

APPENDIX I

WILD AND SCENIC RIVER EVALUATION

BLM has identified and evaluated river segments within the planning area in order to determine their potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System per Section 5(d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (WSRA).

The river study process follows a three-step assessment: 1) eligibility, 2) tentative classification of rivers found to be eligible, and 3) a determination of suitability.

Eligibility

The first step is determination of eligibility. The eligibility of a river is determined by applying the criteria in Sections 1(b) and 2(b) of the WSRA, as interpreted by the USDI-USDA Guidelines (47 FR 39454). To be eligible for inclusion, a river must be "free-flowing" and, with its adjacent land area, must possess one or more "outstandingly remarkable" values. Free-flowing is defined as existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. For any river segment to be eligible one or more of the following values within the river area must be outstandingly remarkable: scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values.

Classification

The second step is potential classification based on the condition of the river and the adjacent lands. Section 2(b) of the WSRA specifies three classification categories (wild, scenic, and/or recreational) for eligible rivers. Classifying a river as either wild, scenic and/or recreational provides a general administrative categorization tool for interim management. Once a river segment is determined eligible and the appropriate classification determined, it must be afforded adequate interim protection until a final decision is reached on suitability and designation.

Suitability

The third step is determination of suitability. This step provides the basis for the decision to recommend designation or nondesignation.

Rivers and Streams Evaluated in the Planning Area

An interdisciplinary team from the Judith, Valley and Phillips Resource Areas reviewed 187 rivers and streams within the planning area for free-flowing and outstandingly remarkable values. Of these, 182 were free-flowing but did not possess outstandingly remarkable values and 4 were neither free-flowing or possessed outstandingly remarkable values (see Table I.1). One segment of the Judith River was determined to be both free-flowing and possess outstandingly remarkable values (see Attachment I.1). Additional information on the evaluation is available in the Lewistown District and Resource Area Offices.

TABLE I.1
RIVERS AND STREAMS EVALUATED FOR
FREE-FLOWING AND OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES

Judith Resource Area

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>TWN</u>	<u>RNG</u>	<u>SECT</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>BLM</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>%</u> <u>BLM</u>	<u>Free</u> <u>Flow</u>	<u>Outstd</u> <u>Values</u>
ARMELLS CREEK	21N	22E	24	50.2	14.0	28	N	N
ARROW CREEK	19N	12E	31	59.5	5.0	8	Y	N
BIGGETT COULEE	17N	29E	35	6.0	2.5	41	Y	N
BLACKTAIL CREEK	14N	22E	33	10.4	0.3	3	Y	N
BOX ELDER CREEK	16N	26E	35	59.0	11.0	18	Y	N
BUFFALO CREEK	15N	26E	6	9.5	3.0	31	Y	N
CAT CREEK	15N	30E	29	16.1	3.0	17	Y	N
COFFEE CREEK	20N	14E	5	24.0	1.3	5	Y	N
COLLAR GULCH	17N	20E	32	11.2	1.8	16	Y	N
COTTONWOOD CREEK (ARROW CREEK)	19N	12E	23	10.0	1.3	13	Y	N
COTTONWOOD CREEK (MUSSELSHELL)	16N	29E	18	14.2	10.0	70	Y	N
CUTBANK CREEK	22N	18E	35	13.2	0.5	4	Y	N
DOG CREEK	22N	18E	20	49.1	14.0	26	Y	N
DOVETAIL CREEK	18N	29E	30	22.5	5.8	26	Y	N
DRAG CREEK	19N	29E	31	12.6	6.1	48	Y	N
DRY WOLF CREEK	15N	11E	31	10.2	0.5	5	Y	N
DURFEE CREEK	12N	22E	24	6.5	0.5	8	Y	N
FORDS CREEK	16N	23E	30	30.5	7.0	23	Y	N
HIGHWOOD CREEK	22N	6E	35	31.1	0.1	1	Y	N
JUDITH RIVER	23N	16E	26	104.0	8.0	8	Y	Y*
LIMEKILN CANYON	16N	19E	17	7.0	0.8	11	Y	N
LITTLE BOX ELDER CREEK	16N	23E	17	15.0	4.0	27	Y	N
LITTLE OTTER CREEK	16N	8E	26	15.0	0.5	1	Y	N
MING COULEE	18N	17E	13	10.0	0.3	1	Y	N
MURPHY COULEE	20N	21E	20	14.0	2.0	14	Y	N
N FK FLATWILLOW CREEK	12N	20E	10	18.0	0.3	1	Y	N
NEBEL COULEE	16N	9E	31	6.0	0.8	13	Y	N
O HANLON COULEE	24N	9E	11	5.5	0.3	5	Y	N
PIKE CREEK	13N	25E	33	11.0	5.0	45	Y	N
ROCK CREEK	13N	17E	25	25.0	0.3	1	Y	N
S FK FLATWILLOW CREEK	12N	21E	11	17.5	1.3	7	Y	N
CROOKED CREEK	20N	29E	29	67.0	17.0	25	Y	N
SALT CREEK	18N	18E	18	26.0	0.1	1	Y	N
SAND CREEK	21N	24E	29	16.0	5.0	31	Y	N
SHONKIN CREEK	24N	9E	17	49.0	0.2	1	Y	N
WARM SPRINGS CREEK	16N	19E	13	35.0	0.2	1	Y	N
WOLF CREEK	21N	16E	34	77.0	0.2	1	Y	N
YELLOW WATER CREEK	13N	25E	17	29.0	2.5	9	N	N
YOGO CREEK	13N	11E	27	17.0	0.5	3	Y	N

