

## 2 MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

### 2.1 Description of the Alternatives and Management Actions

This chapter presents the range of alternatives and summarizes the major management actions proposed for each alternative, organized by resource or resource program. The management goals and objectives are stated for each resource or resource use while the management actions developed to achieve the goals and objectives are described for each alternative. The effects of these management actions by alternative result in the projected environmental consequences analyzed in Chapter 4.

#### 2.1.1 Introduction

The development of the five management alternatives included in the RMP/EIS was guided by the legal authorities and planning criteria to address management issues. These included the NEPA and BLM planning regulations and policy, which are included in Appendix D. The purpose of developing alternatives is to prepare different combinations of resource uses to address the identified issues and management concerns and to resolve conflicts among uses. As a result, a range of resource management actions and allocations, consistent with the alternatives, was developed for each resource or resource use.

##### 2.1.1.1 Resource Management Plan Goals

The mission of the BLM is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In order to accomplish this mission, the BLM has developed a "Strategic Plan" ("BLM Strategic Plan") containing a comprehensive set of broad goal statements and a subset of mission goals. Two goal statements and a subset of mission goals dealing with public land management are shown below. (The complete "BLM Strategic Plan 2000-2005" is available at the BLM web site: [www.blm.gov/nhp/info/stratplan](http://www.blm.gov/nhp/info/stratplan).)

Goal Number One: Serve current and future publics.

- Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible recreation.
- Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible commercial activities.
- Preserve natural and cultural heritage resources.
- Reduce threats to public health, safety, and property.
- Provide land, resource, and title information.
- Provide economic and technical assistance.

Goal Number 2: Restore and maintain the health of the land.

- Understand and plan for the condition and use of the public lands.
- Restore at-risk resources and maintain functioning systems.

The RMP/EIS incorporates the following goals identified under Part II, Vision, of the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy (USDI 2003):

- 1) Sustain, and where necessary, restore the health of the forest, rangeland, aquatic, and riparian ecosystems.
- 2) Provide a predictable, sustained flow of economic benefits within the capability of the ecosystems.
- 3) Provide diverse recreational and educational opportunities within the capability of the ecosystems.
- 4) Contribute to recovery and delisting of threatened and endangered (T&E) species, and 303(d) listed waters.
- 5) Manage natural resources consistent with treaty and trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes.

**Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Steens Act) goals:**

- 1) To manage the CMPA to conserve, protect, and manage the long-term ecological integrity of Steens Mountain for present and future generations;
- 2) To maintain and enhance cooperative and innovative management projects, programs, and agreements between tribal, public, and private interests in the CMPA;
- 3) To promote grazing, recreation, historic, and other uses that are sustainable;
- 4) To conserve, protect, and ensure traditional access to cultural, gathering, religious, and archaeological sites on public land within the CMPA by members of the Burns Paiute Tribe and to promote cooperation with private landowners;
- 5) To ensure the conservation, protection, and improved management of the ecological, social, and economic environment of the CMPA, including geological, biological, wildlife, riparian, and scenic resources;
- 6) To promote and foster cooperation, communication, and understanding and to reduce conflict between Steens Mountain users and interests; and
- 7) To ensure that a monitoring program for public land within the CMPA would be implemented so progress toward ecological integrity objectives can be determined.

In addition, goals and objectives were developed specific to each resource/use. These goals are found later in this chapter and in Table 2.1.

2.1.1.2 Ecosystem Management

As described by the ICBEMP “Summary of Scientific Findings” (USDA/USDI 1996), “Ecosystem management is scientifically-based land and resource management that integrates ecological capabilities with social values and economic relations to produce, restore, or sustain ecosystem integrity and desired conditions, uses, products, values, and services over the long term...” Ecosystem management “concentrates on overall ecosystem health and productivity through an understanding of how different parts of the ecosystem function with each other, rather than on achieving a set of outputs.” Human activities, including social values, regarding use of public lands and biophysical components are part of the total picture.

The ICBEMP emphasized gathering, organizing, and understanding information at the basin scale. In order to apply the findings of ICBEMP to the local level (i.e., the RMP/EIS area), management planning should go through a “step-down” process. “Step-down” is the process of applying broad-scale science findings and land use decisions to site-specific areas using a hierarchical approach in order to understand current resource conditions, risks, and opportunities (USDA 2000). Information developed through this process provides the context by which projects can be developed to meet multiple management objectives.

The ICBEMP describes four levels of analysis below the basin-level analysis. These are intended to provide the context to appropriately apply the scientific findings to individual national forests or BLM districts:

- 1) Subregional analysis – programmatic or broad overview EIS such as those associated with an RMP;
- 2) Mid-scale analysis–SBR;
- 3) Watershed-scale analysis; and
- 4) Site-specific NEPA analysis.

**Table 2.1: Management Alternatives Summary Table**

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b><i>AIR QUALITY (Section 2.2)</i></b>				
<b>Goal - Maintain, restore, or protect air resources to support public health, visibility, and regional haze standards and goals.</b>				
<b>Objective 1. Manage wildland fires to avoid degradation of the airshed.</b>				
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. Implement prescribed fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards.	1B. Manage wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards.	1C. Implement prescribed fire and manage wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1C.
2A. Cooperate with federal, state, and local government on smoke management issues related to prescribed wildland fires (i.e. voluntary communication plan).	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
<b>Objective 2. Manage mining and aggregate operations to avoid degradation of the airshed.</b>				
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. Require DEQ permits on all crushing equipment. Require dust abatement measures at mine operations.	1B. Withdraw the remainder of the Planning Area from mineral entry and development.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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***WATER RESOURCES (Section 2.3)***

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**Goal - Maintain, restore, or improve water quality and quantity to sustain the designated beneficial uses on public lands.**

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**Objective 1.** Comply with state and federal requirements to protect public waters.

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**Actions**

1A. Prescribe and implement BMPs (Appendix F) at the activity-plan level to reasonably prevent degradation of water quality.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**Objective 2.** Protect all designated beneficial uses by preventing or limiting nonpoint source pollution; maintain or improve existing water quality and quantity through implementation of BMPs.

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**Actions**

1A. Prescribe and implement BMPs (Appendix F) at the activity-plan level to reasonably prevent degradation of water quality.	1B. Same as 1A	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Prescribe and implement BMPs (Appendix F) to facilitate maintenance or improvement of attributes (i.e. vegetation, channel geometry) identified through PFC assessment and/or other qualitative or quantitative survey methods.	2B. Same as 2A. Identify and protect stream reaches or sites through watershed assessment, WQRPs, or other processes that provide or contribute cold water habitat in systems where stream temperatures limit the distribution and abundance of aquatic species.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
3A. Maintain existing developed water sources (i.e. spring developments and reservoirs) and develop new sources through project-level planning.	3B. Maintain existing water developments in the CMPA that contribute to beneficial uses; allow natural processes to reclaim developments that are determined through site-specific assessment to not contribute to beneficial uses, except where necessary for wild horse management. Allow natural processes to reclaim existing water developments in the AMU, except where necessary for wild horse management.	3C. Same as Alternative B, except existing water developments in the CMPA and AMU that contribute to beneficial uses would be maintained. Active and/or passive efforts may be used to reclaim water developments determined as no longer providing beneficial uses, such as the No Livestock Grazing Area of the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Existing and future water developments would be maintained or implemented when determined to contribute to beneficial uses.	3D. Same as Alternative C, including specific emphasis on reclaiming existing water developments in the designated No Livestock Grazing Area of the Steens Mountain Wilderness to facilitate cooperative management and future water developments on public and/or private lands.	3E. Same as Alternative A, with an emphasis of water developments to promote or mitigate increased commodity production.

**Objective 3.** Manage impaired waters on public lands listed under Section 303(d) of the CWA to restore beneficial uses and improve water quality so listing is no longer warranted.

**Actions**

1A. Validate the current listing or validate that the listed water body has been adequately restored; document and implement sufficiently stringent management measures; develop and implement WQRPs; or use other available mechanisms including changes in water quality standards (Appendix F BMPs).	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
2A. Riparian and adjacent uplands that influence 303(d) listed water bodies would be managed according to site or reach multiple-use resource management objectives identified through activity level plans, and modified, as necessary, relative to WQRPs and TMDLs.	2B. All perennial and intermittent waters would be managed to maintain or progress toward an advanced ecological status. Development and implementation of WQRPs would be generally guided by stream/watershed prioritization. Active restoration would be limited to areas that are not likely to progress toward an advanced ecological status within the next 20 to 50 years.	2C. Management would be the same as 2B; however, active restoration of riparian and adjacent uplands may be pursued to initiate or increase the rate of progress toward an advanced ecological status.	2D. Waters listed under section 303(d) of the CWA and contributing perennial and intermittent tributaries would be managed toward attainment of water quality standards or other surrogate measures necessary to protect beneficial uses. Passive and active restoration efforts may be implemented to achieve resource objectives, emphasizing cooperative opportunities. Development of WQRPs would be generally guided by stream/watershed prioritization and cooperative management opportunities.	2E. Same as 2A. However, development and implementation of WQRPs would be generally guided by stream/watershed prioritization, and emphasis would be on localized protection or mitigation to accommodate commodity production and public uses.

***SOILS AND BIOLOGICAL SOIL CRUSTS (Section 2.4)***

**Goal 1 - Manage soils on public land to maintain, restore, or improve soil erosion class, watershed health, and areas of fragile soils.**

**Objective 1.** Manage mineral soil to limit accelerated erosion on critical sites, protect soil characteristics on noncritical sites, and maintain or improve existing infiltration and permeability rates.

**Action**

1A Implement BMPs on all potential surface-disturbing activities.	1B. Allow natural processes to affect soil conditions in the Planning Area except where management is necessary to arrest excessive soil movement on critical sites.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**Goal 2 - Increase the understanding of the management of northern Great Basin biological soil crusts.**

**Objective 1.** Collect biological soil crust data within the Planning Area.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
1A. Continue to collect additional biological soil crust data within the Planning Area.	1B. Use the data from biological soil crust monitoring to inform decisions concerning the exclusion or minimization of activities that impact biological soil crusts through surface disturbance.	1C. Use the data from biological soil crust monitoring to inform decisions concerning the minimization of surface disturbing activities that impact biological soil crusts, but still allow reduced levels of commodity production within the Planning Area.	1D. Use the data from biological soil crust monitoring to inform decisions that encourage cooperative management practices in areas containing biological soil crusts.	1E. Use the data from biological soil crust monitoring to inform decisions concerning natural resources and additional commodity production in areas containing biological soil crusts.
2A. Develop a standard monitoring methodology and implement monitoring appropriate to the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Allotment and other allotments within the Planning Area.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. Monitor the crustal community as one of the indicators for S&Gs.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.

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**VEGETATION (Section 2.5)**

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**Goal - Manage vegetation to achieve and maintain healthy watersheds.**

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**RIPARIAN AND WETLANDS (Section 2.5.2)**

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**Goal - Maintain, restore, or improve riparian vegetation, habitat diversity, and geomorphic stability to achieve healthy, productive riparian areas and wetlands and associated structure, function, process, and products that provide public land values such as forage, water, cover, structure and security necessary to meet the life history requirements of fish and wildlife; public recreation and aesthetics; water quality and quantity; and livestock forage and water.**

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**Objective 1.** Achieve and/or maintain a rating of PFC for perennial and intermittent flowing and standing water bodies relative to site capability, site potential, and BLM management jurisdictions.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Implement or continue management prescriptions at the activity-plan level designed to maintain, restore, and/or improve specific attributes of riparian/wetland function to maintain or progress toward attainment of PFC.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**Objective 2.** Maintain and/or improve riparian vegetation communities relative to ecological status, site potential and capability, and/or site-specific management objectives.

**Actions**

1A. Assess reach/site scale riparian/wetland vegetation, hydrology, morphology and soil characteristics (sub-samples) to evaluate site potential and capability.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Continue to develop and implement activity-plan level management prescriptions or WQRP prescriptions based on reach/site assessment and site specific resource management objectives.	2B. Activity-plan level management prescriptions or WQRP prescriptions based on watershed level or reach/site assessment to maintain or progress toward an advanced ecological status of riparian vegetation would be generally guided by stream/watershed prioritization, along with consideration of new circumstances and emerging opportunities.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2B.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
3A. Continue management of existing grazing systems and improvements that maintain PFC relative to reach/site capability and potential.	3B. Manage livestock and recreation use in riparian areas and spring sources within the CMPA emphasizing passive measures. Maintain PFC and promote an advanced ecological status that approaches site capability or potential.	3C. Same as 3B; however, active and passive management and/or restoration of riparian and adjacent upland vegetation may be pursued to initiate or increase the rate of progress toward an advanced ecological status.	3D. Same as 3C; however, ecological status objectives would be dependent on meeting multiple use resource management objectives.	3E. Implement grazing and recreation management in riparian areas to provide maximum use while maintaining or progressing toward PFC and/or WQRP objectives.
4A. Continue management as described under Rangelands Alternative A.	4B. Management of upland vegetation communities adjacent to riparian areas to reduce fire wildland intensity and frequency would be through passive management with emphasis on native vegetation establishment. Active restoration of riparian areas would be limited to reaches/sites that are not likely to achieve or progress towards attainment of an advanced ecological status within the RMP goal time frame of 20 to 50 years.	4C. Manage and manipulate upland vegetation communities adjacent to riparian areas to reduce fire intensity and frequency. Active restoration of riparian and adjacent upland vegetation communities may include the use of native and/or desirable nonnative vegetation; restoration sites would be managed to progress toward native vegetation communities within the RMP goal time frame of 20 to 50 years.	4D. Similar to 4C. However, adjacent upland vegetation communities would be managed or restored to native and/or desirable nonnative vegetation to meet multiple use resource management objectives.	4E. Same as 4D; management emphasis would be to provide sustainable livestock forage, and soil stability and aesthetics along travel corridors and developed recreation sites.
5A. Establish and maintain sources of localized riparian tree and shrub (cottonwood, willow) source material for genetic preservation and riparian restoration purposes.	5B. Same as 5A; however, restoration actions would be limited to riparian areas that are not likely to achieve advanced ecological status within the RMP goal time frame of 20 to 50 years.	5C. Same as 5A, including active manipulation of isolated individuals or stands of woody riparian trees/shrubs to promote regeneration.	5D. Same as 5C.	5E. Same as 5C.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
6A. Maintain existing roads and develop additional roads on a case-by-case basis in conformance with existing laws and regulations.	6B. Inventory road networks and eliminate, relocate, or reconstruct routes that impact riparian/wetland areas. Allow for natural recovery of abandoned road beds where erosion potential is minimal and recovery potential is moderate to high; pursue active restoration where erosion is likely and natural recovery potential is limited. Evaluate and modify road crossings, as necessary, to simulate natural stream function and process.	6C. Same as 6B.	6D. Same as 6B except emphasis of road crossing modification would be designed relative to erosion prevention, and not necessarily stream simulation.	6E. Maintain existing roads and develop additional roads to promote commodity and public uses within established laws and regulations.

**Objective 3.** Manage riparian areas to maintain or restore soil moisture content and retention of ground water to augment base flow conditions during the warmer summer months.

**Actions**

1A. Allow beaver populations to expand naturally as habitat conditions dictate. Coordinate with the ODFW on population management of beavers on public lands.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Allow for the natural expansion and/or reintroduction of beaver into suitable habitat. Coordinate with the ODFW on population management of beaver on public lands.	1D. Allow for the natural expansion and/or reintroduction of beaver into suitable habitat. Coordinate with ODFW on population management of beaver on public lands. Recommend removal of beaver if suitable habitat is not available or if economic harm or ecological damage is occurring.	1E. Allow beaver populations to expand naturally as habitat conditions indicate. Coordinate with the ODFW on population management of beaver on public lands. Recommend removal of beaver if suitable habitat is not available or economic harm or ecological damage is occurring .
2A. Prescribe and implement BMPs at the activity-plan level to maintain, restore, or improve floodplain function and process.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**WOODLANDS (Section 2.5.3)**

**Goal 1 - Maintain and improve integrity of old growth juniper woodlands.**

**Objective 1.** Maintain or improve characteristics of old growth western juniper woodlands.

**Actions**

1A. Mechanically remove all post-settlement western juniper trees in old growth western juniper stands.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine the structure and composition of old growth western juniper stands.	1C. Mechanically remove up to 90 percent of the post-settlement western juniper trees in old growth stands.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Suppress all lightning ignited and human caused wildland fires.	2B. Allow fires to burn in old growth western juniper stands, restoring fire to its historic role in the ecosystem.	2C. Allow fires to burn in old growth western juniper stands if there is no threat to life or significant resource values, restoring fire to its historic role in the ecosystem.	2D. Same as 2C.	2E. Same as 2C. Reseed appropriate areas with introduced and native forage species.
3A. No current management.	3B. No suitable action.	3C. No suitable action.	3D. Develop market for byproducts of western juniper removal (e.g. secondary wood products, biofuels, and firewood).	3E. Same as 3D.

**Goal 2 - Maintain, restore, or improve the integrity of quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands/groves.**

**Objective 1.** Reduce the influence of western juniper and other associated woody plant species in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands/groves.

**Actions**

1A. Mechanically remove western juniper from quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine the structure and composition of quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands where western juniper has established.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Encourage commodity removal of juniper.
2A. Burn quaking aspen stands where western juniper has established and dominates the stands.	2B. Allow natural processes to determine the structure and composition of old growth western juniper stands.	2C. Burn quaking aspen stands where western juniper has established and has the potential to dominate.	2D. Same as 2C.	2E. Same as 2A. Seed areas with native and desirable nonnative forage species. Encourage firewood removal of cut western juniper.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
3A. Cut and burn western juniper in quaking aspen stands.	3B. Burn quaking aspen stands where western juniper has established and has the potential to dominate the stand.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A	3E. Same as 3A.
4A. Suppress all wildland fires in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands.	4B. Allow wildland fires in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands that have been encroached by western juniper to reduce the dominance of western juniper.	4C. Same as 4B	4D. Same as 4B	4E. Same as 4A.
5A. No current management.	5B. No suitable action.	5C. No suitable action.	5D. Develop market for byproducts of western juniper removal (e.g. secondary wood products and biofuels).	5E. Same as 5D
6A. Fence treated mountain mahogany stands and quaking aspen stands where recovery could be suppressed by browsing.	6B. No suitable action	6C. Same as 6A.	6D. Same as 6A.	6E. Allow wild and domestic herbivores access to additional forage produced by cutting and/or burning mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands.

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**Goal 3 - Manage woodland habitats so the forage, water, cover, structure, and security necessary to meet life history requirements of wildlife are available on public lands.**

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**Objective 1.** Reduce juniper woodlands to help restore riparian and sagebrush habitats.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Mechanically remove younger (established <120 ybp) western juniper from riparian and sagebrush habitats.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine the structure and composition of old growth western juniper stands.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Use human ignited wildland fire to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian habitats.	2B. Allow wildland fire, naturally and human ignited, to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian habitats.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2B.

**WILDLAND JUNIPER MANAGEMENT AREA (Section 2.5.4)**

**Goal - Manage the WJMA for the purposes of experimentation, education, interpretation, and demonstration of active and passive management intended to restore the historic fire regime and native vegetation communities on Steens Mountain.**

**Objective 1.** Establish a series of demonstration areas within the 3,267-acre WJMA for technology transfer and public education.

**Actions**

1A. Inventory plant and animal communities present in the WJMA.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. No current management.	2B. Establish areas to demonstrate the effects of different treatments (fire, cutting, etc.) on western juniper and the recovery/rehabilitation of native plant communities.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2B.
3A. No current management.	3B. Establish interpretive sites at the boundary of the management area identifying the WJMA and its intent.	3C. Same as 3B.	3D. Same as 3B.	3E. Same as 3B.

**Objective 2.** Evaluate different treatments and management strategies for plant communities dominated by western juniper.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Evaluate all management actions currently being conducted in western juniper woodlands and sagebrush steppe plant communities.	1B. Implement and evaluate treatments and management strategies that utilize or mimic natural processes in juniper control and vegetative recovery.	1C. Implement and evaluate treatments and management strategies utilizing both natural and other processes in juniper control and vegetative recovery.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Implement and evaluate treatments and management strategies that emphasize commodity production and public uses.
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**RANGELANDS (Section 2.5.5)**

**Goal 1 - Maintain, restore, or improve the integrity of desirable vegetative communities including perennial, native, and desirable introduced plant species. Provide for their continued existence and normal function in nutrient, water, and energy cycles.**

**Objective 1.** Maintain or restore native vegetation communities through sound landscape management practices.

**Actions**

1A. Maintain or improve ecological status of native plant communities.	1B. Allow natural processes to define the vegetation composition across the landscape.	1C. Minimize emphasis on commodity production of herbaceous and shrubby vegetation. Emphasize natural values associated with the diverse composition and structure of native vegetation.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Emphasize production of native, herbaceous, and shrubby vegetation for commodity uses within the constraints of other resource management objectives.
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**Objective 2.** Manage desirable nonnative seedings to meet resource objectives.

**Actions**

1A. Manage and/or manipulate nonnative seedings to maintain vegetative composition and to meet S&Gs.	1B. Allow natural processes to define the vegetation composition in nonnative seedings.	1C. Implement actions to diversify structure and composition of selected nonnative seedings with emphasis on natural values and other resource objectives, such as reestablishment of native species.	1D. Implement actions to diversify structure and composition of selected nonnative seedings, consistent with resource objectives.	1E. Restore existing nonnative seedings presently in poor or fair condition. Establish new seedings in areas capable of additional biomass production.
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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
2A. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, maintain or restore native vegetative species diversity through inter-seeding of native species on 200 acres. Allow brushbeating and/or discing in a mosaic pattern, on 50 percent of nonnative seedings where brush cover is high.	2B. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, allow natural processes to determine the species composition and reinvasion rate of native species into nonnative seedings.	2C. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, use interseeding to establish native plant species onto approximately 20,000 acres of nonnative seedings throughout the Planning Area where vegetative species diversity is low. The emphasis would be on reestablishing native species, but other desirable nonnative species could be used in the seeding mix where appropriate. Livestock grazing could be used to suppress plant competition and allow sagebrush establishment. Coordination with permittees, ODFW, and USFWS would occur. Emphasis of this project would be the seedings on the north and west side of Steens Mountain. Brush beating of sagebrush in a mosaic pattern would be allowed on 50 percent of seeded areas where brush cover is high.	2D. Same as 2C except approximately 10,000 acres or more of nonnative seedings would be reseeded. Desirable nonnative species could be used in the seeding mix.	2E. Same as 2C except approximately 5,000 acres of nonnative seedings would be reseeded with native and other desirable nonnative species. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress plant competition and allow sagebrush establishment. Brushbeat or disk a maximum of 75 percent of nonnative seedings with high shrub cover to release grass species and preserve maximum production.

**Objective 3.** Rehabilitate plant communities that do not have the potential to meet DRCs through management.

**Actions**

1A. Implement vegetation manipulation projects consistent with existing management objectives. Rehabilitate areas burned by wildland fire to protect soil, water, and vegetation resources.	1B. Allow natural processes to define vegetation composition. Wildland fire areas would not be rehabilitated.	1C. Rehabilitate plant communities that do not meet DRCs due to dominance by annual or weedy species, or invasive juniper. Seed native species only.	1D. Rehabilitate plant communities that do not meet DRCs due to dominance by annual or weedy species, or invasive juniper. Seed native and nonnative species where appropriate.	1E. Rehabilitate plant communities that do not meet DRCs due to dominance by annual or weedy species, or invasive juniper. Seed species to provide for optimal forage and/or cover production.
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**Objective 4.** Increase species and structural diversity at the plant community and landscape levels in big sagebrush communities. Provide multiple successional stages within the landscape.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Use prescribed fire to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plants.	1B. Allow natural and human ignited wildland fire to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plants.	1C. Allow naturally ignited wildland fire to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plants.	1D. Use prescribed fire and all wildland fire to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plants.	1E. Same as 1D.
2A. Mechanically remove woody vegetation to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plants.	2B. Allow natural processes to determine successional stages.	2C. Same as 2A, except only on selected sites.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Mechanically remove woody vegetation to release suppressed desirable herbaceous vegetation.

**Goal 2 - Manage rangeland habitats so that the forage, water, cover, structure, and security necessary to meet life history requirements of wildlife are available on public lands.**

**Objective 1.** Manage big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper communities to meet habitat requirements for wildlife.

**Actions**

1A. Determine and implement the desired parameters of big sagebrush, juniper, and aspen cover on a case-by-case basis to provide adequate wildlife habitat.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine the future condition of wildlife habitat in big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper communities.	1C. Manage big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper communities for the benefit of all wildlife and to meet DRCs in all habitats.	1D. Same as Alternative 1C except that meeting DRCs would apply to most habitats.	1E. Manage for big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper habitat types where economically important wildlife are present.
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**Objective 2.** Manage big sagebrush communities to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent wildlife.

**Actions**

1A. Determine variable desired conditions of big sagebrush cover on a site-by-site basis to benefit game and nongame species.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine future big sagebrush conditions.	1C. Manage big sagebrush habitat for the benefit of game and nongame species and to meet DRCs in all big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area.	1D. Manage big sagebrush habitat for the benefit of game and nongame species and to meet DRCs in most big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area.	1E. Reestablish big sagebrush where economically important game species are present.
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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**NOXIOUS WEEDS (Section 2.5.6)**

**Goal - Control the introduction and proliferation of noxious weeds and reduce the extent and density of established populations to acceptable levels.**

**Objective 1.** Treat noxious weeds and inventory for new infestations using the most effective means available, as outlined in the Burns District’s Integrated Weed Management Program EA/Decision Record.

**Actions**

1A. Continue to apply integrated management for the control of noxious weeds. Emphasize control on disturbed areas such as roads, ROWs, and recreation sites.	1B. Treat only high priority areas of noxious weeds to protect high quality natural resource land and adjacent private land. Manual or biological control methods would be preferred.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Apply integrated management for the control of noxious weeds. Priority would be given to high quality natural resource areas. Emphasize control on disturbed areas such as roads, ROWs, and recreation sites.	1E. Same as 1D.
2A. Emphasize inventories to detect new infestations.	2B. Increase inventory to detect new infestations.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Emphasize prevention, restoration, research, and expanded efforts to inventory and detect new infestations.	2E. Increase inventory to detect new infestations that may have adverse effects on commodity resources.

**Objective 2.** Educate the public on how to utilize public lands without inadvertently spreading noxious weeds.

**Actions**

1A. Continue public education in the local area.	1B. Expand public education to include areas outside of Harney County.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
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**Objective 3.** Maintain partnerships with local groups and government agencies to combine efforts in the control and prevention of noxious weed infestations.

**Actions**

1A. Continue Harney County Weed Management Partnership.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**FISH AND WILDLIFE (Section 2.6)**

**Goal - Provide diverse, structured, resilient, and connected habitat on a landscape level to support viable and sustainable populations of wildlife, fish, and other aquatic organisms.**

**Objective 1.** Maintain, restore, or improve habitat.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Monitor aquatic species and manage their habitat in coordination with other agencies, tribal governments, and cooperators.	1B. Same as 1A, with emphasis on managing habitat for self-sustaining native species.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Reseed approximately 9,000 acres of deer winter range that are in unsatisfactory condition with sagebrush and a mix of other native and nonnative species in coordination with USFWS, ODFW and permittees.	2B. Aerially reseed sagebrush onto approximately 9,000 acres of deer winter range.	2C. Throughout the Planning Area, approximately 20,000 acres of nonnative seedings and all the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low would be interseeded to establish native plant species. Other desirable nonnative plant species may be used on a limited basis. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. Coordination with permittees, ODFW, and USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis in areas to be reseeded.	2D. Same as 2C except approximately 10,000 acres or more of nonnative seedings and most of the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low, would be reseeded and nonnative species could be used where appropriate.	2E. Same as 2C except approximately 5,000 acres of nonnative seedings and some of the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low would be interseeded to establish native and other desirable nonnative plant species.
3A. Identify and undertake opportunities for improvement/restoration of fish and wildlife habitat (e.g. vegetation manipulation and water developments).	3B. Identify opportunities and undertake for improvement/restoration of fish and wildlife habitat through use of wildland fire, fence removal, and other mainly passive methods.	3C. Identify and undertake opportunities for improvement/restoration of fish and wildlife habitat through use of wildland fire, other vegetation manipulations, limited fence removal, water developments, etc.	3D. Same as 3C except that functional fence removal would not be completed due to livestock grazing.	3E. Same as 3C except that improvements would also benefit livestock.

**Objective 2.** Manage forage production to support wildlife population levels identified by the ODFW.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**Actions**

1A. Allocate forage for wildlife at management objective levels and allow wildlife populations to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW.	1B. Allocate forage for wildlife above management objective levels and allow wildlife populations to expand naturally.	1C. Allocate forage for wildlife above management objective levels and allow wildlife populations to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Allocate forage for wildlife at management objective levels. Allow wildlife populations to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW. Increase forage allocation concurrent with improved range conditions and other improvements.
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***SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES (Section 2.7)***

**Goal - Maintain, restore, or improve special status plant populations and animal habitats; manage public lands to conserve or contribute to the recovery of T&E; and prevent future ESA listings.**

**SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES (Section 2.7.2)**

**Objective 1.** Manage special status plant species and their habitats so management actions do not contribute to their decline or listing as T&E.

**Actions**

1A. Monitor known populations and inventory for new locations of special status plant species.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Manage habitat for special status plant species to maintain or allow for increases in populations.	2B. Let natural processes determine habitat for special status plant species except for management of critical habitat as identified in a final rule or essential habitat identified in a recovery plan for federally listed species.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

**SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES (Section 2.7.3)**

**Objective 2.** (Special Status Animal) Conserve special status animal species and the ecosystems on which they depend.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. Manage special status animal species habitat for conservation and/or recovery.	1B. Allow natural processes to occur except for management of critical habitat for federally listed animal species.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Manage special status animal species habitat with emphasis given to game species.
2A. Do not undertake management activities likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat pursuant to section 7(a)(2) of the ESA.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. Continue current management of designated critical habitat for Borax Lake chub, with TNC retaining ownership of land located within critical habitat.	3B. Provide permanent protection of designated critical habitat for Borax Lake chub by pursuing the purchase or conservation agreement of nonpublic lands within critical habitat currently owned by TNC, to close the nonpublic lands to livestock grazing, mineral/geothermal exploration, and motorized access.	3C. Same as 3B.	3D. Pursue acquisition or conservation easement of nonpublic lands within Borax Lake chub critical habitat currently owned by TNC and manage uses to avoid or minimize impacts to Borax Lake chub and critical habitat.	3E. Same as 3A.
4A. Rely on the DEQ to establish water quality standards, and the USFWS, ODFW and TNC to monitor habitat and population of Borax Lake chub.	4B. Develop site-specific water quality standards to protect endangered Borax Lake chub in coordination with DEQ, USFWS, ODFW and TNC. Develop and implement a cooperative program to monitor water quality, habitat characteristics, and population trends.	4C. Same as 4B.	4D. Same as 4B.	4E. Same as 4A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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5A. Install bat gates at entrances to abandoned mines to protect roost sites from disturbance but still allow bat movement.	5B. Install bat gates at entrances to abandoned mines and withdraw areas from mineral entry.	5C. Same as 5B.	5D. Same as 5A.	5E. Same as 5A.
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**Objective 3.** Manage big sagebrush communities to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent, special status species.

**Actions**

1A. Determine variable desired conditions of big sagebrush cover on a site-by-site basis to benefit special status species. Manage in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater sage-grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine future big sagebrush conditions. Manage to the extent practicable, in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater sage-grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines.	1C. Manage big sagebrush habitat for the benefit of special status species and meet DRCs in all big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area. Manage in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater sage-grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines.	1D. Manage big sagebrush habitat for the benefit of special status species and meet DRCs in most big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area. Manage in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater sage-grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines.	1E. Reestablish big sagebrush where economically important special status species are present. Manage to the extent practicable, in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater sage-grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines.
2A. Identify Greater sage-grouse and other special status species use areas with ODFW and/or USFWS and coordinate habitat management across agency boundaries.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

**Objective 4.** Evaluate habitat requirements and conditions for the reintroduction of extirpated species into historic habitat in the Planning Area.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**Actions**

1A. In coordination with USFWS and ODFW, determine whether habitat conditions exist that would allow successful reintroduction of locally or regionally extirpated special status species. Determine what habitat improvements are needed, if any, to create suitable habitat for reintroductions.	1B. In coordination with USFWS and ODFW, determine whether habitat conditions exist that would allow successful reintroduction of locally or regionally extirpated special status species.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**Objective 5.** Maintain, restore or improve bighorn sheep habitat and allow for maintenance or further expansion of bighorn sheep populations as defined by the ODFW in “Oregon’s Bighorn Sheep Management Plan.”

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**Actions**

1A. Coordinate with the ODFW on population management of bighorn sheep. Allow for transplants, reintroductions, and natural expansion of bighorn sheep. Where needed, improve poor quality habitat in identified historic range.	1B. Allow natural processes to determine the natural range of expansion of bighorn sheep populations without further introductions/transplants into identified historic range.	1C. Coordinate with the ODFW on population management of bighorn sheep. Allow for transplants, reintroductions, and natural expansion of bighorn sheep.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Authorize the ODFW on trapping bighorn sheep when they determine excess animals are available.	2B. Allow bighorn population numbers to exceed management objectives and do not authorize ODFW to trap excess animals.	2C. Same as 2B except authorize the ODFW to trap bighorn sheep if vegetation monitoring shows degradation due to high population numbers.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
3A. In the Steens Mountain Wilderness, authorize transplants, trapping, distribution of medicine, emergency situations, etc., according to the Steens Act, the Wilderness Act, and Appendix B of House Report 101-405. Minimum tool analysis would be completed on all actions.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.
4A. Identify up to ten sites for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources or wildlife guzzlers (2000-3000 gal capacity) in identified historic habitat.	4B. Identify up to five sites for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources in identified historic habitat. Remove fences that restrict bighorn movements and impede access to water.	4C. Identify up to ten sites for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources in identified historic habitat.	4D. Same as 3A.	4E. Same as 3A.
5A. Continue maintenance of existing guzzlers in the Steens Mountain Wilderness Area and WSAs in accordance with the Steens Act, the Wilderness Act, Appendix B of House Report 101-405 and the WSA IMP. Minimum tool analysis would be completed on all actions.	5B. Same as 5A.	5C. Same as 5A.	5D. Same as 5A.	5E. Same as 5A.

