

Environmental Assessment

Title: Murderers Creek Area Closure Environmental Assessment

NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-OR-P000-2011-0055-EA

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Name and Location of Preparing Office: Prineville District Bureau of Land Management, 3050 NE Third Street, Prineville Oregon, 97754

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Prineville Field Office's proposed Murderers Creek Area Closure. The EA includes an analysis of potential effects that could result with implementation of a proposed action or alternatives to the proposed action. The EA assists the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in project planning, ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any "significant" impacts could result from the analyzed actions. "Significance" is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27. An EA provides evidence for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI). A FONSI is a document that briefly presents the reasons why implementation of the proposed actions will not result in "significant" environmental impacts (effects) beyond those already addressed in Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the Prineville District BLM. If the decision maker determines that this project has "significant" impacts following the analysis in the EA, then an EIS would be prepared for the project.

A decision record (DR) may be signed following public comment on the EA to document the decision.

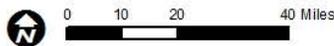
Proposed action

The proposed action is to seasonally close public access to BLM land within the Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area (PWSWA) from February 1 through April 14 annually. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has already taken this action on lands they own within the PWSWA.

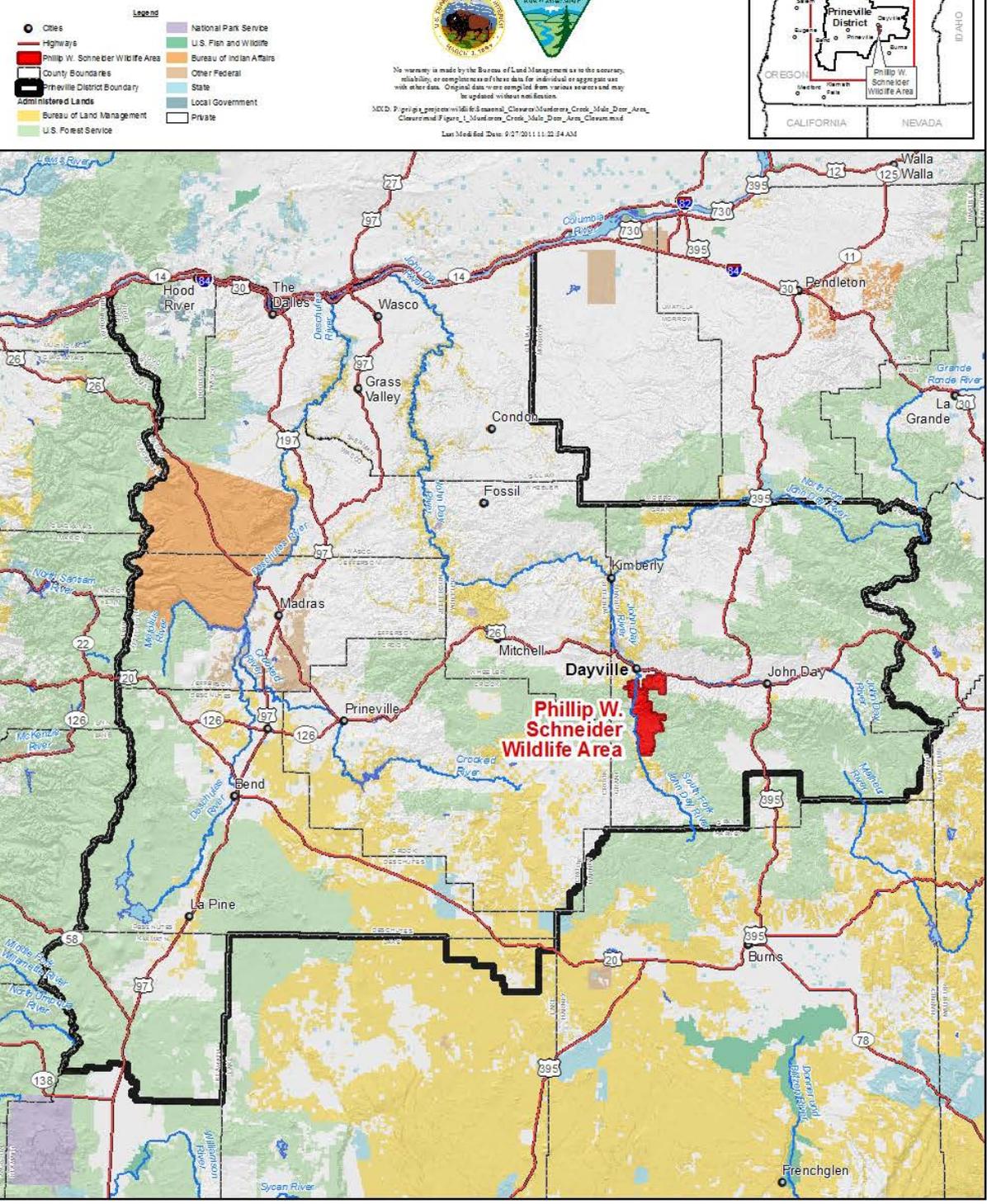
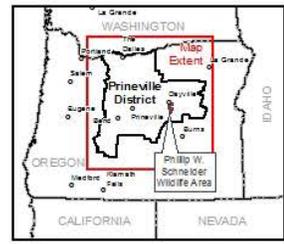
Project location

The project area is the PWSWA that is located is 3 to 20 miles south of Dayville, in Grant County Oregon. See attached Figure 1.