*Note: One segment of the Judith River from Ming Coulee to Anderson Bridge was found eligible. See Attachment I.1 for eligibility and suitability determinations.

Valley Resource Area

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>TWN</u>	<u>RNG</u>	<u>SECT</u>	<u>Total Miles</u>	<u>BLM Miles</u>	<u>% BLM</u>	<u>Free Flow</u>	<u>Outstd Values</u>
ANTELOPE CREEK	29N	35E	34	13.0	1.0	8	Y	N
WILLOW CREEK	26N	37E	36	38.5	25.5	66	Y	N
BRAZIL CREEK	28N	36E	20	19.0	6.7	35	Y	N
BUGGY CREEK	31N	38E	2	21.3	4.3	20	Y	N
CHERRY CREEK	30N	39E	15	18.8	1.8	10	Y	N
POPLAR RIVER	36N	42E	2	12.0	0.3	3	Y	N
EAGLES NEST COULEE	33N	37E	20	11.0	7.0	64	Y	N
FRENCHMAN CREEK	35N	35E	31	2.0	0.2	10	Y	N
LARB CREEK	28N	34E	25	35.0	11.0	31	Y	N
MILK RIVER	29N	38E	14	110.0	1.0	1	N	N
PORCUPINE CREEK	30N	41E	21	43.0	1.0	2	Y	N
ROCK CREEK	35N	36E	27	55.0	18.7	34	Y	N