**REDBAND TROUT RESERVE (Section 2.7.4)**

**Goal - Manage the RTR to conserve, protect, and enhance the Donner und Blitzen River population of redband trout, and provide opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife oriented recreation.**

**Objective 1.** Define the RTR boundary.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Delineate the boundaries of the RTR in cooperation with other participating entities.	1B. The Donner und Blitzen RTR would consist of the public land portion of the Donner und Blitzen River and tributaries upstream of its confluence with Fish Creek to the longitudinal extent of current and future redband trout distribution, and the width of the flood prone area.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. The Donner und Blitzen RTR would consist of the public land portion of the mainstream Donner und Blitzen River upstream of its confluence with Fish Creek and the width of the flood prone area.
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**Objective 2.** Maintain the genetic integrity of redband trout in the RTR.

**Actions**

1A. Coordinate and cooperate with the ODFW and Malheur NWR in developing and/or revising the Native Fish Conservation Plan(s) for the Donner und Blitzen River subbasin in support of the ODFW's Native Fish Conservation Policy.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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**Objective 3.** Increase the distribution and abundance of redband trout in the RTR.

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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**Actions**

1A. Manage riparian and aquatic habitats to maintain or progress toward PFC, water quality standards, and fish habitat values through existing management. Manage the Donner und Blitzen RTR in accordance with the Wilderness Act and WSR Act, as appropriate.	1B. Manage riparian and aquatic habitats for an advanced ecological status that provides for a diversity of fish habitat values including spawning, rearing, cover, forage, and cold-water refuge. Manage the Donner und Blitzen RTR in accordance with the Wilderness Act and WSR Act, as appropriate.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Manage riparian and aquatic habitats through coordinated efforts in a manner that provides for a diversity of fish habitat values including spawning, rearing, cover, forage, and cold-water refuge.	1E. Same as 1D.
2A. The Page Springs gauging station weir on the Donner und Blitzen River would be removed if scientifically justified and funds are available.	2B. Coordinate with appropriate agencies, groups, and individuals on removal or modification of the Page Springs gauging station weir to facilitate migration of redband trout and other aquatic species in the Donner und Blitzen River system, while limiting the migration capabilities of nonnative fish.	2C. Same as 2B.	1D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2B.

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***PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES (Section 2.8)***

**Goal 1 - Preserve, protect and manage vertebrate, noteworthy invertebrate, and plant paleontological resources in accordance with existing laws and regulations to make these resources available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.**

**Objective 1.** Using predictive modeling, identify significant localities which may be in conflict with other resource uses.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. A portion of the Planning Area has not been inventoried for paleontological resources. Under this alternative, there is no program in force to find significant localities in other resource use areas.	1B. Implement sample inventory for significant localities within recreational use areas in the entire Planning Area and livestock use areas within the CMPA.	1C. Implement Planning Area-wide sample inventory for significant localities where they may be in conflict with other resource uses.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1C, except the inventory sample would be larger to account for increased commodity production in other resources.
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**Objective 2.** Research significant paleontological localities in cooperation with universities and other federal agencies.

**Actions**

1A. Research significant localities to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation. Focus research efforts in areas where resource conflicts require management action.	1B. Implement limited research of significant localities to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Emphasize natural history tourism and implement large scale prospecting and excavation at significant localities.
2A. Record and/or salvage eroding paleontological material at Thousand Springs, Catlow, Pueblo, and other similar localities on an annual basis.	2B. Record and/or salvage surface paleontological material at Thousand Springs, Catlow, Pueblo, and other similar localities on an annual basis.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Recover fossil specimens and data to be used for interpretation and site management.

**Objective 3.** Protect significant paleontological localities.

**Actions**

1A. Focus law enforcement surveillance in areas in Catlow Valley, Pueblo Valley, and in the Long Draw.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Use protective measures at significant sites as appropriate.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

**Goal 2 - Increase public knowledge of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to paleontological resources.**

**Objective 1.** Create paleontology interpretive opportunities for public education.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Construct portable and onsite displays for local, regional and national education where applicable.	1B. Same as 1A, except on-site interpretive facilities would not be constructed. The focus of paleontological interpretation under this alternative would be the creation of portable and static off-site displays and brochures.	1C. Same as 1A, except on-site interpretation signage would not be implemented. The focus of paleontological interpretation under this alternative would be the creation of portable and static off-site displays and self-guided walking tour brochures.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as A1, except a higher level of interpretation, including on-site facilities, would be implemented to enhance natural history tourism opportunities.
2A. Cost-share programs with universities, museums, and researchers, and volunteers to inventory, analyze, and research the paleontological resources within the Planning Area would be continued.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

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***CULTURAL RESOURCES (Section 2.9)***

**Goal 1 - Preserve, protect and manage cultural resources in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, in coordination/consultation with the Burns Paiute Tribe, other Native American tribes, the Harney County Historical Society and other heritage groups to make cultural resources available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.**

**Objective 1.** Using predictive modeling, locate significant sites which may be in conflict with other resource uses.

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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**Actions**

1A. Ninety three percent of the Planning Area has not been inventoried for cultural resources. As a result, an unknown number of significant sites may be impacted by other resource uses. Under this alternative, there is no program in force to find significant sites in disturbed areas.	1B. Inventory for significant sites in recreation use areas Planning Area-wide and in livestock use areas within the CMPA.	1C. Implement Planning Area-wide sample inventory for significant sites where they may be in conflict with other resource uses.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1C except the inventory sample would be larger to account for increased commodity production in other resources.
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**Objective 2.** Use Section 110 inventories to locate significant sites in the Planning Area.

**Actions**

1A. Complete cultural program funded archaeological inventories in areas of high potential for significant sites within the Planning Area. Five hundred acres per year would be the proposed accomplishment.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Emphasize heritage tourism and increase cultural program funded inventories in areas of high potential for significant sites within the Planning Area. Utilize inventory data and archaeological specimens in interpretation and other heritage recreation opportunities.
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**Objective 3.** Research significant cultural sites in cooperation with universities, the Burns Paiute Tribe, other tribes, and other heritage partnerships.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Research significant sites or groups of sites to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation. Focus research efforts in areas where resource conflicts require management action.	1B. Research significant sites or groups of sites on a limited basis to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Emphasize heritage tourism and increase archaeological research at sites or groups of sites. Utilize the research data and archaeological specimens in interpretation and other heritage tourism opportunities.
2A. Record and/or salvage eroding cultural material at significant subsurface sites on an annual basis.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

**Objective 4.** Use protective measures to safeguard significant cultural sites.

**Actions**

1A. No physical protection measures have been currently implemented with the exception of a caretaker at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. At significant sites in Catlow Valley, fence the BLM portion; and close the area to OHV use; close roads except for administrative and permittee use. Fence and apply rip-rap to a significant site in the Alvord Valley. Apply other protective measures at other sites as appropriate.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1C.
2A. Provide law enforcement focusing surveillance in the Catlow Valley, Alvord Valley, and Coyote Lake regions.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. Monitor known cultural sites within prescribed wildland fire areas to study fire impacts and prevent post-fire looting.	3B. Monitor and assess known cultural sites within wildland fire areas to study fire impacts and prevent post-fire looting.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.

**Objective 5.** Pursue land acquisitions to bring significant sites into public ownership.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. No land acquisitions are currently being proposed under this alternative.	1B. Same as 1A. Acquire private portions of Skull Creek Dunes, Juniper Lake Site, and other nonpublicly owned significant archaeological sites as the opportunity arises.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. As this alternative would not encourage land acquisitions and culturally funded land purchases would not be pursued.
<b>Objective 6.</b> Stabilize, restore or reconstruct significant historic structures to provide public safety and recreational and interpretive opportunities.				
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. Restore or reconstruct historic structures at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District.	1B. Maintain historic structures at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District in their current condition.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Increase restoration activities in order to support heritage tourism.
2A. Inventory and assess other historic structures in the Planning Area. Develop restoration plans and implement where appropriate.	2B. Inventory and assess other historic structures in the Planning Area.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Increase inventory and assessment activities in order to support heritage tourism.
<b>Goal 2- Increase public knowledge of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to cultural resources.</b>				
<b>Objective 1.</b> Create cultural resources interpretive opportunities and sites for public education in coordination with the Burns Paiute Tribe, other tribes, and other heritage partnerships.				

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**Actions**

1A. On-site interpretation at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District, Andrews Town Site and other sites has not been implemented under this alternative. Portable interpretive displays on various aspects of history in the Planning Area have been created under this alternative.	1B. Construct portable and static interpretive displays for presentation at off-site locations only.	1C. Construct and install interpretive panels at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District, Andrews Town Site and other sites where applicable. Construct portable and static displays for local, regional and national education where applicable.	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Same as 1C except cultural program funding for interpretation may be increased under this alternative to support heritage tourism.
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***NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITIONAL PRACTICES (Section 2.10)***

**Goal - Protect traditional sites, land forms, burial sites, resources, and other areas of interest in coordination and/or consultation with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes.**

**Objective 1.** Monitor and protect Burns Paiute tribal and other tribal interest areas.

**Actions**

1A. Continue coordination/consultation with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes to identify traditional practice areas in the Planning Area.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Nominate applicable Traditional Cultural Properties.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. Monitor burial sites in the Planning Area.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.

**Objective 2.** Integrate maintenance and protection of native subsistence species into vegetation management activities.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Identify culturally, traditionally, and economically important plants during inventories. Input information into FOIA-exempt GIS layer.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Coordinate/consult with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes on Planning Area projects involving vegetation management, in particular large-scale projects.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

***VISUAL RESOURCES (Section 2.11)***

**Goal - Manage public land actions and activities in a manner consistent with VRM class objectives.**

**Objective 1.** Protect, maintain, improve, or restore visual resource values by managing all public lands in accordance with the VRM system.

**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Maintain existing MFP VRM classes (852,210 acres Class I; 239,363 acres Class II; 121,049 acres Class III; and 436,852 acres Class IV) in all areas.	1B. Manage visual resources to allow natural processes to determine visual quality. Designate all lands as VRM Class II (799,132 acres), except where VRM Class I (850,338 acres) is required by law, policy or regulation.	1C. Manage visual resources to emphasize protection of natural values. Existing MFP VRM classes would be amended as follows: 854,266 acres, Class I; 248,943 acres Class II; 546,260 acres Class III; and 0 acres Class IV.	1D. Manage visual resources to improve natural values. Existing MFP VRM classes would be amended as follows: 852,214 acres Class I; 207,012 acres Class II; 214,488 acres Class III; and 375,756 acres Class IV.	1E. Manage visual resources as determined in the MFP, as reinventoried, or as detailed below. VRM classes would be as follows: 852,214 acres Class I; 28,880 acres Class II; 66,978 acres Class III; and 701,398 acres Class IV.
2A. Manage visual resources along eligible WSRs according to existing MFP VRM classes, as amended.	2B. No appropriate action.	2C. Manage visual resources along suitable WSRs according to Alt. C VRM classes	2D. No appropriate action.	2E. No appropriate action.
3A. Manage all WSAs as VRM Class I.	3B. Designate all WSAs as VRM Class I.	3C. Same as 3B. Designate areas found to contain wilderness characteristics as VRM Class II.	3D. Same as 3B.	3E. Same as 3B.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
4A. Continue existing MFP VRM classes for ACECs/ RNAs. (See ACEC Table 2.11).	4B. See Table 2.11 for ACEC VRM classes.	4C. Same as 4B.	4D. Same as 4B.	4E. Same as 4B.
5A. Continue existing MFP VRM classes for seedings.	5B. Designate all seedings as VRM Class II.	5C. Designate all seedings as VRM Class III.	5D. Same as 5C.	5E. Designate all seedings as VRM Class IV.
<b>CMPA</b>				
6A. Manage the Steens Mountain Wilderness, all designated WSRs, and the Steens Mountain ACEC as VRM Class I.	6B. Designate the Steens Mountain Wilderness and all designated WSRs as VRM Class I.	6C. Designate the Steens Mountain Wilderness, all designated WSRs, and the Steens Mountain ACEC as VRM Class I.	6D. Same as 6B.	6E. Same as 6B.
7A. Continue existing MFP VRM classes for the WJMA.	7B. Designate the WJMA as VRM Class II.	7C. Designate the WJMA as VRM Class III.	7D. Designate lands within 0.5 mile of the Steens Loop Road in the WJMA as VRM Class III. Designate the remainder of the WJMA as VRM Class IV.	7E. Designate the WJMA as VRM Class IV.
8A. Maintain existing MFP VRM classes in other areas of the CMPA.	8B. Designate the remainder of the CMPA as VRM Class II.	8C. Same as 8B.	8D. Designate all MFP VRM Class IV lands in the CMPA as VRM Class III. MFP VRM Class II and III areas would remain as VRM Class II and III.	8E. Same as 8A.
<b>AMU</b>				
9A. Maintain existing MFP VRM classes in the AMU.	9B. Designate all remaining MFP VRM Class III and IV areas as VRM Class II. MFP VRM Class II areas would remain as VRM Class II.	9C. Designate all remaining MFP VRM Class IV areas as VRM Class III. MFP VRM Class II and III areas would remain as VRM Class II and III, respectively.	9D. Same as 9A.	9E. Designate all remaining MFP VRM Class II and III areas as VRM Class IV, except the VRM Class II areas in the Trout Creek Mountains and around Denio Creek would remain as VRM Class II. MFP VRM Class IV would remain as VRM Class IV.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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***SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES (Section 2.12)***

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**Goal -Manage public lands to provide social and economic benefits to local residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations.**

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**Objective 1.** Work cooperatively with private and community groups and local Burns Paiute tribal and other tribal governments to provide for customary uses consistent with other resource objectives and to sustain or improve local economies.

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**Actions**

1A. Make contracts for services and sale of products available to local residents as need and conditions permit.	1B. Allow no commodity production from public land except as required by law (e.g. Steens Act).	1C. Restrict commodity production to protect natural values.	1D. Through cooperative and collaborative processes, make contracts and cooperative agreements for services and products available locally when need and conditions permit.	1E. Target services and products for competitive contracting to local firms/individuals where legally permitted.
2A. Manage natural resources as outlined in existing land use plans.	2B. Petition the Department of the Interior to withdraw the Planning Area from locatable mineral entry. Permit no mineral sales or leasing.	2C. Target local contracts for services to restore and maintain natural systems.	2D. Same as 2C, but provides for sustainable tourism, production, and industry.	2E. Manage natural resources on public lands to enhance tourism, maximize production, and attract industry.
3A. Work cooperatively with public land users consistent with resource objectives.	3B. Allow for natural processes to operate with minimal human interference while providing for public health, safety, and facility maintenance only.	3C. Protect and conserve natural values while allowing for tourism and commodity use of natural resources.	3D. Work collaboratively with local populations to emphasize a high level of natural resource protection which contributes to tourism and attracts sustainable commodities industries.	3E. Advertise existing commodities available for extraction or use.
4A. Create public and private partnerships to achieve shared economic objectives.	4B. Same as 4A.	4C. Same as 4A.	4D. Same as 4A.	4E. Same as 4A.

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**Objective 2.** Maintain and promote the cultural, economic, ecological, and social health of the Steens Mountain area. (CMPA only)

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**Actions**

1A. Continue current management by continuing implementation of the directives of the Steens Act.	1B. Provide for commodity production only to the extent required by the Steens Act.	1C. Continue to implement provisions of the Steens Act while emphasizing protection of natural values of the CMPA.	1D. Emphasize sustainable economic operations while protecting the ecological, social, and cultural integrity of the CMPA.	1E. Provide for commodity production to the maximum extent allowable under the Steens Act.
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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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***ENERGY AND MINERALS (Section 2.13)***

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**Goal 1 - Provide opportunities for the exploration and development of locatable minerals in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.**

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**Objective 1.** Identify land with federal mineral estate available to locatable mineral exploration and development.

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**Actions**

1A. Under the MFP, no mineral withdrawals were proposed. Continue management of locatable mineral exploration and development consistent with regulations and laws.	1B. Recommend the entire Planning Area be withdrawn from locatable mineral entry.	1C. Recommend areas to be withdrawn from locatable mineral entry include all ACECs, existing BLM recreation and administrative sites, potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved, National Register eligible and listed cultural sites, significant paleontological localities, big game winter range, RCAs, areas containing special status species and their habitats, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage-grouse leks.	1D. Recommend areas to be withdrawn from locatable mineral entry include existing BLM recreation and administrative sites, potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved, National Register listed cultural sites, significant paleontological localities, areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage-grouse leks.	1E. No new areas would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry so that the maximum amount of land would be available for locatable mineral exploration and development.
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**Goal 2 - Provide opportunities for the leasing and development of oil and gas, geothermal, and solid leasable mineral resources in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.**

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**Objective 1.** Identify leasing categories for the land.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Under the MFP, no areas closed to leasing were designated.	1B. Designate the entire Planning Area as closed to leasing.	1C. Designate areas closed to leasing where natural values would be impaired by leasing including all ACECs, existing BLM recreation and administrative sites, potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved, National Register eligible and listed cultural sites, significant paleontological localities, big game winter range, RCAs, areas containing special status species and their habitat, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage-grouse leks.	1D. Designate no new areas closed to leasing.	1E. Same as 1D.
2A. Under the MFP, areas where a NSO stipulation would be applied would be identified by an ID team immediately prior to leasing.	2B. There would be no leasing.	2C. Designate areas for NSO where natural values would be impaired by surface disturbance.	2D. Designate areas of NSO in ACECs, National Register listed cultural sites, and significant paleontological localities. (See Alternative D, Table 2.4)	2E. All areas would be available for surface occupancy except as restricted by current laws or regulations.
3A. Under the MFP, areas where seasonal and/or other special stipulations would be applied would be identified by an ID team immediately prior to leasing.	3B. There would be no leasing.	3C. Designate areas of seasonal and/or other special stipulations where natural values would be impaired by seasonal leasing activities.	3D. Designate areas for seasonal and/or other special stipulations in big game winter range, RCAs, areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage-grouse leks.	3E. No seasonal or other special stipulations would be applied except as required by laws and regulations.

**Goal 3 - Provide opportunities for the production of saleable minerals by local, state, and federal agencies and the public in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.**

**Objective 1.** Permit development of mineral materials sources on a case-by-case basis in areas where development does not conflict with significant resource values.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**Actions**

1A. Permit saleable minerals development throughout the Planning Area on a case-by-case basis except where it is closed by Congressional action.	1B. Do not permit saleable minerals development.	1C. Same as 1A except do not allow permits in any ACECs, existing BLM administrative and recreation sites, potential BLM recreation sites, National Register eligible and listed cultural sites, significant paleontological localities, RCAs, areas containing special status species and their habitat, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage-grouse leks.	1D. Same as 1A except do not allow permits in all ACECs, existing BLM administrative and recreation sites, potential BLM recreation sites, National Register listed cultural sites, significant paleontological localities, RCAs, areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat, and within 0.6 miles of sage-grouse leks.	1E. Same as 1A.
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***WILD HORSES AND BURROS (Section 2.14)***

**Goal 1 - Manage and maintain healthy wild horse herds in established HMA at AMLs to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance between wild horse populations, wildlife, livestock, vegetation resources, and other resource values. Enhance and perpetuate the special or rare and unique characteristics that distinguish the respective herds.**

**Objective 1.** Designate/Retain/Adjust HMAs.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Retain existing HMAs. See Map 2.1 and Table 2.5.	1B. The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications: the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; the South Steens HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges and the removal of the Ankle Creek Basin portion of the No Livestock Grazing Area. See Map 2.2 and Table 2.5.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications: the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges. See Map 2.1 and Table 2.5.	1E. The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications; the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; the net size of the South Steens HMA would be increased and its boundary changed to reflect the addition of a portion of the “No livestock Grazing Area” known as the Dry Creek and Big Springs Pastures of the Fish Creek-Big Indian Allotment (#6003), the addition of that part of the South Steens HA that includes Serrano Point Allotment (#6019), Carlson Creek Allotment (#6027), Bone Creek and Miners Field pastures in the Alvord Peak Allotment (#6038), and the loss of public land acreage due to the legislated Steens land exchanges. See Map 2.3 and Table 2.5.
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**Objective 2.** Designate/Retain/Adjust Herd Areas in inactive status.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Retain current Herd Areas. See Map 2.1 and Table 2.6.	1B. The existing Herd Areas would be retained except for the following modifications: a Kiger Herd Area would be created to reflect the loss of public lands resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens Herd Area would be increased in size to reflect the addition of the Ankle Creek Basin portion of the No Livestock Grazing Area and changes in ownership resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges. See Map 2.2 and Table 2.6.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. The existing Herd Areas would be retained except for the following modifications: a Kiger Herd Area would be created to reflect the change in land ownership from public to private resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens Herd Area would be increased in size to reflect the change in land ownership from public to private resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges. See Map 2.1 Table 2.6.	1E. Same as 1D except that the South Steens Herd Area would be decreased in size to reflect the increase of the South Steens HMA to include the Serrano Point Allotment (#6019), Carlson Creek Allotment (#6027), and Bone Creek and Miners Field pastures in the Alvord Peak Allotment (#6038). See Map 2.3 and Table 2.6.
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**Objective 3. Maintain/Adjust AMLs and year-long forage allocations for each HMA.**

**Actions**

1A. The current AMLs and wild horse forage allocations would be maintained in all HMAs (see Table 3.19).	1B. The current AMLs and wild horse forage allocations would be maintained in all HMAs (See Table 3.19). Permanent increases or decreases in AML and forage allocations would be considered if monitoring data determines changes in long term forage availability.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
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**Objective 4. Maintain a thriving natural ecological balance within HMAs.**

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

<p>1A. Periodically gather and remove wild horses based on rangeland monitoring studies, climatic conditions, census data, and the occurrence of catastrophic events such as wildfire and drought. Wild horse numbers would be reduced to the low end of the AML range when gathering is conducted.</p> <p>HMA perimeter fences would be maintained and any wild horses that stray outside HMA boundaries would be removed or returned to the HMA. Gates in interior pasture division fences would be managed to maximize horse access to the HMA.</p>	<p>1B. Wild horse numbers would be managed through gathering, removal, and other approved methods of population control. The initiation of gathering and/or other methods of population control would be based on census data, herd health, rangeland health and productivity determined by rangeland monitoring studies, climatic conditions, and the occurrence of catastrophic events such as wildfire and drought. Wild horse numbers would normally be reduced to the low end of the AML range when gatherings are conducted.</p> <p>Perimeter fences would be maintained and any wild horses that stray outside HMA boundaries would be removed or returned to the HMA. Gates in interior pasture division fences would be managed to maximize horse access to the HMA</p>	<p>1C. Same as 1B.</p>	<p>1D. Same as 1B.</p>	<p>1E. Same as 1B.</p>
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**Objective 5.** Maintain/Improve year-round water availability to sustain wild horse herds.

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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**Actions**

1A. Maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses.	1B. Maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses. Develop additional water sources in areas where greater animal distribution would benefit natural processes and values and where water is lacking during periods of drought. Acquire legal access to private water sources that are critical to wild horses.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses. Develop additional water sources to improve animal distribution and provide more stable water sources during periods of drought. Seek cooperative management agreements for access to or acquire legal access to private water sources that are critical to wild horses.	1E. Maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses. Develop additional water sources to improve animal distribution and where water is lacking during periods of drought.
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**Objective 6.** Maintain herd viability, genetic diversity, and the genetic and physical characteristics that distinguish individual herds.

**Actions**

1A. Maintain a 50-50 male/female sex ratio, a diverse age structure, and occasionally introduce new animals to small herds to maintain genetic diversity.  An HMA's animals returned to the range (post -gather) and those introduced from outside HMAs would possess characteristics representative of the herd's conformation, size, unique markings, and color.	1B. Diverse age structure and sex ratios, ranging from 40 to 50 percent female and 50 to 60 percent male, would be maintained. HMA animals that are returned to the range after a gather would possess representative characteristics of the herd's conformation, size, color and unique markings. New animals from outside HMAs would be introduced when needed to increase the diversity of the genome or maintain the characteristics of the herd.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E Same as 1B.
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<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**GRAZING MANAGEMENT (Section 2.15)**

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**Goal - Manage for a sustainable level of livestock grazing while maintaining healthy public land resources.**

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**Objective 1.** Provide for a sustained level of livestock grazing in the AMU while meeting resource objectives and requirements for S&Gs.

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**Actions**

1A. Continue the authorization of livestock grazing use in the AMU consistent with the existing land use plan, S&Gs, and activity plans	1B. No grazing use would be authorized in the AMU.	1C. Emphasize nonconsumptive uses in the AMU while providing for minimal sustainable livestock grazing which meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs.	1D. Provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the AMU which meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs.	1E. Maximize grazing opportunities in the AMU while meeting S&Gs.
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**Objective 2.** Promote viable and sustainable livestock grazing operations in the CMPA while meeting resource objectives and requirements for S&Gs.

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**Actions**

1A. Continue the authorization of livestock grazing use in the CMPA consistent with the existing land use plan, applicable activity plans, Public Law 106-399, and S&Gs.	1B. Emphasize non consumptive uses in the CMPA while providing for sustainable livestock grazing consistent with public law 106-399 which also meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and S&Gs.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the CMPA which meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and meets Public Law 106-399 and S&Gs.	1E. Maximize grazing opportunities in the CMPA consistent with Public Law 106-399 while meeting S&Gs.
2A. Authorize TNR grazing use of additional forage production in years of favorable growing conditions consistent with existing MFP and RPS management objectives.	2B. Authorize no TNR grazing use. Retain additional herbaceous production for values other than forage production.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Authorize TNR grazing use of additional forage in years of favorable growing conditions consistent with meeting resource objectives.	2E. Optimize the authorization of TNR grazing use of additional forage in years of favorable growing conditions consistent with meeting resource objectives.

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**Objective 3.** Implement administrative solutions and rangeland projects to provide proper management for livestock grazing while meeting requirements for S&Gs.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. Continue to adjust interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments. Implement administrative solutions (season of use changes, stocking levels) and rangeland projects.	1B. Within the CMPA, same as 1C. In the AMU, rangeland projects would not be planned or implemented in support of livestock grazing. Remove projects and rehabilitate project sites that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives.	1C. Emphasize administrative solutions (season of use revisions, stocking level adjustments, livestock exclusions) to meet natural resource management objectives. Implement rangeland projects practices when administrative solutions would not accomplish natural resource objectives. Remove projects and rehabilitate project sites that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives.	1D. Adjust interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments. Implement administrative solutions (season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusionary pastures) and/or rangeland projects to accomplish natural resource management objectives.	1E. Emphasize rangeland projects as the preferred solution to meet natural resource management objectives. Apply administrative solutions when structural developments would not accomplish natural resource management objectives.
2A. Relinquished permits and vacant allotments would be handled on a case-by-case basis through land use plan amendments. Non-use would still be authorized for periods of up to three years.	2B. Discontinue permitted use in all allotments where permits have been relinquished.	2C. Relinquished permits would be held in vacant status for two years. Permitted grazing use could be transferred from allotments with resource conflicts to vacant allotments with few or no resource conflicts. In vacant allotments with significant resource conflicts, permitted use could be discontinued.	2D. Relinquished permits would be held in vacant status for two years. Where few or no resource conflicts exist, the allotment could be used as a reserve forage allotment to resolve resource conflicts in other allotments or could be reallocated. Permitted use in all or a portion of allotments with high resource conflicts could be reserved, discontinued, or reallocated.	2E. Relinquished permits would be reallocated to other qualified applicants.

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***WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT (Section 2.16)***

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**Goal 1 - Provide an appropriate management response to all wildland fires emphasizing firefighter and public safety.**

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**Objective 1. Implement appropriate fire suppression actions in the WUI or areas identified to possess significant values.**

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Suppress all wildfires using appropriate management actions.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Develop FMP.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2 A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. No current action.	3B. Identify WUI areas within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone.	3C. Same as 3B.	3D. Same as 3B.	3E. Same as 3B.

**Objective 2.** Implement the appropriate management actions upon discovery of wildland fires in areas outside of the designated WUI or areas that possess significant values.

1A. Suppress all wildland fires using appropriate management actions.	1B. Suppress all fires that threaten human life, private property, or areas that possess significant resource value. Fires that do not threaten human life, private property, or significant areas would be evaluated and managed using minimal suppression actions.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Suppress all fires that threaten human life, private property, or areas that possess significant resource or economic value.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. No current action.	2B. Develop a plan to manage wildland fires for resource benefit.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Develop a plan to manage wildland fires for cultural, economic, ecological, and social benefit.	2E. Develop a plan to manage wildland fires for resource and economic benefit.

**Goal 2 - Restore and maintain the integrity of ecosystems consistent with appropriate fire regimes and land uses.**

**Objective 1.** Implement management actions across the Planning Area that maintain or return plant communities to the historic fire regime where changes to the biophysical environment have not been significant enough to limit the return. Find an appropriate fire regime based on current conditions in areas where the biophysical environment has been significantly changed and where return to the historic fire regime is not possible.

**Actions**

1A. No current management.	1B. Identify WUI and other areas with resource values suitable for fuels reduction treatment	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
2A. Use mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire to reduce fuel loading in areas where the fire regime has been altered.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A and assist local government in developing new markets for byproducts from fuels treatments.	2E. Same as 2D.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**Objective 2.** Assess burned areas for appropriate biological and physical rehabilitation activities.

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**Actions**

1A. Evaluate all burned areas for rehabilitation actions	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Use a mixture of native and desirable nonnative plant species to rehabilitate burned areas where natural recovery is limited.	2B. Use a mixture of native plant species to rehabilitate burned areas where natural recovery is limited.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Use a mixture of native and introduced plant species to enhance economic and natural values.	2E. Use a mixture of native and introduced plant species that would provide maximum economic production.
3A. Utilize a combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression action.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.

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**Goal 3 - Identify areas that qualify for suitable fuels reduction treatments to protect urban interface, developments, and other resource values.**

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**Objective 1.** Develop a management strategy that specifically identifies the WUI, resource values, and developments throughout the Planning Area.

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**Actions**

1A. The FMP would identify WUI areas within the Planning Area.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. The FMP would identify areas within the Planning Area that possess significant resource values.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

**LANDS AND REALTY (Section 2.17)**

**Goal - Provide lands, interests in land, and authorizations for public and private uses while maintaining and improving resource values and public land administration.**

**Objective 1.** Retain, consolidate and/or acquire land or interest in land with high public resource values for effective administration and improvement of resource management. Make available for disposal public land meeting the disposal criteria contained in Section 203(a) of the FLPMA.

**Actions**

1A. Retain public lands in Zone 1 as shown on Map 2.4.	1B. Retain all public lands and increase public land holdings in the entire Planning Area.	1C. Maintain and increase public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A and 1B as identified on Map 2.5 by retaining public lands and acquiring nonpublic lands with emphasis on acquiring lands with natural values.	1D. Maintain and increase public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A, and 1B as identified on Map 2.6 by retaining public lands and acquiring nonpublic lands with high public resource values.	1E. Maintain public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A, and 1B as identified on Map 2.7 by retaining public lands and acquiring nonpublic lands with commodity producing values.
2A. Exchange Zone 2 lands as shown on Map 2.4 for higher resource value lands in Zone 1 or 2. Zone 2 lands would not be sold.	2B. There would be no Zone 2 lands under this alternative.	2C. Exchange public lands in Zone 2 as identified on Map 2.5 for nonpublic lands containing important natural values in Zone 1, 1A, or 1B.	2D. Exchange public lands in Zone 2 as identified on Map 2.6 for nonpublic lands containing important public resource values in Zone 1, 1A, or 1B.	2E. Exchange public lands in Zone 2 as identified on Map 2.7 to facilitate commodity production. Public lands in Zone 2 may also be disposed of by R&PP Sale.
3A. Exchange Zone 3 lands as shown on Map 2.4 to acquire higher value lands in Zones 1 or 2; Zone 3 lands may be sold if exchange is unlikely.	3B. There are no Zone 3 lands identified for disposal under this alternative.	3C. Exchange public lands in Zone 3 as identified on Map 2.5 for non-public lands containing important natural values in Zone 1, 1A or 1B. If exchange is unlikely, Zone 3 lands may be made available for disposal by state indemnity selection, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method.	3D. Make available for disposal by state indemnity selection, private or state exchange, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method, as applicable, approximately 9,940 acres of public land in Zone 3 as identified on Map 2.6.	3E. Make available for disposal by state indemnity selection, private or state exchange, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method, as applicable, approximately 12,296 acres of public land in Zone 3 as identified on Map 2.7.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
4A. Acquire lands in Zone 1 on a case-by-case basis, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.	4B. Acquire nonpublic lands in the Planning Area only by purchase or donation with emphasis on acquiring and restoring commodity producing lands.	4C. Acquire nonpublic lands in Zones 1, 1A, and 1B containing important natural values by exchange, purchase, or donation with the goal of ultimately achieving full fee interest in these zones.	4D. Acquire non-public lands in Zones 1, 1A, and 1B by exchange, purchase, donation, or other authorized method. Acquire lands and interests in Zone 1A with the goal of ultimately achieving full fee interest in the zone.	4E. Acquire lands only by exchanges that facilitate commodity production.
5A. Acquire lands in Zone 2 on a case-by-case basis, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.	5B. There are no Zone 2 lands under this alternative.	5C. Acquire lands in Zone 2 with important natural values. Non-public lands in Zone 2 may be acquired only by purchase or donation.	5D. Limit acquisition in Zone 2 to lands with important resource values (as expressed in 1A and B above) or to lands necessarily included in a larger acquisition of Zone 1, 1A, and 1B lands. Non-public lands in Zone 2 may be acquired only by exchange or donation.	5E. Acquire no lands in Zone 2.
6A. Acquire lands in Zone 3 on a case-by-case basis, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.	6B. There are no Zone 3 lands under this alternative.	6C. Acquire lands in Zone 3 with important natural values. Non-public lands in Zone 3 may be acquired only by purchase or donation.	6D. Acquire no lands in Zone 3 unless they are necessarily included in a larger acquisition of Zone 1, 1A, and 1B lands.	6E. Acquire no lands in Zone 3.