Figure 1: Murderer's Creek Mule Deer Area Closure



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Need for action

The PWSWA was established in 1972 to protect and enhance mule deer winter range habitat. The PWSWA includes approximately 25,000 acres of ODFW managed lands and 27,000 acres of BLM managed lands.

In the last five years, there has been an increase in the number of people entering the winter ranges to hunt for shed antlers from December to April. Generally there are two separate periods of shed antler hunting pressure on PWSWA and private lands. From mid-December to mid-January, hunters are searching for mule deer shed antlers and from late March to mid-April, they are also searching for elk antlers. Both of these time periods coincide with critical periods for mule deer when harassment is a concern to reduce survival. Repeated human disturbance when deer are in a negative energy balance further depletes energy reserves necessary for survival (Cox et al., 2009).

PWSWA has extensive motorized travel restrictions to protect wintering mule deer. Even with these restrictions, there are numerous violations. The cumulative disturbances to mule deer from human walk-in access are a very serious concern for mule deer winter survival. PWSWA can be open to antler hunting and other legal off-road recreational opportunities after mule deer have made it through the most critical winter period.

Purpose of action (objectives)

The purpose of the project is to reduce winter disturbance on mule deer within the winter range. John Day Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision. Date approved (ROD): August 1985, page 21 improve winter range for mule deer and elk. Place priorities for specific treatment in those areas having the greatest problems, the best potential or both.

Issues

Issues considered in detail

An issue is a point of disagreement, debate, or dispute with an action based on an anticipated effect. While many issues may be identified during scoping, only some are analyzed in the EA. The BLM analyzes issues in an EA when analysis is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives, or where analysis is necessary to determine the significance of impacts. To warrant detailed analysis, the issue must also be within the scope of the analysis, be amenable to scientific analysis rather than conjecture, and not have already been decided by law, regulation, or previous decision. Significant effects are those that occur in several contexts (e.g., local and regional) and are intense (e.g., have impacts on public health or unique areas). For more information on significance, see pages 70-74 in the BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1.

The following issues were raised by the public or BLM staff, or both, and will be considered in detail in this EA:

How would mule deer be affected by seasonal public access closures?

How would public access to public lands within the project area be affected by seasonally closing areas?

Issues considered but eliminated from detailed analysis

While a number of other issues were raised during the internal and external scoping process, not all of them warranted detailed analysis to make a reasoned choice between alternatives or to determine the significance of impacts. Project design features (PDFs), also known as best management practices, have been incorporated as part of the proposed actions to further mitigate issues so that the issues no longer warrant detailed analysis. The PDFs are included in the description of the proposed action in Chapter 2. Included below are issues not analyzed or considered further in this EA.

How would the proposed action affect authorized activities within the closure area during the closure period? There are various types of authorized actions and activities that may occur within portions of the closure area during the closure time period. These may include: livestock grazing, fence maintenance, water development maintenance, noxious weed treatments, habitat improvement projects such as juniper management or vegetation seeding, wild horse monitoring and management, wildlife and resource monitoring, and road maintenance. As part of the proposed action these authorized actions would continue to be allowed. PDFs are included as part of the proposed action to minimize the effects of these authorized activities on wintering wildlife.

How would the proposed action affect the characteristics of the Aldrich Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA)? The 1991 Wilderness Study Report for the Aldrich Mountain WSA identified crucial deer winter range as one of the special features contributing to the wilderness character of the WSA. The proposed action would protect that special feature. The proposed action is consistent with the non-impairment standard of the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review, Handbook H-8550-1. Therefore, no potentially significant effects are expected, and this issue is not analyzed in detail in this EA.

Chapter 2 - Proposed Action and Alternatives

Alternative A, no-action

No seasonal area closure for BLM lands within PWSWA would occur under the No Action Alternative. People would be able to walk throughout the project area during February 1 –April 14. The No Action Alternative provides a baseline for the comparison of alternatives.