Phillips Resource Area

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>TWN</u>	<u>RNG</u>	<u>SECT</u>	<u>Total Miles</u>	<u>BLM Miles</u>	<u>% BLM</u>	<u>Free Flow</u>	<u>Outstd Values</u>
ALBERT COULEE	27N	33E	35	7.9	2.7	34	Y	N
ALDER CREEK	25N	24E	13	15.6	3.7	24	Y	N
ALKALI COULEE	28N	30E	33	5.4	3.1	58	Y	N
ALKALI CREEK	25N	29E	01	18.4	2.9	16	Y	N
ANTELOPE CREEK	24N	23E	27	7.2	7.0	97	Y	N
ARMSTRONG-MILLAR-COULEE	27N	31E	09	9.0	5.0	56	Y	N
ASSINIBOINE CREEK	32N	27E	01	19.3	5.8	30	Y	N
AUSTIN COULEE	34N	30E	01	13.6	1.1	8	Y	N
BADLAND COULEE	25N	33E	30	3.9	3.9	100	Y	N
BEAR GULCH	25N	26E	26	6.2	1.7	27	Y	N
BEAUCHAMP CREEK	25N	26E	32	20.5	3.6	18	Y	N
BEAVER CREEK	25N	25E	05	144.0	43.3	31	N	N
BIG COTTONWOOD CREEK	34N	27E	03	43.9	6.5	15	Y	N
BIG COULEE	37N	30E	08	4.7	3.6	77	Y	N
BIG WARM SPRING CREEK	26N	26E	02	31.5	0.0	0	Y	N
BLACK COULEE	29N	27E	24	6.5	4.0	63	Y	N
BLACK COULEE	29N	31E	08	11.6	11.2	0	Y	N
BOWEN COULEE	37N	30E	35	4.5	3.7	82	Y	N
BOX ELDER CREEK	23N	32E	20	10.5	2.4	23	Y	N
BOX ELDER SPRING COULEE	26N	33E	27	8.0	3.1	39	Y	N
BULL CREEK	25N	24E	19	13.8	7.2	52	Y	N
BUTTON BUTTE COULEE	27N	29E	03	7.8	3.5	45	Y	N
CABIN CREEK	25N	23E	23	9.5	2.2	23	Y	N
CAMP CREEK	25N	25E	16	21.4	3.8	18	Y	N
CLARK COULEE	34N	32E	10	5.4	2.6	48	Y	N
COAL BUTTE CREEK	25N	25E	35	8.7	0.4	5	Y	N
CORRAL COULEE	35N	33E	02	12.0	2.1	18	Y	N
COTTONWOOD COULEE	28N	32E	30	6.6	6.5	98	Y	N
COTTONWOOD CREEK	36N	33E	03	13.1	7.0	53	Y	N
COW (CROW) CREEK	30N	27E	32	5.2	0.0	0	Y	N
COWIE COULEE	35N	28E	05	4.5	0.0	0	Y	N
CROOKS COULEE	30N	33E	19	4.4	0.6	14	Y	N
CROW CREEK	37N	34E	01	3.4	0.3	9	Y	N
CYPRIAN CREEK	23N	24E	17	5.0	5.0	100	Y	N
DEAD HORSE CREEK	30N	33E	22	2.7	0.3	11	Y	N
DIBBLE COULEE	36N	29E	26	5.3	1.2	23	Y	N
DICK THOMAS COULEE	34N	30E	01	10.0	0.4	4	Y	N
DODSON CREEK	32N	27E	01	13.7	0.4	3	Y	N
DOG CREEK	24N	32E	17	7.6	3.1	41	Y	N
DOGTOWN COULEE	23N	33E	19	5.2	0.3	6	Y	N
DRY FORK BEAUCHAMP CREEK	24N	27E	07	23.1	16.8	73	Y	N
DUNHAN COULEE	37N	33E	29	9.6	7.0	73	Y	N
DUVALL CREEK	24N	23E	36	6.7	3.3	49	Y	N
EAST FORK STINKY CREEK	36N	33E	33	13.5	1.2	9	Y	N
EAST FORK WHITEWATER CREEK	36N	32E	05	21.5	7.9	37	Y	N
EXETER CREEK	31N	28E	15	9.0	1.8	20	Y	N

