

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: Prineville Field Office **NEPA Log #:** DOI-BLM-OR-P060-2009-0004-CX

Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #: N/A

Proposed Action Title/Type: Millican Cliff Fence

Location: Approximately 12 miles Southwest of Prineville, east of the George Millican Road, south of Millican Cliff area. The legal description of the proposed project is; T. 16 S., R. 15 E. Sections 11 and 12, W.M. (See attached map).

Description of the Proposed Action: The following actions will increase public safety for visitors using public lands in the Millican Cliff area by closing a small area to motorized use, eliminate unauthorized dumping and reduce fence hazards to wildlife;

- 1) Remove 978 feet of an old, down wire fence and posts and install 978 feet of new fence as part of the east-west fence construction (4-strand; top and bottom smooth wire)
- 2) Install an additional 1,588 feet of new of fence in an east-west direction south of Millican cliffs, to the BLM/Quail Valley Ranch private land boundary (4-strand; top and bottom wires smooth).
- 3) Remove an additional 1.5 miles of old, down fence and posts located in a north-south direction to eliminate hazard to visitors, wildlife and livestock,
- 4) Install one steel 12-14 foot gate and
- 5) Install two recreation information signs to inform the public of the area being closed to motorized use and dumping for public safety purposes.

One existing and one new gate will be locked, allowing only authorized activities such as the Oregon National Guard training and on-going livestock management. Public visitor use within the fenced area surrounding Millican Cliffs will be limited to non-motorized activities only.

All cultural, botanical and wildlife clearances are obtained. The proposed fence will be built to BLM specifications allowing easy fence crossing by deer, antelope and elk. Project implementation will be through a land stewardship partnership between BLM and Oregon National Guard and through cooperative fencing efforts on adjacent private land owned by the Quail Valley Ranch, Kurt Lockhart, ranch manager.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Upper Deschutes RMP/EIS Record of Decision

Date approved (ROD): *September, 2005*

The proposed action is in conformance with the Upper Deschutes RMP/EIS Record of Decision because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decisions: This RMP/EIS Record of Decision on Page 123, Millican Plateau OHV Area states, "...The northern tip of the Millican Plateau area is Closed to motor vehicles, in response to chronic dumping and vandalism problems between the BLM boundary and the power line crossing at Millican/West Butte Road See RMP Maps 3 and 17..."

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11, G. Transportation, (4) Placement of recreational, special designation, or information signs, visitor registers, kiosks, and portable sanitation devices., and J. Other., (8) Installation of minor devices to protect human life (e.g., grates across mines).

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply. Fence removal is an action eligible for a Categorical Exclusion under 516DM 11., J. Other., (10) Removal of structures and materials of no historical value.

I considered public access which is available through a small gate off the Millican Road and proposed fence design that will mitigate any potential effects to deer, antelope or elk when crossing the proposed new fence. No potential exists for significant impacts resulting from this Proposed Action.