Alternative B, Proposed Action

The proposed action would implement an annual seasonal area closure for BLM lands within the PWSWA. See Figure 2. The area closure would not allow public entry by any means into the area during the closure period of February 1 through April 14. Signs would be placed along access routes informing the public of the closure. The South Fork John Day River road would remain open to vehicle travel. Information about the closure would be made available on BLM

and ODFW websites. Persons implementing other authorized activities within the closure area would be notified and those authorized activities that occur during the seasonal closure would be allowed, but only travel to and from the needed work sites. All other travel would be eliminated. The proposed action would include reducing pedestrian activities and postponing activities until after the closure period. Outside of the closure dates public entry is allowed as described in the Murderers Creek-Flagtail Cooperative Travel Management Plan. This plan can be found online at: [Murderers Creek- Flagtail 2010](#) or at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/maps/index.asp>

The proposed action is consistent with ODFW actions already occurring on state lands within PWSWA and is part of the recommendations made by the Oregon Mule Deer Initiative (MDI), January 7, 2011. The MDI is available online at: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game/mule_deer/MDI.asp

The MDI Plan (Plan) includes a description of the MDI process, a brief history of mule deer in Oregon; a discussion of limiting factors associated with declines in mule deer, and management considerations. The Plan then addresses the specific situation in each of five Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) (Heppner, Maury, Murderers Creek, Steens Mountain, and Warner) and actions ODFW may take in addressing the problem in each unit.

The Plan establishes six objectives for each WMU, as well as multiple strategies to help achieve those objectives. The objectives and strategies seek to improve conditions for mule deer resulting in populations increasing to management objectives. For each WMU, the six objectives address 1) habitat improvement strategies, 2) predation, 3) disturbance/harassment, 4) law enforcement, 5) disease, and 6) population management. The proposed action described in this EA addresses disturbance and harassment for the BLM lands within the PWSWA portion of the Murderers Creek WMU.

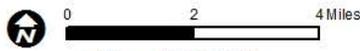
Relevant policies and plans

Land Use Plan Name: John Day Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision. Date approved (ROD): August 1985. The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decisions: page 21, improve winter range for mule deer and elk. Place priorities for specific treatment in those areas having the greatest problems, the best potential or both. Page 36, the following management tools may be used to alleviate wildlife habitat conflicts that may occur: managing public vehicle access to maintain the habitat effectiveness of security cover and key seasonal habitat (such as winter range) for deer and elk; maintaining adequate thermal and security cover on deer and elk habitat, particularly within timber stands adjacent to primary winter foraging areas.

Alternatives considered but eliminated

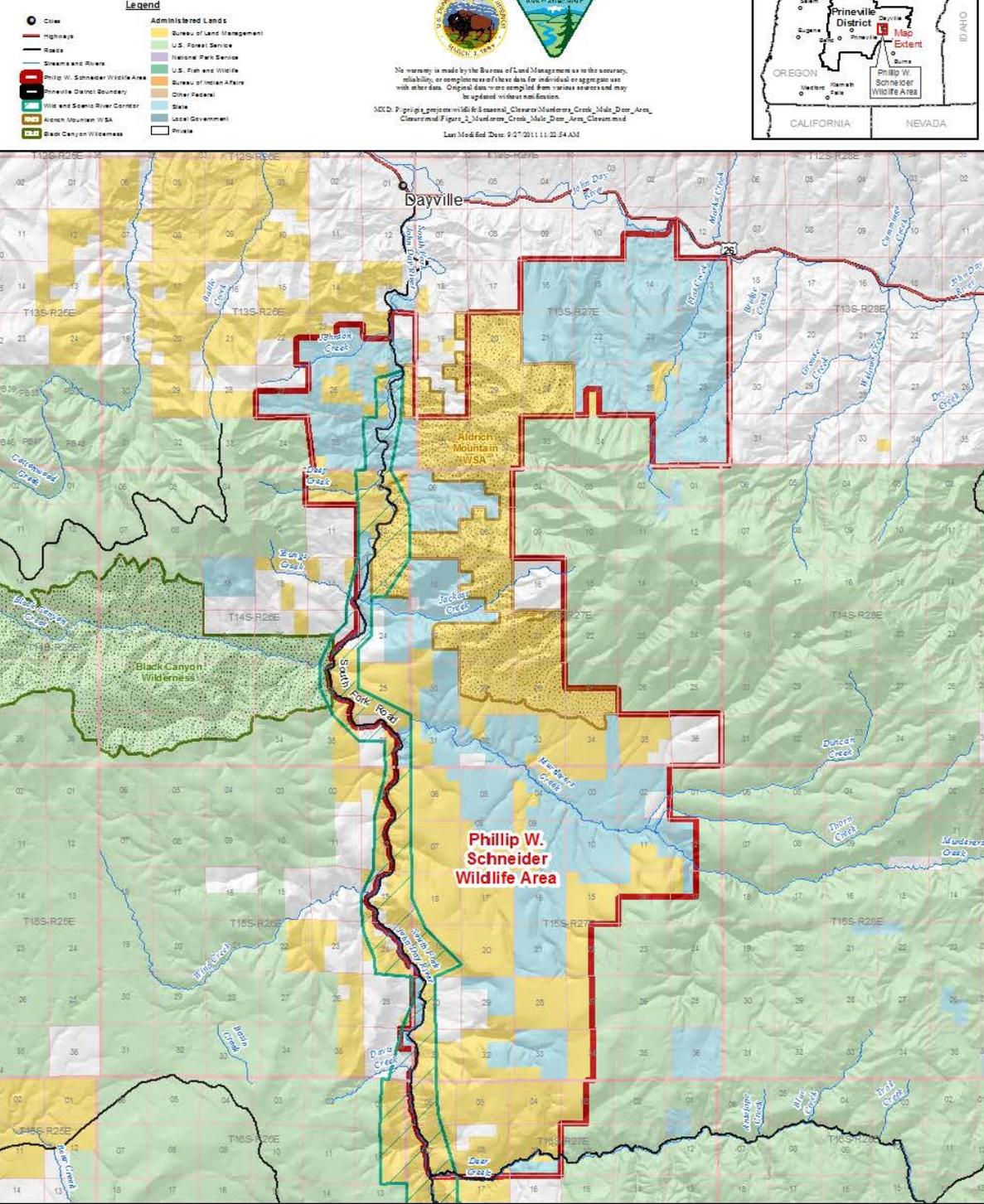
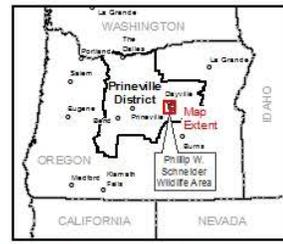
An alternative was suggested to close vehicle access to the area but not limit foot access. Research studies have shown that human walk-in traffic creates similar disturbance levels as vehicles (Wisdom et al., 2004). This alternative would not meet the purpose and need and is therefore not considered further.

