

The hilly and mountainous areas of the WSA (northern and eastern portion), particularly within or around the numerous draws or small side canyons, contain hundreds of individual rock pillars or outcrops intermingled with stands of juniper. The rock formations and juniper join together to form a beautiful mosaic of rock and vegetation. The beauty of these areas is intensified in the early spring when snow patches and moving water in the numerous shallow draws add to the spectrum of colors.

Because of the general lack of understory vegetation in the juniper stands, the numerous shallow to moderately deep draws, and the moderate elevation changes over much of the WSA, mobility throughout the entire WSA is relatively easy. No sense of confinement is felt because of topographic or vegetative barriers.

The lower portion of the Middle Fork Owyhee River Canyon would tend to concentrate visitors because of its scenic beauty and steep topography. However, because of the shallow nature of the middle and upper portions of the main canyon, the readily passable canyon slopes in most areas, and the numerous site draws or small canyons of comparable quality, visitor use can be expected to leave the main canyon and be dispersed across the WSA.

Because of the WSA's size, its diversity of natural features, and the presence of exceptionally scenic natural features in an area where topography and vegetation generally do not restrict the reasonable mobility of a visitor, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

5) West Fork Red Canyon WSA:

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: The intensive wilderness inventory of the West Fork Red Canyon WSA determined that the rugged canyon and mountainous topography combined with thin to dense stands of juniper over much of the WSA provides both excellent screening among visitor groups and excellent potential for dispersed recreational use.

It is recognized that the larger, more scenic canyons in the eastern half of the WSA have the potential to concentrate visitors into narrow corridors of use and increase the potential for visitor interaction. However, the length of canyons available (10+ miles), the canyons' distribution in the eastern half of the WSA, the canyons' meandering character, the presence of heavy riparian vegetation, and the number and distribution of smaller tributary canyons or draws would greatly minimize any potential corridor effect.

The three main canyons and their tributary canyons radiate out to encompass the entire eastern half of the WSA. From many points along the canyon, visitors can climb and disperse onto the flattened ridge areas which are covered with thin to dense stands of juniper. These juniper stands would provide excellent screening among visitor groups who are at close distances to each other.

Any visitor groups which would concentrate within the eastern canyons or draws would be well screened from each other by the meandering, steep canyon walls and/or dense riparian vegetation. The 10 miles of canyons available for hiking provide numerous isolated campsites which would allow visitors to be out of sight and sound of other visitor groups. Furthermore, the length of the canyons would provide more travel time and distance for visitor groups to

adjust their travel rates and campsite locations to avoid interaction while hiking in the canyons. Visual contact between user groups is generally not possible within the canyons at distances of several hundred feet or much less.

Because of the topographic and vegetative similarity of the three northwest canyons and mountainous areas, as well as the rolling southwest sagebrush basin areas, visitor use is not expected to concentrate in any one area of the western half of the WSA. With random dispersed use and excellent vegetative screening provided by juniper, visual encounters between user groups would be extremely limited.

Because of the size and good configuration of the WSA, the presence of plentiful topographic and vegetative screening over much of the WSA, and the ability of topography to disperse visitor use, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive Recreation: The intensive wilderness inventory determined that the West Fork Red Canyon WSA offers a diversity of topographic and vegetative landforms which allow for reasonable mobility throughout the WSA. These natural features can provide a recreational attraction to people interested in backpacking, fishing, hunting and horsepacking.

There is similarity in form, color and contrast within each landform of the WSA. None of the landforms are considered exceptionally scenic natural features. However, the diversity among landforms that visitors will encounter while traveling in the WSA does create variety. This variety contributes to scenic quality throughout the WSA as a whole and would attract recreational use.

The general lack of understory vegetation in the mountainous juniper areas and the presence of numerous readily passable canyons, draws, ridgelines and a rolling basin allows reasonable mobility can be achieved throughout the entire WSA. There are no topographic or vegetative barriers which prevent travel between any portion of the WSA; therefore, there is no sense of confinement created in the WSA.

Because of the WSA's size, its diversity of landform, and the ability of terrain features to allow reasonable mobility throughout the WSA, the WSA has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

d. Primitive Recreation Use

Though each of the WSAs possesses intrinsic natural features which provide outstanding opportunities to enjoy primitive

recreation experiences, few recreationalists have yet taken advantage of these opportunities. The limited use in the WSAs is due largely to the fact that the public is only just beginning to recognize the primitive recreation values associated with desert environments.

Historically, use of the WSAs has been confined to hunters hiking or horseback riding cross-country in search of game. It wasn't until 1980 that backpackers began to use these areas as a result of publicity surrounding the BLM wilderness inventory and studies. As yet, no known horsepacking (non-hunter) use in the areas for recreation purposes has occurred.

The estimated amount of primitive recreational use occurring in each of the WSAs in 1984 is shown on Table III-2.

TABLE III-2
PRIMITIVE RECREATION USE PER WSA IN 1984

WSA	Recreation Use in 24-Hour User Days		
	Hunting & Fishing	Backpacking	Horsepacking
North Fork Owyhee River	15	100	0
Big Willow Spring	5	10	0
Squaw Creek Canyon	15	10	0
Middle Fork Owyhee River	10	10	0
West Fork Red Canyon	20	10	0
TOTAL	65	140	0

The Idaho State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) projects outdoor recreation demand for Owyhee County to increase over the next twenty years as shown below:

Hunting	41.4%
Fishing	37.0%
Hiking (Backpacking)	62.4%
Horseback Riding (Horsepacking)	47.5%

Based upon a mathematical model developed by Dr. Steven Jungst of Iowa State University in his 1978 study of the U.S. Forest Service entitled Projecting Future Use of the National Forest Wilderness System, use in existing wilderness areas is predicted to increase in southern Idaho, Nevada and Utah by as much as 120% by the year 2000 and 150% by the year 2020.

2. SPECIAL FEATURES

a. Scenic Values

The scenic qualities of the WSAs have been evaluated by using scenic quality rating criteria adopted by the BLM. The BLM classification systems rates areas as Class A, B, or C, depending on an evaluation of landform, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural modifications. Generally, Class A scenery is excellent, Class B good, and Class C fair.

The scenic quality ratings for the WSAs are as follows:

North Fork Owyhee River WSA	
Northern hilly areas	Class A
Southern tableland	Class B
Big Willow Spring WSA	Class A
Squaw Creek Canyon WSA	
Lower Squaw Creek Canyon	Class A
Remainder of WSA	Class B
Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA	
Lower Middle Fork Canyon	Class A
Remainder of WSA	Class B
West Fork Red Canyon WSA	Class A

The scenic quality of the WSAs is attributed to very rugged landforms covered with a variety of vegetation patterns which create a diversity in the visual landscape elements of form, texture, line and color. Areas of Class A scenery possess high, vertical topographic relief where massive rock monoliths or rock outcrops with intricate erosional patterns (forms) and lines dominate a landscape covered with a mosaic of twisted, narled, rough textured, climax juniper woodlands and more smooth textured sagebrush/grass openings. Highly eroded, sheer, reddish-brown canyon walls tinted with brightly colored (yellow, light green and orange) microflora are draped with a tapastry of dark green juniper. Patches of subdued green and yellow-brown sagebrush/grass vegetation intermingle with the juniper beyond the canyon rimrocks while a ribbon of lush green riparian vegetation and sparkling water meanders beneath the canyon cliffs. Class B scenery possesses the less severe topographic features of V-shaped canyons and expansive tablelands with intermittent rock outcrops. Topographic features have a variety of erosional patterns yet the features do not dominate the landscape. Instead, the landscape is dominated by the intermixing of vegetation forms, textures and patterns among various age-classes and densities of juniper woodlands and open expanses of sagebrush/grasslands.

b. Vegetation:

1) Ecological Values:

The North Fork Owyhee River WSA and the four Juniper Mountain WSAs lie within the Intermountain Sagebrush Province/Sagebrush Steppe ecosystem. This ecosystem is 3130-49 in the Bailey-Kuchler system (see Bailey, R. G., Kuchler, A. W., 1966, Potential Natural Vegetation of the United States, USDI, Geological Survey). Within these WSAs, the ecosystem has a dense woodland forest component. The ecosystem of the WSAs can be more specifically defined as a western juniper/sagebrush-bunchgrass ecosystem.

The Sagebrush Steppe ecosystem is widespread over much of southern Idaho, eastern Oregon and Washington, and portions of northern Nevada, California, and Utah. There are currently 41,545 acres of the Sagebrush Steppe ecosystem designated as wilderness in three Forest Service areas in Nevada, Washington and California. The BLM and Forest Service also have a total of 130 areas covering over 4,500,000 acres (including the five WSAs in this EIS) under wilderness study within the ecosystem. There are 26 areas covering about 800,000 acres in adjoining states which contain a juniper woodland component.

Juniper woodlands within the Sagebrush Steppe ecosystem are currently not represented in the three areas designated in the National Wilderness Preservation System. None of the other BLM WSAs with juniper woodland components of the Sagebrush Steppe ecosystem have yet been recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. Within the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and the Juniper Mountain WSAs, western juniper is the principle vegetation type. The North Fork Owyhee River WSA has more climax juniper woodlands than the other four WSAs combined. Therefore, the North Fork Owyhee River WSA has significant ecological values.

2) Vegetation Description:

Western juniper and rock outcrops dominate the major canyon landscapes of all WSAs, the middle and higher elevations of the Juniper Mountain WSAs, and much of the steep, broken hill areas of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. Although soils and density of understory species is varied and complex, the western juniper woodlands can be characterized by two major delineations: "climax" and "seral" sites.

Burkhardt and Tisdale (1969, 1976) analyzed vegetation, soils and other site factors on these two different sites. The "climax" sites are characterized by old, often large, trees as well as numerous dead juniper and rotted stumps.

Charcoal is evident as well as considerable fire scarring. Evidently these stands have been dominated by western juniper for at least several hundred years. The most conspicuous trees on climax sites are those over 150 years old.

The other western juniper site was considered by Burkhardt and Tisdale to be an invaded big sagebrush/ bunchgrass site, or "seral" site. Juniper on these sites were generally less than 100 years old.

Additionally, there are areas, principally at the lower and middle elevations and mostly on the plateaus, that are dominated by low sagebrush, and Idaho fescue. This community occurs on soils that are shallow above a restrictive layer of either claypan or bedrock. Junipers are few and scattered and little invasion is likely to occur.

Juniper canopy cover and density is variable on both climax and seral sites but for different reasons. The number of trees and percent of canopy cover on climax sites appear to depend largely on the degree of fracturing of bedrock or the number of locations where juniper can establish and survive. The number of trees on the seral sites is primarily a matter of the extent of invasion and of stand age. Some seral sites have only a few trees per acre, while others exhibit a closed canopy with up to 450 trees per acre. No climax stand has been found with anything approaching this density.

The understory vegetation differs markedly between the two juniper communities. Only three shrubs, mountain big sagebrush, low sagebrush, and antelope bitterbrush occur on climax sites and then usually with less than 1% crown cover. These three shrub species are much more prominent on the seral sites. Depending on the degree of juniper encroachment, these species plus lesser amounts of snowberry, and green rabbitbrush provide up to 25% crown cover on seral sites.

The herbaceous vegetation on both sites varies considerably, but the principal species in both communities are perennial bunchgrasses bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, and Sandberg bluegrass. These grasses occur with high constancy and frequency on both climax and seral juniper communities. Western needle- grass is most characteristic of the climax juniper site. Four annual forbs, cryptantha, groundsnake and microsteris, all native, are the most constant and frequent forbs in both communities. A group of 13 perennial forbs, noteable because of their absence from climax juniper sites, occur in seral stands with considerable constancy. These forbs include blueeyed grass, low daisy, balsamroot, Wyeth

buckwheat, small bluebell, sulphur buckwheat, phacelia, beckwith milkvetch, lupine, tapertip onion, royal penstemon, columbia groundsel, and bloomer fleabane. All of these forbs are common associates of sagebrush-bunchgrass communities of the WSAs.

The encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass communities is widespread throughout the Juniper Mountain WSAs and the North Fork Owyhee WSA. From the age class distribution of juniper, it is apparent that this process began in the 1860's. The rate of invasion was slow until about 1900, then increased to a maximum between 1930 and 1940. Since 1940, invasion has slowed but is still occurring. Presently, juniper has more than doubled the area occupied in 1860.

This invasion process is largely a down-slope spread from old or climax juniper stands on ridges or rimrocks. Occasionally, young junipers are found growing considerable distances from the nearest stand, but most seral stands are continuous with climax stands. Sites with relatively deep, permeable soils are most subject to juniper invasion. Limited invasion of low sagebrush-Idaho fescue sites occurs, but juniper trees are usually dwarfed with few seedlings visible.

As juniper invades a big sagebrush-bunchgrass community, it gradually changes the vegetative composition of the site. As long as the juniper are less than 6 feet in height, little change is apparent. As the juniper increase in size and density, the dominant shrubs such as mountain big sagebrush and bitterbrush begin to decline in vigor and in reproduction. Eventually the shrubs are partially or totally eliminated. If the process continues to a closed juniper canopy with tree densities of over 100 trees per acre, even the herbaceous vegetation is greatly decreased. The extreme situation is a dense, somewhat impenetrable juniper stand with little or no understory vegetation.

The invasion of western juniper into mountain big sagebrush communities in the WSAs appear to be directly related to the cessation of periodic fires. It is evident that fire was an important factor of the environment of the entire Owyhee Plateau for at least a hundred years preceeding settlement by European man and probably much longer. Since 1900, fires are no longer as frequent as in past times; in fact, fire has virtually been eliminated as an environmental factor. This decline in the incidence of fire has resulted from several changes which have occurred during the last 100 years. These changes include heavy grazing of the herbaceous vegetation, which in a cured condition is essential to carry fire through the site; construction of roads which act as fire barriers; and the

active fire control and prevention efforts by government agencies and private landowners.

Other suggested causes of juniper invasion appear to play only an indirect role. There is little correlation between the establishment of juniper seedlings and range condition. Increases in numbers of juniper seedlings per acre occur steadily and constantly both on areas usually heavily grazed and areas with little or no grazing. Neither is there a significant competitive effect of other vegetation on juniper seedling establishment and growth. In fact, juniper establishment is most successful under the crowns of shrubs and other vegetation.

Another vegetative community the riparian zone occurs along streams throughout the approximately 55 miles of narrow canyon bottoms in the WSAs. The riparian zone is composed of an extremely diverse flora made up primarily of wet and semi-wet meadows affected by seasonal water tables. Willows and Wood's rose are the primary shrub species occupying the wetter portions of the zone, with small populations of aspen and hawthorne at the outer edge of the riparian zone. Herbaceous perennial grasses and forbs make up the major component of the riparian zone. Perennial grasses include tufted hairgrass, Nevada bluegrass, rush, sod wheatgrass, alpine and common timothy and sedges. Common perennial forbs include clover, cinquefoil, aster, Rocky mountain iris, groundsel, yarrow, camas, and mulesear dock.

3) Vegetation Condition:

a) Condition:

Vegetation condition is the present state of vegetation in relation to the potential natural community (PNC), formerly called "climax," for the ecological site being evaluated. This rating is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions and amounts of plants in a community resemble that of the PNC. Also rated along with the vegetation is soil stability. This is the amount of protective cover furnished by vegetation and litter compared to the level of soil protection provided by the PNC for the ecological site. Therefore, both soil and vegetation are rated relative to site potential. The presence of western juniper in an ecological site does not automatically lower or lessen the condition rating until the point at which the number of trees or the canopy cover causes some species to decrease, or until total production decreases. When this occurs, the condition rating could change.

An ecological site is judged to be in "good" condition if the vegetation composition (percent composition by air dry weight) is 50 to 75% of the potential plant community (PNC), 50 to 75% of total production of the PNC, and if the soil protection factors (i.e. litter) is also 50 to 75% of the PNC. "Fair" condition ratings require 25 to 50% of vegetation/soil protection factors of the PNC, while anything less than 25% is rated as "poor" condition.

The vegetation within the WSAs generally appears natural and contributes to outstanding wilderness characteristics, particularly the climax juniper stands. However, the sagebrush-bunchgrass vegetation communities and the understory grasses, forbs, and shrubs of juniper woodlands on Juniper Mountain are mostly in poor to fair condition. Poor condition occurs throughout the upper elevations of the mountain. Poor or fair condition is found in the lower and middle elevations, with poor condition dominating. The canyons within the Juniper Mountain WSAs are generally in fair condition. Areas of good conditions are found on Pole Creek Canyon (WSA ID-16-41), portions of Squaw Creek Canyon (WSA ID-16-42), and in the vicinity of the Middle Fork Owyhee River Canyon (WSA ID-16-45).

Most of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA also has a poor condition in its open sagebrush-bunchgrass communities and forest understory vegetation. The vegetation in the hilly areas generally has a poor condition. The tableland rimrock areas and riparian zones are in poor to fair condition. The tableland sagebrush areas are generally in poor to fair condition. Good vegetation condition is found in the southeastern hilly areas and in the southeastern portion and northwest fingers of the southern tableland.

The percent of each vegetation condition class by WSA is shown below:

	Vegetation Condition Class		
	Poor	Fair	Good
WSA ID-16-40	59	29	12
WSA ID-16-41	70	15	15
WSA ID-16-42	78	20	2
WSA ID-16-45	46	52	2
WSA ID-16-47	50	49	1

Grouping the ecological sites of the WSAs into two major communities, indicate that the Juniper Mountain WSAs would support various sagebrush-perennial bunchgrass communities on 72% of the area, with western

juniper communities on 28% of the area. The North Fork Owyhee River WSA is composed of 43% sagebrush-bunchgrass communities and 54% western juniper communities. Because of the extensive invasion of western juniper into the sagebrush-bunchgrass communities, the delineations between many of the communities are obscure if visible at all.

4) Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive, or Uncommon Species:

There have been no endangered, threatened, sensitive, or uncommon plant species identified within the four Juniper Mountain WSAs.

Within the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, three species are classified as sensitive by the scientific community. Sensitive species are maintained on a watch list by each state's Rare Plant Committee. Owyhee sagebrush (Artemisia papposa), is known to occur over a wide area on the southern tableland. Packard's sagebrush (Artemisia packardiae) and Owyhee River stickseed (Hacelia ophobia) are located on the vertical cliffs of the North Fork Owyhee River. Recent studies have found these species throughout the Owyhee River Canyonlands in limited numbers.

Two uncommon species occur within the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. Uncommon species have limited distribution or occurrence but are not listed on federal threatened or endangered lists or on state sensitive species lists. Dwarf lupine (Lupinus lyallii subsp. subpandens) has been found in the southern tableland along the extreme southern periphery of the WSA. Cusick's primrose (Primula cusickiana) has been found in the rimrock areas of the southern tableland.

c. Wildlife

The most important basic needs for wildlife are food, water, shelter and space. These elements of habitat must all be available in a favorable balance to make a habitat suitable. The juniper woodland habitat should consist of climax juniper stands interspersed with various seral juniper stages (age classes) and sagebrush-bunchgrass openings or wet meadows to meet habitat needs. The necessary balance between habitat elements has been disrupted in the WSAs because of the long-term, relatively undisturbed expansion of seral juniper and the decline of sagebrush-grassland openings essential for forage needs (see Vegetation).

Wildlife diversity associated with the western juniper/ sagebrush-bunchgrass ecosystem is quite extensive. Juniper woodlands, riparian areas, sagebrush stands and meadows all provide unique areas for some or all species that make up the diversity of wildlife (83 species of birds and 23 species of

mammals) which use the western juniper woodland habitat. None of these species, however, are dependent solely on this ecosystem for their habitat needs. Principle management species and habitat concerns are discussed below.

1) Principle Management Species:

Mule deer are the most numerous big game animals in the WSAs. Approximately 430 mule deer summer in the WSAs while 240 mule deer winter in a portion of the WSAs. The breakdown of the population by WSA is listed as follows.

WSA	Mule Deer Population	
	Summer	Winter
North Fork Owyhee River	230	80
Big Willow Spring	30	60
Squaw Creek Canyon	50	0
Middle Fork Owyhee River	60	20
West Fork Red Canyon	60	80

Pronghorn antelope are found thinly scattered in some of the WSAs, and they number less than 40. The North Fork Owyhee River WSA has less than 15 on its southern tableland. The Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA also has less than 15 on its more open, lower elevation sagebrush areas near the Oregon-Idaho border. The West Fork Red Canyon WSA has less than ten on its central Bull Basin area.

The habitat for both mule deer and pronghorn is in unsatisfactory condition. The 1977-78 BLM range survey indicated that most of the deer winter range and the summer range in the WSAs is in poor or fair ecological condition. The range survey also found that most of the pronghorn range is in fair and poor ecological condition.

Mountain lion are found throughout the WSAs in small numbers with a slight increase during the winter months when mule deer concentrate on the winter ranges. Even with this slight seasonal increase in lion populations, the total estimated numbers are less than 40. The North Fork Owyhee River WSA has less than 15. The Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA has less than five. The West Fork Red Canyon WSA has less than ten.

Sage grouse are one of the most important game birds of the WSAs. They are widely scattered in the low and big sagebrush communities throughout the WSAs. More than 90% of the summer habitat is in poor and fair ecological condition, and this illustrates the limited quantity of understory vegetation currently found in the nesting areas. Because of their fluctuating population numbers from season to season and the absence of any data on trend by the Idaho Department

of Fish and Game, an estimate of their total population numbers or number by WSAs would not be feasible. No leks (strutting grounds or mating areas) have been identified in any of the WSAs.

Beavers are associated with and dependent upon riparian habitat. Because they frequently exhaust all available food resources (such as aspen, cottonwood, willow, alder, etc.) in their immediate vicinity, they are forced to migrate. Population numbers will vary; therefore, no estimated numbers have been formulated for this furbearer.

The river otter is an aquatic mammal which eats fish, frogs, mollusks and other small aquatic animals. An adequate food supply and den sites are two key habitat elements for this species. Less than one mile of the North Fork Owyhee River in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA has been identified as river otter habitat, and it is in fair condition. About 3.75 miles of otter habitat in the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA is also in fair condition and approximately one mile is in poor condition due to the lack of den sites and adequate food supplies. This is the result of riparian deterioration and poor stream conditions.

2) Fisheries:

The overall fisheries habitat for much of the Owyhee River drainages within the WSAs is in a poor to fair condition. Habitat conditions are a result of stream siltation, unstable streambanks and the loss of stream cover, particularly in the upper reaches of all streams. Naturally low flows and the lack of pooling also adversely affect habitat conditions. In addition to creating silt problems and stream channel movement, unstable stream banks result in the loss of bank undercuts. Bank undercuts are important fish habitat in streams since limited fish cover is available from riparian vegetation along streams of the WSAs. The limited stream cover also results in increased water temperatures.

The redband trout (a sensitive species) is one of the principle fish species within the WSAs. There are approximately 485 fish per surface acre in the 74 miles of perennial stream habitat within the five WSAs.

d. Cultural Values

1) North Fork Owyhee River WSA:

The North Fork Owyhee River WSA is identified as an area of high projected density for archaeological sites. This projection is based upon data generated by sample inventory of the Owyhee Resource Area from 1976 to 1978 (Young 1984).

Analysis of this data indicated that several environmental attributes including flatness, elevation and proximity to water were good predictors of site location. Though little archaeological inventory has occurred within the WSA, the relatively abundant co-occurrence of water sources, flatness and elevations in the sensitive 5000 to 5600 foot zone indicate that portions of this WSA contain many archaeological sites.

To date, two archaeological sites and eight isolated artifact finds have been documented within the WSA and eight archaeological sites and eight isolated finds have been located in close proximity to the WSA. Most of these findings are related to pre-historic hunting activities.

2) Juniper Mountain WSAs:

The Juniper Mountain WSAs are identified as an area of medium to high projected density for archaeological sites. Three archaeological sites and five isolated artifact finds have been documented within the WSAs, and thirteen archaeological sites and six isolated artifacts have been located in close proximity to the WSAs. Most of these findings are related to pre-historic hunting activities.

3. SEMI-PRIMITIVE RECREATION

Though the affected BLM lands have in part been identified as wilderness study areas because of their outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, the dominant recreation use of the WSAs currently evolves around semi-primitive motorized type experiences associated with boundary roads, interior (cherrystem) roads and two-wheel tracks (ways). Semi-primitive recreation use consists primarily of hunting, fishing and sightseeing where motorized access is provided. Overnight camps are set up at undeveloped sites along vehicle routes. The miles of boundary roads and interior roads and ways which provide access to WSA lands are listed in Table III-3.

TABLE III-3
EXISTING ROADS AND WAYS AFFECTING THE WSAs

WSA	Miles		
	Boundary Roads	Interior (Cherrystem) Roads	Ways (two-wheel tracks)
North Fork Owyhee River	30.0	11.0	8.5
Big Willow Spring	10.0	0	0.8
Squaw Creek Canyon	14.0	1.3	1.5
Middle Fork Owyhee River	13.0	1.0	4.5
West Fork Red Canyon	8.0	0	4.0
WSA TOTALS	67.0*	13.3	19.3

* Eight miles of roads serve as boundaries between WSAs, so the total mileage has been reduced by eight miles to eliminate double counting.

Because of the rugged topography and/or dense juniper woodland vegetation, off-road vehicle (ORV) use of WSA lands away from existing vehicle routes is extremely limited and is not of particular concern in the WSAs. It is estimated that less than 37% of any one of the WSAs is used for semi-primitive recreation experiences (Table III-4). The remainder of the WSAs are largely unused for recreation activities other than an occasional hunter and backpacker (see Wilderness Character, Primitive Recreation Use).

TABLE III-4
AMOUNT (PERCENTAGE) OF WSAs RECEIVING
SEMI-PRIMITIVE RECREATION USE*

WSA	Lands Used for Semi-Primitive Recreation Per WSA	
	Acres	% of WSA
North Fork Owyhee River	14,000	30%
Big Willow Spring	2,000	53%
Squaw Creek Canyon	4,000	45%
Middle Fork Owyhee River	5,000	39%
West Fork Red Canyon	3,000	26%

* Assumes casual hiking use within areas at distances of 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from vehicle routes.

The estimated amount of semi-primitive recreation use occurring within the WSAs is shown in Table III-5.

TABLE III-5
AMOUNT OF SEMI-PRIMITIVE RECREATION
USE OCCURRING IN WSAs (1984)

WSA	Current Use in 24-Hour User Days Per WSA	
	Hunting & Fishing	Sightseeing
North Fork Owyhee River	135	100
Big Willow Spring	15	20
Squaw Creek Canyon	135	20
Middle Fork Owyhee River	115	20
West Fork Red Canyon	180	20
TOTAL	580	180

Based upon the Idaho State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), projected increases in recreation use for Owyhee County over the next 20 years are as follows:

Hunting	41.4%
Fishing	37.0%
Camping	63.4%
Sightseeing	108.8%

It can be expected that as much or more of an increase could occur within the WSAs for each of the listed activities.

4. SOIL EROSION

The current estimated annual soil losses for the individual WSAs are listed below:

North Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-40)	:	1.22 tons/acre/year
Big Willow Spring WSA (ID-16-41)	:	1.18 tons/acre/year
Squaw Creek Canyon WSA (ID-16-42)	:	1.02 tons/acre/year
Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA (ID-16-45)	:	1.01 tons/acre/year
West Fork Red Canyon WSA (ID-16-47)	:	1.03 tons/acre/year

Erosion rates for the individual WSAs were calculated using the Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE). Erosion rates as calculated by the USLE are a function of many factors, most importantly, soil erodibility (k factor), slope length and steep- ness, amount of cover, and rainfall intensity. It is important to note that the figures used are estimates and do not indicate absolute values. No actual measurements have been made and the calculations have been applied over a very broad and diverse landscape. It is also important to note that the USLE calculates long-term average rainstorm caused erosion and will not necessarily reflect erosion caused by snowmelt runoff. Spring runoff may contribute significantly to the amount of soil erosion. The USLE is used to measure soil loss from both sheet and rill erosion and does not take into account gully erosion.

Description of Affected Environment

North Fork Owyhee River WSA:

This area consists of soils formed on basalt tables and welded tuff plains, rolling dissected hills and canyons. The estimated soil loss for the area is 1.22 tons/acre. The areas that are contributing most significantly to this figure are the rolling dissected rhyolite hills. In these areas, slopes (those above 20 percent) are the major factor affecting soil loss. Another contributing factor in evidence over much of the area is the poor or fair condition of the vegetative communities.

The erosion hazard rating for the area is dominantly slight to moderate with small areas whose slopes exceed 30 percent having a high rating.

Big Willow Spring WSA:

This area consists of soils formed on welded tuff. They occur on gently rolling plains, rolling dissected hills and canyons. The estimated soil loss for this area is 1.18 tons/acre/year. The areas that are contributing most significantly to soil loss are the rolling dissected hills. In these areas, slopes (those above 20 percent) are the major factor affecting soil loss. Another contributing factor in evidence over much of the area is the poor or fair condition of the vegetative communities.

The erosion hazard rating for the area is dominantly slight to moderate with small areas whose slopes exceed 30 percent having a high rating.

Squaw Creek Canyon WSA:

This area consists of soils formed on welded tuff. They occur on gently rolling plains, rolling dissected hills and canyons. The estimated soil loss for this area is 1.02 tons/acre. The areas that are contributing most significantly to this soil loss are the rolling dissected hills. In these areas, slopes (those above 20 percent) are the major factor affecting soil loss. Another contributing factor in evidence over much of the area is the poor or fair condition of the vegetative community.

The erosion hazard rating for the WSA is slight to moderate.

Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA:

The soils in this area are similar to those in the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA. The proportion of the individual soil types differ somewhat. The estimated soil loss is 1.01 tons/acre.

The erosion hazard rating for the WSA is slight to moderate.

West Fork Red Canyon WSA:

The soils in this area are similar to those in the Squaw Creek Canyon and Middle Fork Owyhee River WSAs. The proportions of the individual soil types differ somewhat. The estimated soil loss is 1.03 tons/acre.

The erosion hazard for the WSA is slight to moderate.

5. LIVESTOCK OPERATION AND FACILITIES

a. Grazing Allotments

Public lands within the WSAs play an important role in providing livestock forage during the spring, summer and fall grazing seasons. Collectively, the five WSAs affect 11 grazing allotments and 18 permittees. On an allotment basis, grazing systems have been implemented, or are being designed, to foster proper livestock use and correspondingly improve rangeland and watershed conditions. Allotment size and active preference (Animal Unit Months - AUMs) and related WSA specific information is given in Table III-6.

TABLE III-6
LIVESTOCK USE WITHIN AFFECTED ALLOTMENTS BY WSA

WSA	Affected Allotment	Total Allotment Size (Acres)	Total Allotment Active Preference (AUMs)	Allotment Acreage Within WSA	% Allotment Within WSA	% WSA Within Allotment	Estimated Current Use Within WSA (AUMs) 1/
North Fork Owyhee River 16-40	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	760	204	170	22%	¶ 1%	45
	Cliffs 0501	18,140	1,788	13,060	72%	26%	1,285
	Indian Meadows 0520	11,895	1,203	4,020	34%	8%	405
	Trout Springs 0539	31,370	2,927	1,070	3%	2%	100
	Pleasant Valley 0546	13,920	1,020	6,695	48%	14%	490
	Burghardt Ind 0599	14,960	1,754	13,165	88%	27%	810
	Nickle Creek 0657	68,910	4,891	11,290	16%	23%	800
TOTAL		159,955	13,787	49,470	31%	100%	3,935
Big Willow (Horsehead) Spring 16-41	Pole Creek 0635	22,800	1,468	6,210	27%	100%	400
TOTAL		22,800	1,468	6,210	27%	100%	400
Squaw Creek Canyon 16-42	Trout Springs 0539	31,370	2,927	6,190	20%	57%	560
	Pole Creek 0635	22,800	1,468	4,590	20%	43%	295
TOTAL		54,170	4,395	10,780	20%	100%	855
Middle Fork Owyhee River 16-45	Bull Basin 0540	44,405	3,726	6,480	15%	46%	545
	Pole Creek 0635	22,800	1,468	7,700	34%	54%	495
TOTAL		67,205	5,194	14,180	21%	100%	1,040
West Fork Red Canyon 16-47	Bull Basin 0540	44,405	3,726	5,490	12%	42%	460
	Castlehead-Lambert 0634	44,675	3,123	7,480	17%	58%	525
TOTAL		89,080	6,849	12,970	15%	100%	985
Affected Allotment Total		271,835	25,031	93,610	34%	100%	7,950

1/ Calculated by multiplying the percentage of the allotment within the WSA by the active preference for the allotment.

Note: Totals reflect affected allotments and are not necessarily column totals.

b. Range Improvements

A range improvement is any authorized activity or program which contributes to accomplishing allotment goals or objectives. The affected allotments support a number of structural improvements (e.g. stock ponds, spring developments and fences). Implementation of grazing systems and correspondingly the improvement in rangeland condition is contingent on the continued maintenance of existing and installation of future rangeland improvements. The number of existing range improvements within each of the WSAs or lying adjacent to the WSA boundary roads are listed below in Table III-7.

TABLE III-7
EXISTING RANGE IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN WSAs

WSA	Livestock Reservoirs	Spring Developments	Corrals	Fence
16-40	16	5 (1 with metal building)	2 (1 abandoned)	24.0 miles
16-41		2		1.5 miles
16-42		5		6.0 miles
16-45		3		2.5 miles
16-47				3.5 miles

Some additional range improvements may be needed to facilitate the implementation of a grazing system or improve its ability to accomplish land use plan objectives. The need for additional range improvements have been addressed in Chapter II.

6. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

All of the WSAs are located within Owyhee County, Idaho. The majority of the livestock permittees live in Malheur County, Oregon or Owyhee County, Idaho. Since livestock grazing is the predominant existing use, these two counties were used as the local economy to which impacts can be compared.

a. Personal Income

Personal income in the two counties amounted to $195 million in 1981. As can be seen from Table III-8, agriculture was the number one industry followed closely by manufacturing (much of it food processing). Other leading industries are state and local government, retail trade, and services.

b. Employment

The total 1981 employment in the affected counties was 18,972. Agriculture was again the leading industry (See Table

III-8). Other leading industries were retail trade, state and local government, manufacturing, and services.

III-8
INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT
(PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Category	Personal Income	Employment
Farm	15.3%	29.0%
Construction	4.3	1.8
Manufacturing	15.2	10.1
Transportation & Public Util.	7.8	3.3
Wholesale Trade	8.1	6.1
Retail Trade	12.4	12.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	3.0	1.8
Services	11.2	8.1
Federal, Civilian Government	2.9	1.6
Federal, Military Government	0.3	1.0
State & Local Government	12.9	11.0
Other	6.6 1/	14.0 2/
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%

1/ Agricultural Services and Mining.
2/ Non Farm Proprietors, Agricultural Services, Mining.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis 1983.

c. Industry Specific

The various alternatives under consideration are expected to primarily impact the areas of livestock grazing, recreation use and fuelwood production.

d. Livestock Grazing

North Fork Owyhee River WSA:

Estimated current livestock use is 3,935 AUMs. The USFS's IMPLAN input-output model was used to estimate the income and employment impacts from livestock grazing. This model was prepared for the Owyhee Canyonlands EIS and included Owyhee County, Idaho, Malheur County, Oregon, and Elko County, Nevada. This model estimated that for every AUM of grazing used, $10.01 in personal income is gained. This means that the grazing use in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA accounts for income of $39,400. This would be 0.1% of the two-county farm income. The IMPLAN model also estimated that it would take 3,558 AUMs to generate one job. This means that North Fork Grazing generates 1.1 jobs which would be 0.02% of the two-county farm employment.

Big Willow Spring WSA:

Estimated current livestock use is 400 AUMs. This would generate income and employment of $4,004 and .11 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment.

Squaw Creek Canyon WSA:

Estimated current livestock use is 855 AUMs. This would generate income and employment of $8,559 and .24 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment.

Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA:

Estimated current livestock use is 1,040 AUMs. This would generate income and employment of $10,410 and .29 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment.

West Fork Red Canyon WSA:

Estimated current livestock use is 985 AUMs. This would generate income and employment of $9,860 and .28 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment.

Total:

The five WSAs have a combined estimated current use of 7,215 AUMs. This would translate into income of $72,222 which is 0.2% of the two-county farm income. This level of grazing use would account for 2.03 jobs or 0.04% of the farm employment in Owyhee and Malheur Counties.

e. Recreation Use

North Fork Owyhee River WSA

The IMPLAN input-output model estimated that $30.16 in income is generated with each 24-hour recreation user day. It also estimated that there is one job generated with 1,159 user days (this is based on the IMPLAN model constructed for the Owyhee Canyonlands EIS). Total recreation use is made up of primitive and semi-primitive use. Table III-9 summarizes the user days for these types of use (from the wilderness and recreation sections of this chapter). The estimated existing use of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA is 350 user days. This would generate income of $10,556. Data from the 1980 Survey of Hunting and Fishing (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1980) indicates that in destination type expenditures (meals, lodging, transportation, ammunition, land use fees, etc.) the retail

trade industry is affected the most. Table III-10 shows the direct impact of a dollar of recreation expenditure by type of activity. As a result, the income and employment generated by recreation activity in the WSAs will be compared to the retail trade sector of the two-county economy. The income generated by recreation use in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA would amount to 0.04% of the two-county retail trade income. This level of visitor use would generate 0.30 jobs. This would be 0.01% of the two-county retail trade employment.

TABLE III-9
RECREATION USE BY WSA
(24-HOUR USER DAYS)

WSA	Primitive	Semi-Primitive	Total
North Fork Owyhee River	115	235	350
Big Willow Spring	15	35	50
Squaw Creek Canyon	25	155	180
Middle Fork	20	135	155
West Fork Red Canyon	30	200	230
TOTAL	205	760	965

TABLE III-10
DISTRIBUTION OF RECREATION EXPENDITURES

Sector	Fishing	Big Game	Small Game	Migratory Birds	Other Hunting
Transportation	$.01	$.02	$.00	$.00	$.00
Retail Trade	.95	.97	.99	.99	.99
Services	.04	.01	.01	.01	.01

Squaw Creek Canyon WSA:

The estimated current use in this WSA is 180 user days. This would generate income and employment of $5,429 and .16 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment.

Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA:

The estimated current use in this WSA is 155 user days. This would generate income and employment of $4,675 and .13 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment.

West Fork Red Canyon WSA:

The estimated current use in this WSA is 230 user days. This would generate income and employment of $6,937 and .20 jobs. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment.

Total:

The five WSAs have a combined estimated current use of 965 user days. This would translate into income of $29,104 which is 0.12% of the two-county retail trade income. This level of recreation use would account for 0.83 jobs and 0.04% of the retail trade employment in Owyhee and Malheur Counties.

f. Fuelwood Products

Fuelwood varies in price depending on the season and type of wood. In the late summer/early fall of 1985, fuelwood was regularly advertised in the Boise Valley for $75 to $100 per cord. Juniper, which is the type available on the WSAs, is considered a fairly good fuelwood and would be priced in the upper end of this range. For purposes of this analysis, the price is assumed to be $90 per cord. Production of fuelwood would be classified under the lumber and wood products portion of the manufacturing industry. Based on the earnings to gross output ratio for lumber and wood products (Water Resources Council 1977), it is estimated that each cord of fuelwood would generate income of approximately $24.75. The average earnings per job in the manufacturing industry was $15,500 in 1981 (BEA 1983). It would take 626 cords of fuelwood to generate one job in this industry. There is currently no harvesting of fuelwood in any of the WSAs.

g. Revenue Collections and Distributions

Some activities on public lands generate revenue to the federal government, some of which are shared with local units of government. Livestock permittees pay grazing fees to graze domestic livestock on the public lands. In fiscal year 1983 this fee was $1.35 per AUM. This fee is distributed in the following manner:

37.5% to Federal Treasury
50.0% to Range Improvement Fund
12.5% to County

The counties in turn pass this money on to local grazing boards which use the money for range improvements.

Permits are required to remove fuelwood from public lands. At the present time this permit fee is $2.50 per cord. This fee is distributed as follows:

95% to Federal Treasury
5% to State General Fund

Table III-11 shows the existing revenue collections by WSA and the distribution of these revenues.

TABLE III-11
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

WSA	Grazing				Fuelwood		
	Total Revenue	To Federal Treasury	To R.I. Fund	To Counties	Total Revenue	To Federal Treasury	To State Treasury
North Fork Owyhee River	$5,312	$1,992	$2,656	$ 664	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
Big Willow Spring	540	203	270	67	0	0	0
Squaw Creek Canyon	1,154	433	577	144	0	0	0
Middle Fork Owyhee River	1,404	527	702	175	0	0	0
West Fork Red Canyon	1,330	499	665	166	0	0	0
TOTAL	$9,740	$3,654	$4,870	$1,216	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0

CHAPTER IV
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter analyzes the environmental consequences of implementing the Proposed Action and alternatives within each of the five WSAs. An analysis of impacts is given under each WSA for the eight issue topics listed in Chapter I.

NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

A. IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, there are 41,665 acres which would be designated wilderness while 9,840 acres would not be designated.

Wilderness Areas:

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper trees from deep soil sites would affect a total of 4,150 acres over a 20 year period (approximately 10% of the wilderness area). Between 200 and 400 acres per year would be cut and burned or burned only in small patches of less than 40 acres. These patches would be interdispersed over approximately 20,000 acres in the northern hilly portion of the wilderness area. Because of rocky, convoluted topography, the construction of fire breaks, roads or trails, and the use of bulldozers (evidence of tracks) are not expected to occur as fire control activities. Natural fire breaks would be utilized. Naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in the cut and burn areas (3,050 acres) for a period of one to two years because of the presence of dead, felled trees and tree stumps (cut at ground level). Trees would be limbed with slash scattered around the trunks and stumps. An additional year of visual impact would occur from the blackening of the landscape by the prescribed burning of the cutting areas. By the fifth year, the visual quality of the cutting areas would improve substantially as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture. The tree stumps would be largely eliminated by the prescribed burn. Also by the fifth year, the visual presence of man's cutting activities would be largely gone and the affected areas would appear as natural openings in the juniper woodland canopy. These open areas would provide increased opportunities for primitive camps in a landscape where a diversity of vegetation patterns and topographic features provides exceptional scenic qualities.

In the areas which are only burned (1,100 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except

burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees would retain their blackened color. On some trees, scorched foliage would also persist for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned area gradually improves. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not be suitable for primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the rugged, convoluted topography of the northern portion of the wilderness area and the fact that cut/burn areas would lie in small swales or shallow draws, the cut/burn areas and their impacts on naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality would remain essentially unseen from adjacent untreated areas. Because the treated areas are widely dispersed over a large area and cannot be seen from immediately adjacent non-treated areas, the juniper removal actions would have no significant impact on the wilderness area as a whole, particularly since less than five percent of the area would be under treatment or rehabilitation actions at one time. The increase (restoration) in open areas within the juniper woodland canopy would increase the diversity of vegetation patterns, thereby increasing the overall scenic quality of the wilderness area.

After twenty years, only occasional prescribed reburns would create localized impacts to scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities because of black ash residue and burned tree skeletons along the periphery of treatment areas. The evidence of prescribed burns (including residual dead trees) would appear as natural fire affects. Because the prescribed burns would consume mostly small, encroaching seral trees, residual tree skeletons would be few and would have a minimal localized adverse impact to scenic quality.

The placement of juniper logs (limbs attached) along 20% to 40% of the stream banks of 9.5 miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek and Cabin Creek would cause significant adverse visual impacts to riparian areas which could receive a major portion of the wilderness area's primitive recreation use. During the first five to ten years after placement, the presence of numerous dead, unlimbed trees, steel rods and wires would make the riparian areas appear highly unnatural and would inhibit primitive recreation use (backpacking and fishing). Once riparian vegetation has reestablished itself in the silted-over juniper, exposed steel rods and wires would be removed. After ten years, the presence of the juniper logs would be largely obscured by lush riparian vegetation, and the stream banks would appear in a natural condition suitable for primitive recreation experiences (backpacking). The revegetated riparian areas would also improve fish habitat conditions and subsequently improve fishing opportunities.

The continuation of existing livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the wilderness area a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the grasses and forbs would be cropped close to the ground. The implementation of rest rotation grazing systems, however, would allow portions of the wilderness area at any given time to have annual vegetative growth which is not cropped off. The ability to see grass waving in the wind adds to the sense of naturalness (and consequently the primitive recreation experience) and scenic quality.

The development of one spring with exclosure fence and one mile of fenceline would contribute to the overall distribution of livestock and reduce the localized trampling and loss of naturalness on lands around existing water developments and riparian stream areas. The lands adjacent to the new water developments would exhibit a high degree of grazing, but the overall grazed appearance of the wilderness area would be somewhat reduced and the range improvements themselves would have little impact on naturalness because they are so few and widely scattered.

The closure of 17.1 miles of cherrystem roads and ways in the wilderness area to general recreational vehicle traffic would ensure a slightly higher degree of solitude and thereby enhance the primitive recreation experience in the wilderness area overall. The road/way closures would also result in a reduction in the visual presence of vehicle routes and increase the overall sense of naturalness in the area. Continued occasional administrative traffic or livestock operation use, however, would not allow the complete rehabilitation of the vehicle routes. Keeping the Big Springs access road open would continue to permit motorized recreational use into the core of the wilderness area without significantly affecting solitude and primitive recreation opportunities on surrounding lands. The road and any vehicle traffic would be well screened from the surrounding wilderness lands by juniper woodlands and rugged hilly/rock outcrop topography.

Not permitting the construction of any recreational facilities (campgrounds or trails) would ensure the existing degree of physical challenge associated with primitive recreation experiences (backpacking and hunting) in the wilderness area. The lack of facilities would also tend to curb increases in recreation use and prevent a reduction in solitude opportunities over the next 20 years. Primitive recreation use within the wilderness area is expected to reach only 170 user days per annum by the year 2005. Such an increase would have no impact on solitude opportunities.

The acquisition of 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings would improve the overall management of the wilderness area. Such a land management action would ensure that the wilderness values at the core of the wilderness area would not be affected by nonconforming land uses. However, the subject lands are not recognized as having a high potential for development activities, including the manipulation of juniper vegetation, rangeland projects or mining.

Nonwilderness Areas:

Juniper cutting/burning treatments and juniper log stream bank structures would cause significant short-term localized reductions in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality on 2,050 acres (1,450 acres cut/burn; 600 acres burn only) of nonwilderness lands as previously described for those lands treated within the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Area, except that additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities would occur from the construction and use of access roads.

As much as 35% of the juniper woodland community in the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA would be treated. This degree of treatment would cause an overall significant reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality in the affected portions of the WSA for as long as 20 years. Through individual treatment areas would not be readily visible from immediately adjacent non-treated lands, it would be difficult to travel in the affected portions (6,000 acres) of the WSA without encountering cutting areas in varying stages of rehabilitation or the access roads provided between cutting areas. In the burn only areas, impacts would be as described for the wilderness area. But because of the height of the stumps (up to eight inches), the cut/burn areas would take more than ten years before the presence of man's activities diminishes enough on the landscape to fully restore naturalness and subsequently primitive recreation opportunities. It could take as long as 20 years before all fire scarred stumps disappear from a cutting area and the area fully recovers its naturalness. A second prescribed burn would remove newly established smaller seral juniper before all larger original stumps have disappeared. The second burn would remove whatever residual stumpage was left from the cutting. The second prescribed burn would create the appearance of natural fire patterns. Though stumps may remain for 20 years, the scenic quality of a cutting area would largely recover within five years due to natural revegetation or the seeding of grass species. The vegetation would partially obscure the stumps and lessen their affect on an area's visual quality. Reoccurring prescribed burns on a 20-year circle would cause temporary (one to two years) localized losses of scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas. The increase in open areas within the juniper woodland canopy would increase the diversity of vegetative patterns, thereby increasing the overall scenic quality of the landscape in the long term.

In addition to the impacts created by cutting and burning, the construction of 3.2 miles of roads for woodcutting access (one mile of which would remain open for recreation access) would significantly reduce naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. These impacts would be mitigated through rehabilitation efforts following cutting (within five years) except for the one mile of road in the northeast portion of the WSA. This road would permanently reduce naturalness and eliminate primitive recreation

opportunities. It would also increase semi-primitive motorized recreation use of the area and reduce opportunities for solitude.

Impacts from juniper log structures on one-half mile of Juniper Creek would be as previously described under wilderness management for the North Fork Owyhee River and Corral Creek.

Impacts from rangeland management actions would be as previously described under management of the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Area.

The transfer of 1,400 acres of federal lands along the eastern periphery of the WSA would probably result in state authorized juniper removal projects that would produce equal or greater reductions in naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude as previously described for nonwilderness lands in the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA.

Conclusion:

There would be no significant adverse, permanent impacts to wilderness values in the 41,665 acres designated as wilderness. However, significant reductions in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality are expected on 4,150 acres in the northern hilly portion of the WSA from juniper cutting/burning projects for a period of five to 20 years. Additional losses of these wilderness values would also occur along 9.5 miles of stream bank in the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek and Cabin Creek Canyons from juniper log structures for over ten years. Wilderness values of naturalness and opportunities for both primitive recreation and solitude would be maintained or slightly enhanced by road/way closures and the lack of any planned recreation facilities. The implementation of grazing systems and the allowance for limited rangeland developments would slightly improve the wilderness area's overall naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities by improving the appearance of native plant communities. Annual primitive recreation use in the wilderness area is expected to reach 170 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 55 user days since 1984).

On much of the 9,840 acres not designated wilderness (6,000 acres in the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA), significant reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities are expected from juniper cutting/burning projects and juniper log stream bank structures (Juniper Creek) for a period of five to 20 years. Also permanent losses in naturalness and opportunities for both primitive recreation and solitude would occur from road construction on nonwilderness lands in the northeast corner of the WSA. The scenic quality of the affected lands would also be significantly reduced by juniper woodland management projects for five years. These same actions, however, should result in an eventual improvement in the area's overall scenic quality by increasing the diversity of the landscape's vegetation patterns.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Under the No Wilderness Alternative for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, none of the 49,470 acres of BLM land would be designated wilderness. Instead, the WSA lands would remain incorporated in a larger 57,000 BLM administrative designation known as the North Fork Owyhee River Recreation Management Area.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper trees from deep soil sites would affect a total of 10,350 acres over a 20-year period (approximately 21% of the WSA). The core of the WSA would receive a 20% treatment while peripheral lands in the WSA's northern and westernmost portions would receive a 35% treatment. Between 500 and 1,000 acres per year would be cut and burned or burned only in small patches of up to 40 acres in size. These patches would be interdispersed over approximately 26,000 acres in the northern hilly portion of the WSA. The prescribe burning activities would depend on the use of natural fire breaks. Naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in these cut/burn areas for a period of ten years.

