

of USFS and BLM lands rated very high, b) 33% high, c) 17 % moderate, d) 7% moderately low and e) 1% very low. (p. 54). The essence of these ranking show that the majority of USFS and BLM public lands have a natural-appearing landscape, with a lower percent of public lands having a disturbed appearance.

3. In the Effects on Ecological Integrity and Socioeconomic Resiliency section of this report stated "...Local publics will be expected to continue to express preferences for stability in scenery and lobby to have projects put in someone else's back yard...." (p.140).

Except for newly acquired public lands on the North Fork of the John Day River all public lands within the planning area have been inventoried according to BLM Visual Inventory guidelines. Previously inventoried public lands were assigned VRM management classes with established guidelines, through the Two Rivers, John Day and Baker RMP/EIS process and the plan amendments instituted via the John Day River Management Plan.

BLM public lands not accessible by the public have generally retained a higher level of natural appearance, although unauthorized motorized use on some BLM public lands has created routes used by off highway vehicles (OHV), degrading scenic quality. Some public lands accessible by motorized use have had new routes and trails created around Canyon City, Dixie Creek, South Fork of the John Day, and Rudio Mountain. The scenic quality of these public lands has been affected in these locations.

Wilderness Study Area Interim Management Guidelines that restrict all motorized use to existing or designated routes continue to be violated by some public land users and some adjacent private landowners. These activities also reduce the natural character of the landscape by creating new OHV routes.

Unique or Key Features: The John Day River, North and South Forks of the John Day River and their river canyons, Sutton Mountain, Pat's Cabin, Little Canyon Mountain and the Rudio Mountain/Johnson Heights area are all key visual features within the planning area. The rivers listed above are also unique features that significantly contribute to high scenic quality in these locations.

## SPECIAL MANAGEMENT DESIGNATIONS

### AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

BLM has two Areas of Environmental Concern (ACECs) in the John Day Basin planning area: Horn Butte Curlew and Spanish Gulch. Both were designated through the Two Rivers RMP/EIS in 1986. These ACECs are shown on Map 9, Special Management Areas and Recreation Sites.

Horn Butte Curlew ACEC is approximately 6,000 acres and is located five miles east of Arlington, in the extreme northeast corner of the planning area. Designated for its long-billed curlew) nesting habitat, a management plan was prepared in 1989 proposing land acquisition, livestock management, noxious weed control and seasonal closure of the area to OHVs. Implementation of all planned actions except OHV management is ongoing.

Since 1989 approximately 80% of the ACEC has been burned by wildfire. Long-billed curlew nesting habitat, consisting mostly of sites dominated by perennial grasses, has

generally been enhanced. However, the shrub steppe, as expected, has been converted to sites dominated by annual species, including noxious weeds (yellow starthistle and medusahead grass). Approximately 1,500 acres has been re-seeded to perennial grasses, although establishment has been poor. Weed control is ongoing. Restoration of this area to shrub steppe and enhancement of its curlew habitat remains an ongoing process.

Spanish Gulch was designated an ACEC for its historic values. This ACEC is approximately 335 acres and is located approximately 12 air miles west-southwest of Dayville, Oregon, just north of the Ochoco National Forest. In the mid-1800s this was the site of active gold mining, following discovery of gold in the Canyon City area to the east. When the Spanish Gulch area was designated an ACEC, numerous historical structures remained on site, including a mill, storage buildings and residences. Since designation, little has been done to manage or protect this area and the structures have fallen further into disrepair.