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>TWN</u>	<u>RNG</u>	<u>SECT</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>BLM</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>%</u> <u>BLM</u>	<u>Free</u> <u>Flow</u>	<u>Outstd</u> <u>Values</u>
FIRST COULEE	22N	29E	08	4.3	3.3	77	Y	N
FIRST CREEK	25N	29E	15	13.7	4.2	31	Y	N
FIRST CREEK	31N	33E	21	8.4	2.1	25	Y	N
FLAT CREEK	26N	31E	29	10.8	4.9	45	Y	N
FOUR MILE COULEE	28N	28E	07	7.7	2.8	36	Y	N
FOURCHETTE CREEK	24N	28E	24	18.2	2.0	11	Y	N
FOURTH CREEK	30N	33E	29	8.2	0.2	2	Y	N
FRENCHMAN CREEK	37N	33E	01	51.7	2.3	4	Y	N
GAREY COULEE	24N	28E	05	4.0	2.4	60	Y	N
GARLAND CREEK	32N	28E	35	7.5	1.6	21	Y	N
GLOYN COULEE	35N	28E	08	4.3	0.9	21	Y	N
GROUSE CREEK	25N	25E	30	6.0	0.3	5	Y	N
GROVE COULEE	26N	33E	22	6.4	4.9	77	Y	N
HALF-WAY COULEE	29N	28E	26	6.4	2.0	31	Y	N
HAWLEY COULEE	22N	29E	26	8.4	1.0	12	Y	N
HAY COULEE	31N	28E	20	5.0	0.0	0	Y	N
HORSESHOE COULEE	36N	27E	33	2.7	0.0	0	Y	N
JOE BELL COULEE	34N	32E	26	4.9	1.9	39	Y	N
JOINER COULEE	33N	27E	05	6.5	4.6	71	Y	N
KILLED WOMAN CREEK	23N	32E	36	2.6	2.5	96	Y	N
LAKE COULEE	36N	29E	27	5.2	3.6	69	Y	N
LAMBING SHED COULEE	35N	28E	27	11.3	5.6	50	Y	N
LARB CREEK	30N	34E	34	9.5	0.0	0	Y	N
LAVELLE CREEK	24N	24E	36	6.0	3.7	62	Y	N
LENOIR COULEE	29N	31E	08	6.9	0.0	0	Y	N
LIND COULEE	24N	22E	12	6.0	5.0	83	Y	N
LITTLE COTTONWOOD CREEK	23N	24E	09	6.4	5.5	86	Y	N
LITTLE COTTONWOOD CREEK	35N	28E	24	22.4	2.5	11	Y	N
LITTLE WARM SPRING CREEK	26N	26E	26	14.5	0.0	0	Y	N
LITTLE JEWEL COULEE	35N	27E	35	8.5	5.2	61	Y	N
LONG (TANK) COULEE	24N	29E	12	6.5	6.4	98	Y	N
LONESOME COULEE	26N	28E	23	4.4	0.3	7	Y	N
LONE TREE COULEE	35N	32E	04	5.3	2.2	42	Y	N
LONE TREE COULEE	25N	33E	16	3.3	3.3	100	Y	N
MARTIN COULEE	35N	28E	01	3.8	0.5	13	Y	N
MARTIN'S COULEE	34N	30E	24	7.6	3.0	39	Y	N
MCCOY COULEE	23N	33E	16	4.9	0.0	0	Y	N
MIDDLE FORK WILDHORSE	28N	26E	36	9.9	2.3	23	Y	N
MILK RIVER	31N	26E	26	113.9	4.9	4	Y	N
MOSS COULEE	28N	33E	25	9.2	1.4	15	Y	N
MUD CREEK	25N	24E	29	6.2	0.0	0	Y	N
MURRAY COULEE	27N	33E	12	5.7	4.3	75	Y	N
NORTH FORK	34N	26E	27	3.2	0.0	0	Y	N
NORTH FORK DHS CREEK	28N	31E	17	12.6	1.8	14	Y	N
NORTH FORK WHITEWATER CREEK	37N	31E	06	3.2	0.0	0	Y	N
NORTH FORK WILDHORSE	28N	27E	18	8.7	2.9	33	Y	N
NORTH FOURCHETTE CREEK	23N	29E	04	7.1	1.1	16	Y	N
OVERFLOW COULEE	27N	30E	06	5.6	3.7	66	Y	N
PARROT COULEE	25N	27E	03	5.4	1.1	20	Y	N
PECK COULEE	37N	34E	32	5.0	3.1	62	Y	N
PLUM PATCH COULEE	24N	33E	21	4.8	0.0	0	Y	N
PROVOST COULEE	35N	32E	15	4.5	0.3	7	Y	N
RATTLESNAKE COULEE	35N	34E	30	6.6	0.0	0	Y	N
RED MUD CREEK	37N	34E	09	10.3	8.8	85	Y	N
ROCK CREEK	24N	25E	08	12.3	3.7	30	Y	N
RUDOLPH COULEE	28N	28E	24	9.8	2.8	29	Y	N
SAGE CREEK	25N	32E	36	11.2	5.0	45	Y	N
SECOND CREEK	24N	28E	11	13.3	3.9	29	Y	N
SECOND CREEK	31N	33E	28	8.6	1.1	13	Y	N
SEVEN MILE COULEE	26N	27E	33	8.0	3.5	44	Y	N
SEVEN MILE CREEK	23N	25E	10	6.0	4.0	67	Y	N
SEVEN MILE CREEK	26N	30E	01	9.6	4.0	42	Y	N
SEVEN MILE CREEK	29N	31E	28	9.5	0.9	9	Y	N