**Objective 2.** Meet public, private, and federal agency needs for realty related land use authorizations and land withdrawals including those authorizations necessary for wind, solar, biomass, and other forms of renewable energy development.

**Actions**

1A. Continue current corridor designations on 339 miles of public land .	1B. Eliminate all existing corridor designations throughout the Planning Area. As opportunities arise, terminate and remove ROW facilities within existing corridors.	1C. Designate approximately 246 miles of public land as ROW corridors .	1D. Same as 1C.	1E. Designate 354 miles on public land as ROW corridors including all corridors identified by the “Western Regional Corridor Study”, all county roads, and all federal and state highways.
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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
2A. ROWs would be located within designated corridors on a case-by-case basis.	2B. The entire Planning Area (1,649,470 acres) would be considered a ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization exclusion area except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to non-public lands and interests in land.	2C. Require all linear ROWs for electrical transmission lines greater than 69 kV, all mainline communications facilities, and all pipelines greater than ten inches in diameter be located within designated corridors.	2D. Encourage all applicants for electrical transmission lines greater than 69 kV, all mainline communications facilities, and pipelines greater than ten inches in diameter to locate their facilities within designated corridors.	2E. Same as 2D.
3A. Continue ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization management as necessary consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law. Except for those areas (14,812 acres) designated in the Three Rivers portion of the Planning Area, no exclusionary areas are currently designated.	3B. The entire Planning Area (1,649,470 acres) would be considered a ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization exclusion area except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.	3C. Designate 995,037 acres of public land including all ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, Wilderness, and the CMPA as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy exclusion areas, except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.	3D. Designate 171,301 acres of public land including all WSRs and Wilderness as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy exclusion areas, except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.	3E. Same as 3D.
4A. Continue ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization management as necessary, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law. Except for those areas (17,834 acres) designated in the Three Rivers portion of the Planning Area, no avoidance areas are currently designated.	4B. The entire Planning Area (1,649,470 acres) would be considered a ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization exclusion area except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.	4C. Designate 222,784 acres of public land including all lands within 0.6 miles of sage-grouse leks, deer and elk winter range, and bighorn sheep habitat as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization avoidance areas.	4D. Designate 699,611 acres of public land including all WSAs, and ACECs as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization avoidance areas.	4E. Designate 678,389 acres of public land including all WSAs, and ACECs as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization avoidance areas.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
5A. Continue Communications Site management as necessary, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.	5B. Allow no new communications uses throughout the Planning Area. Terminate the existing communications uses at Buckskin Mountain, remove all facilities, and allow the site to recover naturally.	5C. With the exception of small linear distribution facilities, allow no new communications uses throughout the Planning Area. Continue the existing uses at Buckskin Mountain until they are obsolete at which time they may be terminated, the facilities removed, and the lands restored.	5D. Designate Buckskin Mountain as a Communication Site and allow for additional communications uses at the site. Upon designation of the site, develop a site management plan to facilitate efficient and timely development of compatible communications uses. Consider communications lease applications for new locations on a case-by-case basis, and develop site management plans concurrent with processing applications.	5E. Designate Buckskin Mountain as a Communication Site and allow for additional communications uses at the site. Consider communications lease applications for new locations on a case-by-case basis, and develop site management plans when a need or conflict between users arises.
6A. Utilizing the NEPA process, consider an application by a qualified entity to lease and reopen the Fields airstrip.	6B. Reject any proposal or application to reopen and lease the Fields airstrip.	6C. Approve an application by a qualified entity to lease and reopen the Fields airstrip. Reject any proposal to convey the lands under the Airport and Airway Improvement Act.	6D. Approve an application by a qualified entity to lease and reopen the Fields airstrip. Reject any proposal to convey the lands under the Airport and Airway Improvement Act and terminate the lease if the lands are proposed for exchange under the land tenure provisions of this alternative.	6E. Approve an application by a qualified entity to lease and reopen the Fields airstrip. Once the airstrip is fully developed and operational under the terms of the lease and an application is filed by a qualified entity, convey the lands under the Airport and Airway Improvement Act or other authorized method.
7A. Continue ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization management as necessary, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.	7B. The entire Planning Area would be considered a ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorization exclusion area except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.	7C. Except as noted above, applications for ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorizations in the remainder of the Planning Area would be processed in a timely manner on a case-by-case basis in accordance with NEPA and other applicable law.	7D. Same as 7C.	7E. Same as 7C.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
8A. Consider new BLM withdrawals on a case-by-case basis.	8B. Recommend the entire Planning Area be withdrawn from the public land laws, including the mining laws.	8C. Recommend approximately 255,137 acres identified in Table 2.4 be withdrawn from the public land and mining laws.	8D. Recommend approximately 20,367 acres identified in Table 2.4 be withdrawn from the public land and mining laws.	8E. Recommend no new withdrawals of public lands.
9A. Recommend approval or denial of other federal agency requests for new withdrawals on a case-by-case basis.	9B. Recommend approval of other federal agency requests only for those new withdrawals that would limit commodity production and protect natural values.	9C. Same as 9B.	9D. Same as 9A.	9E. Recommend approval of other federal agency requests only for those new withdrawals that would emphasize commodity production.
10A. Withdrawal and classification review recommendations would be made on a case-by-case basis.	10B. Recommend withdrawal review and classification continuations on all protective withdrawals and classifications. Recommend revocation and termination of those withdrawals and classifications that allow for commodity uses. Eliminate such uses and allow for natural restoration of the lands.	10C. Withdrawal and classification review recommendations would be made on a case-by-case basis with special emphasis given on protecting natural values.	10D. Same as 10A.	10E. To facilitate commodity production withdrawal and classification review recommendations would be made on a case-by-case basis with special emphasis on reviewing, revoking, and terminating all administrative protective withdrawals.
11A. Consider other agency requests for withdrawal relinquishments and modifications on a case-by-case basis.	11B. Encourage other agencies to relinquish withdrawals that provide for commodity uses. Give favorable consideration to continuations of other agency protective withdrawals.	11C. Same as 11B.	11D. Same as 11A.	11E. Encourage other agencies to relinquish protective withdrawals that restrict or prohibit commodity uses. Give favorable consideration to continuations of other agency withdrawals that facilitate commodity uses.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
12A. Continue the current management and boundary alignment with Malheur NWR.	12B. Develop MOUs with USFWS and consider withdrawals and restorations to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR with special emphasis on excluding commodity production.	12C. Develop MOUs with USFWS and consider withdrawals and restorations to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR with special emphasis on providing for protection of natural values.	12D. Develop MOUs with USFWS and consider withdrawals and restorations to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR.	12E. Develop MOUs with USFWS and consider withdrawal restorations along the boundary of the Malheur NWR to facilitate commodity production.
13A. Maintain existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat.	13B. Consolidate existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat.	13C. Evaluate the feasibility of consolidating existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat and implement for critical areas.	13D. Same as 13C.	13E. Maintain existing ROWs and evaluate when feasible the possibility of consolidation of parallel ROWs.

**Objective 3.** Acquire legal public or administrative access to public land.

**Actions**

1A. Acquire legal or administrative access on a case-by-case basis.	1B. Acquire the rights necessary to control and minimize access to areas containing sensitive resource values.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Acquire legal public or administrative access where public demand or an administrative need exists, including any rights necessary to control and minimize access to areas containing sensitive resource values. Emphasis would be placed on providing access.	1E. Acquire legal public or administrative access where public demand or an administrative need exists. Emphasis would be placed on providing access to facilitate commodity production.
2A. Review all land tenure actions for their effect on public access.	2B. Provide for land tenure actions which do not facilitate public access to lands containing sensitive resource values.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Provide for maintenance or improvement of public access through all land tenure adjustment transactions.	2E. Same as Alternative D.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
3A. Consider new road construction around nonpublic lands where an access need exists, on a case-by-case basis, subject to the limitations expressed in the CMPA.	3B. Do not utilize road construction around nonpublic lands as an option to easement acquisition for access. Close roads that provide public access to lands containing sensitive resource values.	3C. Same as 2B except actively reclaim closed roads.	3D. Where easement acquisition for access is not feasible or desirable, but a critical access need has been identified, construct new roads around nonpublic lands, subject to the limitations expressed in the CMPA.	3E. Consider new road construction around nonpublic lands to facilitate commodity production, on a case-by-case basis, subject to the limitations expressed in the CMPA.

**Objective 4.** Eliminate unauthorized use of public lands.

**Actions**

1A. Detect, confirm, and abate, either by formal authorization or termination, all unauthorized use of public land. Effect active reclamation of lands damaged by unauthorized use.	1B. Detect, confirm, and terminate all unauthorized use of public land. Allow for natural restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use.	1C. Detect, confirm, and terminate, except as noted below in 2C, all unauthorized use of public land. Effect active reclamation of lands damaged by unauthorized use.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Detect, confirm, and authorize all unauthorized use of public land.
2A. Agricultural or occupancy trespass would be terminated or may be authorized, consistent with the land tenure zones, by long-term lease, sale, or exchange.	2B. Terminate all agricultural or occupancy trespass. Remove all structures and facilities and allow for natural restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use.	2C. Agricultural or occupancy trespass would be terminated or may be authorized by exchange, consistent with the land tenure zones, where the exchange would serve to acquire lands with important natural values in addition to resolving the trespass.	2D. Agricultural or occupancy trespass would be terminated or may be authorized, consistent with the land tenure zones, by long-term lease, sale, or exchange, where the lease, sale, or exchange would serve other important public objectives in addition to resolving the trespass. Regardless of the land tenure zone, long-term, inadvertent agricultural or occupancy trespass may be authorized by sale of the minimum acreage necessary to abate the unauthorized use.	2E. Authorize all agricultural or occupancy trespass by long-term lease, sale, or exchange regardless of the land tenure zone.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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***TRANSPORTATION AND ROADS (Section 2.18)***

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**Goal - Provide travel routes to and through BLM managed lands as appropriate to meet resource objectives while providing for private and public access needs.**

**Objective 1.** Manage roads and ways within the CMPA consistent with the Route Management Categories and Maintenance Levels identified for each alternative.

**Actions**

1A. Retain the current road use maintenance levels and seasonal restrictions for the existing road system within the CMPA, subject to implementation of the Steens Act. The entire Steens Loop Road would remain open. Motorized and nonmotorized winter recreation permits to access the snow line on the North Steens Loop Road would remain available. See Map 2.8.	1B. Close approximately 49 miles of roads bounded on both sides by wilderness, including 18 miles of the Steens Loop Road. Close an additional 107 miles of cherrystem roads and ways associated with WSAs. Retain motorized access on the remaining open routes within the CMPA. Discontinue the winter recreation access along the North Steens Loop Road. Install a gate to seasonally close the Moon Hill Road from February 1 through May 15 each year.	1C. Close the Rooster Comb portion of the Steens Loop Road, the Cold Springs Road west of Nye Cabin, the Fish Creek Road where bounded by wilderness, the Indian Creek Road north of Indian Creek along the WSA/wilderness boundary, and seven miles of other routes as shown on Map 2.11. A total of 29 miles of routes would be closed. Retain motorized access on the remaining open routes within the CMPA. Allow motorized access along the North Steens Loop Road to the snow line and issue permits for nonmotorized forms of winter recreation. Install a gate to seasonally close the Moon Hill Road from February 1 through May 15 each year.	1D. Keep the entire Steens Loop Road open. Allow winter recreation access along the North Loop road to the snow line and issue permits for motorized and nonmotorized forms of winter recreation. Close approximately seven miles of routes as shown on Map 2.12. Retain motorized access along all other remaining open routes within the CMPA. Allow the parking of motorized vehicles within 100 feet of centerline along open routes unless precluded by special designation or other resource concerns. Limit parking along the upper section of the Steens Loop Road to the present area of disturbance. Install a gate to seasonally close the Moon Hill Road from February 1 through May 15 each year.	1E. Keep the entire Steens Loop Road open and retain motorized access along all other currently open routes as shown on Map 2.8. Allow vehicles to travel 100 feet from centerline along open routes unless precluded by special designation or other resource concerns. Expand winter seasonal access to the South Steens Loop Road to the vicinity of the South Steens Campground.
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***OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES (Section 2.19)***

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**Goal - Manage motorized OHV and mechanized (nonmotorized) vehicle use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide OHV and mechanized vehicle use opportunities where appropriate and allowable, and minimize conflicts among various users.**

**Objective 1.** Manage OHV and mechanized vehicle use in conformance with OHV designations.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Manage existing OHV and mechanized vehicle use in accordance with the existing open, limited, and closed OHV designations. See Table 2.9.	1B. Maximize areas designated as closed. All other areas would be designated as limited to designated roads and trails with a minimum numbers of roads and trails identified. See Table 2.9 and Map 2.10.	1C. Minimize OHV and mechanized vehicle use in accordance with limited and closed OHV designations (See Table 2.9 and Map 2.11), in order to protect natural values.	1D. Cooperatively manage OHV and mechanized vehicle use in accordance with OHV designations (See Table 2.9 and Map 2.12). Seek cooperative agreements with OHV and mechanized vehicle clubs and other users.	1E. Manage OHV and mechanized vehicle use for maximum OHV opportunities except for areas designated closed or limited, in compliance with existing laws, regulations, and policies (See Table 2.9 and Map 2.13).
2A. Allow OHV and mechanized vehicle organized events when consistent with protection of resource values and OHV designations.	2B. Do not allow organized OHV or mechanized vehicle events.	2C. Allow OHV and mechanized vehicle organized events only on designated roads and trails within areas designated as limited, in order to protect natural values.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Maximize opportunities for OHV and mechanized vehicle organized events.
3A. Continue existing OHV designations for ACECs/ RNAs. See Table 2.11.	3B. See Table 2.11.	3C. Same as 3B.	3D. Same as 3B.	3E. Same as 3B.
4A. Leave open all WSA cherrystem roads and ways.	4B. Close all WSA cherrystem roads and ways.	4C. Same as 4A.	4D. Same as 4A.	4E. Same as 4A.
<b>CMPA</b>				
5A. Manage the Steens Mountain Wilderness as closed to OHVs and mechanized vehicles.	5B. Designate the Steens Mountain Wilderness as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	5C. Same as 5B.	5D. Same as 5B.	5E. Same as 5B.
6A. Leave open the Fish Creek Road, Cold Springs Road, Newton Cabin Road, Bone Creek Road, Indian Creek Road, the road north from Indian Creek Road, and Big Alvord Creek Road. See Map 2.9.	6B. Close all roads listed in 6A and the Steens Loop Road from the Kiger Overlook Road to west of Blitzen Crossing to motorized and mechanized vehicle use.	6C. Close the Rooster Comb, Fish Creek Road, Cold Springs Road from west of Nye Cabin to Riddle Brothers. Ranch, and the road north from Indian Creek Road towards Dry Creek to motorized vehicles.	6D. Same as 6A, except close the Bone Creek Road from the Carlson Creek intersection to the top of Whiskey Hill to public use.	6E. Same as 6A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
7A. All OHV and mechanized vehicle use in WSAs is limited to existing, designated ways and trails.	7B. Designate all WSAs as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	7C. Designate all WSAs and areas found to contain wilderness characteristics as limited to designated ways and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	7D. Same as 7C.	7E. Same as 7C.
8A. Continue the existing seasonal closure on the Steens.	8B. Seasonally close the entire CMPA. Install a gate on the Moon Hill Road at the Diamond Grain Camp Road.	8C. Seasonally close the core of the CMPA. Install a gate on the Moon Hill Road at the Diamond Grain Camp Road. Expand the existing closure to include all public lands affected by gate closures.	8D. Same as 8C, except that the Moon Hill Road would be closed approximately ten miles south of the Diamond Grain Camp Road. Expand the existing closure to include all public lands affected by gate closures.	8E. Seasonally close the upper Steens Mountain area. Motor vehicles would be allowed to the 5,600 foot level on the North Steens Loop Road and to South Steens Campground on the South Steens Loop Road without winter recreation permits when road conditions are suitable. Install a gate on the North Steens Loop Road at about the 5,600 foot level.
9A. Continue the existing OHV designations.	9B. Designate the remainder of the CMPA as limited to designated routes.	9C. Same as 9B.	9D. Same as 9B.	9E. Same as 9B
<b>AMU</b>				
10A. All OHV and mechanized vehicle use in WSAs is limited to existing designated ways and trails.	10B. Designate all WSAs as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	10C. Designate all WSAs and areas found to contain wilderness characteristics as limited to designated ways and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	10D. Same as 10C.	10E. Designate all WSAs as limited to “existing” ways and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use.
11A. Continue existing OHV designations of the Catlow Valley parcels.	11B. Designate the Catlow Valley parcels as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	11C. Same as 11B.	11D. Same as 11B.	11E. Same as 11B.
12A. Retain the remaining existing OHV designations.	12B. Designate the remainder of the AMU as limited to designated routes for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	12C. Same as 12B.	12D. Designate the remainder of the AMU as limited to existing routes for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	12E. Designate the remainder of the AMU as open for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
13A. The Alvord Desert playa would remain open to OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	13B. Designate the Alvord Desert playa as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	13C. Same as 13B.	13D. Designate the Alvord Desert playa as open to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	13E. Same as 13D.
14A. Continue to allow snow to block access to the Trout Creek Mountains Road.	14B. Seasonally close the Trout Creek Mountains Road to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Install two gates on the Trout Creek Mountains Road.	14C. Same as 14B.	14D. Same as 14B.	14E. Same as 14A.
15A. Continue to allow snow to block access to the Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows area.	15B. Seasonally close the Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows area to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Install gates on the Ten Cent Meadows and Starr Ridge Roads.	15C. Same as 15B.	15D. Same as 15B.	15E. Same as 15A.
16A. Maintain the current Borax Lake ACEC OHV designation of limited to existing roads for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	16B. Designate the Borax Lake area as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	16C. Designate the Borax Lake ACEC as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use.	16D. Same as 16C.	16E. Same as 16B.

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***RECREATION (Section 2.20)***

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**Goal - Provide developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities, while protecting resources, to manage the increasing demand for resource-dependent recreation activities.**

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**Objective 1.** Establish and manage intensive-use areas, where the presence of high quality natural resources and the current or potential demand warrants intensive management practices to protect areas for their scientific, educational, and/or recreational values while accommodating anticipated increases in use for recreation activities in specific areas.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**CMPA**

1A. Continue the Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation.	1B. Remove the Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
2A. Manage the entire CMPA as an undesignated SRMA. See Map 2.17	2B. Provide minimal recreation management. No SRMA would be designated Congressionally and administratively designated areas (CMPA, WSRs, Wilderness, WSAs, ACECs) would be subject to a minimum level of management.	2C. Designate the CMPA as an SRMA. See Map 2.15.	2D. Same as 2C. See Map 2.16.	2E. Same as 2C. See Map 2.14.

**AMU**

3A. Manage the entire AMU as an ERMA.	3B. Provide minimal recreation management. No SRMAs would be designated.	3C. Designate the Pueblo Mountains and Trout Creek Mountain as SRMAs with emphasis on undeveloped dispersed recreation opportunities and protection of natural values, while providing an associated level of support facilities. Designate the remaining public lands as an ERMA.	3D. Designate the Pueblo Mountains and Trout Creek Mountain as SRMAs to provide quality recreation opportunities while protecting resource values. Designate the remaining public lands as an ERMA.	3E. Designate the Pueblo Mountains and Trout Creek Mountain as SRMAs to enhance tourism and recreation opportunities. Designate the remaining public lands as an ERMA.
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**Objective 2.** Manage recreation facilities to protect natural resources and to meet user needs.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Continue management of existing developed recreation sites and consider their expansion. Provide tourism opportunities.	1B. Provide minimal management of undeveloped recreation sites. Rehabilitate or close undeveloped sites where natural processes are being jeopardized.	1C. Emphasize dispersed recreation while assuring protection of natural and cultural values. Allow for development only to protect and interpret natural and cultural values and provide for public safety. Rehabilitate or close sites where resource values are being affected beyond acceptable levels.	1D. Continue management of existing recreation sites, areas, and their associated improvements, and allow for their expansion. Establish new recreation sites and areas to meet increased recreation demand where needed to protect natural and cultural values and provide for public safety. Allow tourism opportunities consistent with other resource objectives.	1E. Increase tourism opportunities by expanding existing developed and undeveloped recreation sites. Establish new recreation sites and areas to meet increased recreation demand.
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**CMPA**

2A. Continue management and maintenance of existing developed recreation sites.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. Maintain the Mann Lake Recreation Site in its present condition.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Improve facilities at Mann Lake with minimal development to reduce resource damage. Monitor the area and develop a site plan.	3E. Upgrade the Mann Lake Recreation Site to a full-service campground.
4A. Maintain existing horse trail head facilities at South Steens Campground.	4B. Same as 4A.	4C. Same as 4A.	4D. Develop a trailhead facility for horse users in or near South Steens Campground to improve public safety and limit resource damage. Design and construct connecting trails from the trailhead to other trails.	4E. Develop a trailhead facility for horse users near South Steens Campground. Design and construct connecting trails from the trailhead to other trails.
5A. Do not install additional toilets along the Steens Loop Road.	5B. Same as 5A.	5C. Install and maintain one toilet along the North Steens Loop Road in the Fish Lake area.	5D. Same as 5C.	5E. Install and maintain toilets at the three overlooks at the top of the Steens Loop Road.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
6A. Do not provide for group camping.	6B. Same as 6A.	6C. Develop a group camping area within the confines of an existing campground.	6D. In cooperation with private land owners, develop a group camping area east of Fish Lake.	6E. Same as 6D.
7A. Do not provide any facilities for winter recreation.	7B. Same as 7A.	7C. Develop a winter use staging area along the North Steens Loop Road.	7D. Develop a winter use staging area along the North Steens Loop Road. Develop a system of cross-country ski trails and nonmotorized winter play area at the west end of the WJMA.	7E. Same as 7D.
8A. Continue to manage Lily Lake as a dispersed recreation site.	8B. Designate Lily Lake as a day use area.	8C. Designate Lily Lake as a day use area. Install interpretive signs.	8D. Same as 8 A.	8E. Same as 8A. Install a toilet at Lily Lake.
9A. Do not provide trail access to the Fir Grove.	9B. Same as 9A.	9C. Minimally maintain the route to the Fir Grove protect natural values and provide for public safety.	9D. Same as 9A.	9E. Develop a small trailhead adjacent to the North Loop. Mark and minimally maintain the route to the Fir Grove.
<b>AMU</b>				
10A. Do not develop any new campgrounds.	10B. Same as 10A.	10C. Same as 10A.	10D. Install a toilet and fire rings in the Frog Spring area.	10E. Construct a developed campground in the Frog Spring area.
11A. Do not install a toilet at Pike Creek.	11B. Same as 11A	11C. Same as 11A.	11D. Install and maintain a toilet at Pike Creek in cooperation with the private landowner.	11E. Same as 11D.
12A. Provide trailhead parking near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.	12B. Do not provide a staging area near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.	12C. Provide a staging area near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.	12D. Provide a staging area with information and a toilet near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.	12E. Provide a staging area with information, toilet, and horse support facilities near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.
<b>Objective 3.</b> Outside of the intensive-use areas and developed recreation sites, manage the remainder of the Planning Area for dispersed recreation.				

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Continue management of existing undeveloped recreation sites. Provide for public safety and resource protection. Develop dispersed tourism opportunities.	1B. Minimally manage existing undeveloped recreation sites. Protect natural processes. Rehabilitate or close sites where natural processes are being jeopardized.	1C. Minimally manage existing undeveloped recreation sites. Protect natural and cultural values and provide for public safety. Rehabilitate or close sites where resource values are being affected beyond acceptable levels.	1D. Protect natural and cultural values and provide for public safety. Develop dispersed recreation opportunities consistent with other resource objectives.	1E. Increase tourism opportunities through management of undeveloped recreation sites and providing additional opportunities for dispersed recreation.
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**CMPA**

2A. Do not develop trails outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Develop trails outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness only where needed for protection of natural values.	2D. Develop trails outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness where needed for protection of natural resources and for public health and safety.	2E. Develop trails outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness to provide additional hiking and nonmotorized recreation opportunities.
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**Objective 4.** Manage visitor use in the Planning Area to protect natural resources and to provide a variety of recreation opportunities.

**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Manage visitor use for unlimited recreation opportunities.	1B. Manage visitor use for minimum recreation opportunities through closures, regulations, etc., to maximize natural processes.	1C. Manage visitor use to protect natural values.	1D. Manage visitor use in a manner which encourages economic growth and cooperative management practices for recreation opportunities consistent with other resource objectives.	1E. Manage visitor use for maximum recreation opportunities consistent with other resource objectives.
2A. Do not limit group size for any recreation activity.	2B. Implement group size limits for any activity in order to allow natural processes to be unimpaired.	2C. Implement group size limits in order to protect natural values.	2D. Evaluate group size limits on a case-by-case basis.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b>CMPA</b>				
3A. Do not restrict camping.	3B. Close to camping all RNAs, the Steens Loop Road above the Jackman Park and South Steens Campgrounds, the Wildhorse Road, all overlooks, Wildhorse Lake basin, and all areas above timberline within view of the Steens Loop Road.	3C. Close to camping all RNAs, the Steens Loop Road above the Jackman Park and South Steens Campgrounds, the Wildhorse Road, all overlooks, and Wildhorse Lake basin.	3D. Close Little Wildhorse RNA to camping. Allow camping in Little Blitzen and Rooster Comb RNAs in historically used areas when consistent with the purposes of the RNAs and the Wilderness Management Plan. Allow camping at Wildhorse Lake in designated campsites only. Overnight pack stock use would not be allowed at Wildhorse Lake. Close East Kiger Plateau, South Fork Willow Creek, and Big Alvord RNAs to camping.	3E. Same as 3A.
4A. Do not restrict parking on the Rooster Comb section of the Steens Loop Road.	4B. No appropriate action.	4C. No appropriate action.	4D. Close the Rooster Comb to parking or stopping, except at designated locations. Develop a small pullout at the east end of the Rooster Comb.	4E. Same as 4D.
5A. Limit snowmobile use on certain routes.	5B. Eliminate all snowmobile use in the CMPA. Continue permit system for nonmotorized winter recreation.	5C. Eliminate all snowmobile use associated with the North Steens Loop Road. Continue permit system for nonmotorized winter recreation.	5D. Allow snowmobile and other across-the-snow mechanized vehicle use on certain routes. Develop cooperative agreement with private land owners for play area. Continue permit system for snowmobiles and nonmotorized winter recreation.	5E. Allow snowmobile use on all designated roads within the CMPA. Continue permit system for snowmobiles and nonmotorized winter recreation.
6A. Allow unrestricted camping throughout the CMPA.	6B. Allow camping only in developed campgrounds (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness).	6C. Allow camping only in developed campgrounds and designated sites throughout the CMPA (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness).	6D. Allow dispersed camping in areas more than 0.5 mile from a developed campground (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness).	6E. Allow camping anywhere within the CMPA unless otherwise restricted.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
7A. Allow river use only when the lowest gate on the South Steens Loop Road is open.	7B. Do not allow any recreation river use.	7C. Same as 7A. Allow use only in a manner that does not affect ORVs.	7D. Same as 7C.	7E. Implement a river access system similar to the existing winter use permit system. Do not place limits on the number of users.
8A. Do not restrict visitor use at overlooks.	8B. Limit visitor use at overlooks to designated trails. Move interpretive signs to parking lots.	8C. Same as 8B.	8D. Encourage visitors to stay on designated trails. Move interpretive signs to parking lots.	8E. Same as 8A. Mover interpretive signs to parking lots.
9A. Do not require permits to visit CMPA.	Require permits for all CMPA users.	9C. Require permits for all Steens Loop Road users.	9D. Same as 9A.	9E. Same as 9A.
<b>AMU</b>				
10A. Allow camping in all AMU ACECs/RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs.	10B. Close Mickey Hot Springs to camping.	10C. Close all AMU RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs to camping.	10D. Same as 10C.	10E. Same as 10C.
11A. Allow dispersed users to use whatever method of solid human waste disposal that they prefer.	11B. Require dispersed users to pack out all solid human waste.	11C. Install and maintain toilets at Cottonwood Creek and Frog Spring. Encourage other dispersed users to pack out all solid human waste.	11D. Install and maintain toilets at Cottonwood Creek, Frog Spring, and other dispersed campsites throughout the AMU. Encourage other dispersed users to pack out all solid human waste.	11E. Same as 11D.
12A. Do not develop routes for mechanized vehicle use.	12B. Same as 12A.	12C. Same as 12A.	12D. Develop routes for mechanized vehicle (i.e., mountain bikes) use as demand warrants.	12E. Same as 12D.

**Objective 5.** Provide information and educational opportunities to public land visitors.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Continue providing information (e.g. maps and brochures, etc.) and education opportunities to enhance visitors' experiences.	1B. Same 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Provide extensive information and education opportunities to increase tourism activities.
2A. Continue current informational and directional sign installation and maintenance program.	2B. Minimize placement of new signs. Maintain and replace signs only as needed for public health and safety.	2C. Minimize placement of new signs. Install, maintain, and replace signs only as needed for public health and safety.	2D. Within the CMPA, same as 2C. In the AMU, install, maintain, and replace signs as needed.	2E. Install, maintain, and replace signs to maximize public safety and confidence.

**Objective 6. Manage commercial, competitive, educational, and organized group recreation activities.**

**CMPA**

1A. Issue SRPs on a case-by-case basis while providing for the protection of sensitive resource values.	1B. Continue to manage and renew existing long-term SRPs in the CMPA, in conformance with existing laws and regulations. No new SRPs would be issued.	1C. Issue SRPs as needed to meet the demand, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. Implement allocations (e.g., limits on party size, number of trips, number of permittees) for the CMPA.	1D. Issue SRPs as needed to meet the demand, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. Implement allocations (e.g., limits on party size, number of trips, number of permittees) for the CMPA as needed.	1E. Emphasize commercial, competitive, and organized group opportunities and activities through the issuance of SRPs.
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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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<b>AMU</b>				
2A. Issue SRPs on a case-by-case basis while providing for the protection of sensitive resource values.	2B. Cancel existing SRPs and do not issue additional SRPs in the AMU.	2C. Issue SRPs as needed to meet the demand, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. If needed, implement allocations (e.g., limits on party size, number of trips, number of permittees) for the AMU.	2D. Same as 2C.	2E. Emphasize commercial, competitive, and organized group opportunities and activities through the issuance of SRPs.
3A. Allow organized group and commercial SRP uses of the Alvord Desert playa that do not impair the wilderness values of the Alvord Desert WSA.	3B. Do not issue SRPs for the Alvord Desert playa.	3C. Same as 3B.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Allow organized group, commercial, and competitive SRP uses of the Alvord Desert playa that do not impair the wilderness values of the Alvord Desert WSA.

**Objective 7. Manage BCBs to protect the recognized values.**

**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Manage existing BCBs in conformance with existing laws and regulations.	1B. Eliminate current BCBs and do not designate new BCBs.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A. Develop and implement interpretive management plans for existing BCBs. Designate additional byways or scenic tour routes that support cooperative management.	1E. Same as 1D. Designate new BCBs to increase tourism potential and accommodate anticipated growth in driving for pleasure.
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**CMPA**

2A. Do not construct vehicle pullouts along the Steens Loop Road.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Construct vehicle pullouts along the Steens Loop Road in order to accommodate and manage visitor use.	2E. Construct vehicle pullouts at regular intervals along the Steens Loop Road.
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**Objective 8. Manage the Oregon High Desert National Recreation Trail to protect the recognized values and setting.**

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

**PLANNING AREA**

1A. Continue management under the current MOU with the Desert Trail Association.	1B. Cancel the MOU and remove the trail corridor from maps.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. Do not develop trailhead facilities for the High Desert Trail.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Install minimal trailhead facilities at Domingo Pass and Frog Spring.	2D. Install minimal trailhead facilities at Domingo Pass, Frog Spring, and near Denio. In cooperation with the Fields Store, upgrade facilities at Fields.	2E. Install complete trailhead facilities at Domingo Pass, near Denio, and at Frog Spring. In cooperation with the Fields Store, upgrade facilities at Fields.

**AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (Section 2.21)**

**Goal - Retain existing and designate new ACECs where relevance and importance criteria are met and special management is required to protect the identified values.**

**Objective 1.** Retain and manage existing ACECs if they meet relevance and importance criteria and require special management or protection.