During the first two years following cutting, affected cut and burn areas (7,550 acres) would have naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality substantially reduced by the presence of piles of cutting slash, numerous stumps up to eight inches in height, and constructed roads or ways used for vehicle access. Trees would be limbed with the slash scattered around the trunks and stumps. During the third year, the blackening of the landscape by the prescribed burning of the cutting area would occur. By the end of the fifth year, the scenic quality of the cutting areas would substantially improve as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture. However, the presence of residual burned stumps would persist for over ten years. These stumps would continue to diminish the naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities of the affected areas. The stumps should be gone and a naturally appearing landscape returned by year 20. Any remaining stumps would be consumed by the second prescribed burn. The second burn would temporarily reduce the scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas also. This second burn would, however, take on the appearance of a natural fire since no stumps would be present; only residual dead tree skeletons.

In the areas which are only burned (2,800 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees would retain their blackened color. On some trees scorched foliage also persists for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have

fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned areas would gradually improve. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not encourage primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the rugged, convoluted topography of the northern portion of the WSA and the fact that cut/burn areas would be in small swales or shallow draws, the cut/burn areas and their impacts on naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality would remain essentially unseen from adjacent treated areas. However, the placement of temporary, minimum construction standard roads or the establishment of ways between treatment areas in the northeast and westernmost portions of the WSA would cause additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. The presence of new vehicle access routes plus a 35% woodland treatment program in the northeast and westernmost portions of the WSA (6,000 acres) would reduce the overall sense of naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities in these areas. At the core of the WSA (20,000 acres) where new access roads are not planned and the treatment program is 20%, naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities would not be significantly reduced by juniper woodland management actions.

Recreation management actions calling for the maintenance of 17.3 miles of existing cherrystem roads within the WSA plus the continued use of existing ways would have no affect on the degree of naturalness or primitive recreation opportunities. However, the construction of one mile of new interior road and the upgrading of 3.2 miles of two other roads would cause permanent localized reductions in primitive recreation opportunities and solitude opportunities, specifically in the Big Springs, Tobacco Meadow and Nip and Tuck Creek areas of the WSA. This construction and upgrading of roads would encourage increased semi-primitive motorized recreation use and reduce the solitude opportunities sought by those seeking primitive experiences. The Nip and Tuck access road would also permanently reduce naturalness on a localized basis. Other areas in the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA would also have temporary (up to 20 years) losses of solitude and primitive recreation opportunities because of the temporary woodland management access roads previously discussed.

Further localized losses of naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would occur in the Big Springs, Tobacco Meadow, and in southeast and southwest peripheral areas of the WSA due to the construction of and semi-primitive motorized recreational use of campground/trail head recreational facilities designed to service the 30 miles of trails constructed throughout the WSA. The campground/trail head facilities would consist of parking areas, tables, toilets and fire pits. Such facilities are not conducive to primitive experiences.

The 30 miles of trails would provide improved backpacking/ horsepacking access into the rugged backcountry of the North Fork

Owyhee River and Current Creek drainages for those seeking primitive recreation experiences. However, the presence of these trails would somewhat reduce the quality of the primitive experience by largely eliminating the existing level of risk or physical challenge necessary to travel by foot or horsepack into the core of the WSA. In addition, the trails would reduce the sense of naturalness. Such travel systems, however, are nationally accepted as being compatible with primitive recreation experiences. Trail development would result in a more rapid increase in primitive recreation use of the WSA than expected for the southwest region of Idaho in general. It is expected that primitive recreational use in the WSA would increase to 900 user days per annum by the year 2005. This increased use would concentrate along the trail system and reduce solitude opportunities. There would still be numerous side canyons and draws where "cross-country" travel could still occur for those seeking a high degree of solitude and physical challenge with their primitive experiences. Consequently, the overall effects of the trail system on wilderness values would be within the limits of acceptable change for maintaining a quality primitive experience, yet providing improved opportunities for public access.

The trail system would direct most of the primitive recreation use in the WSA away from much of the juniper log stream bank structures which would occur along ten miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Juniper Creek and Corral Creek. These structures would cause significant reductions in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality for over ten years. Those who venture into these canyon stretches would encounter cut unlimbed logs, steel rods and wires over 20% to 40% of the stream banks' lengths. It would be five to ten years after placement before lush riparian revegetation and stream bank silting obscure the presence of the logs, remaining exposed rods and wires are removed, and the stream banks would appear natural in character.

The placement of a fish ladder on the North Fork Owyhee River would cause a localized reduction in naturalness. However, the facility would encourage upstream travel of redband trout populations; thereby, increasing fishing opportunities and associated primitive recreation experiences (camping).

The continuation of existing livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the WSA a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the grasses and forbs would be cropped close to the ground. The implementation of rest rotation grazing systems, however, would allow portions of the WSA at any given time to have annual vegetative growth which is not cropped off. The ability to see grass waiving in the wind adds to the sense of naturalness (and subsequently the primitive recreation experience) and scenic quality.

The development of six reservoirs, six springs with exclosure fences and one mile of fenceline would contribute to the overall distribution of livestock and reduce the localized trampling and loss of naturalness on lands around existing water developments and

riparian stream areas. The lands adjacent to the new water developments would also exhibit a high degree of grazing, but the overall grazed appearance of the WSA would be somewhat reduced. This overall slight improvement in naturalness, however, would be offset by the significant increase in the visual presence of rangeland improvement projects throughout the WSA. Currently, projects are dispersed enough throughout the WSA so as not to significantly impact naturalness. New water projects would be placed in areas of the WSA where such projects are lacking or widely dispersed; particularly on the southern tableland of the WSA. Such an increase in project concentrations would substantially reduce the naturalness of the tableland and subsequently its primitive recreation opportunities. The tableland would provide semi-primitive nonmotorized experiences in the future.

The acquisition of 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings would improve the overall management of the WSA as part of the North Fork Owyhee River Recreation Management Area. Such a land management action would ensure that the wilderness values at the core of the recreation area would not be affected by nonconforming land uses. However, the subject lands are not recognized as having a high potential for development activities, including the manipulation of juniper vegetation, rangeland projects or mining. The transfer of 1,400 acres of federal lands along the eastern periphery of the WSA would probably result in state authorized juniper removal projects that would produce equal or greater reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities than as previously described for federal lands in the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA.

Conclusion:

There would be significant reductions in wilderness values in the WSA should its 49,470 acres not be designated wilderness. For ten to 20 years significant short-term localized losses in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality are expected on 10,350 acres of the northern hilly portions of the WSA because of juniper cutting/burning projects. There are also ten miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Juniper Creek and Corral Creek Canyons where there would be losses to stream bank naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality from juniper log structures for over ten years. In 6,000 acres of the northern and westernmost portions of the WSA, the juniper cutting/burning projects would be concentrated enough to also cause an overall short-term reduction in wilderness values. After 20 years, wilderness values should have largely recovered except in the northeast portion of the WSA where permanent road construction would reduce naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Road construction and or maintenance coupled with campground and trail development would also permanently reduce naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation in localized areas; however, the impact of these developments on the WSA's

overall primitive recreational quality would be within limits of acceptable change for maintaining a quality primitive experience.

Rangeland development projects would substantially reduce naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities on the WSA's southern tableland.

Primitive recreation use of the WSA is expected to reach 900 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of 785 user days since 1984).

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, there are 47,995 acres which would be designated wilderness while 3,510 acres would not be designated.

The juniper woodland communities and associated wilderness values both within the wilderness area and in nonwilderenss areas of the WSA would be subject to changes occurring only from natural ecological processes and the continued grazing of livestock.

The Partial Wilderness Alternative contains no juniper woodland management actions which would alter existing wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for primitive recreation, and scenic quality. However, rangeland management actions calling for continued livestock grazing which incorporates grazing systems would not be able to effectively control the encroachment of seral juniper into the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings dispersed throughout the northern hilly portion of the WSA. Continued reductions in forage availability in the sagebrush/bunchgrass areas would put additional grazing pressure on all understory vegetation throughout the wilderness area. As a result, the continuation of a policy allowing livestock to graze 50% of the available forage combined within declining understory vegetative cover would give the wilderness area a greater and greater "grazed appearance" which would detract from an otherwise substantially natural appearing landscape. As seral juniper trees form a closed canopy, the diversity of vegetation patterns in the area would decline. This vegetation diversity adds to the northern hilly area's scenic quality. To loose this diversity would result in a reduction in scenic quality. Juniper encroachment would also cause the eventual loss of the hilly area's sagebrush/bunchgrass openings which are highly suitable for primitive camps. Overall, there would be a slight decline in the quality of primitive recreation experiences in the wilderness area's northern hilly area. Wilderness values on the southern tableland would remain largely unchanged.

On the southern tableland of the WSA, where juniper encroachment is not a serious concern, grazing systems incorporating 50% utilization by livestock would also create a grazed appearance to the landscape. However, these grazing systems result in areas where vegetative growth is not cropped annually. The ability to see grass waiving in the wind adds to the sense of naturalness (and subsequently the primitive recreation experience) and scenic quality.

Recreation management actions calling for the closure of 20.7 miles of interior roads and ways in the wilderness area would reduce localized impacts to naturalness and somewhat improve the area's overall primitive recreation and solitude opportunities. Only a slight improvement is expected because these vehicle routes are currently receiving only a relatively small amount of recreation vehicle traffic except for a short period of time during the fall hunting season.

The acquisition of 1,920 acres of Idaho state inholdings would improve the overall management of the wilderness area because it would ensure that the core of the wilderness area would not be affected by nonconforming land uses. However, the subject lands are not recognized as having a high potential for development activities, including the manipulation of juniper, rangeland projects or mining.

Primitive recreation use of the wilderness area is expected to reach 170 user days per annum by the year 2005.

The nonwilderness portion of the WSA would exhibit no change in wilderness values because no change in management direction is planned.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of 47,995 acres of the WSA and non-designation for the remaining 3,510 acres would not result in significant changes in the area's wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. Minor losses in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality would occur from continued seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush/bunchgrass openings. At the same time, the closure of interior roads and ways within the wilderness area would reduce localized impacts to naturalness and somewhat improve the area's opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Primitive recreation use in the wilderness area is expected to reach 170 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of 55 user days since 1984).

4. All Wilderness Alternative

Impacts to wilderness values under the All Wilderness Alternative would be as described under the Partial Wilderness Alternative. Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 170 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of 55 user days since 1984).

Conclusion:

Impacts to wilderness values would be as described under the Partial Wilderness Alternative.

B. IMPACTS ON ECOLOGICAL SUCCESSION IN JUNIPER WOODLANDS

1. Proposed Action

Juniper trees would be mechanically removed and the area burned on 3,050 acres within the wilderness area and on 1,450 acres in the nonwilderness area. This cutting/burning will be done primarily on sites in poor or fair ecological condition with little herbaceous understory.

In addition, juniper trees would be removed through prescribed burning without any mechanical treatment on 1,100 acres within the wilderness area and on 600 acres within the nonwilderness area, primarily on sites in fair or good condition with enough herbaceous understory to carry fire.

Removing juniper from the community will release the equivalent amount of light, minerals and nutrients, moisture and space to neighboring herbaceous species. Burning slash following cutting would return some organic material including nitrogen to the soil, but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous species such as Idaho fescue, and certain mortality to big sagebrush and any small junipers left following cutting. Other species such as squirreltail, bluebunch wheatgrass, rabbitbrush and most perennial and annual forbs are unharmed by fire, and would reach preburn populations within one to two years. Idaho fescue would not reach preburn populations for 5 to 10 years.

The most immediate effect on vegetative succession following cutting of western juniper and prescription burning of the cutting area is the temporary elimination of juniper and big sagebrush. Big sagebrush would generally begin immediate site reestablishment from residual seed. Pretreatment populations can be expected within 20 years, while juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

Approximately 20 years following the cutting/prescribed burning, it may be necessary to again prescribe fire. Juniper regeneration would have reached four feet or less in height and would be mostly consumed by the second fire. In the interim, naturally occurring fire would have a greater opportunity to interact because of the increase in the herbaceous species. If wildfires occur, no prescribed burning would be necessary.

Reseeding would occur on 1,600 acres of the burned areas within the wilderness portion with bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, great basin wildrye, antelope bitterbrush, balsamroot, blue flax, penstemon, and other adapted native species. Seeding would provide for increased densities of these species and a rapid return of seeded communities to the potential natural community.

Reseeding would occur on 750 acres of burned areas in the nonwilderness portion with the same native species identified for the wilderness portion as well as with non-native species such as

crested and intermediate wheatgrass, russian wildrye, alfalfa and small burnett. This would result in an increase in the density of these species.

The combination of juniper removal, prescribed burning and seeding, which would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities, would break up the large homogeneous stands of juniper. Treatment areas would become irregular "park-like" communities dominated by sagebrush and herbaceous grasses and forbs. These areas, as well as some of the adjacent juniper areas, are expected to periodically burn through wildfires or would be treated through prescribed burning. This periodic burning will retard the establishment and dominance of western juniper and big sagebrush and maintain the perennial grasses and forbs in the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites.

The implementation of grazing systems designed to meet plant physiological requirements and the removal of livestock when forage utilization levels reach 50% would allow the ecological condition of the vegetation to improve. Additionally, the amount of herbaceous vegetation remaining from grazing at 50% utilization, and the deferred or rested pastures, which are a part of the grazing systems, would provide a greater opportunity for the occurrence of wildfire which is necessary to maintain the open "parks."

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Installing juniper logs on selected areas along ten miles of stream bank coupled with the implementation of satisfactory grazing systems would improve vegetative condition of riparian communities at least one condition class over a 20 year period. This improvement would consist of a trend toward more stable stream banks and the establishment of willows, woods rose, current and scattered cottonwoods and aspen along the streams. A corresponding increase in vigor of the perennial grasses and forbs would result in a decrease of weeds, annuals and perennials such as Rocky Mountain iris, mulesear dock, and wiregrass.

Conclusion:

Impacts on ecological succession would be the temporary disturbance of vegetation in the treatment areas with the big sagebrush and juniper canopy temporarily reduced or eliminated. After more than 20 years, impacts would be the maintenance of the big sagebrush-grass communities relatively free from juniper dominance, with perennial grasses and forbs making up the major vegetative components.

On untreated sagebrush-bunchgrass communities, it is likely that juniper would continue to increase in dominance unless some unusual climatic condition results in a greater incidence of wildfire, or some biotic factor such as insects or disease results in juniper mortality. Implementing grazing systems and imposition of a 50% use level would increase the opportunity for wildfire to interact although it is unlikely that this would keep pace with juniper invasion. As juniper increases, the herbaceous species would be reduced and eventually the brush species would be suppressed or eliminated. Restricting grazing use to 50% or less of available forage and implementing grazing systems would improve the climax juniper sites by increasing herbaceous plant vigor and increasing litter, and decreasing soil erosion. The overall impact would likely be a more homogenous juniper dominated community.

Through juniper control, seeding and the implementation of grazing systems, the ecological condition of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA in 20 years would change from 59% to 33% poor, 29% to 43% fair, 12% to 20% good and 0% to 4% excellent.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Juniper would be mechanically removed by cutting on 7,350 acres, followed by prescribed burning, primarily on big sagebrush-grass sites in poor or fair condition. An additional 2,800 acres would only be prescribed burned to remove juniper primarily on big sagebrush-grass sites in fair or good condition with enough herbaceous vegetation to sustain fire.

The major impact from reducing or removing juniper would be the release of minerals, nutrients, light, moisture and space that could be utilized by neighboring herbaceous species. Prescribed burning would release organic material, including nitrogen, to the soil but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous grasses and forbs and certain mortality of big sagebrush and small juniper. Most of the perennial grasses such as western needlegrass, great basin wildrye, bluebunch wheatgrass and squirreltail are relatively unharmed by fire as are the perennial forbs. These species would generally reach preburn populations within two years following burning. Idaho fescue, which is only moderately resistant to fire, may not reach preburn populations for five to ten years. Big sagebrush would generally begin immediate reestablishment and preburn populations would be expected in twenty years. Juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but constant.

The increase in the density of the herbaceous species would provide a greater opportunity for wildfire to interact in the community. Also, the resting or deferring of the areas from grazing by implementation of grazing systems and holding utilization to 50% or less of available forage would also increase the opportunity for wildfire. If wildfires do not occur within 20 years, prescribed fire would be used again so the treatment areas would remain relatively free of juniper.

Reseeding of 3,800 acres aerially with native or adapted exotic species would increase the rate of establishment of herbaceous species and maintain the "park"-like appearance of the big sagebrush-grass communities.

Installing juniper logs on selected areas along ten miles of stream bank in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA coupled with the implementation of satisfactory grazing systems would improve vegetative condition of riparian communities at least one condition class over a 20 year period. This improvement would consist of a trend toward more stable stream banks and the establishment of willows, woods rose, current and scattered cottonwoods and aspen along the streams. A corresponding increase in vigor of the perennial grasses and forbs would result in a decrease of weeds, annuals and perennials such as Rocky Mountain iris, mulesear dock, and wiregrass.

Conclusion:

Mechanical removal treatments and prescribed burning would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities. The vegetative treatments, coupled with suitable grazing systems would break up the large homogeneous stands of juniper and allow the maintenance of the sagebrush-grass communities closely approximating the potential native communities. Additionally, the ecological condition of the vegetation of these communities would increase.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through western juniper control, seeding and the implementation of grazing systems, ecological condition of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA, under this alternative in 20 years would change from 59% to 24% poor, 29% to 47% fair, 12% to 23% good and 0% to 6% excellent.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and the imposition of 50% or less forge utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous

species, but would not prevent encroachment of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species, such as bluebunch wheatgrass, and a slight increase in ground cover.

No mechanical treatment of stream banks in riparian zones is planned. However, the implementation of a suitable grazing system and the holding utilization levels to 50% or less would improve the vigor and density of riparian zone vegetation, particularly the perennial grasses. Some stream banks would continue to erode and recovery would be considerably slower than with mechanical treatment.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in the riparian communities and in the climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA in 20 years would change from 59% to 31% poor, 29% to 45% fair, 12% to 20% good and 0% to 4% excellent.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and the imposition of 50% or less forage utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous species, but would not prevent encroachment of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species such as western needlegrass and a slight increase in ground cover.

No mechanical treatment of stream bank in riparian zones is planned. However, the implementation of a suitable grazing system and holding utilization levels to 50% or less of available forage would improve the vigor and density of riparian zone vegetation, particularly the perennial grasses. Some stream banks would continue to erode and recovery would be considerably slower than with mechanical treatment.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in the riparian communities and in the climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA in 20 years would change from 59% to 31% poor, 29% to 45% fair, 12% to 20 good and 0% to 4% excellent.

C. IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE POPULATIONS INDIGENOUS TO JUNIPER WOODLAND COMMUNITIES

1. Proposed Action

Wilderness Area:

The primary impacts to wildlife under the Proposed Action would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 4,150 acres of juniper woodlands. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing the encroaching junipers would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would create a slight increase in wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population could increase by 40 to 60 animals as the result of approximately a ten AUM increase in forage availability. Other wildlife population numbers would not show a noticeable increase due to the vegetative treatments.

The placement of juniper log structures along ten miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Juniper Creek and Cabin Creek would improve stream bank stability and add instream cover, and reduce stream channel width and increase water depths; thereby increasing redband trout populations per acre of stream treated by 150%.

The limitation of motorized recreation use caused by the closure of 7.1 miles of roads and ways could benefit all wildlife species in the WSA. Because of the closures, hunting pressure would decrease in the interior of the wilderness area. The mule deer population numbers could increase from 15 to 20 animals in the first five years because of the lack of harvest. Pronghorn numbers would not change significantly because of the controlled method of harvest and the lack of alteration of the pronghorn habitat. Sage grouse numbers would remain static because of the lack of habitat alteration.

Nonwilderness Area:

The primary impact to wildlife would be the result of vegetative treatment projects on approximately 2,050 acres of juniper woodlands. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing invading juniper would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding increase in available forage could provide more than

five additional AUMs for wild ungulates and other species. Approximately a 10 to 20 animal increase in the mule deer population could result. Other wildlife population numbers would not increase significantly because of the increase in AUMs. The increase of human disturbance caused by extensive woodcutting and the construction of ten miles of new roads could displace much of the wildlife until such time as nine miles of roads are closed and rehabilitated. The remaining one mile would continue to aid in human disturbance. The placement of juniper log structures along the one-half mile segment of Juniper Creek would improve the condition of the stream and therefore increase the redband trout population per acre of stream treated by 150%.

Conclusion:

A slight increase in the mule deer population (approximately 70 animals) and redband trout (150% increase) could result from the Proposed Action. Other wildlife species numbers would remain stable. The closure of 7.1 miles of ways and roads would offset the adverse affects of one mile of new permanent road construction. Recreational hunting pressure on wildlife population would be reduced in the interior of the wilderness area.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

The primary impacts to wildlife under this alternative would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 10,350 acres of juniper woodlands. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing encroaching juniper would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would create a slight increase in wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population could increase by 70 to 90 animals as the result of approximately 15 additional AUMs being available for wildlife. Pronghorn numbers would not increase significantly because of the lack of treatment in its habitat. Sage grouse habitat could be improved by fencing portions of reservoirs, springs and meadows. All wildlife would benefit by the better distribution of livestock and an increase in forage and water developments.

Increasing recreation use would have a direct adverse impact on the wildlife species present and seasonal displacement could be expected. An increase in hunting use would offset any increase in big game and upland bird population numbers gained from vegetative treatments. Under current Idaho State Department Fish and Game management plans for harvest, the populations could drop below present levels.

Juniper structures placed along ten miles of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Cabin Creek and Juniper Creek would improve the condition of the streams and therefore increase redband trout populations per acre of stream treated by 150%.

The placement of a fish ladder on the North Fork Owyhee River would provide improved distribution of redband trout throughout the

upper North Fork Owyhee River drainage and Pleasant Valley Creek drainage.

Conclusion:

There would be a displacement or loss of population numbers because of increased recreation use and increased road access. This reduction would offset any increase possible through vegetative manipulations. Redband trout populations would increase and would have greater distribution.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Wilderness Area:

The impacts to wildlife under the alternative would be the result of continued uncontrolled encroachment of seral juniper onto 10,350 acres of juniper woodland. The loss of the forage/cover ratio because of invading juniper would cause a reduction of available AUM (less than five AUMs) for wildlife and, in a 20 year period, the present population of mule deer could be reduced slightly (by less than 20).

Continued unstable stream banks would result in a continued downward trend in the ecological condition of streams which could reduce the number of redband trout per acre of stream by 10%.

The closure of 20 miles of roads and ways would reduce the human disturbance factor to all wildlife in the interior of the wilderness area. Reduced recreational hunting pressure would produce approximately 20 mule deer in the first five years after closure. Pronghorn and sage grouse would only slightly increase because most of the increase in hunting pressure is expected specifically for mule deer.

Nonwilderness Area:

The continued invasion of juniper into grass/brush areas would decrease the amount of forage and habitat specific to open areas. The mule deer population would decline in a 20 year period (by less than 10 animals). Generally, wildlife populations would remain the same because of the anticipated increase in recreational use due to normal increases in "local" human populations.

The continuation of unstable stream bank conditions would cause fish habitats to remain in poor condition.

Sage grouse and pronghorn would continue to have static population increases and decreases due to weather conditions, predators, etc. and from any management action under this alternative.

Conclusion:

There would be an increase of wildlife population numbers because of a reduction in hunting pressure in the interior of the

wilderness area. This would offset the loss or displacement of habitat created by seral juniper encroachment. Redband trout would be reduced by 10%.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

The primary impact of this alternative would be the result of continued seral juniper encroachment onto sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. The change in the forage-to-cover ratio because of invading juniper would cause a reduction of available AUMs (less than five AUMs) for wildlife and, in a 20 year use period, the displacement of 10 to 15 mule deer. The continuation of unstable stream banks would result in a continued downward trend in the ecological condition of streams, which could reduce the number of redband trout per acre of stream by 10%.

The closure of 21 miles of roads and ways would reduce human disturbance to wildlife in the interior of the wilderness area. Big game species would increase due to a decrease in hunting pressure. An increase of approximately 20 mule deer per year could take place within the first five years after road closures.

Conclusion:

There would be an increase of wildlife due to a reduction in hunting pressure in the interior of the wilderness area. This population increase would offset the slight reductions created by a loss of habitat due to juniper encroachment.

D. IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there are 41,665 acres which would be designated as wilderness. Wilderness policy states that, in most cases, cultural resources would be subject to the forces of nature. Salvage excavation and stabilization of significant endangered sites may be permitted with BLM State Director approval. Non-salvage excavation would be prohibited. This policy would adversely affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in managing the resources for several interrelated reasons.

First, archaeologists regard the products of salvage excavation as inferior in virtually every instance to the products of planned excavations based on carefully considered regional research designs. Salvage excavations, since they are usually initiated on short notice as a result of a site's condition rather than a site's potential to answer significant research questions, often produce inconclusive results and are much less likely to make substantial contributions to scientific understanding than are well-designed, non-salvage excavations.

Second, BLM's assessment of site significance and its resultant management actions are highly dependent on current knowledge about the archaeology of the region. Advancement of this knowledge comes largely from problem-oriented scientific excavations conducted by university academics. A BLM Class III intensive surface inventory as planned under the Proposed Action would be effective for locating and recording most sites within the wilderness area, but the accurate assessment of site significance which occurs primarily in terms of what is established through research oriented excavations, would be limited. Improvement and refinement of our currently poor understanding of the significance of archaeological sites within the proposed wilderness area could therefore be impaired with wilderness designation. In other words, the scientific values of the sites would be reduced.

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could potentially have great destructive impact on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value by: vertical displacement or mixing of artifacts or stratigraphic levels in deposits; horizontal displacement of artifacts, both surface and subsurface; mixing or destruction of environmental information contained within sites such as carbonized wood, bone, seeds or pollen; breakage of artifacts. However, all areas that might suffer impact from proposed juniper woodland actions would receive an intensive cultural inventory before any such actions could commence. Impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided by directing woodland actions to other areas without cultural values, or would be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Idaho State Historical Preservation Officer through such measures as excavation, recordation, collection or stabilization.

Rangeland management actions under the Proposed Action, including the development of one spring with an exclosure fence and the construction of one mile of fenceline, could have potential destructive impacts on cultural sites both directly during construction or indirectly by intensifying cattle use around the new developments, thereby increasing trampling damage such as vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Again, such impacts would be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated before construction is begun on those sites identified.

Though total livestock numbers would remain at about current levels, the redistribution of cattle as a result of the establishment of a rotation grazing system would spread trampling-related damages over a broader area, thus somewhat lessening adverse impacts to cultural resources in sensitive spring and riparian areas currently overutilized by cattle.

Closure of the wilderness to public motor vehicle use would lessen adverse impacts to cultural resources by reducing motorized access to sites now subject to vandalism and unauthorized removal of

artifacts. Conversely, the construction of nine miles of temporary and one mile of permanent road on nonwilderness lands would increase the potential for vandalism by allowing motorized access to previously remote areas.

The transfer of 1,400 acres of nonwilderness lands to the State of Idaho would have no effect on cultural resources since mitigating measures designed to protect significant sites would be implemented as part of an agreement signed by BLM, the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, and the State of Idaho.

Stream bank stabilization measures would reduce impacts to sites by protecting them from further erosion.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy some increased physical protection under the Proposed Action from reduced livestock trampling and road closures, research-oriented excavation would be largely prohibited and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information would be significantly reduced. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could have potentially destructive impacts on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value through vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Such adverse impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated in advance of any woodland actions.

Construction of nine miles of temporary road and one mile of permanent road would increase public use and access, thereby increasing site vandalism and theft of artifacts, as would the proposed construction of campgrounds, trails, bridges and the improvement of existing roads.

A 14% increase in grazing AUMs in the Indian Meadows Allotment could cause a moderate increase in trampling-related damages to undiscovered sites, but these impacts would be lessened somewhat by implementation of grazing systems which would redistribute cattle use over broader areas. Potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the construction of six reservoirs, six springs with exclosure fences, and one mile of fencing would be avoided or mitigated in advance of construction.

An intensive cultural resource inventory of the entire WSA would allow for improved protection of presently undiscovered cultural properties by identifying and recording them.

Conclusion:

Woodland and recreation management programs calling for road improvements and the construction of campgrounds, trails, roads and bridges would have a significant impact on cultural sites by allowing easier public access to remote areas, resulting in increased vandalism and artifact theft. Range management actions would cause a moderate adverse impact to unidentified cultural resources at new range improvement sites, and would moderately reduce the affects of livestock trampling overall. Woodland harvest practices, other than road construction, would have minimal impact on cultural resources.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Wilderness designation of 47,995 acres would place constraints on the protection and study of cultural resources as described under the Proposed Action. Wilderness designation would largely prohibit research-oriented scientific excavation by academic institutions. This would affect BLM's ability to accurately assess site significance and to make appropriate use of time and money in protecting cultural resources.

Reduction in grazing AUMs in two allotments (Cliffs - 20%, Burghardt Individual - 19%) would moderately reduce livestock-related trampling damages to cultural resources.

Closure of 20.7 miles of little-used roads within the wilderness area would have a moderately beneficial impact by reducing vandalism and artifact theft. In the nonwilderness areas, road construction could cause significantly increased vandalism and artifact theft.

A Class III inventory of the wilderness area would improve present identification and protection of cultural sites.

Conclusion:

BLM's capabilities to retrieve scientific information from cultural sites would be significantly impaired over time because of restrictions on research excavations. Physical protection of sites would be moderately enhanced by road closures and reduced livestock trampling within the wilderness area. Nonwilderness areas would show significantly increased vandalism and artifact theft due to improved access from road construction. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

Wilderness designation of 51,505 acres would place constraints on the management and study of cultural resources as described under

the Proposed Action. Wilderness designation would largely prohibit research-oriented scientific excavation by academic institutions. This, in turn, would affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in protecting these resources.

Reducing grazing use from 3,935 AUMs to 3,530 AUMs would moderately reduce the rate of livestock-related trampling damage to cultural resources.

Closure of 21.5 miles of roads and ways within the wilderness would reduce motorized access, thereby moderately reducing site vandalism and theft of artifacts. A Class III cultural resource inventory of the wilderness areas would allow for improved management and protection of cultural sites.

Conclusion:

BLM's capabilities to retrieve scientific information from cultural sites would be significantly impaired because of a prohibition on research-oriented excavation. Physical protection of sites would be moderately improved by road closures and reduced livestock trampling.

E. IMPACTS ON SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED RECREATION USE

1. Proposed Action

Designation of 41,665 acres as wilderness would close 81% of the area to off-road vehicle (ORV) use. This closure would have negligible impacts on ORV opportunities since juniper vegetation, rough topography, and rocky terrain severely limit motor vehicle use off of roads and ways.

Closure of 17.1 miles of roads and ways within the interior of the wilderness would have a negative impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. Recreation users dependent upon motor vehicle transportation, such as hunters and fishermen, would lose access opportunities except along 30 miles of boundary roads and 3.4 miles of interior roads and ways remaining open for public use. This impact of road and way closures on hunting and fishing use is not expected to be significant. Some road hunters may be displaced by hunters on foot or horseback, hunting use would be heavier along remaining vehicle routes, and some hunting and fishing use would be displaced to near-by nonwilderenss lands. Most hunting and fishing use occurs within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways. With wilderness designation, about 20% of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA would be easily accessible to these sportsmen. There would be an increase in this percentage over a five year period as 9 miles of temporary roads are constructed for juniper cutting projects and then closed within the 9,840 acres not desig- nated as wilderness. Sightseers and other recreationists would be able to drive around the entire area on the 30 miles of boundary roads.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels on nonwilderness lands, and vegetation treatment of 6,200 acres are not expected to have a significant impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. Improvements and vegetation treatments would reduce the naturalness of the affected areas but not enough to significantly reduce the quality of these recreation opportunities. A high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experience.

Improvement of forage to cover ratios through vegetation treatments would result in slight increases in mule deer populations. Placement of juniper structures on sections of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Cabin Creek and Juniper Creek would improve the ecological condition of these streams and result in an increase in trout numbers. The increased mule deer and trout populations would improve the quality of hunting and fishing and encourage increased recreation use.

It is estimated that by the year 2005, annual hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of vehicle routes would increase to 180 user days and other semi-primitive recreation uses would increase to 220 user days.

Conclusion:

Under the Proposed Action, 41,665 acres would be closed to ORV use, and 17.1 miles of roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. A few cherrystem roads would provide public motorized access into portions of the wilderness. Impacts on semi-primitive motorized use are not expected to be significant. Hunting use would become heavier along vehicle routes remaining open and some hunting and fishing use would be transferred to nearby nonwilderness lands. There are 33.4 miles of roads and ways that would remain open for motor vehicle use by recreationists. Annual semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 400 user days by the year 2005 and would be concentrated in 20% of the area or 10,368 acres (an increase of 165 user days since 1984).

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Without wilderness designation, no roads and ways would be closed for use by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. About 30% of the area within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would be easily accessible to the public. There would be increases in this percentage over a 20 year period as nine miles of temporary road are constructed for juniper cutting projects and then closed.

Designation of the area as a special recreation management area (SRMA) with the development of four small recreation sites and 30 miles of trail would provide improvements that would enhance and result in increased semi-primitive recreation use, as would the maintenance and upgrading of some roads. With a SRMA designation, motor vehicle use would be limited to existing roads and ways. This

would have a negligible impact on ORV use since little motor vehicle use presently occurs off roads and ways because of juniper vegetation, rugged topographic features and/or rocky terrain.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels, and vegetation treatment of 10,350 acres are not expected to have a significant impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities since a high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences.

Vegetation treatments, better distribution of livestock, and the fencing of portions of reservoirs, springs, and meadows would improve wildlife habitat resulting in increases in mule deer and sage grouse populations. Juniper structures along sections of the North Fork Owyhee River, Noon Creek, Cabin Creek and Juniper Creek would improve the ecological condition of the streams resulting in an increase in trout numbers. A fish ladder on the North Fork Owyhee River would also improve fish distribution in the upper reaches of the North Fork Owyhee River. The increased game and trout populations would improve the quality of hunting and fishing, encouraging increased recreation use.

It is estimated that by the year 2005, annual hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of vehicle routes would increase to 220 user days and other semi-primitive recreation use would increase to 680 user days.

Conclusion:

Without wilderness designation there would be no roads and ways closed to the public. With SRMA designation, the development of recreation sites and trails and the maintenance and upgrading of roads would encourage additional use. Limitation of motorized recreation use to roads and ways would have little negative impact since the area is not suitable for ORV activities because of the juniper woodland and/ or rugged topographic features and terrain. The quality of hunting and fishing opportunities would improve. Annual semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 900 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 665 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 30% of the area or 15,360 acres.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

The impacts of this alternative on recreation use dependent upon motor vehicle access would be similar to those described under the Proposed Action with the exception that an additional 6,330 acres and 3.6 miles of interior roads and ways would be closed to motor vehicle use. Under this alternative, about 19% of the area would be easily accessible to the public from existing roads. No temporary or new roads would be constructed since no vegetation treatments would occur.

There would be no improvements in wildlife and fish habitat resulting in a slight decrease in game and trout populations, causing a decrease in the quality of hunting and fishing opportunities.

It is estimated that by the year 2005, annual hunting and fishing use within 1/2 mile of roads would increase to 160 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 210 user days.

Conclusion:

The impacts of this alternative would be similar to the Proposed Action with the exceptions that an additional 6,330 acres and 3.6 miles of existing roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use and there would be a slight decrease in the quality of hunting and fishing opportunities. Annual semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 370 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 135 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 19% of the area or 9,600 acres.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

The impacts of this alternative on recreation uses dependent upon motor vehicle access would be similar to those described under the Proposed Action with the exception that an additional 9,840 acres and 4.4 miles of roads and ways would be closed to motor vehicle use. Under this alternative, about 19% of the area would be easily accessible to the public from existing roads. Since there would be no juniper vegetation treatments, no temporary or new roads would be constructed.

There would be no improvement in wildlife and fish habitat, resulting in a slight decrease in game and trout populations and subsequently a decrease in the quality of hunting and fishing.

It is estimated that by the year 2005, annual hunting and fishing use within 1/2 mile of roads would increase to 160 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 210 user days.

Conclusion:

The impacts of this alternative would be similar to the Proposed Action with the exception that an additional 9,840 acres and 4.4 miles of existing roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use and there would be a slight decrease in the quality of hunting and fishing opportunities. Annual semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 370 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 135 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 19% of the area or 9,600 acres.

F. IMPACTS ON SOIL EROSION

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, the 45,305 acres (combined wilderness and nonwilderness areas) that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 4% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 6,200 acres (combined wilderness and nonwilderness). The 200 to 400 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 28% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 8% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: less than 1% of the WSA would be treated per year, limiting size of treated tracts to 40 acres, not treating areas with slopes greater than 35%, and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet from any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The 10 miles of roads that would be constructed would cause soil loss rates to be 10 to 20 times those of an undisturbed site. This would be in the form of increased runoff, channeled flow, and gullying in the borrow ditch. The eventual closing and rehabilitation of nine miles of these roads would help reduce these impacts.

The current rate of soil loss for the WSA is estimated at 62,836 tons/year. After 20years the estimated rate is 59,951 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongoing, soil loss is estimated at 63,386 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 5% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 1%.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, the 39,120 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 4% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 10,350 acres. The 500 to 1,000 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 28% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of

8% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help to minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: 1 to 2% of the WSA would be treated per year, and limiting that size of treated tracts to 40 acres.

The ten miles of roads that would be constructed would have the same impacts as the Proposed Action.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 57,362 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongoing soil loss is estimated at 61,578 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 5% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 2%.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, no vegetation treatments are proposed; thereby alleviating any impacts to the soil resource as discussed for vegetation treatments under the other alternatives.

The 51,505 acres affected would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices and a reduction in AUMs.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 61,291 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

The impacts to the soil resource would be the same as stated in the Partial Wilderness Alternative.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

G. IMPACTS ON LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

1. Proposed Action

Wilderness Area:

Juniper woodland management actions include vegetation treatments on 4,150 acres (Table II-1 and Appendix A, Table 1). Following burning or mechanical treatment, approximately 1,600 acres would be aerial seeded to native species to enhance natural revegetation. Prescribed burning would be conducted at 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. There would be an estimated increase in available forage of approximately 170 AUMs. This increase in AUMs would offset reductions in active preference anticipated as necessary to balance current livestock use with forage production. Livestock use permitted to graze in the wilderness area would remain at the approximate level (3,150 AUMs) existing of the time the area entered the wilderness system. See Appendix B, Table 1 for current and anticipated 20-year livestock use by affected allotment.

Recreation management actions recommend that of the 18.3 miles of roads/ways within the wilderness area, 1.2 miles be maintained and 17.1 miles be closed to the general public. Controlled use of motorized vehicles for salting and facility maintenance would be permitted only if access by horseback is determined not to be a viable alternative. Restrictions on vehicle use would impede day-to-day monitoring of livestock and maintenance of range improvements. Wilderness designation would effectively inhibit the trend toward mechanization and efficiency in livestock management.

Range and management actions include the continued development of grazing systems with grazing use remaining at approximately the level occurring at time of wilderness designation (3,150 AUMs). Livestock use levels of the key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current years annual growth. Existing range improvements would be maintained (i.e. stock reservoirs, spring developments and fencelines). New range improvements would include one spring development with exclosure fence and one mile of fenceline.

Maintenance of existing projects and construction and maintenance of proposed projects would facilitate the implementation of grazing systems and correspondingly the rate and extent to which the rangelands would improve. Although the additional spring development and fenceline would improve livestock grazing distribution, the number and type of range improvements proposed is less than optimum to maximize the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Increases in livestock use outside wilderness boundaries but within the affected allotments would be limited by wilderness designation. Livestock increases in allotment pastures which contain both wilderness and nonwilderness land would not be

authorized unless livestock use within the wilderness portion would not increase or the increase would not adversely impact wilderness values.

Wilderness designation would also restrict use on allotments grazed under rotation grazing systems. A livestock number balance needs to be achieved between allotment pastures before an effective grazing system can be implemented. Wilderness would limit livestock increases within wilderness and nonwilderness areas of an allotment or an imbalance among pastures to be rotated would occur. Wilderness would either limit livestock increases on both wilderness and nonwilderness portions of an allotment or the subsequent imbalance among pastures would restrict the implementation of a rotation grazing system. This would reduce the rate of improvement in ecological condition of wilderness and nonwilderness areas.

Although this alternative would not allow the optimum grazing systems to be implemented, the grazing systems developed would allow for the improvement in rangeland condition. This improved condition would contribute to maintaining current grazing use levels without exceeding 50% utilization of key forage plants.

Nonwilderness Area:

Of 9,840 acres not recommended for wilderness, juniper woodland management actions calls for 2,050 acres receiving vegetation treatment (Table II-1 and Appendix A, Table 1). Vegetation treatment would be followed by approximately 750 acres of drill and/or aerial seeding to supplement and/or enhance natural revegetation. Prescribed burning would be conducted at approximately 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. Vegetation treatments along with seedings would increase AUM production by approximately 325 AUMs. This AUM increase would offset reductions in active preference anticipated as necessary in order to balance current livestock use with forage production. See Appendix B, Table 1 for current and anticipated 20-year livestock use by affected allotment.

Rangeland management actions calls for livestock use continuing at approximately the level occurring at time of wilderness designation (785 AUMs). Livestock use would be in accordance with grazing systems and would not exceed 50% of the current years annual growth of the key forage plants. Existing range improvements would be maintained. Vehicle or motorized equipment use would be subject to policy and regulations governing nonwilderness lands. New range improvements would include two spring developments with exclosure fences. The existing 3.2 miles of roads and ways would be maintained with an additional 1.0 miles of road being constructed.

Continued development and/or implementation of grazing systems would promote improvement in rangeland condition and the maintenance of current livestock use levels without exceeding 50% utilization of the key forage plants.

Maintenance of existing and construction of new range improvements would facilitate the implementation of grazing systems and correspondingly the rate and extent to which the rangelands would improve. Without wilderness the number and type of proposed range improvement would not be constrained and the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition would be optimized. The opportunity to improve rangeland condition and provide a reliable forage base for livestock is greatly enhanced under this management action.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment would increase available forage by approximately 495 AUMs and offset livestock reductions which otherwise would have been necessary in order to balance current livestock use with forage capacity. Livestock use would remain at its current level in both wilderness and nonwilderness lands. Prescribed burning at approximately 20-year intervals would maintain sagebrush/grass openings and forage capacity levels.

Continued implementation of grazing systems would improve range condition and contribute to the maintenance of current livestock grazing levels (3,150 AUMs-wilderness and 785 AUMs-nonwilderness).

Development and implementation of grazing systems would be contingent upon the continued maintenance of existing and proposed projects.

Wilderness designation would place constraints on the number and type of proposed range improvements. This would limit the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition. The effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition is optimized on nonwilderness where wilderness constraints on number and type of range improvements would not be in affect.

Constraints placed on use of vehicles or motorized equipment in wilderness would hinder day-to-day livestock management activities (e.g. salting, range improvement maintenance, livestock monitoring, etc.). In nonwilderness, the use of vehicles or motorized equipment could be used to maintain range improvements or monitor livestock in a effective and efficient manner.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Juniper woodland management actions include vegetation treatments on 10,350 acres. Burning or mechanical removal of juniper would be followed by approximately 3,800 acres of drill and/or aerial seeding (Table II-1 and Appendix A, Table 1). Prescribed fire would be utilized on a 20-year schedule to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. Woodland management actions would result in the production of an additional 540 AUMs annually. This increase in AUMs would exceed the additional production necessary to offset reductions in active preference anticipated as necessary to balance

current livestock use with forage capacity. Livestock use would increase above the current 3,935 AUM level to approximately 4,000 AUMs. See Appendix B, Table 1 for current and anticipated 20-year livestock use by affected allotment.

Rangeland management actions include continued development and implementation of grazing systems. Existing range improvements (i.e. stock reservoirs, spring developments and fencelines) and roads/ways (21.5 miles) would be maintained. Proposed range improvements would include six reservoirs, six spring developments with exclosure fences, and 4.5 miles of fenceline. These improvements would improve grazing distribution and controlled season of use by pasture. The number and type of range improvements proposed is the optimum necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Conclusion:

There would be no adverse impacts to livestock operations or facilities as a result of adopting the No Wilderness Alternative. Forage production would exceed the level necessary to meet current livestock use. Juniper woodland management would not be hindered under this alternative. All actions necessary to optimize the effectiveness of livestock grazing systems to improve rangeland condition would be implemented.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Wilderness Area:

No juniper vegetation projects would be undertaken. Production (AUMs) gained through the implementation of grazing systems and the corresponding improvement in rangeland condition would not be great enough to balance current livestock forage needs with forage capacity. Of the seven affected allotments, three would show no change in livestock use over 20 years, one a slight increase, and the remaining three a decrease (see Appendix B, Table 1). The decrease (15 AUMs) in the Trout Springs Allotment #0539, which would have only 2% of its area within wilderness, would be minimal. Approximately 72% of the Cliffs Allotment #0501 and 80% of the Burghardt Individual Allotment would be within wilderness boundaries. The decrease in active preference, within wilderness boundaries, for the Cliffs and Burghardt Individual Allotments would be substantial at approximately 20% (255 AUMs) and 19% (140 AUMs), respectively. Livestock use within wilderness would decrease from the current level of 3,705 AUMs to 3,315 AUMs in 20 years.

Development and implementation of grazing systems would continue. However, no new range improvements or livestock facilities would be permitted, which would not allow the optimization of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition. Also, restrictions on the level of use allowed within the wilderness area would restrict the level of use on adjacent areas or reduce the effectiveness of rotation grazing systems. As described in the proposed action

section, use within pastures grazed under a rotation grazing system should be nearly equal for maximum effectiveness.

Access for salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring would occur from horseback which would increase operating costs and decrease efficiency..

Constraints on motor vehicle use within wilderness would hinder management and monitoring of livestock by operators.

Nonwilderness Area:

No juniper woodland management actions would occur.

Anticipated 20-year livestock use would remain at the current level of approximately 230 AUMs. Development of grazing systems would continue. Existing range improvements would be maintained and motorized vehicles for salting and maintenance would be permitted. No new range improvements are proposed.

Roads and ways would remain open to motorized vehicle access.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would place constraints on vegetation treatment practices and subsequently result in a significant decrease in livestock use within two allotments.

Within wilderness, the construction of new range improvements or livestock facilities would not occur. This would limit the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Constraints on motor vehicle use within wilderness would hinder management and monitoring of livestock.

In nonwilderness areas, livestock use and the use of motorized vehicles to maintain range improvements or monitor livestock would remain at its current levels.

4. All Wilderness Alternative

There would be no juniper woodland management actions.

Livestock use would continue along with the development and implementation grazing systems. Livestock utilization of the key forage plants would not exceed 50% of the current years annual growth. Maintenance of existing stock reservoirs, spring developments and fenceline would continue. No new livestock facilities or range improvements would be constructed. Access for salting and facility maintenance would occur on horseback.

Implementation of rotation grazing systems and corresponding improvement in rangeland condition would not provide the additional

AUMs necessary to balance current livestock use with forage production. Three of the seven affected would show no change in livestock use over 20 years, one would show a slight increase and the remaining three a decrease (see Appendix B, Table 1). The decrease (20 AUMs) in the Trout Springs Allotment which would have only 3% of its area within wilderness, would be minimal. Approximately 72% of the Cliffs Allotment #0501 and 88% of the Burghardt Individual Allotment would be within wilderness boundaries. The decrease in active preference within wilderness boundaries, for the Cliffs and the Burghardt Individual Allotments would be substantial at approximately 20% (255 AUMs) and 19% (150 AUMs), respectively. Livestock use within wilderness would decrease from the current level of 3,935 AUMs to 3,530 AUMs in 20 years.

Wilderness designation would prohibit the construction of new range improvements or livestock facilities which would not allow for the optimization of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition. Also, restrictions on the level of use allowed within the wilderness area would restrict the level of use on adjacent areas or reduce the effectiveness of rotation grazing systems. As described in the proposed action section, use within pastures grazed under a rotation grazing system should be equal for maximum effectiveness.

Constraints placed on motor vehicle use would hinder management and monitoring of livestock by operators and BLM personnel.

Conclusion:

Wilderness constraints would prohibit vegetation treatment practices and subsequently result in a significant decrease in livestock use within two allotments.

The construction of new range improvements or livestock facilities would not be allowed within wilderness. This would limit the effectiveness of grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Constraints on motor vehicles would hinder management and monitoring of livestock.

H. ECONOMICS

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be the same in 20 years as in the existing situation. Personal income would be $39,400 and employment would be 1.1 jobs. With this alternative recreation use would increase by 190 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $16,286 and .47 jobs. These are increases of 54% and 55% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first five years, there would be 3,540 cords of fuelwood cut

each year. This would translate into income of $87,615 and employment of 5.7 jobs. After five years, there would be 1,220 cords cut each year with resulting income and employment of $30,195 and 2.0 jobs. These would be 0.1% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment.

a. Costs

Range improvement development and maintenance would be more costly in wilderness areas than outside of wilderness. This is because the use of motorized vehicles and equipment would be limited requiring horse, pack mule, and helicopter work. Table IV-1 shows a comparison of estimated costs in wilderness and nonwilderness lands. Under this alternative range improvement costs for fencing, spring developments, burning and seeding would cost $57,500 in wilderness lands and $25,750 in nonwilderness lands for a total of $83,250. In addition, maintenance cost (primarily fence maintenance) would cost between $3,825 and $6,125 in wilderness lands and $125 in nonwilderness.

TABLE IV-1
RANGE IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Type	Unit	Wilderness	Non-wilderness
Fence	mile	$3,500	$2,000
Spring	ea	2,000	1,500
Reservoir	ea	2,500	2,000
Burning	acre	5	5
Seeding	acre	25	25
Fence Maintenance	mile	150-250	50

Additional costs, which are not quantifiable, would be borne by livestock permittees due to higher herding, monitoring, salting, veterinary, etc. costs.