Figure 2: Murderer's Creek Mule Deer Area Closure



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.

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Chapter 3, Existing environment and effects

Introduction

Mule deer have important aesthetic, cultural, economic, and ecological values. Researchers and wildlife managers generally agree the species achieved its maximum abundance during the 1950s and 60s. Since then, mule deer populations have declined across the west and in Oregon. The most recent decline happened since the early 1990s and, though not fully understood, it is believed to be primarily due to the combined effects of drought and severe winters, which coincided with increased numbers of predators. Historically, deer populations rebounded quickly after such climatic extremes. However, in recent years, survival of fawns has remained at depressed levels. Low fawn recruitment, severe winters, dry summers, changing predator/prey relationships, and increased habitat loss have pushed deer populations lower than the ODFW and the public desire. Information in this chapter comes from the ODFW 2011 Mule Deer Initiative Plan.

Wildlife

Existing Environment

The Murderers Creek WMU is located in Grant County and is made up of 64 percent public lands. See Figure 3. The unit includes the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness in the eastern portion of the unit and PWSWA in the western portion. Most of the summer range is mixed conifer and pine forests with a shrub and grass understory. The winter range is shrub-steppe that has been heavily impacted by juniper encroachment and annual grass infestation.

The Murderers Creek unit has a long history of deer management starting in the early 1900s, when mule deer populations were very low. The State Game Commission established a State Wildlife Refuge in the Murderers Creek basin from 1929 through 1933 as a way to address the low population problem.

The mule deer population increased to an estimated 30,000 deer, just in the Murderers Creek basin, followed by a large die off of deer on the winter range from over utilization of the range. Management was then changed to allow hunting to control the population.

Since that time, estimates of the mule deer population have fluctuated through the years from a high of 30,000 in the entire WMU in the 1970s to a current estimate of 5,000 (52 percent of Population MO) In the early 1980s, a series of hard winters resulted in a 62 percent reduction in the mule deer population. Hard winters in 1988/89 and 1992/93 likewise produced deer die-offs resulting in lower deer numbers. Data indicate mule deer populations have been on a gradual decline since the late 1990s. Fawn ratios have fluctuated through time due to weather and predation.

Mule deer hunting in the unit has historically been one of the key recreational opportunities. Along with declines in the mule deer population, there has also been a proportionate decrease in number of hunters and a corresponding decrease in harvest. In response to decreasing mule deer populations throughout eastern Oregon, rifle hunting season structure was changed from a

general season format to a limited entry hunt system in 1991 (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2003). Archery season remains under a general season. As numbers of rifle hunters have decreased, archery hunter numbers have increased.