## WILDERNESS

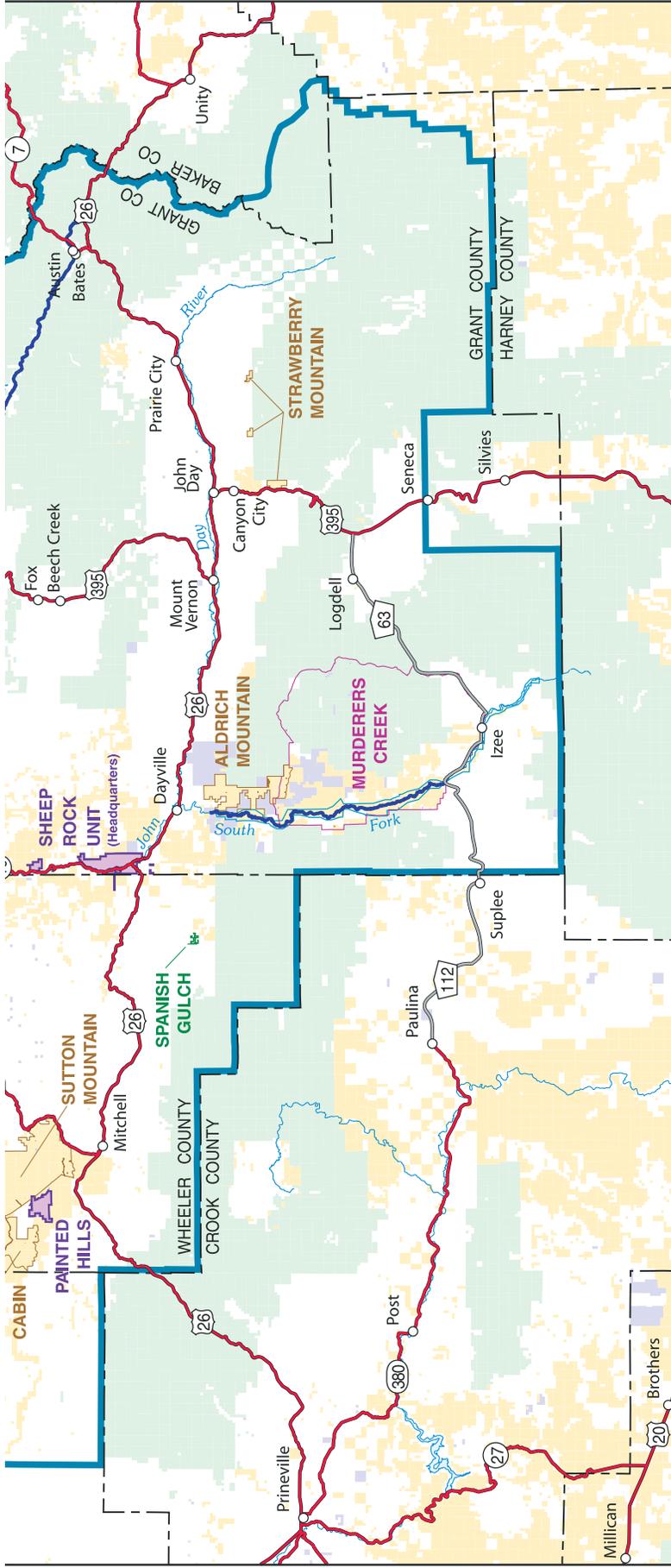
Portions of five federally designated Wilderness areas (North Fork John Day, Black Canyon, Monument Rock, Strawberry Mountain, and Bridge Creek) are within the planning area, each managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The North Fork John Day Wilderness is located along the upper North Fork, Black Canyon Wilderness is located on the west side of the South Fork John Day, Monument Rock Wilderness is located at the southern end of the Blue Mountains, Strawberry Mountain Wilderness is located southeast of John Day and Canyon City, and Bridge Creek Wilderness is located in the Ochoco Mountains south of Mitchell.

Eight Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) have been identified by the BLM within the planning area. The Strawberry Mountain WSA (1,149 acres) consists of three individual units that abut the north and east boundary of the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness Area (USFS). The Aldrich Mountain WSA (9,395 acres) is located on the east side of the South Fork John Day River near Dayville. The Spring Basin WSA (6,000 acres) is located south of Clarno on the east side of the mainstem John Day River. The North Pole Ridge WSA (8,379 acres) is located north of Clarno on the mainstem. Further north along the mainstem is the Thirtymile WSA (7,538 acres) and the Lower John Day WSA (25,396 acres). Two additional WSAs, Sutton Mountain (29,400 acres) and Pat's Cabin (9,970 acres) are located just south of the mainstem John Day River near Bridge Creek.

In a 1991 report, the BLM recommended that most of the acres contained in four WSAs be designated as Wilderness by Congress including Thirtymile, Lower John Day, North Pole Ridge, and Spring Basin. The report did not recommend Wilderness status for the Strawberry Mountain WSA or the Aldrich Mountain WSA. Lands acquired after 1991 were inventoried for wilderness characteristics, and those found to meet the WSA criteria, including Sutton Mountain WSA, Pat's Cabin WSA, and a 1,240-acre addition to the North Pole Ridge WSA, were amended to WSA status through earlier planning documents. The study process for Sutton Mountain and Pat's Cabin WSAs is not complete, and study reports with recommendations have not been forwarded to Congress.