Recreation management costs would be $7,000 annually with this alternative. The administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $2.50 per cord or about $3,050 annually in the long-term.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-2 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-2
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
NORTH FORK-PROPOSED ACTION

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$5,312	$3,050
Federal Treasury	1,992	2,897
State Treasury	0	153
Counties	664	0
Range Improv. Fund	2,656	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $85,881. This would be a 72% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.04% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 3.6 jobs. This is a 157% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.02% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements (both in and outside of wilderness) would cost $83,250 with maintenance ranging from $3,950 to $6,250. Recreation administrative costs would be $7,000 per year while fuelwood administrative costs would total $3,050 per year. Total revenues would be $8,362 per year with $5,312 coming from grazing and $3,050 coming from fuelwood. Table IV-3 is a comparative table of impacts for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA.

2. No Wilderness Alternative

Total income and employment generated by livestock grazing under this alternative would be $40,040 and 1.12 jobs. These are both 2% increases over the existing situation. These are 0.13% and 0.02% respectively of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 1,450 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $54,288 and 1.6 jobs. These are both 400% increases over the existing situation. They represent 0.2% and 0.1% respectively of the two-county retail trade income and employment. Over a 20 year period there would be an average of 3,020 cords of fuelwood harvested. This would translate into income and employment levels of $74,745 and 4.8 jobs. These would represent 0.25% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment.

a. Costs

Range improvement costs would be $131,000 with maintenance costs of $1,425 per year. Recreation management costs would be $500,000 initially for the construction of trails, campgrounds, etc. Annual recreation administrative costs would be $30,000. The administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $7,550 per year.

TABLE IV-3
SUMMARY TABLE
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-40

Element	Existing	Proposed Action	No Wilderness	Partial Wilderness	All Wilderness
Personal Income (Total):					
Grazing (long-term)	$39,400	$39,400	$ 40,040	$35,485	$35,335
Recreation (long-term)	10,556	16,286	54,288	15,382	15,382
Fuelwood (long-term)	0	30,195	74,745	0	0
TOTAL	$49,956	$85,881	$169,073	$50,867	$50,717
Employment (Total):					
Grazing (long-term)	1.1	0.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
Recreation (long-term)	0.3	0.5	1.6	0.4	0.4
Fuelwood (long-term)	0.0	2.0	4.8	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	1.4	3.6	7.5	1.4	1.4
Range Impr. Costs (One time)	$ 0	$83,250	$131,000	$ 0	$ 0
RI Maint. Costs (Annual)	1,200	$ 3,950-6,250	1,425	$ 3,525-5,875	$ 3,600-6,000
Fuelwood Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	3,050	7,550	0	0
Recreation Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	7,000	30,000	5,000	5,000
Recreation Develop. Costs (One time)	0	0	500,000	0	0
Grazing Revenues (Annual)	5,312	5,312	5,400	4,786	4,766
Fuelwood Revenues (Annual)	0	3,050	7,550	0	0
Total Revenues (Annual)	$ 5,312	$ 8,362	$ 12,950	$ 4,786	$ 4,766

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-4 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-4
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
NORTH FORK-NO WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$5,400	$7,550
Federal Treasury	2,025	7,173
State Treasury	0	377
Counties	675	0
Range Improv. Fund	2,700	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $145,548. This would be a 191% increase over the current

situation and would represent 0.07% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 6.8 jobs. This is a 386% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.04% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $131,000 with maintenance costing $1,425. Recreation administrative costs would be $500,000 initially and $30,000 annually. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $7,550 per year. Total revenues would be $12,950 per year with $5,400 coming from grazing and $7,550 coming from fuelwood.

3. Partial Wilderness Alternative

Total income and employment generated by livestock grazing under this alternative would be $35,485 and 1.0 jobs. These are both 10% decreases from the existing situation. These are 0.12% and 0.02% respectively of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 160 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $15,382 and .44 jobs. These are both 46% increases over the existing situation. They represent 0.06% and 0.02% respectively of the two-county retail trade income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting with this alternative.

a. Costs

There would be no new range improvements with this alternative. Maintenance of existing fences would cost between $3,525 and $5,875. Annual recreation administrative costs would be $5,000.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-5 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-5
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
NORTH FORK-PARTIAL WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$4,786	$ 0
Federal Treasury	1,795	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	598	0
Range Improv. Fund	2,393	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $50,867. This would be a 2% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.03% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 1.4 jobs. This would be no change from the current situation and would represent 0.01% of

the total two-county employment. Range improvement maintenance would cost between $3,525 and $5,875. Recreation administrative costs would be $5,000 annually. Total revenues would be $4,786 (all grazing).

4. All Wilderness Alternative

Total income and employment generated by livestock grazing under this alternative would be $35,335 and 1.0 jobs. These are both 10% decreases from the existing situation. These are 0.12% and 0.02% respectively of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 160 user days. This would make the recreation generated income equal $15,382 and .44 jobs. These are both 46% increases over the existing situation. They represent 0.06% and 0.02% respectively of the two-county retail trade income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting with this alternative.

a. Costs

There would be no new range improvements with this alternative. Maintenance of existing fences would cost between $3,600 and $6,000. Annual recreation administrative costs would be $5,000.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-6 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-6
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
NORTH FORK-ALL WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$4,766	$ 0
Federal Treasury	1,787	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	596	0
Range Improv. Fund	2,383	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $50,717. This would be a 2% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.03% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 1.4 jobs. This would be no change from the current situation and would represent 0.01% of the total two-county employment. Range improvement maintenance would cost between $3,600 and $6,000. Recreation administrative costs would be $5,000 annually. Total revenues would be $4,766 (all grazing).

BIG WILLOW SPRING
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

A. IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action for the Big Willow Spring WSA, none of the 6,210 acres of BLM land would be designated wilderness.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper from deep soil sites would affect a total of 1,250 acres (approximately 20% of the WSA) over a period of one to five years. Between 250 and 500 acres per year would be cut and burned/not burned or burned only in small patches up to 40 acres in size. These patches would be interdispersed over approximately 3,200 acres in the eastern and southern portions of the WSA. Because of rocky, convoluted topography, the construction of fire breaks, roads or trails, and the use of bulldozers (evidence of tracks) is not expected to occur as fire control activities. Natural fire breaks would be utilized. Naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in these cut/burn areas for a period of over ten years.

During the first two years following cutting, affected areas (950 acres) would have naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality substantially reduced by the presence of piles of cutting slash, numerous stumps up to eight inches in height, and constructed roads or ways used for vehicle access. Trees would be limbed with the slash scattered around the stumps. During the third year, those areas which are chosen to be burned would have their landscape blackened. In these areas, the scenic quality would substantially improve as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture (within five years). However, the presence of residual burned stumps would persist for over ten years. These stumps would continue to diminish the naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities of the affected areas. Most stumps should be gone and a natural appearing landscape returned by year 20. Any remaining stumps would be consumed by the second prescribed burn. The second burn would temporarily reduce the scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas also. This second burn would, however, take on the appearance of a natural fire since no stumps would be present; only residual dead tree skeletons would remain.

In those cutting areas not burned, stumps and slash would persist well beyond the 20th year to the detriment of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

In the areas which are only burned (300 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During

the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees would retain their blackened color. On some trees, scorched foliage would also persist for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned area would gradually improve. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not encourage primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the relatively flatness of the terrain in the cut/burn areas, the affected areas would remain essentially unseen from adjacent untreated areas. However, the placement of temporary, minimally constructed roads or the establishment of ways between treatment areas in the eastern and southern portions of the WSA would cause additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. With approximately 20% of the eastern and southern portions of the WSA being treated, plus the presence of new vehicle access routes, these portions of the WSA (3,200 acres) would exhibit an overall reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality. The new road access would also reduce the overall opportunities for solitude for those seeking primitive recreation experiences by encouraging an increase in semi-primitive motorized recreation use.

It would be at least 20 years before the WSA once again exhibits an overall high degree of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality. However, the solitude opportunities within the WSA would be reduced permanently by recreation management actions calling for the construction of 1.5 miles of permanent interior roads and the construction and semi-primitive motorized recreational use of a campground in the eastern periphery of the WSA at Big Willow Springs. The campground facilities would consist of a parking lot, tables, toilets and fire pits. Such facilities would not be conducive to primitive recreation use. Though the campground would only locally affect naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities, its presence would reduce the solitude in the WSA overall because it would encourage an increase in semi-primitive recreation opportunities on the existing and new road/way system throughout and adjacent to the WSA.

Because of the loss of naturalness and the development of semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities, it is expected that primitive recreation use of the WSA would remain under 15 user days per annum through the year 2005.

The continuation of about the same livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the WSA a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the annual growth of grasses and forbs would be cropped close to the ground. However, this cropping would not occur until mid-summer of each year, giving backpackers during their primary spring use season the opportunity

to see grass blowing in the wind, which adds to the sense of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

Conclusion:

There would be significant reductions in wilderness values in the WSA should its 6,210 acres not be designated wilderness. Significant losses in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude opportunities and scenic quality would occur in the WSA overall (with 1,250 acres most affected) from juniper cutting/burning projects for a period of 10 to 20 years. After 20 years, wilderness values should have largely recovered except for solitude opportunities. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from the development and use of recreation access roads and campgrounds.

Rangeland management practices and improvements would produce a slight increase in the area's overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

Primitive recreation of the WSA is expected to remain under ten user days per annum through the year 2005.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, all 6,210 acres of the Big Willow Spring WSA would be designated wilderness.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper would have impacts to wilderness values as described under the Proposed Action, except that impacts would be less severe on only 450 acres of treatment and impacts on the wilderness area overall would be minimal during the first 20 years. Impacts to naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality in the cut/burn areas would last only five years because cutting procedures would require that trees be cut at ground level and that all cut areas would be burned. Consequently, there would be no residual charred stumps or slash piles left following the treatment period. Overall impacts to wilderness values, including solitude, would be minimal because the 450 acres would be treated in small patches (40 acres or less) dispersed through 3,200 acres of the eastern and southern portions of the wilderness area and no access roads would be created.

No recreation management actions would occur to affect existing wilderness values except the closure of .8 miles of interior ways. This would cause a slight increase in naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude.

Impacts from rangeland management actions would cause a slight improvement in wilderness values as described under the Proposed Action.

Primitive recreation use within the wilderness area is projected to increase to only 20 user days per annum by the year 2005.

Conclusion:

There would be no significant permanent adverse impacts to wilderness values in the 6,210 acres designated as wilderness. However, during the first five years, reductions in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality are expected on 450 acres in the northern and eastern portion of the WSA from juniper cutting/burning projects.

Recreation and rangeland management actions (road closures and rangeland improvements) would provide a slight improvement in wilderness values.

Primitive recreation use is expected to be only 20 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of five user days since 1984).

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Under this All Wilderness Alternative, all 6,210 acres of the Big Willow Spring WSA would be designated wilderness.

The juniper woodland communities and associated wilderness values would be subject to changes occurring only from natural ecological processes and the continued grazing of livestock.

This All Wilderness Alternative contains no juniper woodland management actions nor recreation management actions which would notably alter existing wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. The closure of .8 miles of way within the WSA would only slightly increase naturalness on a localized basis and cause no noticeable improvement in primitive recreation or solitude opportunities. The way is seldom used except for a short period of time during the fall hunting season.

Rangeland management actions calling for continued grazing pastures which incorporate grazing systems would not be able to effectively control the encroachment of seral juniper into the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings dispersed throughout the southern and eastern portion of the wilderness area. Continued reductions in forage availability in the sagebrush/bunchgrass areas would put additional grazing pressure on all understory vegetation throughout the wilderness area. As a result, the continuation of a policy of allowing livestock to graze 50% of the available forage combined with a declining understory cover would give the wilderness area a greater and greater "grazed appearance" which would detract from an otherwise substantially natural appearing landscape. As seral juniper trees form a closed canopy, the diversity of vegetation patterns in the area would decline. This vegetation diversity adds to the scenic quality of the eastern and southern portion of the

wilderness area. To lose this diversity would result in a reduction in scenic quality. Juniper encroachment would also cause the eventual loss of the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings which are highly suitable for primitive camps. Overall, there would be a slight decline in the quality of primitive recreation experiences in the southern and eastern portions of the wilderness areas, wilderness values in the area's central canyon and northern hilly country would remain the same.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation of 6,210 acres of the WSA would not result in significant changes in the areas wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. Minor losses in primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality would occur from the continued encroachment of seral juniper into sagebrush/bunchgrass openings.

Primitive recreation is expected to reach only 20 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of five user days since 1984).

B. IMPACTS ON ECOLOGICAL SUCCESSION IN JUNIPER WOODLANDS

1. Proposed Action

Juniper trees would be mechanically removed by cutting or chaining on 950 acres mostly in poor vegetative condition. In addition, juniper would be removed by prescribed burning alone on 300 acres primarily in good or fair vegetative condition.

Removing juniper from the community would release the equivalent amount of light, minerals and nutrients, moisture and space to neighboring herbaceous species. Burning slash following cutting would return some organic material including nitrogen to the soil, but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous species such as Idaho fescue, and certain mortality to big sagebrush and any small junipers left following cutting. Other species such as squirreltail, western needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, rabbitbrush and most perennial and annual forbs are unharmed by fire, and would reach preburn populations within one to two years. Idaho fescue would not reach preburn populations for five to ten years.

The most immediate effect on vegetative succession following cutting of western juniper and prescription burning of the treatment areas would be the temporary elimination of juniper and Mountain big sagebrush. Mountain big sagebrush would generally begin immediate site reestablishment from residual seed. Pretreatment populations can be expected within 20 years, while juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

Approximately 20 years following the cutting/prescribed burning, it may be necessary to again prescribe burn fire. Juniper regeneration would generally be less than four feet in height

and would be mostly consumed by fire. In the interim, naturally occurring fire would have a greater opportunity to interact because of the increase in the herbaceous species. If wildfires occur, no prescribed burning would be necessary.

Reseeding would occur on 950 acres of the treated areas. Native species such as Idaho fescue, Great Basin wildrye, antelope bitterbrush, balsamroot, blue flax and penstemon would be aerially seeded. Adapted exotic species such as crested wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome, orchard grass, alfalfa and small burnett could also be seeded. Seeding would provide for more rapid revegetation and density by the herbaceous species and would retard the encroachment of western juniper by providing a greater opportunity for wildfire occurrence.

The combination of juniper removal, prescribed burning and seeding, which would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities, would break up the homogeneous juniper stands, and maintain the irregular open "parks" of the sagebrush-grass community, characterized by a big sagebrush overstory and a herbaceous understory of perennial grasses and forbs. These communities, as well as parts of the adjacent climax juniper sites, are expected to periodically burn from lightning caused wildfire, or would be treated by prescribed burning on a 20-year cycle.

The implementation of grazing systems designed to meet plant physiological requirements, and the removal of livestock when forage utilization levels reach 50% would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the encroachment of juniper into the sagebrush-grass communities, and the eventual decline of the understory species."

Conclusion:

Impacts on ecological succession would be the temporary disturbance of vegetation in the treatment areas with the big sagebrush and juniper canopy temporarily reduced or eliminated. Beyond 20 years, impacts would be the maintenance of the big sagebrush-grass communities relatively free from juniper dominance, with perennial grasses and forbs making up the major vegetative components.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs, and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through juniper control, seeding, and the implementation of grazing systems, the ecological condition of the Big Willow Spring WSA in 20 years would change from 70% to 22% poor, 15% to 52% fair,

15% to 18% good and 0% to 4% excellent. This would be modified somewhat if wildfires occur.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Juniper would be mechanically removed by cutting on 450 acres, followed by prescribed burning, primarily on big sagebrush-grass sites in poor or fair condition. An additional 150 acres would be prescribed burned only. Treatments to remove juniper would occur primarily on big sagebrush-grass sites in fair or good condition with enough herbaceous vegetation to sustain fire.

The major impact from reducing or removing juniper would be the release of minerals, nutrients, light, moisture and space that could be utilized by neighboring herbaceous species. Prescribed burning would release organic material, including nitrogen, to the soil but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous grasses and forbs and certain mortality of big sagebrush and small juniper. Most of the perennial grasses such as western needlegrass, Great Basin wildrye, bluebunch wheatgrass and squirreltail are relatively unharmed by fire as are the perennial forbs. These species would generally reach preburn populations within two years following burning. Idaho fescue, which is only moderately resistant to fire would not reach preburn populations for five to ten years. Big sagebrush would generally begin immediate reestablishment and preburn populations would be expected in 20 years. Juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

The increase in the density of the herbaceous species would provide a greater opportunity for wildfire to interact in the community. Also, the resting or deferring of the areas from grazing by implementation of grazing systems, and holding utilization to 50% or less of available forage would also increase the opportunity for wildfire. If wildfires do not occur within 20 years, prescribed fire would be used again so treatment areas would remain relatively free of juniper.

Reseeding of 550 acres aerially with native species would increase the rate of establishment of herbaceous species and maintain the "park-like" appearance of the big sagebrush-grass communities.

Conclusion:

Mechanical removal treatments and prescribed burning would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities. The vegetative treatments, coupled with suitable grazing systems would break up the large homogeneous stands of juniper and allow the maintenance of the sagebrush-grass communities closely approximating the potential native communities. Additionally, the ecological condition of the vegetation of these communities would increase.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs, and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through western juniper control, seeding and the implementation of grazing systems, ecological condition of the Big Willow Spring WSA, under this alternative in 20 years would change from 70% to 34% poor, 15% to 48% fair, and 0% to 4% excellent, with 15% remaining good.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and imposition of 50% or less forage utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous species, but would not prevent invasion of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species such as western needlegrass and a slight increase in ground cover.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the Big Willow Spring WSA in 20 years would change from 70% to 42% poor, 15% to 43% fair, 15% to 14% good and 0% to 1% excellent.

C. IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE POPULATIONS INDIGENOUS TO JUNIPER WOODLAND COMMUNITIES

1. Proposed Action

The primary impacts to wildlife under this alternative would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 1,250 acres of juniper woodland. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing the invading junipers would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would create a slight increase in wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population would increase slightly (by five animals) as the result of approximately a two AUM increase in forage availability. Other wildlife population numbers would not show a noticeable increase due to the vegetative treatments. The construction of 2.5 miles of road and the increased human disturbance by woodcutting efforts would cause a temporary displacement of wildlife until such time as the roads are closed (1 mile). The 1.5 miles of new road kept open for recreational use would increase hunting pressure. This would reduce the mule deer population by 10 animals annually.

Conclusion:

There would be a displacement or loss of population numbers because of increased recreation and woodcutting use. This reduction or displacement would offset any increase possible through vegetation manipulation. There would be a net loss of five deer.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

The primary impacts to wildlife under this alternative would result from vegetative treatments of juniper encroaching into sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would not be significant; therefore, population numbers for wildlife would remain at or near their present numbers. The closure of .8 mile of road would not significantly reduce recreational use or cause a reduction in hunter pressure. The human disturbance to wildlife would remain at or near its present level.

Conclusion:

There would not be a significant change in wildlife populations due to vegetative treatments. Recreational disturbance of wildlife would remain at or near the present level.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

The primary impact of this alternative would be the result of continued seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush/bunchgrass sites. The loss of the forage-to-cover ratio because of invading junipers would cause a reduction in available forage (less than 1

AUM) for wildlife. In a 20 year period, one to five mule deer would be displaced. Other wildlife population numbers would not change significantly.

Conclusion:

There would be a loss or displacement of one to five mule deer, but other wildlife species would remain stable. The reason for the loss or displacement would be the result of the alteration of habitat due to juniper encroachment.

D. IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could have potentially destructive impacts on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value through vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Such adverse impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated in advance of any woodland actions.

Construction of one mile of temporary road and 1.5 miles of permanent road would increase public use and access thereby increasing site vandalism and theft of artifacts, as would the proposed construction of a campground.

A 10% increase in grazing AUMs could cause a moderate increase in trampling-related damages to undiscovered sites, particularly in sensitive spring and riparian areas. Redistribution of cattle through implementation of grazing systems would have a slight protective benefit for cultural resources by somewhat reducing grazing pressure on sensitive spring and riparian areas.

Conclusion:

Woodland and recreation management programs calling for road improvements and the construction of a campground, and roads would have a significant adverse impact on cultural sites by allowing easier public access to remote areas, resulting in increased vandalism and artifact theft. Range management actions would cause a slight localized adverse impact to unidentified cultural resources at new range improvement sites, but would slightly reduce the affects of livestock trampling overall. Woodland harvest practices, other than road construction, would have minimal impact on cultural resources.

2. All Wilderness Alternative (With Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Under this alternative, there are 6,200 acres which would be designated as wilderness. Wilderness policy states that, in most

cases, cultural resources would be subject to the forces of nature. Salvage excavation and stabilization of significant endangered sites may be permitted with BLM State Director approval. Non-salvage excavation would be prohibited. This policy would adversely affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in managing the resources for several interrelated reasons.

First, archaeologists regard the products of salvage excavation as inferior in virtually every instance to the products of planned excavations based on carefully considered regional research designs. Salvage excavations, since they are usually initiated on short notice as a result of a site's condition rather than a site's potential to answer significant research questions, often produce inconclusive results and are much less likely to make substantial contributions to scientific understanding than are well-designed, non-salvage excavations.

Second, BLM's assessment of site significance and its resultant management actions are highly dependent on current knowledge about the archaeology of the region. Advancement of this knowledge comes largely from problem-oriented scientific excavations conducted by university academics. A BLM Class III intensive surface inventory as planned under the Proposed Action would be effective on locating and recording most sites within the wilderness area, but the accurate assessment of site significance which occurs primarily in terms of what is established through research oriented excavations, would be limited. Improvement and refinement of our currently poor understanding of the significance of archaeological sites within the proposed wilderness area could therefore be impaired with wilderness designation. In other words, the scientific values of the sites would be reduced.

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could potentially have great destructive impact on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value by: vertical displacement or mixing of artifacts or stratigraphic levels in deposits; horizontal displacement of artifacts, both surface and subsurface; mixing or destruction of environmental information contained within sites such as carbonized wood, bone, seeds or pollen; breakage of artifacts. However, all areas that might suffer impact from proposed juniper woodland actions would receive an intensive cultural inventory before any such actions could commence. Impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided by directing woodland actions to other areas without cultural values, or would be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Idaho State Historical Preservation Officer through such measures as excavation, recordation, collection or stabilization.

Though total livestock numbers would remain at about current levels, the redistribution of cattle as a result of the establishment of a rotation grazing system would spread trampling-related

damages over a broader area, thus somewhat lessening adverse impacts to cultural resources in sensitive spring and riparian areas currently overutilized by cattle.

Closure of the wilderness to public motor vehicle use would lessen adverse impacts to cultural resources by reducing motorized access to sites now subject to vandalism and unauthorized removal of artifacts.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy somewhat increased physical protection under this alternative from reduced livestock trampling and road closures, research-oriented excavation would be restricted and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information would be significantly reduced. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Impacts under this alternative would be as described under the All Wilderness Alternative With Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations except there would be no potential for impacts from juniper cutting activities.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy moderately increased physical protection under this alternative from reduced livestock trampling and road closures, research-oriented excavation would be restricted and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information would be significantly reduced.

E. IMPACTS ON SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED RECREATION USE

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there are 6,210 acres and 12.3 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for motor vehicle use by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. About 61% of the Big Willow Spring WSA adjacent to roads and ways would be easily accessible to the public.

The development of a hunter camp near Horsehead Spring would enhance hunting and other recreation opportunities by providing presently lacking camping and sanitation facilities.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels, and vegetation treatment of 1,250 acres are not expected to have

significant impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities since a high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences.

Vegetation treatments would improve wildlife habitat resulting in slight increase in game populations, improved hunting quality, and increases in hunting use.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would increase to 30 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 45 user days.

Conclusion:

Without wilderness designation, there are 6,210 acres and 12.3 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for public motor vehicle use. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 75 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 40 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 61% of the area or 3,775 acres.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Designation of 6,210 acres as wilderness would close the area to ORV use. This closure would have negligible impact on ORV opportunities since juniper vegetation, rough topography, and/or rocky terrain severely limit motor vehicle use off of roads and ways.

Closure of 0.8 miles of way to motor vehicle use would have minimal impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. Sportsmen and other recreationists could still utilize motor vehicles along the ten miles of boundary roads. Most hunting and fishing use occurs within 1/2 mile of roads. With wilderness designation, about 52% of the area would be easily accessible to the public.

Vegetation treatments would have no impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities because alterations of the natural landscape are not sufficient to disrupt semi-primiitve activities.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use within 1/2 mile of roads would increase to 20 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 50 user days.

Conclusion:

With the designation of a 6,210 acre wilderness, the area and 0.8 miles of ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. Impacts from the closure on semi-primitive motorized recreation use would be insignificant. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 70 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 35

user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 52% of the area or 3,200 acres.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

The impacts of this alternative upon semi-primitive recreation opportunities would be the same as those described under the All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations with the exception that, without vegetative treatments, there would be slight reductions in deer numbers and in hunting quality.

Conclusion:

With the designation of a 6,210 acre wilderness, the area and 0.8 miles of ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. Impacts of the closure on semi-primitive motorized recreation use would be insignificant. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 70 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 35 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 52% of the area or 3,200 acres.

F. IMPACTS ON SOIL EROSION

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, the 4,960 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 4% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 1,250 acres. The 250 to 500 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 29% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 8% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: not treating areas with slopes greater than 35% and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The 2.5 miles of roads that would be constructed would cause soil loss rates to be 10 to 20 times those of undisturbed sites. This would be in the form of increased runoff, channeled flow, and gullying in the borrow ditch. The eventual closing and rehabilitation of one mile of these roads would help reduce these impacts.

The current rate of soil loss for the WSA is estimated at 7,328 tons/year. After 20 years, the estimated rate is 6,955 tons/year.

While vegetation treatments are ongoing, soil loss is estimated at 7,835 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 5% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 7%.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Under this alternative, the 5,760 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 450 acres. The areas that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 29% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 8% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: less than 1% of the WSA would be treated per year, limiting size of treated tracts to 40 acres, not treating areas with slopes greater than 35%, and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The 2.5 miles of roads that would be constructed would have the same impacts as the Proposed Action.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 6,995 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongoing soil loss is estimated at 7,663 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 5% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 4%.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Under this alternative, no vegetation treatments are proposed; thereby alleviating any impacts to the soil resource as discussed for vegetation treatments under the other alternatives.

The 6,210 acres affected would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 7,141 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would result in a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

G. IMPACTS ON LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

1. Proposed Action (No Wilderness Designation)

Juniper woodland management actions calls for vegetation treatment, including tree cutting and/or prescribed burning on 1,250 acres (approximately 20% of the WSA; see Table II-4 and Appendix A, Table 2). Of the area to be treated 950 acres would be drill and/or aerial seeded with native as well as nonnative species. Prescribed fire would be utilized on a 20-year schedule to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. Of the 2.5 miles of road that would be constructed to woodcutting areas, one mile would be rehabilitated and the remaining 1.5 miles would be retained as permanent access for recreation and multiple use purposes.

Rangeland management action would include continued livestock grazing under a deferred rotation grazing system. The livestock use level in the Pole Creek Allotment #0635 is anticipated to increase from 400 AUMs to 440 AUMs in 20 years.

Range improvements would be maintained and the existing access would be used by motorized vehicles for salting, livestock monitoring and facility maintenance. Although, additional range improvements or livestock facilities are not scheduled at the present time, it would be possible under the Proposed Action to develop or construct those projects necessary to optimize the effectiveness of the grazing system to improve rangeland condition.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment and seeding would increase livestock forage by approximately 40 AUMs over a 20 year period. Prescribed burning to maintain sagebrush/grass openings would retain desired successional stages and forage production.

Continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing system would improve range condition and contribute to the production of livestock forage. Implementation of the grazing system would be contingent upon the continued maintenance of existing range improvements.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Woodcutting and/or prescribed burning of 600 acres within wilderness boundaries is proposed (Table II-4 and Appendix A, Table 2) vegetation treatment would be followed by aerial seeding of native species. Prescribed burning would be conducted at 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/grass openings.

Livestock grazing in the Pole Creek Allotment #0635 would continue under a deferred rotation grazing system and at the current level of approximately 400 AUMs.

Existing range improvements would be maintained. There would be no development of additional range improvements. Salting livestock monitoring and facility maintenance would be by horseback which would hinder these activities.

Increases in livestock use outside wilderness boundaries but within the affected allotments would be limited by wilderness designation. Livestock increases in allotment pastures which contain both wilderness and nonwilderness lands would not be authorized unless livestock use within the wilderness portion would not increase or the increase would not adversely impact wilderness values.

Wilderness designation would also restrict use on allotments grazed under rotation grazing systems. Livestock number balance needs to be achieved between allotment pastures before an effective grazing system can be implemented. Wilderness would limit livestock increases within wilderness and nonwilderness areas of an allotment or an imbalance among pastures to be rotated would occur. Wilderness would either limit livestock increases on both wilderness and nonwilderness portions of an allotment or the subsequent imbalance among pastures would restrict the implementation of a rotation grazing system. This would reduce the rate of improvement in ecological condition of wilderness and nonwilderness areas.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment and seeding, and implementation of the grazing system would provide for the continued allocation of livestock forage at the current level of 400 AUMs. Utilizing prescribed burning at approximately 20-year intervals to sustain sagebrush/grass openings would contribute to maintenance of the current forage production level. Wilderness constraints which dictate aerial application of native species would limit diversity of plant species, germination rates, seeding establishment and corresponding production of available forage.

Maintenance of existing range improvements would allow for the continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing system and improvement in rangeland condition. Wilderness would prohibit the development of new range improvements with livestock use patterns

remaining in their present configuration. The optimization of the grazing system to improve rangeland condition could not be achieved unless all necessary supporting facilities are developed.

Constraints placed on motor vehicle use would hinder salting, facility maintenance and livestock management.

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Management actions would be as described under the All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations except vegetation treatments to remove seral juniper would not be proposed.

Conclusion:

Impacts to livestock operations and facilities would be as described under the All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations.

H. ECONOMICS

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $4,404 and 0.12 jobs. These are both 10% increases over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 35 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $2,564 and .07 jobs. These are increases of 70% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first five years, there would be 1,520 cords of fuelwood cut each year. This would translate into income of $37,620 and employment of 2.4 jobs. These would be 0.1% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting after five years.

a. Costs

Range improvement development costs would be $25,000 with this alternative. Annual maintenance would be $65. Recreation management costs would be $15,000 initially with annual administrative cost of $5,000. The annual administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $3,800. These costs would end after five years.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-7 shows the revenue collections and disburse- ments under this alternative.

TABLE IV-7
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
BIG WILLOW SPRING - PROPOSED ACTION

	Grazing	Fuelwood 1/
Total Revenue	$ 594	$3,800
Federal Treasury	223	3,610
State Treasury	0	190
Counties	74	0
Range Improv. Fund	297	0

1/ For the first five years only.

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $6,968. This would be a 26% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.004% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.19 jobs. This is a 27% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.001% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $25,000 with maintenance costing $65. Recreation administrative costs would be $15,000 initially and $5,000 annually thereafter. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $3,800 per year for five years. Total revenues would be $4,394 per year with $594 coming from grazing and $3,800 coming from fuelwood (for the first five years). Table IV-8 is a comparative table of impacts for the Big Willow Spring WSA.

TABLE IV-8
SUMMARY TABLE
BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA, ID-16-41

Element	Existing	Proposed Action	All W/S Wilderness	All Wilderness
Personal Income (Total):				
Grazing (long-term)	$ 4,004	$ 4,404	$4,004	$4,004
Recreation (long-term)	1,508	2,564	2,714	2,714
Fuelwood (long-term)	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	$ 5,512	$ 6,968	$6,718	$6,718
Employment (Total):				
Grazing (long-term)	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.11
Recreation (long-term)	0.04	0.07	0.08	0.08
Fuelwood (long-term)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	0.15	0.19	0.19	0.19
Range Impr. Costs (One time)	$ 0	$25,000	$11,750	0
RI Maint. Costs (Annual)	$ 65	$ 65	$195-$325	$195-$325
Fuelwood Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	$ 3,800 1/	$ 900 2/	0
Recreation Admin Costs (Annual)	0	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$3,000
Recreation Develop. Costs (One time)	0	$15,000	0	0
Grazing Revenues (Annual)	$540	$ 594	$ 540	$ 540
Fuelwood Revenues (Annual)	0	$ 3,800 1/	$ 900 2/	0
Total Revenues (Annual)	$540	$ 4,394	$ 1,440	$ 540

1/ For the first five years only.
2/ For the first ten years only.

2. All Wilderness Alternative with Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $4,000 and 0.11 jobs. These are both 10% increases over the existing situation. These are both no change from the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 40 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $2,714 and 0.08 jobs. These are increases of 80% and 100% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first ten years, there would be 360 cords of fuelwood cut each year. This would translate into income of $8,910 and employment of 0.58 jobs. These would be 0.03% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting after ten years.

a. Costs

Range improvement development costs would be $11,750 with this alternative. Annual maintenance would range from $195 to $325. Recreation management costs would be $5,000 annually. The annual administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $900. These costs would end after ten years.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-9 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-9
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
BIG WILLOW SPRING - ALL WILDERNESS W/STIPULATIONS

	Grazing	Fuelwood 1/
Total Revenue	$ 540	$ 900
Federal Treasury	202	855
State Treasury	0	45
Counties	68	0
Range Improv. Fund	270	0

1/ For first 10 years only.

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $6,718. This would be a 22% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.003% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.19 jobs. This is a 27% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.001% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $11,750 with maintenance costing $195 to $325. Recreation administrative costs would be $5,000 annually. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $900 per year for ten years. Total revenues would be $1,440 per year with $540 coming from grazing and $900 coming from fuelwood (for the first ten years).

3. All Wilderness Alternative (No Special Juniper Woodland Management Stipulations)

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $4,004 and 0.11 jobs. These are both the same as the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 40 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $2,714 and 0.08 jobs. These are increases of 80% and 100% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income

and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting under this alternative.

a. Costs

There would be no new range improvements with this alternative. Recreation management costs would be $3,000 annually.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-10 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-10
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
BIG WILLOW SPRING - ALL WILDERNESS
WITHOUT STIPULATIONS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$ 540	$ 0
Federal Treasury	202	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	68	0
Range Improv. Fund	270	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $6,718. This would be a 22% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.003% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.19 jobs. This is a 27% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.001% of the total two-county employment. Range improvement maintenance would cost $195 to $325 annually. Recreation administrative costs would be $3,000 annually. Total revenues would be $540 per year (all grazing).

SQUAW CREEK CANYON
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

A. IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action for the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA, none of the 10,780 acres of BLM land would be designated wilderness.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper from deep soil sites would affect a total of 3,800 acres (approximately 35% of the WSA) over a period of one to five years. Between 250 and 500 acres per year would be cut and burned/not burned or burned only in small patches up to 40 acres in size. These patches would be interdispersed throughout the WSA. Because of rocky, convoluted topography, the construction of fire breaks, roads or trails, and the use of bulldozers (evidence of trails) is not expected to occur as fire control activities. Natural fire breaks would be utilized. Naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in these cut/burn areas for a period of over ten years.

During the first two years following cutting, affected areas (2,700 acres) would have naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality substantially reduced by the presence of piles of cutting slash, numerous stumps up to eight inches in height, and constructed roads or ways used for vehicle access. Trees would be limbed with the slash scattered around the stumps. During the third year, those areas which are chosen to be burned would have their landscape blackened. In these areas, the scenic quality would substantially improve as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture (within five years). However, the presence of residual burned stumps would persist for over ten years. These stumps would continue to diminish the naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities of the affected areas. Most stumps should be gone and a natural appearing landscape returned by year 20. Any remaining stumps would be consumed by the second prescribed burn. The second burn would temporarily reduce the scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas also. This second burn would, however, take on the appearance of a natural fire since no stumps would be present; only residual dead tree skeletons would remain.

In those cutting areas not burned, stumps and slash would persist well beyond the 20th year to the detriment of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

In the areas which are only burned (1,100 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees

would retain their blackened color. On some trees, scorched foliage would also persist for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned area would gradually improve. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not encourage primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the sloping terrain involved in the cut/burn areas, the affected areas would be highly visible from adjacent untreated areas. Moreover, the placement of temporary, minimally constructed roads or the establishment of ways between treatment areas in the eastern and southern portions of the WSA would cause additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. With approximately 35% of the WSA being treated, plus the presence of new vehicle access routes, much of the WSA (3,200 acres) would exhibit an overall reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality. The new road access would also reduce the overall opportunities for solitude for those seeking primitive recreation experiences by encouraging an increase in semi-primitive motorized recreation use.

It would be at least 20 years before the WSA once again exhibits an overall high degree of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality. However, the solitude opportunities within the WSA would be reduced permanently by recreation management actions calling for the construction of four miles of permanent interior roads and the construction and semi-primitive motorized recreational use of a campground in the southern periphery of the WSA near Hills Creek. The campground facilities would consist of a parking lot, tables, toilets and fire pits. Such facilities would not be conducive to primitive recreation use. Though the campground would only locally affect naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities, its presence would reduce the solitude in the WSA overall because it would encourage an increase in semi-primitive recreation opportunities, on the existing and new road/way system throughout and adjacent to the WSA.

Because of the loss of naturalness and the development of semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities, it is expected that primitive recreation use of the WSA would remain under 25 user days per annum through the year 2005.

The placement of juniper log (limbs attached) along 20% to 40% of a three mile stretch of Squaw Creek would cause significant adverse visual impacts to riparian areas. During the first five to ten years after placement, the presence of numerous dead, unlimbed trees, steel rods and wires would make the riparian area appear highly unnatural and would inhibit primitive recreation use (backpacking and fishing). Once riparian vegetation has reestablished itself in the silted-over juniper, exposed steel rods and wires would be removed. After ten years, the presence of the

juniper logs would be largely obscured by lush riparian vegetation and the stream banks would appear in a natural condition suitable for primitive recreation experiences (backpacking). The improved riparian areas would also improve fish habitat conditions and subsequently improve fishing opportunities.

The continuation of about the same livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the WSA a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the annual growth of grasses and forbs would be cropped close to the ground. However, this cropping would not occur until mid-summer of each year, giving backpackers during their primary spring use season the opportunity to see grass blowing in the wind, which adds to the sense of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

The development of one spring with exclosure fence would slight increase the number of projects in the WSA. A total of six spring developments and 5.8 miles of fenceline would not notably reduce naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities nor scenic quality in the WSA as a whole. Impacts to these wilderness values would be extremely localized because of the screening from juniper woodland vegetation. The additional rangeland projects would contribute to the overall distribution of livestock and reduce the localized trampling and loss of naturalness on lands surrounding existing water developments and riparian stream areas. The land adjacent to the new water development would also exhibit a high degree of grazing, but the overall grazed appearance of the WSA would be somewhat reduced.

The acquisition of 640 acres of Idaho state land would have no positive impact on the WSA's wilderness values. These lands would have management actions taken on them that would be identical to those already identified for WSA lands.

Conclusion:

There would be significant reductions in wilderness values in the WSA should its 10,780 acres not be designated wilderness. Significant losses in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude opportunities and scenic quality would occur in the WSA overall (with 3,800 acres being most affected) from juniper cutting/burning projects for a period of ten to 20 years. The placement of juniper log stream bank structures along three miles of Squaw Creek would also cause significant losses of naturalness, opportunities for primitive recreation and scenic quality for over ten years. After 20 years, wilderness values should have largely recovered except for solitude opportunities. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from the development and use of recreation access roads and campgrounds.

Rangeland management practices and improvements would produce a slight increase in the area's overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

Primitive recreation of the WSA is expected to remain under 25 user days per annum through the year 2005.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, 12,500 acres of the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA would be designated wilderness.

The juniper woodland communities and associated wilderness values would be subject to changes occurring only from natural ecological processes and the continued grazing of livestock.

The All Wilderness Alternative contains no woodland management actions nor recreation management actions which would notably alter existing wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. The closure of 2.8 miles of interior roads and ways within the wilderness area would only slightly increase naturalness on a localized basis and cause no noticeable improvement in primitive recreation or solitude opportunities. The roads and ways are on the peripheries of the wilderness area and are seldom used except for short periods of time during the fall hunting season.

Rangeland management actions calling for continued grazing practices which incorporate grazing systems would not be able to effectively control the encroachment of seral juniper into what is left of the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings of the wilderness area. Encroachment is so far advanced throughout the wilderness area, except in peripheral open areas mostly along boundary roads, that understory vegetation is declining or has been largely removed. The continued policy of allowing livestock to graze 50% of the available forage combined with a declining understory, cover would give the wilderness area a greater and greater "grazed appearance" which would detract from an otherwise substantially natural appearing landscape. In addition, dead or dying stands of understory sagebrush would give some portions of the wilderness area an unsightly or degraded scenic quality. As juniper continues to grow into denser and denser stands, the visual quality of portions of the wilderness area (primarily the higher elevation deep soil sites) would decline as would the quality of primitive recreational experiences.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 30 user days per annum by the year 2005.

The expansion of the wilderness area beyond the boundaries of the WSA through road closures and the inclusion of both additional adjacent federal and state lands (acquisition of state land) would slightly improve the area's overall opportunities for both primitive recreation and solitude by increasing its size.

Conclusion:

The designation of wilderness on 12,500 acres within and adjacent to the WSA would result in an overall slight decline in the area's primitive recreation and scenic quality due to continued seral juniper encroachment. Naturalness would be largely unaffected, and solitude opportunities would be slightly improved by WSA boundary road closures and the inclusion of both federal and state lands (acquisition) into the wilderness area.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach only 30 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of five user days since 1984).

B. IMPACTS ON ECOLOGICAL SUCCESSION IN JUNIPER WOODLANDS

1. Proposed Action

Juniper trees would be mechanically removed by cutting or chaining and burned on 2,700 acres mostly in poor vegetative condition. In addition, juniper would be removed by prescribed burning alone on 1,100 acres primarily in fair and good vegetative condition.

Removing juniper from the community would release the equivalent amount of light, minerals and nutrients, moisture and space to neighboring herbaceous species. Burning slash following cutting would return some organic material including nitrogen to the soil, but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous species such as Idaho fescue, and certain mortality to big sagebrush and any small junipers left following cutting. Other species such as squirreltail, western needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, rabbitbrush and most perennial and annual forbs are unharmed by fire, and would reach preburn populations within one to two years. Idaho fescue would not reach preburn populations for five to ten years.

The most immediate effect on vegetative succession following cutting of western juniper and prescription burning of the treatment area is the temporary elimination of juniper and Mountain big sagebrush. Mountain big sagebrush would generally begin immediate site reestablishment from residual seed. Pretreatment populations can be expected within 20 years, while juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

Approximately 20 years following the cutting/prescribed burning, it may be necessary to again prescribe burn these small areas. Juniper regeneration would generally be less than four feet in height and would be mostly consumed by fire. In the interim, naturally occurring fire would have a greater opportunity to interact because of the increase in the herbaceous species. If wildfires occur, no prescribed burning would be necessary.

Reseeding would occur on 2,700 acres of the treated areas. Native species such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, Great

Basin wildrye, antelope bitterbrush, balsamroot, blue flax and penstemon would be aerially seeded. Adapted exotic species such as crested wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome, orchard grass, alfalfa and small burnett could also be seeded. Seeding would provide for more rapid revegetation and density by the herbaceous species and would retard the encroachment of western juniper by providing a greater opportunity for wildfire occurrence.

The combination of juniper removal, prescribed burning and seeding, which would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities, would break up the homogeneous juniper stands, and maintain the irregular open "parks" of the sagebrush-grass community, characterized by a big sagebrush overstory and a herbaceous understory of perennial grasses and forbs. These communities, as well as parts of the adjacent climax juniper sites, are expected to periodically burn from lightning caused wildfire, or will be treated by prescribed burning on a 20 year cycle.

The implementation of grazing systems designed to meet plant physiological requirements, and the removal of livestock when forage utilization levels reach 50% would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the invasion of juniper into the sagebrush-grass communities, and the eventual decline of the understory species."

Installing juniper log structures on selected areas along three miles of stream bank in the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA coupled with the implementation of satisfactory grazing systems would improve vegetative condition of riparian communities at least one condition class over a 20 year period. This improvement would consist of a trend toward more stable stream banks and the establishment of willows, woods rose, current and scattered cottonwoods and aspens along the streams. A corresponding increase in vigor of the perennial grasses and forbs would result in a decrease of weeds and annuals and perennials such as Rocky Mountain Iris, mulesear dock and wiregrass.

Conclusion:

Impacts on ecological succession would be the temporary disturbance of vegetation in the treatment areas with the big sagebrush and juniper canopy temporarily reduced or eliminated. Beyond 20 years, impacts would be the maintenance of the big sagebrush-grass communities relatively free from juniper dominance, with perennial grasses and forbs making up the major vegetative components.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of

the understory grasses, forbs and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through juniper control, seeding, and the implementation of grazing systems, the ecological condition of the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA in 20 years would change from 78% to 45% poor, 20% to 39% fair, 2% to 15% good and 0% to 1% excellent. This would be modified somewhat if wildfires occur.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and the imposition of 50% or less forage utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous species, but would not prevent invasion of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species such as western needlegrass and a slight increase in ground cover.

No mechanical treatment of stream bank in riparian zones is planned. However, the implementation of a suitable grazing system and holding utilization levels to 50% or less of available forage would improve the vigor and density of riparian zone vegetation, primarily the perennial grasses. Some stream banks would continue to erode and recovery would be considerably slower than with mechanical treatment.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA in 20 years would change from 78% to 56% poor, 20% to 35% fair, 2% to 8% good and 0% to less than 1% excellent.

C. IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE POPULATIONS INDIGENOUS TO JUNIPER WOODLAND COMMUNITIES

1. Proposed Action

The primary impacts to wildlife under the alternative would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 3,800 acres of juniper woodland. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing invading juniper would establish grass/brush dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would create a slight increase in the wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population could increase slightly (+3) as the result of approximately a one AUM increase in forage availability. Other wildlife population numbers would not show a noticeable increase due to vegetative treatments. The placement of juniper structures along a three mile section of Squaw Creek would improve stream bank stabilization and add instream cover, and reduce stream channel width and increase water depths; thereby increasing redband trout populations per acre of stream treated by 10%.

The improved access created for juniper harvest and the development of recreational facilities would cause a reduction in wildlife populations. The construction of seven miles of roads, of which four miles are permanent, would result in an increase in hunting pressure. The mule deer populations could be reduced by 25 mule deer annually. Pronghorn numbers would remain at or near its present population numbers. Sage grouse numbers would remain static.

Conclusion:

There would be a displacement or loss of 20 to 25 mule deer because of increased recreational use and increased road access for juniper harvesting. Redband trout populations would increase by 10%. Other wildlife population numbers would remain unchanged.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

The primary impact of this alternative would be the result of continued seral juniper encroachment into sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. The loss of the forage-to-cover ratio because of invading junipers would cause a reduction of available AUMs (less than two AUMs) for wildlife and, in a 20 year use period, two to eight mule deer would be displaced. The continuation of unstable stream banks would result in the downward trend in the ecological condition of the streams. Total fish population per acre of stream could be reduced by 10%.

The closure of 2.8 miles of roads and ways would reduce the human disturbance to wildlife in the interior of the wilderness area.

Big game species would increase due to the decrease in harvest numbers. An increase of approximately ten mule deer per year could take place within the first five years after the road closures.

Conclusion:

There would be a slight increase of wildlife due to the reductions of hunting pressure in the interior of the WSA. This population increase would offset the slight reduction created by the alteration of habitat from juniper encroachment. Overall population numbers would be unchanged.

D. IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could have potentially destructive impacts on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value through vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Such adverse impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated in advance of any woodland actions.

Construction of three miles of temporary road and four miles of permanent road would increase public use and access, thereby increasing site vandalism and theft of artifacts, as would the proposed construction of a campground.

A 3.5% increase in grazing AUMs could cause a slight increase in trampling-related damages to undiscovered sites, particularly in sensitive spring and riparian areas. Potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the construction of one spring with an exclosure fence would be avoided or mitigated in advance of construction. Redistribution of cattle through implementation of grazing systems would have a slight protective benefit for cultural resources by somewhat reducing grazing pressure on sensitive spring and riparian areas.

Conclusion:

Woodland and recreation management programs calling for the construction of a campground and roads would have a significant adverse impact on cultural sites by allowing easier public access to remote areas, resulting in increased vandalism and artifact theft. Range management actions would cause a slight localized impact to undiscovered cultural resources at new range improvement sites, but would slightly reduce the affects of livestock trampling overall. Woodland harvest practices, other than road construction, would have minimal impact on cultural resources.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, there are 12,500 acres which would be designated as wilderness. Wilderness policy states that, in most cases, cultural resources would be subject to the forces of nature.

Salvage excavation and stabilization of significant endangered sites may be permitted with BLM State Director approval. Non-salvage excavation would be prohibited. This policy would adversely affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in managing the resources for several interrelated reasons.

First, archaeologists regard the products of salvage excavation as inferior in virtually every instance to the products of planned excavations based on carefully considered regional research designs. Salvage excavations, since they are usually initiated on short notice as a result of a site's condition rather than a site's potential to answer significant research questions, often produce inconclusive results and are much less likely to make substantial contributions to scientific understanding than are well-designed, non-salvage excavations.

Second, BLM's assessment of site significance and its resultant management actions are highly dependent on current knowledge about the archaeology of the region. Advancement of this knowledge comes largely from problem-oriented scientific excavations conducted by university academics. A BLM Class III intensive surface inventory as planned under the Proposed Action would be effective on locating and recording most sites within the wilderness area, but the accurate assessment of site significance which occurs primarily in terms of what is established through research-oriented excavations, would be limited. Improvement and refinement of our currently poor understanding of the significance of archaeological sites within the proposed wilderness area could therefore be impaired with wilderness designation. In other words, the scientific values of the sites would be reduced.

Total livestock numbers would decrease by about 7% and should moderately lesson trampling damage to cultural resources. The redistribution of cattle as a result of the establishment of a rotation grazing system would spread trampling-related damages over a broader area, thus moderately lessening impacts to cultural resources in sensitive spring and riparian areas currently overutilized by cattle.

Closure of the wilderness to public motor vehicle use would lessen impacts to cultural resources by reducing motorized access to sites now subject to vandalism and unauthorized removal of artifacts.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy moderately increased physical protection under the Proposed Action from reduced livestock trampling and some road closures, research-oriented excavation would be severely restricted and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information would be significantly reduced. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

E. IMPACTS ON SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED RECREATION USE

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there are 11,420 acres and 20.8 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for motor vehicle use by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. About 49% of the area adjacent to roads and ways would be easily accessible to the public. The would be an increase in this percentage over a five year period as three miles of temporary road are constructed for juniper cutting projects and then closed.