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>TWN</u>	<u>RNG</u>	<u>SECT</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>BLM</u> <u>Miles</u>	<u>%</u> <u>BLM</u>	<u>Free</u> <u>Flow</u>	<u>Outstd</u> <u>Values</u>
SHOTGUN COULEE	33N	32E	02	5.7	3.2	56	Y	N
SHOTGUN COULEE	24N	33E	07	4.2	0.9	21	Y	N
SNAKE CREEK	37N	34E	03	6.5	3.2	49	Y	N
SOUTH FORK TELEGRAPH CREEK	23N	32E	15	6.5	1.0	15	Y	N
SPLINE COULEE	27N	26E	13	10.8	1.7	16	Y	N
SPRING COULEE	31N	29E	15	5.6	2.2	39	Y	N
SPRING CREEK	31N	27E	01	8.3	0.4	5	Y	N
SPRING CREEK	23N	26E	14	6.2	0.4	6	Y	N
SUGAR CREEK	25N	23E	23	9.0	0.3	3	Y	N
TALLOW CREEK	25N	33E	09	10.1	2.2	22	Y	N
TELEGRAPH CREEK	24N	32E	24	20.6	2.1	10	Y	N
THIRD CREEK	23N	30E	18	6.7	4.9	73	Y	N
THIRD CREEK	24N	29E	18	15.4	3.7	24	Y	N
THIRD CREEK	30N	33E	16	7.9	0.3	4	Y	N
TIN ROOF	28N	27E	11	5.9	0.7	12	Y	N
TOM DAVIDSON COULEE	29N	28E	17	7.2	1.9	26	Y	N
TRESSLER COULEE	28N	27E	07	6.2	0.0	0	Y	N
TRINE CREEK	23N	26E	01	5.6	4.4	79	Y	N
TRUEBLOOD COULEE	27N	33E	35	6.9	4.2	61	Y	N
WAGNER COULEE	31N	28E	28	3.4	0.3	9	Y	N
WEST ALKALI CREEK	28N	27E	02	14.9	3.2	21	Y	N
WEST FORK STINKY CREEK	35N	33E	30	25.7	1.8	7	Y	N
WHITEROCK COULEE	26N	28E	02	9.5	5.6	59	Y	N
WHITewater CREEK	37N	28E	11	57.4	28.6	50	Y	N
WOODY ISLAND COULEE	36N	27E	06	6.7	3.1	46	Y	N
VALENTINE CREEK	22N	30E	19	2.4	2.4	100	Y	N
YADLEY CREEK	31N	29E	21	7.4	1.9	26	Y	N

ATTACHMENT L1

JUDITH RIVER REPORT

Introduction

The Judith River is located in the Judith Resource Area of the Lewistown District. The Ming Coulee to Anderson Bridge segment was found to be eligible for Wild and Scenic River consideration by an interdisciplinary team through development of the JVP RMP/EIS.

This report addresses the eligibility, classification, and suitability of a 27.1 mile long segment of the Judith River in central Montana for Wild and Scenic River designation (see Figure I.1). A prairie river, the Judith flows northerly through a sharply eroded valley that varies in width from less than 1/2 mile to more than 2 1/2 miles. The river's gradient is 14.4 feet per mile. The valley is 650 feet deep at Ming Coulee, the up river end, and 740 feet deep at Anderson Bridge, the lower terminus.

Eligibility

The Judith River is free-flowing throughout its length. The segment under consideration is Class I (easy) on the International Scale of River Difficulty, but several boulder fields require some boating skills. It is boatable by canoe or raft, but low water levels during the height of the irrigation season and during late summer can require pulling boats over a couple of sandstone shelves or "niche points."

There are BLM lands along this river reach whose resources meet the "outstandingly remarkable values" criteria. They possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, and geologic values. Fish and wildlife values are excellent. Cultural values have not been assessed, but the Judith River is known to have been a favorite route for the Blackfeet to travel when raiding the Crow, and for the Crow to travel when raiding the Blackfeet.