The largest current threat to the WSAs is the unauthorized use of motorized vehicles and the creation of new routes through this use. Off highway vehicle (OHV) trespass is presently occurring in nearly every WSA within the planning area. Other unauthorized activities are threatening individual WSAs. In Sutton Mountain WSA, the unauthorized cutting of old-growth juniper trees is escalating, associated with the recent popularity





### LEGEND

#### BLM Recreation Sites

- Campground
- Boat Launch
- Picnic Area
- Point of Interest

#### Special Management Areas

- Wilderness Study Area
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Wild Horse and Burro Management Area
- Wild and Scenic River
- State Scenic Waterway

Planning Area Boundary

#### Administered Land

- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- John Day Fossil Beds National Monument
- Other Federal
- State
- Private or Other

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Bureau of Land Management



### PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

### John Day Basin Resource Management Plan

2006

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**Map 9: Special Management Areas and Recreation Sites**

of hand-crafted juniper furniture. In the North Pole Ridge, Thirtymile, and Lower John Day WSAs, unauthorized motor vehicle use is increasing as single engine aircraft land on sagebrush flats along the river. The BLM has investigated cases where chainsaws have been used to remove vegetation to facilitate landing, aircraft tie-downs have been installed in the ground, and chainsaw fuel containers have been stashed.

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Three John Day River segments are designated as Wild and Scenic through the Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-558). The specific nature of these designations are discussed in chapter 4. The WSR segments along the John Day are:

- **Lower John Day River mainstem**; from Tumwater Falls upstream to Service Creek the lower the river is classified as “Recreational” and flows through a number of colorful canyons, broad valleys, and breathtaking terrain. This segment offers notable steelhead and smallmouth bass fishing; mostly flat water boating punctuated with a few rapids; and sites of archeological, historical and paleontological interest.
- **South Fork John Day River**; from Smokey Creek upstream to the Malheur National Forest boundary, this segment is classified as “Recreational” and offers outstanding scenery, wild steelhead fishing, hunting, hiking, swimming and camping.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers are displayed on Map 9; Special Management Areas and Recreation Sites.

### OTHER WILD & SCENIC RIVERS WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA

The North Fork of the John Day River is the only WSR managed by the Umatilla National Forest within the planning area. In the Malheur National Forest the Malheur River and the North Fork of the Malheur River contain reaches designated Wild and Scenic River. The outstandingly remarkable values on these Malheur river segments include Fisheries, Wildlife, Recreation, Scenery and Geology.

### IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ELIGIBLE RIVERS WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA

In May 2005, the BLM Prineville District reviewed 1,400 miles of waterways on BLM public land within the John Day Basin planning area. In addition data from the Northwest Rivers Study, the Northwest Power Planning Council Protected Rivers and the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NPS 2004) were evaluated.

The eighteen waterways listed in Table 11 totaling 92.87 miles on BLM public lands, were identified for evaluation to determine if they met WSR eligibility criteria.

Prineville BLM enlisted a private contractor with eligibility assessment expertise, to conduct a detailed inventory of the 18 waterways identified above. The final eligibility report for the eighteen waterways is located in the folder entitled “Support Documents” on the attached CD.

## STATE SCENIC WATERWAYS

The State Scenic Waterways (SSW) program is administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). OPRD has developed both statewide and river specific rules. These rules specify management objectives for development and uses within the Scenic Waterway corridor to maintain the natural beauty of the river. A total of approximately 317 miles of the John Day River are included in this system.

- a) The mainstem of the John Day from Tumwater Falls to Parrish Creek at river mile 170.
- b) The North Fork John Day River from river mile 20, near Monument, upstream to the West end of the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary

**Table 11 Waterways Evaluated for Potential Wild & Scenic River Eligibility**

Waterway	Miles
North Fork John Day River (BLM managed sections Between Wall and Camas Creek)	26.41
Potamus Creek	2.60
Rudio Creek	3.26
Stony Creek	6.90
Graves Creek	3.29
Jericco Creek	2.28
Little Wall Creek	3.73
Mallory Creek	3.17
Ditch Creek	5.19
Wall Creek	6.27
Bear Creek	2.17
Bridge Creek	12.18
Cottonwood Creek	1.28
Little Pine Creek	1.43
Ferry Canyon	2.75
Girds Creek	2.30
Indian Creek	0.51
Jackknife Canyon	7.15
<b>Total: 18 Waterways</b>	<b>92.87</b>

- c) The Middle Fork John Day River, from its confluence with the North Fork John Day River upstream to the Crawford Creek Bridge
- d) The South Fork John Day River, from the north boundary of Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Management Area (formerly Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area) County Road 63.