The development of a hunter camp near Hill Creek would enhance hunting and other recreation opportunities by providing presently lacking camping and sanitation facilities.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels, and vegetation treatment of 3,800 acres are not expected to have significant impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities since a high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences.

Vegetation treatments and placement of juniper structures along creek segments would improve wildlife and fish habitats resulting in slight increases in deer and trout populations, improved hunting and fishing quality, and increases in consumptive recreation use.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would increase to 200 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 45 user days.

Conclusion:

Without wilderness designation, 11,420 acres and 20.8 miles of roads and ways would remain open for public motor vehicle use. The quality of hunting and fishing opportunities would improve slightly. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 245 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 90 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 49% of the area or 6,175 acres.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Designation of 12,500 acres as wilderness would close the area to ORV use. This closure would have negligible impacts on ORV opportunities since juniper vegetation, rough topography, and/or rocky terrain severely limit motor vehicle use off roads and ways.

Closure of 1.2 miles of boundary road and 2.8 miles of interior roads and ways and the loss of the opportunity to construct an additional four miles of permanent roads would have a negative impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. This impact is not expected to be significant. Recreationists could still use motor vehicles along 12.8 miles of boundary road. Some

road hunters may be displaced by hunters on foot or horseback, hunting use would be heavier along remaining vehicle routes, and some hunting and fishing use would be displaced to nearby nonwilderness lands. With wilderness designation, about 33% of the area would be within 1/2 mile of the boundary road and would be easily accessible to these sportsmen.

With no stream bank stabilization projects, deer and trout populations would decrease slightly resulting in reductions in the quality of fishing opportunities.

It is estimated that by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use would increase to 170 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 50 user days.

Conclusion:

With designation of a 12,500 acre wilderness, the area and four miles of roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. Impacts from the closure on semi-primitive motorized recreation use would be insignificant. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 220 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 65 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 33% of the area or 4,096 acres.

F. IMPACTS ON SOIL EROSION

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, the 6,980 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 5% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 3,800 acres. The 250 to 500 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 34% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 10% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: not treating areas with slopes greater than 35% and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The seven miles of roads that would be constructed would cause soil loss rates to be 10 to 20 times those of undisturbed sites. This would be in the form of increased runoff, channeled flow, and gullying in the borrow ditch. The eventual closing and rehabilitation of three miles of these roads would help reduce these impacts.

The current rate of soil loss for the WSA is estimated at 11,002 tons/year. After 20 years, the estimated rate is 10,267 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongoing soil loss is estimated at 11,538 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 7% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 5%.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, no vegetation treatments are proposed; thereby alleviating any impacts to the soil resource as discussed for vegetation treatments under the Proposed Action.

The 10,780 acres affected would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 10,678 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

G. IMPACTS ON LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

1. Proposed Action

Management actions include vegetation treatments, including mechanical and prescribed burning, be conducted on 3,800 acres, 35% of the WSA (Table II-6 and Appendix A, Table 3). Prescribed burning would be used at 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. Vegetation treatments would include post drill and/or aerial seeding of approximately 2,700 acres with a seed mixture which could include both native and nonnative species. Seven miles of access would be constructed to woodcutting areas. Three miles would be rehabilitated following cutting and the four remaining miles would be maintained as permanent access.

Livestock grazing in the Trout Springs and Pole Creek Allotments would continue under deferred rotation grazing systems. Within WSA boundaries livestock use would be anticipated to increase from the current estimated level of 855 AUMs to 885 AUMs.

Existing range improvements or livestock facilities would be maintained. Motorized vehicles and existing roads and ways would be used for salting, facility maintenance and day-to-day livestock

monitoring. The additional spring development would improve livestock grazing distribution.

Existing roads and ways (2.8 miles) and four miles of road constructed to provide access for woodcutting would remain open for recreation and multiple use purposes.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment and grazing management would offset livestock reductions in the Trout Springs Allotment and increase livestock use in the Pole Creek Allotment. Livestock use within the WSA would increase slightly from 855 AUMs to 885 AUMs (Appendix B, Table 3).

Within the Trout Springs Allotment livestock reductions, which would of otherwise been necessary in order to balance current livestock use with rangeland capacity, would be offset. The livestock use level within the Trout Springs Allotment portion of the WSA would remain at the current level of approximately 560 AUMs.

The livestock use level within that portion of the WSA occupied by the Pole Creek Allotment would show an anticipated increase (295 AUM to 325 AUM) of 30 AUMs.

Use of prescribed burning at 20-year intervals would maintain sagebrush/grass openings and anticipated livestock forage capacity levels.

Continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems would mitigate the adverse impacts of livestock grazing and subsequently improve rangeland condition and the quality of livestock forage.

Implementation of the grazing systems would be contingent upon maintenance of existing range improvements or livestock facilities. The effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition would be improved by development of the proposed spring.

Maintenance of existing roads and retention of roads constructed for woodcutting would improve access and facilitate salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Vegetation treatments to remove seral juniper would not be proposed.

Livestock grazing in the Trout Springs and Pole Creek Allotments would continue in accordance with the deferred rotation grazing systems. Livestock use within the WSA would decrease from an estimated 855 AUMs to 795 AUMs.

Increases in livestock use outside wilderness boundaries but within the affected allotments would be limited by wilderness designation. Livestock increases in allotment pastures which contain both wilderness and nonwilderness land would not be authorized unless livestock use within the wilderness portion would not increase or the increase would not adversely impact wilderness values.

Wilderness designation would also restrict use on allotments grazed under rotation grazing systems. A livestock number balance needs to be achieved between allotment pastures before an effective grazing system can be implemented. Wilderness would limit livestock increases within wilderness and nonwilderness areas of an allotment or an imbalance among pastures to be rotated would occur. Wilderness would either limit livestock increases on both wilderness and nonwilderness portions of an allotment or the subsequent imbalance among pastures would restrict the implementation of a rotation grazing system. This would reduce the rate of improvement in ecological condition of wilderness and nonwilderness areas.

Existing range improvements would be maintained. No additional range improvements or livestock facilities would be constructed.

Constraints would be placed on motor vehicle use within the wilderness. Vehicle or motorized equipment use would be prohibited unless for emergency situations. Access for salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring would be by horseback, which would increase costs and decrease efficiency.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would place constraints on vegetation manipulation practices. A decrease in livestock use would be necessary in order to balance livestock use with forage capacity. Livestock use within wilderness would decrease from the current estimated level of 855 AUMs to 795 AUMs (Appendix B, Table 3). Livestock use in the Trout Springs Allotment would decrease from 560 AUMs to 500 AUMs. Livestock use in the Pole Creek Allotment would remain at its current level of 295 AUMs.

Maintenance of existing range improvements would provide for the continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems. Constraints placed on the construction of additional range improvements would prohibit the optimization of the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Constraints placed on the use of vehicles or motorized equipment would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day monitoring of livestock by operators and BLM personnel.

H. ECONOMICS

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $8,859 and 0.25 jobs. These are both 4% increases over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 75 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $7,691 and 0.22 jobs. These are increases of 42% and 38% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first five years, there would be 4,320 cords of fuelwood cut each year. This would translate into income of $106,920 and employment of 6.9 jobs. These would be 0.4% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting after five years.

a. Costs

Range improvement development costs would be $68,500 with this alternative. Annual maintenance would be $290. Recreation management costs would be $15,000 initially with annual administrative cost of $5,000. The annual administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $10,800. These costs would end after five years.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-11 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-11
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
SQUAW CREEK CANYON - PROPOSED ACTION

	Grazing	Fuelwood 1/
Total Revenue	$1,195	$10,800
Federal Treasury	448	10,260
State Treasury	0	540
Counties	149	0
Range Improv. Fund	598	0

1/ For first five years only.

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $16,550. This would be a 18% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.008% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.47 jobs. This is a 18% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.002% of the

total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $68,500 with maintenance costing $290. Recreation administrative costs would be $15,000 initially and $5,000 annually. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $10,800 per year for five years. Total revenues would be $11,995 per year with $1,195 coming from grazing and $10,800 coming from fuelwood (for the first five years). Table IV-12 is a comparative table of impacts for the Squaw Creek Canyon WSA.

TABLE IV-12
SUMMARY TABLE
SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA, ID-16-42

Element	Existing	Proposed Action	All Wilderness
Personal Income (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	$ 8,559	$ 8,859	$ 7,958
Recreation (long-term)	5,429	7,691	7,238
Fuelwood (long-term)	0	0	0
TOTAL	$13,988	$16,550	$15,196
Employment (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	0.24	0.25	0.22
Recreation (long-term)	0.16	0.22	0.21
Fuelwood (long-term)	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	0.40	0.47	0.43
Range Impr. Costs (1 time)	0	$68,500	0
RI Maint. Costs (Annual)	$ 290	$ 290	$870-$1450
Fuelwood Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	$10,800 1/	0
Recreation Admin Costs (Annual)	0	$ 5,000	$3,000
Recreation Develop. Costs (1 time)	0	$15,000	0
Grazing Revenues (Annual)	$1,154	$ 1,195	$1,073
Fuelwood Revenues (Annual)	0	$10,800 1/	0
Total Revenues (Annual)	$1,154	$11,995	$1,073

1/ For the first five years only.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $7,958 and 0.22 jobs. These are 7% and 8% decreases from the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 60 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $7,238 and 0.21 jobs. These are increases of 33% and 31% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting under this alternative.

a. Costs

There would be no new range improvements with this alternative. Annual maintenance of existing fence would be $870 to $1,450. Recreation management costs would be $3,000 annually.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-13 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-13
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
SQUAW CREEK CANYON - ALL WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$1,073	$ 0
Federal Treasury	402	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	134	0
Range Improv. Fund	537	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $15,196. This would be a 9% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.007% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.43 jobs. This is a 8% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.002% of the total two-county employment. Maintenance of existing range improvements would cost $870 to $1,450. Recreation administrative costs would be $3,000 annually. Total revenue would be $1,073 per year (all grazing).

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

A. IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action for the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA, none of the 14,180 acres of BLM land would be designated wilderness.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper from deep soil sites would affect a total of 4,250 acres (approximately 30% of the WSA) over a period of one to five years. Between 800 and 1,500 acres per year would be cut and burned/not burned or burned only in small patches up to 40 acres in size. These patches would be interdispersed over approximately 9,500 acres in the eastern two-thirds of the WSA. Because of rocky, convoluted topography, the construction of fire breaks, roads or trails, and the use of bulldozers (evidence of tracks) is not expected to occur for fire control activities. Natural fire breaks would be utilized. Naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in these cut/burn areas for a period of over ten years.

During the first two years following cutting, affected areas (3,550 acres) would have naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality substantially reduced by the presence of piles of cutting slash, numerous stumps up to eight inches in height, and constructed roads or ways used for vehicle access. Trees would be limbed with the slash scattered around the stumps. During the third year, those areas which are chosen to be burned would have their landscape blackened. In these areas, the scenic quality would substantially improve as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture (within five years). However, the presence of residual burned stumps would persist for over ten years. These stumps would continue to diminish the naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities of the affected areas. Most stumps should be gone and a natural appearing landscape returned by year 20. Any remaining stumps would be consumed by the second prescribed burn. The second burn would temporarily reduce the scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas also. This second burn would, however, take on the appearance of a natural fire since no stumps would be present; only residual dead, tree skeletons would remain.

In those cutting areas not burned, stumps and slash would persist well beyond the 20th year to the detriment of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

In the areas which are only burned (700 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During

the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees would retain their blackened color. On some trees, scorched foliage would also persist for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned areas would gradually improve. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not encourage primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the sloping terrain involved in the cut/burn areas, the affected areas would be highly visible from adjacent untreated areas. Moreover, the placement of temporary, minimally constructed roads or the establishment of ways between treatment areas in the eastern portions of the WSA would cause additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. With approximately 30% of the WSA being treated, plus the presence of new vehicle access routes, this portion of the WSA (9,500 acres) would exhibit an overall reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality. The new road access would also reduce the overall opportunities for solitude for those seeking primitive recreation experiences by encouraging an increase in semi-primitive motorized recreation use.

It would be at least 20 years before the WSA once again exhibits an overall high degree of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality. However, the solitude opportunities within the WSA would be reduced permanently by recreation management actions calling for the construction of three miles of permanent interior roads and the construction and semi-primitive motorized recreational use of campgrounds in the eastern and northern peripheries of the WSA at Lone Tree Spring and "CCC" Spring. The campground facilities would consist of parking lots, tables, toilets and fire pits. Such facilities would not be conducive to primitive recreation use. Though the campgrounds would only locally affect naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities, their presence would reduce the solitude in the WSA overall because they would encourage an increase in semi-primitive recreation use on the existing and new road/way system throughout and adjacent to the WSA.

Because of the loss of naturalness and the development of semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities, it is expected that primitive recreation use of the WSA would remain under 20 user days per annum through the year 2005.

The placement of juniper log (limbs attached) along 40% of a 1.5 mile stretch of the Middle Fork Owyhee River would cause significant adverse visual impacts to riparian areas. During the first five to ten years following placement, the presence of numerous dead, unlimbed trees, steel rods and wires would make the riparian area appear highly unnatural and would inhibit primitive recreation use (backpacking and fishing). Once riparian vegetation has reestablished itself in the silted-over juniper, exposed steel rods

and wires would be removed. After ten years, the presence of the juniper logs would be largely obscured by lush riparian vegetation, and the stream banks would appear in a natural condition suitable for primitive recreation experiences (backpacking). The improved riparian areas would also improve fish habitat conditions and subsequently improve fishing opportunities.

The continuation of about the same livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the WSA a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the annual growth of grasses and forbs are cropped close to the ground. However, this cropping would not occur until mid-summer of each year, giving backpackers during their primary spring use season the opportunity to see grass blowing in the wind, which adds to the sense of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

The development of five springs with exclosure fences and .3 miles of fence would substantially increase the number of rangeland projects in the WSA. However, a total of seven water developments and 2.8 miles of fenceline would not notably reduce naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities nor scenic quality in the WSA as a whole. Impacts to these wilderness values would be extremely localized because of the screening from juniper woodland vegetation. The additional rangeland projects would contribute to the overall distribution of livestock and reduce the localized trampling and loss of naturalness on lands surrounding existing water developments and riparian stream areas. The lands adjacent to the new water developments would also exhibit a high degree of grazing, but the overall grazed appearance of the WSA would be somewhat reduced.

The acquisition of 640 acres of Idaho state land would have no impact on the WSA's wilderness values. These lands would have management actions taken on them that would be identical to those already identified for WSA lands.

Conclusion:

There would be significant reductions in wilderness values in the WSA should its 14,180 acres not be designated wilderness. Significant losses in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude opportunities and scenic quality would occur in the WSA overall (with 4,250 acres being most affected) from juniper cutting/burning projects for a period of ten to 20 years. The placement of juniper log stream bank structures along three miles of the Middle Fork Owyhee River would also cause significant losses of naturalness, opportunities for primitive recreation and scenic quality for over 10 years. After 20 years, wilderness values should have largely recovered except for solitude opportunities. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from the development and use of recreation access roads and campgrounds.

Rangeland management practices and improvements would produce a slight increase in the area's overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

Primitive recreation of the WSA is expected to remain under 20 user days per annum through the year 2005.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, there are 15,300 acres within and adjacent to the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA which would be designated wilderness.

The juniper woodland communities and associated wilderness values would be subject to changes occurring only from natural ecological processes and the continued grazing of livestock.

The All Wilderness Alternative contains no woodland management actions nor recreation management actions which would notably alter existing wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. The closure of 5.5 miles of interior roads and ways within the wilderness area would only slightly increase naturalness on a localized basis and cause no noticeable improvement in primitive recreation or solitude opportunities. The roads and ways are mostly on the peripheries of the wilderness area and are seldom used except for short periods of time during the fall hunting season.

Rangeland management actions calling for continued grazing practices which incorporate grazing systems would not be able to effectively control the encroachment of seral juniper into what is left of the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings of the wilderness area. Encroachment is so far advanced throughout the wilderness area, except in the lower elevations in the westernmost portion of the area, that understory vegetation is declining or has been largely removed. In the western portions of the wilderness area, seral juniper is not yet dominant but is well established in the sagebrush/bunchgrass communities. The continued policy of allowing livestock to graze 50% of the available forage combined with a declining understory cover would give much of the wilderness area a greater and greater "grazed appearance" which would detract from an otherwise substantially natural appearing landscape. In addition, dead or dying stands of understory sagebrush would give eastern portions of the wilderness area an unsightly or degraded scenic quality. As juniper continues to grow into denser and denser stands, the visual quality of the wilderness area (primarily the higher elevation deep soil sites) would decline as would the quality of primitive recreational experiences.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 30 user days per annum by the year 2005.

The expansion of the wilderness area beyond the boundaries of the WSA through road closures and the inclusion of both additional adjacent federal and state lands (acquisition of state land) would slightly improve the area's overall opportunities for both primitive recreation and solitude by increasing its size.

Conclusion:

The designation of wilderness on 15,300 acres within and adjacent to the WSA would result in an overall slight decline in the area's primitive recreation and scenic quality due to continued seral juniper encroachment. Naturalness would be largely unaffected and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly improved by road closures and the inclusion of both federal and state lands (acquisition) into the wilderness area.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 30 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of 10 user days since 1984).

B. IMPACTS ON ECOLOGICAL SUCCESSION IN JUNIPER WOODLANDS

1. Proposed Action

Juniper trees would be mechanically removed by cutting or chaining and burned on 3,550 acres mostly in poor vegetative condition. In addition, juniper would be removed by prescribed burning alone on 700 acres primarily in fair and good vegetative condition.

Removing juniper from the community would release the equivalent amount of light, minerals and nutrients, moisture and space to neighboring herbaceous species. Burning slash following cutting would return some organic material including nitrogen to the soil, but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous species such as Idaho fescue, and certain mortality to big sagebrush and any small junipers left following cutting. Other species such as squirreltail, western needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, rabbitbrush and most perennial and annual forbs are unharmed by fire, and would reach preburn populations within one to two years. Idaho fescue would not reach preburn populations for five to ten years.

The most immediate effect on vegetative succession following cutting of western juniper and prescription burning of the treatment area is the temporary elimination of juniper and mountain big sagebrush. Mountain big sagebrush would generally begin immediate site reestablishment from residual seed. Pretreatment populations can be expected within 20 years, while juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

Approximately 20 years following the cutting/prescribed burning, it may be necessary to again prescribe fire. Juniper regeneration would generally be less than four feet in height and would be mostly consumed by fire. In the interim, naturally occurring fire would have a greater opportunity to interact because of the increase in the herbaceous species. If wildfires occur, no prescribed burning would be necessary.

Reseeding would occur on 3,550 acres of the treated areas. Native species such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, Great Basin wildrye, antelope bitterbrush, balsamroot, blue flax and

penstemon would be aerially seeded. Adapted exotic species such as crested wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome, orchard grass, alfalfa and small burnett could also be seeded. Seeding would provide for more rapid revegetation and density by the herbaceous species and would retard the encroachment of western juniper by providing a greater opportunity for wildfire occurrence.

The combination of juniper removal, prescribed burning and seeding, which would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities, would break up the homogeneous juniper stands, and maintain the irregular open "parks" of the sagebrush-grass community, characterized by a big sagebrush overstory and a herbaceous understory of perennial grasses and forbs. These communities, as well as parts of the adjacent climax juniper sites, are expected to periodically burn from lightning caused wildfire, or would be treated by prescribed burning on a 20 year cycle.

The implementation of grazing systems designed to meet plant physiological requirements, and the removal of livestock when utilization levels reach 50% would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the invasion of juniper into the big sagebrush-grass communities, and the eventual decline of the understory species."

Installing juniper log structures on selected areas along one and a half miles of stream bank in the Middle Fork Owyhee River coupled with the implementation of satisfactory grazing systems would improve vegetative condition of riparian communities at least one condition class over a 20 year period. This improvement would consist of a trend toward more stable stream banks and the establishment of willows, woods rose, current and scattered cottonwoods and aspens along the streams. A corresponding increase in vigor of the perennial grasses and forbs would result in a decrease of weeds and annuals and perennials such as Rocky Mountain Iris, mulesear dock and wiregrass.

Conclusion:

Impacts on ecological succession would be the temporary disturbance of vegetation in the treatment areas with the big sagebrush and juniper canopy temporarily reduced or eliminated. Beyond 20 years, impacts would be the maintenance of the big sagebrush-grass communities relatively free from juniper dominance, with perennial grasses and forbs making up the major vegetative components.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would improve on all site initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs, and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through juniper control, seeding, and the implementation of grazing systems, the ecological condition of the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA in 20 years would change from 46% to 17% poor, 52% to 49% fair, 2% to 34% good and 1% excellent. This would be modified somewhat if wildfires occur.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and the imposition of 50% or less forage utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous species, but would not prevent invasion of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species such as western needlegrass and a slight increase in ground cover.

No mechanical treatment of stream bank in riparian zones is planned. However, the implementation of a suitable grazing system and holding utilization levels to 50% or less will improve the vigor and density of riparian zone vegetation, primarily the perennial grasses. Some stream banks will continue to erode and recovery will be considerably slower than with mechanical treatment.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA in 20 years would change from 46% to 38% poor, 52% to 36% fair, 2% to 25% good; with 1% excellent.

C. IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE POPULATIONS INDIGENOUS TO JUNIPER WOODLAND COMMUNITIES

1. Proposed Action

The primary impacts to wildlife under the alternative would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 4,250 acres of juniper woodland. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by the removal of encroaching junipers would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase

would create a slight increase in wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population could increase by 15 to 20 animals as the result of approximately a three AUMs increase in forage availability. Other wildlife populations would not show a significant change in population numbers due to vegetative treatments.

The placement of juniper log structures along 1.5 miles of the Middle Fork Owyhee River would improve stream bank stability and add instream cover, and reduce stream channel width and increase water depths; thereby increasing redband trout populations per acre of stream treated by 10%.

The improved access created for juniper harvest and the development of recreational facilities would cause a reduction or displacement of wildlife populations. The construction of seven miles of temporary roads and three miles of permanent roads would result in an increase in hunting pressure.

The mule deer population could decrease by 10 to 15 animals in the first five years after the closure of the temporary roads. Other game population numbers would not change significantly because of the controlled method of harvest, the short hunting season and lack of alteration to the habitat.

Conclusion:

There would be a 15 to 20 animal increase in mule deer population numbers due to the vegetative treatment of juniper. However, there would be a 10 to 15 animal decrease due to increased hunting pressure resulting in a net increase of approximately five mule deer. Redband trout would increase by 10% on 1.5 miles of stream. Other wildlife species would remain status quo.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

The primary impact of this alternative would be the result of continued juniper encroachment into sagebrush/bunchgrass sites. The loss of the forage-to-cover ratio because of invading junipers would cause a reduction of available AUMs (less than 3 AUMs) for wildlife and, in a 20 year period, 10 to 15 mule deer would be displaced. The continuation of unstable stream banks would result in the downward trend in the ecological condition of the streams. Total fish population per acre of stream would be reduced by 10%.

The closure of seven miles of roads and ways would reduce human disturbance to wildlife in the interior of the wilderness area. Big game species would increase due to the decrease in harvest numbers. An increase of approximately ten mule deer per year would take place within the first five years after the road closures.

Conclusion:

There would be a 10 to 15 animal reduction in mule deer populations due to the alteration of the habitat from juniper encroachment. This reduction in population would offset the slight increase created by a lessening of hunting pressure. Redband trout populations would be reduced by 10%.

D. IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could have potentially destructive impacts on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value through vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Such adverse impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated in advance of any woodland actions.

Construction of seven miles of temporary road and three miles of permanent road would increase public use and access, thereby increasing site vandalism and theft of artifacts, as would the proposed construction of a campground.

A 5% increase in grazing AUMs in two allotments could cause a slight increase in trampling-related damages to undiscovered sites, but redistribution of cattle through implementation of grazing systems would have a slight protective benefit for cultural resources by somewhat reducing grazing pressure on sensitive spring and riparian areas. Potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the construction of five springs with exclosure fences, and .3 miles of fencing would be avoided or mitigated in advance of construction.

Conclusion:

Woodland and recreation management programs calling for the construction of a campground and roads would have a significant adverse impact on cultural sites by allowing easier public access to remote areas, resulting in increased vandalism and artifact theft. Range management actions would cause a slight localized adverse impact to undiscovered cultural resources at new range improvement sites, but would slightly reduce the affects of livestock trampling overall. Woodland harvest practices, other than road construction, would have minimal impact on cultural resources.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, there are 15,300 acres which would be designated as wilderness. Wilderness policy states that, in most

cases, cultural resources would be subject to the forces of nature. Salvage excavation and stabilization of significant endangered sites may be permitted with BLM State Director approval. Non-salvage excavation would be prohibited. This policy would adversely affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in managing the resources for several interrelated reasons.

First, archaeologists regard the products of salvage excavation as inferior in virtually every instance to the products of planned excavations based on carefully considered regional research designs. Salvage excavations, since they are usually initiated on short notice as a result of a site's condition rather than a site's potential to answer significant research questions, often produce inconclusive results and are much less likely to make substantial contributions to scientific understanding than are well-designed, non-salvage excavations.

Second, BLM's assessment of site significance and its resultant management actions are highly dependent on current knowledge about the archaeology of the region. Advancement of this knowledge comes largely from problem-oriented scientific excavations conducted by university academics. A BLM Class III intensive surface inventory as planned under the Proposed Action would be effective on locating and recording most sites within the wilderness area, but the accurate assessment of site significance which occurs primarily in terms of what is established through research-oriented excavations, would be limited. Improvement and refinement of our currently poor understanding of the significance of archaeological sites within the proposed wilderness area could therefore be impaired with wilderness designation. In other words, the scientific values of the sites would be reduced.

Livestock numbers would decline by about 8%, moderately reducing trampling-related damage. The redistribution of cattle as a result of the establishment of a rotation grazing system would spread trampling-related damages over a broader area, thus somewhat lessening impacts to cultural resources in sensitive spring and riparian areas currently overutilized by cattle.

Closure of the wilderness to public motor vehicle use would lessen impacts to cultural resources by reducing motorized access to sites now subject to vandalism and unauthorized removal of artifacts.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy moderately increased physical protection under the Proposed Action from reduced livestock trampling and some road closures, research-oriented excavation would be severely restricted and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information would be significantly reduced. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

E. IMPACTS ON SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED RECREATION USE

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there are 14,820 acres and 21.5 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for motor vehicle use by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. About 44% of the area within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would be easily accessible to the public. There would be an increase in this percentage over a five year period as seven miles of temporary road are constructed for juniper cutting projects and then closed. Increased ORV use is expected to occur, particularly in the northwest periphery and southern half of the WSA where soil (terrain) vegetation and/or topography does not physically constrain users.

The development of two campgrounds would enhance hunting and other recreation opportunities by providing presently lacking camping and sanitation facilities.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels, and vegetation treatment of 4,250 acres are not expected to have significant impacts on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities since a high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences.

Vegetation treatments and placement of juniper structures along creek segments would improve wildlife and fish habitats resulting in slight increases in deer and trout populations, improved hunting and fishing quality, and increases in recreation use.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would increase to 170 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 45 user days.

Conclusion:

Without wilderness designation, there are 14,820 acres and 21.5 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for public motor vehicle use. The quality of hunting and fishing opportunities would improve slightly. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 215 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 80 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 44% of the area or 6,560 acres.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Designation of 15,300 acres as wilderness would close the area to ORV use. This closure would reduce ORV opportunities in the northwest periphery and southern half of the WSA, particularly during the fall where off-road travel is expected to be increasing in association with hunting activities. These areas are well suited for ORV use because of smoother terrain, less rugged topography and less juniper vegetation.

Closure of 1.5 miles of boundary roads and 5.5 miles of interior roads and ways and the loss of the opportunity to construct an additional three miles of permanent roads would have a negative impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. This impact is not expected to be significant because recreationists could still use motor vehicles along 11.5 miles of boundary road. Some road hunters may be displaced by hunters on foot or horseback, hunting use would be heavier along remaining vehicle routes, and some hunting and fishing use would be displaced to nearby nonwilderness lands. With wilderness designation about 24% of the area would be within 1/2 mile of the boundary road and would be easily accessible to these sportsmen.

With no vegetation treatment and stream bank stabilization projects, deer and trout populations would decrease slightly resulting in a lessening of hunting and fishing opportunities.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use would increase to 140 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 50 user days.

Conclusion:

With designation of a 15,300 acre wilderness, the area and seven miles of roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. Impacts from the closure on semi-primitive motorized recreation use would be insignificant for those confining their use to established access routes. However, ORV use opportunities associated with hunting would be significantly reduced within the WSA. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 190 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 55 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 24% of the area or 3,680 acres.

F. IMPACTS ON SOIL EROSION

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, the 9,930 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 5% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 4,250 acres. The 800 to 1,500 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 34% during the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 10% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss not treating areas with slopes greater than 35% and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The 10 miles of roads that would be constructed would cause soil loss rates to be 10 to 20 times those of undisturbed sites. This would be in the form of increased runoff, channeled flow, and gullying in the borrow ditch. The eventual closing and rehabilitation of 3 miles of these roads would help reduce these impacts.

The current rate of soil loss for the WSA is estimated at 14,322 tons/year. After 20 yeras, the estimated rate is 13,400 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongiong, soil loss is estimated at 16,145 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 6% from current levels. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 11%.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, no vegetation treatments are proposed; thereby alleviating any impacts to the soil resource as discussed in the Proposed Action.

The 14,180 acres affected would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices and a reduction in AUMs.

After 20 years, the estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 13,896 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

G. IMPACTS ON LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions calls for mechanical and prescribed burning vegetation treatments to be conducted on 4,250 acres, 30% of the WSA (Table II-8 and Appendix A, Table 4). Prescribed burning would be used at 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/grass openings. Vegetation treatments would include post drill and/or aerial seeding of approximately 3,550 acres. Seed mixture could be composed of both native and nonnative species. Three miles of access roads constructed for woodcutting would be retained as permanent access and seven miles would be rehabilitated following cutting.

Livestock grazing in the Bull Basins and Pole Creek Allotments would continue under deferred rotation grazing systems. Within WSA

boundaries livestock use would be anticipated to increase from the current estimated level of 1,040 AUMs to 1,090 AUMs.

Existing range improvements or livestock facilities would be maintained. Motorized vehicles and existing roads and ways would be used for salting, facility maintenance and day-to-day livestock monitoring. The additional range improvements, which include .3 miles of fenceline and five spring developments, would improve livestock grazing distribution and control season of use by pasture.

Existing roads and ways (5.5 miles) and three miles of road constructed to provide access for woodcutting would remain open for recreation and multiple use purposes.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment and grazing management would offset livestock reductions in the Bull Basin Allotment and provide for increased livestock use in the Pole Creek Allotment. Livestock use within the WSA would increase slightly from 1,040 AUMs to 1,090 AUMs (Appendix B, Table 4).

Within the Bull Basin Allotment livestock reductions, which otherwise would have been necessary to balance current livestock use with rangeland capacity, would be offset. The livestock use level within the Bull Basin Allotment portion of the WSA would remain at the current level of approximately 545 AUMs.

The livestock use level within that portion of the WSA occupied by the Pole Creek Allotment would show an anticipated increase (495 AUM to 545 AUM) of 50 AUMs.

Use of prescribed burning at 20-year intervals would maintain sagebrush/grass openings and anticipated livestock forage capacity levels.

Continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems would mitigate the adverse impacts of livestock grazing and subsequently improve rangeland condition and the quality of livestock forage.

Implementation of the grazing systems would be contingent upon maintenance of existing range improvements or livestock facilities. The effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition would be improved by development of the proposed springs and construction of the fenceline.

Maintenance of existing roads and retention of roads constructed for woodcutting would improve access and facilitate salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Vegetation treatments to remove seral juniper would not be proposed. Existing range improvements would be maintained. No additional range improvements or livestock facilities would be constructed.

Livestock grazing in the Bull Basin and Pole Creek Allotments would continue in accordance with the deferred rotation grazing systems. Livestock use within the WSA would decrease from an estimated 1,040 AUMs to 955 AUMs.

Increases in livestock use outside wilderness boundaries but within the affected allotments would be limited by wilderness designation. Livestock increases in allotment pastures which contain both wilderness and nonwilderness land would not be authorized unless livestock use within the wilderness portion would not increase or the increase would not adversely impact wilderness values.

Wilderness designation would also restrict use on allotments grazed under rotation grazing systems. A livestock number balance needs to be achieved between allotment pastures before an effective grazing system can be implemented. Wilderness would limit livestock increases within wilderness and nonwilderness areas of an allotment or an imbalance among pastures to be rotated would occur. Wilderness would either limit livestock increases on both wilderness and nonwilderness portions of an allotment or the subsequent imbalance among pastures would restrict the implementation of a rotation grazing system. This would reduce the rate of improvement in ecological condition of wilderness and nonwilderness areas.

All 5.5 miles of existing roads and ways within the WSA and 1.5 miles of boundary road would be closed. Vehicle or motorized equipment use would be prohibited unless for emergency situations. Access for salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring would be by horseback which would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day monitoring of livestock.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would place constraints on vegetation manipulation practices. A decrease in livestock use would be necessary in order to balance livestock use with forage capacity. Livestock use within wilderness would decrease from the current estimated level of 1,040 AUMs to 955 AUMs (Appendix B, Table 4). Livestock use in the Bull Basin Allotment would decrease from 545 AUMs to 460 AUMs. Livestock use in the Pole Creek Allotment would remain at its current level of 495 AUMs.

Maintenance of existing range improvements would provide for the continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems. Constraints placed on the construction of additional range

improvements would prohibit the optimization of the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Road closures and the disallowing of vehicles or motorized equipment would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day monitoring of livestock by operators and BLM personnel.

H. ECONOMICS

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $10,911 and 0.31 jobs. These are 5% and 7% increases over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 70 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $6,786 and 0.19 jobs. These are increases of 45% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first five years, there would be 5,680 cords of fuelwood cut each year. This would translate into income of $140,580 and employment of 9.1 jobs. These would be 0.4% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting after five years.

a. Costs

Range improvement development costs would be $89,000 with this alternative. Annual maintenance would be $250. Recreation management costs would be $30,000 initially with annual administrative cost of $5,000. The annual administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $14,200. These costs would end after five years.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-14 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-14
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER - PROPOSED ACTION

	Grazing	Fuelwood 1/
Total Revenue	$1,472	$14,200
Federal Treasury	552	13,490
State Treasury	0	710
Counties	184	0
Range Improv. Fund	736	0

1/ For the first five years only.

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $17,697. This would be a 17% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.009% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.50 jobs. This is a 19% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.002% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $89,000 with maintenance costing $250. Recreation administrative costs would be $30,000 initially and $5,000 annually. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $14,200 per year for five years. Total revenues would be $15,672 per year with $1,472 coming from grazing and $14,200 coming from fuelwood (for the first five years). Table IV-15 is a comparative table of impacts for the Middle Fork Owyhee River WSA.

TABLE IV-15
SUMMARY TABLE
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-45

Element	Existing	Proposed Action	All Wilderness
Personal Income (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	$10,410	$10,911	$ 9,560
Recreation (long-term)	4,675	6,786	6,334
Fuelwood (long-term)	0	0	0
TOTAL	$15,085	$17,697	$15,894
Employment (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	0.29	0.31	0.27
Recreation (long-term)	0.13	0.19	0.18
Fuelwood (long-term)	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	0.42	0.50	0.45
Range Impr. (RI) Costs (One time)	0	$89,000	0
RI Maint. Costs (Annual)	$ 125	$ 250	$375-$625
Fuelwood Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	$14,200 1/	0
Recreation Admin Costs (Annual)	0	$ 5,000	$3,000
Recreation Develop. Costs (1 time)	0	$30,000	0
Grazing Revenues (Annual)	$1,404	$ 1,472	$1,289
Fuelwood Revenues (Annual)	0	$14,200 1/	0
Total Revenues (Annual)	$1,404	$15,672	$1,289

1/ For the first five years only.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $9,560 and 0.27 jobs. These are 8% and 7% decreases from the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 55 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $6,334 and 0.18 jobs. These are increases of 35% and 38% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting under this alternative.

a. Costs

Annual maintenance of existing fences would be $375 to $625. Recreation management costs would be $3,000 annually.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-16 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-16
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER - ALL WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$1,289	$ 0
Federal Treasury	483	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	161	0
Range Improv. Fund	645	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $15,894. This would be a 5% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.008% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.45 jobs. This is a 7% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.002% of the total two-county employment. Range improvement maintenance would cost $375 to $625. Recreation administrative costs would be $3,000 annually. Total revenue would be $1,289 per year (all grazing).

WEST FORK RED CANYON
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

A. IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action for the West Fork Red Canyon WSA, none of the 12,970 acres of BLM land would be designated wilderness.

Juniper woodland management practices calling for the removal of seral juniper from deep soil sites would affect a total of 2,600 acres (approximately 20% of the WSA) over a period of one to five years. Between 500 and 1,000 acres per year would be cut and burned/not burned or burned only in small patches up to 40 acres in size. These patches would be interdispersed over approximately 6,000 acres in the northern half and the eastern and western peripheries of the WSA. Because of rocky, convoluted topography, the construction of fire breaks, roads or trails, and the use of bulldozers (evidence of tracks) is not expected to occur as fire control activities. Natural fire breaks would be utilized. Naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality would be significantly reduced in these cut/burn areas for a period of over ten years.

During the first two years following cutting, areas (1,950 acres) would have naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality substantially reduced by the presence of piles of cutting slash, numerous stumps up to eight inches in height, and constructed roads or ways used for vehicle access. Trees would be limbed with the slash scattered around the stumps. During the third year, those areas which are chosen to be burned would have their landscape blackened. In these areas, the scenic quality would substantially improve as natural revegetation and/or seeded grass species reclaim the areas and as black ash is incorporated into the soil and dispersed by wind and moisture (within five years). However, the presence of residual burned stumps would persist for over ten years. These stumps would continue to diminish the naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities of the affected areas. Most stumps should be gone and a natural appearing landscape returned by year 20. Any remaining stumps would be consumed by the second prescribed burn. The second burn would temporarily reduce the scenic quality and primitive recreation opportunities in the cutting areas also. This second burn would, however, take on the appearance of a natural fire since no stumps would be present; only residual dead tree skeletons would remain.

In those cutting areas not burned, stumps and slash would persist well beyond the 20th year to the detriment of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

In the areas which are only burned (650 acres), impacts to scenic quality would be as described for cut and burn areas except burned tree skeletons would persist for many years. Fire snags have been known to last in the Owyhee Uplands for 25 to 50 years. During the first few years (up to five years) following the burn, trees would

retain their blackened color. On some trees, scorched foliage would also persist for several years. It is during this period that the trees (combined with the blackened ground) cause the greatest visual degradation. Once the residual brown foliage and black bark have fallen from the trees, the scenic quality of the burned area would gradually improve. Despite the loss of scenic quality, the treated areas would retain their natural appearance. The areas would not encourage primitive camping until much of the residual tree material is gone.

Due to the sloping terrain involved in the cut/burn areas, the affected areas would be highly visible from adjacent untreated areas. Moreover, the placement of temporary, minimally constructed roads or the establishment of ways between treatment areas in the eastern and southern portions of the WSA would cause additional reductions in naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities. With approximately 30% of the northern half and the eastern and western peripheries of the WSA being treated, plus the presence of new vehicle access routes, these portions of the WSA (6,000 acres) would exhibit an overall reduction in naturalness, primitive recreation and scenic quality. The new road access would also reduce the overall opportunities for solitude for those seeking primitive recreation experiences by encouraging an increase in semi-primitive motorized recreation use.

It would be at least 20 years before the WSA once again exhibits an overall high degree of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality. However, the solitude opportunities within the WSA would be reduced permanently by recreation management actions calling for the construction of four miles of permanent interior roads and the construction and semi-primitive motorized recreational use of a campground in the northeastern periphery of the WSA at Big Tree Point. The campground facilities would consist of a parking lot, tables, toilets and fire pits. Such facilities would not be conducive to primitive recreation use. Though the campground would only locally affect naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities, its presence would reduce the solitude in the WSA overall because it would encourage an increase in semi-primitive recreation opportunities on the existing and new road/way system throughout and adjacent to the WSA.

Because of the loss of naturalness and the development of semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities, it is expected that primitive recreation use of the WSA would remain under 30 user days per annum through the year 2005.

The continuation of the same livestock numbers and levels of forage utilization (50% utilization) would give the WSA a "grazed appearance" on an overall basis because much of the annual growth of grasses and forbs would be cropped close to the ground. However, this cropping would not occur until mid-summer of each year, giving backpackers during their primary spring use season the opportunity to see grass blowing in the wind, which adds to the sense of naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

The development of three springs and .4 mile of fence line would more than double the number of rangeland projects in the WSA. However, a total of three spring developments and 3.7 miles of fenceline would not notably reduce naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities nor scenic quality in the WSA as a whole. Impacts to these wilderness values would be extremely localized because of the screening from juniper woodland vegetation. The additional rangeland projects would contribute to the overall distribution of livestock and reduce the localized trampling and loss of naturalness on lands surrounding existing water developments and riparian stream areas. The lands adjacent to the new water developments would also exhibit a high degree of grazing, but the overall grazed appearance of the WSA would be somewhat reduced.

The acquisition of 740 acres of adjacent Idaho state land would have no positive impact on the WSA's wilderness values. These lands would have management actions taken on them that would be identical to those already identified for WSA lands.

Conclusion:

There would be significant reductions in wilderness values in the WSA should its 12,970 acres not be designated wilderness. Significant losses in naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities, solitude opportunities and scenic quality would occur in the WSA overall (with 2,600 acres being most affected) from juniper cutting/burning projects for a period of ten to 20 years. After 20 years, wilderness values should have largely recovered except for solitude opportunities. Solitude opportunities would be permanently reduced from the development and use of recreation access roads and campgrounds.

Rangeland management practices and improvements would produce a slight increase in the area's overall naturalness, primitive recreation opportunities and scenic quality.

Primitive recreation use of the WSA is expected to remain under 30 user days per annum through the year 2005.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, there are 14,870 acres within and adjacent to the West Fork Red Canyon WSA which would be designated wilderness.

The juniper woodland communities and associated wilderness values would be subject to changes occurring only from natural ecological processes and the continued grazing of livestock.

The All Wilderness Alternative contains no woodland management actions nor recreation management actions which would notably alter existing wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation, and scenic quality. The closure of four miles of interior roads and ways within the wilderness area

would only slightly increase naturalness on a localized basis and cause no noticeable improvement in primitive recreation or solitude opportunities. The roads and ways are seldom used except for short periods of time during the fall hunting season.

Rangeland management actions calling for continued grazing practices which incorporate grazing systems would not be able to effectively control the encroachment of seral juniper into what is left of the sagebrush/bunchgrass openings of the wilderness area. Encroachment is so far advanced throughout much of the wilderness area, except in the south-central portion of the wilderness area, that understory vegetation is declining or has been largely removed. In the north-central portion of the wilderness area, seral juniper is not yet dominant but is well established in the sagebrush/bunchgrass communities. The continued policy of allowing livestock to graze 50% of the available forage combined with a declining understory cover would give the wilderness area a greater and greater "grazed appearance" which would detract from an otherwise substantially natural appearing landscape. In addition, dead or dying stands of understory sagebrush would give northern portions of the wilderness area an unsightly or degraded scenic quality. As juniper continues to grow into denser and denser stands and vegetation diversity is lost, the visual quality of the wilderness area would decline as would the quality of primitive recreational experiences.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 45 user days per annum by the year 2005.

The expansion of the wilderness area beyond the boundaries of the WSA through the inclusion of both additional adjacent federal and state lands (acquisition of state land) would slightly improve the area's overall opportunities for both primitive recreation and solitude by increasing its size.

Conclusion:

The designation of wilderness on 14,870 acres within and adjacent to the WSA would result in an overall slight decline in the area's primitive recreation and scenic quality due to continued seral juniper encroachment. Naturalness would be largely unaffected and solitude opportunities would be slightly improved by road closures and the inclusion of both federal and state lands (acquisition) into the wilderness area.

Primitive recreation use is expected to reach 45 user days per annum by the year 2005 (an increase of 15 user days since 1984).

B. IMPACTS ON ECOLOGICAL SUCCESSION IN JUNIPER WOODLANDS

1. Proposed Action

Juniper trees would be mechanically removed by cutting or chaining and burned on 1,950 acres mostly in poor condition. In

addition, juniper would be removed by prescribed burning alone on 650 acres primarily in fair or good condition.

Removing juniper from the community would release the equivalent amount of light, minerals and nutrients, moisture and space to neighboring herbaceous species. Burning slash following cutting would return some organic material including nitrogen to the soil, but would cause some mortality of the herbaceous species such as Idaho fescue, and certain mortality to big sagebrush and any small junipers left following cutting. Other species such as squirreltail, western needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, rabbitbrush and most perennial and annual forbs are unharmed by fire, and would reach preburn populations within one to two years. Idaho fescue would not reach preburn populations for five to ten years.

The most immediate effect on vegetative succession following cutting or chaining of western juniper and prescription burning of the treatment area is the temporary elimination of juniper and Mountain big sagebrush. Mountain big sagebrush would generally begin immediate site reestablishment from residual seed. Pretreatment populations can be expected within 20 years, while juniper reestablishment is somewhat slower but equally constant.

Approximately 20 years following the cutting/prescribed burning, it may be necessary to again prescribe fire. Juniper regeneration would generally be less than four feet in height and would be mostly consumed by fire. In the interim, naturally occurring fire would have a greater opportunity to interact because of the increase in the herbaceous species. If wildfires occur, no prescribed burning would be necessary.

Reseeding would occur on 1,950 acres of the treated areas. Native species such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, Great Basin wildrye, antelope bitterbrush, balsamroot, blue flax and penstemon would be aerially seeded. Adapted exotic species such as crested wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome, orchard grass, alfalfa and small burnett could also be seeded. Seeding would provide for more rapid revegetation and density by the herbaceous species and would retard the encroachment of western juniper by providing a greater opportunity for wildfire occurrence.

The combination of juniper removal, prescribed burning and seeding, which would be dispersed throughout the seral juniper communities, would break up the homogeneous juniper stands, and maintain the irregular open "parks" of the sagebrush-grass community, characterized by a big sagebrush overstory and a herbaceous understory of perennial grasses and forbs. These communities, as well as parts of the adjacent climax juniper sites, are expected to periodically burn from lightning caused wildfire, or would be treated by prescribed burning on a 20 year cycle.

The implementation of grazing systems designed to meet plant physiological requirements, and the removal of livestock when forage

utilization levels reach 50% would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the encroachment of juniper into the sagebrush-grass communities, and the eventual decline of the understory species.

Conclusion:

Impacts on ecological succession would be the temporary disturbance of vegetation in the treatment areas with the big sagebrush and juniper canopy temporarily reduced or eliminated. Beyond 20 years, impacts would be the maintenance of the big sagebrush-grass communities relatively free from juniper dominance, with perennial grasses and forbs making up the major vegetative components.

Studies show that implementing grazing systems and imposing use levels of 50% or less would improve the ecological condition of the vegetation, but would not prevent the expansion of juniper into the big sagebrush-bunchgrass ecological sites. Although the vigor and density of grasses and forbs would imporve on all sites initially, the encroachment and continued growth of juniper in the "loamy" sites not treated, would result in an eventual decline or demise of the understory grasses, forbs, and shrubs and subsequently a decline in species diversity and vegetative condition.

Through juniper control, seeding, and the implementation of grazing systems, the ecological condition of the West Fork Red Canyon WSA in 20 years would change from 46% to 30% poor, 52% to 44% fair, 2% to 25% good, with 1% excellent. This would be modified somewhat if wildfires occur.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

No treatments for juniper removal are proposed under this alternative. The major impact would be the continued encroachment of western juniper into the big sagebrush-grass ecological sites, a corresponding decrease in herbaceous understory of perennial grass and forbs and a decrease in vegetative condition. This may be partially offset by the increased opportunity for wildfire occurrence resulting from the implementation of deferred and rest-rotation grazing systems and the imposition of 50% or less forage utilization levels. These grazing systems and utilization limits would increase vigor and competitive ability of the herbaceous species, but would not prevent encroachment of juniper. The climax juniper ecological sites would improve as a result of the improved grazing systems and utilization levels. This improvement would be evidenced by an increase in vigor and density of the understory perennial species such as bluebunch wheatgrass and a slight increase in ground cover.

Conclusion:

Vegetative condition over a 20 year period would improve in climax juniper communities as a result of improved grazing systems and utilization levels. Vegetative condition would decrease in the

interspersed sagebrush-grass communities because of the encroachment of western juniper and the increase in big sagebrush. This may be offset somewhat by increased wildfire occurrence. The ecological condition of the West Fork Red Canyon WSA in 20 years would change from 50% to 45% poor, 49% to 35% fair, 1% to 20% good, with less than 1% excellent.

C. IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE SPECIES INDIGENOUS TO JUNIPER WOODLAND COMMUNITIES

1. Proposed Action

The primary impacts to wildlife under this alternative would be the result of vegetative manipulation projects on approximately 2,600 acres of juniper woodland. The improvement of the forage/cover ratio by removing the invading junipers would establish grass/forb dominated sites. The corresponding grass/forb increase would create a slight increase in wild ungulate populations. The mule deer population could increase by seven to ten animals as the result of approximately a one to two AUM increase in forage availability. Other population numbers would not show a noticeable increase due to the vegetative treatments.

The improved access created for juniper harvest and the development of recreational facilities would cause a reduction or displacement of wildlife populations. The construction of three miles of temporary roads and four miles of permanent roads would result in an increase in hunting pressure. The mule deer population could decrease by approximately ten animals in the first five years after the closure of the temporary roads. Other game population numbers would not change significantly because of the controlled method of harvest, the short hunting season and the lack of alteration to the habitat.

Conclusion:

There would be a slight increase in the mule deer population numbers due to the vegetative treatment of juniper. This population increase would be offset by a reduction in population due to increased recreation use and road access. Other wildlife species populations would also remain status quo.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

The primary impact of this alternative would be from the continued encroachment of seral juniper into sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. The loss of the forage-to-cover ratio because of invading juniper would cause a reduction of available AUMs (less than 2 AUMs) for wildlife and, in a 20 year period, less than ten mule deer would be displaced.

The closure of four miles of roads and ways would reduce the human disturbance to wildlife in the interior of the wilderness area. Big game species would increase due to the decrease in harvest

numbers. An increase of approximately one to five mule deer per year could take place within the first five years after the road closure.