Actions

1A. Manage the 15 existing ACECs (nine of which are RNAs) totaling 131,907 acres.	1B. Drop the designation on the 15 existing ACECs. No existing ACECs would be retained. Since the Planning Area would be managed for maximum protection of natural processes, the additional designation would not be necessary. See Map 2.14 and Table 2.10.	1C. Retain all 15 existing ACECs (nine of which are RNAs) totaling 131,907 acres. See Map 2.15 and Table 2.10.	1D. Retain 12 existing ACECs (nine of which are RNAs) with potential additions and deletions for a total of 67,135 acres. Drop the designation on three existing ACECs totaling 75,143 acres. See Map 2.16 and Table 2.10.	1E. Drop the designation on the 15 existing ACECs. No existing ACECs would be retained in order to provide for least restrictions on commodity production.
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**Objective 2.** Designate and manage new ACECs that meet relevance and importance criteria and need special management or protection.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

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**Actions**

1A. Manage seven potential ACEC/RNAs as specified in the BLM manual.	1B. Designate one potential ACEC for a total of 27 acres. Since the Planning Area would be managed for maximum protection of natural processes, the additional designation would not be necessary.	1C. Designate seven potential ACECs (three of which are RNAs) for a total of 20,170 acres.	1D. Designate five potential ACECs (three of which are RNAs) for a total of 3,220 acres.	1E. Designate one potential ACEC for a total of 27 acres in order to provide for least restrictions on commodity production
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***WILDERNESS (Section 2.22)***

**Goal 1 - Maintain or improve the wilderness values and the special features of the Steens Mountain Wilderness under a principle of nondegradation and in a manner that would leave these values unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, while providing opportunities for public use, enjoyment, and understanding.**

**Objective 1.** Manage the wilderness to allow for areas of differing levels of resource use.

**Actions**

1A. Develop an integrated WSR/Wilderness Management Plan for all WSRs in the CMPA and the Steens Mountain Wilderness.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
2A. No “Management Areas”.	2B. Wilderness would be classified into two “Management Areas”: the Gorges and the Uplands.	2C. Same as 2B.	2D. Same as 2B.	2E. Same as 2A.
3A. During the years 2003 and 2004 inventory wilderness to establish baseline and monitoring data for resources and social impacts and to establish appropriate levels of use.	3B. Same as 3A.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
4A. During 2005, 2006 and 2007, evaluate monitoring data as outlined in the Wilderness Plan. Change management actions as needed if not within acceptable limits.	4B. Same as 4A.	4C. Same as 4A.	4D. Same as 4A.	4E. Same as 4A.
5A. No restrictions on dogs in wilderness.	5B. No dogs allowed in wilderness.	5C. Allow dogs in all areas but require them to be under voice or physical control.	5D. Same as 5C.	5E. Same as 5A.
6A. Encourage use of catholes and proper disposal of toilet paper.	6B. Require all human waste and toilet paper to be packed out of the wilderness.	6C. Require catholes for human waste and require them to be a minimum of 150 feet from all water sources, campsites and trails. Require all toilet paper to be packed out.	6D. Same as 6C.	6E. Same as 6A.
7A. No camping restrictions enforced.	7B. No overnight camping allowed at Wildhorse Lake or in any RNA. Require use of existing established campsites in other areas.	7C. No overnight camping allowed at Wildhorse Lake or in any RNA.	7D. Close Little Wildhorse RNA to camping. Camping would be allowed at Wildhorse Lake in a defined area in designated campsites, but no overnight pack stock. Camping would be allowed in Little Blitzen and Rooster Comb RNAs in historical areas, consistent with the purposes of the RNA and the wilderness plan.	7E. No camping restrictions.
8A. No campsite restrictions. Encourage use of existing camp sites.	8B. Campsite conditions would be limited. Five percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	8C. Campsite conditions would be limited. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 30 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	8D. Campsite conditions would be limited. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 30 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 40 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	8E. Same as 8A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
9A. No limits on campsite density.	9B. Campsite density would be limited. Five percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	9C. Campsite density would be limited. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 30 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	9D. Campsite density would be limited. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 30 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 40 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	9E. Same as 9A.
10A. No limits on party size or area of use to maintain solitude (limit crowding). No amount of use increase would initiate limits on party size or area of use.	10B. Limit group size to six people. Limit pack stock to nine head, except historic use on a case-by-case basis.  Crowding limits: Five percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a ten percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 20 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 20 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 20 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	10C. Limit group size to nine people. Limit pack stock to 12 head, except for historic use on a case-by-case basis.  Crowding limits: Ten percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 15 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 30 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 30 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 40 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	10D. Limit group size to 12 people. Limit pack stock to 15 head, except for historic use on a case-by-case basis, subject to NEPA review.  Crowding limits: 20 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 25 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 30 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 40 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 40 percent exceedence of the crowding guideline or a 50 percent exceedence of the crowding perception guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	10E. Same as 10A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
11A. Trail density would not be managed. Minimal maintenance of Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake trails. No new trails constructed. Reclaim inappropriate user-created trails.	11B. No maintenance of existing trails or reclamation of user-created trails or closed roads in wilderness except in cases involving threat to life, property or wilderness values. No new trails constructed. Five percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	11C. Minimal maintenance on Little Blitzen, Big Indian and Wildhorse Lake trails. No new trails constructed. Reclaim inappropriate user-created trails. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. Reclaim selected closed roads in wilderness while allowing the use of others as informal stock and hiking routes.	11D. Maintain Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake trails. Construct new trails as needed to preserve wilderness values and protect resources from damage. Reclaim inappropriate user-created trails. Reclaim selected closed roads in wilderness while allowing the use of others as informal stock and hiking routes. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 25 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	11E. Same as 11C except construct new trails where appropriate as use increases and to aid with ease of visitor travel.
12A. Length of stay in wilderness limited to 14 days.	12B. Recommended length of stay limited to five days. Five percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 15 percent exceedence would initiate Level 3 actions.	12C. Recommended length of stay limited to five days. Ten percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 15 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 20 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	12D. Recommended length of stay limited to five days. 15 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 25 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 3 actions.	12E. Same as 12A.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
13A. No restrictions on stock enforced.	13B. Limited stock use allowed in any RNA or at Wildhorse Lake. Five percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. Ten percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 15 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. No tying of stock to trees allowed.	13C. Limited stock use allowed in any RNA or at Wildhorse Lake. Ten percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 15 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 20 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. Require use of high lines for stock. No tying of stock to trees allowed.	13D. Limited stock use allowed in any RNA or at Wildhorse Lake. 15 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 25 percent exceedence in guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. No tying of stock to trees for overnight. Grazing of pack stock would be allowed consistent with Standards and Guidelines for grazing.	13E. Stock allowed in all areas. Encourage use of high lines or picketing for stock. No grazing within 150 feet of all water sources.

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**Goal 2 - Manage the wilderness in such a manner that the landscape is essentially unaffected by human manipulation and influences while allowing natural processes to dominate.**

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**Objective 1.** Accomplish necessary projects and activities occurring in wilderness with the minimum tool or requirement needed to achieve a desired result. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure would be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently.

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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
<b>Actions</b>				
1A. No new recreation facilities would be constructed in wilderness or at trailheads. Historic structures would be allowed to deteriorate through natural processes, including fire. Limited maintenance of Nye Cabin would take place only to correct hazards.	1B. Same as 1A except Nye Cabin would not be maintained.	1C. No new recreation facilities would be constructed in wilderness. Construct new facilities at trailheads only if resource damage/hazards exist. Ten percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. Remove all facilities (excluding trails) and structures in wilderness except for historic ones and those needed for grazing/wildlife purposes. Historic structures would be allowed to deteriorate through natural processes, including fire. Limited maintenance of Nye Cabin would take place only to correct hazards. Remove Page Springs gauging station weir.	1D. Recreation facilities would be constructed at trailheads as needed to prevent resource damage. 15 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 1 actions. 20 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 2 actions. 25 percent exceedence of guideline would initiate Level 3 actions. Historic structures would be maintained to preserve them. Nonconforming structures would be removed or allowed to deteriorate except for those needed for grazing and wildlife purposes. Manage Nye Cabin to maintain a safe and hazard-free environment and for its historic characteristics. Consider removal of Page Springs weir.	1E. Same as 1D except manage Nye Cabin as a rental cabin.
2A. All fire suppression would be accomplished using the Appropriate Management Response, based on life, safety, and resource values.	2B. Fire would be allowed to play its natural role. This would exclude areas along the wilderness boundary where life and property are at risk. All lightning fires would be considered for wildland fire use. Wildfires would be confined or contained within natural barriers unless additional measures are necessary to protect life/property values. No prescribed wildland fire would be allowed.	2C. Same as 2B, but prescribed fire allowed if needed to maintain the natural condition of a fire-dependent ecosystem or to reintroduce fire where past strict wildfire control measures have interfered with natural ecological processes.	2D. Same as 2C.	2E. Same as 2A.

<b>Alternative A -</b>	<b>Alternative B -</b>	<b>Alternative C -</b>	<b>Alternative D -</b>	<b>Alternative E -</b>
No action. Continues present management.	Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	Emphasizes protection of natural values.	Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.

3A. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using a full range of equipment after a minimum tool analysis.	3B. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using nonmotorized equipment.	3C. Same as 3A.	3D. Same as 3A.	3E. Same as 3A.
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**Goal 3 - Manage nonconforming uses of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, allowed under the Wilderness Act and the Steens Act, to have the minimum impact on wilderness characteristics.**

**Objective 1.** Manage livestock grazing in wilderness under the stipulations of the Congressional Grazing Guidelines (HR 101-405 Appendix A)

**Actions**

1A. Adhere to the decision records of the Motorized Access for Grazing Operations in Wilderness EA/Decision Record (2003).	1B. No mechanized transport or motorized equipment allowed for grazing operations in wilderness.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Allow mechanized/motorized use at historic use levels (pre-designation)
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**Objective 2.** Provide for the level and type of commercial services necessary to enable the public to use, access, enjoy, and understand the recreational and other values of wilderness, emphasizing opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, inspiration, and solitude.

1A. Consider new proposals.	1B. No commercial services allowed.	1C. Limit outfitters at the current level. No permanent caches allowed.	1D. Consider new proposals for outfitters after preparing a needs assessment. No permanent caches allowed.	1E. Same as 1D.
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**Objective 3.** Allow for a level of reasonable access for the use and enjoyment of private inholdings while protecting the wilderness values.

1A. Adhere to the decision record of the Access for Inholdings in the Steens Mountain Wilderness EA/Decision Record (2003).	1B. No mechanized transport or motorized use allowed for inholding access.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Allow access at historic (predesignation) levels.
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**WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS (Section 2.23)**

**Goal - Manage WSAs and areas found to contain wilderness values so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness.**

**Objective 1.** Manage lands found to contain wilderness values so as not to impair those values.

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Do not incorporate acquired inholdings into existing WSAs.	1B. Incorporate the acquired 40- and 80-acre parcels into the Mahogany Ridge WSA. Incorporate the acquired 40-acre parcel on the southern boundary into the Bridge Creek WSA.	1C. Same as 1B.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
2A. Do not protect any parcels found to contain wilderness values.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Protect the following parcels that have been found to contain wilderness values: Bridge Creek - 1,526 acres; High Steens - 629 acres; Stonehouse - 2,176 acres; and Alvord Desert - 2,033 acres. Protection would include appropriate OHV and VRM designations.	2D. Same as 2A.	2E. Same as 2A.

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**Objective 2.** Manage existing WSAs so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness.

**Actions**

1A. Manage existing WSAs in conformance with the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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***WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS (Section 2.24)***

**Goal 1 - Manage the existing and newly designated WSRs in conformance with the WSR Act and the Wilderness Act.**

**Objective 1.** Protect and enhance the ORVs of the designated WSRs.

**Actions**

1A. Develop an integrated WSR/Wilderness Management Plan for all WSRs in the CMPA and the Steens Mountain Wilderness.	1B. Same as 1A.	1C. Same as 1A.	1D. Same as 1A.	1E. Same as 1A.
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<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
2A. Maintain the existing wild classification throughout the river corridor.	2B. Same as 2A.	2C. Same as 2A.	2D. Recommend to Congress to change the wild classification of the Riddle Brothers Ranch Historic District, and Page Springs and Jackman Park Campgrounds to a recreational classification, and change the Blitzen Crossing classification to scenic.	2E. Same as 2D.
<b>Goal 2 - Determine the suitability of eligible WSRs for potential inclusion into the National WSR System by Congress. Manage those rivers found suitable in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 (Wild and Scenic Rivers - Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management) for protective management of eligible and suitable WSRs.</b>				
<b>Objective 1.</b> Protect and enhance the ORVs of rivers determined to be administratively suitable for potential inclusion into the National WSR System by Congress.				

<b>Alternative A -</b> No action. Continues present management.	<b>Alternative B -</b> Excludes commodity production and limits other uses; maximizes natural processes.	<b>Alternative C -</b> Emphasizes protection of natural values.	<b>Alternative D -</b> Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.	<b>Alternative E -</b> Emphasizes commodity production and public uses.
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**Actions**

1A. Manage eligible rivers in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 for protective management of eligible WSRs.	1B. Recommend no eligible rivers as administratively suitable for potential designation as WSRs by Congress. Manage nonsuitable river segments in accordance with RMP management objectives.	1C. Recommend the following rivers as administratively suitable for potential designation as WSRs by Congress: Big Alvord-6.3 miles wild; Willow-6.2 miles wild; Threemile-4.3 miles scenic; Pike-4.2 miles scenic; Mud-7.2 miles scenic; McCoy-30.8 miles scenic; Home-5.5 miles scenic; Kiger-14.25 miles scenic; Cottonwood-12.1 miles scenic; Van Horn-9.9 miles scenic; and Big Trout-20.3 miles scenic. All rivers found suitable for inclusion in the WSR system would be managed in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 as if it were a designated WSR until Congress acts on whether or not to add these rivers into the National WSR system. All suitable rivers shall be administered in such a manner as to protect and enhance their ORVs.	1D. Same as 1B.	1E. Same as 1B.
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In order to better define issues and to identify ICBEMP findings applicable to the Planning Area and adjacent public lands, staff conducted a SBR between September 2001 and January 2002. The SBR, or the second layer of the step-down process, is an intergovernmental process tiering mid- and fine-scale information to ICBEMP scientific findings. It is also an assessment of ecosystem processes and functions at the subbasin level.

The AMS (available at the Burns District Office) serves as the SBR report. Findings and recommendations from the SBR are carried forward into the RMP/EIS in the issues to be resolved and in the alternatives identified to resolve those issues. These findings and recommendations are identified in Appendix B.

#### 2.1.1.2.1 Desired Range of Conditions

The desired range of conditions (DRC) described below applies to all alternatives, and portrays the land, resource, or social and economic conditions that would begin to be established in 20 to 50 years if management goals were achieved. The length of time to achieve the DRC would vary by alternative depending on the resources involved, the theme of the alternative, and the management actions proposed under that alternative. Appendix P contains descriptions of habitat characteristics important to wildlife.

The following DRC is a description of what the physical and biological condition or degree of function would be or would be moving toward at the end of the 20- to 50-year time frame. The DRC has been factored into the management goals of each resource management program.

#### 2.1.1.2.2 Description of Desired Range of Conditions

Rangeland vegetation (sagebrush steppe) includes a mosaic of multiple-aged shrubs, forbs, and native perennial grasses. Shrub overstories are present in a variety of spatial arrangements and scales across the landscape level, including large continuous blocks, disjunct islands, and corridors. Plant communities not meeting DRC show upward trends in condition and structural diversity. Desirable plants continue to improve in health and vigor. New infestations of noxious weeds are not common across the landscape, and existing large infestations are declining. Populations and habitat of rare plant species and their associated communities are stable or continue to improve in vigor and distribution.

Large portions of the landscape have a protective soil cover of deep-rooted plants and litter, which supports proper hydrologic function. In thin-soiled areas and other appropriate soils, microbiotic crusts are present that increase soil stability, contribute to nutrient cycles, and act as indicators of rangeland health.

Western juniper dominance is limited to rocky outcrops, ridges, and other historic (old growth) sites where wildfire frequency is limited by lower site productivity and sparse fuels. Western juniper occurs in low densities in association with vigorous shrubs, grasses, and forbs (where site potential permits). Historic western juniper sites retain old growth characteristics. Quaking aspen groves occupy historic range and are in stable or improving condition.

Rangeland vegetation and water sources support viable, healthy herds of wild horses through time. Individual herds have diverse age structures, good conformation, and are quality animals exhibiting the characteristics unique to each herd. Wild horse numbers are in balance with the rangelands that support them. Improvements in grass/shrubland steppe and riparian areas increase the health of the herd.

The amount and diversity of wildlife habitat are maintained or improved through time. Late-seral grass/shrublands exist in blocks of various sizes in well-distributed patterns across the landscape. Ongoing management of rangeland habitat components and conditions (such as vegetation cover, forage, and roads) and of key areas helps to maintain big game populations near state wildlife agency objectives. Hunting opportunities continue to be provided throughout the Planning Area. Improvement in the condition of grass/shrubland steppe and riparian areas benefits a variety of wildlife species by increasing the quality, quantity, and variety of habitat. Such species include upland game, raptors, and nongame species. Management has helped to create the long-term habitat changes that contribute toward restoring some sensitive species and toward recovery of listed species.

The area provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities for a growing demand, as the population increases and urban dwellers seek to experience the open spaces commonly found on public land. Additional recreation facilities, restored and maintained recreation sites, and more intensive management are a few of the means used to meet the increased demand. Protection of the natural landscape is an important consideration when designing recreation facilities and planning for related activities. Certain areas are excluded from recreational development to preserve their natural character.

Areas such as wilderness, WSRs, and ACECs preserve the integrity of special or unique values over the long term.

Upland soils have sufficient vegetation cover to minimize accelerated soil erosion. Physical and chemical soil properties are adequate for vegetation growth and hydrologic function appropriate to the specific soil type, landform, and climate.

Wildland and prescribed fire play an active role in defining the composition of vegetation and limiting the dominance of woody species including shrubs and invasive juniper.

Riparian areas and stream habitat conditions have improved as a result of protection and management. Watersheds are stable and provide for capture, storage, and safe release of water appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform. Most riparian/wetland areas are stable and include natural streamflow and sediment regimes related to contributing watersheds. Soil supports native riparian/wetland vegetation to allow water movement, filtration, and storage. Riparian/wetland vegetation structure and diversity are progressing toward controlling erosion, stabilizing streambanks, healing incised channels, shading water areas, filtering sediment, aiding in floodplain development, dissipating energy, delaying floodwater, and increasing recharge of ground water appropriate to climate, geology, and landform. Stream channels are narrower, water depth and channel meanders are increasing, and floodplains are developing. Stream channels and floodplains are making important progress in dissipating energy at high-water flows and transporting and depositing sediment as appropriate for geology, climate, and landform. Riparian/wetland vegetation is increasing in canopy volume (height and width) and in healthy uneven-aged stands of key woody plants; increasing in herbaceous ground cover; and shifting toward late succession. Surface disturbances inconsistent with the physical and biological processes described above have been reduced. Disturbances such as roads, dispersed recreation sites, and inappropriate livestock use are decreasing as vegetation and soils recover naturally. There is no downward trend in riparian condition and function.

Human use of natural resources is managed to enhance fisheries, improve water quality, and promote healthy riparian conditions. Water quality is managed so that most streams are providing cool, clear, and clean water. High-quality water is in greater demand from all users. Better regulation of runoff has improved the water supply from rangelands. There is increased infiltration on upland sites, increased ground water recharge, increased spring flow, reduced peak flow during floods, and increased stability of base flow during late summer and winter.

Management activities have been implemented on nearly all high-risk sites to facilitate recovery of upland, riparian, aquatic, and water quality conditions. Improved aquatic habitat conditions allow populations of threatened and endangered aquatic species to stabilize and expand into appropriate, previously occupied habitat. Populations of native aquatic species are increasing.

Water quality is improved to provide stable and productive riparian and aquatic ecosystems. Water quality of high-priority streams is within state standards, and the remaining streams have made important progress toward attaining those standards. Upland, riparian, and aquatic ecosystems are stable and productive to a degree that leads to acceptable water quality for identified beneficial uses. Improvement has occurred in stream channel integrity and channel processes, under which the riparian and aquatic systems developed. Hydrologic and sediment regimes (the characteristic behavior or orderly occurrence of a natural phenomenon or process) in streams, lakes, and wetlands are appropriate to the surrounding soils, climate, and landform. Instream flows are sufficient to support healthy riparian and aquatic habitats, and stream functions are stable and effective. Flooding streams discharge without substantial damage to the watershed. Riparian vegetation provides sufficient vegetation debris; provides adequate regulation of air and water temperatures during both summer and winter; and helps reduce surface erosion, bank erosion, and channel migration to levels characteristic of natural conditions.

Riparian and aquatic habitats support populations of well-distributed native and desired nonnative plant, vertebrate, and invertebrate populations. The DRCs have been factored into the management goals of each resource management program.

### 2.1.1.3 Adaptive Management

Adaptive management is a procedure in which decisions are made as part of an ongoing process of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and incorporating new information into strategies meeting the goals and objectives of ecosystem management. This process builds on current knowledge, observation, experimentation, and learning from experience. A continuous feedback loop allows for mid-course corrections in management to meet planned goals and objectives. In addition, it provides a model for adjusting goals and objectives as new information develops and when the public recommends management changes.

The complex interrelationships of physical, biological, and social components of the ecosystem and their reaction to land management practices are often not fully understood when a land use management plan is developed. Successful plans must have the flexibility to adapt and respond to new knowledge or conditions. The following processes briefly describe the four parts of adaptive management:

**1) Planning/Decision** – plan development or revision is the process leading to decision-making, starting with issue identification and goal development. The next step is gathering information necessary to develop objectives for management direction that address issues and goals. The final stage of planning is to develop alternative management strategies that progress toward achieving management objectives; analyze the consequences of implementing the alternatives; and choose a preferred alternative for implementation.

**2) Implementation** – the process of putting plans and decisions into effect. Implementation includes short- and long-term actions taken to meet management objectives and to progress toward goals and the DRC. Unless otherwise stated, all management direction listed here is assumed to be implemented within ten years. Standards are defined as required management actions addressing the achievement of management goals. In certain situations, standards can include requirements that no action be taken.

**3) Monitoring** – should detect changes early enough in the process so that management activities can be modified to work toward achieving management objectives. Monitoring data provide information on the condition and trend of the ecosystem, and can indicate whether or not goals and objectives are being met. Data can also identify management strategies that appear to be working in the short term.

**4) Evaluation/Assessment** – the point at which plans and monitoring data are reviewed. This phase of adaptive management is used to judge the success of existing plans in meeting or progressing toward objectives and to make recommendations for mid-course corrections. The understanding gained through evaluations is critical to managing sustainable, healthy, and productive ecosystems. Evaluations are a key component of the adaptive management process. An evaluation may lead to a change in management actions that pursues the objectives identified in the approved RMP and resulting activity plans.

#### 2.1.1.3.1 Watershed-Scale Assessment

The watershed scale is the third layer in ecosystem analysis and planning. Where management actions are likely to have a watershed-scale effect, watershed-scale assessment would be used, if necessary, to assure that potential actions are evaluated with an overall understanding of the capabilities and limitations of specific watersheds. Information gained through analysis at this scale would be used in the adaptive management process, and may support land management decisions as well as development of ecologically sustainable programs and projects.

#### 2.1.1.3.2 RMP Monitoring

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-9) call for the monitoring of resource management plans on a continual basis with a formal evaluation done at five-year intervals. The RMP/EIS would be monitored on a continual basis to allow up-to-date evaluations and to respond to changing situations. Management actions arising from activity level plan decisions would be evaluated for consistency with RMP/EIS objectives. Monitoring plans would assess implementation of the following:

- 1) satisfactory progress toward objectives through management actions;
- 2) actions consistent with current policy;
- 3) original assumptions correctly applied and impacts correctly predicted;
- 4) satisfactory mitigation measures;
- 5) consistency of the RMP with the plans and policies of state and local government, other federal agencies and Indian tribes; and
- 6) new data availability that would require plan alterations.

RMP monitoring would be conducted at multiple levels and scales. Monitoring would be conducted in a manner to allow localized information to be compiled and considered in a broader regional context, thereby addressing both local and regional issues. At the project level, monitoring would examine how well specific management direction has been applied on the ground and how effectively it produces expected results. Monitoring at broader levels would measure how successfully projects and other activities have achieved the objectives for those management areas.

Monitoring results would provide managers with the information needed to determine whether an objective has been met, and whether or not to modify the management direction. Findings obtained through monitoring, together with research and other new information, would provide a basis for adaptive management changes to the plan. The processes of monitoring and adaptive management share the goal of improving effectiveness and permitting dynamic response to increased knowledge and a changing landscape.

If monitoring and evaluation indicate that modifying the plan is necessary, the Burns District Manager would determine what, if any, changes are necessary to show that management actions are consistent with RMP objectives. If the District Manager finds that a plan amendment is necessary, an environmental analysis of the proposed change, consistent with the NEPA, would be conducted and a recommendation on the amendment made to the State Director. If approved, it may be implemented 30 days after public notice. A plan amendment may be initiated because of the need to consider monitoring findings, new data, new or revised policy, or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan.

Potential minor changes, refinements, or clarifications in the plan may take the form of maintenance actions. Maintenance actions incorporate minor data changes and are usually limited to minor refinements and documentation. Plan maintenance would not result in expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions, nor change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved RMP. Maintenance actions are not considered plan amendments and do not require a formal public involvement and interagency coordination process.

Monitoring is an essential component of natural resource management because it provides information on the relative success of management strategies. The implementation of the RMP would be monitored to show that these management actions: (1) follow prescribed management direction (implementation monitoring); (2) meet or progress toward desired objectives (effectiveness monitoring); and (3) are based on accurate assumptions (validation monitoring).

Watershed assessment is one of the principal analyses that would be used to meet the ecosystem management objectives. Information from watershed analysis would also be used in developing monitoring strategies and objectives. Specific to monitoring, the results and findings from watershed analyses are used to reveal the most useful indicators for monitoring environmental change; detecting magnitude and duration of changes in conditions; formulating and testing hypotheses about the causes of the changes; understanding these causes and predicting impacts; and managing the ecosystem for desired outcomes. Watershed analysis would provide information concerning patterns and processes within a watershed and provide information for monitoring at that scale.

## **2.1.2 Overview of the Alternatives**

### **2.1.2.1 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis**

The range of alternatives was sufficiently broad to accommodate all other variations of existing alternatives. No other alternatives were presented that differed sufficiently from the five existing alternatives to warrant independent consideration.

### **2.1.2.2 Alternatives Analyzed in Detail**

The BLM planning process calls for the development of goals, objectives and actions to manage each of the resources and uses within the Planning Area. Every decision proposed through the planning process is actually a string of components. The primary components are the goals, objectives and management actions. Additional components include management framework and monitoring. Each of these components is defined as follows:

Management Framework - primary reasoning behind the importance of pursuing the stated management goal.

Management Goal - a broad statement of a desired outcome. Goals are usually not quantifiable and may not have established time frames for achievement.

Management Objective - a description of a desired condition for a resource. Objectives can generally be quantified and measured and, where possible, have established time frames for achievement.

Management Action - measures that are to be undertaken to achieve the stated management objective. Management actions state management activities or land uses that are allowed, restricted, or excluded, and provide the basis for subsequent implementation and effectiveness monitoring.

Monitoring - assessment of the resources is conducted to determine whether or not the identified management objectives are being accomplished.

Alternatives would generally meet the goals that have been identified for all resources. However, there are differences between alternatives. These differences address how quickly the management goals are being met; the degree to which they are met; the priorities within the program; the emphasis placed on different management activities, and whether those actions are active or passive. They also identify what resources or uses society is willing to forego.

Integrated resource management was emphasized in formulating the alternatives. A primary concern was that all major ecological and socioeconomic systems go through the selection of specific management actions. Public input received through the planning process was considered in the development of alternatives.

The management goals associated with the alternatives may not be completely met over the life of the plan (up to 20 years). Funding and staffing levels would affect rates of implementation, and projected implementation rates may vary from alternative to alternative, depending on the cost of prescribed management activities. All alternatives would follow existing laws, regulations, and guidelines.

#### 2.1.2.3 Management Themes of the Alternatives

The following is a description of the five alternatives considered in detail:

##### **Alternative A** (No action. Continues current management):

This alternative would continue management under the existing Andrews MFP and amendments, and the Andrews Grazing Management Final EIS and Rangeland Program Summary. In addition to these, the dictates of the Steens Act and the various existing activity plans would apply to the CMPA. Resource values and sensitive habitats would receive management emphasis at current levels. Emphasis would focus on maintaining existing conditions. No comprehensive plan for restoration of degraded systems would be used. Restoration would take place on a case-by-case basis and would utilize either active or passive methods.

##### **Alternative B** (Excludes commodity production and limits other uses to maximize natural processes):

This alternative would exclude all permitted discretionary uses of the public land including, but not limited to, livestock grazing, mineral sale or leasing, realty actions, recreation uses requiring permits, and new commercial ROWs. The BLM would petition the Department of Interior to withdraw the entire Planning Area from locatable mineral entry. This alternative would allow no commodity production and would include only those management actions necessary to maintain or improve natural values and protect life and property. Any management actions would utilize primarily passive methods. Some components of the alternative may not be possible to implement in the CMPA because of legal requirements and constraints of the Steens Act, but the alternative is included for purposes of impact analysis and comparison.

##### **Alternative C** (Emphasizes protection of natural values):

This alternative emphasizes the restoration of natural systems that are degraded and the maintenance of those that are functioning at a high level of condition. Commodity production would be constrained to protect natural values and systems that are in advanced ecological status or to accelerate improvement in those that are in less than advanced ecological status. Constraints to protect sensitive resources would be the most restrictive. In some cases and in some areas, commodity production could be excluded to protect sensitive resources, while still providing for overall sustainable commodity production as provided for in the Steens Act. Both active and passive restoration methods would be utilized to achieve management goals.

**Alternative D** (Balances cultural, economic, ecological, and social health in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices):

This alternative emphasizes natural resource use, protection, and environmental health, and places high importance on balancing cultural, economic, ecological, and social values. This would be accomplished within the limits of the natural system's ability to provide commodities on a sustainable basis and within the constraints of laws and regulations, including the Steens Act as it pertains to the CMPA. This alternative encourages cooperative management of the Planning Area by collaborative arrangements with landowners, permit holders, other land managers, and interested parties. This alternative recognizes that the long-term cultural, economic, social, and ecological integrity of the Planning Area are intertwined and cannot be maintained without involving landowners, permit holders, local and tribal governments, and interested parties in relationships involving cooperation, consultation, and coordination. This alternative would balance the values that through the generations created the area's cultural and physical environment. Constraints to protect sensitive resources would be implemented, but would be less restrictive than under Alternative B, so that sustainable commodity uses and production would be maintained.

**Alternative E** (Emphasizes commodity production and public uses):

This alternative would emphasize commodity production and production of goods and services such as mining, grazing, commercial recreation, harvesting commercial woodlands products, and tourism. Under this alternative, constraints on commodity production for protection of sensitive resources would be the least restrictive possible within legal limits, while still meeting the requirements of the Steens Act for management of the CMPA. Potential impacts to sensitive resources would be mitigated on a case-by-case basis. Emphasis would be on maintaining resource conditions where required. Restoration actions that would enhance commodity production would utilize primarily active methods. Other restoration actions would utilize passive methods.

#### 2.1.2.4 Summary of the Management Alternatives

Table 2.1 summarizes the major management actions proposed for each alternative and organized by resource, goal, and objective. The narrative following the table provides a more detailed description of the management actions by alternative. The effects of these management actions result in the projected environmental consequences analyzed in Chapter 4.

## 2.2 Air Quality

### 2.2.1 **Goal - Maintain, restore, or protect air resources to support public health, visibility, and regional haze standards and goals.**

#### 2.2.1.1 Management Framework

Smoke is a factor that may affect a land manager's ability to use larger and more frequent wildland fire for restoration and maintenance of fire-dependent ecosystems.

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires federal agencies to comply with all federal, state, and local air pollution requirements. The CAA also requires each state to develop a state implementation plan (SIP) to ensure that the national ambient air quality standards are attained and maintained for the criteria pollutants. The DEQ is responsible for producing the SIP, but delegates the smoke management portion to the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). As part of the SIP, the ODF developed instructions and requirements for wildland and prescribed fire emissions in the smoke management plan. The smoke management plan does not cover those portions of the areas with range lands or agricultural lands outside of the Willamette Valley, Oregon.

The national ambient air quality standards are described in the CAA. The national ambient air quality standards have been established for six pollutants. Of these six criteria pollutants, natural resource management activities largely affect only the production of particulate matter. However, most particulate matter of concern is produced from fire and most of this is less than ten microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), which is the size class that is currently regulated under the CAA. PM<sub>10</sub> produced from fire does not seriously affect forest and rangeland ecosystems, because fire is a natural part of these systems. However, it does have effects on human health.

Southeast Oregon has been designated as a “clean air source” by the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission. This designation, as well as the designation for other areas of the western United States, is under consideration by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in its development of the Regional Haze Regulation.

#### 2.2.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage wildland fires to avoid degradation of the airshed.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

The BLM will cooperate with other federal, state, and local governments on smoke management related to wildland fires. This cooperation may include the use of a voluntary communication plan.

##### Alternative A

Conduct prescribed fire while meeting federal and state air quality and smoke management standards. An average of 5,000 to 20,000 acres would be burned per year using prescribed fire.

##### Alternative B

Allow wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards. Prescribed fire would be used to a limited degree. Natural fire processes would be allowed to operate in the Planning Area.

##### Alternative C

Utilize wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards. Under this alternative, prescribed fire and wildland fire use to achieve resource management objectives would not be limited.

##### Alternative D

Utilize wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards. Under this alternative, prescribed fire and wildland fire use to achieve resource management objectives would not be limited. Ideally, a limited amount of area would be burned, which would enable landscape-scale objectives to be achieved in years when those opportunities are available.

##### Alternative E

Utilize wildland fire while meeting federal and state air quality and opacity standards. Under this alternative, prescribed fire and wildland fire use to achieve resource management objectives would be limited.

**Objective 2.** Manage mining and aggregate operations to avoid degradation of the airshed.

##### Alternative A

The BLM would require air quality permits from the DEQ for all operations in the Planning Area. In addition, the BLM would require dust abatement measures at the mining operations.

##### Alternative B

The BLM would withdraw the remainder of the Planning Area from mineral entry and development.

##### Alternative C

Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D

Same as Alternative A.

Alternative E

Same as Alternative A.

**2.2.2 Monitoring**

The Fuel Analysis, Smoke Tracking, and Report Access Computer System, an emissions information system, is used in Oregon to quantify prescribed fire emissions and to track changes in emission production in the state. Federal land managers have an obligation to complete smoke management reports and apply appropriate mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts on air quality (EPA 1992).

An air quality monitoring network has been developed for Oregon that is used to determine whether the national ambient air quality standards are met. However, no monitors are located within the Planning Area.