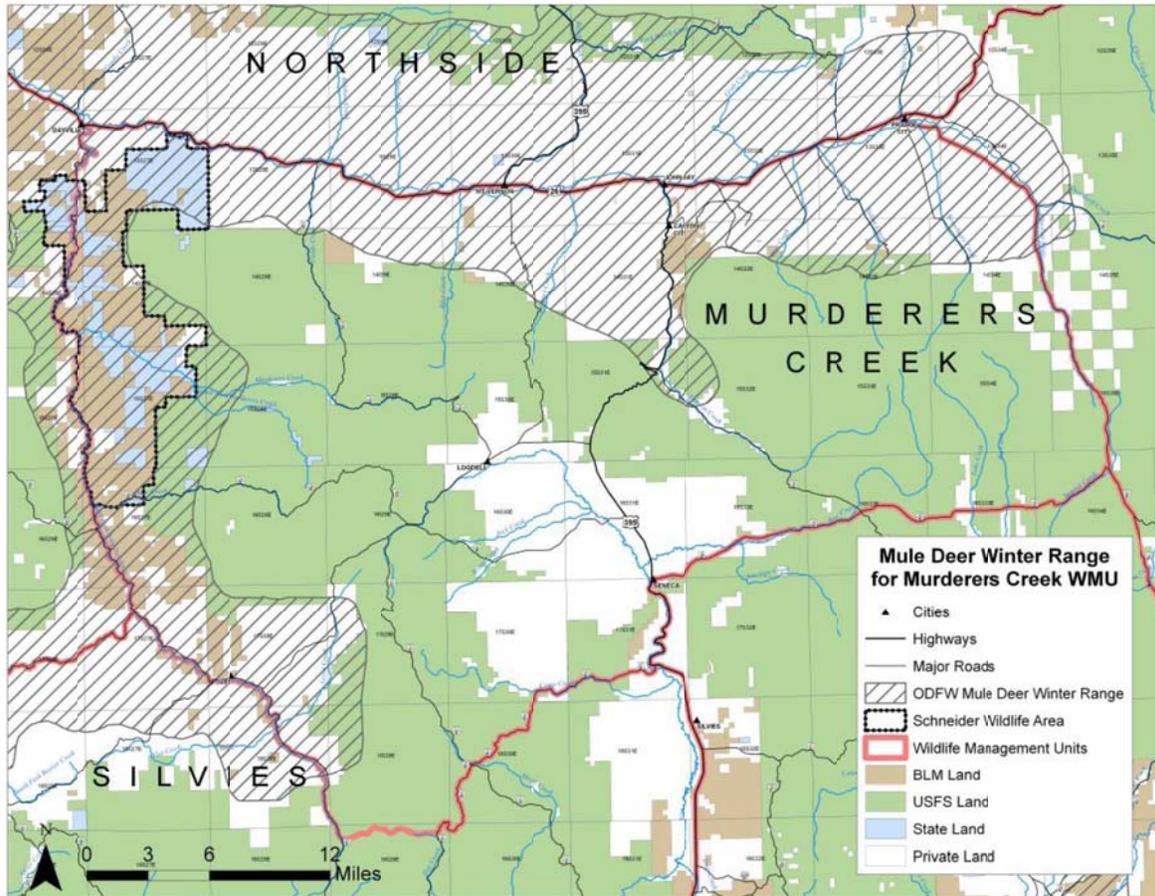


Figure 3. Winter Range and Land Ownership in the Murderers Creek WMU.

Since the late 1960s there has been a change in habitat throughout the Murderers Creek Unit. Historically, habitat types consisted primarily of large stands of bitterbrush and native bunchgrasses that provided excellent forage for wintering deer. These key habitats have undergone landscape changes resulting from western juniper encroachment and invasion of annual grasses (e.g., medusahead and cheatgrass), leading to a loss of the shrub and forb components.

Motorized recreation has increased in the Murderers Creek WMU during the past 30-years, resulting in fragmentation of mule deer habitat primarily through disturbance. High road densities used by motorized enthusiasts and cross-country vehicle travel can adversely impact mule deer populations, especially during critical time periods (i.e. wintering and fawning).

In the last five years, there has been an increase in the number of people using the winter ranges to hunt shed antlers from December to April. Generally there are two separate periods of

shed antler hunting pressure on PWSWA and private lands. From mid-December to mid-January, antler hunters are searching for mule deer shed antlers and from late March to mid-April, they are searching for elk antlers. Both of these time periods coincide with critical period of December through April for mule deer when disturbance has been shown to reduce survival. Repeated disturbance when deer are in a negative energy balance further depletes energy reserves necessary for survival (Cox et al., 2009).

Direct and Indirect effects

The No Action Alternative would result in the continued disturbance and harassment of wintering mule deer during the 73 day period of February 1 thru April 14. This 73 day period is approximately half of the December 1 thru April 30 wintering period. The late winter and early spring period is when mule deer are most vulnerable because their energy reserves are low, weather conditions are harsh and forage conditions marginal. This continued disturbance and harassment would occur on the 27,000 acres of BLM managed winter range within the PWSWA. Within a 20 mile radius of Dayville the PWSWA represents less than 25 percent of mule deer winter range. These disturbances may cause mule deer to avoid areas within preferred habitats, causing reduced body reserves and thus adversely affecting survival, reproduction and recruitment of fawns into the adult population.