Conclusion:

There would be a slight reduction in wildlife due to the alteration of the habitat from juniper encroachment. This reduction in population would be offset by the slight increase created by the lessening of hunting pressure in the interior of the wilderness area.

D. IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions such as tree cutting/felling, burning and associated vehicle movement across sites could have potentially destructive impacts on cultural resources. These actions could disturb sites and thereby reduce or destroy their scientific value through vertical and horizontal disturbance of artifacts, mixing or destruction of environmental information and artifact breakage. Such adverse impacts to identified cultural resources would either be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated in advance of any woodland actions.

Construction of three miles of temporary road and four miles of permanent road would increase public use and access, thereby increasing site vandalism and theft of artifacts, as would the proposed construction of a campground.

Potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the construction of three spring with exclosure fences, and .4 mile of fencing would be avoided or mitigated in advance of construction. Redistribution of cattle through implementation of grazing systems would have a slight protective benefit for cultural resources by somewhat reducing grazing pressure on sensitive spring and riparian areas.

Conclusion:

Woodland and recreation management programs calling for the construction of a campground and roads would have a significant adverse impact on cultural sites by allowing easier public access to remote areas, resulting in increased vandalism and artifact theft. Range management actions would cause a slight localized impact to undiscovered cultural resources at new range improvement sites, but would slightly reduce the affects of livestock trampling overall. Woodland harvest practices, other than road construction, would have minimal impact on cultural resources.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, there are 14,870 acres which would be designated as wilderness. Wilderness policy states that in most

cases, cultural resources will be subject to the forces of nature. Salvage excavation and stabilization of significant endangered sites may be permitted with BLM State Director approval. Non-salvage excavation would be prohibited. This policy would adversely affect BLM's ability to accurately assess the significance of cultural resources and to make appropriate allocations of time and money in managing the resources for several interrelated reasons.

First, archaeologists regard the products of salvage excavation as inferior in virtually every instance to the products of planned excavations based on carefully considered regional research designs. Salvage excavations, since they are usually initiated on short notice as a result of a site's condition rather than a site's potential to answer significant research questions, often produce inconclusive results and are much less likely to make substantial contributions to scientific understanding than are well-designed, non-salvage excavations.

Second, BLM's assessment of site significance and its resultant management actions are highly dependent on current knowledge about the archaeology of the region. Advancement of this knowledge comes largely from problem-oriented scientific excavations conducted by university academics. A BLM Class III intensive, surface inventory as planned under the Proposed Action would be effective in locating and recording most sites within the wilderness area, but the accurate assessment of site significance which occurs primarily in terms of what is established through research-oriented excavations, would be limited. Improvement and refinement of our currently poor understanding of the significance of archaeological sites within the proposed wilderness area could therefore be impaired with wilderness designation. In other words, the scientific values of the sites would be reduced.

Total livestock numbers would decrease by about 7% and this would moderately lesson trampling damage to cultural resources. The redistribution of cattle as a result of the establishment of a rotation grazing system would spread trampling-related damages over a broader area, thus moderately lessening impacts to cultural resources in sensitive spring and riparian areas currently overutilized by cattle.

Closure of the wilderness to public motor vehicle use would lessen impacts to cultural resources by reducing motorized access to sites now subject to vandalism and unauthorized removal of artifacts.

Conclusion:

Though cultural sites would enjoy moderately increased physical protection under the Proposed Action from reduced livestock trampling and some road closures, research-oriented excavation would be severely restricted and BLM's ability to retrieve cultural resource information would be significantly impaired. The value of archaeological sites for the obtainment of scientific information

would be significantly reduced. Other management actions would not significantly impact cultural resources.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would place constraints on the management and study of cultural resources. Closure of the area to public motor vehicle use and decreases in livestock use would reduce damage to cultural sites.

E. IMPACTS ON SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED RECREATION USE

1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there are 13,710 acres and 16 miles of road and ways which would remain open for motor vehicle use by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. About 34% of the area within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would be easily accessible to the public. There would be an increase in this percentage over a five year period as three miles of temporary roads are constructed for juniper cutting projects and then closed. Increased ORV use is expected to occur, particularly in the northeast and southcentral portions of the WSA where soil (terrain), vegetation and/or topography does not physically constrain users.

The development of a campground on Big Tree Point would enhance hunting and other recreation opportunities by providing presently lacking camping and sanitation facilities.

Rangeland improvements, changes in livestock grazing levels, and vegetation treatment of 2,600 acres are not expected to have significant impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities since a high level of naturalness is not required for quality semi-primitive motorized recreation experiences.

Vegetation treatments would improve wildlife habitat resulting in slight increases in deer numbers, improved hunting quality, and increases in hunting use.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of roads and ways would increase to 265 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 45 user days.

Conclusion:

Without wilderness designation, there are 13,710 acres and 16 miles of roads and ways which would remain open for public motor vehicle use. The quality of hunting opportunities would improve slightly. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 310 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 110 users days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 34% of the area or 4,640 acres.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Designation of 14,870 acres as wilderness would close the area to ORV use. This closure would reduce ORV opportunities in the northeast and southcentral portions of the WSA, particularly during the fall where off-road travel is expected to be increasing in association with hunting activities.

Closure of four miles of interior roads and ways and the loss of the opportunity to construct an additional four miles of permanent roads would have a negative impact on semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. This impact is not expected to be significant because recreationists could still use motor vehicles along eight miles of boundary road. Some road hunters may be displaced by hunters on foot or horseback, hunting use would be heavier along remaining roads, and some hunting and fishing use would be displaced to nearby nonwilderness lands. With wilderness designation, about 17% of the area would be within 1/2 mile of the boundary road and would be easily accessible to these sportsmen.

With no vegetative treatment, deer populations would decrease slightly resulting in reductions in the quality of hunting opportunities.

It is estimated that, by the year 2005, hunting and fishing use would increase to 225 user days and other semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 50 user days.

Conclusion:

With designation of a 14,870 acre wilderness, the area and four miles of roads and ways would be closed to public motor vehicle use. Impacts from the closure on semi-primitive motorized recreation use would be insignificant for those confining their use to established access routes. However, ORV use opportunities associated primarily with hunting would be significantly reduced within the WSA.. Semi-primitive motorized recreation use would increase to 275 user days by the year 2005 (an increase of 75 user days since 1984) and would be concentrated in 17% of the area or 2,560 acres.

F. IMPACTS ON SOIL EROSION

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, the 10,370 acres that would not be subject to vegetation treatment would show an estimated 5% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices.

Vegetation treatments (cutting and burning) are targeted for 2,600 acres. The 500 to 1,000 acres/year that would be treated would show a one to two year increase in soil loss estimated at 32% during

the treatment and early post treatment period. A decrease of 10% in soil loss would occur as seeded and/or natural vegetation becomes reestablished.

The following proposed actions would help minimize the potential for accelerated soil loss: not treating areas with slopes greater than 35% and keeping treated areas more than 50 to 150 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream courses.

The seven miles of roads that would be constructed would cause soil loss rates to be 10 to 20 times those of undisturbed sites. This would be in the form of increased runoff, channeled flow, and gullying in the borrow ditch. The eventual closing and rehabilitation of 3 miles of these roads would help reduce these impacts.

The current rate of soil loss for the WSA is estimated at 13,359 tons/year. After 20 years, the estimated rate is 12,581 tons/year. While vegetation treatments are ongoing soil loss is estimated at 15,628 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 6% from current rates. During the treatment period, the impact would be an increase in soil loss of 15%.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, no vegetation treatments are proposed; thereby alleviating any impacts to the soil resource as discussed in the Proposed Action.

The 12,970 acres affected would show an estimated 3% reduction in soil loss over a 20 year period. This would be due primarily to improved range condition as a result of improved grazing management practices and a reduction in AUMs.

The long-term estimated rate of soil loss for the WSA is 12,970 tons/year.

Conclusion:

After 20 years, the impact to the soil resource would be a reduction in soil loss of 3% from the current level.

G. IMPACTS ON LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

1. Proposed Action

Juniper woodland management actions calls for mechanical and prescribed burning vegetation treatments to be conducted on 2,600 acres, 20% of the WSA (Table II-10 and Appendix A, Table 5). Prescribed burning would be used at 20-year intervals to maintain sagebrush/

grass openings. Vegetation treatments would include post drill and/or aerial seeding of approximately 1,950 acres. Seed mixture could be composed of both native and nonnative species. Three miles of access roads constructed for woodcutting would be retained as permanent access and seven miles would be rehabilitated following cutting.

Livestock grazing in the Bull Basin and Castlehead-Lambert Allotments would continue under deferred rotation grazing systems. Within WSA boundaries, livestock use would remain at the current estimated level of 985 AUMs.

Existing range improvements or livestock facilities would be maintained. Motorized vehicles and existing roads and ways would be used for salting, facility maintenance and day-to-day livestock monitoring. The additional range improvements, which include .4 miles of fenceline and three spring developments, would improve livestock grazing distribution and control season of use by pasture.

The existing four miles of ways and the four miles of road constructed to provide access for woodcutting would remain open for multiple use purposes.

Conclusion:

Vegetation treatment and grazing management would offset livestock reductions in the Bull Basin Allotment which would of otherwise been necessary in order to balance current livestock use with rangeland capacity. Livestock use in the Bull Basin and Castlehead-Lambert Allotments would remain at their current levels of 460 AUMs and 525 AUMs, respectively. Total livestock use within the WSA would remain at the current estimated level of 985 AUMs.

Use of prescribed burning at 20-year intervals would maintain sagebrush/grass openings and anticipated livestock forage capacity levels.

Continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems would mitigate the adverse impacts of livestock grazing and subsequently improve rangeland condition and the quality of livestock forage.

Implementation of the grazing systems would be contingent upon maintenance of existing range improvements or livestock facilities. The effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition would be improved by development of the proposed springs and construction of the fenceline.

Maintenance of existing roads and retention of roads constructed for woodcutting would improve access and facilitate salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Vegetation treatments to remove seral juniper would not be proposed.

Livestock grazing in the Bull Basin and Castlehead-Lambert Allotments would continue in accordance with the deferred rotation grazing systems. Livestock use within the WSA would decrease from an estimated 985 AUMs to 915 AUMs.

Increases in livestock use outside wilderness boundaries but within the affected allotments would be limited by wilderness designation. Livestock increases in allotment pastures which contain both wilderness and nonwilderness land would not be authorized unless livestock use within the wilderness portion would not increase or the increase would not adversely impact wilderness values.

Wilderness designation would also restrict use on allotments grazed under rotation grazing systems. A livestock number balance needs to be achieved between allotment pastures before an effective grazing system can be implemented. Wilderness would limit livestock increases within wilderness and nonwilderness areas of an allotment or an imbalance among pastures to be rotated would occur. Wilderness would either limit livestock increases on both wilderness and nonwilderness portions of an allotment or the subsequent imbalance among pastures would restrict the implementation of a rotation grazing system. This would reduce the rate of improvement in ecological condition of wilderness and nonwilderness areas.

Existing range improvements would be maintained. No additional range improvements or livestock facilities would be constructed.

Constraints would be placed on the use of motor vehicles. Vehicle or motorized equipment use would be prohibited unless for emergency situations.Access for salting, facility maintenance and livestock monitoring would be by horseback which would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day monitoring.

Conclusion:

Wilderness designation would place constraints on vegetation manipulation practices. A decrease in livestock use would be necessary in order to balance livestock use with forage capacity. Livestock use within wilderness would decrease from the current estimated level of 985 AUMs to 915 AUMs (Appendix B, Table 5). Livestock use in the Bull Basin Allotment would decrease from 460 AUMs to 390 AUMs. Livestock use in the Castlehead-Lambert Allotment would remain at its current level of 525 AUMs.

Maintenance of existing range improvements would provide for the continued implementation of the deferred rotation grazing systems. Constraints placed on the construction of additional range improvements would prohibit the optimization of the effectiveness of the grazing systems to improve rangeland condition.

Constraints placed on the use of motor vehicles or motorized equipment would hinder facility maintenance and day-to-day monitoring of livestock by operators and BLM personnel.

H. ECONOMICS

1. Proposed Action

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $9,860 and 0.28 jobs. These are no change from the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 90 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $9,651 and 0.27 jobs. These are increases of 39% and 35% over the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. In the first five years, there would be 3,120 cords of fuelwood cut each year. This would translate into income of $77,220 and employment of 5.0 jobs. These would be 0.3% of the two-county manufacturing income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting after five years.

a. Costs

Range improvement development costs would be $47,750 with this alternative. Annual maintenance would be $190. Recreation management costs would be $10,000 initially with annual administrative cost of $5,000. The annual administrative costs associated with fuelwood sales would be $7,800. These costs would end after five years.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-17 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-17
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
WEST FORK RED CANYON - PROPOSED ACTION

	Grazing	Fuelwood 1/
Total Revenue	$1,330	$7,800
Federal Treasury	499	7,410
State Treasury	0	390
Counties	166	0
Range Improv. Fund	665	0

1/ For first five years only.

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $19,511. This would be a 16% increase over the current situation and would

represent 0.01% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.55 jobs. This is a 27% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.003% of the total two-county employment. Establishment of range improvements would cost $47,750 with maintenance costing $190. Recreation administrative costs would be $10,000 initially and $5,000 annually. Fuelwood administrative costs would total $7,800 per year for five years. Total revenues would be $9,130 per year with $1,330 coming from grazing and $7,800 coming from fuelwood (for the first five years). Table IV-18 is a comparative table of impacts for the West Fork Red Canyon WSA.

TABLE IV-18
SUMMARY TABLE
WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA, ID-16-47

Element	Existing	Proposed Action	All Wilderness
Personal Income (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	$ 9,860	$ 9,860	$ 9,159
Recreation (long-term)	6,937	9,651	8,897
Fuelwood (long-term)	0	0	0
TOTAL	$16,797	$19,511	$18,056
Employment (Total):			
Grazing (long-term)	0.28	0.28	0.26
Recreation (long-term)	0.20	0.27	0.25
Fuelwood (long-term)	0.48	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	0.48	0.55	0.51
Range Impr. Costs (One time)	0	$47,750	0
RI Maint. Costs (Annual)	$ 165	$ 190	$495-$825
Fuelwood Admin. Costs (Annual)	0	$ 7,800 1/	0
Recreation Admin Costs (Annual)	0	$ 5,000	$3,000
Recreation Development Costs (One time)	0	$10,000	0
Grazing Revenues (Annual)	$1,330	$ 1,330	$1,235
Fuelwood Revenues (Annual)	0	$ 7,800 1/	0
Total Revenues (Annual)	$1,330	$ 9,130	$1,235

1/ For the first five years only.

2. All Wilderness Alternative

Under this alternative, livestock grazing generated income and employment would be $9,159 and 0.26 jobs. These are both a 7% decrease from the existing situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county farm income and employment. Recreation use would increase by 65 user days. This would make the recreation generated income and employment equal $8,897 and 0.25 jobs. These are increases of 28% and 25% over the existing

situation. These are both less than 1/10th of 1% of the two-county retail trade income and employment. There would be no fuelwood cutting under this alternative.

a. Costs

Range Improvement maintenance costs would be $495 to $825. Recreation management costs would be $3,000 annually.

b. Revenue Collections and Disbursements

Table IV-19 shows the revenue collections and disbursements under this alternative.

TABLE IV-19
REVENUE COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS
WEST FORK RED CANYON - ALL WILDERNESS

	Grazing	Fuelwood
Total Revenue	$1,235	$ 0
Federal Treasury	463	0
State Treasury	0	0
Counties	154	0
Range Improv. Fund	618	0

c. Conclusion

Total income generated by this alternative would be $18,056. This would be a 7% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.009% of the total two-county personal income. Total employment would be 0.51 jobs. This is a 6% increase over the current situation and would represent 0.003% of the total two-county employment. Range improvement maintenance would cost $495 to $825. Recreation administrative costs would be $3,000 annually. Total revenue would be $1,235 per year (all grazing).

SHORT-TERM USE VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The allocation of resources resulting from this wilderness decision is not expected to have a significant impact on long-term productivity. A wilderness decision would not significantly affect the land's capability to produce renewable resources on a sustained yield basis. The principles of sustained yield would govern the allocation of all renewable resources under each alternative.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Wilderness designation could preclude future resource commodity development. This commitment, however, is not irreversible or irretrievable. Resources within wilderness would be available for use at a future date should national priorities and needs change. Congress has the option to relinquish wilderness designation and open once designated lands for development of their resource potential. Special wilderness management stipulations allowing juniper treatment projects would somewhat increase soil erosion in the short-term (less than 20 years) and cause an irretrievable loss of some soils. In the long-term (over 20 years), however, soil losses would be reduced as vegetative conditions improve. Restrictions on the scientific excavation of archaeological sites could also cause an irretrievable loss of cultural values within designated wilderness areas.

In areas not designated wilderness, commodity production activities including range management facilities, juniper cutting, road construction and livestock grazing would not irreversibly or irretrievably commit resources except for an irretrievable loss of soils. These actions could be removed or the resources rehabilitated to restore present values or reduce impacts, including a reduction in erosion. Soils will continually be lost, but soil erosion rates would be reduced in the long-term as vegetation conditions improve and temporary roads are rehabilitated following the prescribed management actions.

CHAPTER V
COORDINATION, CONSISTENCY, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

Coordination and consultation has been a continuing process beginning in 1978 with the initial inventory of BLM lands to determine areas with wilderness characteristics. The issue identification and alternative formulation process for this Amendment/EIS involved individual contacts with state agencies, county government, range users, and interest groups who are affected by the Proposed Action. The Boise District held public meetings and mailed informational packets to approximately 400 individuals, interest groups, local government agencies, and elected officials. The scoping process for the Amendment/EIS is discussed in Chapter I. Those government agencies, elected officials, and interest groups who participated in the planning process are listed under PUBLIC PARTICIPATION of this chapter.

B. CONSISTENCY

No formally approved land management plan affects the WSAs other than the Owyhee Resource Area Management Framework Plan which is under consideration for amendment in this document.

The Owyhee County, Idaho Comprehensive Plan Update (1980) does not address wilderness recommendations. However, the Owyhee County Commissioners are on public record as being opposed to any wilderness in Owyhee County.

The management objectives for wildlife in the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness proposal and the nonwilderness proposals for the Juniper Mountain WSAs are consistent with wildlife management objectives identified by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Preparation of Draft Amendment/EIS

The Boise District prepared a Wilderness Study Public Participation Plan as a continuation of the public review process begun during the wilderness inventory. Public participation in the inventory was under the guidance of the BLM Idaho State Office Public Participation Plan. The District plan coordinates all wilderness studies for different planning efforts in the District to maintain consistency between issue identification and the BLM Wilderness Study Policy.

Those government agencies, elected officials, and interest groups that participated in the planning process by providing input during the inventory and study phases for the Draft Amendment/EIS are listed below.

a. Interest Groups

Boise State University Conservation Group
Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
Committee for Idaho's High Desert
Friends of the Earth
Greater Snake River Land Use Congress
Idaho Cattlemen's Association
Idaho Conservation League
Idaho Environmental Council
Nampa Chamber of Commerce
National Audubon Society
Oregon High Desert Study Group
Owyhee Cattlemen's Association
Sierra Club
The Wilderness Society

b. State Agencies

Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Idaho Department of Lands
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
Idaho Land Board

c. Elected Officials

Federal:
Congressman Larry Craig
Senator James McClure
Senator Steve Symms

State:
Governor John Evans

Local:
Owyhee County Commissioners

2. Agencies, Organizations, and Persons to Whom Draft Sent

The Draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS was distributed to the following government agencies, organizations (interest groups), individuals, and elected officials for review and comment.

a. Federal Agencies

Department of Agriculture:
Soil Conservation Service

Environmental Protection Agency

Department of the Interior:
- U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Bureau of Mines
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

Department of Transportation:
- Federal Aviation Administration

b. Idaho State Agencies or Boards

Air National Guard
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Health, Welfare, and Environmental Services
- Department of Lands
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Water Resources
- Outfitters and Guides Board
- State Clearing House
- State Historic Preservation Officer (Idaho Historical Society)
- University of Idaho Extension Service

c. Local Agencies

Owyhee County Historic Preservation Officer

d. Elected Officials

Federal:
- Congressman Larry Craig
- Congressman George Hansen
- Senator James McClure
- Senator Steve Symms

State:
- Governor John Evans
- Representative Gerry Montgomery
- Representative Lyman Winchester
- Senator Walt Yarborough

Local:
- Ada County Commissioners
- Canyon County Commissioners
- Malheur County Commissioners (Oregon)
- Owyhee County Commissioners

e. Advisory Councils

Boise District Multiple Use Advisory Council
Boise District Grazing Advisory Board

f. Organizations

Boise State University Conservation Group
Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
Committee for Idaho's High Desert
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
Friends of the Earth
Greater Snake River Land Use Congress
High Country News
Idaho Cattlemen's Association
Idaho Conservation League
Idaho Environmental Council
Idaho Gem Club
Idaho Mining Association
Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee
Idaho Outdoor Association
Nampa Chamber of Commerce
National Audubon Society
National Wildlife Federation
Nature Conservancy
Northwest Mining Association
Oregon High Desert Study Group
Oregon Wilderness Coalition
Owyhee Cattlemen's Association
Owyhee County Gem and Mineral Society
Sierra Club
The Wilderness Society
Wildlife Society

g. Concerned Individuals and Businesses

Affected grazing permittees
Other individuals
Businesses or industries (i.e., minerals and energy)

3. Analysis of Public Comment on Draft Amendment/EIS

a. Statistical Information:

During the 1982 public comment period on the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS, 73 written comments were received from 71 individuals. Two additional comments were received from government agencies in 1985.

Public hearings were held on the wilderness recommendations during July of 1982. These hearings were held in Jordan Valley, Oregon, on July 7, and in Boise, Idaho, on July 8. Twenty-six (26) individuals gave oral and/or written testimony at these hearings. One individual gave testimony at both public hearings; some individuals also provided additional written comments during the comment period.

The number of comments or testimonies supporting or opposing wilderness or supporting a particular alternative presented in the draft document are shown below:

Written Comments

Alternative or Wilderness Position*	Number of Individuals Commenting
No Action/No Wilderness Alternative	8
All Wilderness Alternative	9
Partial Wilderness Alternative #1 (North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Proposal)	0
Partial Wilderness Alternative #2 (North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Proposal with Special Stipulations for Juniper Woodland Management)	0
Partial Wilderness Alternative #3 (North Fork Owyhee River and Big Willow Spring Wilderness Proposals with Special Stipulations for Juniper Woodland Management)	1
For Wilderness Designation in General	5
For Wilderness Designation in North Fork Owyhee River WSA (No specific proposal)	41
Against Wilderness Designation in General	2
No Position Taken	6
Total Comments Received	73

* Alternatives no longer presented in aggregated format as done in draft EIS.

Hearing Testimony

Alternative or Wilderness Position	Number of Individuals Testifying
No Action/No Wilderness Alternative	9
All Wilderness Alternative	5
Partial Wilderness Alternative #1	0
Partial Wilderness Alternative #2	0
Partial Wilderness Alternative #3	0
For Wilderness Designation in General	5
For Wilderness Designation in North Fork Owyhee River WSA	0
Against Wilderness Designation in General	7
No Position Taken	0
Total Number of Testimonies	26

b. List of Those Providing Comment:

The individuals, interest groups, government agencies, and/or elected officials who provided comments on the Draft Amendment/EIS are listed below in the order in which comments

were received. The number assigned to each comment also corresponds to the order in which they are reproduced in this document beginning on page V-14. Comments are tabulated by federal government (elected and agencies), state government (elected and agencies), local government, organizations and individuals in Table V-1.

List of those Commenting

1. Don L. Crawford, Moscow, Idaho
2. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland Area Office, Portland, Oregon
3. Dennis Baird, Moscow, Idaho
4. Benjamin A. Foote, Kent, Ohio
5. Julie J. Hall, Boise, Idaho
6. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Owyhee, Nevada
7. Mr. and Mrs. Steve Hall, Nampa, Idaho
8. Dr. Bruce M. Hayse, McCammon, Idaho
9. Neil R. Rimbey, Caldwell, Idaho
10. Fred W. Rabe, Moscow, Idaho
11. Alan R. Hausrath, Idaho Environmental Council, Boise, Idaho
12. Jerry Jayne, Idaho Falls, Idaho
13. Nita Lowry, Jordan Valley, Oregon
14. Janet Abromeit, McCall, Idaho
15. B. Arline Rutledge, Arco, Idaho
16. Owyhee County Commissioners, Murphy, Idaho
17. Kenneth M. Goldsmith, Northford, Connecticut
18. Pete Bowler, Bliss, Idaho
19. Norma and Herbert Pember, Boise, Idaho
20. Margaret J. Pratt, Twin Falls, Idaho
21. Gene Tindall, President, Owyhee Cattlemen's Association, Bruneau, Idaho
22. Jeffrey Crook, Boring, Oregon
23. John R. Wells, Minerals Exploration Coalition, Denver, Colorado
24. John R. Swanson, Berkeley, California
25. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region X, Seattle, Washington
26. William R. Meiners, Idaho Wildlife Federation, Meridian, Idaho
27. Dave Foreman, EARTH FIRST, Ely, Nevada
28. Thomas J. Weitz, Jordan Valley, Oregon
29. Dr. Theodore Cowgill, Jordan Valley, Oregon
30. Scott Ploger, Idaho Falls, Idaho
31. Robert and Naomi Mayer, Boise, Idaho
32. Daniel A. Poole, President, Wildlife Management Institute, Washington, D.C.
33. Charles A. Wellner, Chairman, Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee, Moscow, Idaho
34. Tom and Ellen Glaccury, Ketchum, Idaho
35. Mark Keller, Orofino, Idaho
36. Jill Wyatt, Bremerton, Washington
37. J. R. Mitchell, Atlantic Richfield Company, Denver, Colorado
38. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, Idaho

List of Those Commenting (Con't.)

39. Janet D. Ward, Boise, Idaho
40. Bruce Bowler, Boise, Idaho
41. Theodore S. Weigold, Boise, Idaho
42. John Marshall, Boise, Idaho
43. National Park Service, Northwest Regional Office, Seattle, Washington
44. Daryl Romeyn, Medford, Oregon
45. Susie Vader, Boise, Idaho
46. Randal E. Morris, DDS, Mountain Home, Idaho
47. Charles C. Yoder, Chairman, Middle Snake Group, Northern Rockies Chapter, Sierra Club, Boise, Idaho
48. Phil Miller, Boise, Idaho
49. Tim Evans, Boise, Idaho
50. Dorian Duffin, Boise, Idaho
51. Charlotte Evans, Boise, Idaho
52. Dennis Reese, Boise, Idaho
53. Rick Johnson, Boise, Idaho
54. Christie Calvert, Meridian, Idaho
55. Kurt Ballance, Boise, Idaho
56. Don Carroll, Boise, Idaho
57. Matt Slater, Boise, Idaho
58. Joe Wheat, Boise, Idaho
59. Robert Vasquez, Boise, Idaho
60. Wes Hult, Boise, Idaho
61. Steve Kraemer, Boise, Idaho
62. Chris Gardarino, Boise, Idaho
63. David L. Taylor, Boise, Idaho
64. Larry and Donna Hallock, Boise, Idaho
65. Jeff Atkinson, Boise, Idaho
66. John Lamborn, Boise, Idaho
67. Larry Jackson, Boise, Idaho
68. Bruce Boccard, Committee for Idaho's High Desert, Boise, Idaho
69. Robert and Naomi Mayer, Boise, Idaho
70. Ken Robinson, Boise, Idaho
71. Bette Wood, Boise, Idaho
72. Paula Shuff, Boise, Idaho
73. Roy Foote, Boise, Idaho
78. Federal Aviation Administration
79. Idaho Air National Guard; 124th Tactical Reconnaissance Group
80. Peter Bowler, Bliss, Idaho

Those who gave oral testimony and submitted letters at the public hearings, or provided oral testimony requiring a specific response, are listed below.

74. Mike Mogensen, Executive Vice-President, Idaho Cattlemen's Association, Boise, Idaho
75. Michael Hanley, Jordan Valley, Oregon
76. Tim Kessinger, Boise, Idaho
77. Bill Lowry, Owyhee County, Idaho

Others who provided oral testimony at one or both public hearings are shown below. Their testimony is part of the official hearing record to be submitted to Congress along with the final Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS and Wilderness Study Report.

Mike Stanford, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Forest Fretwell, Owyhee Cattlemen's Association, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Dennis Swisher, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Theodore T. Cowgill, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Wendell Collins, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Tim Lowry, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Bruce Boccard, Committee for Idaho's High Desert, Boise, Idaho
Janet Ward, Boise, Idaho
Alan Hausrath, President, Idaho Environmental Council, Boise, Idaho
Chris Yoder, Chairman, Northern Rockies Chapter, Middle Snake Group of the Sierra Club, Boise, Idaho
Ray Blair, Glenns Ferry Grazing Association, Glenns Ferry, Idaho
Ernie Bahem, Owyhee County Commissioner, District No. 1, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Paul Nettleton, Murphy, Idaho
Marjorie Hayes, Boise, Idaho
Ted Weigold, Boise, Idaho
Ted Payne, Owyhee County, Idaho
Bob Krumm, Boise, Idaho
Randall Morris, Mountain Home, Idaho
Ernie Day, Boise, Idaho
Pat Payne, Jordan Valley, Oregon
Ed Wardell, Boise, Idaho
Twila Montano, Boise, Idaho

TABLE V-1
PUBLIC COMMENTS ON DRAFT PLAN AMENDMENT/EIS
BY GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION AND INDIVIDUAL
(BY ORDER OF RECEIPT)

Federal Government

Name of Agency or Individual	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Bureau of Indian Affairs	2	*			17
Bureau of Indian Affairs	6	*		*	18
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	25	*			26
National Park Service	43	*		*	33
Federal Aviation Administration	78	*			44

TABLE V-1 (continued)

State Government

Name of Agency or Individual	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game	38	*			31
Idaho Air National Guard	79	*		*	44

Local Government

Name of Agency or Individual	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Owyhee County Commissioners	16	*			21
Owyhee County Commissioners	--		*		HR 1/

Organizations

Name of Organization or Business	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Idaho Environmental Council	11	*		*	20/HR
Owyhee Cattlemen's Association	21	*			21/HR
Minerals Exploration Coalition	23	*		*	25
Idaho Wildlife Federation	26	*		*	26
Earth First	27	*		*	27
Wildlife Management Institute	32	*			29
Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee	33	*		*	29
Atlantic Richfield Company	37	*			31
Sierra Club, Northern Rockies Chapter	47	*		*	34/HR
Committee for Idaho's High Desert	68	*		*	39/HR
Idaho Cattlemen's Association	74	*	*		42/HR
Owyhee Cattlemen's Association	--		*		HR
Committee for Idaho's High Desert	--		*		HR
Idaho Environmental Council	--		*		HR
Sierra Club, Northern Rockies Chapter	--		*		HR
Glenns Ferry Grazing Association	--		*		HR
Owyhee County Commissioners	--		*		HR

1/ HR: Comments contained in public hearing record.

TABLE V-1 (continued)

Individuals

Name of Individual	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Don L. Crawford	1	*		*	17
Dennis Baird	3	*			17
Benjamin A. Foote	4	*		*	17
Julie J. Hall	5	*			18
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Hall	7	*			18
Dr. Bruce M. Hayse	8	*			19
Neil P. Rimbey	9	*		*	19
Fred W. Rabe	10	*			19
Jerry Jayne	12	*			20
Nita Lowry	13	*		*	20
Janeta Abromeit	14	*			21
B. Arline Rutledge	15	*			21
Kenneth M. Goldsmith	17	*		*	22
Pete Bowler	18	*		*	22
Norma and Herbert Pember	19	*			23
Margaret J. Pratt	20	*			23
Jeffrey Crook	22	*			24
John R. Swanson	24	*			26
Thomas J. Weitz	28	*			27
Dr. Theodore Cowgill	29	*	*		27/HR 1/
Scott Ploger	30	*			28
Robert and Naomi Mayer	31	*			28
Tom and Ellen Glaccury	34	*			29
Mark Keller	35	*			30
Jill Wyatt	36	*			30
Janet Ward	39	*	*		31/HR
Bruce Bowler	40	*			31
Theodore S. Weigold	41	*	*	*	32/HR
John Marshall	42	*			32
Daryl Romeyn	44	*		*	33
Susie Vader	45	*			33
Randal E. Morris	46	*	*	*	33/HR
Phil Miller	48	*			34
Tim Evans	49	*			35
Dorian Duffin	50	*			35
Charlotte Evans	51	*			35
Dennis Reese	52	*			35
Rick Johnson	53	*			36
Christie Calvert	54	*			36
Kurt Ballance	55	*			36
Don Carroll	56	*			36
Matt Slatter	57	*			37
Joe Wheat	58	*			37

1/ HR: Comments contained in public hearing record.

TABLE V-1 (continued)

Individuals (continued)

Name of Individual	Comment No.	Written Comment	Oral Comment	BLM Response to Comments	Chpt. V Page Comment Printed
Robert Vasquez	59	*			37
Wes Hult	60	*			37
Steve Kraemer	61	*			38
Chris Gardarino	62	*			38
David L. Taylor	63	*			38
Larry and Donna Hallock	64	*			38
Jeff Atkinson	65	*			39
John Lamborn	66	*		*	39
Larry Jackson	67	*			39
Robert and Naomi Mayer	69	*			41
Ken Robinson	70	*			41
Bette Wood	71	*			42
Paula Shuff	72	*			42
Roy Foote	73	*			42
Michael Hanley	75		*		43
Tim Kessinger	76		*	*	43
Bill Lowry	77		*		45
Mike Stanford	--		*		HR 1/
Dennis Swisher	--		*		HR
Peter Bowler	80	*			45
Wendell Collins	--		*		HR
Tim Lowry	--		*		HR
Paul Nettleton	--		*		HR
Marjorie Hayes	--		*		HR
Ted Payne	--		*		HR
Bob Krumm	--		*		HR
Ernie Day	--		*		HR
Pat Payne	--		*		HR
Ed Wardell	--		*		HR
Twila Montano	--		*		HR

1/ HR: Comments contained in public hearing record.

c. Synopsis of Pro-Wilderness Comments

A variety of comments were advanced in support of wilderness designation for at least some of the WSAs in the Owyhee Resource Area, especially the North Fork of the Owyhee River. Comments expressed the concern that the draft EIS was inadequate in the sense that it showed a bias toward resource production rather than resource preservation. The following is a synopsis of the comments arranged in the general categories of livestock grazing concerns, economic/social concerns, ecological concerns, other concerns, and concerns specific to the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. These paragraphs are paraphrased versions of the original statements with no attempt to evaluate the validity of the arguments or to answer them.

1. Livestock Grazing Concerns:

   a) The process used to arrive at the Proposed Action was faulty in that the Proposed Action is based on the Owyhee MFP in which wilderness was not considered. The amendment rejects wilderness because designation would interfere with the original grazing levels projected in the MFP.

   b) The Proposed Action is inconsistent with the draft EIS. While the North Fork Owyhee River WSA meets all wilderness criteria and while there appears to be no significant resource conflict with wilderness designation, the draft EIS still concludes with a no wilderness recommendation.

   c) Wilderness is a multiple use value as well as a form of multiple use, not a "lock-up". However, the amendment shows a strong bias towards grazing by giving wilderness little value relative to grazing.

   d) While the public lands belong to all citizens of this country, local livestock interests carried more weight than national interests in reaching the proposed action.

   e) Wilderness is where you find it. It is improper for BLM to try to balance the distribution of wilderness geographically.

   f) The natural resource management education of the draft EIS preparers biases them towards favoring management by man over management by nature.

2. Economic/Social Concerns:

   a) The cost-benefit analysis contained in the draft EIS supports wilderness designation. Wilderness designation would reduce the subsidy to ranchers found in the proposed action while still increasing their income. However, any subsidy constitutes welfare for cattlemen.

   b) The pro-grazing bias of the draft EIS is shown by two shortcomings in the document: (a) short-term economic values were given undue consideration over long-term values; (b) while costs to local governments arising from recreation use were considered, benefits were not.

   c) The draft EIS cites an out-of-date poll showing lack of support for more wilderness. Two more recent Harris Polls show very strong public support for environmental protection regardless of cost.

3. Ecological Concerns:

a) The BLM should develop an alternative for wilderness designation in the North Fork Owyhee River and on Juniper Mountain which would allow for the removal of seral juniper stands from appropriate soil sites. The method of removal should have no long-term impact on the wilderness areas naturalness nor outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude.

b) The draft EIS misleadingly emphasizes juniper invasion within the WSAs as the major ecological problem and "poor ecological condition" as the prime reason for recommending nonwilderness. We question the degree to which juniper invasion is "unnatural" and see this view as masking the more serious problem of overgrazing. Regional climatic changes as well as lack of knowledge of ecosystem dynamics of this community type make premature any statement that all of the invasion is an "unnatural occurrence." BLM's discussion of the causes for "poor ecological condition" is incomplete in that it doesn't adequately discuss overgrazing; consequently, its discussion of methods of rehabilitation is incomplete also. Methods of rehabilitation that don't require juniper removal should be considered for the North Fork Owyhee River and Big Willow Spring WSAs.

c) BLM went against its normal principles and methods for determining vegetation condition over range condition. In the draft Bruneau-Kuna Grazing EIS, BLM defines range condition as "the present state of a site in relation to the climax or natural potential plant community for the site." That refers to natural potential of existing vegetation not natural potential of original vegetation. The fact that seral junipers would continue to thrive under natural conditions constitutes the natural potential of this plant community; therefore, all determinations of range condition must be relative to this potential and not to the original plant communities that are no longer natural to those range sites. The originality of plant species and desirability of plant species are irrelevant to range condition, vegetation condition, and ecological condition.

d) The draft EIS is inadequate in its discussion of vegetation and wildlife species because it ignores those species peculiar to juniper woodland communities.

e) Designation would increase the diversity of land- forms and ecosystems in the wilderness system since there is no Sagebrush Steppe or juniper woodland over rhyolite/basalt uplands in the wilderness system.

f) These WSAs contain significant ecological and scientific values in the endangered, sensitive, and rare plant and/or animal species found in each unit, particularly in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA.

4. Other Concerns:

a) Administrative designation as a special recreation management area would provide no long-term protection since such a designation could easily be changed at any time in the future.

b) These WSAs contain exceptional scenery, recreation opportunities, and historic and archaeological values, particularly the North Fork Owyhee River WSA.

5. Concerns Specific to the North Fork Owyhee River WSA:

a) North Fork contains some of the best wildlands in Owyhee County.

b) Area offers all the wilderness attributes; these attributes are of high quality.

c) Immense geological diversity and the chances of solitude and quiet are very high.

d) Exceptional scenic beauty.

e) Valuable recreation and wildlife resources.

f) Administrative protection (a special recreation management area) does not provide level of protection which wilderness designation would assure.

g) Area has scientific and ecological value for its "sensitive" species of wildlife and plants.

h) Area has unique combination of rhyolitic rock and climatic juniper/sagebrush ecosystem not represented in NWPS nor in other study areas. The area has a remarkable blending and intermingling of rock pillars, vegetation, and canyonlands which makes it a powerful primitive recreation experience.

i) Wilderness designation of the area would have little conflict with other resource values or uses.

d. Synopsis of Anti-Wilderness Concerns

As in the preceding synopsis of pro-wilderness arguments, this section contains the paraphrased versions of the original statements with no attempt to evaluate the validity of the arguments or to answer them.

1. Economic/Social Concerns:

   a) Wilderness is not multiple use. Federal lands should be managed for the multiple uses of food, fiber and mineral production as well as recreation, hunting, and fishing.

   b) Wilderness designation would not provide cattlemen the incentive to contribute labor and funds for range improvements if past grazing reductions could not be restored.

   c) Multiple use, as opposed to wilderness, would contribute more to the local economy.

   d) A statewide poll has shown that the citizens of Idaho do not support more wilderness.

2. Ecological Concerns:

   a) There is no need to preserve Sagebrush-Steppe wilderness since this ecotype covers a large area in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, California, and Utah.

   b) Wilderness designation would prohibit the vegetation control and intensive grazing systems necessary to improve the ecological condition of the affected range. Such improvements would benefit wildlife as well as cattle.

3. Other Concerns:

   a) Wilderness designation would interfere with access for hunters and other traditional users of the land and would disrupt the traditional lifestyle of the area's citizens.

   b) The WSAs have never been explored for minerals and energy resources with modern equipment. In a time of shortages, it is not prudent to eliminate these lands from exploration.

e. Response to Specific Public Comments

All letters and public hearing testimonies were reviewed and considered in the preparation of the final Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. Although all letters are included in this document, only those which presented new data, questioned the adequacy of the impact analysis and decision rationale, or raised questions on issues bearing directly on the draft document were responded to.

1. Response to Written Comments:

All individuals or groups that submitted comments on the draft EIS were previously listed on pages V-6 and V-7. Each letter has been numbered and reproduced in this final EIS. Each substantive comment has also been numbered. The BLM responses follow the letters and are numbered to correspond with the appropriate comment found in the letter.

2. Response to Hearing Testimony:

All individuals who provided oral or written testimony at the public hearings were also previously listed on pages V-7 and V-8. Those individuals who presented letters or who gave oral testimony that BLM responded to have also been numbered as described under Response to Written Comments. Some individuals submitted letters and also testified at the public hearings. Where this was the case, and when their comments were the same, the letter was included.

1

BLM
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I have read the Owyhee EIS and wish to make the following comments. Your failure to recommend a single acre of wilderness, when several areas are deserving, is unjustified! I see that you in the Idaho BLM are trying to make your exploitive boss, James Watt, happy. You are proposing the James Watt alternative - that is, develop everything regardless of the real resource values present.

The North Fork Owyhee River (WSA 16 40) should be designated wilderness. Public support for this designation is very high, and the area contains some of the best wildlands in Owyhee County. I am also strongly opposed to the 19-mile pipeline south of Grand View. This pipeline is clearly a threat to the California bighorn sheep population. Considering the endangered status of these bighorn, I urge you to protect their habitat and let ranchers graze their cattle in the several million other acres you plan to develop even more extensively. James Watt and "Wattism" are a passing fad. Idaho's wildcountry cannot be replaced once it is destroyed. Why don't you recommend what will protect that wildcountry, not what will please Mr. Watt!

1.1

Sincerely,
Don L. Crawford
825 Camas
Moscow, Id. 83843

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

2 memorandum

DATE:

REPLY TO ATTN OF: Office of the Area Director, Portland Area

SUBJECT: Review of DES Owyhee Wilderness Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

TO: Martin J. Zimmer, Bureau of Land Management, Boise, Idaho

As requested, we have reviewed the subject statement and offer the following comment.

We recommend consultation with tribal representatives of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Eastern Nevada Agency for information on cultural use of the lands under consideration. Wilderness designation of lands and waters support the intent of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-341) in that additional protection to the natural environment occurs. The subject plan should contain information on consultation with tribal representatives to determine application of the Religious Freedom Act to the proposed action.

2.1

Acting Area Director

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
(REV. 1-80)
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
5010-114

* GPO : 1981 O - 341-525 (7008)

3

P.O. Box 8787
Moscow, ID 83843
8 June 1982

Boise Dist., BLM
Dear Sirs: Owyhee Wilderness EIS Comments

I cannot attend any of the public meetings scheduled to discuss this EIS, so I hope that you will find these written comments of some value.

Your decision in this matter is a major disappointment, an error that I hope will be corrected in the final EIS and decision. I am only partially familiar with Juniper Mountain, and so can only suggest that in your final decision this area be spared from further human changes, habitat modification in particular. I cannot say whether or not it should be recommended for Wilderness protection.

I am certain, however, that the North Fork of the Owyhee (16-40) should all be recommended for Wilderness. This area offers virtually all the wilderness attributes and in high quality at that. It is ill-suited for any economic use, or to road building and mining. It offers immense geological diversity and the chances for solitude and quiet there are already very high. It is a place of great beauty. The watercourse of the canyon istelf is important to wildlife and has great recreational value. As part of an at least partially protected Owyhee River wilderess systmen, it has a major role to play in the bigger picture.

Protection as Wilderness of the North Fork is also hardly inconsistent with the Owyhee MFP, which recognizes the great wild and primitive values of this area. The EIS itself, in numerous places, recognizes what a special place the North Fork is, yet fails to make the next logical step--to recommend it for statutory protection. It may be possible for us to rely on admininstrative protection for places like the North Fork, but given the large number of plunderers and pillagers now giving orders to the otherwise able employees of BLM, one would have to be a complete idiot to believe that sound, permanament protection can be provided outiside Wilderness.

If there is any internal logic at all in the EIS, it is to conclude that the North Fork WSA should be left alone--all of it. Why not follow your own logic?

Sincerely,
Dennis Baird

4

492 Harvey Avenue
Kent, Ohio 44240
June 11, 1982

Mr. Zimmer
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

We are responding to your Impact Statement for the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment which was recently forwarded to us for comment. We thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns and irritations with the Statement. Sadly, we must come down on the negative side.

We must disagree completely with BLM's recommendation that no part of the five Wilderness Study Areas is suitable for wilderness designation. This conclusion is overtly biased and considers unduly immediate economic values to be gained from exploitative use. Our land is too precious to be considered repeatedly as merely a resource to be exploited to the fullest possible extent. The result historically of such an attitude has been degradation of land to the point where it becomes useless for continued human use. Long-term benefits are sacrificed on the altar of short-term economic gain. Man displays again his apparent inability to plan for the future in a meaningful way. Allow us to express some of our concerns.

First of all, we were disappointed to learn that every member of the Preparers of the Document, as listed in page P-1, is basically involved in resource managment. Even though people trained in such disciplines as wildlife management, range conservation, recreation planning and so forth may have good intentions and be honorable citizens, their training and academic programming unduly influences their decision making processes. They are seemingly trained to believe human management of land is always a good thing, whereas natural phenomena are messy, inefficient, and economically inviable. In other words, we would have been far more impressed if the List of Preparers had included a few academic types, particularly biologists whose training and interests are in basic ecology and even systematics. Another useful set of members could have represented environmental and preservationist interests. Sadly, the recommendation that issued from the committee was fore-ordained, not out of evilness or even from a hatred of nature, but rather out of their prejudiced vision of what is good and proper. It is just that we do not agree with their particular vision of the role of man in nature. We feel strongly that nature should be allowed to go her own way upon occasion. Man is not always a "good" agent for change. All too frequently, he is an agent of destruction.

Secondly, it is apparent that wilderness values were given little weight compared to the weight given to grazing values. This unbalanced weighting appears repeatedly throughout the document. The glorious good to be derived from increasing grazing levels is extolled constantly, whereas the far more meaningful benefits of peaceful uses of undisturbed land are given little attention. The preparers appeared to be nearly desperate in their desire to please the local grazing community and seemingly overlooked the reality that the land in question belongs to all the people and not to a handful of politically powerful local ranchers. We are aware that use of federally owned land

Zimmer
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amend. -2- **4** June 11, 1982

by ranchers is necessary and wholeheartedly endorse that concept. However, competing uses must also be weighed when the future of federally owned land is being considered. The document is not evenly balanced in its treatment of these other uses, as it is saturated with the exploiter viewpoint that land has value only if it can generate immediate economic benefits. We are aware that the present national administration is very exploitation oriented, but political tides do shift and frequently dramatically. We are confident that such dinosaurs as James Watt will soon be retired to their ante-diluvian pastures from whence they sprung, unwanted, unloved and certainly unsung.

4.1 Thirdly, the concept that man can manage land better than nature is absurd. The reason that juniper is encroaching on the sagebrush-grass areas is due to overgrazing by livestock. To act as if that fact is not true is amazing. It reminds me of the silliness that pervades western Texas where vast acreages are being overrun by mesquite with subsequent loss of grassland. The cause is the same--overly intense grazing by cattle that feed on the highly palatable grass species but avoid the non-palatable mesquite. Man obviously has tipped the scales against a long-established balance. Further, we would like to suggest that the assumption that grazing levels would maintain themselves in areas declared to be wildernesss is not a proven idea. Probably, the levels would decrease, as the elimination of roads would increase the costs of maintaining cattle in more remote areas. The reduction in grazing intensity would then permit natural successional events to occur with the result that the original vegetative cover would become re-established. The feeling that repeated treatment of juniper by chemical and/or mechanical means would improve vegetative quality is also unproven. Let us be honest, what would be improved is not the vegetation but rather the ability of the land to support more cows per unit area. That is not multiple use but rather single abuse. Finally, if land management schemes are so beneficial, why has the vegetative cover deteriorated over the past 30 years or so? The vegetation should now be lush and diverse. Obviously, it is not as shown by your repeated reference to simplication of plant communities by the invasion of juniper. Huge areas of southern Idaho, particularly along the Snake River, hasve already been "improved" by land managing techniques so that they are now nearly pure grassland and thus as boring as an Ohio cornfield or the crud of downtown Akron. Why can't we retain a few small parcels of our land in a relatively undamaged original state? Must all land be managed for economic gain? We say no, as there are much higher values to be considered in our ever more crowded world.

4.2 Finally, we notice that there are no designated wilderness areas on BLM lands in the Idaho-Nevada-Oregon region. Why not? To state piously that there are thousands of potential acres for the establishment of wilderness areas is meaningless. The point is that none have been actually established. Further, we suggest that BLM is fighting tooth and nail to prevent any of its holdings from receiving wilderness status. It is thus a mere handmaiden, if not a slave, to the exploiters and destroyers of land. We would hope that a governmental agency would truly represent all of the people. Sadly, that does not seem to be the case with BLM.

Please reconsider your recommendation--at least a parcel of the land is deserving of wilderness designation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin A. Foote

Sheri A. Foote

BSF:jf

5

6/30/82

Greetings:

This is to register my strong support for protection as wilderness of the N. Fork of the Owyhee River WSA. This exceptional piece of desert wilderness has outstanding scenic & recreational values in addition to it's wildlife habitats.

Too little of our unique desert wilderness ~~has been~~ remains in Idaho, and this outstanding area deserves protection.

Please include this notice of my support as part of the public hearing record.

Sincerely yours,
Julie J Hall

6

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
EASTERN NEVADA AGENCY
Owyhee, Nevada 89332

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Land Operations
702-757-3133

June 30, 1982

Ted Milesnick, E.I.S. Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Milesnick:

Having reviewed the draft of the "Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/ Environmental Impact Statement," I have found it well written and very informative.

6.1 We do have a question on controlled burn for vegetation control. How would chemical spray be as a good alternative to burning?

Cultural Resources (IV-24)

6.2 It appears that the North Fork of the Owyhee River and Battle Creek and Noon Creek should be studied in more detail or more written about these spots as there must be much more that can be said about them. We do not know if there are any designated areas or locations which suggests sacred grounds or infringing on the "Religious Freedom Act".