The river provides outstanding scenery (Class A scenic quality rating) with very few impacts to the natural setting. These impacts do include scattered ranch buildings (many abandoned). Unobtrusive trails to these ranches intrude into the natural landscape. Valley cliffs are so steep along the upper half of this segment that livestock grazing is not evident over much of its length. Recreational use is light, so opportunities for solitude are excellent. Six good campsites have been identified on BLM land along the river. However, legal access along the segment is limited.

The river is characterized by a meandering channel with small widely scattered secondary channels commonly forming narrow islands. Vegetation along the shoreline is typical of riparian communities which are historically found throughout perennial drainages in eastern Montana. Due to its unique free-flowing nature the Judith River has a relatively pristine riparian ecosystem that has largely disappeared from other rivers in the region. This is particularly true in lower reaches of the river. Large groves of cottonwood and box elder form a dense tree canopy over an understory dominated by thickets of snowberry, chokecherry, rose and other shrubs. Where tree canopy is sparse or absent, silver sage and stands of grass and sedges dominate the flood plain.

Along the upper half of this segment, valley slopes have stringers of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine along bases of sandstone cliffs and up side drainages. Along the lower half of the segment, stands of pine and juniper occupy the valley slopes and side drainages, and a few are found within the riparian zone.

Wildlife diversity is characteristically high as influenced by the vegetative structure of riparian communities. The understory of the cottonwood groves and grassy banks provide a variety of nesting cover and shelter for waterfowl, passerines, pheasants, herpetofauna and small mammals. Deer frequent the floodplain, and tree girdling by beaver is common. Hunting pressure is probably light because of limited physical access to the river, and because river travel is suited to only non-motorized watercraft.

Fisheries haven't been sampled, but warm water temperatures, turbidity, and shallow depth would favor warm water species.

The first 14.7 miles are dominated by highly scenic white cliffs of Virgelle sandstone (the lower unit of the Eagle sandstone formation). These appear as rim-rocks along a narrow river valley at Ming Coulee, and slip below the alluvium of the valley floor just below the confluence of Box Elder Creek. As the position of the white Virgelle sandstone moves from the rim to the valley floor, it is replaced along the rim, and then along the slopes, by alternation beds of gray to buff sandstone, shale, carbonaceous shale and coal of the upper and middle members of the Eagle formation. The Eagle formation is then overlain by the brownish-gray marine shales of the Claggett formation. As Anderson Bridge is approached, cliffs again appear along the rim as the light-brown sandstone of the Judith River formation becomes more and more of a dominant feature. The Claggett and Judith River formations form badlands type topography.

The upper half of this segment is predominately a steep sided narrow canyon. The only impacts to the natural scene are ranch buildings 0.9 mile below Ming Coulee, a homestead 1.7 miles below that, and a set of deteriorating barns 1.8 miles below the homestead. Unobtrusive trails to these structures are the only vehicle access to the river in this section. The homestead and barns add historical interest and charm to a float, but they have not been assessed for their cultural resources value.

In the lower half, the river valley broadens, assumes a "badlands" character, and the river meanders between high shale cut banks. An abandoned set of ranch buildings can be seen 1.9 miles below Box Elder Creek. Beginning 3.7 miles below Box Elder Creek, a high woven-wire fence is visible from the river at various locations for 4 miles, and the buildings of the Judith River Ranches, Inc. headquarters are visible from several locations for 2 miles mid-way along this reach. The bottom lands along the last 2 miles above Anderson Bridge are irrigated from the river and farmed.

This segment of the Judith is an Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Semi-Primitive Nonmotorized Class area, and it received a Quality Evaluation Rating of Class "A" for Sightseeing-Scenery and for Water Sports-Floatboating during preparation of the Fergus Unit Resource Analysis (1977). This segment was classified as a VRM Class II area during development of the Fergus MFP.

BLM lands are found scattered through the river area and as such possess remarkable (primarily scenic) values in the same pattern. Although the river resources are best considered as a continuous system, it has been determined that those BLM lands do contain values worthy of consideration even in isolation.

