

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The BLM Cultural Resources Program continued to provide support for restoration activities conducted at the Wood River Wetland during 1999. Activities largely concentrated on managing cultural resources encountered during 1998 restoration construction along the Wood River.

The National Historic Preservation Act, in addition to other laws and regulations, requires that potential impacts to cultural resources be addressed prior to and during the implementation of construction and various other projects. Cultural resources surveys had been conducted along and near the Wood River prior to river restoration construction. Though no cultural resources were located during these surveys, four archaeological sites were encountered during phase I and II river restoration construction in 1998. Construction impacts were minimized at three of the site areas. These sites appeared limited in both extent and deposits. The fourth site proved more substantial. Restoration activity was suspended near the site area in 1998 to provide time to evaluate measures for lessening potential construction impacts.

In April, 1999, archaeological testing was performed to determine the extent and nature of the deposits. This work was monitored by the Klamath Tribes. A series of auger probes helped to determine an area where construction could proceed without impacting substantial archaeological deposits. A report was generated which described finds and measures taken to alleviate construction impacts upon cultural resources. It was determined that continued restoration construction would have "no adverse effect" on cultural resources. A copy of the report was provided to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Numerous meetings and on-site visits were held with the Klamath Tribes to ensure that their concerns were adequately addressed. A presentation discussing cultural resources and Wood River restoration construction was given during the 1999 "State of Jefferson" conference held at the Klamath County Museum. In addition to the design modifications made to lessen impacts to cultural resources, certain features of the river restoration project should serve to protect artifacts from damage caused by fluvial erosion and unauthorized collection.

A Memorandum of Agreement between the Klamath Tribes and Oregon Trout had been previously signed which provided for monitoring support and the protection of cultural sites. Extensive monitoring by Klamath tribal members was conducted in 1998 and continued in 1999. During 1999, tribal monitors were supplied by Allied Cultural Resources Services. Numerous monitors were on-site during all aspects of 1999 river restoration construction. The Klamath Tribes Cultural Site Protection Specialist and a BLM Archeologist were also often present during restoration construction working alongside monitors to ensure cultural site issues were addressed. No new sites were detected during 1999 construction which completed phase I and II construction.

Phase III Wood River restoration construction, planned to commence in 2000, will also be monitored by both the Klamath Tribes and BLM. This area was surveyed for cultural resources in 1998. No sites were discovered during survey. Phase III construction will primarily involve the dredging of relatively recently deposited sediments along the historic course of the Wood River downstream from the Agency dike bridge. Though it appears unlikely that sites will be encountered within the confines of the historic river channel, construction will continue to be monitored to ensure that cultural resources are not unintentionally impacted.