**2.3 Water Resources****2.3.1 Goal - Maintain, restore, or improve water quality and quantity to sustain the designated beneficial uses on public lands.****2.3.1.1 Management Framework**

The CWA of 1977, as amended, required the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The State of Oregon, under delegated authority and oversight by the EPA, defines the beneficial uses, and establishes policies and standards relative to managing the quality of Waters of the State. Water quality is managed by the DEQ through implementation of the Antidegradation Policy and supporting policies defined in Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 340-041-0026, which includes the High Quality Waters Policy, Outstanding Resource Waters Policy, and Water Quality Limited Waters Policy. The purpose of the Antidegradation Policy is to guide decisions that affect water quality such that unnecessary degradation from point and nonpoint sources of pollution is prevented, and to protect, maintain, or improve existing surface water quality relative to designated beneficial uses. Beneficial uses designated for the Malheur Lakes Basin include domestic water supply, livestock watering, irrigation, salmonid and resident fish habitat, wildlife and hunting, fishing, water contact recreation, and aesthetic quality. High Quality Waters Policy and Outstanding Resource Waters Policy generally apply to maintenance and protection where existing water quality meets or exceeds those levels necessary to support beneficial uses. The Water Quality Limited Waters Policy addresses those waters that do not currently meet water quality standard(s).

The BLM, as a designated management agency, is responsible pursuant to the CWA for implementing land management activities that maintain, protect, or improve the quality of waters under their jurisdiction. In addition to the CWA, numerous laws, regulations, policies, and Executive Orders direct the BLM to manage water quality for the benefit of the nation and its economy (Appendix D). Thus, the BLM is required to maintain water quality where it meets state water quality standards and to improve water quality where it does not meet standards. Potential nonpoint source pollution is the primary water quality issue associated with public land management and is the focus of this discussion. Management of nonpoint source pollution is conducted through the development and implementation of best management practices (BMPs) during activity level planning and analysis. BMPs are defined as methods, measures or practices selected by an agency to meet its nonpoint source control needs. BMPs include but are not limited to structural and nonstructural controls, and operation and maintenance procedures. BMPs can be applied before, during, and after pollution-producing activities to reduce or eliminate the introduction of pollutants into receiving waters (40 CFR 130.2(m), EPA's Water Quality Planning and Management). In the context of public land management, the development and implementation of BMPs are primarily relevant to actions such as recreation, grazing, fuels and transportation management. Further, the design and implementation of land management actions and BMPs are relative to the management of upland and riparian vegetation, and the associated attributes and processes that facilitate watershed function.

BMPs are identified as part of the NEPA process, with interdisciplinary involvement. Since the control of nonpoint sources of pollution is an ongoing process, refinement of BMP design may be necessary. This adaptive management process can be described in five steps: (1) selection of design for a specific BMP; (2) application of the BMP; (3)

monitoring; (4) evaluation; and (5) feedback. Data gathered through monitoring is evaluated and used to identify changes needed in BMP design, application, or in the monitoring program. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Protocol for Addressing Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Listed Waters (Protocol) outlines the approach for the BLM to meet obligations for contributing to the management of the state's impaired waters. The Protocol was developed by the USFS, BLM, EPA and DEQ, as well as other agencies. The Protocol recognizes Water Quality Restoration Plan(s) (WQRPs) as the primary mechanism to address and restore impaired waters on BLM administered lands. WQRPs or equivalent would serve the purpose of surface water temperature management plan(s) described in OAR 340-041-0026.

A watershed/subwatershed priority list (Table 2.2) was generated to guide assessment of ecosystem conditions, development of site-specific management actions and associated short-term and intermediate monitoring objectives, and to provide a context of evaluating progress toward plan level objectives and goals. Work would focus on higher priority areas; however, other areas may require attention to address site-specific needs. The following list describes the criteria used to prioritize watersheds and the process that would be used to change priorities, if necessary.

- Legal mandates (Clean Water Act [CWA], Endangered Species Act [ESA], National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, etc.);
- Resources at risk;
- Potential for recovery;
- Resource conflicts or controversy;
- Opportunity for interagency or partnership assessments;
- Field staff knowledge of the area; and
- Current ongoing management.

#### 2.3.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Comply with state and federal requirements to protect public waters.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

To reasonably prevent degradation of water quality, BMPs (Appendix F) would be prescribed and implemented at the activity-plan level.

The management of riparian areas is an important component of restoring water quality, and would differ among the alternatives.

**Objective 2.** Protect all designated beneficial uses by preventing or limiting nonpoint source pollution; maintain or improve existing water quality and quantity through implementation of BMPs.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

To reasonably prevent degradation of water quality, BMPs (Appendix F) would be prescribed and implemented at the activity-plan level. These BMPs would also be directed toward management practices to facilitate maintenance or improvement of attributes (i.e., vegetation, channel geometry) identified through PFC assessment and/or other qualitative or quantitative methods.

The management of riparian areas is an important component of restoring water quality, and would differ among the alternatives.

##### Alternatives A and E

Maintain existing developed water sources (i.e. spring developments, reservoirs, and wells) and develop new sources through project-level planning to promote the distribution and quantity of available water for beneficial uses such as wildlife, livestock and/or wild horses. The BLM would rely on the DEQ to determine and designate ecologically important cold-water refuges.

### Alternatives B

Inventory developed water sources (i.e. spring developments, reservoirs, and wells) and evaluate contribution to beneficial uses through site-specific assessments. Maintain existing water developments in the CMPA that contribute to beneficial uses; allow natural processes to reclaim water developments that are determined through site-specific assessment to not contribute to beneficial uses, except where necessary for wild horse management. Allow natural processes to reclaim existing water developments in the AMU, except where necessary for wild horse management.

Through watershed assessment, WQRP, or other processes, stream reaches or sites would be identified that provide or contribute summertime cold water habitat in subwatersheds where stream temperatures limit the distribution and abundance of aquatic species. Protection measures (BMPs) in WQRPs, or activity level plans for such reaches/sites would be identified and implemented. The BLM would coordinate with the DEQ on locations and rationale of stream reaches/sites for evaluation as ecologically important cold-water refuges.

### Alternative C

Same as Alternative B, except existing developed water sources in the CMPA and AMU that contribute to beneficial uses would be maintained. Active and passive restoration efforts may occur in reclaiming developed water sources determined as no longer providing beneficial uses, such as the No Livestock Grazing Area of the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Existing and future water developments would be maintained or implemented when determined to contribute to beneficial uses or to facilitate management, or protection of off-site natural values, such as water quality and/or riparian resources through distribution of wildlife, livestock, and/or wild horses.

### Alternative D

Same as Alternative C, including specific emphasis on reclaiming existing developments in the designated No Livestock Grazing Area of the Steens Mountain Wilderness to facilitate cooperative management and future water resource developments on public and private lands through legal processes of the Oregon Department of Water Resources.

**Objective 3.** Impaired waters on public lands listed under Section 303(d) of the CWA would be managed to restore beneficial uses and to improve water quality so that listing is no longer warranted.

### Management Common to All Alternatives

The status of waters identified on the 303(d) list would be evaluated. Impairment would be validated or, in cases where water quality improvement has resulted from restoration activities since the listing, evaluation may suggest that the listing is no longer warranted. In cases where the listing is validated, management measures that are sufficiently stringent to restore water quality may be recognized, especially in areas such as wilderness and WSRs where such management may be required to meet other objectives. In other impaired waters, WQRPs would be developed and implemented. Other available mechanisms may be explored for removing impaired waters from the 303(d) list, such as changes in water quality standards. The development and implementation of sufficiently stringent measures and WQRPs to address water quality would be based upon assessment and monitoring of existing activity level management, resource management alternatives identified through this RMP, appropriate BMPs, and subsequent activity level planning efforts. Site/reach specific objectives, guidelines, and/or standards would be set through the development of the WQRP and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL).

### Alternative A

Under this alternative, current management would continue. Riparian and adjacent upland areas that influence 303(d) listed waterbodies would be managed according to site or reach management objectives identified in activity level plans and modified, as necessary, relative to WQRPs and TMDLs. Development and implementation of WQRPs would follow the TMDL schedule outlined by the DEQ.

**Table 2.2: Priority Streams/Subwatersheds Identified to Guide Development of Watershed Management Actions and Water Quality Restoration Plan(s) for the Planning Area**

<b>PLANNING AREA PRIORITY STREAMS/WATERSHEDS</b>			
<b>ALVORD SUBBASIN (TMDL 2002)</b>			
Relative Priority	Location	Stream	Rationale
1	East Steens Mountain	Little McCoy*, Mosquito*, Willow*, Little Wildhorse*, Cottonwood**, Big Alvord**, Little Alvord**, Pike**, Wildhorse***, Indian, Mann, Castlerock	303(d) List; Lahontan cutthroat trout; Allotment Management Plans (2003); Biological Opinion(s); Wilderness/WSA
2	Pueblo Mountain	Van Horn*, Denio*, Little Willow, Willow, Little Cottonwood, Arizona, Catlow, Oliver, Colony, Cherry	303(d) List; Lahontan cutthroat trout; Biological Opinion(s); WSA
6	Trout Creek Mountains	Big Trout***, East Fork Big Trout***, Little Trout***	303(d) List; rainbow-cutthroat trout hybrid; WSA
<b>DONNER UND BLITZEN SUBBASIN (TMDL 2007)</b>			
3	Upstream of Page Springs	Donner und Blitzen*, Little Blitzen*, Ankle*, Mud*, Big Indian*, Indian*, Deep*, Fish*, Little Indian**	303(d) List; redband trout, Malheur mottled sculpin, and Columbia spotted frog; Redband Trout Reserve; Aquatic Stronghold (redband trout); Priority Watershed; Wilderness; Wild & Scenic River
5	Downstream of Page Springs	Bridge**, Mud**	Redband trout, Malheur mottled sculpin, Columbia spotted frog; WSA
8	Downstream of Page Springs	Kiger**, Little Kiger**	Redband trout and Malheur mottled sculpin; Wilderness
9	Downstream of Page Springs	McCoy*, Cucamonga**	303(d) List; Redband trout, Malheur mottled sculpin, and Columbia spotted frog
11	Downstream of Page Springs	Krumbo**	Redband trout (possible introduced rainbow / hybrids)
<b>GUANO SUBBASIN (TMDL 2007)</b>			
4	Catlow Rim	Home*, Threemile**	303(d) List; redband trout and Catlow tui chub; Wilderness
<b>HARNEY-MALHEUR LAKES SUBBASIN (TMDL 2007)</b>			
7		Riddle*, Coyote**	303(d) List; redband trout and Malheur mottled sculpin
10		Smyth**	Redband trout

\*303(d) List/T&E, Candidate, Bureau Sensitive aquatic species present

\*\*T&E, Candidate, Bureau Sensitive aquatic species present

\*\*\*303(d) List/nonsensitive aquatic species

### Alternative B

All perennial and intermittent waters would be managed toward an advanced ecological status of riparian vegetation communities. Maintenance, protection and/or restoration of riparian and aquatic function and processes would be emphasized through specific management actions and performance measures identified in the relevant WQRP and TMDL, respectively. The development and implementation of WQRPs and associated management (BMPs) would be generally guided by the stream/watershed priority list (Table 2.2) along with consideration of new circumstances or emerging opportunities. Initial WQRP priority would be assigned to waters where Lahontan cutthroat trout, protected pursuant to the ESA, are the most sensitive beneficial use. Natural processes would be emphasized and active restoration would be limited through planting riparian vegetation along reaches/sites that are not likely to achieve or progress toward attainment of advanced ecological status within the RMP goal timeframe of 20 to 50 years.

### Alternative C

Management under this alternative would be the same as Alternative B; however, active restoration may be pursued to initiate or increase the rate of progress toward advanced ecological status of riparian vegetation communities.

### Alternative D

All perennial waters listed under Section 303(d) of the CWA, as well as contributing perennial and intermittent streams, would be managed toward an appropriate ecological status to attain or progress toward attainment of water quality standards or other surrogate measures of water quality standards necessary to protect beneficial uses. Determination of appropriate ecological status to protect beneficial uses, and implementation of BMPs to maintain, protect and/or restore riparian and aquatic function and processes would be identified in the relevant WQRP and TMDL, respectively. The development and implementation of WQRPs and associated management (BMPs) would be generally guided by the stream/watershed priority list (Table 2.2) along with consideration of new circumstances or cooperative management opportunities. Initial WQRP priority would be assigned to waters where Lahontan cutthroat trout, protected pursuant to the ESA, are the most sensitive beneficial use.

### Alternative E

Management under this alternative would be the same as Alternative A; however, development and implementation of WQRPs would be guided by the stream/watershed priority list (Table 2.2) along with consideration of new circumstances or emerging opportunities..

## **2.3.2 Monitoring**

The intensity and scale (watershed, subwatershed or reach/site) of implementation and effectiveness monitoring would be determined through watershed or reach/site assessments, activity plans, or WQRPs. Identification of specific riparian attributes of vegetation, hydrology/geomorphology and erosion/deposition to be monitored would be identified through PFC assessments (USDI 1998 and 1999) and activity level planning. The relevance of vegetation management to the maintenance, restoration, or improvement of water quality and quantity would be reflected in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of BMPs, and may include a variety of techniques to assess condition and trend. Hydrologic/geomorphic characteristics would be assessed to determine the relative reach/site susceptibility to disturbance, ecological potential, and appropriate management actions. Monitoring of hydrologic/geomorphic characteristics and erosion/deposition to evaluate maintenance or progress toward a desired condition may include measurements of channel slope, cross sectional profile, and substrate particle size and embeddedness. Additional monitoring of associated attributes and processes relative to water quality and quantity may include lateral extent of riparian vegetation, stream shade, aquatic macroinvertebrates, water temperature, and other water quality constituents.

## **2.4 Soils and Biological Soil Crusts**

### **2.4.1 Goal 1- Manage soils on public lands to maintain, restore, or improve soil erosion classes, watershed health, and areas of fragile soils.**

#### **2.4.1.1 Management Framework**

Soils provide the foundation for vegetation growth and site productivity. Management goals for vegetation, watershed, wildlife and livestock are more difficult to achieve without healthy, productive, and intact soils. Within the semiarid Planning Area, soils are young and poorly developed. Biological and chemical soil development processes such as rock weathering and decomposition, plant material decomposition, accumulation of organic matter, and nutrient cycling proceed slowly in this environment. Due to slow soil recovery processes, the disruption of soils can lead to long-term changes in soil ecology and productivity.

#### **2.4.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative**

**Objective 1-** Manage mineral soils to limit accelerated erosion on critical sites, protect soil characteristics on noncritical sites, and maintain or improve existing infiltration and permeability rates.

##### Alternatives A, C, D, and E

BMPs would be implemented to protect and manage soil for all ground disturbing activities including new projects, livestock grazing, and road maintenance and construction. See Appendix F for a complete description of

##### Alternative B

Natural processes would affect soil conditions in the Planning Area except where management is necessary to arrest excessive soil movement on critical sites.

### **2.4.2 Goal 2 - Increase the understanding of the management of Northern Great Basin biological soil crusts.**

#### **2.4.2.1 Management Framework**

Biological soil crusts contribute to the functional, structural, and compositional parts of a functioning ecosystem. They function as living mulch by retaining soil moisture. In some systems they comprise up to 70 percent of the living cover. They reduce wind and water erosion, fix atmospheric nitrogen, and contribute to soil organic matter (TR-1730-2). Biological soil crusts are one of at least twelve potential indicators used in evaluating watershed function for uplands (USDI, 1997a). Management goals can be facilitated by implementing practices that encourage soil stability and properly functioning ecosystems.

#### **2.4.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative**

**Objective 1.** Collect biological soil crust data within the Planning Area.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

A standard monitoring methodology would be developed and implemented to monitor the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Allotment and other allotments within the Planning Area. In addition, the biological soil crust community would be monitored as one of the indicators for the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (S&Gs).

##### Alternative A

Biological soil crust data would be collected within the Planning Area. A standard monitoring methodology would be implemented to monitor the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Allotment and other allotments within the Planning Area.

Alternatives B, C, D, and E

Biological soil crust monitoring data would be collected and utilized to inform decisions concerning the exclusion or minimization of activities in areas that impact biological soil crusts through surface disturbance.

**2.4.3 Monitoring**

Soil health and condition would be monitored by conducting project reviews for the implementation and effectiveness of BMPs. Soil movement potential can be assessed by utilizing the soil surface factor form. The Slake test (TR 1730-2) can also be used to estimate soil surface stability (under wet conditions).

Biological soil crusts would be monitored for percent cover of general morphological groups (these groups are described in the technical reference TR-1730-2). The Slake test can also function as an indirect measure of the cohesive qualities of biological soil crusts. In addition, the Grazing Management Section would also consider biological soil crusts in their monitoring program.

**2.5 Vegetation****2.5.1 Goal -Manage vegetation to achieve and maintain healthy watersheds****2.5.1.1 Management Framework**

With the passage of the FLPMA and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act (PRIA) of 1978, objectives and priorities for the management of public land vegetation resources were more clearly defined. Guidance contained in 43 CFR 4180 of the regulations directs public land management toward the maintenance or restoration of the physical function and biological health of vegetative ecosystems. The S&Gs approved by the Secretary of the Interior on August 12, 1997 also provide guidance for the management of plant communities. The S&Gs are included as Appendix G. This objective would maintain and improve the condition in plant communities that provide wildlife habitat, recreation, forage, scientific, scenic, ecological, and water and soil conservation benefits for consumptive and nonconsumptive uses. The long-term goal of vegetation management across the landscape is to maintain or improve rangeland condition to a DRC which meets management objectives.

Management actions authorized or implemented by the BLM would influence future vegetation composition. These actions may include: season, intensity, and duration of livestock grazing within diverse vegetation communities; the influence of fire and associated suppression actions; emergency fire rehabilitation and reintroduction of grazing following fire; the use of natural and management-created firebreaks to protect early seral communities from frequent fire intervals; rehabilitation and reclamation actions following soil-disturbing activities; management of noxious weeds; OHV use; wild horse management; recreational use; and mining.

**2.5.2 Riparian and Wetlands****2.5.2.1 Goal - Maintain, restore, or improve riparian vegetation, habitat diversity, and geomorphic stability to achieve healthy, productive riparian areas and wetlands and associated structure, function, process and products that provide public land values such as forage, water, cover, structure and security necessary to meet the life history requirements of fish and wildlife; public recreation and aesthetics; water quality and quantity; and livestock forage and water.****2.5.2.1.1 Management Framework**

The FLPMA and PRIA direct the BLM to "... manage public lands according to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield" and "manage the public lands to prevent unnecessary degradation ... so they become as productive as feasible." Section 102 of the FLPMA also requires that public land be managed for multiple use and sustained yield in a manner that would protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values. Section 102 also mandates that public land be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber. In addition to the FLPMA, numerous laws, regulations, policies, Executive Orders, and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and agreements (MOAs) direct the BLM to manage its riparian/wetland areas for biological diversity, and to maintain their productivity

and sustainability for the benefit of the nation and its economy. These directives are listed in Appendix D. While the directives listed in Appendix D relate specifically to planning requirements, they also relate to management in general.

Functioning riparian/wetland areas are essential to maintenance and improvement of water quality and quantity, fish and wildlife habitat, and soil and alluvial groundwater retention. Healthy riparian/wetland areas increase the quantity and quality of forage for wildlife and livestock. Riparian zones serve as a primary indicator of watershed health. Management of riparian/wetland areas for the DRC would be implemented to maintain or progress toward attainment of PFC. This would be a first step toward achieving water resource and fish/wildlife habitat objectives in entire watersheds and/or their components such as uplands, streams, riparian/wetland areas, springs, lakes, and ponds.

Section 102.8 of the FLPMA states that it is the policy of the United States to manage the public land in a manner that would protect the quality of multiple resources and that would provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife and domestic animals. Beaver are considered to be an important part of the riparian habitat as discussed in "Riparian Area Management" TR 1737-5 (1990), TR 1737-6 (1992) and TR 1737-15 (1998). Habitat created behind beaver dams supports a diversity of aquatic organisms, fish, and wildlife including the Columbia spotted frog, a candidate species for listing as threatened or endangered. Although beaver are still present in some locations within the Planning Area, they have been removed or have emigrated from other locations. To allow for transplanting or reestablishment of beaver into suitable habitat where they were found previously, BLM Manual 1745, "Introduction, Transplant, Augmentation, and Reestablishment of Fish, Wildlife, and Plants" (1992) states that "Decisions for making introductions transplants, or reestablishments should be made as part of the land use planning process...." Recommendations for transplants of beaver onto or removal of beaver from public lands would be coordinated with the ODFW.

#### 2.5.2.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Achieve and/or maintain a rating of PFC for perennial and intermittent flowing and standing waterbodies relative to site capability, site potential, and BLM management jurisdictions.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

Management prescriptions would be implemented or continued at the activity plan level designed to maintain, restore, and/or improve specific attributes of riparian/wetland areas to maintain or progress toward attainment of PFC.

**Objective 2.** Maintain, restore, or improve riparian/wetland vegetation communities relative to ecological status, site potential and capability, and/or site-specific management objectives.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

Assess reach/site scale riparian/wetland vegetation, hydrology, morphology, and soil characteristics (sub-samples) to evaluate site potential and capability. To assist in riparian restoration and to preserve genetics, sources of localized riparian tree and shrub (cottonwood, willow) material would continue to be established and maintained.

##### Alternative A

Under this alternative, current management would be continued. Activity level management prescriptions and/or WQRP prescriptions would be developed and implemented based on reach/site assessment and site-specific resource management objectives. Existing grazing and recreation systems and improvements that maintain PFC relative to reach capability and potential would continue. Existing roads associated with riparian areas would be maintained and additional roads developed on a case-by-case basis in conformance with existing laws and regulations.

##### Alternative B

Activity level management prescriptions and/or WQRP prescription(s), and propagation of local woody vegetation would be developed and implemented as in Alternative A, but would be generally guided by the stream/subwatershed priority list (Table 2.2) along with consideration of new circumstances and emerging opportunities. Livestock and recreational use would be managed in riparian/wetland areas emphasizing passive measures. Riparian/wetland areas would be managed to maintain or progress toward attainment of advanced ecological status. Restoration of riparian/wetland vegetation and adjacent upland vegetation that influences riparian vegetation communities would primarily rely on natural maintenance and recovery processes. In riparian areas determined through watershed level or site/reach specific

analysis as unlikely to achieve or progress toward attainment of advanced ecological status within the RMP goal timeframe of 20 to 50 years, active restoration through planting native riparian vegetation may be initiated. Road networks would be inventoried; routes that impact riparian areas relative to site/reach specific objectives would be eliminated, relocated, or reconstructed. Natural recovery of abandoned roadbeds would be allowed where erosion potential is minimal and recovery potential is moderate to high. Active restoration of abandoned roadbeds would be pursued where erosion is likely and natural recovery potential is limited. Road crossings would be evaluated and modified, as necessary, to simulate natural stream function and process.

#### Alternative C

This alternative is similar to Alternative B. However, livestock and recreational use of riparian/wetland areas would be managed by active and/or passive measures, including BMPs, in both the CMPA and AMU. Active and/or passive restoration may occur within riparian areas and adjacent uplands that influence riparian areas. Planting and other manipulation of riparian/wetland vegetation may occur to accelerate progress toward advanced ecological status. Condition of upland communities that influence riparian/wetland areas, such as increased fire frequency or intensity and/or erosion potential, may be actively restored with native and/or desirable nonnative vegetation and mechanical methods. Restoration sites would be managed to progress toward native vegetation communities within the RMP goal timeframe of 20-50 years.

#### Alternative D

This alternative is similar to Alternative C. However, ecological status objectives would be based on maintaining or progressing toward attainment of PFC; obligations pursuant to the CWA, ESA, and appropriate Executive Orders; and site-specific objectives of multiple resource management. Management would include passive and active measures relative to site-specific emphasis of multiple resource management objective(s). Restoration of adjacent upland vegetation communities that influence riparian/wetland areas would include establishment and management for a range of vegetation, native to desirable nonnative, relative to site-specific emphasis of multiple resource management objective(s).

#### Alternative E

Activity level management prescriptions and/or WQRP prescription(s) would be developed and implemented as in Alternative A; priority would generally be guided by the stream/watershed priority list (Table 2.2) along with consideration of new circumstances or cooperative management opportunities. Grazing and recreation management in riparian areas would provide maximum use while maintaining or progressing toward PFC, WQRP, and/or activity level plan objectives. Upland communities adjacent to riparian areas would be managed as in Alternative D with an emphasis on providing sustainable livestock forage, soil stability, and aesthetics along travel corridors and developed recreation sites. Riparian restoration would include passive and active measures to achieve activity level and/or WQRP objectives. Roads in riparian areas would be managed and developed to promote commodity and public uses within established laws and regulations.

**Objective 3.** Manage riparian/wetland areas to maintain, restore, or improve soil moisture content and retention of alluvial ground water to augment base flow conditions during warm summer months.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

BMPs would be prescribed and implemented at the activity plan level to maintain, restore, or improve floodplain function and process. The ODFW would be coordinated with on the management of beaver populations on public lands.

#### Alternatives A and B

Beaver populations would be allowed to expand naturally on public lands as habitat conditions dictate.

#### Alternative C

Natural expansion and/or reintroduction of beaver would be allowed into suitable habitat on public lands.

### Alternative D

Management under this alternative would be the same as Alternative C except that the BLM would recommend to the ODFW the removal of beaver from public lands if suitable habitat is not available or if economic harm or ecological damage is occurring.

### Alternative E

Under this alternative, beaver populations would be allowed to expand naturally on public lands as habitat conditions dictate the BLM would recommend to the ODFW the removal of beaver from public lands if suitable habitat is not available or economic harm or ecological damage is occurring.

#### 2.5.2.2 Monitoring

Monitoring of riparian attributes, as described in Water Resources Monitoring (2.3.2), would be based on site/reach specific management objectives determined through processes such as grazing allotment evaluations and/or management plans, recreation management plans, wilderness management plans, WQRPs, and Endangered Species Act section 7 consultations. Inventory and assessments to evaluate short-term and long-term progress toward identified objectives would be determined through PFC assessments and/or other qualitative and/or quantitative assessments. Assessments may include vegetation composition and structure, bank stability/disturbance, and stream channel configuration.

Beaver activity would be monitored and documented in cases of expansions in present habitat; activity reported in new areas would be noted. Woody riparian species use would be monitored to determine sustainability.

### **2.5.3 Woodlands**

#### **2.5.3.1 Goal 1 - Maintain or improve ecological integrity of old growth juniper woodlands.**

##### 2.5.3.1.1 Management Framework

Western juniper is a long-lived tree species capable of living 1,000 years or more. Historically, western juniper occupied rocky ridge tops, shallow soil areas, and other areas where surface vegetation was too sparse to carry fire. Old growth western juniper woodlands are best described on the basis of the presence of pre-European settlement trees (>120 years before present [ybp]) and structural characteristics such as standing and down dead trees, decadent living trees, bole cavities, stripbark, and branches covered with lichens. These stands accounted for less than three percent of the western juniper woodlands across eastern Oregon. The majority of western juniper expansion has primarily been on more productive plant communities; however, the number of trees in old growth stands has also increased over the last 120 years. While special characteristics of old growth woodlands provide habitat for plant and wildlife species, the recent dramatic increase in trees and invasive plants has increased the risk of unplanned wildland fire.

Fire was not a common occurrence in old growth western juniper woodlands. Historically, most fires were confined to small areas or single trees due to the sparse ground vegetation. Once every 100 to 200 years, climatic and vegetation conditions were such that large scale fires burned through these stands. These fires would kill some mature individuals and most of the younger trees. Recently, fire suppression, reduction of fine fuels by grazing, and subtle climatic shifts have allowed numerous small western juniper trees to become established. The increase in western juniper has been at the expense of the associated woody and herbaceous plants.

Western juniper woodlands are not classified as commercial forests. The bole morphology and numerous branches make juniper difficult to work with and desirable only for ornamental wood working. However, opportunities do exist for other nontraditional commercial uses such as firewood and biofuels.

### 2.5.3.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Maintain or improve late-seral stage ecological characteristics in old-growth western juniper woodlands.

#### Alternative A

Younger (<120 year old) western juniper trees would be mechanically removed from old growth juniper stands. Younger trees would be removed using chainsaws or other mechanical equipment. All lightning- and human-caused wildland fires in old growth western juniper stands would continue to be suppressed.

#### Alternative B

Natural processes would be allowed to define vegetation composition and structure in old growth woodlands. Wildland fire use management would occur on lightning-ignited fires that have low threat to life and property, and are determined to benefit resources in and adjacent to the fire.

#### Alternative C

If no threat to life or substantial resource values is present, wildland fires would be allowed to burn in old growth western juniper stands, restoring fire to its historic role in the ecosystem. Up to 90 percent of the post-European settlement western juniper trees may be individually removed from old growth stands using terra torches or other ignition devices.

#### Alternative D

Up to 90 percent of the younger (<120 years old) western juniper trees in old growth western juniper stands would be mechanically removed. Markets would be developed for byproducts of western juniper removal, such as secondary wood products (e.g. fence posts), biomass fuels for electricity generation, and firewood. Unplanned wildland fires would be evaluated for resource benefit. If no threat to life or private property exists, the wildland fire would be managed for resource benefit.

#### Alternative E

Younger (<120 years old) western juniper trees would be mechanically removed from old growth juniper stands. Markets would be developed for by-products of western juniper removal, such as secondary wood products (e.g. fence posts), biomass fuels for electricity generation, and firewood. Unplanned wildland fires would be evaluated for resource benefit. If no threat to life or private property exists, the wildland fire would be managed for resource benefit.

### **2.5.3.2 Goal 2 - Maintain, restore, or improve the ecological integrity of mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands/groves.**

#### 2.5.3.2.1 Management Framework

Quaking aspen and mountain mahogany communities comprise a relatively small percentage of the landscape, but contribute substantially to the biodiversity of plants and animals in the Great Basin. Quaking aspen plant communities, especially below 7,000 feet, were influenced by fire. These plant communities are often found in productive deep soil areas and in a complex mosaic of mountain big, mountain shrub, and low sagebrush plant communities. Fire played a much less important role in the development of mountain mahogany stands. Mountain mahogany is often found on shallow soil sites in areas where long periods of time can elapse between fire events. These two plant communities share a dramatic increase in western juniper over the last 120 years.

Western juniper is an effective competitor for resources. Recent expansion of western juniper into quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands has been at the expense of the associated vegetation. Western juniper has encroached some stands to the point that all associated woody vegetation has been replaced. This total type conversion alters the habitat for many plant and animal species. However, some areas encroached by western juniper still have varying degrees of quaking aspen or mountain mahogany remaining. Treatment of these stands, especially small isolated pockets, may require protection from wild and domestic larger herbivores until new suckers or plants can reach heights above the browse line.

#### 2.5.3.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Reduce the component of western juniper and other associated woody plant species in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands.

##### Alternative A

Western juniper would continue to be mechanically removed from quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands where fire is inappropriate. Where western juniper has become established and has the potential to dominate aspen stands, either the stands would be rehabilitated by prescribed burning, or the stand would be burned after removing the juniper. All nonprescription wildland fires in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands would continue to be suppressed.

Where recovery could be suppressed by browsing livestock and/or wildlife, treated mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands would be fenced. In general, this pertains to smaller stands or to stands where higher than normal browsing pressure could be expected to occur. Some large stands might not need to be fenced in order for regeneration to occur.

##### Alternative B

Allow natural processes to define vegetation composition and structure in quaking aspen groves and mountain mahogany stands. Wildland fire use management would occur on lightning fires that have low threat to life and property, and that are determined to benefit resources in and adjacent to the fire.

##### Alternative C

Western juniper would be mechanically removed from quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands. Where western juniper has become established and has the potential to dominate aspen stands, either the stands would be rehabilitated by prescribed burning, or the stand would be burned after removing the juniper. Wildland fires would be allowed to burn in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands that have been invaded by western juniper in order to reduce the influence of western juniper.

Where recovery could be suppressed by browsing by livestock and/or wildlife, treated mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands would be fenced. In general, this would pertain to smaller stands or to stands where higher than normal browsing pressure could be expected to occur. Some large stands might not need to be fenced in order for regeneration to occur.

##### Alternative D

Western juniper would be mechanically removed from quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands. Markets would be encouraged for by-products of western juniper removal. Some targeted uses could be fence posts, molding, biomass for cogeneration, and firewood.

Where western juniper has become established and has the potential to dominate aspen stands, the stands would be rehabilitated by prescribed burning where possible. Wildland fires would be allowed to burn in quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands that have been invaded by western juniper in order to reduce the influence of western juniper.

Where recovery could be suppressed by browsing by livestock and/or wildlife, treated mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands would be fenced. In general, this would pertain to smaller stands or to stands where higher than normal browsing pressure could be expected to occur. Some large stands might not need to be fenced in order for regeneration to occur.

Western juniper would be mechanically removed from quaking aspen and mountain mahogany stands. Markets would be encouraged to utilize the byproducts of western juniper removal. For example, markets for fence posts, biomass for cogeneration, and firewood could be encouraged in the local community.

Where western juniper has become established and has the potential to dominate quaking aspen stands, prescribed fire would be used to reduce the influence of western juniper, or the stand would be mechanically treated and then burned to achieve the same goal. Burned areas would be reseeded with native and introduced forage species.

Wild and domestic herbivores would be allowed access to additional forage produced by cutting and/or burning mountain mahogany and quaking aspen stands.

**2.5.3.3 Goal 3 - Manage woodland habitat so that the forage, water, cover, structure, and security necessary to meet the life history requirements of woodland-dependent and -associated wildlife species are available on public lands.**

2.5.3.3.1 Management Framework

Currently, 97 percent of western juniper stands are less than 120 years old. The prehistoric record indicates that the range of western juniper woodlands has fluctuated greatly over the last 5,000 years. Historically, western juniper increased its range during mild, wet periods. As fire frequency increased at the end of these periods, the range of western juniper contracted. Recent expansions (since 1870) have occurred under different climatic conditions and in more productive and deeper soil sites than the previous expansions.