Classification

The segment of the Judith River between Ming Coulee and Anderson Bridge would be classified as Wild under Section 2(b) of the WSR. The river is free of impoundments. It is inaccessible except by unobtrusive vehicle trails, and they are only briefly visible from the waters surface. Its watershed and shore-line are primitive except for irrigation pumps just above Anderson Bridge. The Judith's waters are unpolluted with the possible exception of agricultural chemicals that may be leaching into the river above this segment. The only elements to detract from its fully representing a vestige of primitive America are the abandoned homestead below Box Elder Creek and the Judith River Ranch headquarters and fence.

Interim Management

Interim management measures will apply only to BLM land within 1/4 mile of either side of the riverbank as specified in the WSR. Approximately 1,895 acres of BLM land will be affected.

The BLM land along this segment of the Judith River will be managed as part of the Judith River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA# MT 06852) and the management prescriptions for that area will apply as discussed in the Management Common To All Alternatives section of Chapter 2.

There are no known threats to the pristine condition of the Judith River or its valley between Ming Coulee and Anderson Bridge from BLM actions. Any project that might be proposed would be carefully assessed and its impacts mitigated to protect the values present. VRM Class II objectives would apply. Possible threats from private land development are not anticipated at this time. However, changes in ownership or management goals could change that assessment.

Opportunities would be sought to acquire lands contiguous to the river.

Suitability

The following factors were considered in the suitability determination for one segment of the Judith River from Ming Coulee to Anderson Bridge.

1. Characteristics which do or do not make the area a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The scenery and resources along this segment of the Judith River, the near pristine setting, and the potential recreational opportunities available make this river segment worthy for addition to the Wild and Scenic River System.

There are however, severe manageability problems along this section. No bona-fide public access exists to any of the BLM land along the river. There are no public put-in points within the segment, although one could take out at the Anderson Bridge. There is no road or trail access suitable for hiking the unit, once again due to lack of BLM land and access. The small, scattered BLM land pattern, while possessing some unique values, is overwhelmingly constrained by the private land surrounding it. BLM has no control over these lands which, if taken as a whole, are an integral part of the river system and without which, would make BLM management of the river ineffectual.

2. Current status of landownership, use in the area, including the amount of private land involved and associated or conflicting uses.

There are approximately 1,895 acres of BLM land within 1/4 mile on either side of the river bank along the 27.1 miles of this river segment. There are no BLM lands in the first several miles of river. Total acreage, including all ownerships, within this 1/4 mile area is approximately 11,200 acres. Of this:

1,895 acres (16.9%) are BLM lands, and
9,305 acres (83.1%) are private lands.

Within a potential rim-to-rim river corridor, such as that designated by Congress in the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River (UMNWSR) legislation, are 22,895 acres. Of this:

4,198 acres (18.3%) are BLM lands,
840 acres (3.7%) are State lands, and
17,857 acres (78.0%) are private lands.

Ownership of land bordering the Judith River includes:

6.5 miles (24%) of BLM land, and
20.6 miles (76%) of private land.

BLM land along this segment is available for livestock grazing. Private land in the area is primarily used for livestock grazing and farming.

This segment is part of the Judith River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA MT06852). In the Recreation 2000 Tri-State Strategy it is number 52 in priority statewide out of a total 54 sites. It is estimated that the Judith River SRMA receives about 800 visits annually for hunting, floating, fishing, sightseeing, hiking and camping.

BLM land along this segment is available for oil and gas leasing. The area has moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas. There are no mining claims along this segment. Potential for locatable minerals is low.

This segment has power site reserves for water power and storage development. BLM land along the segment currently contains 1,360 acres of power site withdrawals. These withdrawals would be recommended for revocation if the sites do not have water power potential. There are no existing water resource developments within this segment.

3. Reasonably foreseeable potential uses of the land and related waters which would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the area were included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and the values which could be foreclosed or diminished if the area is not protected as part of the System.

Recreational opportunities for a quality primitive backcountry boating experience would be enhanced and the Charlie Russell Country Tourism Promotion program would have enhanced capability. Wildlife, riparian and cultural values would also be enhanced.

Potential mining claims and locatable mineral development would be foreclosed within 1/4 mile of the river if designated and classified as Wild.