D. Signature

Authorizing official: _____

Molly Brown
Field Manager
Deschutes Resource Area

Molly Brown

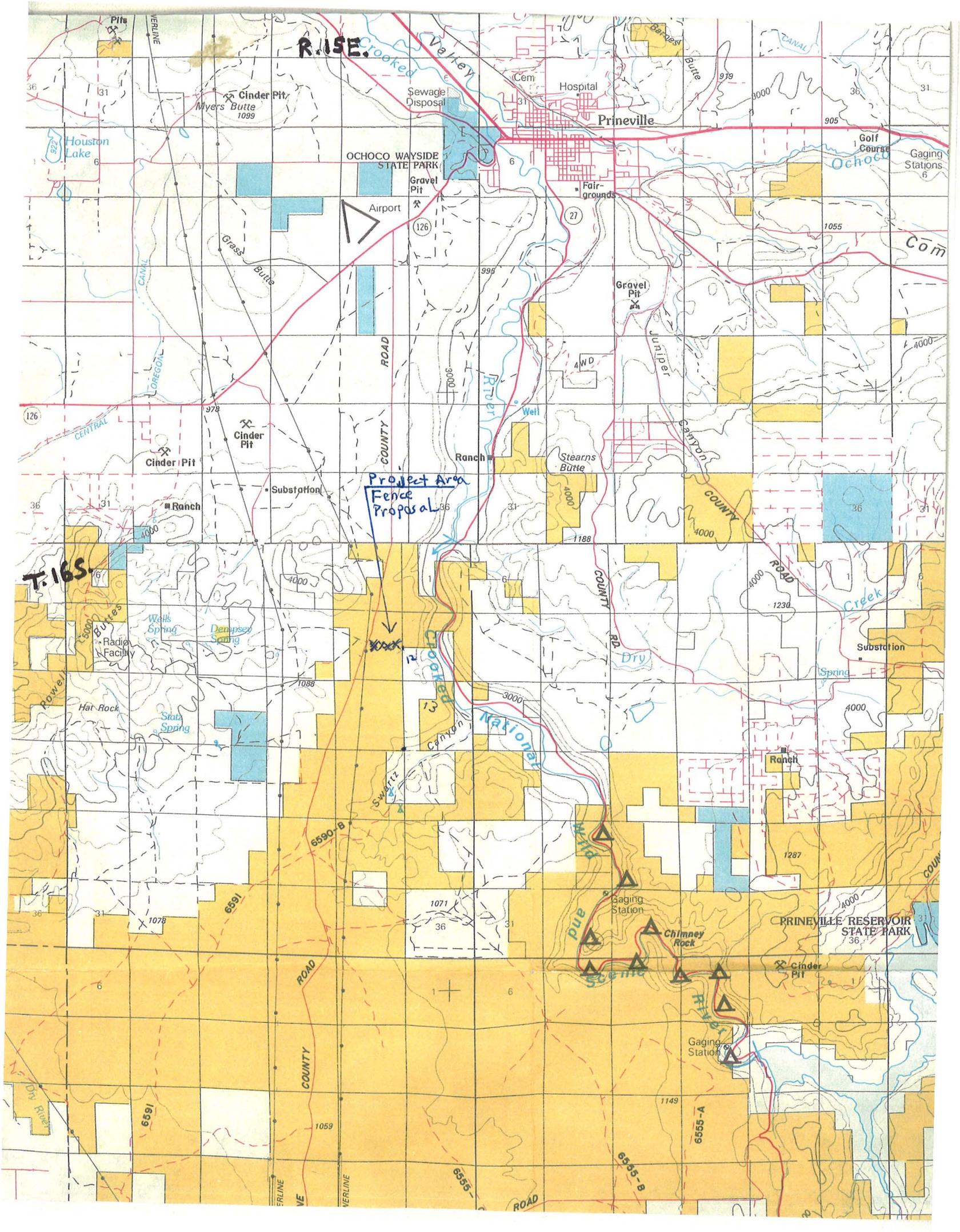
2/24/09

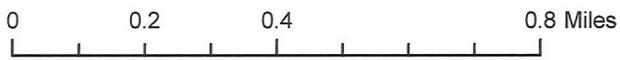
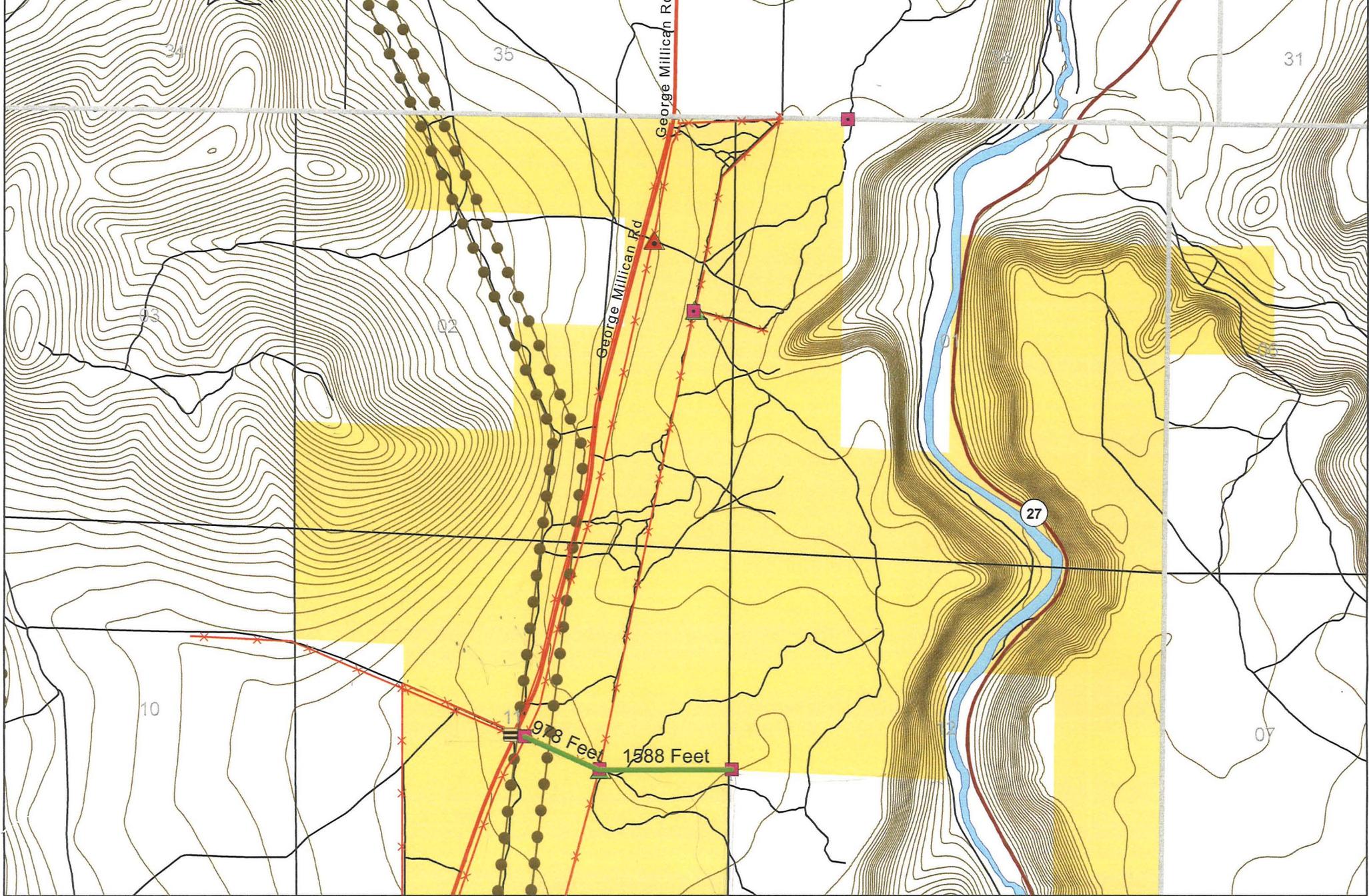
Date