The Proposed Action would reduce human disturbance during the critical winter period on 27,000 acres of BLM managed mule deer winter range within the PWSWA. A reduction in winter harassment for 73 days or approximately half of the wintering period would have a positive effect on survival and recruitment of fawns into the adult population.

Public Access

Existing Environment

Public entry is allowed within the project area as described in the Murderers Creek-Flagtail Cooperative Travel Management Plan. This plan can be found online at: [Murderers Creek-Flagtail 2010](#) or at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/maps/index.asp>

Motorized vehicle access is allowed on designated roads and is restricted by season on some roads. On BLM administered lands public access by non-motorized methods is not restricted in areas or by season. The majority of public access activities relates to hunting. Currently there are no regulated hunting seasons open within PWSWA during the proposed seasonal closure timeframe. As described above there has been an increase in people accessing the area by vehicle and by foot during winter months to gather shed antlers. Other wintertime recreational activities such as snowmobiling and cross country skiing are uncommon within the project area.

Direct and Indirect effects

The No Action Alternative would not change current public access on BLM lands within the PWSWA. The motorized travel management restrictions of the Murderers Creek-Flagtail Cooperative Travel Management Plan would continue. The public would continue to be able to access 27,000 acres of BLM managed lands within the PWSWA year round.

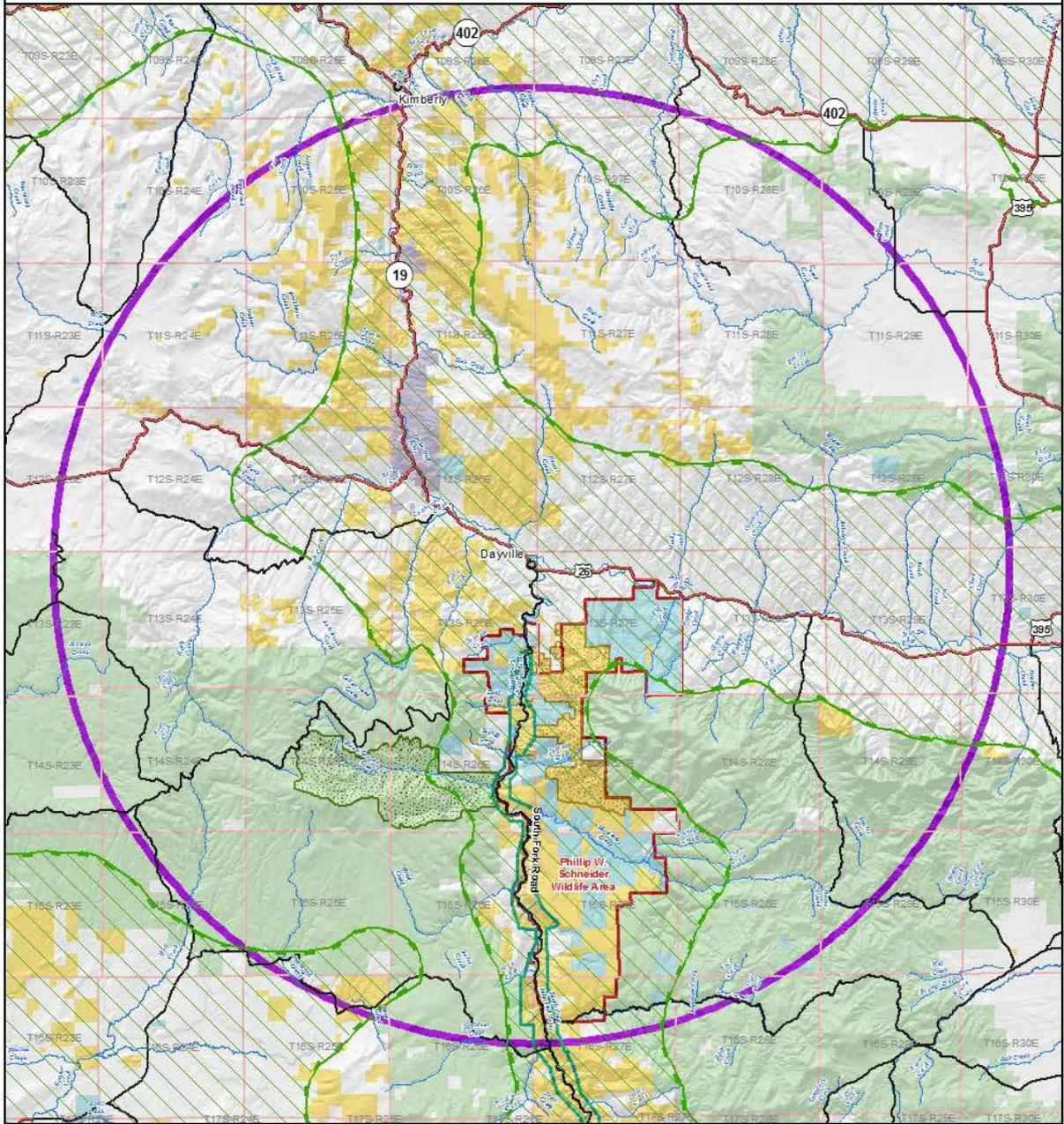
The Proposed Action would not allow public access of any type on approximately 27,000 acres of BLM managed lands within the PWSWA during the closure period. Within a 30 mile radius of Dayville there are approximately 93,000 acres of BLM managed lands that would continue to allow public access during the closure period. See Figure 4. Approximately 55,000 acres of those public lands are mule deer winter range. No regulated hunting opportunities would be lost due to the proposed action. People would be able to gather shed antlers before and after the seasonal closure, but would not be able to gather shed antlers during the 73 day seasonal closure period. The BLM managed lands within PWSWA can be open to antler hunting and other recreational opportunities after mule deer have made it through the most critical winter period, therefore not eliminating antler collecting, but instead deferring the activity to a time period less stressful to mule deer.