Western juniper is an effective competitor for resources. Recent expansion of western juniper into more productive big sagebrush, low sagebrush, and riparian plant communities has been at the expense of the associated vegetation and animal communities. The result of this encroachment has been a reduction in the total number of species present and an increase in the amount of mineral soil exposed. Forage for livestock and wildlife has also been reduced as western juniper density and cover has increased. Sagebrush obligate wildlife species have experienced a reduction in habitat due to western juniper encroachment. A similar trend has occurred in riparian plant communities where western juniper has replaced riparian woody and herbaceous plants.

2.5.3.3.2 Management Directions by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Reduce the influence of post-settlement (stands with trees <120 years old) western juniper to restore riparian and sagebrush habitats.

Alternative A

Post-settlement juniper trees (<120 years old) would be mechanically removed from riparian areas and sagebrush habitats. Human-ignited prescribed broadcast fire would be used to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian habitats. All unplanned wildland fires would be suppressed with the appropriate management actions.

Alternative B

Naturally ignited fires would be evaluated for risk to public and firefighter safety, threats to private property, and resource damage. Fires with low risks to firefighter and public safety, private property, and resources would be managed for resource benefits. Prescribed fires would be used to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian plant communities.

Alternative C

All younger western juniper trees (<120 years old) would be mechanically removed from riparian areas and sagebrush habitats. Naturally ignited fires would be evaluated for risk to public and firefighter safety, threats to private property, and resource damage. Fires with low risks to firefighter and public safety, private property, and resources would be managed for resource benefits.

Alternative D

Post-settlement trees (<120 years old) would be mechanically removed from riparian areas and sagebrush plant communities. Naturally ignited fires would be evaluated for risk to public and firefighter safety, threats to private property, and resource damage. Fires with low risks to firefighter and public safety, private property, and resources would be managed for resource benefits. Human ignited prescribed fires would be used to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian plant communities.

### Alternative E

Post-settlement trees (<120 years old) would be mechanically removed from riparian areas and sagebrush plant communities. Naturally ignited fires would be evaluated for risk to public and firefighter safety, threats to private property, and resource damage. Fires with low risks to firefighter and public safety, private property, and resources would be managed for resource benefits. Human ignited prescribed fires would be used to reduce the influence of western juniper on sagebrush and riparian plant communities. Local markets would be encouraged to utilize by-products of western juniper removal.

#### 2.5.3.4 Monitoring

See monitoring in Rangelands Section.

### **2.5.4 Wildland Juniper Management Area**

**2.5.4.1 Goal - Manage the WJMA for the purposes of experimentation, education, interpretation, and demonstration of active and passive management intended to restore the historic fire regime and pre-settlement native vegetation communities on Steens Mountain, compatibly with preservation of desirable juniper woodland ecological values in nonexperimental areas.**

#### 2.5.4.1.1 Management Framework

The restoration of historic fire regimes in the CMPA is specified in the Steens Act and discussed elsewhere under Fire Management. The WJMA was established by the Steens Act in order to provide an opportunity to demonstrate current management actions and evaluate the applicability of new or untested management techniques. In order to make the WJMA most useful, plant and animal communities should be inventoried in order to provide generalized baseline information and to assist in planning demonstration areas and field experiments.

Common to all objectives is the establishment of a science advisory group, which will help set direction for research and demonstration conducted within the WJMA. Composition and number in this group would be determined by the SMAC and the District Manager.

#### 2.5.4.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Establish a series of demonstration areas within the 3,267-acre WJMA for technology transfer and public education. Evaluate different treatments and management strategies for plant communities dominated by western juniper.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Livestock grazing would continue within the Frazer Field Pasture. Temporary fences would be constructed to protect demonstration areas within the WJMA where livestock grazing is outside the scope of the evaluation. Every effort would be made to mitigate any loss of forage resource to the permittee.

### Alternative A

Plant and animal communities present in the WJMA would be inventoried.

#### Alternatives B, C, D and E

Plant and animal communities present in the WJMA would be inventoried. Areas would be established to demonstrate and evaluate the effects of different treatments (fire, cutting, or other strategies) on western juniper and on the recovery or rehabilitation of native plant communities. Interpretive sites would be established at the boundary of the WJMA identifying the management area, its intent, and eventually some experimental results.

#### 2.5.4.2 Monitoring

See Rangelands Section.

## 2.5.5 Rangelands

### 2.5.5.1 **Goal 1 - Maintain, restore or improve the integrity of desirable vegetation communities including perennial, native, and desirable introduced plant species. Provide for their continued existence and normal function in nutrient, water, and energy cycles.**

#### 2.5.5.1.1 Management Framework

Beginning in the 1960s, awareness began to evolve concerning the importance of public lands for the maintenance of biological diversity. The passage of the FLPMA and PRIA provided objectives and priorities for the management of vegetation resources on public lands. Across the landscape, the long-term goal of vegetation management is to improve or maintain rangeland condition to the DRC that meets management objectives.

#### 2.5.5.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Maintain or restore native vegetation communities through sound landscape management practices.

##### Alternatives A and D

Maintain or improve ecological status of native plant communities.

##### Alternative B

Natural processes would define the vegetation composition across the landscape.

##### Alternative C

Natural values associated with the diverse composition and structure of native vegetation would be emphasized. Emphasis on commodity production of herbaceous and shrubby vegetation would be minimized.

##### Alternative E

The production of native herbaceous and shrubby vegetation for commodity uses would be emphasized within the constraints of other resource management objectives.

**Objective 2.** Manage desirable nonnative seedings to meet resource objectives.

##### Alternative A

Nonnative seedings would be managed and/or manipulated to maintain vegetation composition and to meet S&Gs. In Greater Sage-Grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, native vegetation and diversity would be maintained or restored through interseeding of native plant species on approximately 200 acres of nonnative seedings. Brush beating and/or disking in a mosaic pattern would be allowed on 50 percent of nonnative seedings where brush cover is high.

##### Alternative B

Natural processes would define the vegetation composition in nonnative seedings.

##### Alternative C

Actions to diversify structure and composition of selected nonnative seedings would be implemented, with emphasis on natural values and other resource objectives, such as reestablishment of native plant species. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, interseeding to establish native plant species on approximately 20,000 acres of nonnative seedings throughout the Planning Area would be utilized where vegetative species diversity is low. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that have reverted to cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. The emphasis would be on reestablishing native species, but other desirable nonnative species could be used in the seeding mix where appropriate. Livestock grazing could be used to suppress plant competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination

with permittees, the ODFW, and the USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis. Emphasis of this project would be the seedings on the north and west sides of Steens Mountain. Brush beating of sagebrush in a mosaic pattern would be allowed on 50 percent of seeded areas where brush cover is high.

#### Alternative D

Actions to diversify structure and composition of selected nonnative seedings would be implemented when consistent with other resource objectives. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, interseeding to establish native plant species onto approximately 10,000 acres of nonnative seedings throughout the Planning Area would be utilized where vegetative species diversity is low. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that have reverted to cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. Other desirable nonnative species could be used in the seeding mix. Livestock grazing could be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination with permittees, the ODFW, and the USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis. Emphasis of this project would be the seedings on the north and west sides of Steens Mountain. Brush beating of sagebrush in a mosaic pattern would be allowed on 50 percent of seeded areas where brush cover is high.

#### Alternative E

Existing nonnative seedings presently in poor or fair condition would be restored. New seeding in areas capable of additional biomass production would be established. In Greater sage-grouse habitat and/or deer winter range, interseeding to establish native and other desirable nonnative plant species onto approximately 5,000 acres of nonnative seedings throughout the Planning Area would be utilized where vegetative species diversity is low. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that have reverted to cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination with permittees, the ODFW, and the USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis. Emphasis of this project would be the seedings on the north and west side of Steens Mountain. Brush beating of sagebrush in a mosaic pattern would be allowed on 75 percent of seeded areas where brush cover is high.

**Objective 3.** Rehabilitate plant communities that do not have the potential to meet the DRC through management.

#### Alternative A

Vegetation manipulation projects would be implemented under this alternative, consistent with existing management objectives. Areas burned by wildland fire would be rehabilitated to protect soil, water, and vegetation resources.

#### Alternative B

Under this alternative, natural processes would determine vegetation composition. Wildland fire areas would not be rehabilitated unless noxious weeds or other undesirable weedy plant species have the potential to dominate the site.

#### Alternative C

Plant communities that do not meet the DRC due to dominance by undesirable weedy species or invasive juniper would be rehabilitated utilizing native plant species.

#### Alternative D

Plant communities that do not meet the DRC due to dominance by undesirable weedy species or invasive juniper would be rehabilitated utilizing native and nonnative plant species where appropriate.

#### Alternative E

Plant communities that do not meet the DRC due to dominance by undesirable weedy species or invasive juniper would be rehabilitated utilizing species that would provide optimal forage and vegetative cover.

**Objective 4** - Increase species and structural diversity at the plant community and landscape levels in the big sagebrush communities. Provide multiple successional stages within the landscape.

Alternative A

Prescribed fire and mechanical removal of western juniper would be used to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plant species.

Alternative B

Wildland fire would be utilized to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plant species.

Alternative C

Wildland fire and mechanical removal of western juniper would be utilized on selected sites to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plant species.

Alternatives D and E

Prescribed fire, all wildland fire, and mechanical removal of western juniper would be utilized to create a mosaic of multiple successional stages, reduce the dominance of woody vegetation, and release suppressed desirable plant species.

**2.5.5.2 Goal 2 - Manage rangeland habitats so that forage, water, cover, structure, and security necessary to meet the life history requirements of wildlife are available on public lands.**

2.5.5.2.1 Management Framework

With the passage of the FLPMA and PRIA, objectives and priorities for the management of public land vegetation resources were more clearly defined. Guidance contained in 43 CFR 4180 of the regulations directs public land management toward the maintenance or restoration of the physical function and biological health of vegetative ecosystems. The S&Gs (USDI 1997a) also provide guidance for the management of plant communities with relation to rangeland condition. This goal would maintain and improve the condition in plant communities that provide wildlife habitat, recreation, forage, scientific, scenic, ecological, and water and soil conservation benefits for consumptive and nonconsumptive uses. The long-term goal of vegetation management across the landscape is to maintain or improve rangeland condition to the DRC, which meets management objectives. Numerous wildlife species (e.g. Greater sage-grouse, mule deer, pygmy rabbits, sage sparrows, sage thrasher, other migratory birds and small mammals) depend on native upland sagebrush steppe habitats to meet life history needs. In managing uplands, the BLM needs to consider the consequences and relationships of management to the life history needs of wildlife.

2.5.5.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper plant communities to meet habitat requirements for wildlife.

Alternative A

Variable desired conditions of big sagebrush cover would be determined on a site-by-site basis to benefit game and nongame species.

Alternative B

Natural processes would be allowed to determine the future condition of wildlife habitat in big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper plant communities.

### Alternative C

Big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper plant communities would be managed for the benefit of all wildlife and to meet the DRC in all habitats throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative D

Big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper plant communities would be managed for the benefit of all wildlife and to meet the DRC in most habitats throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative E

Big sagebrush, quaking aspen, and western juniper habitat types would be managed where economically important wildlife are present. Big sagebrush would be reestablished where economically important game species are present.

**Objective 2.** Manage big sagebrush communities to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent species.

### Alternative A

Variable desired conditions of big sagebrush cover would be determined on a case-by-case basis in cooperation with the ODFW to provide mosaics of sagebrush cover on portions of big game habitat. Limited emphasis would be placed on specifically providing habitat for nongame wildlife species. Crucial big game and greater sage-grouse habitat would be protected from large-scale vegetation treatment projects or wildland fires.

### Alternative B

Future big sagebrush conditions would be variable and would be determined by natural processes.

### Alternative C

Big sagebrush habitat would be managed for shrub cover, structure, and forage values for the benefit of game and nongame wildlife. The DRC would include shrub cover values that meet or exceed the requirements described in Wildlife Habitats in Managed Rangelands (1984) and big sagebrush distribution over a large enough area to avoid the adverse impacts of habitat fragmentation. The DRC would strive for big sagebrush overstories that emphasize the presence of mature, light- to moderately-stocked shrub canopies capable of supporting diverse herbaceous understories and that are present in a variety of spatial arrangements important to wildlife. This would apply to all native range or seeded areas in big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative D

Same as Alternative C, except that the DRC would apply to most areas in big sagebrush habitat throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative E

Big sagebrush habitat would be reestablished on native rangelands or seedings where economically important wildlife are present.

#### 2.5.5.3 Monitoring

Over the life of this plan, vegetation communities would be monitored to determine progress toward attaining the DRC. Monitoring to determine the success in meeting vegetation management objectives would include periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity. Measurements of the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter would also be determined. Vegetative and litter cover protects the soil surface from raindrop impact, detains overland flow, protects surface from wind erosion, and retards soils moisture loss through evaporation. Additional data collection to determine the effectiveness of established tools in meeting objectives may include herbaceous or woody utilization studies, actual use data, and climate.

## 2.5.6 Noxious Weeds

### 2.5.6.1 **Goal - Control the introduction and proliferation of noxious weeds and reduce the extent and density of established populations to acceptable levels.**

#### 2.5.6.1.1 Management Framework

The FLPMA and PRIA direct the BLM to "manage public lands according to the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield" and to "manage the public lands to prevent unnecessary degradation...so they become as productive as feasible." The introduction and spread of noxious weeds and undesirable plants within the Planning Area contributes to the loss of rangeland productivity, increased soil erosion, reduced species and structural diversity, loss of wildlife habitat, and in some instances may pose a threat to human health and welfare. The Carlson-Foley Act (Public Law 90-583), the Federal Noxious Weed Act (Public Law 93-629), and the Burns District's Integrated Management Program EA direct weed control on public lands in the Planning Area. In the future, additional weed management direction will come from the new national Vegetation Management EIS, which is currently being developed. Protection of natural resource values depends on educating people about the negative impacts of weeds, and the actions, which agencies and individuals can take to prevent introduction and establishment of invasive species.

The Burns District Noxious Weed Management Program addresses the dynamic nature of noxious weeds such as the increasing number of species, changing conditions of infestations, and changing technologies. Currently, 18 noxious weed species are known to occur within the AMU, totally 1,457 acres. There are currently 17 noxious weed species known to occur within the CMPA, totaling 336 acres. Selection of the appropriate control method is based on such factors as the growth characteristics of the target species, size and location of infestation, accessibility/feasibility of equipment, potential impacts to nontarget species, human use of the area, effectiveness of the treatment on target species, and cost. In addition, all BLM authorized activities are evaluated for their potential to spread or cause new infestations. If necessary, proposed activities shall be mitigated so that weed establishment would be minimal.

Depending on the plant's characteristics, control methods may be used individually or in combination and may be utilized over several years. Due to the length of seed viability, annual germination of seed from previous years, and the characteristics of certain plants, treatment could occur annually for a period of ten or more years. Since weed infestations vary annually due to new introductions, spread of existing infestations, and results of prior treatments, annual site-specific reviews of known locations would be conducted prior to initiating weed treatment activities.

Herbicides that may be used are those approved in the "Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States EIS" (1991b), or any that are approved through an amendment or other agency approval process (see Appendix H for the current list of approved chemicals). Application would take place only in accordance with the manufacturer's label and by qualified/certified applicators. Methods of application include wiping or wicking, backpack spraying, spraying from a vehicle with a handgun or boom, aerial spraying, or other approved methods.

Noxious weeds occurring in special management areas, including areas with T&E species/habitat, would be treated with methods to protect resource values and in accordance with the provisions of the Burns District's Integrated Management Program EA directing weed management.

#### 2.5.6.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Treat noxious weeds and inventory for new infestations using the most effective means available, as outlined in the Burns District's Integrated Management Program EA/Decision Record.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Noxious weed prevention and control would continue to be a priority in all Alternatives. Weeds would be controlled in an integrated weed management program, which includes prevention, education, and cultural, physical, biological, and chemical treatments. Preventive measures such as public education and livestock and wildlife management would be employed to maintain or enhance desirable vegetation cover and reduce the distribution and introduction of noxious weed seed and plant parts. Mechanical and manual control methods and burning treatments would physically remove noxious weeds and unwanted or invasive vegetation; biological controls would introduce and cultivate factors such as insects and pathogens that naturally limit the spread of noxious weeds; and chemical treatments using approved herbicides would

be applied where mechanical and/or biological controls are not feasible. Periodic inventories would detect new infestations. Monitoring the extent of known infestations is the key to controlling or eradicating noxious weeds.

#### Alternative A

The application of approved noxious weed control methods including mechanical, biological, and chemical treatments would be continued through integrated management. Control on disturbed areas such as roads, ROWs, waterholes, and recreational sites would be emphasized, as would inventories to detect new infestations.

#### Alternatives B and C

Only high priority areas of noxious weeds would be treated in order to protect high quality natural resource values and adjacent private land. Manual or biological control methods would be preferred. Inventories for noxious weeds would increase to provide maximum detection of new infestations.

#### Alternatives D and E

Integrated management would be implemented for the control of noxious weeds. Control on disturbed areas such as roads, ROWs, waterholes, and recreational sites would be emphasized. Priority would be given to lands with high quality natural resource values. Emphasis would be on prevention, restoration, research, and expanded efforts to inventory and detect new infestations.

**Objective 2.** Create public awareness on how to utilize public lands without inadvertently spreading noxious weeds.

#### Alternative A

Public education concerning noxious weeds would continue in the local area.

#### Alternatives B, C, D and E

Public education concerning noxious weeds would be expanded to include areas outside of Harney County.

**Objective 3.** Maintain partnerships with local groups and government agencies to combine efforts in the control and prevention of noxious weed infestations.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

The Harney County Weed Management partnership would continue under all of the alternatives.

#### 2.5.6.2 Monitoring

Evaluation of treatments would continue in cooperation with the State of Oregon, private interests, Harney and other neighboring counties, and federal jurisdictions. Inventories to identify new introductions, as well as distribution and density of noxious weed populations, would be carried out on an annual basis in cooperation with the aforementioned entities.

Monitoring of riparian vegetation and associated attributes and processes would be identified through watershed assessment, PFC assessment, and/or activity level management actions. Methods to evaluate effectiveness of management actions may include qualitative and/or quantitative techniques such as photo-points; trends in vegetation composition and/or density; stream shade; bank stability; and channel width-to-depth ratio.

Monitoring of pre-treatment conditions and experimental results would be done by the specialist, researcher, or other individual or entity carrying out each experiment or demonstration.

## 2.6 Fish and Wildlife

### 2.6.1 **Goal— Provide diverse, structured, resilient, and connected habitat on a landscape level to support viable and sustainable populations of wildlife, fish, and other aquatic organisms.**

#### 2.6.1.1 Management Framework

Section 102.8 of the FLPMA states that the policy of the United States is to manage public land in a manner that would protect the quality of multiple resources and provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic animals. The PRIA directs the BLM to improve rangeland conditions with due consideration given the needs of wildlife and their habitats.

The character of vegetation, including arrangements, densities, and age classes, greatly influences fish and wildlife habitat quality and productivity. Since vegetation character can vary in response to federal land use authorizations, the BLM considers the consequences to the health of fish and wildlife habitat of various land uses such as grazing and mining, and treatments such as burning and seeding.

The BLM's role in the management of fish and other aquatic resources is to provide the habitat that supports these resources. Aquatic habitat values are products of the attributes and processes of properly functioning riparian and aquatic systems at a desired ecological status. Therefore, the maintenance, restoration, or improvement of aquatic habitat to support these resources is primarily relative to the alternatives identified under the Water Resources, Vegetation, and Special Status Species sections. Species manipulation, such as introduction or removal, is under the authority of the ODFW and the USFWS.

Wildlife must have a reasonable amount of protection from adverse impacts associated with human disturbances and most human activities. This is especially true during breeding seasons and when wildlife use winter ranges.

The ODFW manages wildlife species populations through management objectives specified in their respective management plans; the BLM manages adequate habitat to support these numbers. The BLM and the ODFW will work cooperatively to benefit the management of wildlife and wildlife habitat as described in the MOU of 2001 between the two agencies. Bighorn sheep have been reintroduced and elk have expanded their range in the Planning Area, while pronghorn numbers have remained fairly stable and deer numbers have decreased. Changes in numbers of wildlife depend on availability, quality and quantity of seasonal and year long habitat, and other factors.

To allow for transplanting or reestablishment of wildlife into suitable habitat where they were found previously, BLM Manual 1745, "Introduction, Transplant, Augmentation, and Reestablishment of Fish, Wildlife, and Plants" (1992) states that "Decisions for making introductions, transplants, or reestablishments should be made as part of the land use planning process..." Recommendations for transplants of wildlife onto or removal from public lands would be coordinated with the ODFW. Management of special status species in wilderness areas will be conducted in accordance with Appendix B of House Report 101-405 of the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress.

#### 2.6.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Maintain, restore, or improve habitat.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

Maintenance, restoration, or improvement of habitat to support these resources is primarily relative to the alternatives identified under the Water Resources, Vegetation, and Special Status Species sections. Fish and wildlife habitat management and monitoring would be coordinated with the ODFW, DEQ, USFWS, and other cooperators, as appropriate.

##### Alternative A

Single-species-oriented management would be emphasized in most habitats.

Approximately 9,000 acres of deer winter range in unsatisfactory condition would be reseeded with sagebrush and a mix of other native and nonnative species in coordination with the USFWS, ODFW, and permittees. Opportunities for

improvements and/or restoration of fish and wildlife habitat would be identified and undertaken, such as vegetation manipulation and water developments.

#### Alternative B

This alternative assumes that habitat conditions would be determined by the consequences of natural events. The emphasis would be on managing self-sustaining native species.

Where appropriate, at least 9,000 acres of deer winter range would be reseeded by aerial application. Opportunities would be identified and undertaken for improvements and/or restoration of fish and wildlife habitat through the use of wildland fire, fence removal, and other mainly passive methods.

#### Alternative C

Equal emphasis would be placed on habitat requirements for game and nongame fish and wildlife. To the extent possible and practical, fish and wildlife community connectivity and interrelationships would be emphasized in most habitats. This approach would stress landscape or ecosystem management and would be distinctly different from single-species management emphasis.

The emphasis would be on managing self-sustaining native species.

Throughout the Planning Area, approximately 20,000 acres nonnative seedings and all the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low would be inter-seeded to establish native plant species. Other desirable nonnative plant species may be used on a limited basis. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that have cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination with permittees, the ODFW, and the USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis.

Opportunities for improvements and/or restoration of wildlife habitat through the use of wildland fire, other vegetation manipulations, limited fence removal, water developments, etc., would be identified and undertaken.

#### Alternative D

Equal emphasis would be placed on habitat requirements for game and nongame fish and wildlife. To the extent possible and practical, fish and wildlife community connectivity and interrelationships would be emphasized in most habitats. This approach would stress landscape or ecosystem management and be distinctly different from single-species management emphasis.

Throughout the Planning Area, approximately 10,000 acres of nonnative seedings and most of the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low would be inter-seeded to establish native plant species. Where appropriate, other desirable nonnative plant species could be used. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that have cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination with permittees, the ODFW, and the USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis.

Opportunities would be identified and undertaken for improvements and/or restoration of fish and wildlife habitat through the use of wildland fire, other vegetation manipulations, water developments, etc. Functional fence removal would not be conducted due to livestock grazing.

#### Alternative E

Single-species-oriented management would be emphasized in most habitats.

Throughout the Planning Area, approximately 5,000 acres of nonnative seedings and some of the native vegetation in deer winter range where vegetative species diversity is low would be inter-seeded to establish native and other desirable nonnative plant species. Low species diversity means seeded areas that are predominantly crested wheatgrass, or that

have cheatgrass dominance, or few herbaceous plants with an overstory of sagebrush. Livestock grazing would be used to suppress competition and allow sagebrush establishment. In areas to be reseeded, coordination with permittees, the ODFW, and USFWS would occur to set livestock grazing prescriptions on a site-specific basis. Opportunities would be identified for improvements and/or restoration of fish and wildlife habitat through the use of wildland fire, other vegetation manipulations and water developments. Fence removal would not be conducted due to livestock grazing.

The emphasis of the improvements would be to benefit livestock.

**Objective 2.** Manage forage production to support wildlife population levels identified by the ODFW.

#### Alternative A

Forage for wildlife would be allocated at management objective levels; wildlife populations would be allowed to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW.

#### Alternative B

Forage for wildlife would be allocated at greater than management objective levels. Wildlife populations would be allowed to expand naturally.

#### Alternative C

Forage for wildlife would be allocated at greater than management objective level. Wildlife populations would be allowed to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW.

#### Alternative D

Forage for wildlife would be allocated at management objective levels. Wildlife populations would be allowed to expand naturally or through limited transplants in coordination with the ODFW.

#### Alternative E

Forage for wildlife would be allocated at management objective levels. Wildlife populations would be allowed to expand naturally or through limited transplants. Forage allocation would increase concurrent with improved range conditions and other improvements in coordination with the ODFW.

#### 2.6.1.3 Monitoring

Monitoring of wildlife habitat would occur as described previously in the monitoring section for Rangelands. Monitoring would also include ODFW survey data on the locations and numbers for various wildlife species, which would allow for evaluation of the adequacy of wildlife forage allocations.

### 2.7 **Special Status Species**

#### 2.7.1 **Goal 1 - Maintain, restore, or improve special status plant populations and animal habitats; manage public lands to conserve or contribute to the recovery of threatened or endangered species; and prevent future Endangered Species Act listings.**

##### 2.7.1.1 Management Framework

The Endangered Species Act mandates management that leads to the conservation or recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species. This Act, as well as BLM policy, encourages management to conserve special status species not currently listed as threatened or endangered.

Section 102.8 of the FLPMA requires that public lands be managed to protect the quality of ecological and environmental values, and where appropriate, to protect their natural condition. The FLPMA further requires that public land be managed to protect the quality of multiple resources and provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic

animals. Rangeland health regulations identify the need to foster productive and diverse populations and communities of plants and animals.

Most animals assigned to a special status category are limited in their distributions, populations, or habitats and may be at risk over various geographic areas. Where evidence suggests land uses are adversely affecting special status species not currently listed as threatened or endangered, it is in the public interest to prevent the need for federal listing under the Endangered Species Act. Listing of a species as threatened or endangered may lead to restrictions on land uses, and under some circumstances may cause adverse socioeconomic impacts to commodity users. In most cases, both socioeconomic and biological benefits are associated with conserving species to avoid federal listing.

Conservation efforts for special status species may include maintenance, restoration, or improvement of habitat through resource management actions relative to the habitat needs or specific circumstances of a species. Active and/or passive measures may be developed and implemented to promote suitable habitat condition and to minimize or avoid adverse effects to the species. Two potential limitations to developing and implementing conservation efforts are: 1) the lag between management implementation and the realization of environmental benefits and 2) the fact that physical and biological mechanisms adversely affecting a species are not necessarily fully understood.

Bats are an economically important group due to their impact on insect populations. Many of the bat species present in the Planning Area are special status species. Abandoned mines can be important roosting habitats for bats, but are also subject to disturbance by humans. Gating of mine entrances can protect important bat habitat as well as reduce the possibility of injury to people exploring these old mines.

Numerous wildlife species depend on native upland sagebrush steppe habitats to meet life history needs. In managing uplands, the BLM needs to consider the consequences and relationships of management to the life history needs of wildlife. The Executive Order on the Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds, and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush-Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines give direction to protect or restore habitat for these species, many of which are special status species.

Public land supplies a high percentage of the total available and currently unoccupied land suitable for bighorn sheep. As the principle land administrator of habitat capable of supporting bighorn sheep, BLM involvement in this program is necessary. The BLM has a policy and responsibility to cooperate with state agencies to accommodate species management goals to the extent they are consistent with the principles of multiple use management.

The ODFW and the USFWS manage special status species populations through recovery plans, conservation agreements and management objectives specified in their respective management plans. The BLM is involved in the development of these plans manages habitat in cooperation with the other agencies in support of these plans. The BLM and the ODFW will work cooperatively to benefit the management of special status species and their habitat as described in the MOU of 2001 between the two agencies. Management of special status species and their habitat in wilderness areas will be conducted in accordance with Steens Act, the Wilderness Act and Appendix B of House Report 101-405 of the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress. Minimum tool analysis is required and would be conducted on all actions proposed for management of special status species and their associated habitats.

To allow for transplanting or reestablishment of special status species into suitable habitat where they were found previously, BLM Manual 1745, "Introduction, Transplant, Augmentation, and Reestablishment of Fish, Wildlife, and Plants" (1992) states that "Decisions for making introductions transplants, or reestablishments should be made as part of the land use planning process..." Recommendations for transplants of special status species onto or removal from public lands would be coordinated with the ODFW and the USFWS.

The ODFW has been pursuing a statewide effort to restore bighorn sheep into suitable unoccupied habitat and to enhance populations in currently occupied areas. Both the BLM and the ODFW have agency management plans and have coordinated over the years to foster communication between agencies and the public. Although the ODFW has been successfully releasing and managing bighorn sheep on public land since the mid-1960s, current populations and distributions are still considered to be below their potential.

Bighorn sheep are native to eastern Oregon. Their presence contributes to the overall biological diversity and productivity of public land. Public interest in observing bighorn sheep in their natural setting is widespread, and they are highly prized as a big game animal.

## 2.7.2 Special Status Plant Species

### 2.7.2.1 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage special status plant species and their habitats so management actions do not contribute to their decline or listing as T&E.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Known populations of special status plants would be monitored periodically to assess their condition and trend. Inventories for new occurrences of special status plants would be completed in areas where public land is disturbed or targeted for disposal. Specific habitats would be managed to protect special status plants so populations can be maintained or increased.

### 2.7.2.2 Monitoring

Monitoring would include surveys to determine the distribution, resource conditions, and trends of special status plant species and representative habitats. Any new ground disturbing activities, noxious weed control activities, or the NEPA actions would require survey clearance for presence or absence of special status plant species.

## 2.7.3 Special Status Animal Species

**Objective 2.** Conserve special status animal species and the ecosystems on which they depend.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Maintenance, restoration, or improvement of habitat to support these resources is primarily relative to the alternatives identified under Water Resources and Vegetation. Fish and wildlife habitat management and monitoring would be coordinated with the ODFW, DEQ, USFWS, and other cooperators, as appropriate.

#### Alternative A

Management would emphasize achieving the DRC that maintains, restores, or improves habitats or populations of any special status species regardless of economic importance. The habitats and populations of all special status species would be managed for conservation. Management actions that affect threatened or endangered species would be conducted in accordance with existing and future biological opinions.

Management would provide habitat conditions that meet individual species requirements. Fish and wildlife community goals would generally be secondary to goals for individual species.

A variety of management actions or land use adjustments could be required to maintain, restore, or improve habitat for special status species. Management may include avoidance or mitigation measures to prevent or minimize adverse effects to special status animal species. Restoration or improvement measures could involve specific remedies with the potential for adjustments in ongoing resource management. Due to the variability in habitat use by special status species, management actions could be required within any of the habitat types described in this plan.

Bat gates would be installed at the entrances to abandoned mines to protect roost sites from disturbances while still allowing bat movement.

#### Alternative B

Natural processes would be emphasized except for management of critical habitat for federally listed animal species where natural processes are likely to conflict with species conservation or recovery. Management of special status species habitat would primarily be through passive measures associated with development and implementation of other resource management actions and associated themes of this RMP, except where required by law, such as compliance with the Endangered Species Act, CWA, or Steens Act.

Permanent protection of designated critical habitat for the Borax Lake chub would be pursued through purchase of nonpublic lands within critical habitat currently owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) or through establishment of a Conservation Agreement and easement among the BLM, TNC, USFWS and/or the ODFW to close the area to livestock grazing, mineral/geothermal exploration, and motorized access. The BLM would coordinate development of water quality standards and monitoring with the DEQ, USFWS, ODFW, and TNC concerning habitat and population trends for Borax Lake chub.

Bat gates would be installed at the entrances to abandoned mines. These areas would be withdrawn from mineral entry.

#### Alternative C

Management of special status species habitat could include active and passive measures associated with development and implementation of other resource management actions and associated themes of this RMP. Active restoration for specific habitat attributes may be developed through watershed analysis and/or site-specific activity plans. Where natural processes conflict with or substantially delay conservation, active restoration could be implemented to promote restoration of natural processes.

A variety of management actions or land use adjustments could be required to maintain, restore, or improve habitat for special status species. Management may include avoidance or mitigation measures to prevent or minimize adverse effects to special status animal species. Restoration or improvement measures could involve remedies that lead to adjustments in ongoing resource management. Due to the variability in habitat use by special status species, management actions could be required within any of the habitat types described in this plan.

Permanent protection of designated critical habitat for the Borax Lake chub would be pursued through the purchase of nonpublic lands within critical habitat currently owned by TNC, or through establishment of a Conservation Agreement and easement among the BLM, TNC, USFWS and/or the ODFW to close the area to livestock grazing, mineral/geothermal exploration, and motorized access. The BLM would coordinate development of water quality standards and monitoring with the DEQ, USFWS, ODFW, and TNC concerning habitat and population trends for Borax Lake chub.

Bat gates would be installed at the entrances to abandoned mines. These areas would be withdrawn from mineral entry.

#### Alternative D

Management of special status species under this alternative would be similar to Alternative C. However, development and implementation of passive and active measures to maintain, restore, or improve specific habitat attributes would be developed through watershed analysis and/or site-specific activity plans to balance a variety of resource management and uses. Protection of Borax Lake chub critical habitat would be pursued through establishment of a Conservation Agreement or other cooperative agreement among the BLM, TNC, USFWS and/or the ODFW to manage and protect the area for the conservation or recovery of the species. The BLM would coordinate development of water quality standards and monitoring with the DEQ, USFWS, ODFW, and TNC concerning habitat and population trends for Borax Lake chub.

Bat gates would be installed at the entrances to abandoned mines to protect roost sites from disturbances while still allowing bat movement. Specific critical sites would be considered for withdrawal from mineral entry.