I have contacted Herman Atkins, Tribal Administrator for the Shoshone-Paiute Indian Tribe on the Duck Valley Reservation, to see if he knew about the area and the above question. He stated that he knew the area fairly well, but not in detail. He contacted Winona Manning, Tribal Historian. I talked to her and she will look into this subjective in further detail. We are providing a draft report of the entire impact statement to the Tribe for their study and response.

Feel free to contact us again for any help that you may need on Indian culture and interests.

Sincerely,

Martin C. Urka

Martin C. Urka
Land Operations Officer

7

Dear Bureau of Land Management,

We support the Wilderness Clasification of the North Fork of the Owyhee River. This is an undisturbed & very critical area for protection from our destruction. There are many species of wildlife in these natural state. This is one of a very few areas still undisturbed from man's hand. The area is worth many more times as is than what little we could get from development.

Sincerely,
Mr & Mrs Steve Is & H
Rt #3 Box 3684H
Nampa, Idaho
83657

Bruce M. Hayse, M.D.
~~9480 Socorro Rd.~~
~~[illegible]~~
Star Rt. Box 268
McCammon ID
83250

8

Dear Sirs

I find myself appalled and amazed at your non-wilderness recommendation for the North Fork Owyhee. There is no defense for such a recommendation except possibly insanity. Having spent a good deal of time hiking in the area, it unquestionably represents high quality wilderness of a quite unique type for the Owyhee Plateau, with distinctive and attractive habitats which should not be disturbed. There do not appear to be any significant resource conflicts while the recreational potential is very high, not to mention the exceptional wildlife and botanical features, all of which would suffer in the event of intrusion by non-wilderness type usage. Of all the canyons of southwest Idaho, this is perhaps my favorite; it should be near the top of the wilderness listing.

Thank you
Bruce Hayse

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

9

University of Idaho
College of Agriculture
In Cooperation with the
U.S. Department of Agriculture
SW Idaho R/E Center
Rt. 8, Box 8478
Caldwell, ID 83605
July 7, 1982

Martin J. Zimmer
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
BLM - Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. I would like to commend you and your staff on this fine effort. It is quite obvious from the proposed action that you have listened to people during the issue identification stage of the planning process and previous public hearings on wilderness. It is also obvious that the vast majority of southwestern Idahoans and Idahoans in general feel that there are enough wilderness areas in Idaho (page IV-27).

9.1 I do have one question that I feel needs clarification. This involves the information relating to economic efficiency presented in TABLE III-1. I question the analysis behind the benefit cost ratios. Specifically, the proposed action shows a benefit/cost ratio of 1.60. This compares with the other alternatives ranging between 1.66 and 1.68. There is no way that this can logically be true. It appears that what has been done is to ignore the indirect costs of wilderness and say that the only difference between the proposed action and the all wilderness alternative is $62,200 in land treatment costs and 3491 additional AUM's. The land treatment and structural costs amount to about $63.58 per "new" AUM in the all wilderness proposal. (I realize that it is wrong to put all costs against livestock AUM's in that some of the costs are strictly wildlife or other use related). The cost per additional AUM for the proposed action would be about $17.82 ($62,200 added cost ÷ 3491 added AUM's). The marginal cost of the additional AUM's is quite reasonable when compared with the wilderness alternatives. Another way of looking at the situation would be to consider that it will cost the rancher about $20 per AUM to replace those AUM's (assuming $50/ton hay and 800 lbs of hay per AUM). The benefit of spending the additional $62,200 would be $69,820. Depending upon when the costs and benefits occur in the 20 years of analysis, it would appear that the benefit/cost ratio for the proposed action would be at least as high as the all wilderness alternative.

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Martin J. Zimmer, BLM Boise
Page #2
July 7, 1982

9

9.2 The analysis ignores the fact that additional costs will be placed on various users of the wilderness area. For example, the hunter will now have to spend more time hiking into the area than he would have in driving into the area. The livestock permittee must consider other alternatives to hauling supplies (salt, camp food, etc.) to his livestock than his pickup. The recreationist must consider other means of seeing a wilderness area than the vehicle. These are legitimate costs and should be identified in the analysis. I realize the difficulty in quantifying these costs but they should at least be identified as items to consider.

9.3 Consideration should also be given that wilderness designation will severely hamper range improvement work and probably discourage private contributions of labor, materials and funds. Recent policy statements from BLM have emphasized the importance of user contributions. This consideration is critical in periods of fiscal austerity.

Again, I commend you and your staff for the forthright decision in this matter. I look forward to future work and cooperation with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Neil Rimbey

Neil R. Rimbey
Ext. Range Economist

NRR/rb

10

University of Idaho
College of Letters and Science
Department of Biological Science
Moscow, Idaho/83843
Phone (208) 885-6280

July 7, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sirs:

I am writing this letter to ask you to reconsider your recommendation of no wilderness or Research Natural Areas in the North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area.

In order to best preserve examples of biological diversity in this state, we need to include bits and pieces of landscape to include desert lands as well as montane habitats which have been selected as RNAs by the Forest Service. The North Fork is an excellent example of desert wilderness that has been altered very little and still contains no energy, mineral or forest resources. It is a piece of real estate that is quickly disappearing from this state as well as other places.

We have a great opportunity now to set up a series of small Natural Areas throughout the state that represent certain physical and biotic conditions characteristic of a particular locale. We badly need such areas as the North Fork of the Owyhee River to help complete this system.

Sincerely,

Fred W Rabe

Fred W. Rabe
Associate Professor of
Zoology

FWR:das

RECEIVED
Bureau of Land Management
Boise District

JUL 9 1982	
1	DM
2	A/DM
	RPM
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4	PECS
Tot.	
Action:	
Comments:	

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Idaho Environmental Council

P.O. Box 1708
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Please reply to: 1920 N 7th Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

July 9, 1982

11

Mr. Martin J. Zimmer
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

These comments will confirm and amplify my testimony last night at the hearing on the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS Draft which was held at the Boise Public Library. This letter represents the position of the Idaho Environmental Council.

From the point of view of the Wilderness enthusiast, your draft EIS is a very confusing document. On the one hand, you conclusively prove that Wilderness designation is the best and highest use of the WSA's covered by this document. You correctly observe that these WSA's

- -possess outstanding wilderness characteristics
- -appear to be natural
- -seem to be unaffected by man
- -are valuable for primitive recreation such as fishing, hiking, hunting, etc
- -contain rare and sensitive plant and wildlife species
- -contain virtually no mineral or energy resources
- -contain almost no forest resources
- -could accept a 21% increase in grazing even if designated as Wilderness.

On the other hand, you draw the wrong conclusion and propose to designate no Wilderness despite all the evidence pointing to the opposite choice.

The Idaho Environmental Council strongly endorses the All Wilderness Alternative and urges the Bureau of Land Management to do likewise.

We hope that you will clear up one outright mistake and two ambiguous points in the Draft before the Final EIS comes out.

11.1 On page III-7, the total number of partial alternatives (including the all and no wilderness alternatives) should read 32 and not 120 as you state.

11.2 On page III-19, it should be made quite clear that Wilderness designation is a form (many would say the best form) of multiple use.

11.3 On page II-3, it should be pointed out that the Bureau cannot balance the geographic distribution of wilderness. Wilderness is where it is and the BLM's only true powers are to preserve or eliminate wilderness where it now is located.

11

Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS Draft - 2

In summary, the IEC supports the all wilderness alternative for all the reasons presented in the draft to support the no wilderness alternative and we hope that you will do likewise.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Alan R. Hausrath

Alan R. Hausrath, President
Idaho Environmental Council

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July 11, 1982

Martin Zimmer, District Manager
BLM, Boise District
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, Idaho 83705

Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/ EIS Draft

Dear Mr. Zimmer;

Here are a few comments on your proposal as described in the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS Draft.

I am disappointed that you propose to recommend all 5 WSA's as unsuited for Wilderness designation. I disagree, and urge you to reconsider, at least for the North Fork Owyhee WSA.

12.1 Past overgrazing has apparently been the cause of the invasion by junipers and the loss of native grasses in portions of the WSA's. The argument now seems to be that you oppose Wilderness designation so that you can engage in extensive and expensive vegetation manipulation in order to improve forage production so that you can run more cattle on the land.

I don't agree with this. If there are still too many cows, reduce the AUM's. Allow some fires to burn. (In fact, I believe that prescribed burns are allowed in Wilderness areas, if the purpose is to try and restore natural conditions.)

The North Fork Owyhee WSA should be recommended for Wilderness. It has high wildlife, scenic, recreational, seientific, and cultural values. I object to extensive vegetative manipulation there, although some burning might be agreeable to try and restore original plant communities.

Sincerely, Jerry Jayne

Jerry Jayne
1568 Lola St.
Idaho Falls, Id. 83402

13

Box 595
Jordan Valley, Or. 97910
July 12, 1982

Bureau of Land Mgmt.
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise Dist. Office
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sirs:

I am in agreement with your Proposed Action (no action/no wilderness) EIS.

The multiple use policy makes sense to me as the best for the most people and for wildlife and domestic grazing.

Without continued efforts by the BLM and ranchers the juniper and brush will further deplete the land of good grazing for wildlife, cattle and sheep. The salting and development of waterings also are beneficial both to wildlife, cattle and sheep.

Now there are many people enjoying these areas, 16-40, 16-41, 16-42, 16-45, 16-47, who

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would not be able to do so under an All Wilderness Plan. I would be one as I have arthritis and simply could not back-pack or ride horse back into these areas.

13.1 There is also an economic impact of a Wilderness Plan. There would be no taxes collected from any kind of production. With multiple use not only livestock men are making a living and paying taxes but they are generating business in our towns and the farming communities have an outlet for their grain, hay, etc.

Sincerely Yours,
Nita Lowry
Homemaker, Owyhee Cnty.

14

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendments
Boise Dist. Office
3948 Development Ave
Boise, Id. 83705

Dear Bureau of Land Management
I have read a little about the Wilderness study and I have hiked in the proposed areas. I would like to recomend that the North Fork of the Owyhee River become Wilderness. Aside from it's recreational value and beauty, it is home for an endangered species of sage brush and a uncommon lupine and primrose. It provides habitat for several sensitive animal species including the River otter and Red-banded trout and Bob Cat. The N.F. of the Owyhee River also contains historical and archaeological sites. Thank you for your time, and I hope to see my points into consideration.

14.1

Sincerely
Janet Aforest
Box 424
McCall, Id.
83638

15

July 13, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

To Whom it May Concern:

The North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area is an exceptional piece of Idaho's remaining desert wilderness, providing a strong recreational attraction to people interested in backpacking, day hiking, sightseeing, nature photography, wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding.

15.1 The North Fork is valuable for much more than its recreational potential; it provides habitat for an endangered species of sagebrush and an uncommon lupine and primrose. (The scientific and ecological values of the area populated by the "sensitive" sagebrush have been recognized by the Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee which has recommended that part of the WSA be designated a Research Natural Area.) The North Fork provides habitat for several "sensitive" animal species, including river otter and red-banded trout; the canyon and surrounding plateaus provide a substantial area of habitat for the wide-ranging bobcat, in addition to mule deer, antelope, sage grouse, beaver, and several species of geese and duck. It also contains several historical and archaeological sites.

The BLM has recommended that NONE of the WSAs be recommended as Wilderness; if this recommendation is made final, it would open the North Fork and four other WSAs to vegetative manipulation through spraying and chaining as well as to the possibility of other developments, such as pipelines and powerlines. Resource conflicts between Wilderness and other resource values are minimal; the area contains NO energy, mineral or forest resources, grazing would not be affected (and could increase 34% above current allocations).

We must not sacrifice a superb part of Idaho's wilderness for a miniscule increase in potential grazing.

Respectfully,
B. Arline Rutledge

B. Arline Rutledge
Rt. 1, Box 76
Arco, ID 83213

16

DISTRICT NO. 1
ERNIE BAHEM
563-2366
PLEASANT VALLEY
JORDAN VALLEY, ORE 97910

DISTRICT NO. 2
JAMES W. PURDOM
RT. 2, BOX 100
HOMEDALE, IDAHO 83628
337-3644

DISTRICT NO. 3
DONALD L. DAVIS
845-2540
BRUNEAU, IDAHO 83604

Owyhee County Commissioners

COURT HOUSE
MURPHY, IDAHO 83650

BARBARA JAYO
CLERK
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
495-2421

July 12, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

We are in favor of the proposed Action. Wilderness designation would not be in the best interest of Multiple Use Management. There is no expectation for improvement in the plant communities under Wilderness Management.

The achievement of good condition for all plant communities and the maintenance of the open sagebrush-bunchgrass areas is the primary objective of Multiple Use Management. This objective must be done with the control or removal of Juniper trees along with the implementation of intensive grazing systems which may not be compatible with wilderness.

Under the proposed action, the primitive recreation values, including solitude, would be protected in the canyon lands through special management areas. Once short term restoration projects have disappeared, the canyon lands will be in better ecological condition, thus contributing to the protection of primitive recreation values.

Removing encroaching Junipers, and restoring and maintaining plant communities in good condition should be the primary objective.

Wilderness areas lying within portions of many of the affected allotments could hinder the implementation of intensive grazing systems, which are important to achieving the desired improvement in range condition and all associated multiple use benefits.

The proposed action would provide better protection to all wildlife species because of its greater flexibility in habitat restoration, improvement projects, vegetative manipulation and water distribution.

Predators would be a great detriment to wildlife in the areas under Wilderness management. Wilderness Management Policy states that commercial trapping will not be permitted, predators should be able to survive and compete with other species, free from unregulated human interference and the traditional pursuit of sport or bounty.

(2)

16

Although there is little or no mineral potential, the possibility of geothermal, natural gas, or oil sources have not been studied. In light of our current energy crunch this is a very important consideration.

There are currently 34,545 acres of Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem in the National Wilderness Preservation system. However there are abour 4.7 million acres under review by the BLM.

A statewide survey in 1979 showed that only 15 percent of the people were in favor of more wilderness. We can assure you that if the survey would have been taken in Owyhee County, where the people are affected the most, it would have been a lot less that that. We have not had one of our constituents tell us they were in favor of any wilderness in Owyhee County.

The proposed action provides the flexibility necessary to insure the most benefits for the most resources.

Donald L. Davis, Chairman

Ernie Bahem

James W. Purdom

KENNETH M. GOLDSMITH
555 FOREST ROAD
NORTHFORD, CT 06472

17

Dear Sirs,

I have just reviewed the Draft Owyhee wilderness Plan Amendment / EIS. As a visitor to the region I have seen the rugged beauty and solitude these areas have to offer. Also, the WSA's, particularly the North fork of the owyhee River have valuable and significant plant communities & wildlife habitat. Further, resource conflicts are very small. Grazing would increase only insignificantly if the areas are not designated wilderness compared to wilderness.

Therefore, I strongly support all 5 areas for wilderness designation.

Sincerely,
Ken Goldsmith

P.S. The EIS was full of discussion about how much wilderness → over

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17.1 had been designated or was under study for several hundred miles around the study area but there was almost no mention of the amount under study vs. the total BLM area or total land area. the presentation came across as extremely biased.

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July 12, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

RE: Comments on the Draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement

Dear BLM EIS Preparation Team:

18.1 I greatly appreciate this opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS and your poposed action for the five WSAs treated, and commend the BLM for its efforts in soliciting public participation in this process. Since I have already written a lengthy commentary on the Amendments, I ask that my attached letter of my December 8, 1981 letter be included in the Final E.I.S. record.

18.2 I am strongly opposed to the proposed action, and object to the statement on page iv that there would be no significant irretrievable or irreversible commitments of resources caused by any of the alternatives. Indeed, the category and qualifications of these WSAs as wilderness would be impacted irreversibly by the proposed action, and BLM should admit it. I urge the BLM to reconsider its stand on this issue and to instead support the all wilderness alternative. The North Fork of the Owyhee WSA (16-40) is an extraordinary segment of Idaho's remaining roadless desert wilderness. It is isolated, being around 80 miles from Boise, and has magnificent reddish brown rock formations and juniper stands that contribute to the beauty of the habitat. The remarkable blending and intermingling of rock pillars and vegetation as well as the morphology of the canyonland makes this area a powerful experience and attraction for people interested in backpacking, day-hiking, sightseeing, nature photography, wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting and horseback riding.

The North Fork of the Owyhee River area has significant ecological values in addition to recreational potential. Micro-habitats in this area have a number of endangered-sensitive-rare plant species, including an endangered sagebrush species, a sensitive sage, and uncommon occurrences of a lupine and a primrose species. The area includes sites identified by the Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee as qualifying for Research Natural Area status. The riverine habitat supports populations of red-band trout and river otter. It is my understanding that the Owyhee River system supports an undescribed endemic sculpin species about which virtually nothing is known. In addition to sensitive species, populations of mule deer, antelope, sage grouse, beaver, and numerous avian species occur in the area.

This area has little conflict with other resource values or uses (there are no energy, mineral or forest resources present), so that it is difficult see how a Wilderness designation recommendation could draw fire even from cattle interests. Even should the five units be designated Wilderness, grazing could be increased significantly (up to ca. 34% even if the North Fork Owyhee WSA was recommended for wilderness recognition). Under the BLM backed alternative, grazing would increase only 38% - which is insignificant when compared with the tradeoff of losing any possibility of future wilderness

18

protection for these WSAs.

It should be remembered that Wilderness is one of the truest multiple use designations land can have. The public uses and public values of wilderness areas include watershed protection, recreation, scenic preservation, the conservation of wildlife that requires a wilderness habitat, and scientific research. There has been a misleading historic notion perpetuated that Wilderness designation is in some way a "single use" lock up of public resources. This charge is usually put forth by special interest groups looking for a way to make money from the exploitation of public lands. Grazing is an example of a resource use which has, more than any other factor, changed the species composition of native plant communities throughout the West. It has also been the use which caused the most deterioration of all resource values on BLM lands, and I request that the attached reference be included in the Amendment record: 18.3

General Accounting Office. July 5, 1977. Public Rangelands Continue to Deteriorate. CED-77-88.

The point is that historically the public lands of the West have been undervalued, given at fabulous subsidy to special interest uses (such as grazing), and the most fragile resource aspects of our lands have been inadequately appreciated and managed (Wilderness qualities have been the most seriously abused of all of the resources public lands encompass.) We have got to stop the historic trend and recognize the true value of the public lands that remain in wilderness quality condition. Arguments about ecological condition (because of over-grazing - which could be rectified to a large degree by reducing cattle numbers, not further reducing wildlife AUM allocations), difficulty in management (in this isolated area, leaving the sites alone is the best management), and the adequacy of special resource area protection, are all thin veils for not recommending designation. Frankly I think the BLM is abdicating the public trust if prime areas like these are not given Wilderness go-ahead so that a nominal gain in cattle AUMs can be accomplished.

Internal BLM "special recreation management" or special resource protective categories are inadequate to protect wilderness areas, and it's a copout to pretend that these would not succumb to any other consumptive use application that came along (like requests for added AUM allocations for cattle.) In Idaho the BLM has never even used the FLMPA provided Area of Critical Environmental Concern program and I have no faith whatsoever that the present Administration would be sincere in protecting wilderness through administrative decree. This is the last chance for some of the finest roadless areas in the state and I think BLM should get its priorities straight in terms of the values of use categories to the public interest. It should be remebered that wildlife has already had nearly all of the naturally occurring forage allocated to cattle. Beef is not so uncommon a commodity that there shouldn't be Wilderness protection for areas like the five WSAs in question. To further communicate my concern about the dangers of not giving this quality public land Wilderness protection, I am attaching a paper by Dr. Bernard Shanks describing the land transfers occurring on BLM lands throughout the West. 18.4

I urge the BLM to re-evaluate its position on these WSAs, and to follow the true public interest by supporting Wilderness designation on these quality public lands.

18

Respectfully,

Peter Bowler

Peter A. Bowler
Star Route
Bliss, Idaho 83314

Attachments:

18.5 Please include these references in the Amendment record, and reproduce both this letter and my letter of December 8, 1981 in the Final E.I.S.

Bowler, P.A. December 8, 1981. Letter to BLM commenting on the Owyhee Resource Area Management Plan.

General Accounting Office. July 5, 1977. Public Rangelands Continue to Deteriorate. CED-77-88.

Shanks, B. April 27, 1982. James Watt: The West's Trillion Dollar Pirate.

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507 West Hays Street
Boise, Idaho 83702
July 17, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Gentlemen:

It grieves us that the BLM has recommended ~~that~~ 49,470 acres in the North Fork of the Owyhee area not be considered Wilderness Area.

So little of our nation remains unfettered, uninhabited and otherwise defaced and desecrated by developers--whether farmer, rancher or home builder. We desperately need to preserve what little Wilderness Areas remain.

Please reconsider releasing among others, the North Fork of the Owyhee (49,470 acre tract) from Wilderness status. The West is worth preservation--desert animals and desert foliage of all kinds.

Thank you,

Norma I. Pember
Herbert R. Pember

Norma I Pember

Herbert R Pember

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July 17, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Gentlemen:

The North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness area should remain & be protected as Wilderness. It has so much ecological and scientific value. Please protect it for its animal life, the trout, river otter, bobcat, deer, antelope, grouse, etc. Please do not allow it to be opened to vegetation manipulation!

This beautiful area should remain as is; a haven for wildlife, a source of beauty & interest for peaceful pursuit of nature study, outdoor enjoyment & restoration for the weary mind & heart.

Protect this beautiful area as Wilderness. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Margaret J. Pratt

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July 15, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Sirs:

We would like the following statement to go on record in reference to the Wilderness Impact Statement for the Juniper Mountain and the North Fork of the Owyhee:

Although the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association is not in total agreement and accord with all statements in the document, we do agree with and support the general premise that wilderness designation would provide a management system too rigid and stilted for the area.

We believe that all resources, such as recreation, wildlife management, predator control, forage production and mineral exploration must be maximized under the multiple use concept.

We agree with the premise expressed on pages III-10, III-11, III-12, that saturation with wilderness has occurred within sagebrush steepe ecological zones. We further believe that the statistical study cited on page IV-27 is a public mandate that the people do not desire further wilderness designation. In this study respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement,

"We have enough areas legally designated as wilderness in Idaho."

Of the 1,410 responses received, 67% agreed that there is enough legally designated wilderness in Idaho, with 15% neutral and 18% disagreeing with the statement.

Sincerely,

Gene Tindall

Gene Tindall, President
Owyhee Cattlemen's Association

22

7-14-82

BLM-Ted Molesnick
Owyhee Wilderness Plan/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave
Boise, Id.

Re: Preliminary Recommendation
LWSAs N. OWYHEE, JACKS CREEK

Dear Sir:

I am an Oregon attorney, ornithologist, fisherman, and conservationist deeply concerned with the preservation of our remaining wild areas, particularly the BLM "desert" areas, few of which now have any designated protected status.

(1) The North Fork WSA is indeed an exceptional area of Idaho's remaining desert wildlands. I disagree very strongly with your preliminary decision to recommend no areas in the district for congressional designation.

The area of the main and side canyons and Current Creek canyons are exceptionally scenic, and meet all BLM criteria for solitude, primitive recreation opportunities and diversity of recreational potential.

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The rock spires on the uplands themselves are exceptional, and make the area stand out from many Great Basin canyon areas with only flat lands or no screening above the canyon edge.

The opportunities for recreational pursuits are numerous, and include backpacking, day hiking, photography, rafting, hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation.

22.1 This area, in my view, is even more important for its habitat value than its recreational resources. It provides habitat for an endangered species of sagebrush, a "sensitive" species, and uncommon lupine and primrose species. The Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee has acknowledged these values in recommending the WSA have RNA designation. Sensitive animal and bird species are also present such as river otter, red-headed trout, and prairie falcons.

The area also contains several historical and archaeological sites.

22

Most important to your decision, in the new "WATT"-ist BLM, should be that conflicts between Wilderness and other resource values are minimal. The area has no energy, mineral or forest resources. Grazing rights would not be affected by Wilderness designation, and could still increase 34% above current levels even with designation. The highest option for grazing in BLM plan shows a 38% increase, even with no designation. This magnificent area of desert wildland should not be sacrificed for a very minor potential increase in grazing.

(2) I oppose any pipeline Bork-Bowell in the JACKS CREEK WSA. This idea for 19 miles of line to benefit 2 ranchers on marginal cattle grazing land is absurd, and an affront to environmental and fiscal common sense.

22.2 I urge you to return to a sensible option for range improvements on WICKIUP TREE DOME to provide the

22

forage the pipeline would provide. I also request, (and you are legally obligated to) do a detailed economic analysis, including a benefit-cost assessment which includes a reasonable value of the bighorn sheep, both for animals to be eliminated and the value of the potential bighorn habitat gone in the BIG JACKS CREEK area. I further request that a full EIS be done before any approval is granted, and that I be notified of any actions affecting the Plateau and WSA. You are blatantly overlooking the value of the herd of 100 Cal. Desert Bighorns, where 84% of all public comment have opposed the action. This is a political give away that will not be tolerated, and if not EIS is done you are clearly liable to litigation under NEPA and Endangered species Act.

22

(3) Bruneau-Kuna Grazing - I must again oppose the planned action which allocates only 1% of grazing area to wildlife - Hardly a balanced multiple-use you are mandated by law to follow.

I support the Reduced Livestock Use alternative, for it proposes the most "forage not allocated" so hopefully some will get to wildlife use. I also support it for economic reasons, this is the only alternative based on the money BLM actually expects to receive from grazing fees. The only alternative I will not be subsidizing with my tax dollars.

I demand the AUMs for wildlife be increased in any preferred alternative from the unrealistic 1% percent. Also that the amount of unallocated forage be increased over that recommended in the Proposed Action.

22

(4) The Draft EIS should in its final form include the wilderness recommendations for Owyhee River WSA, Sheep Ark West, and all other formerly recommended areas. Also the "dropped" parts of Big, Little Jacks Creek, Dan Cap Creek, Poke Creek and Bruneau Plateau be reconsidered, and that Sheep Creek East be recommended for wilderness.

Thank you, I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Cook, ESJ
27691 SE Haley Rd
Boring OR. 97009
(503) 663-5959

cc - ~~Ore~~
IWC
McCline

23.1

23

MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS:

P. O. Box 15638
Denver, Colorado 80215

July 9, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sir:

This letter constitutes the written comments of the Minerals Exploration Coalition (MEC) on the Owyhee Plan Amendment/Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The MEC represents mineral exploration companies and individuals conducting hard mineral exploration on federal land.

The area covered by this DEIS is range land with little or no known mineral resource potential. This being the situation, we realize that geology, energy and minerals are among the low priority items in land use planning and management of this area. However, we believe that more geologic and minerals information than is shown on page IV-24 should be included. For example, a description of the regional geologic and structural setting; current and past mining and prospecting in the region; evidence of mineral potential, including the continuity of the mineralized geologic units and structures from the DeLamar mine into the wilderness study areas (on the surface or projected into the subsurface) should be noted. Using published reports such as U. S. Geological Survey Map I-1256 by Ekren and others, other literature, and available unpublished information from mining companies, will show hydrothermal alteration is extensive and follows structural trends that connect with the mining areas in the vicinity of Carlin, Nevada. Other minerals information should become available as a result of the GEM studies now underway by the BLM, or from other sources.

We believe that a compilation of the geologic and minerals information will show that while little, if any, prospecting has been done in the Wilderness Study Areas, they are in a zone of geologic favorability. More studies and exploration are needed to assess the mineral potential.

790 WEST TENNESSEE AVE., SUITE 103 • DENVER, COLORADO 80223 • (303) 722-2235

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TO: Bureau of Land Management Page 2

In view of the fact that wilderness areas designated after December 31, 1983 will be withdrawn from appropriation under the mining and leasing laws, we believe that all areas with mineral potential should be excluded from wilderness designation, even though no economic deposit is now known. The withdrawal limitations will preclude collection of new data and new areas of mineral potential will not be found. With new discoveries effectively stopped, the policy of excluding all currently known mineral potential from wilderness should be followed, so that exploration of these areas will not be restricted and minerals might yet be produced. Explorationists tend to look at the long term because the lead time of discovery may be ten to fifteen years. The impact of wilderness on minerals should be assessed over the long term (a century or more). We believe that land use decisions should be in conformity with the policy statements made in the National Minerals Program Plan and Report to Congress released by the President in April.

North Fork Owyhee River WSA and Juniper Mountain WSA's. The Proposed Action, no action/no wilderness alternative, is favored by the MEC. The area shows evidence of its past and current non-wilderness use and, as indicated in the DEIS, is not suitable for wilderness designation. Further, while the areas are regarded to have low mineral potential, we believe they should remain open to additional geologic studies and exploration.

We thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments.

Sincerely,

MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

John D. Wells
Managing Director

JDW/mh

24

JOHN R. SWANSON
P. O. Box 952
Berkeley, Calif. 94701

July 19, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment - E.I.S. Staff
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sirs,

I commend your Management Team for the fine, comprehensive Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment - Environmental Impact Statement Draft.

I am familiar with the North Fork Owyhee River, and previous explorations there and have made observations in that area and I do have concern that they contain not only wilderness resources of certain national importance but scenic, historic and cultural resources of great importance.

With that in mind I suggest that the following areas be considered by the BLM for greater full wilderness characteristics and to be included within the National Wilderness Preservation System with acreage included. And with the understanding that additional wilderness study areas may be identified:

- North Fork Owyhee River 60,000
- Dry Diggings - Rattlesnake - Jordan 9,500
- Squaw Creek Canyon 15,000
- Middle Fork Owyhee 15,000
- Duck Creek Pole Canyon 10,000

There are the last of our once magnificent natural heritage of unique lands; most prominently intermingled and interwoven with what very little is left of the unimpaired, pristine wilderness states; our natural true natural heritage lands.

Lands of unrivaled scenic, historic, cultural, geologic, wilderness lands where we may experience true freedom of wilderness and all its natural and all else in their pleasant ways, and a lasting sanctuary.

Many thanks to you. I suggest that this entire Owyhee region receive National Park status.

Also, am hopeful that the magnificent features remaining may be preserved.

Sincerely,

D. John Swanson

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION X
1200 SIXTH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98101

REPLY TO ATTN OF: M/S 443

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JUL 29 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

RE: Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS

Dear Sirs:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has completed review of the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. We have no comments at this time and look forward to receiving the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

EPA has rated this EIS L-1 [LO -- Lack of Objection; 1 -- Sufficient Information]. We appreciate the opportunity to review this report.

Sincerely,

John R. Spencer
Regional Adminstrator

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July 22, 1982

Martin J. Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District, BLM
3948 Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705

Re: Wilderness Classification - Owyhee Resource Area

Dear Joe:

In my letter dated December 8, 1981, I opted for the All-Wilderness Alternative within the Owyhee Resource Area. I'm still of that opinion as the optimum area that could/should be designated wilderness in the Owyhee Resource Area. My fall-back position is that WSA 16-40 (North Fork Owyhee River) is the absolute minimum acreage that demands classification as wilderness.

I read the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement Draft and find it as biased a document as is the Draft Bruneau-Kuna Grazing Environmental Statement. There is useful information related, but the decision is never in doubt - the accommodation of livestock grazing regardless of other considerations. To comment further is to reiterate the criticisms of the Bruneau-Kuna draft - generalities, no specifics or assessment of impact(s) aside from those associated with livestock grazing; Appendix 2, Table 1; and, Appendix 3, Tables 1, 2 and 3. Thus, in my view, the subject document is more a supplemental grazing EIS than one which treats wilderness classification - its need, criteria, and impact upon public land resources and the public's interest. It is an inadequate document by and from which to make wilderness classification decisions. 26.1

In conclusion, the Idaho Wildlife Federation is in full accord and supports the recommendations for wilderness classification as proposed by the Committee for Idaho's High Desert, i.e., North Fork Owyhee River (49,470 acres).

Sincerely,

William R. Meiners, Chairman
Natural Resources Committee

WRM:mjm

Earth First!

July 21, 1982

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Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear sirs

After reviewing the Owyhee document, it is obvious that Bob Burford has succeeded in destroying the integrity of the BLM Wilderness Review Program. The location of the Boise District Office on Development Avenue is certainly in keeping with the attitudes displayed in this document.

We reject your non-wilderness recommendation for these 5 areas. In 1936, Bob Marshall inventoried a roadless area in the Owyhee country of over 4 million acres and one of nearly 1 million acres. In fact, the 1926 Outdoor Recreation Conference called by President Coolidge recommended an Owyhee Canyons Wilderness of 1 million acres.

Instead of going along with further deterioration of the wilderness values of the Owyhee country, BLM should be doing its utmost to recreate and preserve the wild values once found here and still found here. The management emphasis in the Owyhee should be a steady lessening and phasing out of development not drone-like acceptance of the industrialization of this part of the W est, too.

As a minimum, WSAs 16-41, 42, 45, & 47 should be combined into one wilderness recommendation with all " roads" between them closed and WSA 16-40 should also be recommended as wilderness. Other vehicle trails and dirt roads should eventually be closed and all the BLM lands in the several million acre Owyhee region of Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon should be designated as a Wilderness Area -- which would be an area of international significance. 27.1

Sincerely

Dave Foreman
Issues Coordinator
EARTH FIRST!
PO Box 235
Ely, Nevada 89301

28

P.O. Box 14
Jordan Valley, Or 97910
July 22, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Gentlemen:

I want to commend the BLM for your proposed action (no action/no wilderness) recommendation for the five Wilderness Study Areas on Juniper Mtn., and the North Fork Owyhee River. I believe your recommendation is correct for the reasons you outline and the simple fact that it is the best present and future use of the land for the largest number users.

My interest in these WSA's is that of a recreational user and a concerned citizen. I am the Mine Superintendent at the DeLamar Silver Mine. I have lived in Jordan Valley, Oregon and worked in the Owyhee Mountains the past seven years. During that time my family and I have made many trips into the Owyhee Mountains and specifically these WSA's, enjoying such activity as camping, sight-seeing, fishing, photography, rock hounding, cross-county skiing and flower collecting. For the types of activities we like to do the multiple-use concept of management best allows our continued use and enjoyment of these public lands. Because of the remoteness and ruggedness of these WSA's, an all wilderness or partial wilderness designation for the lands would actually exclude my family, (we have two pre-school age children) and myself from access to the many activities we now enjoy in the Owyhee's.

I attended the public hearing in Boise July 8th. and have a few specific comments I would like to make concerning the testimony that was given:

1. There were some comments about preservation of the juniper woodland and whether or not overgrazing was causing juniper encroachment, or whether juniper encroachment was causing poor land/grazing conditions. My opinion is that whatever the case may be, multiple use would allow the BLM to do a better job of both juniper woodland preservation and rangeland improvements than would a wilderness designation.

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2. Several people testified that the cattlemen were being subsidized by the government. I would not consider the range improvements a subsidy, but rather a benefit for the taxes and grazing fees they pay. What's the difference between the rangeland improvements benefit the cattlemen have and the benefits general and commercial aviation receives from the national air-space/air traffic control systems, or the benefits the trucking industry receives from the Interestate Highway System? Rangeland improvements also improve the wildlife habit as well, Do we call that a subsidy for the hunters?

3. The question of mineral resources was brought up. One speaker said there were none there, or there would be some mining claims in the WSA. Another speaker said we shouldn't exclude these areas from mineral exploration because new ideas and new technologies may someday lead to new mineral discoveries in these presently untested lands. I believe the second comment is absolutely right. Agreed, mineral resources in these WSA's don't look promising today, but what about the future? A wilderness designation will withdraw these lands from mineral exploration, while multiple-use will leave them open.

4. Another observation that I think was apparent at the hearing was that several of the cattlemen there were testifying in favor of the proposed action to protect their very livelihoods, not just to give the position statement of the well researched and prepared views of a special interest group. The proposed action will allow these livelihoods to continue, and with the BLM's good management to improve.

Again, I want to praise the BLM for the proposed action. As one who enjoys these WSA's mainly for their recreational resources and opportunities, I support the NO ACTION/NO WILDERNESS recommendation.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Weitz

TJW:eb

29

July 23. 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

REPLY IN GENERAL TO OWYHEE WILDERNESS PLAN AMENDMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT DRAFT.

I realize that Congress did Mandate the BLM to reviewing all of the public lands with rather strict and closely drawn guidelines to find lands suitable for wilderness classification by Congress definition.

I feel that it was a misguided Congress that passed the law, and not enough leway was allowed the BLM to eliminate as much as should have been eliminated in the first place. I feel enough land is already withdrawn from production to satisfy the needs for wilderness land for many years into the future.

In much of the area where public land is located the human population has been decreasing over the last eighty years or more, as the economics of agriculture has demanded larger units operated by less and less manpower. Generally wildlife has adapted to co-existance with human life and the domestic livestock industry. A twelve month per year environment for domestic livestock has improved the full year environment for wildlife. Deer for instance is probably at a production level never before known to history. Where local people have been allowed to control wildlife, including originally the Indians, game quality has generally improved with culling for quality; while the Great American hunter is looking for trophies.

Again in respect to wilderness areas, the uninitiated are not qualified at present time to occupy tinder and wilderness lands. Man made fires caused by piling wet vegetation, broken glass, domed aerosol cans, disposal of fags, and careless camp fires required any land used as recreation area by the general public, to be broken up with gridiron roads so fires can be kept small fires and contained whenever one gets started. I fear that wilderness areas as viewed by Congress would not be preserved as under multiple use lands, but if not ignited would become scared with piles of human debris--like a public beach on a Monday morning.

I hope the BLM will keep the recomended wilderness areas as small as the regulations will permit and that our education efforts with Congress will keep as much acreage out of wilderness as possible. As we wait for future consideration, use without abuse under multiple use management we will see these public lands improve into the future, and present use will add to the economy of America.

Dr. Theodore T. Cowgill
Jordan Valley
Oregon 97910
(503) 586 2426

30

Scott Ploger
510 East 16th St.
Idaho Falls, Id. 83401
July 26, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sirs:

I must express my opposition to your decision that the North Fork Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area not be recommended for wilderness. This WSA is ideally suited for primitive recreation: hiking, fishing, backpacking, etc., and the steep canyons and spires on the surrounding hills are breathtakingly beautiful. It's simply a lovely place to visit in the spring, and it should be managed to preserve the obvious wilderness qualities.

I'm aware that this WSA has considerable wildlife and plant ecology significance, but I know of zero resource conflicts. Since alternative uses are virtually nonexistent, wilderness management seems to be the only sane choice. I note that the Joint Recommendation for the Great Rift is getting similar treatment these days in Washington, in spite of a total lack of resource conflicts. I can't find another way to interpret the North Fork decision beyond concluding that Watt has formally equated wilderness with Satan and/or the International Communist Conspiracy!

The guidelines you folks must be receiving from D.C. during this administration just have to be all-time classics. Filling out all the paperwork must be quite a trick, with one frontal lobe tied behind the back and the other one used as a seat cushion!

Seriously, you have my sympathies.

Sincerely yours,
Scott Ploger

Scott Ploger

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1416 D. Newell
Boise, Idaho 83705
July 25, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District BLM
3948 Development Way
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer;

As a citizen interested in preservation of wilderness and wildlife for all the people rather than subsidized few (ranchers for example), both for present and future public use, I urge the consideration of BLM concerning the following areas and issues in Idaho:

> Jacks Creek Pipeline <

1. I oppose any pipeline on the Big Jacks-Little Jacks plateau. I urge the BLM to return to its original proposal for range improvements on Wickney Flat Dome to supply the cattle forage the pipeline is supposed to provide. Have the BLM do a detailed economic analysis of the project,

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including a benefit-cost assessment. (Include the economic value of the Bighorn Sheep, a trophy species), both for the animals which would be eliminated and the value of the bighorn potential forgone in the Big Jacks Creek area. A full EIS statement should be completed on the pipeline before BLM grants approval of the project. Please notify me of any actions affecting the Big Jacks, Little Jacks plateau and WSA's.

> Cattle 96%, Wildlife 1% <

2. Regarding the Draft EIS proposal that only 1% of the forage in the Bruneau-Kuna Resource Area be allocated for wildlife — with over 96% allocated to cattle, I request that Alternative 4, the Reduced Livestock Use Alternative, be selected as the preferred alternative and become the proposed action, that the AUM allocation for wildlife be increased, and that the amount of allocated forage be increased over that recommended in the Proposed Action.

3

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< North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area >

3. I support the Wilderness recommendations for the Owyhee River Wilderness, Sheep Creek West, and all other recommended areas. I urge that the dropped portions of Big and Little Jacks Creeks, Duncan Creek, Pole Creek, and the Bruneau Plateau be reconsidered, and that Sheep Creek East be recommended for Wilderness.

The North Fork of the Owyhee River area, only 80 miles from Boise, is an exceptional piece of Idaho's remaining roadless desert wilderness. It provides habitat for an endangered species of sagebrush, a "sensitive" sagebrush, and an uncommon lupine and primrose; also provides habitat for several "sensitive" animal species, including river otter and red-banded trout, and the bobcat.

In addition, the area contains several historical and archeological sites. Resource conflicts between Wilderness and other resource

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values on the North Fork are minimal. The area contains no energy, mineral or forest resources. Grazing would not be affected by Wilderness designation and, in fact, could increase 34% above current allocations even if the North Fork Owyhee WSA is designated as Wilderness. Under the BLM plan, grazing could increase only 38% even if no new Wilderness is designated! We must not sacrifice a superb part of Idaho's wilderness for a minuscule increase in potential grazing.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Mayer

Noni P. Mayer

32

Wildlife Management Institute

709 Wire Building, 1000 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005 • 202/347-1774

DANIEL A. POOLE
President
L. R. JAHN
Vice-President
L. L. WILLIAMSON
Secretary
JACK S. PARKER
Board Chairman

July 28, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan
Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Gentlemen:

The Wildlife Management Institute is pleased to comment on OWYHEE WILDERNESS PLAN AMENDMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT, DRAFT, Idaho.

We support the preferred alternative, No Action/No Wilderness, which will be best for wildlife. Developments to break up the large areas of juniper and protect the riparian areas are the basic wildlife management needed. Wilderness classification would preclude this type of management.

These remarks have been coordinated with William B. Morse, the Institute's Western Representative.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Poole

Daniel A. Poole
President

DAP:lbb

DEDICATED TO WILDLIFE SINCE 1911

33

439 Styner Avenue
Moscow, Idaho 83843
July 28, 1982

Mr. Martin J. Zimmer, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendments/EIS
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

33.1 In reviewing the "Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS - Draft" I did not find any mention of Research Natural Areas, except on page III - 10. I would like to stress the need for small, relatively undisturbed areas to serve as (1) baseline or reference areas for studying and monitoring the effects of management practices, (2) gene pools, and (3) for research and educational purposes.

WSA 16-40 contains excellent stands of Artemisia papposa and climax stands of Juniperus occidentalis. I hope an area can be reserved as a research natural area to incluce these situations.

A research natural area containing good stands of mountain mahogany is needed, also. Does WSA 16 - 47 offer possibilities?

Sincerely

C. A. Wellner

Charles A. Wellner, Chairman
Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee

34

Box 1113
Ketchum, Idaho 83340

BLM
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office

Gentlemen & Madams:

We are writing to urge that the North Fork of the Owyhee River be protected as wilderness. This area is an exceptional piece of Idaho's remaining desert wilderness and ought to be managed as such. The area is beautiful and supports a "sensitive" sagebrush species as well as other rare-banded trout. These are important reasons for protection.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Tom and Ellen Glaccum

35

July 30, 1982

BLM
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office

Dear Persons;

I am disappointed to hear that BLM's preliminary recommendation denies wilderness status for all of the Wilderness Study Areas (W.S.A.s) in Owyhee County.

Wilderness designation for all of these WSAs would have a minuscule economic impact on Owyhee County. However the potential for recreation

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use there is great. Boise is less than 100 miles distant. Wilderness designation for these WSAs would preserve and help protect habitat for the red-banded trout.

Administrative protection, as proposed for a part of the canyon country, does not go far enough in protecting these values.

Having worked in Owyhee county the past two summers, I feel

35

a part of that country should be preserved with Wilderness designation!

Mark Keller
MARK KELLER
PO Bx 1105
Ovofino, Id
83544

36

1303 Ivy Rd #12
Bremerton, WA 98310
July 31, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Ave
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Sir:

I wish to submit comments on the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. I support the protection of the entire North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area as wilderness(e.g. 49,470 acres).

Your EIS describes the area as "spectacular," a "meandering oasis" and "with Class A scenery." The area has "high projected density for archeological sites." Mineral, gas and oil potential is minimal. The North Fork also provides habitat for endangered and sensitive plant and animal species. Your analysis confirms that this area should be designated wilderness. Your preferred alternative does not provide sufficient protection of the area from development and vegetative manipulation. Primitive recreational opportunities should not be defined only in the canyons, but the tablelands should also be included in the wilderness classification.

Wilderness classification will allow an increase in grazing of 34%, only 4 % less than your preferred alternative. Four percent is insignificant and should not be used to deny wilderness classification for this spectacular area.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my views.

Sincerely,

Jill Watt

AtlanticRichfieldCompany 555 Seventeenth Street
Denver, Colorado 8021
Telephone 303 575 757
J. R. Mitchell
Public Lands Coordinator

37

August 3, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Ave
Boise, ID 83705

Re: Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/
Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Sir:

Atlantic Richfield Company appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Bureau of Land Management's Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment.

We support BLM's recommendations for nonwilderness for the N. Fork Owyhee River, Big Willow Spring, Squaw Creek Canyon, Middle Fork Owyhee River, and West Fork Red Canyon Wilderness Study Areas.

We endorse the concept of a thorough analysis of the resource values existing on Wilderness Study Areas in order to determine what the priorities are. Obviously, tradeoffs are necessary when there are conflicting resource values. Tradeoffs considered would include opportunities and restrictions for access to minerals and the relative value of each conflicting resource before recommendations are made for wilderness designation. Energy and mineral resources must play a major role in wilderness decisions. It is essential that the exploration for and development of these resources be provided for by opening or maintaining access to areas which may contain these values. Areas identified as having mineral resource potential, such as the WSA's contained in the Owyhee Plan Amendment, should remain open to mineral activities.

In conclusion, we support the Bureau's recommendations as outlined in the Draft EIS. Given the mineral potential existing in these WSA's, it is important that the BLM keep its preliminary recommendations in tact when making the final recommendations on these areas.

Sincerely,

J. R. Mitchell

CMM:drm

38

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
600 South Walnut • Box 25
Boise • Idaho • 83707

August 4, 1982

Mr. Martin J. Zimmer
District Manager, BLM
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

This is in reference to the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement for the five wilderness study areas involving Juniper Mountain and the North Fork Owyhee River.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game concurs in the BLM proposed action that none of the five WSA's are suitable for wilderness designation.

We believe the land managers do, however, need the flexibility to manipulate vegetation composition in these WSA's to improve the habitat base for wildlife as well as for domestic livestock.

Sincerely,

Jerry M. Conley
Director

cc: ICL (Boccard)

• EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER •

39

1910 Manitou
Boise, Idaho 83706
August 5, 1982

Martin J. Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District BLM
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment EIS
3948 Development Way
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer,

The Owyhee Wilderness Draft EIS is extremely disappointing for it ignores the outstanding wilderness potential of the area which could benefit us all and advocates instead expensive, Federally-funded range improvements in the WSA's benefiting only a few ranchers.

The Boise District's wilderness inventory eliminated many fine "defacto" wilderness areas. The ones remaining were truely outstanding. I was very hopeful some would be recommended as wilderness.

This EIS justifies the no-wilderness proposal as necessary to give land managers "flexibility" to " manipulate vegetative composition". The costs of this "flexibility" are impressive. Range improvements costing $924,100 are proposed. It is estimated that this public investment will increase the AUM's by 13,891 in 20 years, giving ranchers additional annual income of $62,000 in 5 years.

But ranchers also benefit under the all-wilderness alternative. The costs of range improvements (outside the WSA's) would be $597,800. AUM's would increase by 10,710 in 20 years, giving ranchers additional annual income of $44,600 in 5 years. The difference is a savings of $326,300 in public monies and $17,400 less additional income for ranchers.

I find this proposal especially disturbing for there is not a BLM WSA anywhere that could not benefit some individual given enough public investment.

It is difficult to place a monetary value on wilderness, but in this case the all-wilderness alternative is obviously the most cost effective. It is also a more balanced and fair approach to managing our public lands. I urge you to reconsider the all-wilderness alternative.

Sincerely,

Janet D. Ward

40

BRUCE BOWLER
LAWYER
244 SONNA BUILDING
BOISE, IDAHO 83702
PHONE 343-6078

August 5, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Gentlemen:

I appreciate your supplying me with copy of your Draft of Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement, and this comment is made thereon as provided in your announcement.

Your all wilderness alternative should be your proposed action for the 99,725 acres in your wilderness study areas. This is where service to the true public interest rests, your efforts to again assist the cattle permittees is misdirected.

These are relatively small areas that still have wilderness characteristics largely because toughness of terrain and lack of water have kept cattle out. To further expand cattle grazing in these study areas is the wrong way to go.

It is mythology that cattle in big numbers and wildlife are multiple use. Cattle dominate in the ranges they invade. In most cases, cattle and wildlife are mutually exclusive so far as good game and fish populations are concerned, and I am sure you have extensive data that proves this fact.

As an agency of public interest in administration of your trusteeship of the public lands, you should be opting in favor of wildlife population in the public interest rather than trying to accommodate the private interests of cattle grazers on public lands.

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Cattle are inherently the most destructive force we have on the public lands in the quantities that BLM consistently tries to accommodate.

It is time the thrust should be to protect the few remaining areas that can qualify for wilderness status which have become preciously small amounts.

Please change your proposed action to better accommodate the public interest in the wilderness areas, and wildlife under your jurisdiction.

Thank you very kindly.

Respectfully yours,

Bruce Bowler

BB/kmk
cc: Hon. Jim McClure, USS
Hon. Steve Symms, USS
Hon. George Hansen, MC
Hon. Larry Craig, MC
Hon. Clair M. Whitlock

41

August 9, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Re: Draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS

41.1 In my public comments, I refered you to the fact that recent polls indicate a very strong public interest in environmental issues. At page IV-27 of your report, the results of a dated poll are cited. Beyond questioning whether a survey has the same validity as a poll, I believe it should be apparent that so much has happened in the last 3 years that relying on such old material invites any reasonable observer to discredit your conclusions.

There are two Harris Polls dated May, 1982, which I cited at the hearing. The results of these polls suggest that the public feels more concern with environmental issues now than before (1979, when your survey was conducted). In part this shift may well be due to the fact the current Administration has very different priorities than the majority of the american public. At the rate of 83% to 14% people want the Clean Air Act enforced as strictly or more strictly than it is today. At the rate of 93% to 4% people are for keeping the Clean Water Act as strict as it is or stricter.