Cumulative effects

The cumulative effects analysis considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that would affect the resources of concern. The analysis includes other BLM actions, other Federal actions, and non-Federal (including private) actions. The analysis of reasonably foreseeable future actions is not limited to those that are approved or funded. Reasonably foreseeable future actions are those for which there are existing decisions, funding, formal proposals, or which are highly probable, based on known opportunities or trends. The current conditions on the lands affected by the proposed action have resulted from a multitude of natural and human actions that have taken place over many decades. The description of the current state of the environment provided here inherently includes the effects of past actions and serves as an accurate and useful starting point for a cumulative effects analysis. The importance of “past actions” is to set the context for understanding the incremental effects of the proposed action. This context is determined by combining the current conditions with available information on the expected effects of other present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Reasonably foreseeable future actions that would affect wildlife habitat and public access include actions to be taken by ODFW and other partners in the MDI. ODFW has already implemented the same seasonal area closure on approximately 25,000 acres state owned lands within the PWSWA that are intermingled with BLM lands. The MDI for the Murderers Creek WMU includes a variety of future actions to accomplish objectives in the areas of habitat degradation, predation, disturbance and harassment, highway collision mortality, illegal activities and disease and parasites. Juniper and weed management actions along with seeding and plantings are proposed and occurring to improve habitats. Increased law enforcement to reduce illegal activities is also occurring.

Figure 4: Murderer's Creek Mule Deer Area Closure



Summary of effects

Table 1: Summary of key effects of issues considered in detail in this EA.

Issue	No Action	Proposed Action
Human disturbance affecting mule deer during critical winter period	Allows human disturbance during entire critical winter period	Provide 73 days without human disturbance during critical winter period
Limiting public access to BLM administered lands	No Change; no seasonal closure. Allows public access year round to 27,000 acres of BLM administered lands	Do not allow public access to 27,000 acres of BLM administered lands for 73 days in winter/spring

Chapter 4, Preparers and Reviewers

Name	Resources represented
Bill Dean	Co-Team Lead, management
Dan Tippy	Co-Team Lead, Contractor
Cassandra Hummel	Natural Resource Specialist, Wildlife
Teal Purrington	Environmental coordinator
Berry Phelps	Recreation, Visuals, Wilderness Character
Michael Tripp	GIS
Ryan Torland	ODFW Coordination

Appendices

Appendix A, References

Cox, M., D. W. Lutz, T. Wasley, M. Fleming, B. B. Compton, T. Keegan, D. Stroud, S. Kilpatrick, K. Gray, J. Carlson, L. Carpenter, K. Urquhart, B. Johnson, and C. McLaughlin. 2009. Habitat Guidelines for Mule Deer: Intermountain West Ecoregion. Mule Deer Working Group, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. 83 pp.

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U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1985. John Day Resource Management Plan Record of Decision. Pp. 25. Available on the internet at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/plans/prinevillermph>

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 2008. BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1, pp. 70-74.

Wisdom, Michael J.; Ager, Alan A.; Preisler, Haiganoush K.; Cimon, Norman J.; Johnson, Bruce K. 2004. Effects of off-road recreation on mule deer and elk. In: Transactions of the 69th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference: 531-550.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Murderers Creek Area Closure Environmental Assessment
NEPA Register Number DOI-BLM-OR-P000-2011-0055-EA
US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
Prineville Field Office, Oregon

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA No. DOI-BLM-OR-P000-2011-0055-EA) that analyzes the effects of closing public access to BLM land within the Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area (PWSWA) from February 1 through April 14. The purpose of the project is to reduce winter harassment on mule deer within the winter range. The EA is incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations state that the significance of impacts must be determined in terms of both context and intensity (40 CFR 1508.27).