#### Alternative E

Management of special status species would be conducted through development and implementation of passive and active measures to maintain, restore, or improve specific habitat attributes while promoting commodity production and public uses. Localized protection of habitat, such as riparian exclosures, and mitigation of potential adverse affects to threatened or endangered species would be emphasized. Management would provide habitat conditions that favor individual special status species. Fish and wildlife community goals would be secondary to goals for individual species. Restoration or improvement of habitat for special status species would focus on game species, and would serve as on-site and off-site mitigation.

Bat gates would be installed at the entrances to abandoned mines to protect roost sites from disturbances, while allowing bat movement.

**Objective 3.** Manage big sagebrush communities to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent special status species.

Alternative A

Variable desired conditions of big sagebrush cover would be determined on a site-by-site basis to benefit special status species. Big sagebrush habitat would be managed in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush-Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines. Areas used by Greater sage-grouse and other special status species would be identified with the ODFW and/or the USFWS. Habitat management would be coordinated across agency boundaries.

Limited emphasis would be placed on specifically providing habitat for nongame wildlife species. Crucial big game and Greater sage-grouse habitat would be protected from large-scale vegetation treatment projects or wildland fires.

Alternative B

Natural processes would be allowed to determine future big sagebrush conditions. To the extent practicable, management would be in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush-Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines. Areas used by Greater sage-grouse and other special status species would be identified in coordination with the ODFW and/or the USFWS. Habitat management would be coordinated across agency boundaries.

Alternative C

Big sagebrush habitat would be managed for the benefit of game and nongame species, and to meet the DRC in all big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area. Big sagebrush habitat would be managed in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush-Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines. Areas used by Greater sage-grouse and other special status species would be identified in coordination with the ODFW and/or the USFWS. Habitat management would be coordinated across agency boundaries.

Alternative D

Big sagebrush habitat would be managed for the benefit of special status species and to meet the DRC in most big sagebrush habitats throughout the Planning Area. Big sagebrush habitat would be managed in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush-Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines. Areas used by Greater sage-grouse and other special status species would be identified in coordination with the ODFW and/or the USFWS. Habitat management would be coordinated across agency boundaries.

Alternative E

Big sagebrush would be reestablished where economically important special status species are present. To the extent practicable, management would be in accordance with the Migratory Bird Executive Order and the Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Management Guidelines. Areas used by Greater Sage-Grouse and other special status species would be identified in coordination with the ODFW and/or the USFWS. Habitat management would be coordinated across agency boundaries.

**Objective 4.** Evaluate habitat requirements and conditions for the reintroduction of extirpated species into historic habitat in the Planning Area.

Alternative A

In coordination with the USFWS and the ODFW, a determination would be made whether habitat conditions exist to allow the successful reintroduction of locally or regionally extirpated special status species such as Columbia sharp-tailed grouse and mountain quail. A determination would be made whether habitat improvements, if any, are needed to create suitable habitat for reintroductions.

### Alternative B

In coordination with the USFWS and the ODFW, a determination would be made whether habitat conditions exist to allow the successful reintroduction of locally or regionally extirpated special status species such as Columbia sharp-tailed grouse and mountain quail, and other species.

### Alternatives C, D, and E

In coordination with the USFWS and the ODFW, a determination would be made whether habitat conditions exist to allow the successful reintroduction of locally or regionally extirpated special status species such as Columbia sharp-tailed grouse and mountain quail, and other species. A determination would be made whether habitat improvements, if any, are needed to create suitable habitat for reintroductions.

**Objective 5.** Maintain, restore, or improve bighorn sheep habitat and allow for maintenance or further expansion of bighorn sheep populations as defined by the ODFW in Oregon's Bighorn Sheep Management Plan.

### Management Common to All Alternatives

In the Steens Mountain Wilderness Area, all actions such as transplants, trapping, distribution of medicine, emergency situations, and maintenance of existing guzzlers would be authorized in accordance with the Steens Act, the Wilderness Act, and Appendix B of House Report 101-405 of the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress. Minimum tool analysis would be completed on all actions. Where these same actions occur in WSAs, the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (WSA IMP) would be followed.

### Alternatives A and E

The BLM would coordinate with the ODFW on population management of bighorn sheep. Transplants, reintroductions, and natural expansion of bighorn sheep would be allowed. Where needed, poor quality habitat in identified historic range would be improved. If the ODFW determines that excess animals are available, transplants out of the herds would be authorized.

Up to ten sites would be identified for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources or wildlife guzzlers (2000-3000 gal capacity) in identified historic habitat.

Bighorn sheep habitat maintenance, restoration, and enhancement would be emphasized within existing use areas and proposed reintroduction areas as identified in current land use plans, wildlife habitat management plans, and the ODFW's most current bighorn sheep management plan. Bighorn sheep pioneering outside the range would be allowed where no disease transmission conflicts exist.

A nine-mile buffer, as recommended in "Mountain Sheep Ecosystem Management Strategy in 11 Western States and Alaska" (USDI 1995), would be required, based on local conditions, between new domestic sheep and goat permitted use areas and bighorn sheep use areas, as a mechanism to further avoid disease transmission.

### Alternative B

Bighorn sheep management would allow for natural processes to occur. The range expansion of bighorn sheep populations would be determined by natural processes such as population growth and natural dispersal. No reintroductions or transplants would be conducted in identified historic range. Population numbers would be allowed to exceed management objectives, but no transplants out of the herds would be allowed.

Up to five sites would be identified for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources in identified historic habitat. Fences that restrict bighorn movements and impede access to water would be removed.

Habitat maintenance, restoration, and enhancement would be emphasized within all suitable range and with no limitations on public land. Livestock grazing, including domestic sheep and goats, would not be authorized; therefore, a buffer would not be required to minimize disease transmission.

Alternative C

The BLM would coordinate with the ODFW on population management of bighorn sheep. Transplants, reintroductions, and natural expansion of bighorn sheep would be allowed. Population numbers would be allowed to exceed management objectives. Transplants out of the herds would be authorized if the ODFW determines that excess animals are available for removal.

Up to ten sites would be identified for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources in identified historic habitat.

Bighorn sheep habitat maintenance, restoration, and enhancement would be emphasized within existing use areas and proposed reintroduction areas as identified in current land use plans, wildlife habitat management plans, and the ODFW's most current bighorn sheep management plan. Bighorn sheep pioneering outside the range would be allowed where no disease transmission conflicts exist.

A nine-mile buffer, as recommended in "Mountain Sheep Ecosystem Management Strategy in 11 Western States and Alaska" (USDI 1995), would be required, based on local conditions, between new domestic sheep and goat permitted use areas and bighorn sheep use areas as a mechanism to further avoid disease transmission.

Alternative D

The BLM would coordinate with the ODFW on population management of bighorn sheep. Transplants, reintroductions, and natural expansion of bighorn sheep would be allowed. Where needed, poor quality habitat in identified historic range would be improved. If the ODFW determines that excess animals are available, transplants out of the herds would be authorized.

Up to ten sites would be identified for construction of low impact, natural appearing water sources or wildlife guzzlers (2000-3000 gallon capacity) in identified historic habitat. Bighorn sheep maintenance, restoration, and enhancement would be emphasized within existing use areas and proposed reintroduction areas as identified in current land use plans, wildlife habitat management plans, and the ODFW's most current bighorn sheep management plan. Bighorn sheep pioneering outside the range would be allowed where no disease transmission conflicts exist.

A nine-mile buffer, as recommended in "Mountain Sheep Ecosystem Management Strategy in 11 Western States and Alaska" (USDI 1995), would be required, based on local conditions, between new domestic sheep and goat permitted use areas and bighorn sheep use areas as a mechanism to further avoid disease transmission.

2.7.3.1 Monitoring

Monitoring would consist of checking constructed gates for vandalism and collecting data on bat movement as well as numbers of bats exiting these gated mines.

Periodic surveys would determine the distribution, resource conditions, and trends of important habitats that support special status species. Refer to the monitoring sections of the Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat, Rangeland, Water Resources/Watershed Health, Noxious Weeds and Competing Undesirable Vegetation, and Plant Communities in this chapter for more information on monitoring.

Monitoring would include ODFW survey data on the general locations and numbers of bighorn sheep, and livestock utilization and rangeland trend studies.

A cooperative monitoring program (the BLM, DEQ, USFWS, ODFW and TNC) would be developed and implemented to monitor water quality, habitat characteristics, and population trends in Borax Lake and Lower Borax Lake Reservoir. This monitoring would be used to develop site-specific water quality standards for Borax Lake chub.

2.7.4 **Redband Trout Reserve**

**2.7.4.1 Goal - Manage the Redband Trout Reserve (RTR) to conserve, protect and enhance the Donner und Blitzen population of redband trout, and provide opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife oriented recreation.**

#### 2.7.4.1.1 Management Framework

The Steens Act mandates the Secretary of the Interior to designate the RTR and administer it consistent with the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSR Act). Administration of the RTR shall be through consultation with the SMAC and cooperation with the ODFW. The legislation identifies the RTR as consisting of the Donner und Blitzen River in the Steens Mountain Wilderness above its confluence with Fish Creek and the federal riparian lands immediately adjacent to the river, excluding private lands adjacent to the Donner und Blitzen River or its tributaries.

#### 2.7.4.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Define the RTR boundary.

##### Alternative A

The boundaries of the RTR are not currently delineated.

##### Alternatives B, C, and D

The RTR would consist of the public land portion of the Donner und Blitzen River and tributaries upstream of its confluence with Fish Creek to the longitudinal extent of current and future redband trout distribution, and the width of the flood prone area.

##### Alternative E

The RTR would consist of the public land portion of the mainstream Donner und Blitzen River upstream of its confluence with Fish Creek, and the width of the flood prone area.

**Objective 2.** Maintain genetic integrity of redband trout in the RTR.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

Coordinate and cooperate with the ODFW and the Malheur NWR in developing and/or revising Native Fish Conservation Plan(s) for the Donner and Blitzen River subbasin in support of the ODFW's Native Fish Conservation Policy.

**Objective 3.** Increase the distribution and abundance of redband trout in the RTR through maintenance and/or restoration of habitat quality and quantity.

##### Alternative A

Riparian and aquatic habitats would be managed to maintain or progress toward PFC, water quality standards, and fish habitat values through existing management. The RTR would be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act and the WSR Act, as appropriate. The Page Springs gauging weir would be removed if scientifically justified and funds are available.

##### Alternatives B, and C

Riparian and aquatic habitats would be managed for an advanced ecological status that provides a diversity of fish habitat values including spawning, rearing, cover, forage, and cold-water refuge, and in accordance with the Wilderness Act and the WSR Act, as appropriate. Alternatives would be developed, evaluated, and implemented with the USFWS, ODFW, SMAC, and local interests and organizations, for removal or modification of the Page Springs gauging weir in order to facilitate upstream migration of redband trout and other aquatic species while limiting the migration capabilities of nonnative fish.

##### Alternatives D and E

Riparian and aquatic habitats would be managed in a manner that provides a diversity of fish habitat values including spawning, rearing, cover, forage, and cold-water refuge, and in accordance with the Wilderness Act and the WSR Act,

as appropriate. Alternatives would be developed, evaluated, and implemented for removal or modification of the Page Springs gauging station weir with the USFWS, ODFW, SMAC, and local interests and organizations in order to facilitate upstream migration of redband trout and other aquatic species while limiting the migration capabilities of nonnative fish.

## 2.8 Paleontological Resources

### 2.8.1 **Goal 1 - Preserve, protect, and manage vertebrate, noteworthy invertebrate, and plant paleontological resources in accordance with existing laws and regulations to make these resources available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.**

#### 2.8.1.1 Management Framework

The BLM is required by law, regulations, and Executive Orders to manage paleontological resources such that they would be preserved and protected from destruction, and that appropriate uses would be made of such resources.

The BLM regulates the collection of fossils on public lands under its jurisdiction according to the following laws and regulations: FLPMA Section 310 and 302(b); 43 CFR 8365.1-5; and 43 CFR 3622. These laws provide direction for what individuals who wish to collect fossils on public land may do. Other federal agencies have similar authorities and policies for the lands they administer.

#### *The Federal Land Policy and Management Act*

Included in the many charges given to the BLM by the FLPMA are the following items: (a) to manage the public lands in such a manner that protects the quality of scientific and other values; (b) to see that these lands and resources are periodically and systematically inventoried; (c) to use such inventory data in developing plans for the management of these lands; and (d) to manage the use of such lands and resources through easements, licenses, and permits. Management actions on public lands would be inventoried for paleontological resources prior to ground disturbing activity.

#### *BLM Regulations 43 CFR 8365.1-5*

Subject to the provisions of this regulation, common invertebrate and paleobotanical fossils may be collected in reasonable amounts for noncommercial purposes without a permit. However, in order to protect significant localities, areas may be closed to the collection of invertebrate and paleobotanical fossils except under permit. Vertebrate fossils such as dinosaur bones, fish, footprints, etc., may only be collected under a permit. The BLM issues permits to qualified paleontologists who agree to put their collections into repositories where they remain the property of the federal government and are accessible for study, education, and public enjoyment.

#### *BLM Regulations 43 CFR 3622*

Subject to the provisions of this regulation, persons may collect, without a permit, up to 25 pounds plus one piece per person per day of petrified wood, up to a maximum of 250 pounds in one calendar year, for personal, noncommercial purposes.

All areas within the Planning Area would be evaluated for classification into three paleontological conditions as written in the BLM Manual H-8270-II-3.

Condition 1 - Areas that are known to contain vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils. Consideration of paleontological resources would be necessary if the Field Office review of the available information indicates that such fossils are present in the area.

Condition 2 - Areas with exposures of geological units or settings that have high potential to contain vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils. The presence of geologic units from which such fossils have been recovered elsewhere may require further assessment of these same units where they are exposed in the area of consideration.

Condition 3 - Areas that are very unlikely to produce vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils based on their surficial geology, igneous or metamorphic rocks, extremely young alluvium, colluvium or aeolian

deposits or the presence of deep soils. However, if possible, it should be noted at what depth bedrock may be expected in order to determine whether fossiliferous deposits may be uncovered during surface disturbing activities.

#### 2.8.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Using predictive modeling, locate significant localities, which may be in conflict with other resource uses.

##### Alternative A

A portion of the Planning Area has not been inventoried for paleontological resources. Under this alternative, no program is in force to find significant localities in other resource use areas.

##### Alternative B

Management would implement sample inventory for significant localities within recreational use areas in the entire Planning Area and livestock use areas within the CMPA.

##### Alternative C

Management would Implement Planning Area-wide sample inventory for significant localities where they may be in conflict with other resource uses.

##### Alternative D

This alternative is the same as Alternative C.

##### Alternative E

This alternative is the same as Alternative C, except that the inventory sample would be larger in order to account for increased commodity production in other resources.

**Objective 2.** Research significant paleontological localities in cooperation with universities and other federal agencies.

##### Alternatives A, C, and D

Significant localities would be researched to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation. Research efforts would be focused in areas where resource conflicts require management action. Eroding paleontological material at Thousand Springs, Catlow, Pueblo localities, and other similar localities would be recorded and/or salvaged on an annual basis.

##### Alternative B

Management would implement limited research of significant localities to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation. Surface paleontological material at Thousand Springs, Catlow, Pueblo localities, and other similar localities would be recorded and/or salvaged on an annual basis.

##### Alternative E

Management would emphasize natural history tourism and would implement large scale prospecting and excavation at significant localities, as well as recover fossil specimens and data used for interpretation and site management.

**Objective 3.** Protect significant paleontological localities.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

Law enforcement surveillance would be focused in areas in Catlow Valley, Pueblo Valley, and in the Long Draw. Protective measures at significant sites would be used as appropriate.

## 2.8.2 Goal 2 - Increase public knowledge of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to paleontological resources.

### 2.8.2.1 Management Framework

The BLM is required by law to preserve and protect cultural and paleontological resources. In order to do so, the public must be aware of resource values and the impact that human activities have upon them. Cultural and paleontological resources are fragile and irreplaceable when damaged or destroyed by actions of the public. Through vandalism and natural erosion, these resources are disappearing. If the public understands the effects of their actions and feels it has equity in the nation's cultural and natural history heritage, the resources would be appreciated and better protected from vandalism. Additionally, interpretation of paleontological resources enhances recreational opportunities in the Planning Area and provides a high-demand public service.

### 2.8.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Create paleontology interpretive opportunities for public education.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Actions would be initiated to develop public appreciation and protection through education regarding the values and importance of cultural resources. All interpretation projects would be implemented only if they would not impact the paleontological values at the subject locality.

#### Alternative A

Construct portable and static displays for local, regional, and national education where applicable.

Cost-share programs with universities, museums, researchers, and volunteers would be continued to inventory, analyze, and research the paleontological resources within the Planning Area.

#### Alternative B

Same as Alternative A, except on-site interpretative facilities would not be constructed. The focus of paleontological interpretation under this alternative would be the creation of portable and static off-site displays and brochures.

#### Alternative C

Same as Alternative A, except on-site interpretative signage would not be implemented. The focus of paleontological interpretation under this alternative would be the creation of portable and static off-site displays and self-guided walking tour brochures.

#### Alternative D

Management actions would be the same as described under Alternative A.

#### Alternative E

Same as Alternative A, except a higher level of interpretation, including on-site facilities, would be implemented to enhance natural history tourism opportunities.

## 2.8.3 **Monitoring**

Monitoring the condition of localities on a regular basis would be required to establish a baseline at known significant localities. Monitoring all localities within the Planning Area would be practical, as they are few in number and relatively discrete.

## 2.9 Cultural Resources

### 2.9.1 **Goal 1—Preserve, protect, and manage cultural resources in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, in coordination/consultation with the Burns Paiute Tribe, other American Indian tribes, Harney County Historical Society and other heritage groups to make cultural resources available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.**

#### 2.9.1.1 Management Framework

The BLM is required by laws, regulations, and Executive Orders to manage cultural resources such that they would be preserved and protected from destruction, and that appropriate uses would be made of such resources. The Antiquities Act of 1906 provides for the protection of archaeological resources on all public lands and requires permits for those who excavate or appropriate these resources. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended, defines and protects archaeological resources on public lands, establishes a permit system for resource users, and requires agencies to provide for public education and continuing inventory of public lands. Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, provide a national policy for historic preservation, establish a National Register of Historic Places designation for important properties, protect sites from destruction without appropriate data recovery, and require that historic properties be utilized in agency missions, when warranted. Executive Order 11953 directs federal agencies to inventory public lands and to nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places. These laws, regulations, and Executive Orders further require that such management be coordinated with the appropriate American Indian tribes and individuals.

All management actions on public lands and private land projects, which are federally funded, permitted, or assisted would require completion of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. This would consist of a literature review, a site survey on the ground to determine the presence or absence of sites, and site evaluation in coordination with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes, as appropriate. Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) would occur with projects outside the scope of the Oregon Protocol of the National Programmatic Agreement of 1997 and when National Register listed or eligible properties may be impacted.

All sites that have currently been identified, as well as sites identified in the future, would be evaluated for placement in one of four use categories as specified in BLM Manual 8110. These four uses are as follows:

- 1) Conservation for future use: This category places a site in protection from destruction with the intent to have it available at an unspecified date in the future for use in research or public interpretation.
- 2) Public use: Sites placed in this category would be used for recreation, public interpretation, education, etc.
- 3) Experimental use: Sites placed in this category would be used in scientific research. Such use may result in the complete consumption of the site in some cases. Sites may be placed in public use as a result of the research that is conducted.
- 4) Discharged sites: These are sites that no longer exist or have been so damaged that they have no value of any kind. Sites may be destroyed by erosion, consumption in research, or through destruction caused by humans.

#### 2.9.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Using predictive modeling, locate significant sites that may be in conflict with other resource uses.

##### Alternative A

Ninety three percent of the Planning Area has not been inventoried for cultural resources. As a result, an unknown number of significant sites may be impacted by other resource uses. Under this alternative, no program is in force to find significant sites in disturbed areas.

##### Alternative B

Management would inventory for significant sites in recreation use areas Planning Area-wide and in livestock use areas within the CMPA.

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Alternatives C and D

Planning Area-wide sample inventory would be implemented for significant sites where they may be in conflict with other resources uses.

Alternative E

This alternative is the same as Alternative C, except that the inventory sample would be larger to account for increased commodity production in other resources.

**Objective 2.** Use Section 110 inventories to locate significant sites in the Planning Area.

Alternatives A, B, C, and D

Management would complete cultural program funded archaeological inventories in areas of high potential for significant sites within the Planning Area. Five hundred acres per year would be the proposed accomplishment.

Alternative E

Heritage tourism and increased cultural program funded inventories would be emphasized in areas of high potential for significant sites within the Planning Area. Inventory data and archaeological specimens would be utilized in interpretation and other heritage recreation opportunities.

**Objective 3.** Research significant cultural sites in cooperation with universities, the Burns Paiute Tribe, other tribes, and other heritage partners.

Alternatives A, C, and D

Management would research significant sites or groups of sites to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation. Research efforts would be focused in areas where resource conflicts require management action.

Eroding cultural material at significant sub-surface sites would be recorded and/or salvaged on an annual basis.

Alternative B

Management would research significant sites or groups of sites on a limited basis to generate data for use in site management and off-site interpretation.

On an annual basis, eroding cultural material at significant sub-surface sites would be recorded and/or salvaged.

Alternative E

Heritage tourism and increased archaeological research would be emphasized at sites or groups of sites. Research data and archaeological specimens would be utilized in interpretation and other heritage tourism opportunities.

**Objective 4.** Use protective measures to safeguard significant cultural sites.

Alternative A

No physical protection measures have been currently implemented with the exception of a caretaker at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District.

Law enforcement would be provided, focusing surveillance in the Catlow Valley, Alvord Valley, and Coyote Lake regions.

Known cultural sites within wildland fire areas would be monitored to study fire impacts and prevent post-fire looting.

Alternative B

Law enforcement would be provided, focusing surveillance in the Catlow Valley, Alvord Valley, and Coyote Lake regions.

Known cultural sites within wildland fire areas would be monitored and assessed in order to study fire impacts and to prevent post-fire looting.

Alternatives C, D, and E

At significant sites in Catlow Valley, management would fence the BLM portion; close the area to OHV use; close roads except for administrative and permittee use; fence and apply rip-rap to a significant site in the Alvord Basin; and apply other physical protection measures at other sites where applicable.

Law enforcement would be provided, focusing surveillance in the Catlow Valley, Alvord Valley, and Coyote Lake regions.

Known cultural sites within wildland fire areas would be monitored in order to study fire impacts and to prevent post-fire looting.

**Objective 5.** Pursue land acquisitions to bring significant sites into public ownership.

Alternative A

No land acquisitions are currently being proposed under this alternative.

Alternatives B, C, and D

As the opportunity arises, the private portion of Skull Creek Dunes, the Juniper Lake site and other non-BLM owned significant archaeological sites would be acquired.

Alternative E

As this alternative would not encourage land acquisitions, land purchases funded by the cultural resources program would not be pursued.

**Objective 6.** Stabilize, restore, or reconstruct significant historic structures to provide public safety and recreational and interpretive opportunities.

Alternatives A, C, and D

Historic structures at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District would be restored or reconstructed.

Management would inventory and assess other historic structures in the Planning Area, develop restoration plans, and implement them where appropriate.

Alternative B

Historic structures at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District would be maintained in their current condition.

Other historic structures in the Planning Area would be inventoried and assessed.

Alternative E

Management would increase inventory, assessment, and restoration activities in order to support heritage tourism.

## 2.9.2 Goal 2 - Increase public knowledge of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to cultural resources.

### 2.9.2.1 Management Framework

The BLM is required by law, regulation and policy to preserve and protect cultural resources. Public education and interpretation efforts are intended to improve understanding of these resources, their value, and agents of impact. The result should be a greater appreciation of the resources and ultimately, less site vandalism.

Another facet of public education and interpretation is the positive link to enhanced heritage tourism, a high demand public service.

Cultural resources interpretation projects would be done in coordination with American Indians, and implemented only if they would not impact cultural resource values.

### 2.9.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Create cultural resources interpretive opportunities and sites for public education in coordination with Burns Paiute Tribe, other tribes, and/or other heritage partners, as appropriate.

#### Alternative A

On-site interpretation at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District, Andrews Town Site and other sites has not been implemented under this alternative. Portable interpretive displays on various aspects of history in the Planning Area have been created under this alternative.

#### Alternative B

Management would construct portable and static interpretive displays for presentation at off-site locations only.

#### Alternatives C and D

Interpretive panels would be constructed and installed at Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District, Andrews Town Site, and other sites where applicable. Portable and static displays for local, regional, and national education would be constructed where applicable.

#### Alternative E

Under Alternative E, cultural program funding for interpretation may be increased in order to support heritage tourism.

## 2.9.3 Monitoring

National Register of Historic Places listed and selected eligible sites would be monitored to determine baseline site condition. However, monitoring all sites within the Planning Area would not be practical or possible, due to the large number of known sites.

## 2.10 Native American Traditional Practices

### 2.10.1 Goal – Protect traditional sites, landforms, burial sites, resources, and other areas of interest in consultation with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes.

#### 2.10.1.1 Management Framework

Federal policy, laws, regulations, and Executive Orders require the BLM to consult and coordinate activities with American Indian tribes so that their rights and interests are considered when land use decisions are made, and that American Indian traditions and traditional uses are addressed. Specifically, the agency must comply with the National Historic Preservation Act; the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; the American Indian Religious Freedom Act; Regulations 36 CFR 800, section 106 and 119; and Executive Order 13007 (Sacred Sites). BLM Manual Section 8160, entitled “Native American Coordination and Consultation”, establishes agency policy regarding American Indians, and integrates into all programs the management of resources valued by American Indians.

### 2.10.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Monitor and protect Burns Paiute tribal and other tribal interest areas.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Management would continue consultation/coordination with the Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes to identify traditional practice areas in the Planning Area. Applicable Traditional Cultural Properties would be nominated. Burial sites in the Planning Area would be monitored. Coordination and consultation with American Indian tribes would be documented under all alternatives.

**Objective 2.** Integrate maintenance and protection of native subsistence species into vegetation management activities.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Management would identify plants of cultural, traditional, and economic importance during botanical and cultural inventories, and would input information into the Freedom of Information Act-exempt Geographical Information System (GIS) layer.

The Burns Paiute Tribe and other tribes would be consulted on vegetation management projects, especially those involving large scale vegetation management project studies.

Coordination and consultation with American Indian tribes would be documented under all alternatives.

## **2.10.2 Monitoring**

On-the-ground monitoring of identified traditional practice sites would be developed in order to determine condition, impacts, deterioration, and use of such sites.

Procedures would be developed to track consultation and to document all written, telephone, electronic, and in-person communications, with yearly review for adequacy.

## **2.11 Visual Resources**

### **2.11.1 Goal - Manage public land actions and activities in a manner consistent with VRM class objectives.**

#### 2.11.1.1 Management Framework

Section 102(8) of the FLPMA declares that public land would be managed to protect the quality of scenic values and, where appropriate, to preserve and protect certain public land in its natural condition. The NEPA, Section 101(b), requires federal agencies to "assure for all Americans...esthetically pleasing surroundings." Section 102 of the NEPA requires agencies to "utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach that would ensure the integrated use of...Environmental Design Acts in the planning and decision making" process. Guidelines for the identification of visual resource inventory classes on public land are contained in BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory. The establishment of visual resource inventory classes on public land is based on an evaluation of the landscape's scenic qualities, public sensitivity toward the landscape, and visibility of the landscape from travel routes or observation points. VRM classes are designated through the RMP process. VRM class objectives are managed through application of BLM Manual Handbook H-8431-1, Visual Resource Contrast Rating.

#### 2.11.1.2 Management Common to all Alternatives

WSAs, designated wild WSRs, and the Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as VRM Class I. Should a WSA not be designated as wilderness by Congress, the area would be evaluated to determine the appropriate VRM designation.

### 2.11.1.3 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Protect, maintain, improve, or restore visual resource values by managing all public lands in accordance with the VRM system.

#### Alternative A

##### *Planning Area*

Maintain existing Andrews MFP VRM classes in all areas.

Management would continue as described in the existing Andrews MFP and plan amendments. Visual resources in existing ACECs/RNAs would be managed as shown in Table 2.22. Eligible WSRs would be managed according to the surrounding VRM class designation.

#### Alternative B

##### *Planning Area*

Manage visual resources to allow natural processes to determine visual quality. All lands within the Planning Area would be designated as VRM Class II, except where VRM Class I is required by law, policy, or regulation.

Visual resources in the ACECs/RNAs would be designated as shown in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Visual Resources Management Class Designation Acres by Alternative in the Planning Area (Public Land Acres Only)**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Alternative A (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative B (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative C (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative D (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative E (acres)</b>
Class I	852,209	850,338	854,266	852,214	852,214
Class II	239,362	799,132	250,977	207,012	28,880
Class III	121,048	0	544,227	214,488	66,978
Class IV	436,851	0	0	375,756	701,398
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>

#### Alternative C

##### *Planning Area*

Visual resources would be managed to emphasize protection of natural values. Existing VRM classes would be amended. The VRM classes for the ACECs/RNAs would be designated as shown in Table 2.11. All existing seedings would be designated as VRM Class III. The visual resources of all suitable WSRs would be managed according to the surrounding VRM class designation. Should a suitable WSR be designated as a wild WSR by Congress, the WSR would be designated as VRM Class I. Other existing Andrews MFP VRM classes would be amended. Four parcels found to contain wilderness values would be designated as VRM Class II.

##### *CMPA*

The Steens Mountain ACEC would be designated as VRM Class I. The WJMA would be designated as VRM Class III, and the remainder of the CMPA would be designated as VRM Class II.

##### *AMU*

All VRM Class IV areas would be designated as VRM Class III. All VRM Class II and III areas would not be amended.

#### Alternative D

##### *Planning Area*

All visual resources would be managed to improve natural values. ACECs/RNAs would be designated as shown in Table 2.11. All existing seedings would be designated as VRM Class III. Other existing Andrews MFP VRM classes would be amended.

*CMPA*

The WJMA would be designated as VRM Classes III and IV. The remainder of the CMPA would be designated as VRM Classes II and III.

*AMU*

The existing Andrews MFP VRM classes would be maintained.

Alternative E

*Planning Area*

Visual resources would be managed as determined in the Andrews MFP, as re-inventoried or as detailed below. ACECs/RNAs would be designated as shown in Table 2.11. All existing seedings would be designated as VRM Class IV. Other existing Andrews MFP VRM classes would be amended.

*CMPA*

The WJMA would be designated as VRM Class IV. The remainder of the CMPA would be designated as VRM Classes II, III, and IV.

*AMU*

The areas between the Trout Creek Mountains WSAs and the area around Denio Creek would be designated as VRM Class II. The remainder of the AMU would be designated as VRM Class IV.

**2.11.2 Monitoring**

The visual contrast rating system described in BLM Manual Handbook 8431-1 would be used when assessing proposals for projects on public lands.

**2.12 Social and Economic Values**

**2.12.1 Goal - Manage public lands to provide social and economic benefits to local residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations.**

**2.12.1.1 Management Framework**

The BLM is required by Section 202 of the FLPMA to integrate "...physical, biological, economic and other sciences..." in developing land use plans (43 U.S.C. 1712). Section 102 of the NEPA requires the integrated use of the social sciences in assessing impacts of an action on the human environment (42 U.S.C. 4332). The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations state that when an EIS is prepared "and economic or social and natural or physical environmental effects are interrelated, then the [EIS] would discuss all of these effects on the human environment" (40 CFR 1508.14). Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice) requires federal agencies to "...identify and address... disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States..." As indicated by these legal mandates, social science information is required to make informed, legal land use planning decisions. This section outlines the various management alternatives as they relate to social and economic values.

Historically, commodity values on public lands have been made available to private individuals or businesses through sales, permitting, or other methods. The federal government collects revenues when commodities are used. These commodities also generate private economic activity in the local, regional, national, and in some cases international economies.

Public lands provide or contribute to numerous environmental amenities such as clean water, scenic quality, and recreational opportunities. These amenities enhance local communities as places to live, work, or visit. Public lands also attract visitors to the area, many of whom purchase goods and services, which generate local economic activity. Business activities of federal agencies generate economic activity in the local, regional, and national economies as both an employer and purchaser of goods and services.

Public lands contribute to local governments where they are located. Many commodity programs include provisions to share collections with local governments. Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) are also made to compensate counties due to public lands being exempt from local property taxes. Continuation of programs limits disruption of existing economic structures. Guidance within the plan defines the amount of economic opportunity in the future, especially related to mining, recreation, grazing, agriculture, and tourism.

In its resource management planning, the BLM generally strives for a balance among current and future generations; local, regional and national interests; commodity uses and natural values; and physical, biological, and socioeconomic values.

#### 2.12.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

The following section outlines the management actions and emphasis by alternative for social and economic values as well as economically based resource uses including the following: energy and minerals; grazing management; lands and realty; transportation and roads; recreation; and OHV. See Table 2.2 and Sections 2.13 (Energy and Minerals), 2.15 (Grazing Management), 2.17 (Lands and Realty), 2.18 (Transportation and Roads), 2.19 (OHV), and 2.20 (Recreation) for more details regarding the goals, objectives and management actions for these resource uses.

**Objective 1.** Work cooperatively with private and community groups and local government, Burns Paiute tribal, and other tribal governments to provide for customary uses consistent with other resource objectives and to sustain or improve local economies.

#### Alternative A

Commodity use would continue at existing levels. Contracts for services and sale of products would be made available to local residents as need and conditions permit. Natural resources would be managed as outlined in existing land use plans and the Steens Act, and staff would work cooperatively with public land users consistent with resource objectives.

Management of existing facilities (roads, recreation sites, and rangeland facilities and improvements) to promote commodity uses and continued access and availability of natural resource amenities would continue as outlined in existing land use plans and the Steens Act. When determining the need for additional facilities, existing management direction would continue.

Public and private partnerships would be created to achieve shared economic objectives. Mining, grazing, and recreation management would remain the same, with the exception of restrictions and designations as required by the Steens Act.

