Community Character of the *Upper Crab Creek Human Resource Unit*

The Spokane Field Office contracted James Kent Associates (JKA) to collect information on communities in the planning area. They collected information within Human Resource Units (HRU) which are roughly equivalent in size to a county but seldom correspond to county boundaries. HRU boundaries are derived by JKA from seven cultural descriptors and by self-reporting of residents living in these areas. The Cultural Descriptors are Settlement Patterns, Publics, Networks, Support Services, Work Routines, Recreation Activities and Natural and Human caused Features of the Landscape. This document presents a synopsis of the information collected by JKA for the *Upper Crab Creek HRU*. **More detail can be found at the RMP website where the full JKA report is posted.**

The Upper Crab Creek drainage is known as a premier winter wheat growing area, an area for dryland farming noted for its productivity. BLM lands called Escure Ranch, properly in the Pullman/Moscow HRU, are considered along with this HRU because of their proximity. The JKA report noted a decrease in farm numbers and size within Lincoln County however also noted that people believe agriculture will stay a strong part of area lifestyle and tradition. Many noted that young people are sometimes coming back to work the land as the elders get older and die. Some land is getting broken up for development. Many people expressed a concern that this trend will grow. Changing demographics and a changing way of life are being seen at the local level. Cheap rural housing is apparently attracting lower-income residents with social problems like drug use. The nearby urban population of Spokane is active in the outdoors and makes use of the Upper Crab Creek area extensively to hunt, fish, ride horses, have dog trials, hike and bicycle, accentuated by the presence of BLM lands in the area; there is high awareness of BLM's role in recreation activity through its acquisition of hunting lands and development of recreation sites. This development appears most pronounced in Odessa.

Community Concerns related to BLM

Citizens noted concern with the **location and acquisition of BLM;** the JKA report noted that land acquisition program in Lincoln County has significantly affected the area in terms of agriculture, fire management, tax revenues, recreation and other measures. JKA notes that these changes have been accepted, but residents are uncertain about BLM's future land acquisition plans. A desire for **increased grazing or improved management on BLM**; others suggested **opportunities for grazing management** to improve forage, and decrease fire risk. Citizens also noted **resource damage related to grazing**. Concern with hunter impacts included trespass, trash, vandalism, cut fences and opened gates. **Designation of an OHV route** in the around Odessa was noted however associated concerns included impacts to wildlife, fires, weeds, trespass and effect to hieroglyphics. Management of BLM in order to increase aquifer and downstream **human uses of water** was also expressed. Specific areas mentioned included **Fisthrap and Hog Lakes** which has become population for target shooting, hiking, swimming, fishing, gliding, bird watching, scenic viewing, astronomy, bird dog trials, paintballing, survival group events, geo-caching, horseback riding and hunting. Issues in the area include conflicts with target shooting, wildlife impacts and road maintenance.

Are there other concerns related to BLM in your area?