Mr. Harris reports that his staff was so surprised at these figures that they followed the initial poll to ask if people felt the same way regardless of economic costs. Interestingly enough, the original results were still valid.

While these polls may not be directly relevant to the Owyhee wilderness question, they should serve to cause a review of the basis on which you made your decision. In addition, the fact that people want to save their environment, regardless of cost, suggests that if some livestock production is sacrificed for achieving wilderness quality, people would elect that option. Inasmuch as these are public lands, I think it is appropriate to consider these factors. Citizens of Idaho are not the only persons with an interest in these lands. Many of these wilderness areas have national significance, and the decisions about their future should be

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made by a larger population base than the one existing in Idaho.

Concerning the issue of cost benefits, I am surprised at the BLM's election. In this era of fiscal conservation, how can you justify the costly alternative you propose? From a purely fiscal standpoint, wilderness designation is most effective.

41.2 Your report is biased in several areas, but one point that is painfully apparent is in your discussion of the costs and burdens to local government of recreational users. That discussion is fine as far as it goes, but there is absolutely no counter in the form of a description of recreational benefits and income. Since recreation is one of the major activities contemplated in wilderness, why is so little detailed analysis of benefits from the activity included in this report?

In conclusion, your report seems to be chiefly concerned with justifying a no wilderness alternative rather than making an honest evaluatioin of the possibilities. There is simply no rational justification for depending on a 3 year old survey, when public opinion on environmental issues strongly prefers preservation today. Your proof and conclusions are at odds, and the only supportable conclusion from your report is that all wilderness areas be recommended. I do not see any evidence to justify your non-wilderness recommendation.

Sincerely,

Theodore S. Weigold

Theodore S. Weigold
1005 Fort St.
Boise, Id. 83702

August 6, 1982.

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John Marshall
P.O. Box 168
Boise, Idaho 83701

BLM
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/ EIS
Boise District Office
Boise, Idaho

Dear BLM,

I oppose the recommendation that no wilderness be recommended for the North Fork of the Owyhee. I haven't been to this area yet, but certainly will, and will be madder than hell if I see crested wheat grass plantings when I get there. I don't mind seeing a few cattle, but the wholesale slaughter of the natural ecosystem for the beasts galls me. That is why I am for the wilderness. I grew up in southeast Oregon and have enjoyed the high desert all of my life. I used to not think that wilderness protection was neddessary, but the BLM has recently changed my mind. The kind of mangement you people are promoting these days under your leader James Watt apalls me. It favors cattle and nothing else. Futher more it does not make economic sense. It ammounts to a welfare system for ranchers at the expense of the taxpayer, the wildlife, and the Natural ecosystem. Considering the way you are operating these days, I am positively for wilderness in the North Fork of the Owyhee area.

Sincerely

John Marshall

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Pacific Northwest Region
Westin Building, Room 1920
2001 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98121

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1202-03 (PNR-RE)
DES 82/29

43

August 4, 1982

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Boise District Office

From: Associate Regional Director, Recreation Resources and Professional Services

Subject: Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement DES 82/29

We have reviewed the subject document and have the following comments:

Cultural Resources

43.1 On page III-1 there is a summary of the proposed management plan as it addresses cultural resources. The approach outlined appears to be a reasonable one, but there is no reference to compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

43.2 The description on page IV-24 fails to make clear which of the archeological and historic resources that have been identified in the study areas are considered to be potentially eligible for the "National Register of Historic Places," which have been submitted to the National Register for determinations of eligibility, which have actually been determined eligible, and which have been nominated. Any properties that appear to meet the criteria of eligibility should be reported to the National Register for a formal determination of eligibility.

Recreation Resources

It is stated that the environmental impacts from wilderness designation or nondesignation are similar, and that the study areas with the most significant wilderness characteristics could be equally protected by administratively recognized special recreation management areas. These and other similar statements lead us to conclude that we have no objections to the proposed action.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Richard L. Winters

Richard L. Winters

44

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

3808 Andrews Road
Medford, Or. 97501
August 2, 1982

Dear Sirs:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS. I do not agree with the proposed action, instead I support Alternative #3 - Wilderness Designation for the Owyhee North Fork and Horsehead Springs. I feel very strongly that the North Fork must be given Wilderness Protection. Under the proposed action the North Fork is available for multiple use, and eventhough the Owyhee MFP presently calls for a Special Recreation Management Area, there is no guarentee that this will be the case in the extended future. If the area is to be preserved in it's natural condition, then wilderness designation must be proposed for it now. This would ensure for all time the unique values which the SRMA classification attempts to do for the short term. An interesting figure is the percentage of proposed Wilderness in the Boise district in relation to the land base. Since all the WSA's have not been studied this number cannot be precisely given, yet an approximate figure surely could be worked out at this time. Would a figure of 20% be to high? How about 30%? Given the outstanding Wilderness characteristics of the North Fork, surely it must help comprise any percentage figure.

44.1

Given the fact that the proposed management would alter 5 of the 7 key factors used to evaluate scenic quality, the natural state of Juniper Mountain is at stake. I would like to see the entire "green island" of Juniper Mountain unaltered, however I do not see this as realistic. I support proposed Wilderness for Horsehead Springs as a compromise to the all Wilderness alternative.

The benefits of Wilderness are well documented and the resource conflicts under alternative #3 are very minmal. I urge the Boise District to commit itself to preserving more than just a token amount of our once all encompassing Wilderness. Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,
Daryl Romeyn
Daryl Romeyn

45

FROM THE DESK OF
Susie Vader
1525 Malad
Boise ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer,

I would like to protest the BLM recommendation concerning wilderness in the Owyhee Resource Area.

I strongly urge you to recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area.

Sincerely,
Susie Vader

Form PP-1750 The Drawing Board, Inc., Box 505, Dallas, Texas

The Bengoechea Hotel
SUITE ONE

46

RANDALL E. MORRIS, D.D.S.

195 North Second West ● Post Office Box 732 ● Mountain Home, Idaho 83647
Telephone: (208) 587-4326

August 8, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sirs:

A review of the Owyhee Wilderness EIS indicates that the only significant conflict with a Wilderness designation lies in management of the WSA for grazing purposes. As no energy or mineral resources are present, and as no potential agricultural development is likely, the public is once again asked to sacrifice recreational values for grazing. No value appears to have been given to the recreational worth of flat desert land. Isolation and solitude within the canyons exist because of the wide buffer of flat de facto wilderness.

46.1

The Bruneau-Kuna grazing EIS proposals in conjunction with the Owyhee Wilderness EIS, suggest to me, an official BLM hostility toward sustaining desert wilderness in Idaho. I have heard little to encourage me about other desert WSA's elsewhere within the state.

The Owyhee EIS indicates that grazing could increase significantly even with Wilderness designation through the use of different management techniques. Vegitation manipulation appears to be one of the major conflicts with Wilderness. As past grazing practices have been the primary cause of both juniper encroachment and the destruction of the native bunch grasses, I feel that it is only fair that the livestock grazers should not dictate the future use of this land for the rest of the public.

Although 26 WSA's are identified as having the juniper forest component, there is no assurance at this time that any of these areas will indeed receive Wilderness designation. To claim that the Owyhee WSA juniper system can be dropped because it is represented in other WSA's is not a valid arguement when we do not know the outcome of the study process for these other areas.

Although improvement in range vegetation may be more difficult under a Wilderness or partial Wilderness designation, it is not listed as impossible.

46

What are we really discussing here? This land has been wrongly grazed and exploited for 100 years. Profits have been taken and the land degraded through four or five human generations of use. The costs of rehabilitation to a healthy ecological state, including re-introduction of a diverse range of native plants must be weighed against a century of profit taking. Anything else is non-renewable exploitation of a renewable resource.

The wilderness which still exists along the North Fork of the Owyhee provides habitat for "sensitive" species of river otter, red-banded trout, bobcat, sagebrush, and who knows what else? Another endangered species of sagebrush, as well as an uncommon lupine and primrose are present. These genetic resources must be protected. The BLM is the only agency which can do it.

I strongly urge that the BLM reconsider its proposal and recommend that an All Wilderness Alternative be recommended for the five units within the Owyhee RSA.

Thank you for reading this far.

Sincerely,

Randall E. Morris

8-9-82

47

SIERRA CLUB
NORTHERN ROCKIES CHAPTER
MIDDLE SNAKE GROUP
Box 552 Boise, ID 83701

Martin J Zimmer
Manager, Boise Dist BLM
Boise, ID 83706.

Subject: Owyhee Wilderness Plan amendment Draft EIS

Dear Mr. Zimmer

Over policy objections to the proposed alternative were discussed at your Boise Public Hearing held earlier this summer. In addition to not being in the public interest economicly (all Wilderness has the best cost benefit ratio - even ignoring the unrealistic discount rate and non monetary benefits of wilderness) your alternative proposed for implementation was arrived at by an unsound process.

your starting point was the Owyhee MFP. this MFP was prepared without consideration for a major multiple-use (Wilderness.) The chain of logic leading to your proposed (no Wilderness) alternative boils down to the fact that Wilderness would interfer with grazing levels projected in the Original MFP. this is not an example of multiple use decision making. I note that AUMs are projected to increase under all alternatives so the question is really - How much of an increase in grazing will occur and at what cost? Under your proposed the cost to Wilderness is too high.

We do not consider "Special Recreation Management areas" of undefined extent or effect to be adequate protection for Wilderness values. We note that while Wilderness areas are often suitable for recreation use (and grazing) Wilderness is a value and a multiple use in itself.

-2-

47

SIERRA CLUB
NORTHERN ROCKIES CHAPTER
MIDDLE SNAKE GROUP

your EIS notes that "lack of periodic ~~wildfires~~ fire ..... and grazing by livestock .... are the main factors which have influenced the existing vegetation and trend." (IV-2) you note that the existing ~~vegetation condition~~ is mostly in poor to fair condition and the trend is stable at best and often downward. You further state the primary objective of BLM multiple use management is the achievement of good vegetative condition.

47.1 We object to the train of logic which led to the only alternatives being considered being adjustments in the Wilderness boundries. If you seriously hope to attain your stated goal it is necessary to consider alternatives which manipulate the dominant factor in the failure of the range to meet your goal. this means you must consider grazing. This EIS keeps grazing constant (actually - it assumes increases for all alternatives) and considers as the only variable Wilderness.

This is an example of single use dominant use management This EIS is fatally flawed by its failure to go beyond the single use focus of its parent MFP.

Charles C Yoder
Chair

48

1704 Robert St.
Boise, Idaho 83705
August 8, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

Please recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers outstanding opportunities for a wide variety of recreational activities. The juniper woodland which it supports is not protected in the Wilderness system, nor is there an opportunity elsewhere to protect it on the landform type found in the North Fork and Juniper Mountain. Designation of the North Fork as Wilderness would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are minimal, and there are no conflicts with minerals, energy, timber, or other resources. I cannot agree with the BLMs contention that the special values of the North Fork would be adequately protected by Special Resource Management Area designation; this designation would only apply to the canyons, not the plateaus or uplands. Being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. The only lasting protection for the North Fork is through Wilderness designation.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Phil Miller

8951 Wichita Drive
Boise, Idaho 83709
August 8, 1982

49

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation values found in the North Fork deserve Wilderness protection. The unit would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small; the potential opportunity costs of designating this area are less than 5/100ths of 1% of the current economy of Owyhee County. Although the DEIS fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation for this area, it is possible that they would exceed the costs of forefone range improvements.

Designation the North Fork as Wilderness has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, which calls for significant taxpayer monies to go into the area for range improvement projects. I urge you to select an alternative which is both economically and environmentally more responsible, and designate the North Fork as a Wilderness Area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Tim Evans

Tim Evans

1525 Malad Street
Boise, Idaho 83705
August 8, 1982

50

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers outstanding recreational opportunities not found many other places in the region. The unique geology and other landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so the unit would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

I cannot agree with your contention that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. This would protect merely the canyon, and not the plateaus and uplands; being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

I cannot see how recommending none of the Owyhee Resource Area WSAs as Wilderness meets BLM's mandate for balanced multiple use, and increasing the diversity of the National Wilderness system in landform and ecosystem type. Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dorian Duffin

Dorian Duffin

8951 Wichita Drive
Boise, Idaho 83709
August 8, 1982

51

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has outstanding scenery, and offers a wide range of recreational opportunities. It is dominated by an ecosystem which is very limited in Idaho, covering only 0.9% of the state. There is no protection of the juniper woodland ecosystem in the Wilderness system, nor is there an opportunity elsewhere to protect it on the landform type found in the North Fork and Juniper Mountain. Designation of the North Fork as Wilderness would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small, and there are no conflicts with minerals, energy, timber, or other resources. The outstanding recreational and wilderness values of the North Fork can only be protected by Wilderness designation; any other administrative designation (such as the Special Recreation Management Area) could be changed at any time, giving inadequate protection to the area's irreplaceable values. For these reasons, I urge you to recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee in your final EIS.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Evans

Charlotte Evans

5174 Choctaw Ct.
Boise, Idaho 83706
August 8, 1982

52

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my opposition to your decision not to recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers outstanding opportunities for a wide variety of recreational activities. The juniper woodland which it supports is not protected in the Wilderness system, nor is there an opportunity elsewhere to protect it on the rhyolite landform type found in the North Fork and Juniper Mountain. Designation of the North Fork as Wilderness would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a major objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are minimal, and there are no conflicts with minerals, energy, timber, or other resources. I cannot agree that the special values of the North Fork would be adequately protected by Special Resource Management Area designation; this designation would only apply to the canyons, not the plateaus. Being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. The only lasting protection for the North Fork is through Wilderness designation.

Please recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork in the Final EIS. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dennis Reese

Dennis Reese

2106 Harrison
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 8, 1982

53

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers a wide range of recreational opportunities. The juniper woodland ecosystem type which covers it is very limited in Idaho, covering only 0.9% of the State. There is no protection of this ecosystem in the Wilderness system, nor is there an opportunity elsewhere to protect it on the landform type found in the North Fork and Juniper Mountain. Designation of the North Fork as Wilderness would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are minimal, and there are no conflicts with minerals, energy, timber, or other resources. The outstanding recreational and wilderness values of the North Fork can only be protected by Wilderness designation; any other administrative designation could be changed at any time, which would fail to protect the area's irreplaceable values. Please recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Rick Johnson

865 South Linder
Meridian, Idaho
August 8, 1982

54

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation values found in the North Fork deserve Wilderness protection. Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small; the potential opportunity costs of designating this area are less than 5/100ths of 1% of the current economy of Owyhee County. Although the DEIS fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation for this area, it is possible that they would exceed the costs of foregone range improvements. (This needs to be further explored in the final EIS).

Designation the North Fork as Wilderness has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, which calls for significant taxpayer monies to go into the area for range improvement projects. I urge you to select an alternative which is more economically and environmentally sound, and designate the North Fork as a Wilderness Area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Christie Calvert

4503 Gage Street
Boise, Idaho 83705
August 8, 1982

55

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation values found in the North Fork deserve Wilderness protection. The North Fork supports a juniper woodland community, which is found only on 0.9% of the State. Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a major objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small; the potential opportunity costs of designating this area are less than 5/100ths of 1% of the current economy of Owyhee County. Although the DEIS fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation for this area, it is possible that they would exceed the costs of foregone range improvements. (This needs to be further explored in the Final EIS).

Because the North Fork partial alternative has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, it is a more fiscally responsible alternative. The special values of the North Fork deserve permanant protection, which cannot be given through an administrative designation. I urge you to select the alternative which is more economically and environmentally sound, and recommend the entire North Fork as a Wilderness Area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kurt Ballance

823 Resseguie
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 8, 1982

56

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation values found in the North Fork deserve Wilderness protection. Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a major objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small; the potential opportunity costs of designating this area are less than 5/100ths of 1% of the current economy of Owyhee County. Although the DEIS fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation for this area, it is possible that they would exceed the costs of foregone range improvements. (This needs to be further explored in the final EIS).

Because the North Fork partial alternative has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, it is a more fiscally responsible alternative. The special values of the North Fork deserve permanant protection, which cannot be given through an administrative designation. I urge you to select the alternative which is more economically and environmentally sound, and recommend the entire North Fork as a Wilderness Area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Don Carroll

303 N. 2nd No. 5
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

57

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork contains outstanding scenery and recreation opportunities, opportunities not found many other places in the region. The geology and landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in accordance with the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines). The ecological condition of the unit could be improved through new grazing systems and other land management programs, since juniper encroachment is minimal.

The economic costs of designating the North Fork as Wilderness are minimal, and there are no conflicts with energy, minerals, or other resources.

I cannot agree that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. This would protect only the canyon, and not the uplands; being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

Recommending Wilderness designation for the North Fork would better meet BLM's mandate for balanced multiple use, and is a more fiscally responsible choice than the proposed action. Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the entire North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Matt Slater

58

303 N. 2nd #5
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

RE: Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement - Draft

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers outstanding recreational opportunities not found many other places in the region. The unique geology and landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so the unit would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Wheat

59

303 N. 2nd #5
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation values found in the North Fork deserve Wilderness protection. The unit would increase the diversity of landform and ecosystem types in the National Wilderness Preservation System, a key objective of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating the North Fork are very small; the potential opportunity costs of designating this area are less than 5/100ths of 1% of the current economy of Owyhee County. Although the DEIS fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation for this area, it is possible that they would exceed the benefits of the proposed range improvements.

Designation the North Fork as Wilderness has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action. I urge you to select an alternative which is both economically and environmentally more responsible, and recommend the North Fork as a Wilderness Area. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robert Vasquez

60

303 North 2nd No. 6
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District BLM
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

RE: Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement Draft

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to support the Partial Wilderness Alternative Number 1, designation of the North Fork of the Owyhee River. The North Fork has outstanding scenery and opportunities for hunting, fishing, backpacking, climbing, and other types of recreation; it is also habitat for bobcat, river otter, redband cutthroat, and several rare or endangered plant species.

A major reason I support Wilderness designation for the North Fork is that it is more cost-effective than managing it as non-Wilderness. The all-Wilderness alternative has the highest benefit-cost ratio, with the North Fork alternative second; in times of tight budgets and fiscal responsibility such as these, doing business in the most cost-effective way makes the most sense.

Please reconsider your decision on the North Fork. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Wes Hult

61

303 North 2nd St. No. 6
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as Wilderness. The North Fork offers a unique opportunity to increase the diversity of ecosystem and landform type in the National Wilderness system, because of the uncommon combination of juniper woodland and basalt uplands. Because there is virtually no juniper invasion in the North Fork, the ecological condition could be improved through new grazing systems and other land management practices.

There is no conflict with Wilderness and minerals, energy, or other resources in the North Fork; the economic costs are very small, and could be compensated for by increased recreation user expenditures within the region. I urge you to recommend the North Fork for Wilderness in your final decision.

Sincerely,

Steve Kraemer

Steve Kraemer

62

4503 Gage Street
Boise, Idaho 83705
August 8, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has spectacular scenery, and offers outstanding recreational opportunities not found many other places in the region (mostly because of the limited extent of the juniper woodland ecosystem). The geology and other landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so the unit would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

I cannot agree that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. This would protect merely the canyon, and not the plateaus and uplands; being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

I cannot see how recommending none of the Owyhee Resource Area WSAs as Wilderness meets BLM's mandate for balanced multiple use, and increasing the diversity of the National Wilderness system in landform and ecosystem type. Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Chris Garbarino

Chris Garbarino

63

1809 North 9th Street
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr . Martin Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Managemant
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer

I would like to go on record as opposing your decision not to recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee River Wilderness Study Area. As a tax-payer I can not see how you can recommend this proposal it is not very money-wise. In this era of no money, how do you justify spending more than is necessary? It seems that the most economically sound idea is Wilderness, and not your proposal.

Thank you for allowing me to make my comments.

Sincerely

David L. Taylor

David L. Taylor

64

1817 Annett Street
Boise, ID 83705
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer
Disrtict Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Managemant
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer ,

My wife and I would like to express our strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a wilderness area. The beauty of the area is undeniable and the recreational possibilities are endless. These things need to be preserved. We feel that Wilderness designation for the North Fork would add to the diversity of the whole Wilderness Preservation System. There is at this time no protection of the juniper woodland; it too has a place in the wilderness system.

As for the economic cost of designating this WAS as wilderness, it is very small, and there are no resources to exploit. The outstanding recreational and wilderness values of the North Fork can only be protected by Wilderness designation; and other administrative designation (such as the Special Recreation Management Area) could be changed at any time, giving inadequate protection to the area's irreplaceable values. For these reasons, we urge you to recommend Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee in the final EIS.

Sincerely ,

Larry Hallock

Donna Hallock

Donna Hallock

65

303 N. 2nd #6
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork contains outstanding scenery and recreation opportunities, opportunities not found many other places in the region (mostly because of the limited extent of the juniper woodland ecosystem). The geology and other landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System, in accordance with the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines.

The economic costs of designating the North Fork as Wilderness are minimal, and there are no conflicts with energy, minerals, or other resources. The partial Wilderness alternative which designates the North Fork as Wilderness has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, meaning it is fiscally a more responsible and less expensive alternative. In today's era of belt-tightening, it makes sense to go with an alternative which protects the environment and saves the taxpayer money.

I cannot agree that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the entire North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jeff Atkinson

66

120 West Main Street
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 9, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Sir;

I would like to express my concern for your proposed action on the North Fork of the Owyhee River. I for one am opposed to your DEIS as it is neither economically or enviromentally sound.

66.1 The economic costs of designating the North Fork as wilderness are small compared to the proposed action, and there are no conflicts with energy, minerals or other resources. Your DEIS also seems to have overlooked the economic benefits for Owyhee county if this WSA was indeed considered Wilderness - this should be included in your final EIS.

The plateaus and canyons of this area are wonderfully scenic and should be preserved. The juniper woodland of this area is not found anywhere else in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The designation of this area would increase the diversity of the landform and ecosystem types within the NWPS. This is one of the major objectives of the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines. The recreational opportunities are numerous. It also offers a great amount of solitude-a major objective of the NWPS.

Please reconsider your proposal and recommend the North Fork as Wilderness.

Sincerely yours,

John Lamborn

67

120 West Main Street
Boise, ID 83702
August 9, 1982

Martin Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer

It is not very often that I comment on enviromental issues, but I think now is the time to say something. I am strongly opposed to your decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Oywhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork has some spectacular scenery and opportunities for a wide variety of recreational activities. The juniper forest which exists there is not protected in any part of the Wilderness system. Isn't it about time to give protection to this type of ecosystem? Designating the North Fork as a Wilderness area would add variety to the Wilderness Preservation System, which is one of the main objectives of your Wilderness Guidelines.

The economic and other costs of designating this area as Wilderness are quite small compared with the proposed action. There are no mineral, energy, or other resources which would conflict with this area being designated as Wilderness. The cost of range improvements will be much higher than Wilderness. I hope that you consider the most economically and enviromentally sound action.

I can see no justification for recommending that none of the Owyhee Resource Area WSAs be designated as Wilderness. This does not meet with BLM mandate for balanced multiple use nor will it increase the diversity of the National Wilderness System. For the sake of diversity and sound economic values please reconsider your decision.

Thank you for reading my comments.

Sincerely

Larry A. Jackson

Larry Jackson

COMMITTEE FOR IDAHO'S HIGH DESERT
P.O. BOX 463 BOISE, IDAHO 83701

9 August 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

68

Dear Joe:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement. On behalf of the Committee for Idaho's High Desert and its members statewide, I would like to make the following comments.

GENERAL COMMENTS

We are very disappointed with the BLM decision not to recommend any Wilderness in the Owyhee Resource Area. Reading the DEIS seems to direct the reader to a completely different conclusion than that of the Proposed Action - the DEIS very strongly points to the protection of at least part, if not all, of the Wilderness Study Areas as Wilderness because of the outstanding recreational, scenic, and other values. We cannot see how the Proposed Action represents a balanced decision based on careful consideration of the BLM's mandate to manage the Public Lands in a Multiple Use manner. Unfortunately, the whole DEIS points to dominance of a single use - livestock - at the expense of recreation, aesthetics, watershed, and a host of other multiple-use values.

We are particularly disturbed with the proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as Wilderness. Not only does the North Fork have outstanding scenic and recreational values, it has very limited potential for livestock improvement. The unit provides habitat for an uncommon species of sagebrush, an uncommon primrose and lupine, and habitat for river otter, bobcat, and red-banded trout (all "sensitive" wildlife species). The WSA also contains several historical and archaeological sites. All of these would be better protected by Wilderness designation than by the Proposed Action.

The Committee for Idaho's High Desert officially endorses Alternative 2, the All-Wilderness Alternative.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System

The BLM Wilderness Study guidelines state that increasing the ecosystem and landform diversity of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) is one of the major criteria for evaluating Wilderness Study Areas. Designation of all or part of the WSAs being considered in the Owyhee Resource Area would better meet this direction than the Proposed Action for the following reasons:

1. There is, at present, virtually no representation in the NWPS of the Sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, and absolutely no represen-

68.1 tation of the juniper woodland. There is also no juniper woodland included in any of the administratively endorsed wilderness areas. Although other areas with these vegetative communities are being studied, there is no guarantee that any will be recommended for Wilderness designation.

2. Designation of all or part of the units under study as Wilderness would protect the only example we know of a juniper woodland on rhyolite/basalt uplands. The other WSAs containing juniper woodlands are located on fault-block mountains or other geologic formations very different from the base strata in the North Fork and Juniper Mountain. The combination of deeply carved canyons with rhyolite columns and pillars, eroded red lava uplands and spires covered with juniper forest is only found, to the best of our knowledge, in the WSAs included in this decision. This is our only opportunity to add this combination of ecosystem and landform type to the National Wilderness System.

3. Designation of North Fork and/or Juniper Mountain WSAs as Wilderness would help balance the geographical distribution of Wilderness in Idaho. At present, virtually all of Idaho's Wilderness is concentrated in a corridor through the central portion of the state, with none south of the Snake River or west of the Sawtooths. Protection of Wilderness in the southwestern part of Idaho would help balance the geographical distribution and ecosystem representation of Wilderness in Idaho.

Ecology

Throughout the DEIS the BLM emphasizes juniper encroachment within the WSAs as the major ecological problem, and "poor ecological condition" as a prime reason for recommending non-Wilderness. We have two major concerns with this:

1) the degree to which juniper invasion is "unnatural", and

2) the degree to which this is masking a much more serious, and pervasive, problem within the WSAs - overgrazing.

There is no doubt that juniper invasion is occuring to some extent in each of the WSAs. This varies from 7% of Horsehead Spring to over 50% in others. Because BLM indicates that the Owyhee region has been experiencing a climate change since 1870, making the region hotter and drier, we question whteher or not a certain amount of juniper invasion may not be a natural phenomenon related to this change. Because the ecosystem dynamics of this community type are not well known, it may be premature to describe all the invasion as an "unnatural occurrance".

68.2 We are very concerned that the emphasis on juniper invasion as the major ecological problem is misleading, particularly when overgrazing, a very widespread problem, is barely mentioned. This inbalance can be seen in the discussion of the Horsehead Spring, where although only 7% of the unit is experiencing juniper invasion, 70% is classified as being in "poor" ecological condition. A similar situation can be seen in the North Fork, where only 10% of the unit is experiencing juniper encroachment, but 59% of the unit is classified as being in "poor" ecological condition. Obviously, only a small portion of the reason for the majority of these two units being in poor condition can be related to juniper encroachment, yet the DEIS never mentions what the cause of ths poor ecological condition is. We believe this is a critical shortcoming in the DEIS, since the poor ecological condition is a major reason for the

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68.2 BLM proposal not to recommend any of the units as Wilderness. The final EIS must describe the complete reason for the poor ecological condition, and means of rehabilitating that condition (and, for the North Fork and Horsehead Spring, ways of doing so that do not involve juniper removal, since juniper encroachment is obviously of minor significance to the overall condition of the WSA). We expect BLM to include a more even-handed analysis of ecological condition and trends, and their causes, in the final EIS.

For the two WSAs that are in near-climax condition, BLM should recommend Wilderness with a grazing system outlined which will improve ecological condition without juniper removal. For these two units the current poor condition should not be a barrier to Wilderness designation, as proper grazing systems and other land management would restore the quality of the natural environment.

68.3 The DEIS contains no discussion of juniper woodland ecology or wildlife, or the impacts of the alternatives on them. This is a significant omission, particularly in light of the limited extent of juniper woodland community type in Idaho (covering 0.9% of the State). An analysis by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1980 (Boccard, 1980) ranked juniper woodland as one of the highest priority habitats of concern, and identified it as an inadequately protected habitat type, with no representation in any Federal, State, or private protected natural areas. The FEIS needs to examine the current status of this habitat type, and detail the impacts of each of the alternatives on efforts to protect a representation of this limited community type.

68.4 The DEIS is wholly inadequate in its discussion of wildlife species. The wildlife species discussed are almost entirely those of open sagebrush grasslands, such as antelope, sage grouse, and mule deer; there is no discussion of pinyon jay, Western tanager, Least chipmunk, Green-tailed towhee, vagrant shrew, or any other juniper woodland wildlife species. The final EIS needs to discuss the impacts of each of the alternatives on the wildlife of the juniper woodland, not just those of the open steppe. Larrison (1967) and Larrison, Tucker, and Jollie (1967) should be consulted in this review.

68.5 The DEIS contains no discussion of the impacts of any of the alternatives on sensitive or endangered plant species, proposed Research Natural Areas, bobcat, river otter, juniper-dependent or preferent wildlife species, or on the ecology of the juniper woodland as a whole.

Economics

Wilderness designation for all the Wilderness Study Areas would have virtually no adverse impact on the economy of Owyhee County. Examining the all-Wilderness and no-Wilderness alternatives shows that even comparing the 5-year opportunity costs of Wilderness designation with today's Owyhee County economy, Wilderness designation for all the WSAs would decrease potential income in Owyhee County by less than 9/100ths of 1%. This is less than 4/10ths of 1% of the livestock income in Owyhee County today. The figures for the North Fork and other partial alternatives are even less - designation of the entire North Fork WSA would effect the total income in Owyhee County by less than 5/100ths of 1%, a negligible amount.

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68.6 The DEIS figures the economic costs of Wilderness designation, but fails to calculate the economic benefits of Wilderness designation - a critical failure. No figure is calculated for the additional income spent regionally by Wilderness users for the Owyhee WSAs, but if the Recreation User Day figures reported for the Clearwater National Forest (see attached memo from Mike Schlegel of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Kamiah) are applied to the North Fork, then almost $11,000 in recreational expenditures were generated by the WSA last year. Even at the current low level of use, recreation use in 1982 almost compensates for the potential 1987 grazing income which would be foregone by designating the area as Wilderness.

Wilderness designation makes sense from an investment standpoint, as well - the all-Wilderness alternative has the highest benefit:cost ratio of all the alternatives considered, with the North Fork and other partial alternatives second. The worst benefit:cost ratio is that of the proposed action - meaning that we taxpayers pay the least for Wilderness, and the most for the large-scale range improvements included in the Proposed Action.

Social Conditions

68.7 The Committee would like to request a copy of the Wilderness survey conducted by Card and Carlson (1979). We question whether the results of a similar survey today would show the same results. Our concern in this regard is based on two observations:

1. The survey was conducted during the very heated, and political, debate on the three River of No Return Wilderness proposals being considered by Congress; and

2. The survey was conducted during, or immediately following, the equally controversial RARE II Study of all Roadless lands in the National Forests throughout the U.S. The conduct of the study and the industry, environmentalist, and other response to it created a climate very unfavorable to consideration of additional Wilderness designation. Similar situations in Colorado, New Mexico, and other states have been reversed in recent years as those states have passed comprehensive RARE II bills, which enjoyed wide public support.

Special Recreation Management Areas

We cannot agree with the BLM contention that Special Recreation Management Area designation would protect the WSAs in a manner equal to Wilderness. SRMA is simply an administrative designation; as such, it could be changed administratively at any time. No Congressional review would be required for a change in status, such as a National Conservation Area would have; there is not even a centralized listing process, such as there is for Research Natural Areas. SRMA would provide only temporary, and dubious, protection for the outstanding recreational, aesthetic, and other values of the North Fork and other WSAs.

68.8 Even the SRMA proposal itself is questionable. Although proposed as a means of protecting outstanding recreation and other resource values, the DEIS has no size, boundaries, or management direction specified. Worse yet, the guidelines given suggest that

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68.8 BLM is endorsing a "canyons and lava flows" mentality, by proposing to classify only the canyons, and not the adjacent plateaus.

We are compelled to reject the SRMA scheme as a sham. Wilderness designation provides the only permanent protection for the outstanding resource values found in the North Fork and other Wilderness Study Areas.

Irretrievable Committment of Resources

68.9 Page V-18 of the DEIS states that "The wilderness study has determined that there are no significant irretrievable or irreversible commitment of resources." This statement completely fails to recongize the impact of the proposed action on a tremendously limited and steadily shrinking resource - wilderness. Once destroyed, wilderness can never be recreated. This fact needs to be included in this final statement in the FEIS.

CONCLUSION

There are compelling reasons to designate Wilderness in the Owyhee Resource Area, in order to protect outsatanding recreation opportunities, rare and sensitive plant and wildlife species, magnificent aesthetics, scientific values, and to ensure a representation of juniper woodland in the Wilderness system. The economic costs of doing so are miniscule, and may be outweighed by economic benefits. Wilderness designation would increase the diversity and geographic distribution of Wilderness in Idaho, providing a unique addition to the Wilderness system. And, through sound grazing and land management practices, good ecological condition could be restored in the North Fork and part, or all, of the Juiper Mountain WSAs.

Wilderness is an irreplaceable resource; once destroyed, it cannot be re-created. We strongly urge BLM to recommend the North Fork as Wilderness, and reconsider its decision for Juniper Mountain. We look foreward to learning your final decision in the near future, and request that we be notified of that decision once it is made.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
COMMITTEE FOR IDAHO'S
HIGH DESERT

by Bruce R. Boccard
Bruce R. Boccard,
Chairman

cc: Idaho Congressional delegation

68

REFERENCES

BOCCARD, Bruce R. 1980. Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats of Idaho: An Inventory. Boise: USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon-Idaho Area Office. 165 pp.

LARRISON, Earl J. 1967. Guide to Idaho Mammals. Moscow, ID: University of Idaho (Journal of the Idaho Academy of Science). 166 pp.

LARRISON, Earl J.; TUCKER, Jerry L.; and Malcolm T. JOLLIE. 1967. Guide to Idaho Birds. Moscow, ID: University of Idaho (Journal of the Idaho Academy of Science). 220 pp.

68

Comments on Bighorn-Weitas Study Proposal by Mike Schlegel, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, June 12, 1982

It will be interesting to review the proposed road density data and compare it to what was proposed for the Little Weitas and Cayuse-Toboggan proposals. For example, in the full development alternatives for the Toboggan Creek analysis area, 137.5 miles of road are anticipated. The construction costs are $25,000/mile for reconstruction, and $90,000/mile for new construction. Certain sections of the road system for the Cabin Creek timber sale will run $209,000 per mile.

Limitations of the Analysis Section

I would think the data generated for the Little Weitas and Toboggan Transportation Environmental Assessment reports would have great application to the Weitas-Bighorn analysis. Too many things can be masked in using data for the forest as a whole.

Again, I strongly urge the second level of analysis in order to adequately assess the resources in the Bighorn-Weitas Area. For example, recent data from the Clearwater National Forest indicated the forest sells and harvests, on an average, 170 mm BF of timber per year with a revenue of over $6 million. It is further stated the potential sustained yield is 244 mm BF which would provide annual receipts of $10 million.

This report further states recreation on the Clearwater Forest is under utilized but still provides more than 1 million recreation visitor days. The RUD value used in the Forest planning process was $60 per RUD!!!

Also, and again, the fish, wildlife and recreational values are annual as compared to the once in 100-125 years for timber. The costs to maintain and provide for the former are also much less.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

69

1817 Annett Street
Boise, Idaho 83705
August 11, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

Earlier this week we wrote you our comments on why we think the North Fork of the Owyhee River should be protected as wilderness. After listening to the news and reading the Statesman today, we can see we left out a key reason for designating the North Fork and Juniper Mountain as wilderness - making sure they stay public lands.

It looks like President Reagan means business about selling off the public domain, if the article on the front page of the Statesman today is correct. Since Wilderness areas are some of the few public lands which won't be sold off, we think BLM should make sure its key scenic and recreational lands are included as wilderness. We need some guarantee that our most beautiful wildlands won't be sold off to the highest bidder -and wilderness is about the only guarantee that the North Fork and Juniper Mountain won't go to the auction block.

We think its a shame that the President wants to sell off the public lands. Having seen what life is like in the east, we certainly don't want that to happen here in Idaho.

We are enclosing the newspaper article from todays paper, just in case you haven't seen it. Even though it pertains to National Forest land, we think that similar proposals for BLM land are just around the corner. Please - reconsider your decision, and give the North Fork and Juniper Mountain wilderness protection. We want to make sure that some land is left for our family to use in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Larry Hallock

Donna Hallock

70

P.O. Box 9303
Boise, ID 83707
August]0,]982

Mr. Martin Zimmer, District Manager
Boise District Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my support for Wilderness designation for the North Fork of the Owyhee River. The area has beautiful scenery and outstanding recreation values, offering excellent opportunities for a very wide variety of recreation types. The North Fork also provides an opportunity to protect within the Wilderness system an example of juniper and sagebrush on basalt, something which currently does not exist within the system. On the North Fork in particular, I think the ecological condition could be improved without chaining or other mechanical means (since there is little juniper invasion). I also think that Wilderness designation is the only permanent way of protecting this outstanding area.

Please recommend Wilderness for the North Fork in your final decision. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ken Robison

71

7590 Carriage Lane
Boise, Idaho 83704
August 10, 1982

Mr. MArtin Zimmer, District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my support for wilderness protection for the North Fork of the Owyhee River. This area provides habitat for redband trout, bobcat, river otter, and a number of species of rare and endangered plant species - resource values which could be destroyed without wilderness designation. The area has outstanding scenery and recreation values, and would be a worthy addition to the wilderness system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important area.

Sincerely yours,

Bette Wood

72

2420 Sunset
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 8, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The North Fork contains outstanding scenery and recreation opportunities, opportunities not found many other places in the region (mostly because of the limited extent of the juniper woodland ecosystem). The geology and other landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in accordance with the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines).

The economic costs of designating the North Fork as Wilderness are minimal, and there are no conflicts with energy, minerals, or other resources. The partial Wilderness alternative which designates the North Fork as Wilderness has a higher benefit-cost ratio than the proposed action, meaning it is a more fiscally responsible (less expensive) alternative. In an era of fiscal conservatism and belt-tightening, it makes sense to go with an alternative which protects the environment and saves the taxpayer money.

I cannot agree that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. This would protect only the canyon, and not the uplands; being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

Recommending Wilderness designation for the North Fork would better meet BLM's mandate for balanced multiple use, and is a more fiscally responsible choice than the proposed action. Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the entire North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Paula Shuff

73

3204 Edgemoore
Boise, Idaho 83702
August 8, 1982

Mr. Martin Zimmer,
District Manager
Boise District Office
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

I would like to express my strong opposition to your proposed decision not to recommend the North Fork of the Owyhee River as a Wilderness area. The spectacular scenery and recreation opportunities offered by the North Fork deserve strong, permanent protection. These opportunities are not found many other places in the region (mostly because of the limited extent of the juniper woodland ecosystem). The geology and other landform features of the North Fork are not found in the other WSAs containing the juniper woodland-sagebrush steppe ecosystem, so Wilderness designation for the North Fork would increase both the landform and ecosystem representation of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in accordance with the BLM Wilderness Study Guidelines).

I cannot agree that Special Recreation Management Area status would adequately protect the North Fork's outstanding recreational and wilderness characteristics. This would protect only the canyon, and not the uplands; being an administrative designation, it could be changed at any time. Special Recreation Management Area designation would not provide the permanent protection this outstanding area deserves.

Recommending Wilderness designation for the North Fork would better meet BLM's mandate for balanced multiple use, and increasing the diversity of the National Wilderness system in landform and ecosystem type. Please reconsider your decision, and recommend the entire North Fork of the Owyhee River for Wilderness designation in your final EIS.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Roy Foote

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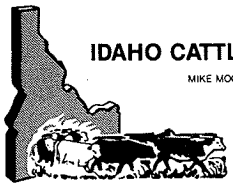

IDAHO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

MIKE MOGENSEN, Executive Vice President

OFFICERS
PRESIDENT
David Bivens ..... Payette
VICE PRESIDENTS
Tom Prescott ..... Jerome
Blair Fisher ..... Rexburg

July 7, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705

Gentlemen:

My name is Mike Mogensen. I am the executive vice president of the Idaho Cattlemen's Association. I am testifying on behalf of the Idaho Cattlemen's Association and Idaho Public Land Users relative to the draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement.

Our association strongly supports the proposed BLM action of no wilderness on the five units listed in this document. These five units include the North Fork Owyhee River, Big Willow (Horsehead) Spring, Squaw Creek Canyon, Middle Fork Owyhee River, and West Fork Red Canyon totalling 93,610 acres.

Our association has retained policy for several years opposing designation of any BLM lands in Idaho as wilderness study areas or wilderness. This proposed action is in line with our policy. As you may know, we have jointly appealed these WSA units along with the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association during the past two years. Information provided by our members in the Owyhee area reinforce our position that none of these wilderness study areas qualify as wilderness.

These units have been utilized for livestock grazing since approximately the turn of the century. These lands have also been accessible for use by the general public for long as people have lived in the general area. Evidence of man's presence in these units is proven by facts provided by Owyhee showing roads, fences, reservoirs, and other developments in these units over the past several years. These areas remain accessible today, and must remain accessible in order to utilize the natural resources for both food and fiber production and recreation.

It would be a grave mistake to create wilderness in these five units for the people of Owyhee County and surrounding area where people have utilized the area for so many years for so many uses. Other established wilderness areas in Idaho exemplify the negative impact on our natural resources when management is discontinued through wilderness designation. Idaho currently has the largest amount of wilderness in

2120 AIRPORT WAY • BOISE, IDAHO 83705 • PHONE (208) 344-9482

Bureau of Land Management PAGE 2 **74** July 7, 1982

any of the lower 48 contiguous states. Our association members believe we have our share of wilderness. We strongly believe the rest of our federal public lands should remain in multiple use management for food, fiber and mineral production as well as recreation, hunting and fishing for the public.

We strongly encourage the BLM to proceed with the recommendation of no wilderness as their final action on these five units. In addition, we offer our total support for you in achieving this final decision.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft Owyhee BLM Wilderness EIS. Please let us know if we can provide further assistance to you on this document.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Mogensen
Executive Vice President

MM/lkc

HANLEY RANCH
JORDAN VALLEY, OREGON 97910

75

8 July 1982
Boise Idaho
Testimony presented by
Mike Hanley on the Draft
Owyhee Wilderness Plan
Amendment/Environmental
Impact Statement for Juniper
Mountain and the North Fork of
the Owyhee.

Sirs:

I support the Multiple Use based proposed action of no wilderness in the Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the Boise District BLM 1982.

My reasons for support are:

1. Future land management policy will rely heavily on contributions from permitees for range improvements. Were the five areas placed in wilderness past reductions would not be restored. Without the incentive of increasing forage for restoration of non-use permitees would have little or no incentive to contribute.
2. It has been estimated that over 90 percent of the hunting use in the five areas is based on motorized vehicle access. This is important since restrictions would create heavy hunter use in adjacent non wilderness causing many conflicts. The same areas are ingrained deeply in the heritage of citizens and allowing continued access will insure they arn't denied a valuable part of their way of life.
3. The area has never been explored for mineral and energy sources with modern equipment and in a time of shortages it is not prudent to eliminate these lands from exploration.
4. The study that polled citizens on their desire for additional wilderness showed that 67% were opposed to more wilderness in the area.
5. There is not a need for the duplication of Sagebrush Steepe Wilderness since the five WSAs covered in this document lie within the intermountain Sagebrush Province/Sagebrush Steepe ecosystem. This ecological condition cover a much of southern Idaho, eastern Oregon, eastern Washington and parts of northern Nevada, California and Utah.
6. The proposed Action insures a more viable economic base in a county (Owyhee) largely owned by the Federal Government by maximizing the benifits of Multiple Use.

Not covered in this document is the future publication of the Stateline Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement. I would suggest that this be put off until Congress has concluded the pending Scenic and Wild River designation of the Owyhee River. Overlapping designations would only lead to confusion and serve no practicle purpose.

Michael F. Hanley IV
Jordan Valley, Oregon

THESE IRONS IN OREGON SINCE 1852

HANLEY

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Mr. Kissenger: Oral Testimony, Boise

My name is Tim Kissenger. I live at 810 North 14th in Boise. I would like to speak in regard to the Owyhee Wilderness Draft EIS.

They're analyses of the ecological condition that is made for the proposed action in each of the four wilderness alternatives.

I have an objection to determinations that were made for vegetation condition, particularly where return to the original plant community is targeted as the goal.

I'm referring to the EIS prediction that in the absence of vegetation manipulation, the "overall vegetation condition would decline."

76.1

The means by which this determination was made and the substance of the determination itself is contrary to BLM's normal principles and methods for determining vegetation condition over range condition.

The Kuna-Bruneau resource area draft grazing EIS reveals that range condition is the "present state of a site in relation to the climax or natural potential plant community for the site."

That's natural potential and not natural plants potential.

The distinction here between natural potential and natural communities is a clause well adapted to the situation in the Owyhee WSAs where the unoriginal plant community of Seral Junipers has become a major issue.

The natural or unnatural characteristic of the Seral Juniper is a question which has long been debated and which may never be resolved. The accomplishment of the Kuna-Bruneau resource area draft grazing EIS range consolidation criteria is that it spares us the trouble of facing

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this perplexing question, but directs our attention instead to the natural potential of vegetation communities.

Natural as in independent of man and his manipulations.

The fact that Seral Junipers of the Owyhee WSAs would continue to thrive under natural conditions constitute the natural potential of this plant community; therefore, all determinations of range condition must be relative to this potential and not to the original plant communities that are no longer natural to those range sites.

Plant species. The originality of plant species or desirability of plant species are not factors of range condition, vegetation condition or ecological condition.

76.1

The prevention of proposed vegetation manipulation would not cause a decline of range condition in the Owyhee WSAs, but rather it would prevent the impacts that the proposed action would impose upon the present plant community's natural potential.

The so-called good ecological condition that would result from vegetation manipulation is not a good condition and it could never create a natural condition even if the area were returned to an original state.

What does the EIS mean by "good ecological condition" that is contrary to the natural potential of the range and that must be created thorugh man's efforts?

It cannot possibly benefit nature as nature in the region has come to be defined.

There can be no intrinsic good in an exchange of one ecosystem for another, though there may be an inherent wrong in the progression of monocultures and livestock dominance of the resources.

76

The invalid evaluations and determinations of range conditions in the five Owyhee WSAs results in an overall distortion of EIS predictions of values, benefits and conflicts arising from the proposed action and wilderness alternatives.

Wilderness management has been falsely credited as a detriment to good ecology when, in fact, it is the best means for improving the natural potential short of a tree planting project.

Non-wilderness management has been credited for saving the value it would destroy as man takes nature and its processes into his own hands.

The proposed action that would eliminate the wilds so well represented by these five WSAs would be a great loss to wilderness values while in real terms it would benefit livestock products but a little.

I implore the Boise District to reconsider its wilderness stance in the interest of all Americans. Thank you.

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Mr. Lowry: Partial Oral Testimony, Boise

....It also states that annual income gains associated with these livestock gains are projected at $62,000 in five years and $203,000 in twenty years.

Well, personally, I think that figure is too low. I think it will be substantially higher than that, especially if cattle come up a bit, because I think we are going to generate more AUMs than what you are anticipating or projecting. 77.1

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

Northwest Mountain Region
Colorado Idaho Montana
Oregon Utah Washington
Wyoming

17900 Pacific Highway South
C-68966
Seattle, Washington 98168

MAY 1 5 1985

78

Mr. Martin J. Zimmer
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Zimmer:

We have reviewed your draft Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement and do not foresee any impact on aviation or its activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your proposed action.

Sincerely,

Joseph W. Harrell
Policy & Planning Officer

RECEIVED
Bureau of Land Management
Boise District
MAY 21 1985

IDAHO AIR NATIONAL GUARD
124TH TACTICAL RECONNAISSANCE GROUP
BOISE AIR TERMINAL (GOWEN FIELD)
P. O. BOX 45, BOISE, IDAHO 83707

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RECEIVED
JUN 24 1985
Bureau of Land Management
Boise District

Bureau of Land Management
Owyhee Wilderness Plan Amendment/EIS

18 June 1985

District Manager

1. The entire 93,610 acres in the five Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) underline a significant portion of the Owyhee and Paradise Military Operations Areas (MOA's) and two military training routes (MTR's), VR 1301 and VR 1302. The Owyhee and Paradise MOA's have collectively vertical dimensions of 100 feet above ground level (AGL) to approximately 17,000 feet AGL. VR 1301 and VR 1302 have vertical dimensions of 100 feet AGL to 1500 feet AGL. Aircraft in the aforementioned areas fly ground speeds in excess of 600 knots. The MOA's and MTR's are scheduled by 366TFW/DOTV (366 Tactical Fighter Wing) Mountain Home AFB, ID and 124TRG/DO (124 Tactical Reconnaissance Group) Boise, ID respectively, and are used by numerous Air Force, Navy, Marine, National Guard and Reserve Units. Last year approximately 365 124TRG missions were scheduled in the MOA's and 1461 missions were scheduled in the MTR's. The usage of the MTR's, Paradise and Owyhee MOA's has steadily increased since their creation in 1975, 1978 and 1981, respectively.

2. It should be apparent our flight operations will directly impact the wilderness resource characteristic of solitude. These flights definitely are not a minimal or limited external influence as stated in Chapter 4, Table IV-1, under the sub-heading of solitude. Also the note in Chapter 4, page IV-4, stating, "periodic low flying aircraft have a notable short term, temporary impact which can be mitigated" is incorrect. Rather, it should read, "frequent low flying military aircraft have a notable long term occurrance which will continue to impact the area." 79.1

3. When MTR's and MOA's are established, noise sensitive areas and low altitude civil aircraft activity are considered and avoided to the maximum possible extent. For these reasons many remote and sparsely populated areas administered by National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and or U.S. Forest Service become optimum low altitude flight training areas. Department of Defense (DOD) policy as stated in a circular from the Federal Aviation Administration (AC no 91-36A) specifically advises, "military aircraft may at times overfly areas managed by the Department of the Interior at altitudes lower than the recommended 2,000 foot minimum, but in compliance with the minimum safe altitudes prescribed in FAR 91-79. Such deviations will occur only when essential to the mission being conducted". Use of this airspace down to the minimum published altitude and at maximum ground speeds is essential in accomplishment of our tactical flight training mission and is in compliance with FAR 91-79 and DOD policy.