## RIVER MANAGEMENT TRENDS

Implementation of Wilderness Study Area interim guidance (USDI BLM, 1995b), the John Day River Management Plan (USDI BLM, 2001) guidance, and a new joint BLM and NPS Law Enforcement Ranger have helped to protect Outstandingly Remarkable values such as scenic quality, recreation, fisheries, camping and dispersed recreation on the main-stem and South Fork John Day Rivers. Changes include improved communication with users, an emphasis on Leave No Trace ethics, improved riparian habitat through compatible grazing management, and increased on-site management of these rivers.

## RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

There are no Research Natural Areas within the JDRMP planning area.

## CAVES

Many resources are associated with cave features, including critical wildlife habitat, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, and paleontological resources. "Cave" is defined as any naturally occurring void, cavity, recess or series of connected passages beneath the surface of the earth or within a cliff or ledge large enough to allow a person to enter. It includes any natural pit, sinkhole or other feature that is an extension of the entrance. Caves in the planning area have the potential to be significant as winter hibernacula or maternity roost sites for bats.

Caves in the planning area include features such as lava tubes, caves formed by pressure ridges associated with lava flows, and piping caves formed by moving water eroding insoluble rock. The locations of caves nominated for significance are considered confidential under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act (FCRPA). Information concerning the specific location of any significant cave may not be made available to the public unless the disclosure of this information would further the purposes of the FCRPA and would not create a substantial risk of harm, theft or destruction of such cave.

Several caves within the planning area were identified during the significant cave nomination process and initial listing in 1995. Wildhorse Point Cave is the only known cave on BLM public land within the JDBRMP area determined to be significant by the BLM. This cave provides habitat for the western big-eared bat. The condition of Wildhorse Point Cave in the mid 1990's when it was inventoried was excellent.

Rock Creek Cave NW was identified in the 1995 initial listing, but it may be located on private land. Field surveys need to be done to verify the land status of this cave before a determination of significance can be made.

## OTHER AREAS DESIGNATED FOR SPECIAL MANAGEMENT

The Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Management Area (formerly Murderers Creek Wildlife Management Area) was established along a portion of the South Fork John Day River in 1972 by the ODFW and the BLM to better manage mule deer winter range. The area is now used by mule deer, elk, and bighorn sheep year-round and pronghorn during all but the winter season. Several thousand mule deer use the area during severe winters. This area also provides habitat for turkey, chukar, mountain quail, California quail, and a host of neotropical migratory birds.

The State of Oregon established the John Day Wildlife Refuge in 1933 along the lower mainstem of the John Day River. The primary purpose of this refuge is to protect wintering and nesting waterfowl. It includes all land within 1/4 mile of the John Day river mean high water line from the Columbia River upstream to Thirtymile Creek. No waterfowl hunting is allowed in this area. The area is open to deer and upland game bird hunting during authorized seasons, but hunting of these species on private lands within the refuge requires land owner permission.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Prehistoric sites of archaeological interest are scattered throughout the planning area. They are most commonly found in certain environmental locations that are heavily influenced by the existing geology/terrain and for the most part tend to conform to the same locations where people live today. For example, there is a high potential to find prehistoric sites near any water course or body, like rivers, streams, springs and lakes. Similarly, ridges and breaks (abrupt changes in topography) are likely spots to find evidence of past use or occupation. Steep slopes and rocky ground are less likely to have cultural resources of relevance, though there are exceptions.

A cultural resource is “a definite location of human activity, occupation, or use identifiable through field inventory (survey), historical documentation, or oral evidence. Site types known for this area include but are not limited to Native American stone tool making scatters, rock shelters, isolated artifacts, remains of living structures, pictographs and petroglyphs, rock stacked features, burials, historic homesteads/living structures or their remains, roads/trails, irrigation ditches, stock raising and management features, cemeteries, ferry crossings, mining features and equipment, prohibition stills, wagon remains, and features related to logging activities.

On a regional basis, the John Day basin has been influenced through time by what is perceived as two distinct cultural areas – the Columbia Plateau to the north and the Great Basin to the south. The Columbia Plateau cultures are generally focused on river systems taking advantage of the elevation changes in that system to provide resource availability throughout the different seasons. Fish, berries and roots are important resources in this culture area. Resource storage and semi-permanent dwellings are key features for this area. Great Basin cultures focused on internally drained lake basins and other water features. Similarly, the Great Basin cultures take advantage of resource availability afforded in areas with relatively close elevation changes. Rabbits, waterfowl and roots are important resources. Storage and temporary shelters are key features.