Context

The Proposed Action would occur on BLM managed lands within the Phillips W Schneider Wildlife Area and would have local impacts on affected interests, lands, and resources similar to and within the scope of those described and considered in the following Resource Management Plans (RMP): John Day Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision, August 1985.

The PWSWA was established in 1972 to protect and enhance mule deer winter range habitat. The PWSWA includes approximately 25,000 acres of ODFW managed lands and approximately 27,000 acres of BLM managed lands. The winter range within the PWSWA represents approximately 20 percent of the winter range within the Murderers Creek wildlife management unit.

In the last five years, there has been an increase in the number of people utilizing the winter ranges to hunt for shed antlers from December to April. Generally there are two separate periods of shed antler hunting pressure on PWSWA and private lands. From mid-December to mid-January, hunters are searching for mule deer shed antlers and from late March to mid-April, they are searching for elk antlers. Both of these time periods coincide with critical periods for mule deer when harassment has been shown to reduce survival. Repeated harassment when deer are in a negative energy balance further depletes energy reserves necessary for survival (Cox et al., 2009).

PWSWA has extensive motorized travel restrictions to protect wintering mule deer. Even with these restrictions, there are numerous violations. The cumulative disturbance of mule deer from human walk-in access is a very serious concern. PWSWA can be open to antler hunting and other legal off-road recreational opportunities after mule deer have made it through the most critical winter period.

The actions described represent anticipated program implementation within the scope and context of the RMPs. The seasonal closure of approximately 27,000 acres to public access would not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance not previously considered in the NEPA analysis for these RMPs.

Intensity

We have considered the potential intensity and severity of the impacts anticipated from implementation of a Decision on this EA relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

1. Would any of the alternatives have significant beneficial or adverse impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(1)? No.

Rationale: The proposed action would have impacts as described in the EA. Mitigations to reduce impacts were incorporated in the design of the proposed action. These project design features are outlined in Chapter 2 Alternatives of the EA. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the RMPs.

2. Would any of the alternatives have significant adverse impacts on public health and safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)? No.

Rationale: The proposed action is designed to reduce winter harassment on mule deer within the winter range. There are no known effects to public health or safety.

3. Would any of the alternatives have significant adverse impacts on unique geographic characteristics (cultural or historic resources, park lands, prime and unique farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, designated wilderness or wilderness study areas, or ecologically critical areas (ACECs, RNAs, significant caves)) (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)? No.

Rationale: The Aldrich Mountain WSA is within the proposed closure area. Public access to this WSA would not be allowed during the seasonal closure but would be allowed in the other 9 ½ months of the year. There are no effects on park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, designated wilderness or ecologically critical areas.

4. Would any of the alternatives have highly controversial effects (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)? No.

Rationale: There are no effects which are expected to be highly controversial.

5. **Would any of the alternatives have highly uncertain effects or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)?** No.

Rationale: There are no unique or unusual risks. The BLM has implemented similar actions in similar areas. The environmental effects are fully analyzed in the EA. There are no predicted effects on the environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6. **Would any of the alternatives establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)?** No.

Rationale: Similar habitat improvement and protection actions have occurred numerous times for many years throughout BLM. There is no evidence that this action has potentially significant environmental effects. This management activity does not commit the BLM to pursuing further actions, and as such would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

7. **Are any of the alternatives related to other actions with potentially significant cumulative impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)?** No.

Rationale: The actions considered in the proposed action were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. An analysis of the effects of the proposed action is described in the EA.

8. **Would any of the alternatives have significant adverse impacts on scientific, cultural, or historic resources, including those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Resources (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)?** No.

Rationale: The project will not adversely affect scientific, cultural, or historic resources, including those eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. An analysis of the effects of alternatives is described in the EA.

9. **Would any of the alternatives have significant adverse impacts on threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)?** No.

Rationale: The proposed action reduces effects of human activity of wildlife species. Threatened or endangered species habitats would not be affected or effects would be beneficial.

10. **Would any of the alternatives have effects that threaten to violate Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)?** No.

Rationale: The project does not violate any known Federal, State, Local or Tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. State, local, and tribal interests were given the opportunity to participate in the environmental analysis process.

Finding

On the basis of the information contained in the EA, the consideration of intensity factors described above, all other information available to us, it is our determination that: (1) implementation of the alternatives would not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the RMPs; (2) the proposed action would not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an EIS or a supplement to the existing EIS is not necessary and will not be prepared.

H.F. "Chip" Faver
Field Manager, Central Oregon Resource Area