Reservoir construction which would negatively impact river values would be curtailed. Oil and gas leasing could be curtailed if exploration and development would negatively impact river values.

There are no known proposals that would foreclose or diminish the values present if the area is not protected as part of the Wild and Scenic River System.

4. Public, State, local, or Federal interest in designation of the river, including the extent to which the administration of the river, including the costs thereof, may be shared by State, local, or other agencies and individuals.

Other than the BLM there has been no interest in designation expressed from any other federal, state or local agency. The American Rivers National Organization has listed the Judith River on its national list of outstanding rivers, and the U.S. Forest Service, Lewis and Clark National Forest, has found the extreme upper reaches of the Judith River eligible for consideration due to cultural resource values.

The Judith-Valley-Phillips Management Situation Analysis (MSA) for the Judith River SRMA identified the need for a cooperative agreement with the State of Montana to conduct a wild and scenic river study to determine suitability. It also prescribed acquiring access for ingress and egress sites.

5. Estimated cost of acquiring necessary lands and interests in lands and of administering the area if it is added to the System.

It would not be feasible for the BLM to manage its relatively small section of the river without acquiring private land bordering the river and within a rim-to-rim corridor. Land types range from rough breaks land to irrigated bottoms. Approximate land values range from \$35 per acre to \$450 per acre, respectively. The majority of private land is of the rough breaks type (+ 90%). Based on these land types and approximate land values, the total value of private land in a rim-to-rim corridor is estimated to be from \$1,000,000 to \$1,250,000.

Within the corridor, the purchase price of private land opposite Ming Coulee for a campsite and boat launch area is estimated to be from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The purchase price of private land at Anderson Bridge for a boat take out area is estimated to be from \$5,000 to \$10,000. However, the availability of any of this land to the BLM for purchase is questionable.

Two access easements will be needed, one for boat launching (3.5 miles), and one for take out (.5 miles). Approximate costs for easement acquisition would be \$2,000 and \$2,500 respectively, for a total of \$4,500 to \$5,000.

Development of the area would include the construction of parking, picnicking and sanitary facilities at the launch and take-out sites, and placement of sanitary facilities at selected campsites. Development costs are estimated at \$30,000.

The development of a "Floater's Guide" with self-guided interpretation would cost around \$6,000.

Due to the proximity of the UMNWSR and because BLM has equipment and personnel in place for management, actual costs for patrol of the Judith River are low. Bi-weekly maintenance patrols would probably be conducted during the boating season. Approximate costs would be \$3,000 for labor and \$1,000 for supplies and equipment for a cost of \$4,000 annually.

Public contact and visitor services would require around four months of field time and two months of office time or \$18,000 annually.

6. Ability of the agency to manage the river area or segment as a Wild and Scenic River.

This segment of the Judith River is eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System. However, the lack of an adequate BLM land base along its corridor diminishes its suitability as a BLM managed river. Should opportunities develop that make the ownership pattern more positive, then the issue of the Judith River's suitability should be revisited. At this time and based on the overall issue of land ownership and management, the BLM has no ability to manage this segment of the Judith River as a Wild and Scenic River.

7. Historical or existing rights which would be adversely affected as to foreclosure, extinguish, curtail, infringe, or constitute a taking which would entitle the owner to just compensation if the area were included in the national Wild and Scenic Rivers System. In the suitability analysis, adequate consideration will be given to rights held by owners, applicants, lessees, or claimants.

Historical and existing rights were not evaluated due to the lack of BLM land along this segment of the river. This would be considered if the State of Montana studied the issue of suitability.

8. Other issues and concerns identified in the land use planning process.

No other issues or concerns were identified.

Conclusion

The BLM has concluded that this segment of the Judith River is eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System. However, based on the suitability evaluation this segment of the Judith River has been determined unsuitable for designation because of severe manageability problems. These include lack of access to the area, the small scattered BLM land pattern and the overwhelming constraints of private land ownership and management in the area. Lack of support by any other federal, state or local interest combined with the small percentage of BLM land in the area appear to make joint consideration of the area infeasible as well. The BLM will provide interim management for these lands until the Record of Decision is issued for this RMP.