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: *Berry Phelps, Recreation Planner*
Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6723;
bphelps@blm.gov

Attachments: General Vicinity Map of Project Area & Map of proposed fence
Attachment: Botanical Clearance Form





Legend

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Proposed_Fences | GPS Points | Fences | Cattle Guards | Arterial Road | Bureau of Land Management | U.S. Fish and Wildlife | State |
| Closed Year-Round | Open Year-Round | Seasonally Closed | Collector Road | Bureau of Indian Affairs | U.S. Forest Service | Bureau of Indian Affairs | Local Government |
| | | | Local or Resource Road | National Park Service | Private/Unknown | Private/Unknown | |
| | | | Power Lines | | | | |

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

Rept. No.: 09001

Date: January 9, 2009

SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SURVEY WAIVER

Project name: Millican Cliff Fence

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND EXPECTED IMPACTS:

Project Description: 1) Remove 978 feet of an old, down wire fence and posts and install 978 feet of new fence as part of the east-west fence construction, 2) Install an additional 1,588 feet of new fence in an east-west direction south of Millican cliffs, 3) Remove an additional 1.5 miles of old, down fence and posts located in a north-south direction to eliminate hazard to visitors, wildlife and livestock, 4) Install fence, one steel 12-14 foot gate and 5) Install two recreation information signs to inform the public of the area being closed to motorized use and dumping for public safety purposes.

Project Impacts: No impacts are identified. A wildlife friendly fence will be constructed.

Descriptive location: 6 ½ miles south of the Prineville Airport, west of the Crooked River, along Millican Road.

Legal Description: T.16 S.; R. 15 E.; Sections 11 & 12; W.M. see fence map for locations inside sections. A vicinity map is attached.

Environment as described by project initiator or from other information: The site is essentially flat and has been subjected to heavy disturbance, including vehicles and livestock grazing. The vegetation is dominated by rabbitbrush with a sparse understory of bunchgrasses and some sagebrush.

Special status plants which would be suspected of occurring in the project area, their habitat and known locations: The only plant suspected in this general area is *Castilleja chlorotica*, a Bureau Sensitive species. *Castilleja chlorotica* (green-tinged paintbrush) is a several-stemmed perennial herb with greenish-yellow showy flower bracts. The plant, a member of the snapdragon family, is glandular hairy which gives it an overall stickiness. Flowering occurs in July and August. A mycoheterotroph, it is found most often associated with big sagebrush, but is also found in association with antelope bitterbrush in ponderosa pine or lodgepole pine communities. Species occurrence is strongly associated with canopy gaps or open canopy conditions where understory light, water and nutrient availability are high. Sites are often rocky. The nearest known site of this plant is the top of West Butte and is approximately 16 miles to the south. Other BLM sites occur even further south and west, these include Pine Mountain, Golden Basin, Bear Creek Butte and Horse Ridge.

Results of other botanical inventories in the general area: The Millican Cliffs area has been surveyed for numerous projects: 2003 – Report # 03016; 2005 – Report # 05008 and the adjacent section 13 in 2005 – Report # 05009, no special status plants were found or suspected.

For the following reasons, I have determined that there will be no impact to special status plants and have waived the need for a field clearance:

Although the area has been surveyed as recently as 4 years ago, these surveys should still be considered current. No plants were suspected then and none would be suspected now. Additionally, the site has been heavily disturbed and since there is little in the way of surface rock, it is not a site where *Castilleja chlorotica* would normally be expected.


District Botanist