



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Prineville District Office
3050 N.E. 3rd Street
Prineville, Oregon 97754

IN REPLY REFER TO:

DOI-BLM-OR-P060-1998-0079-EA

JUN 18 2012

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Prineville District, is proposing to remove Stearns Dam to provide fish passage. Stearns Dam, located on the Crooked River, was originally constructed for irrigation diversion but is no longer used for that purpose. The proposed dam removal project is a cooperative effort involving the irrigator, Crooked River Watershed Council, and BLM. The project location is approximately six miles south of Prineville on Highway 27, T. 16 S., R.15 E., Section 12. Please refer to the attached project map.

Two action alternatives will be considered along with a no action alternative. One action alternative would remove the dam and the majority of the sediment that has accumulated behind the dam. Studies have determined that there are approximately 10,000 to 13,000 cubic yards of sediment stored in the pool behind Stearns Dam. Another action alternative would remove the dam and not the sediment, allowing the sediment to move downriver with normal flows over time. Other alternatives may be developed as a result of comments received from this scoping letter.

The Stearns Dam Removal Project would use a variety of methods and mechanized equipment to remove the concrete shell and move or remove rock and sediment as part of the dam removal actions. The project would include constructing less than one mile of fence to facilitate livestock management within the riparian area and may include installation of a cattle guard at the adjacent day use area upstream of the dam. Traffic delays and/or temporary road closure may occur during project implementation which is anticipated to occur in the fall of 2013.

The following list contains issues or potential impacts that have already been identified for further review in regards to the effects of the proposed action. These issues will be considered in the development of the Environmental Assessment (EA).

- Sediment movement related to water quality
- Sediment impacts to irrigation
- Potential for erosion after dam removal that could affect Highway 27
- Potential traffic limitations or delays during construction
- Recreation access limitations due to construction
- Historical significance of dam structure
- Potential spread or introduction of noxious weeds
- Wildlife disturbance during dam demolition
- Livestock management in riparian area

- Potential fish salvage resulting from draw down of pond upstream of the dam
- Fish passage and fish habitat
- Visual effects to the Scenic By-Way road
- Disposal of removed materials

The BLM is accepting public scoping comments until July 18, 2012. Comments may be sent to the email or postal address listed above. We would particularly like to know of any additional issues not already listed above or other potential alternatives. Please direct all comments to the attention of: Stearns Dam Removal Project DOI-BLM-OR-P060-1998-0079-EA.

Please be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information such as your address, phone number, and email address, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

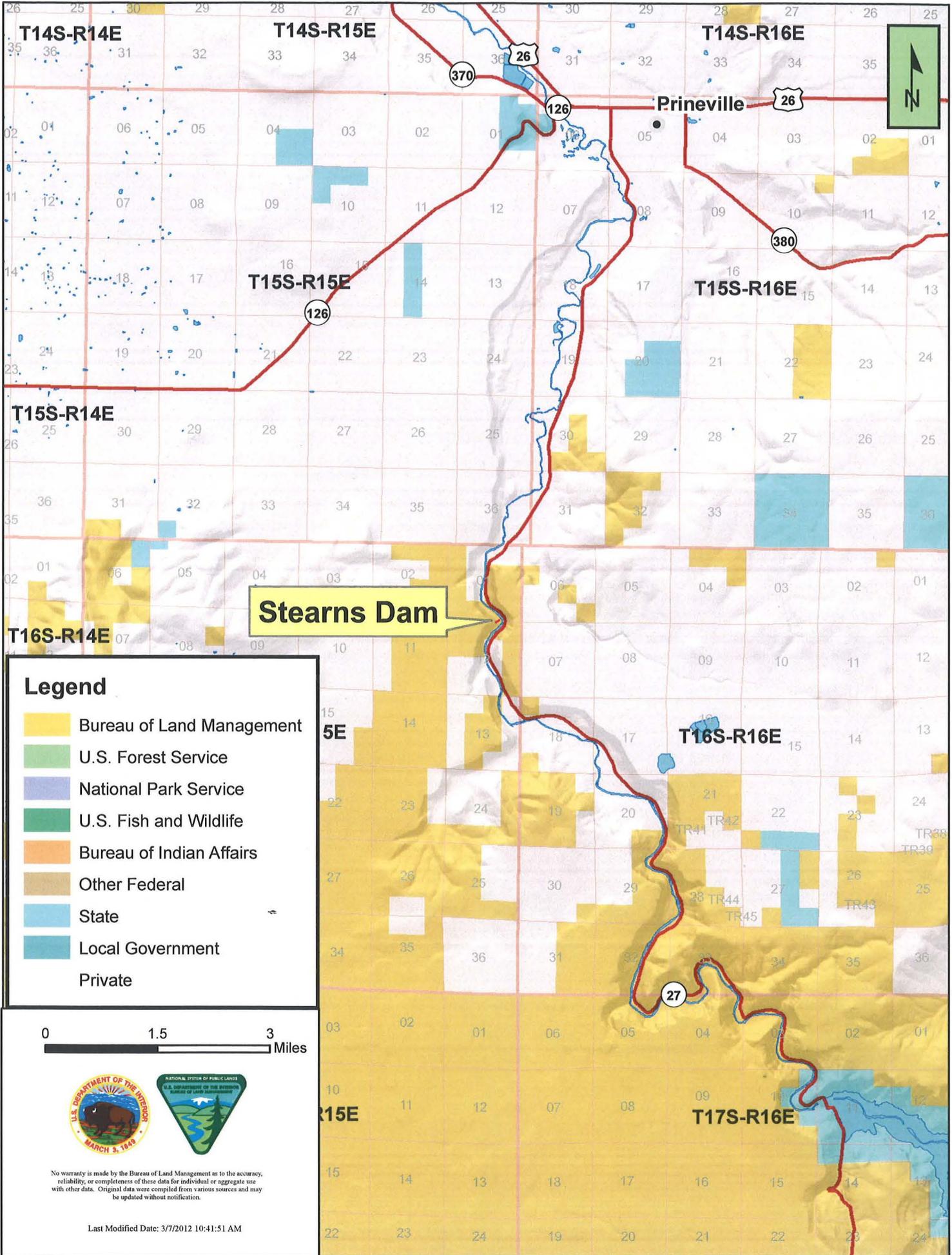
At the end of the scoping period, the BLM's interdisciplinary team (IDT) will review the comments from the public and identify new issues to incorporate into the planning process. The IDT will then prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to describe the issues, and analyze a range of alternatives to meet the purpose and need for this irrigation dam removal project. Finally, there will be another comment period on the EA, after which the BLM will issue a decision.

If you have questions about this project please contact Jimmy Eisner, Project Lead, at 541-416-6753 or Michelle McSwain, Associate Field Manager at 541-416-6877.

Sincerely,



Molly M. Brown
Field Manager, Deschutes Resource Area



T14S-R14E

T14S-R15E

T14S-R16E

Prineville

T15S-R15E

T15S-R16E

T15S-R14E

Stearns Dam

T16S-R14E

T16S-R16E

Legend

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Other Federal
- State
- Local Government
- Private

0 1.5 3 Miles



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Last Modified Date: 3/7/2012 10:41:51 AM