4. Therefore, the 124 Tactical Reconnaissance Group strongly objects to the purposed Wilderness Areas 16-40, 16-41, 16-42, 16-45 and 16-47 because of the conflict between the wilderness resource characteristic of solitude and our tactical flight training mission. We cannot subject our current airspace to possible reduction because of noise complaints generated by military aircraft performing their mission over conservationists and recreationalists located in the proposed Wilderness Areas.

ROBERT R. CORBELL III, Col, IDANG
Group Commander

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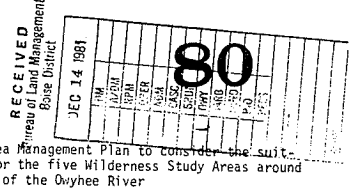
December 8, 1981



Mr. Oscar Anderson, Owyhee Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

RE: Amendment of the Owyhee Resource Area Management Plan to consider the suitability of Wilderness designation for the five Wilderness Study Areas around Juniper Mountain and the North Fork of the Owyhee River

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Dear Mr. Anderson:

I greatly appreciate this opportunity fo make comment upon the proposed amendment of the Owyhee Resource Area Management Plan. I have some general remarks on the three alternative scenarios you consider, and specific comments on your issues section.

Of the three alternatives you offer, the true public interest is best represented in Alternative 2, the "All Wilderness" Alternative. It is interesting that so few alternatives were designed for consideration; it does not appear that the full range of alternatives was adequately evaluated, as is mandated under NEPA and related guidelines. The choices presented here are no wilderness recognition (your preferred choice), all wilderness, or only one of the five WSAs be designated. By not assembling other combinations of WSAs, the true scope of possible compromises and their associated values to all users is not represented.

Parenthetically, I am amazed that the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association and the Owyhee County Commissioners are the groups the BLM looks to for design and forwarding of "Sensitive or Unique Areas" in these Wilderness Study Areas. These groups are development oriented; there is no balance struck here. BLM should request similar input from conservation groups such as the Committee for Idaho's High Deserts (1815 Annette, Boise, Idaho 83705), the Idaho Conservation League (Box 844, Boise, Idaho 83701) or the Idaho Native Plant Society. It greatly disturbs me to see the BLM include only the groups which have historically degraded (and economically profited from) the public lands in their design of ecologically sensitive sites in Wilderness Study Areas.

The Cattelmen's Associations in Idaho represent a small minority of Idaho's land users, and certainly a very small group of the public at large. This group has taken a radical, uncompromising stand on WSAs, i.e., they want them all denied or dismantled. Conservation groups were extraordinarily moderate in their appeals, and indeed, I would say that groups attempting to establish wilderness recognition for Idaho lands should feel that they were successful only in a small way, as relatively few areas which were evaluated actually made WSA status*. The Cattlemens Association protested all WSA designations. My point is that these land users are after self interest; they make money off our (the public's) lands, and have proven themselves uncompromising. The BLM very carefully evaluated all of the instensive study areas, and the WSA screening process was meticulous. Those WSAs that finally made it were only those that are eminently qualified. The only reason we have five WSAs to examine in the Juniper Mountain/N.Fork Owyhee River area is because they qualify; if there were any doubt, the appeals of the cattlemen would have knocked them out long ago. Now that the BLM has identified wilderness quality resources in these sites, it is the BLMs mandate to protect them for the public at large. This public trust is key to your agency. and you cannot abdicate it on this one. Let's face it, a great majority of the public lands have been disqualified for wilderness consideration, and now the cattlemen want the other few percent. It

*In January, 1980, BLM identified 237,849 acres in ten roadless areas in this unit as WSAs, and dropped another 237,849 acres in sixteen roadless areas from wilderness consideration.

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In reality, a management plan could probably be constructed to be essentially self-running for these remote sites. A management plan should be drawn up in any event to preserve the existing wilderness resources whether these sites go beyond WSA status or not.

- What constitutes manageability?

Not knowing the specific BLM definition of this concept, I can't go beyond saying that the BLM is mandated to come up with viable management plans for all of its lands, especially areas with wilderness qualities (one of the most limited resources it has within its purview; the public is fortunate that some of this resource remains in the Owyhee District). Again, I think management problems are overblown; by denying vehicular use and regulating grazing levels these sites could continue to retain their present character indefinately (and excluding or carefully limiting mineral exploration or development).

-Do existing classifications effectively protect the specific values in each WSA short of designation under the Wilderness Act of 1964?

No. In the first place, this is likely the last chance these lands will have for ever making Wilderness status. A great deal of development could be allowed on these lands if they are not designated, and it doesn't seem likely to me that the BLM would be able to resist development forces sufficiently to insure protection of Wilderness qualities (which demand little or no development by definition) in the future. (Witness the battle that was fought just to get them designated WSAs and the present appeals against Wilderness Study Area designation - and of course, the BLMs preferred alternative itself.) In my opinion the only real way to positively insure wilderness quality preservation is to recommend Wilderness designation, and that is what the Wilderness Act was designed to accomplish. The Wilderness Act is the will of the American people as enacted by Congress, and it is one of the most advanced cultural indications we have expressed. Far from being obstructionistic, this Act is designed to protect one of the fundamental public trust concepts, and if these lands qualify, this act was made for them (and it should be used!). Wilderness designation would be the most sure way of recognizing and protecting this resource.

3. Affects of Wilderness Designation on Socio-Economic Conditions.

-What will be the effects of designation of any or all WSAs on the local, state, and national socio-economic situation?

This should be addressed in an EIS carried out under NEPA guidelines. I might add that the fact that individuals have have historically benefited (personally) in economic ways from grazing the public's lands on these sites should not have greater weight than the wilderness qualities, from which the public at large benefits and will continue to benefit, on these public lands. Grazing can be done elsewhere; compensation can be arranged, but wilderness can only be experienced at sites like these. The BLM should not forget that its mandate is for the people of the United States, not just private developers or land users in Owyhee County.

-How will the "quality of life" of citizens of the state and local areas be affected and that of the nation as a whole?

The quality of life for the public will be enhanced by the protection of these wilderness qualities; this is true on a state and national level, although it is hard to say what local impacts would be. I urge you to read the attachments dealing with various aspects of the public trust in regard to wilderness values.

-How will wilderness designation affect the ability of the nation to supply its needs for food, minerals, and other essential resources?

I think this is another red herring issue. Wilderness areas are not heavily used agriculturally or they wouldn't qualify. The truth of the matter is that the livestock industry in America has always had the enormous federal subsidy of being able to graze the public lands; America will not go hungry if we (or the BLM acting in the public interest)now decide to revoke some of those historical

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is not in the public interest to give it to them. Future generations will not forgive this generation for this kind of land use decision making, and the rest of us, the majority of us - who are not cattlemen, want the few remaining qualifying wilderness sites protected for what they are. If these last wilderness potentials are developed, something will have gone out of us a people. The Owyhee WSAs are a part of our heritage; this is something that should not be sacrificed to grazing interests, which already have a majority of the resource.

Specific comments on: Issues for the Owyhee Planning Amendment/Juniper Mountain Wilderness EIS

1. Affects of Livestock Operations on Wilderness and of Wilderness on Livestock Operation.

-How will wilderness designation affect livestock grazing levels, future range developments, and methods of operation?

Wilderness designation would not, in all liklihood, result in any change in grazing practice on these WSAs. There would probably be no reduction in AUMs or major changes in livestock practices. One of the initial impacts of wilderness designation might be the reduction or elimination of vehicular (or helicopter) use within the Wilderness Area boundaries. Grazing practices would change only if the site was in bad condition - in which case it should likely be modified whether wilderness designation occurred or not. Wilderness designation would not "lock up" the resource for other uses; grazing would continue unless it impacted the naturalness of the site. Grazing level should be more carefully monitored in designated areas; however, unless demonstrated interference with naturalness is shown, the present use would continue. Monitoring is necessary for the BLM to adhere to its mandate of management and maintenance of the existing wilderness resources identified in the WSA screening process. It is an abdication of the public trust to do anything less. Now that BLM has demonstrated wilderness character in these WSAs, it is critical to maintain it. If there is a conflict with grazing, then wilderness should take priority since grazing can be and is being done elsewhere.

- Should a history of livestock use and visible evidence of such use preclude designation of a WSA as wilderness?

No. These evidences can be mitigated, and recovery can occur so that the wilderness character is entirely restored. For that matter, some of our most famous wildernesses in Idaho have roads crossing parts of them, so that this kind of problem is one of case-by-case consideration. Something like evidence of grazing should in no way preclude designation.

-Will wilderness designation protect livestock operations on public land from potentia incompatible uses such as ORV use and mineral exploration and development?

After 1983 mineral exploration will no longer be an active part of the Wilderness Act, so that this aspect could conceivably be reduced, if not eliminated (at least for new developments) on Wilderness Areas. I would guess that livestock operations could benefit from Wilderness designation in the sense that ORV use would likely be terminated (and mineral exploration and development limited, if not terminated). An unspoken truth is that the only reason these lands still retain wilderness qualitie is because they are undesirable for any other use - if they had oil or coal they would likely already have lease numbers.

2. BLM Management to Protect Wilderness Values.

-Are specific BLM WSAs manageable as designated wilderness?

Yes. I think the management problem is greatly overblown. For one thing, BLM has not had much of a record for management of these WSAs before their recognition as wilderness potentials, and another simple fact is that one of the best ways to "manage" a wilderness is to leave it alone. I think efforts to mitigate roads or "ways" in these areas (planting them; obliterating evidences, etc.) are more important than management in terms of a continual enforcing or manning of the sites.

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uses in a few areas to preserve other qualities on the public lands. Let's get some perspective on the issue - the cattlemen are afraid that wilderness designation will put them out of business and this is simply not the case. I don't for a minute believe that substantial portions of our national food sources come from Wilderness quality sites. I really think this issue is a red herring. Nor do I think that minerals required for national security will be in short supply if these five WSAs are designated Wildernesses. As I stated earlier, the reason these sites are still surviving in their present wilderness quality condition is because they aren't good for any other use; if they had valuable mineral resources, they'd have been developed years ago, long before WSAs and the Wilderness Act existed. The essential resource which would be protected if these sites are designated is that of Wilderness, which is in far shorter supply than any of the above concerns. Wilderness should be a first, not last or leftover, consideration for the BLM.

- How will wilderness designation affect visitor use to the area?

It might increase it, however, these sites are so remote that the wilderness character is not going to be threatened by overuse in the forseeable future. I mean let's face it, the mosaic of these sites is far removed from even Boise, and, in part because of that, their long-term viability is good.

- If visitor use increases, how will this increase affect local government services, local services, businesses, livestock operations, and BLM management?

Again, this should be addressed in full in an E.I.S. carried out using NEPA guidelines.

-Can wilderness values be fairly compared to production values of land? How?

This has always been a complicated question, and the traditional approach has stated that the intangible values ("what is the price of a sunset?") are invaluable. More modern approaches have attempted to value the quantifiable aspects of a resource along with those that are unquantiable (such as aesthetics and related intangibles). I have attached some literature describing some of the heritage, ecological, and cultural values we derive from wilderness settings. Wallace Stegner's "geography of hope" point, that people draw benefit from just knowing that a wilderness site is there (in wilderness condition) for the visiting, should not be ignored. The intangible and aesthetic values of wildernesses in our culture are significant, and should be given great weight in discussions comparing the economic benefits to a few individuals versus the potential benefit to the public at large. We need more Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner and Edward Abbey reflected in our appreciations of these aspects of our cultural heritage - especially in evaluating them. I think it is not necessary to try to make these kinds of comparisons at the five WSAs in question. The paucity of surviving wilderness habitat has accelerated the value of that which is still of quality, and I think that in these cases it outweighs any economic gain for individuals. (There is no issue of oil or rare metal here, it is basically just grazing compared with wilderness. One of the ways of making these kinds of comparisons is using a structured approach such as the Habitat Evaluation Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. You might consider employing it, although, in these cases the wilderness values far outweigh "production" potential

The premise for allowing individuals to graze the public lands is that the public benefits more from the economic flow from agriculture than it does from the ungrazed public uses. If the public benefits from other uses outweigh public benefit derived from private uses, then the public lands should not be used by private interests. This is a fundamental tenet of the public trust, and it should not be forgotten. Wilderness quality land on relatively small portions of roadless areas (which in itself is less than the roaded regions) should be regarded as critical habitat for many and BLM should manage and evaluate it that way. In the case of these WSAs, wilderness designation preserves both wilderness values and grazing derived use (unless the latter is mismanaged and interferes with naturalness); in short, it gives the best of both worlds, and surely outweighs the maximum production alternative.

4. Affects of Ecological condition on the Question of Designation or Non-Designation

- How should ecological condition affect a designation/non-designation decision?
Ecological condition should be a secondary consideration in present day wilderness designation evaluations. A century ago we might have had the luxury, had the Wilderness Act existed, of picking and choosing so that only the best or prime examples of habitat types were preserved. Today we are lucky to have a handful of possible examples remaining in varying degrees of "ecological condition." One of the remarkable aspects of the land and its biology is the resilience once disturbing factors are removed. For example, if grazing were terminated in over-grazed areas, recovery would occur. There are aspects which cannot be changed such as the presence of introduced, rather than native, grasses, or the loss of species diversity. Nonetheless, these sites are the best (and only) ones remaining in this part of Idaho, and they are still of far greater value than any alternative use. To summarize, these sites deserve designation regardless of historic over-grazing. They will recover and are far too valuable (because of the wilderness quality of the other components of the sites) to sacrifice simply because of ecological disturbance.

- Should an area in poor ecological condition be designated wilderness to insure representation of an otherwise unrepresented ecosystem in the NWPS?
Absolutely!

-What methods of ecosystem restoration are acceptable in wilderness areas?
This would vary on a site-by-site basis, but I think an extremely broad spectrum should be considered. I would urge the BLM to consult with other agencies, such as the Biological Services Program of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Fort Collins (Western Energy and Land Use Team, Office of Biological Services, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior - specific address for, say, the Habitat Assessment Program can be obtained from the Boise Office), which has developed ecosystem evaluation and mitigation that would probably be workable. The bottom line is that today we can mitigate for a broad range of disturbances, and if this is critical in a wilderness area designation or rehabilitation decision - we should do it.

- In areas with a history of livestock use and visible evidence of such use, should range developments be implemented to maintain or improve ecological condition?
Yes. Livestock subsidy through land use must take a back seat to wilderness values at these sites, and the ecological condition of the site is more important than an individual's economic benefit from over grazing the site. Wilderness designatic is not going to exclude grazing; it is just going to be better evaluated and managed if it is continued. Over-grazing should in no way preclude wilderness designation or the protection of wilderness qualities.

5. Effects of Wilderness Designation on Multiple Use Management.

-How will wilderness designation affect other multiple resource values of wildlife, water, air quality, cultural, recreational, vegetation, soils, and scenery?

This complex of issues should be fully addressed in an E.I.S. implemented using NEPA guidelines.

The BLM has a mandate to protect and manage the wilderness qualities it has identified at these sites (as WSAs), and the BLM should support designation of

these sites as Wilderness Areas. These sites have all been thoroughly screened and form a complementary mosaic which preserves examples of the natural character of this part of southern Idaho. I urge the BLM to reconsider its preference of the alternatives, and to develop other alternatives for consideration in the E.I.S. The true public interest in this issue lies in the preservation of the wilderness values identified at these sites, and the BLM should strive to preserve one of the most limited resources remaining.

Please include these comments in the record of this Amendment. I hope that the BLM can find a way to explain that Wilderness Area designation would not preclude some of the other present uses, and that wilderness as a value will be considered first, not last, at these sites. Include my name on the E.I.S. service list. There is no mitigation for wilderness quality habitat lost.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Bowler
Star Route
Bliss, Idaho
83314

Please include the attached reference in the record. Although written to discuss values of rivers, wetlands, and "non-resources," most of these issues apply equivalentl to wilderness.

Nash, R. 1978. Who Loves A Swamp? Paper presented at the National Symposium on Strategies for Protection and Management of Floodplain Wetlands and other Riparian Ecosystems, Callaway Gardens, December 11-13, 1978.

Response to Letter No. 1

1.1 The 19-mile pipeline referred to in the letter lies in the Little Jacks Creek WSA (ID-111-06) which is addressed in the Jacks Creek Wilderness EIS and Bruneau-Kuna Grazing EIS.

Response to Letter No. 2

2.1 We contacted the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Eastern Nevada Agency concerning the application of the Religious Freedom Act to the proposed action. As indicated in their comments on the draft EIS (letter No. 6), they do not know of any areas or locations which suggest sacred grounds or infringing on the Religious Freedom Act.

Response to Letter No. 4

4.1 The Wilderness Act allows for the continued use of livestock grazing within areas where such use occurred prior to designation. Additional guidance has further defined administrative agencies' roles in providing for this continued livestock use. The analysis of wilderness designation in the juniper areas has addressed the impacts of livestock use upon wilderness values and other resource values that would continue. Land managers will continue to provide an ongoing management program to mitigate livestock grazing impacts regardless of whether or not wilderness is designated. We recognize that past management of these areas has resulted in the resource conditions of today and that aggressive future management (intensive grazing systems and vegetation treatments) is needed to improve the resource conditions. The level of aggressive management needed in the WSAs of Juniper Mountain is not generally compatible with wilderness management policy. In the North Fork Owyhee River and Big Willow Spring WSAs, carefully controlling the type and locations of vegetation treatments would be compatible with wilderness management policy.

4.2 The BLM has made a preliminary recommendation in the Owyhee Canyonlands and Jacks Creek Wilderness EISs and the Jarbidge RMP/EIS to designate 330,000 acres of BLM land as wilderness (as of June 1986) within southwest Idaho, with an additional 170,000 acres of contiguous lands in the adjoining states of Oregon and Nevada.

Response to Letter No. 6

6.1 Chemical treatment in the No Action/No Wilderness Alternative of the draft EIS was sited as one of the methods of controlling seral juniper forests and dense sagebrush stands. This method was identified by the Owyhee Management Framework Plan. However, chemical treatment of juniper stands is no longer considered a viable operation because 1) the chemicals that are most effective for juniper control are not approved for use by BLM at this time, and 2) the demand for harvesting of juniper for fuelwood has increased dramatically in recent years. Woodcutting combined with burning is now the preferred method of juniper removal as identified in this final EIS.

6.2 We hope to have the opportunity to further evaluate the significant sites you mentioned in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA and to nominate these sites to the National Register of Historic Places. Any further information you acquire as a result of your inquiries would be appreciated.

Response to Letter No. 9

9.1 The impacts accounted for in the benefit/cost analysis performed for the alternatives in the draft EIS were only those related to rancher income and range improvement construction costs. Increases in visitor use as well as costs associated with managing the areas as wilderness or developed recreation areas have now been calculated and thus are included in the analysis of this final EIS.

9.2 Costs concerns as identified have been added to the analysis in the final EIS.

9.3 We anticipate that ranchers would continue to contribute towards range improvement projects within wilderness because range improvement projects developed to enhance wilderness values would also generally enhance their livestock operations.

Response to Letter No. 11

11.1 This discussion has been removed from the final EIS.

11.2 This discussion has been revised and placed in Chapter I. We recognize that wilderness is a form of multiple use.

11.3 The balancing of the geographical distribution of wilderness is a planning criteria identified in the BLM Wilderness Study Policy. Because of the number of BLM WSAs currently under study and their location in relation to existing USFS or other agencies' designated wilderness, it is possible for recommendations made during the BLM planning process to contribute to the overall geographic distribution of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Response to Letter No. 12

12.1 See Response No. 4.1.

Response to Letter No. 13

13.1 Livestock grazing, the only current economic use of the WSAs, will continue in designated wilderness areas; lands will not be taken out of production.

Response to Letter No. 14

14.1 There are no Federally listed endangered species of sagebrush identified in the North Fork WSA. Two species of sagebrush (Artemisia papposa and Artemisia packardiae) are present in this area and are

recognized as sensitive species. The Owyhee River stickseed (Hacelia ophobia) is also located in the area and is a sensitive species. Two uncommon species, dwarf lupine (Lupinus lyallii subsp. subpandens) and Cusick's primrose (Primula cusickiana) have also been found in the North Fork WSA. Management to protect these species would be the same under all alternatives.

Response to Letter No. 15

15.1 See Response No. 14.1.

Response to Letter No. 17

17.1 The BLM Wilderness Study Policy requires a review of existing and potential wilderness (study areas) for (1) ecosystem representation, (2) proximity to metropolitan population centers, and (3) for geographical distribution. There are currently over 900 WSAs totalling over 24,800,000 acres in the western United States (June 1986).

Response to Letter No. 18

18.1 Your letter of December 8, 1981, has been reprinted in the final EIS (Comment #80). Its contents were considered in developing the issues for the draft and final EISs and is part of the Permanent Documentation File for wilderness study and public participation.

18.2 Wilderness is a subjective concept open to a wide range of ideologies. The purest viewpoint is that "wilderness" should be a representation of an ecosystem relatively untouched by man serving as a biological barometer for scientific value and a historic remnant of America's pristine past. Yet, "wilderness" has been designated in second growth forests once extensively logged, in areas which had been impacted by mining or subject to future mining, and even on once cultivated lands, all of which now have apparent naturalness but are not likely to be ecologically pure.

Furthermore, as pristine de facto wilderness areas have diminished in number and size, our criteria for what constitutes a wilderness has become less stringent. Consequently, the "wilderness" resource has actually expanded. If this trend toward less restrictive criteria for wilderness continues, lands which do not meet current minimum wilderness requirements may in the future become "wilderness" resources.

It has been argued that wilderness is a non-renewable resource and cannot be re-created. It is, however, important to distinguish between the various values of wilderness. While the social or philosophical values of wilderness may be renewable, the ecological and scientific values of pristine wilderness are generally irreplaceable and non-renewable. The potentially impacted areas of the Juniper Mountain WSAs are not pristine in an ecological sense and consequently are of little scientific value in their current state. Therefore, significant irreversible or irretrievable resource

commitments would not occur in these areas for these values. The North Fork Owyhee River WSA is considered of ecological value and scientific value for its presence of limited or unique plant and animal representations and expanses of climax juniper. These values, however, would not be irretrievably lost by any action presented in this document since land management actions would not significantly affect these values in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. Irretrievable losses of soil and cultural resources have been identified and are discussed in Chapter IV.

18.3 The reference attached to the letter, specifically the General Accounting Office publication "Public Rangelands Continue to Deteriorate" (CED-77-88), has been included in the Amendment Record.

18.4 The Bowen Canyon Bald Eagle Sanctuary ACEC consisting of 2,308 acres was designated in February 1981 in the Burley District. A 180,000 acre Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area ACEC was designated along the Owyhee River Canyon in southwest Idaho in March 1983. As of August 1986, there were 11 designated ACECs totaling 265,138 acres in Idaho.

18.5 See Response No. 18.1.

Response to Letter No. 22

22.1 See Response No. 14.1. The Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee's recommendation for a RNA covered a small portion of the southern tableland area in the WSA. That recommendation for a RNA was considered but not accepted by BLM management.

22.2 The pipeline referred to is not within the scope of this wilderness EIS. It is addressed in the Jacks Creek Wilderness EIS and Bruneau-Kuna Grazing EIS. See Response No. 1.1.

Response to Letter No. 23

23.1 Since no known mineral resources have been specifically identified or located in the WSAs, mineral resources did not play a significant role in the selection of the Proposed Action in the draft nor final EIS. Since the writing of the draft document, further field data and reports on mineral resources has been received from the Bureau of Mines and the Geological Survey. This data indicates a low favorability for any mineral/energy development. Because of this low rating, minerals/energy resources are not considered an issue in this final EIS. The Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines will submit a separate report to Congress on mineral/energy resources in the WSAs.

Response to Letter No. 26

26.1 Significant impacts of the Proposed Action or alternatives that could be identified were documented in the final EIS. The level of analysis has increased substantially over that of the draft EIS. The documentation of impacts to vegetation, wilderness values and the

levels of livestock use under the various alternatives is greater than the documentation for some other resources because of the availability of resource data and/or the degree (significance) of impacts identified. The level of documentation for livestock was necessary to respond to the issues identified during the scoping process.

All wilderness study planning criteria and quality standards for wilderness evaluation required by the BLM Wilderness Study Policy, including an evaluation of environmental impacts, are discussed in the wilderness study report which must accompany this EIS to Congress. It is not the purpose of the EIS to address planning concerns but rather only significant resource issues identified by the public.

Response to Letter No. 27

27.1 The all wilderness alternatives presented for each of the Juniper Mountain WSAs allows for the combining of the four areas into one wilderness management unit. The issue of closing boundary roads between the WSAs will be addressed in any wilderness management plan which would be developed should the four areas be designated wilderness. At this time the closure of roads between the study areas is not considered essential for the protection of the wilderness character in each of the WSAs.

Response to Letter No. 33

33.1 Though a research natural area was recommended by the Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee for Artemisia papposa, no formal designation will be provided by the Owyhee MFP. The area in question has been regularly used by livestock. Impacts on these sagebrush areas would be the same as described in general in Chapter IV. The climax juniper woodlands (Juniperus occidentalis) will be protected through improved grazing management. No climax woodland stands are involved in vegetation treatments under wilderness designation nor wilderness management proposals. Much of the mountain mahogany found on Juniper Mountain has been devastated by moth infestations (Anacamptodes clivinaria).

Response to Letter No. 41

41.1 The original Proposed Action of the draft EIS was not dependent upon the wilderness survey. You will find no reference to it in any statement justifying the Proposed Action. The BLM Wilderness Study Policy dictates that the study process not include vote-counting. Vote-counting is a function of the political process, not responsible land management planning. Public involvement is used in the planning process in part to determine which WSAs are of most value to the public, not to vote whether they should or should not be designated wilderness. The survey was included for background information just as background information is supplied concerning other resources or values, regardless of whether that information is used in arriving at a recommendation. Though not particularly useful in solving land management conflicts, survey information such as this is useful to our

elected officials who have the final responsibility for wilderness designation. Other surveys conducted before and after this survey show markedly different results. Such variations in results show the falibility of surveys or opinion polls on generalized subjects as a decision making tool. From a political perspective, decision makers should be concerned with how the public feels about specific areas for wilderness, not how the public feels about wilderness in general. Unfortunately, this is not the case because of the polarity or emotionalism associated with the concept of wilderness and the "hard line" taken by both sides. To alleviate the public's concerns, the survey results have been eliminated from the final EIS.

41.2 Attempts have been made at defining or calculating the economic benefits of wilderness. Some research on such benefits has been done in other areas of the country for USFS wilderness. However, the assumptions used to calculate benefits cannot be directly applied to BLM wilderness. For the final EIS, recreation use (1984) for the BLM areas was estimated and used as a basis for analysis. Changes in visitor use were calculated, in part, by using the Idaho State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and thus economic impacts of recreation changes are now reflected in the analysis of the final EIS.

Response to Letter No. 43

43.1 The "proposed management plan" referred to from page III-1 of the draft EIS was a summary of the Owyhee Management Framework Plan, not a wilderness management plan. The actions described in the MFP would have been implemented under the No Wilderness (No Action) Alternative. Compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA would occur regardless of whether or not wilderness designation occurs. Further discussion of this concern is provided in the final EIS.

43.2 Of the cultural sites described on page IV-26 of the draft EIS, Indian Battleground and the Indian campsite on Noon Creek are considered potentially eligible for the National Register. No formal determinations have been sought or received for any of the sites in the study areas.

Wilderness is now being recommended in the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. We have received a determination of effect from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on the question of wilderness designation. Dr. Thomas Green of the SHPO expressed his concern that wilderness designation could prevent some site stabilization or salvage since the wilderness policy advocates the "natural deterioration" of cultural resource sites. Since neglect is regarded as an adverse effect on cultural resources, the BLM could technically be in violation of 36 CFR 800 by advocating a policy of neglect. The wilderness policy does allow for the stabilization of <u>significant</u> cultural resource sites; i.e., National Register eligible sites; hence, violation of 36 CFR 800 would seemingly be avoided. Such concerns have been discussed in the final EIS.

We hope to resolve this question of effect and the need for further inventory, evaluation, National Register nomination, etc., through further discussion with the SHPO or the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Response to Letter No. 44

44.1 Approximately fourteen percent (14%) of the Boise District has been identified for wilderness study. There are 25 WSAs totalling over 742,000 acres. To date (as of June 1986), about 330,000 BLM acres have been identified preliminarily suitable for wilderness in other planning/EIS efforts, including the Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS, Jacks Creek Wilderness EIS and Jarbidge Resource Management Plan/EIS.

Response to Letter No. 46

46.1 There is very little "flat desert land" within these WSAs except in southern portions of the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. In this area, a series of flat tablelands covered with a vegetation mosaic of sagebrush and juniper occurs. The values of this southern tableland were identified as contributing to the outstanding primitive recreation and solitude opportunities of the North Fork which make it stand out among the other WSAs in the study.

Response to Letter No. 47

47.1 Alternatives for managing grazing use were addressed in the Owyhee Grazing EIS. The Wilderness Act and the BLM Wilderness Management Policy clearly state that grazing will continue within wilderness areas at approximately the same level and in the same manner as at the time of designation. Changes in the level of livestock use must be based only upon the condition of the range and other resource considerations, and not merely because of wilderness designation. Under the BLM Wilderness Management Policy, current livestock operators are entitled to make use of their entire livestock preference if the condition of the range permits. So, in effect, as far as wilderness designation is concerned, grazing is "constant".

Response to Letter No. 66

66.1 See Response No. 41.2.

Response to Letter No. 68

68.1 The planning criteria concerning ecosystem diversity was reevaluated; thus developing the new Proposed Action of the final EIS. We concur that the assumption should not have been made that other juniper forested WSAs would eventually be designated. Furthermore, poor understory conditions do not justify the need for selecting other WSAs for wilderness to provide better representation of the Sagebrush-Steppe ecosystem. Though these units are in the Sagebrush-Steppe ecosystem, the dominant vegetation type is juniper. Therefore, it

should be the value of juniper representation in the NWPS which should be considered.

68.2 Ecological condition is a comparison or rating of the present state of vegetation density and composition on a site in relation to the climax (or natural potential) plant community expected on pristine or undisturbed sites. A plant or plant association is considered climax on a site if it has the ability to successfully compete (often called natural or ecological potential) with other plant species on a given site considering (1) the potential of other competing plants to grow and reproduce (often known as physiological potential), (2) climatic conditions, (3) fire, (4) soil conditions, and (5) the impact of animal populations, particularly herbivores (plant eating animals).

Prior to the turn of the century, before the area was heavily utilized for grazing, historic records and research indicate that Juniper Mountain consisted of a vegetation mosaic of climax juniper, rock outcrops and canyons, open sagebrush-bunchgrass areas, and limited seral juniper stands.

Seral juniper encroachment into deep soil sites occupied with sagebrush and grasses has always occurred, and probably at about the same rate. However, frequent periodic ground fires carrying through abundant ground cover continually removed encroaching juniper; thereby allowing grasses, etc. to maintain a competitive advance. Occasional crown fires may have also removed dense seral juniper thickets.

Livestock grazing since the turn of the century has greatly impaired the ability of fire (whether natural or prescribed by man) to burn juniper out of the deeper soiled sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. Over 80 years of limited fire has resulted in widespread establishment of advanced seral juniper stands which are "fire resistant" due to the lack of understory vegetation. The removal of livestock pressure, which will occur in each WSA regardless of alternative selected (see Response 47.1), will not result in sufficient improvement in ground cover in many areas because of the competition from juniper overstories. The original vegetation mosaic of climax juniper, grassy openings, and intermixed seral juniper forests cannot be reestablished unless man takes a hand in juniper removal, or seral juniper stands are allowed to progress to dense thickets which will eventually be subject to removal by catastrophic crown fires. Unlike probable crown fires of the limited seral forests of the past, future crown fires could be extensive and cause long-term damage to the ecosystem. The continued loss of wildlife habitat from advancing seral stands will also be significant before the catastrophic fires occur.

There is no question that juniper invasion is "natural"; there is also no question that the current amount of advanced seral invasion is "unnatural". The present abundance of seral juniper and the loss of sagebrush-bunchgrass is the result of a lack of fire brought on by selective overgrazing of grasses and forbs by livestock. Contrary to the allegations presented in this letter, the cause (grazing) of poor ecological condition and juniper encroachment were described in the

vegetation section of Chapter IV of the draft EIS and elsewhere. These sections, however, were re-worked in the final EIS to be more explicit concerning the cause of vegetation condition.

Regardless of the cause of the current situation, restoring the condition of the ecosystem will require improved livestock management (see Response No. 47.1) and vegetation treatments. Improved grazing management (including reductions in livestock use) will result in better understory vegetation conditions for climax juniper forests and improved conditions of sagebrush-bunchgrass openings which are currently not invaded by juniper. However, such management will not restore sagebrush-bunchgrass sites with advanced juniper encroachment. Prescribed burning can keep the remaining openings free of juniper; only mechanical treatments will be able to restore lost sagebrush-bunchgrass sites. Prescribed burning will have to be a continual process because continued selective foraging of grasses, forbs, and shrubs by livestock will always give a competitive edge to juniper. Even with the obtainment of good range conditions through more intensive management, livestock will always be cropping off fine fuels prior to prime fire potential periods in late summer, resulting in reduced opportunities for natural fire regimes to return.

Without an ongoing program to offset past and continued impacts of livestock grazing, the wildlife values of the juniper woodland ecosystem discussed in this letter could be lost. The juniper dependent wildlife species are not merely dependent upon juniper trees. They are dependent upon an association of climax juniper, seral juniper, and open grassy and sagebrush areas in a vegetation mosaic which will supply a proper balance between cover and forage needs. This balance between cover and forage no longer exists on Juniper Mountain in general and is threatened in the North Fork Owyhee River and Big Willow Spring WSAs.

68.3 A discussion of juniper woodland ecology and the impacts on this ecosystem are included in the final EIS. In light of this information, it is appropriate for BLM to give greater consideration to providing a protective designation for the juniper-sagebrush ecosystem in the NWPS. Such protection, however, should allow for the maintenance and restoration for natural plant associations and not allow the perpetuation of unnatural associations brought about by livestock use.

68.4 In reference to the specific wildlife species mentioned in the letter, pinyon jay is not found in the juniper woodlands of the WSAs. There are no pinyon pines within the WSAs which this species is largely dependent upon for food. The only pinyon-juniper woodlands in Idaho are located in small areas southeast of Burley. The pinyon-juniper woodland is a different ecosystem which is widespread over Utah, Nevada, western Colorado, and northern Arizona. The other species listed are not dependent or preferent to juniper woodlands. They are also found in other ecosystems.

68.5 Further discussion of impacts on juniper woodland ecology is provided in this final EIS.

68.6 The use of any USFS analysis for determining economic benefits from recreational use of the Clearwater National Forest cannot be applied to the North Fork Owyhee River WSA. Any dollar value resulting from the use of the USFS system would be extremely suspect. The $11,000 estimate appears to have been made based upon 180 recreation user days (RUD) at $60/RUD. It is very questionable that a visitor would generate $180 in benefits for a 3-day visit to the North Fork from Boise. Furthermore, such recreation use would occur with or without wilderness designation. So, economic benefits cannot be attributed solely to wilderness designation. The final EIS contains recreation visitor use estimates (1984) and predicts changes in visitor use, and thus the economic impacts of any such changes are now reflected in the analysis. Costs associated with managing an area as wilderness or as a developed recreation area and changes in user costs (ranchers, hunters, and recreationists) are also now reflected in the analysis.

68.7 Refer to Response No. 41.1.

68.8 The protection of primitive recreational opportunities for the North Fork Owyhee River WSA with an SRMA was not clearly defined in the draft EIS. Primitive and semi-primitive designations would encompass the canyons of the North Fork Owyhee River, the southern tablelands, and much of the rugged juniper covered hilly regions (84% of the WSA). The distinction between primitive and semi-primitive management depends upon an area's proximity to roads and ways which would remain open for public recreational use. Only about 12% of the WSA (6,000 acres) would lose primitive recreational values due to vegetation manipulation. These treated areas would be primarily in the northeast portion of the WSA. Further detail on specific SRMA management actions for recreation has been provided in the final EIS.

Special recreation management areas (SRMAs) can provide protection of wilderness values. The question boils down to not which form of designation, administrative or legislative, provides adequate protection, but rather which provides the greatest long-term protection. Obviously, legislative designations provide greater long-term protection because they are not as subject to political pressures associated with recurring land management planning efforts.

68.9 Refer to Response No. 18.2.

Response to Testimony No. 76

76.1 Refer to Response No. 68.2.

Response to Testimony No. 77

77.1 Projected AUM increases are based on improvement in range condition as well as implementation of brush control projects. The estimated amount of acreage to receive vegetation treatments has been changed in

the final EIS as have the estimates concerning AUMs. These changes are based upon updated information. The original estimates were highly optimistic. The new acreages presented represent the sites that are potentially suitable from a soils standpoint and that would ensure the protection of wildlife habitat needs or other resource values. Higher AUMs are unlikely.

Response to Letter No. 79

79.1 In accordance with the BLM wilderness inventory policy, aircraft flights were considered external influences which should be noted but not used in determining whether a roadless area has outstanding opportunities for solitude. This was due in part to the fact that many designated wilderness areas have military over-flights. The wilderness study policy, however, permits the assessment of external influences on the suitability of a WSA for wilderness designation. There is strong disagreement among the public as to what effect current levels of military over-flights have on a roadless area's solitude. It is the BLM's position that such flights are acceptable in areas it is recommending suitable for wilderness designation. Regardless of the perceived impact, the fact is that wilderness designation or nondesignation would do little to change the existing patterns of military aircraft over southwest Idaho nor the impacts they have on existing wilderness characteristics.

LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	Position	Amendment/EIS Responsibilities	Education	Experience
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GLOSSARY

Active Grazing Preference - That portion of the total grazing preference that could be licensed and used should the livestock operator desire.

Adequate Access - The combination of routes and modes of travel which will cause the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource, and at the same time serve the reasonable purposes for which the state or private land is held or used.

Allotment Management Plan - A plan that prescribes how livestock operations will be conducted in a grazing allotment.

Allowable AUMs - Amount of forage available for use based upon current vegetation condition.

Animal Unit Month (AUM) - The amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or its equivalent for a period of one month.

AUM Allocation - The amount of current allowable AUMs available to livestock or a wildlife species in question.

Chaining - Dragging an anchor chain between two bulldozers to uproot undesirable trees or shrubs.

Channel Erosion - The erosion of land associated with water courses, both perennial and intermittent.

Cherrystem Road - A road that penetrates the interior of a WSA but does not divide it into two separate areas.

Climax Vegetation - The final vegetative community that emerges after a series of successive vegetational stages.

Ecological Condition - The present state of vegetation in an area in relation to the climax (natural potential) plant community the area is capable of supporting.

Ecological Site - Classification of an area based on vegetation potential (kind, amount, and proportion) which is determined by soils and other environmental factors.

Ecological (Vegetation) Potential - The potential for vegetation to grow in response to environmental factors such as competition with other plant species, moisture, and soil conditions.

Endangered Species - Any species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Fifty Percent Utilization of Key Species - Grazing use that is adjusted so that 50% of the annual forage produced by the plants will not be consumed.

Forage - Browse and herbaceous foods that are available to grazing animals.

Grazing Systems - Systems that adjust the grazing use from year to year to reduce grazing impact on vegetation.

Ground Cover - The percentage of ground covered by living plants or dead parts of plants.

Management Framework Plan (MFP) - A BLM planning document that outlines multiple use management objectives for an area. Replaced by the Resource Management Plan (RMP).

Mechanical Treatment - The use of mechanized equipment to change vegetative composition of an area.

Multiplier - The ratio between the increase of income arising from an increment of investment and the investment itself.

Naturalness - Refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable" (from Section 2(c), Wilderness Act of 1964).

ORVs - Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel.

Permittees - Livestock operators who have grazing privileges on public lands.

Primitive Recreation - Nonmotorized and nondeveloped types of outdoor recreational activities in a natural setting featuring a maximum degree of solitude and challenge.

Rangeland Improvements - Any structural or nonstructural improvement which directly affects or supports the use of the forage resource by domestic livestock, such as fences, line cabins, water lines, and stock tanks.

Resource Area - A geographic portion of a BLM district that is the smallest administrative subdivision in the Bureau.

Sagebrush Ecological Site - An area where the climax vegetation community is visually dominated by sagebrush species.

Scoping Process - Public participation process used to identify issues to be addressed in planning.

Semi-Primitive Recreation - Nonmotorized or motorized and nondeveloped types of outdoor recreation in settings where standards for naturalness and opportunities for solitude and challenge are not as stringent as primitive recreation settings.

Sensitive Species - Species whose ranges are so limited that any reductions in numbers, habitat availability, or habitat condition could result in their being placed on the endangered list.

Seral Juniper Stands - Plant communities that are part of a successional stage and not the climax community for an area.

Sheet Erosion - The removal of a fairly uniform layer of soil from the land surface by runoff water or wind.

Site (Archaeological) - A physical location where primitive and historic human activities or events occurred which can be used to document human history.

Solitude - The state of being alone or remote from habitations; isolation. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place.

Special Features (Supplemental Values - Resources associated with wilderness which contribute to the quality of wilderness areas.

Suitability/Nonsuitability - A recommendation or decision whether to designate or not designate wilderness.

Uncommon Species - Species that are not endangered or sensitive but are uncommon in the state of Idaho.

Vegetation Manipulation (Treatment) - To change the vegetative composition of an area.

Wilderness Study Area (WSA) - A roadless area that has been inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in Section 603 of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

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APPENDIX A - TABLE 1
VEGETATION TREATMENT (Acres)
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-40

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)						
		Mechanical Removal		Burn		Mechanical Removal and Burn Acreage Total		Mechanical Removal and/or Burn Acreage Seeded
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	
Proposed Action	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	---	0	---	0	---	0	0
	Cliffs 0501	350	150	100	150	450	300	250
	Indian Meadows 0520	650	400	250	150	900	550	550
	Trout Spring 0539	50	0	50	0	100	0	50
	Pleasant Valley 0546	200	0	50	0	250	0	100
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	1,450	900	500	300	1,950	1,200	1,200
	Nickle Creek 0657	350	0	150	0	500	0	200
Total		3,050	1,450	1,100	600	4,150	2,050	2,350
No Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	--	0	--	0	--	0	0
	Cliffs 0501	--	850	--	350	--	1,200	450
	Indian Meadows 0520	--	1,700	--	650	--	2,350	850
	Trout Spring 0539	--	100	--	100	--	200	50
	Pleasant Valley 0546	--	400	--	100	--	500	200
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	--	3,800	--	1,300	--	5,100	1,900
	Nickle Creek 0657	--	700	--	300	--	1,000	350
Total			7,550		2,800		10,350	3,800
Partial Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	0	---	0	---	0	---	0
	Cliffs 0501	0	---	0	---	0	---	0
	Indian Meadows 0520	0	---	0	---	0	---	0
	Trout Spring 0539	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Pleasant Valley 0546	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Nickle Creek 0657	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Cliffs 0501	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Indian Meadows 0520	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Trout Spring 0539	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Pleasant Valley 0546	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Nickle Creek 0657	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
Total		0		0		0		0

APPENDIX A - TABLE 2
VEGETATION TREATMENT (Acres)
BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA, ID-16-41

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)						
		Mechanical Removal		Burn		Mechanical Removal and Burn Acreage Total		Mechanical Removal and/or Burn Acreage Seeded
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Pole Creek 0635	--	950	--	300	--	1,250	950
Total			950		300		1,250	950
All Wilderness With Stipulations	Pole Creek 0635	450	--	150	--	600	--	550
Total		450		150		600		550
All Wilderness With No Stipulations	Pole Creek 0635	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
Total		0		0		0		0

APPENDIX A - TABLE 3
VEGETATION TREATMENT (Acres)
SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA, ID-16-42

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)						
		Mechanical Removal		Burn		Mechanical Removal and Burn Acreage Total		Mechanical Removal and/or Burn Acreage Seeded
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Trout Springs 0539	--	1,500	--	600	--	2,100	1,500
	Pole Creek 0635	--	1,200	--	500	--	1,700	1,200
Total			2,700		1,100		3,800	2,700
All Wilderness	Trout Springs 0539	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Pole Creek 0635	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
Total		0		0		0		0

APPENDIX A - TABLE 4
VEGETATION TREATMENT (Acres)
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-45

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)						
		Mechanical Removal		Burn		Mechanical Removal and Burn Acreage Total		Mechanical Removal and/or Burn Acreage Seeded
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Bull Basin 0540	--	1,650	--	300	--	1,950	1,650
	Pole Creek 0635	--	1,900	--	400	--	2,300	1,900
Total			3,550		700		4,250	3,550
All Wilderness	Bull Basin 0540	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Pole Creek 0635	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
Total		0		0		0		0

APPENDIX A - TABLE 5
VEGETATION TREATMENT (Acres)
WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA, ID-6-47

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Vegetation Treatment (Acres)						
		Mechanical Removal		Burn		Mechanical Removal and Burn Acreage Total		Mechanical Removal and/or Burn Acreage Seeded
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	Wilderness	Non-wilderness	
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Bull Basin 0540	--	1,000	--	350	--	1,350	1,000
	Castlehead-Lambert 0634	--	950	--	300	--	1,250	950
Total			1,950		650		2,600	1,950
All Wilderness	Bull Basin 0540	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
	Castlehead-Lambert 0634	0	--	0	--	0	--	0
Total		0		0		0		0

APPENDIX B - TABLE 1
CURRENT AND 20-YEAR LIVESTOCK USE (AUMs)
NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-40

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Estimated Current Use		Vegetation Treatment and/or Grazing Management 1/	Anticipated 20-year Use	
		Wilderness	Non-wilderness		Wilderness	Non-wilderness
Proposed Action	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	---	45	---	---	45
	Cliffs 0501	1,200	85	255	1,200	85
	Indian Meadows 0520	180	225	20	180	225
	Trout Springs 0539	65	35	20	65	35
	Pleasant Valley 0546	475	15	0	475	15
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	540	270	200	540	270
	Nickle Creek 0657	690	110	0	690	110
Total		3,150	785	495	3,150	785
No Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	---	45	---	---	45
	Cliffs 0501	---	1,285	255	---	1,285
	Indian Meadows 0520	---	405	65	---	470
	Trout Springs 0539	---	100	20	---	100
	Pleasant Valley 0546	---	490	0	---	490
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	---	810	200	---	810
	Nickle Creek 0657	---	800	0	---	800
Total			3,935	540		4,000
Partial Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	45	---	--	45	--
	Cliffs 0501	1,285	---	--	1,030	--
	Indian Meadows 0520	405	---	20	425	--
	Trout Springs 0539	65	35	--	50	35
	Pleasant Valley 0546	475	15	0	475	15
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	740	70	15	600	70
	Nickle Creek 0657	690	110	0	690	110
Total		3,705	230	35	3,315	230
All Wilderness	Brown Fenced Federal Range 0459	45	---	--	45	---
	Cliffs 0501	1,285	---	--	1,030	---
	Indian Meadows 0520	405	---	20	425	---
	Trout Springs 0539	100	---	--	80	---
	Pleasant Valley 0546	490	---	--	490	---
	Burghardt Indiv. 0599	810	---	50	660	---
	Nickle Creek 0657	800	---	0	800	---
Total		3,935	---	70	3,530	---

1/ Not all AUMs gained through vegetation treatment and/or grazing management would be allocated to livestock. AUMs gained under the partial wilderness and all wilderness alternatives are from livestock management only.

APPENDIX B - TABLE 2
CURRENT AND 20-YEAR LIESTOCK USE (AUMs)
BIG WILLOW SPRING WSA, ID-16-41

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Estimated Current Use	Vegetation Treatment and/or Grazing Management 1/	Anticipated 20-Year Use
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Pole Creek 0635	400	40	440
Total		400	40	440
All Wilderness With Stipulations	Pole Creek 0635	400	--	400
Total		400	--	400
All Wilderness With No Stipulations	Pole Creek 0635	400	--	400
Total		400	--	400

1/ Not all AUMs gained through vegetation treatment and/or grazing management would be allocated to livestock.

APPENDIX B - TABLE 3
CURRENT AND 20-YEAR LIVESTOCK USE (AUMs)
SQUAW CREEK CANYON WSA, ID-16-42

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Estimated Current Use	Vegetation Treatment and/or Grazing Management 1/	Anticipated 20-Year Use
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Trout Springs 0539	560	60	560
	Pole Creek 0635	295	30	325
Total		855	90	885
All Wilderness	Trout Springs 0539	560	30	500
	Pole Creek 0635	295	--	295
Total		855	30	795

1/ Not all AUMs gained through vegetation treatment and/or grazing management would be allocated to livestock. AUMs gained under the all wilderness alternative are from livestock management only.

APPENDIX B - TABLE 4
CURRENT AND 20-YEAR LIESTOCK USE (AUMs)
MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER WSA, ID-16-45

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Estimated Current Use	Vegetation Treatment and/or Grazing Management 1/	Anticipated 20-Year Use
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Bull Basin 0540	545	85	545
	Pole Creek 0635	495	50	545
Total		1,040	135	1,090
All Wilderness	Bull Basin 0540	545	20	460
	Pole Creek 0635	495	--	495
Total		1,040	20	955

1/ Not all AUMs gained through vegetation treatment and/or grazing management would be allocated to livestock. AUMs gained under the all wilderness alternative are from livestock management only.

APPENDIX B - TABLE 5
CURRENT AND 20-YEAR LIVESTOCK USE (AUMs)
WEST FORK RED CANYON WSA, ID-16-47

Alternative	Affected Allotment	Estimated Current Use	Vegetation Treatment and/or Grazing Management 1/	Anticipated 20-Year Use
Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	Bull Basin 0540	460	70	460
	Castlehead-Lambert 0634	525	--	525
Total		985	70	985
All Wilderness	Bull Basin 0540	460	20	390
	Castlehead-Lambert 0634	525	--	525
Total		985	20	915

1/ Not all AUMs gained through vegetation treatment and/or grazing management would be allocated to livestock. AUMs gained under the all wilderness alternative are from livestock management only.

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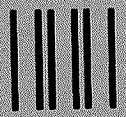

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