Livestock grazing use would continue to be authorized in the AMU consistent with the existing land use plan, the S&Gs (USDI 1997a), and applicable activity plans. Interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels would continue to be adjusted in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments.

Lands currently open to locatable mineral activity would continue to be available. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development. Mineral leases and stipulations would be identified following completion of the RMP. Mineral materials would be removed from existing sources and from new sources identified in areas open to saleable minerals. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to saleable minerals.

Renewable energy authorization management would continue as necessary, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law. There would be no renewable energy authorization exclusion or avoidance areas, although special designations, planning decisions, and other factors may constrain or exclude renewable energy development.

Public lands would be retained, exchanged, and sold as outlined in Section 2.17. Lands may be acquired in any zone on a case-by-case basis by exchange, donation, or purchase, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.

New ROW facilities would be located within corridors on a case-by-case basis and designed to minimize impairment to SMAs. There would be no land use authorization exclusion or avoidance areas except the Stonehouse WSA exclusion zone and the Kiger HMA avoidance area. Subject to the constraints discussed in Section 2.17, the entire Planning Area would be available on a case-by-case basis to ROW and other land uses including energy development, communications sites and military uses. Withdrawal and land classification actions would also be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired on a case-by-case basis as the need arises. Emphasis would be placed on providing access for BLM administrative facilities and program-related activities. All land tenure actions would be reviewed for their effect on access.

Construction of new roads around private lands may be considered where easement acquisition is not feasible or desirable, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act. Roads and trails would be constructed and maintained as needed in the AMU. Roads in the CMPA would be retained and maintained at current levels, subject to the Steens Act. Existing recreation sites would generally be maintained at the current level, and alterations and/or development of new sites would be undertaken when deemed advantageous to recreation management and the public. SRPs would be issued on a case-by-case basis. OHV use would continue at present levels.

### Alternative B

This alternative emphasizes natural processes and limits commodity production; therefore, no commodity production from public land would be allowed except as required by law (i.e. the Steens Act). Natural resource amenities would continue to be provided at levels that meet or exceed existing legal requirements. Where needed, environmental quality would be improved to meet or exceed requirements, using administrative or project-related solutions that emphasize elimination of commodity production and public uses to protect natural values. In addition, the Department of the Interior would be petitioned to withdraw the entire Planning Area from mineral entry, subject to valid existing rights.

Under this alternative, natural processes would be allowed to operate with minimal human interference while providing for public health, safety, and facility maintenance. Alternatives would be developed for existing facilities that negatively impact natural values. Public and private partnerships would be created to achieve shared economic objectives within existing legal, regulatory, and administrative authorities.

No grazing use would be authorized in the AMU, and rangeland projects that support livestock grazing would not be planned or implemented. Rangeland projects that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives would be removed, and project sites would be rehabilitated.

There would be no locatable mineral exploration or development under this alternative and all mineral estate in the Planning Area would be closed to energy and mineral leasing. The entire Planning Area would be closed to saleable minerals, except where required by law or where essential to protect human safety such as road construction under critical or emergency conditions. The entire Planning Area would also be considered a renewable energy authorization exclusion area.

All public lands in the Planning Area would be identified for retention to protect resources from commodity producing activities that could occur if the lands were conveyed into nonpublic ownership. The entire Planning Area would also be considered a ROW and land use authorization exclusion zone except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interest in land subject to valid existing rights. In addition, the entire Planning Area would be recommended for withdrawal to protect the lands from mining, energy and mineral development, military activities, and other commodity production.

Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired, with emphasis on controlling public access, for protection of sensitive resource values. Land tenure actions would be designed to avoid facilitating public access to these areas. Construction of new roads around private lands would not be considered as an alternative for access easement acquisition. Some roads would be closed in order to maximize natural processes. Only recreation that enhances public knowledge and appreciation of natural resources and processes would be encouraged or permitted. New commercial permits would not be issued and existing permits would be terminated. OHV use would be eliminated throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative C

Under this alternative, commodity production would be restricted in order to increase protection of natural values. New commodity use levels that can be maintained through time and that contribute to stability in the local livestock and mining industries would be established. Natural resource amenities would continue to be provided at levels that meet or exceed existing legal requirements. Where needed, administrative or project related solutions that protect or improve natural values would be used to improve environmental quality to meet or exceed requirements. Local contracts would

be targeted for services to restore and maintain natural systems. Public and private partnerships would also be created to achieve shared economic objectives within existing legal, regulatory, and administrative authorities.

Natural values would be protected and conserved while allowing for tourism and commodity use of natural resources that would not negatively impact natural values. Management of existing facilities (e.g. roads, recreation sites, and range improvements) would continue in order to facilitate commodity uses and continued access and availability of natural resource amenities. Alternatives would be developed, where possible, for existing facilities that negatively impact natural values; otherwise, such facilities would be eliminated.

Nonconsumptive uses would be emphasized in the AMU while providing for minimal sustainable livestock grazing that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives, and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusion of livestock from specific areas, etc.) would be emphasized to accomplish natural resource management objectives. Rangeland projects and/or accepted livestock management practices would be implemented when administrative actions alone would not accomplish natural resource objectives. Rangeland projects that do not enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives would be removed, and project sites would be rehabilitated.

Approximately 212,972 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development. Approximately 255,137 acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development, no acres would be open with no surface occupancy (NSO), no acres would be open with seasonal and/or other special stipulations, and the remaining 212,972 acres would be open with standard stipulations (Table 2.4). This acreage would increase or decrease as additional or fewer areas are identified as having natural values that would be impaired by leasing. In addition, approximately 212,972 acres would be open to saleable minerals.

All ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, and the CMPA would be designated as renewable energy authorization exclusion areas. Applications for renewable energy authorizations in the AMU would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Public land holdings containing WSAs, ACECs, HMAs, special status species, and important cultural/historical sites, as well as those in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and the CMPA, would be retained and increased with an emphasis on acquiring land with natural or cultural values. Other lands may be acquired by purchase, donation, conservation agreements/easements, or by exchange in order to obtain lands with natural or cultural values.

All ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, and the CMPA would be designated as ROW and realty use authorization exclusion areas, except those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land. No new communications sites would be authorized in the Planning Area. Except as noted in Section 2.17, applications for ROWs and other realty use authorizations in the AMU, including those for energy development and military uses, would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Approximately 255,137 acres as identified in Table 2.4 would be recommended for withdrawal from the public land and mining laws. Access and easement acquisition management would be the same as Alternative B, except that closed roads would be actively reclaimed.

Roads that are determined not essential or that contribute to negative impacts on natural resources would be closed and rehabilitated. Recreation that does not negatively impact natural resources would be permitted and closely monitored. Only SRPs that contribute to public education and appreciation of natural resources would be issued. OHV use would be limited to specific areas of low resource value on a case-by-case basis.

#### Alternative D

This alternative emphasizes balancing social, economic, cultural, and ecological components and using cooperative management practices. To achieve the objective, cooperative and collaborative processes, contracts, and cooperative agreements would be made for services and products available locally when need and conditions permit. In addition, local contracts would be targeted for services to restore and maintain natural systems, while providing for sustainable tourism, production, and industry. Collaboration with local populations would be implemented to encourage a high level of natural resource protection, which contributes to tourism and attracts sustainable commodities industries. Public and private partnerships would also be created to achieve shared economic objectives within existing legal, regulatory, and administrative authorities.

Management actions would provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the AMU that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Revision of Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) would be based on evaluations and rangeland health assessments, which would determine allowable Animal Unit Months (AUMs) and plant community management. Interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels would be adjusted in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments.

Accepted livestock management practices would be implemented (e.g. adjustment of the timing, duration, frequency of grazing, and/or periodic rest or deferment). These would be supplemented by administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusionary pastures, etc.) and/or rangeland projects to accomplish natural resource management objectives.

Approximately 447,742 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development. No acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development, 9,355 acres would be open with NSO, 241,961 acres would be open with seasonal and/or other special stipulations, and the remaining 216,793 acres would be open with standard lease stipulations (Table 2.4). Approximately 446,052 acres would be open to saleable minerals and 22,057 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

All WSRs and the Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as renewable energy authorization exclusion areas. All WSAs and ACECs would be designated as renewable energy authorization avoidance areas. Applications for renewable energy authorizations in the AMU would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Public land holdings containing WSAs, ACECs, HMAs, special status species, and important cultural/historical sites, as well as those in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and the CMPA, would be retained and increased with emphasis on acquiring lands with high public resource values. Emphasis would also be on acquisition of nonpublic lands within an

**Table 2.4: Acres of Mineral Restrictions Within Areas of High Mineral Potential, by Alternative<sup>1</sup>**

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<b>LOCATABLE MINERALS</b>					
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area <sup>2</sup>	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109
Total Closed acres in the Planning Area <sup>3</sup>	0	468,109	255,137	20,367	0
Total Open acres in the Planning Area	468,109	0	212,972	447,742	468,109
Total available BLM acres with high potential for hot-springs gold and mercury	32,284	32,284	32,284	32,284	32,284
Closed	0	32,284	24,960	8,005	0
Open	32,284	0	7,324	24,279	32,284
Total available BLM acres with high potential for uranium	0	0	0	0	0
Total available BLM acres with high potential for vein gold	0	0	0	0	0
Total available BLM acres with high potential for porphyry copper, gold and molybdenum	1,313	1,313	1,313	1,313	1,313
Closed	0	1,313	1,294	10	0
Open	1,313	0	19	1,303	1,313
Total available BLM acres with high potential for diatomite	1	1	1	1	1
Closed	0	1	1	1	0
Open	1	0	0	0	1
<b>LEASABLE MINERALS</b>					

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109
Total Closed acres in the Planning Area	0	468,109	255,137	0	0
Total No Surface Occupancy in the Planning Area	0	0	0	9,355	0
Total Open with Special Stipulations in the Planning Area	0	0	0	241,961	0
Total Open with Standard Stipulations in the Planning Area	468,109	0	212,972	216,793	468,109
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area with high potential for oil and gas resources	0	0	0	0	0
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area with high potential for geothermal resources	332	332	332	332	332
Closed	0	332	289	0	0
No Surface Occupancy	0	0	0	0	0
Open with Seasonal or other Special Stipulations	0	0	0	281	0
Open with Standard Lease Stipulations	332	0	43	51	332
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area with high potential for sodium or potassium mineral resources	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SALEABLE MINERALS</b>					
Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109	468,109
Closed	0	468,109	255,137	22,057	0
Open	468,109	0	212,972	446,052	468,109

<sup>1</sup> These acreages are for areas of Public Land only; surface and mineral estates are both under BLM administration

Total Planning Area = 1,649,470 acres

Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area (includes some WSAs, all WSRs and all Steens Mountain Wilderness) = 748,118 acres

All other WSAs (outside of the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area) = 433,243 acres

Total Closures due to Congressional action and WSA IMP (Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area, WSAs, WSRs, and the Steens Mountain Wilderness) = 1,181,361 acres

<sup>2</sup> Total available BLM acres in the Planning Area: 1,649,470 acres - 1,181,361 acres = 468,109 acres

<sup>3</sup> Total Closed acres in the Planning Area means acres recommended for withdrawal from public land and mining laws through this RMP process

ACEC, the CMPA, WSA, or proposed or designated WSRs, or of nonpublic lands containing a critical access need as identified in an approved BLM land use plan, riparian or wetland values, habitat for listed T&E species, or cultural/historical resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Corridor designations would be the same as Alternative C. All large-scale facilities, as specified in Section 2.17, would be encouraged to locate in the designated corridors. All WSRs and the Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as ROW and realty use authorization exclusion areas, except those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land. All WSAs and ACECs would be designated as ROW and realty use authorization avoidance areas. Communications lease applications for new locations would be considered on a case-by-case basis and site management plans would be developed concurrent with processing applications. Except as noted in Section 2.17, applications for ROWs and other realty use authorizations in the Planning Area would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Approximately 20,367 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from the public land and mining laws. Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired where public demand or an administrative need exists, including any rights necessary to control and minimize access to areas containing sensitive resource values. Emphasis would be placed on providing access to areas containing high public values and on the protection of natural values. Land tenure transactions would be designed to maintain and improve public access. Where easement acquisition for access is not feasible or desirable but a critical access need has been identified, new roads would be constructed around nonpublic lands, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act.

Existing roads would be maintained to meet resource goals and objectives that balance cultural, economic, ecological, and social values. Activities would be encouraged and permitted that attract tourism and recreational uses but are primarily nonimpairing to natural resources. Recreation sites that would attract visitors to specific maintained areas would be developed, in turn alleviating widespread impacts to natural resources. OHV areas would be developed in locales of low resource value on a case-by-case basis. SRPs would be issued on a case-by-case basis.

### Alternative E

This alternative emphasizes commodity production while targeting services and products for competitive contracting to local firms/individuals, where legally permitted, and managing natural resources on the public lands to enhance tourism, maximize production, and attract industry. In addition, existing commodities available for extraction would be advertised and public and private partnerships would be created to achieve shared economic objectives within existing legal, regulatory, and administrative authorities.

Grazing opportunities would be maximized in the AMU to the extent possible while meeting the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Rangeland projects and accepted livestock practices would be emphasized as the preferred solution to meet natural resource management objectives. Administrative actions would be applied when structural developments and/or accepted livestock management practices would not accomplish natural resource management objectives.

The maximum amount of area (468,109 acres) would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development. No acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development as mandated by the Steens Act; no areas would require NSO; no areas would require seasonal and/or other special stipulations; and the maximum amount of area would be open with standard lease stipulations. Saleable minerals under this alternative would be similar to Alternative A except that no new areas would be closed to saleable minerals. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to saleable minerals and no acres would be closed. Renewable energy exclusion and avoidance designations and renewable energy administration would be the same as Alternative D.

Public land holdings containing WSAs, ACECs, HMAs, special status species and important cultural/historical sites, as well as those in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and the CMPA, would be maintained in their approximate current acreage. Emphasis would be on securing land containing commodity-producing values or that facilitates commodity production. Leases, permits, and other authorizations would be considered and encouraged for agricultural, occupancy, filming, and other commodity producing land uses.

The designated corridors would include all corridors identified by the Western Regional Corridor Study, all county roads, and all federal and state highways. Otherwise, corridor management, exclusion and avoidance designations, and general ROW administration would be the same as Alternative D.

No new protective withdrawals would be considered for public land. Legal public or administrative access would be acquired with emphasis on providing access to facilitate commodity production. No conservation or scenic easements would be considered. New roads would be constructed around private lands where easement acquisition is not feasible or desirable, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act. Land tenure transactions would be designed to maintain and improve public access.

New roads would be constructed and existing roads upgraded on a case-by-case basis to facilitate public uses and commodity production. Recreational activities would be permitted to the fullest extent possible, while not damaging sensitive resources protected by laws and regulations. New recreation sites would be created to attract visitors to the area. Except where prohibited by law or regulation, the Planning Area would be open to OHVs. Areas would be developed for OHV events and general use. SRPs would be issued on a case-by-case basis.

**Objective 2.** Maintain and promote the cultural, economic, ecological, and social health of the Steens Mountain area.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

The Steens Act requires that management of the CMPA would accomplish the following:

- 1) Provide for predictable and sustainable levels of commodity outputs.
- 2) Meet subsistence needs of tribes and tribal communities to the greatest extent practicable.
- 3) Provide natural resource amenities on public lands that enhance local communities as places to live, work, or visit (this could include water quality, scenic views, recreation sites, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing).
- 4) Protect special designated areas with unique natural resource values for the enjoyment of future generations (this could include habitats of endangered species).
- 5) Target local economies for government business activities associated with public land management to the extent permitted by the existing authorities (procurement and contracting can be tracked through BLM records to evaluate whether local versus nonlocal government spending changes over time).

These requirements meet both objectives for Social and Economic Values.

#### Alternative A

Under this alternative, current management mandated by the Steens Act would continue. Livestock grazing use would continue to be authorized in the CMPA consistent with the existing land use plan, the Steens Act, the S&Gs (USDI 1997a), and applicable activity plans. Minerals and land authorizations would be managed as outlined in existing land use plans and the Steens Act. Therefore, subject to valid existing rights, no mining or mineral exploration would be permitted anywhere in the CMPA.

Pursuant to the Steens Act, a Transportation Plan for the CMPA is being written in conjunction with the development of this RMP. No new roads are to be constructed in the CMPA. The Steens Act dictates that no mechanized/motorized vehicles can be operated off designated roads. Existing SRPs would continue to be issued, but no new developments would be allowed in the CMPA. Existing recreation sites would be retained.

#### Alternative B

This alternative emphasizes natural process and limits commodity production to the extent required by the Steens Act. Nonconsumptive uses would be emphasized in the CMPA while providing for sustainable livestock grazing consistent with the Steens Act, and that also meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Rangeland projects and/or accepted livestock management practices would be implemented when administrative actions alone would not accomplish natural resource objectives. Rangeland projects that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives would be removed, and project sites would be rehabilitated.

In the entire Planning Area, no mineral entry, no leasing, no saleable minerals or development and no renewable energy authorizations would be permitted.

Transportation and recreation/OHV are the same as for Alternative A.

#### Alternative C

Under this alternative, provisions of the Steens Act would continue to be enacted while emphasizing protection of the natural values of the CMPA. Nonconsumptive uses would be emphasized in the CMPA while providing for sustainable livestock grazing consistent with the Steens Act, and that also meet allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

The CMPA would be designated as a renewable energy authorization exclusion area.

Lands within the CMPA may be disposed of only by exchange that furthers the purpose and objectives of the Steens Act. All ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, and the CMPA would be designated as ROW and realty use authorization exclusion areas, except those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land.

Transportation and recreation/OHV are the same as for Alternative A.

#### Alternative D

This alternative emphasizes sustainable economic operations while protecting the ecological, social, and cultural integrity of the CMPA. Management actions would provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the CMPA that is consistent with the Steens Act and that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Revision of AMPs would be based on evaluations and rangeland health assessments, which would determine allowable AUMs and plant community management.

Minerals and land use authorizations would be managed as described under Objective 1, Alternative D.

Transportation and recreation/OHV are the same as for Alternative A.

#### Alternative E

Under this alternative, commodity production would be provided to the maximum extent allowable under the Steens Act. Grazing opportunities would be maximized in the CMPA consistent with the Steens Act, and to the extent that is possible while meeting the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

Minerals and land use authorizations would be managed as described under Objective 1, Alternative E.

Transportation and recreation/OHV are the same as for Alternative A.

### **2.12.2 Monitoring**

BLM records would be used to determine the amounts of commodity uses (i.e., AUMs, tons of minerals, range products, etc.). Employment in related industries would be monitored using public information sources. BLM budget information would be utilized to project and ascertain expenditures for environmental quality projects and facilities development. This information would then be correlated to employment and revenue in related industries.

Recreation management information systems (RMIS) and other site-specific measures would be used to determine visitor use levels. BLM procurement records would be utilized to track local versus nonlocal contracts, and payroll records would be utilized to track BLM employment levels.

### **2.13 Energy and Minerals**

#### **2.13.1 Goal 1 - Provide opportunities for the exploration and development of locatable minerals in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.**

##### **2.13.1.1 Management Framework**

The General Mining Law of 1872 gives the public the basic right to explore and locate mining claims on public land. The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 declares that it is the continuing policy of the federal government to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of domestic mineral resources. Section 102 of the FLPMA directs that the public land be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of minerals and other resources. BLM mineral policy (1984) states that public lands shall remain open and available for mineral exploration and development unless withdrawal or other administrative action is clearly justified in the national interest.

Split estate land is shown on the map titled "Surface and Mineral Estate Ownership" that is included on the CD that accompanies this draft document. Split estate land with nonfederal surface estate and federal mineral estate may be either due to patenting of the surface estate under the Stock Raising Homestead Act or due to sale or exchange of public land.

Within the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area within the Planning Area there are approximately 44,000 acres of split estate land with nonfederal surface estate. Of those, approximately 40,000 acres are Stock Raising Homestead Entry lands and 4,000 acres are due to sale or exchange of public land. Outside of the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area within the Planning Area there are approximately 28,000 acres of split estate land with nonfederal surface estate. Of those, approximately 14,000 acres are Stock Raising Homestead Entry lands and 14,000 acres are due to sale or exchange of public land.

The Stock Raising Homestead Act allowed the surface estate to be patented while the mineral estate remained in federal ownership. Mining claims may be located on these lands under the special procedures of Public Law 103-23, which is the Stock Raising Homestead Act Amendment of April 16, 1993. Potential claimants must file a Notice of Intent to Locate prior to entering this land to explore for minerals or to locate mining claims. If the surface owner will not grant access, then it becomes a civil matter that must be decided in court. After location of claims, further surface entry requires either surface owner consent or an approved plan of operations. There has been no interest in locatable minerals on Stock Raising Homestead Act lands in the Planning Area.

When public lands are sold or exchanged, minerals reserved to the United States are removed from the operation of the mining laws unless a subsequent land-use planning decision expressly restores the land to mineral entry, and BLM publishes a notice to inform the public (43 CFR 3809.2(a)). All past and future public lands sold or exchanged, where minerals are reserved to the United States, shall be opened to operation under the mining laws upon the publication of opening orders in the Federal Register informing the public of such action, unless otherwise closed to the land and mineral laws in accordance with the Steens Act, other applicable law, or land use planning decisions.

Locatable mineral exploration and development are regulated under 43 CFR 3802 for WSAs and 43CFR 3809 for other public lands. Within the Planning Area, there are no grandfathered claims within WSAs or the Steens Mountain Wilderness. The WSA IMP states that location of new claims and the assessment work necessary to hold claims would be allowed as long as these activities are carried out in a manner that does not impair the area's wilderness suitability. Generally, all activities permitted in Oregon WSAs after the September 1990 reclamation deadline passed must be temporary uses that create no surface disturbance nor involve placement of permanent structures. This policy restriction effectively closes WSAs to mineral exploration and development activities. However, should the WSA IMP be revised or Congress take action to remove some areas from WSA status, some of these areas could eventually be made available for mineral exploration and development activities during the life of the RMP.

A plan of operations is required for all mining activity (note that mining activity is distinguished from exploration activity) that is not casual use, regardless of the number of acres disturbed. A plan of operations is also required for all exploration activities that disturb more than five acres, bulk sampling that would remove 1,000 tons or more of presumed ore for testing, or for any surface disturbing operations greater than casual use proposed in areas within the WSRs, areas designated for potential addition to the WSRs, ACECs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, WSAs, areas designated "closed" to off-road vehicle use, and any lands or waters known to contain federally proposed or listed T&E species or their proposed or designated critical habitat. The approval of plans of operation is a federal action that requires NEPA compliance to ensure that no unnecessary or undue degradation would occur. Examples of compliance measures that could be required as a result of NEPA review are rerouting proposed access roads located within 0.6 mile of sage grouse leks, or seasonal closure of access roads within big game winter range.

A notice is required for exploration activities on five acres or less if they are outside of the WSRs; areas designated for potential addition to the WSRs, ACECs, Steens Mountain Wilderness, or WSAs; areas designated "closed" to off-road vehicle use, and any lands or waters known to contain federally proposed or listed T&E species or their proposed or designated critical habitat. Acknowledging a notice is not a federal action that requires compliance with the NEPA, so no environmental documentation must be prepared. The BLM does review notices to ensure that no unnecessary or undue degradation would occur, and that a plan of operations is not required.

The BLM reviews notices and plans to ensure that an adequate financial guarantee is provided by the operator for reclamation of all proposed surface disturbances. Mining claim use and occupancy under 43 CFR 3715 requires NEPA compliance.

Many areas within the Planning Area are subject to overlapping designations, making the amount of area that is open or closed to mineral exploration and development difficult to determine. For example, an ACEC (which is open to mineral location and development under a plan of operations) may partially overlap a WSA (which is effectively closed to mineral exploration and development). For simplicity, such an area of overlap has been classified as "closed" to reflect

the most restrictive management measure in place. Any WSAs that are later removed from WSA status would be managed in accordance with the remaining restrictions. In the above example, an area where a WSA overlaps an ACEC would change from "closed" to "open" if Congress removed WSA status during the life of the RMP.

By Congressional Action and WSA IMP, no locatable mineral exploration and development activities are authorized within the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area (748,118 acres) and designated WSRs, Steens Mountain Wilderness, and WSAs (433,243 acres outside of the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area), which together cover 1,181,361 acres in the Planning Area.

#### 2.13.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Identify land with federal mineral estate available to locatable mineral exploration and development.

##### Alternative A

Management of locatable mineral exploration and development would continue on lands currently open to locatable mineral activity, consistent with regulations and laws, and no additional withdrawals would be proposed. Under the Andrews MFP, no mineral withdrawals were proposed beyond those specified in the Steens Act. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development and no acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

##### Alternative B

Actions would be taken to withdraw the portion of the Planning Area not currently withdrawn from locatable mineral entry, subject to valid existing rights. Since the withdrawal would exceed 5,000 acres, Congressional approval would be required. No acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development and approximately 468,109 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

##### Alternative C

This alternative emphasizes protection of natural values. The following areas would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral exploration and development: all ACECs; existing BLM recreation and administrative sites; potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved; National Register eligible and listed cultural sites; significant paleontological localities; big game winter range; RCAs; areas containing special status species and their habitats; and within 0.6 mile of identified sage grouse leks. The land outside of these areas and outside of the areas closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP would be open to mineral exploration and development. Approximately 212,972 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development and 255,137 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

##### Alternative D

Areas recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral exploration and development are existing BLM recreation and administrative sites; potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved; National Register listed cultural sites; significant paleontological localities; areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat; and within 0.6 mile of identified sage grouse leks. The land outside of these areas and outside of the areas closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP would be open to mineral exploration and development. Approximately 447,742 acres would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development and 20,367 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

##### Alternative E

No new areas would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral exploration and development so that the maximum amount of land would be available. This is similar to Alternative A. Approximately 468,109 acres outside of the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area would be open to locatable mineral exploration and development (Table 2.4).

### 2.13.2 Goal 2 - Provide opportunities for the leasing and development of oil and gas, geothermal, and solid leasable mineral resources in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.

#### 2.13.2.1 Management Framework

As declared in the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended; the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as amended; and the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, the continuing policy of the federal government is to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of domestic mineral resources. Section 102 of the FLPMA directs that the public land be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of mineral and other resources. BLM mineral policy (1984) states that public lands shall remain open and available for mineral exploration and development unless withdrawn or unless other administrative action is clearly justified in the national interest.

From most restrictive to least restrictive, the leasing categories that must be identified for areas within the Planning Area are: (1) closed to leasing, (2) open with NSO, (3) open with seasonal and/or other special stipulations, and (4) open with standard stipulations (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1). The leasing category of each area is determined by the resources contained in that area and identification of the least restrictive leasing category that would protect those resources under each management alternative.

Oil and gas leasing and development are regulated under 43 CFR 3100; geothermal leasing and development are regulated under 43 CFR 3200; and solid mineral leasing is regulated under 43 CFR 3500. The least restrictive leasing category is "open with standard stipulations." In order to protect special resource values and investments, some areas would be subject to additional stipulations shown in Table 2.4.

Many areas within the Planning Area are subject to overlapping designations, making the amount of area open to each leasing category difficult to determine. For example, an ACEC (which may be open to leasing with NSO) may partially overlap a WSA (which is closed to leasing). For simplicity, such an area of overlap has been classified as "closed to leasing" to reflect the most restrictive management measure in place. Any WSAs that are later removed from WSA status by Congressional action and WSA IMP would be managed in accordance with the remaining restrictions. In the example above, an area where a WSA overlaps an ACEC would change from "closed to leasing" to "open to leasing with NSO" if Congress removed WSA status during the life of the RMP.

By Congressional action and WSA IMP, no energy and mineral lease activities are authorized within the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area (748,118 acres) and designated WSRs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, and WSAs (433,243 acres outside of the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area), which together cover 1,181,361 acres in the Planning Area.

The primary form of authorization for wind and solar energy development would be ROW or other realty use authorization. In addition off-site infrastructure such as roads, pipelines and powerlines necessary for mineral development would be permitted by realty authorizations. Discussions on the management actions and their effects associated with these realty use authorizations may be found in the Lands and Realty sections of this document.

#### 2.13.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Identify leasing categories for the land.

##### Alternative A

Under the Andrews MFP, no leasable energy and mineral withdrawals were proposed. Since then, some land was closed to leasable mineral exploration and development by Congressional action and WSA IMP. Consistent with the Andrews MFP, no new areas would be closed to leasing under this alternative. Areas of NSO would be identified prior to leasing in order to protect those areas where natural values would be impaired by surface disturbance, although no areas with those natural values are currently identified under this alternative. Areas would be designated for seasonal and/or other special stipulations where natural values would be impaired by seasonal leasing activities, although no areas with those natural values are currently identified under this alternative. No new lease sales are planned until after completion of this RMP.

No additional acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development beyond those closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP. No acres would be subject to NSO or seasonal and/or other special stipulations

unless publicly-reviewed environmental analysis prior to leasing indicates otherwise. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to leasing under standard leasing stipulations (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative B

The mineral estate in the entire Planning Area (468,109 acres beyond those closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP) would be closed to energy and mineral leasing (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative C

This alternative emphasizes protection of natural values. Areas would be closed to leasing where natural values would be impaired by leasing, including all ACECs; existing BLM recreation and administrative sites; potential BLM recreation sites when development is approved; National Register eligible and listed cultural sites; significant paleontological localities; big game winter range; RCAs; areas containing special status species and their habitat; and within 0.6 mile of identified sage grouse leks. Areas would be designated for NSO where natural values would be impaired by surface disturbance, although no areas with those natural values are currently identified. Areas would be designated for seasonal and/or other special stipulations where natural values would be impaired by seasonal leasing activities, although no areas with those natural values are currently identified.

Approximately 255,137 acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development, including those areas listed in the above paragraph and in addition to those areas closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP. No acres would be subject to NSO or seasonal and/or other special stipulations unless analysis prior to leasing indicates otherwise. Approximately 212,972 acres would be open to leasing under standard leasing stipulations (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative D

No new areas would be closed to leasing. Areas of NSO would include ACECs identified for NSO under Alternative D in Table 2.10, National Register listed cultural sites, and significant paleontological localities. Areas of seasonal and/or special stipulations would include big game winter range, RCAs, areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat, and within 0.6 mile of identified sage grouse leks.

No acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration and development beyond those areas closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP. Approximately 9,355 acres would be subject to NSO stipulations. Approximately 241,961 acres would be subject to seasonal and/or other special stipulations. Approximately 216,793 acres would be open to leasing under standard leasing stipulations (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative E

No new areas would be closed to leasing under this alternative. All areas would be available for surface occupancy except as restricted by current laws or regulations. No seasonal and/or other special stipulations would be applied except as required by laws and regulations.

No acres would be closed to leasable energy and mineral exploration beyond those areas closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP. No acres would be subject to NSO stipulations. No acres would be subject to seasonal and/or other special stipulations. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to leasing under standard leasing stipulations (Table 2.4).

### **2.13.3 Goal 3 - Provide opportunities for the production of saleable minerals by local, state, and federal agencies and the public in a culturally- and environmentally-sound manner.**

#### **2.13.3.1 Management Framework**

The Materials Act of 1947, as amended, authorized the disposal of mineral materials such as sand and gravel. The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 declares that the continuing policy of the federal government is to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of domestic mineral resources. Section 102 of the FLPMA directs that the public land would be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for minerals and other resources. BLM

mineral policy (1984) states that public land shall remain open and available for mineral exploration and development unless withdrawal or other administrative action is clearly justified in the national interest.

Mineral materials exploration and disposal are regulated under 43 CFR 3600. Under all alternatives, effort would be made to work with the state and counties to rehabilitate exhausted rock sources and identify new sources as needed. Surface disturbances would be reclaimed at the earliest feasible time, concurrent with development.

By Congressional action and WSA IMP, all WSAs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, designated WSRs, and the Steens Mineral Withdrawal Area are closed to mineral materials development except at those sites specifically identified in the Steens Act, which are permitted for road maintenance use only. Saleable minerals removal would be permitted on a case-by-case basis in WSAs eliminated from wilderness consideration in the future, with priority consideration given to protecting sensitive resources.

### 2.13.3.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Permit development of mineral materials sources on a case-by-case basis in areas where development does not conflict with resource values.

#### Alternative A

Saleable minerals removal would be permitted throughout the Planning Area on a case-by-case basis except where it is closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP. Mineral materials would be removed from existing sources, and from new sources identified in areas open to saleable minerals. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to saleable minerals (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative B

The entire resource area (468,109 acres), beyond those already closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP, would be closed to saleable minerals, except where required by law or where essential to protect human safety such as road construction under critical or emergency conditions (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative C

Permit saleable minerals development throughout the Planning Area on a case-by-case basis except where it is closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP; however, do not allow permits in any ACECs; existing BLM administrative and recreation sites; potential BLM recreation sites; National Register eligible and listed cultural sites; significant paleontological localities; RCAs; areas containing special status species and their habitat; and within 0.6 mile of identified sage grouse leks.

Under this alternative, which emphasizes protection of natural values, approximately 212,972 acres would be open to saleable minerals and 255,137 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative D

Saleable minerals development would be permitted throughout the Planning Area on a case-by-case basis except where it is closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP; however, do not allow permits in any ACECs; existing BLM administrative and recreation sites; potential BLM recreation sites; National Register listed cultural sites; significant paleontological localities; RCAs; areas containing federally listed species and their designated critical habitat; and within 0.6 mile of sage grouse leks.

Under this alternative, approximately 446,052 acres would be open to saleable minerals and 22,057 acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

#### Alternative E

Saleable minerals disposal under this alternative would be similar to Alternative A except that no new areas would be closed, beyond those closed by Congressional action and WSA IMP, to saleable minerals. Approximately 468,109 acres would be open to saleable minerals and no acres would be closed (Table 2.4).

## 2.13.4 Monitoring

### *Locatable Minerals*

For locatable minerals, monitoring of activities on mining claims would be conducted to promote compliance with the 43 CFR 3802/3809/3715 regulations. These regulations provide for locatable minerals activities on public lands while preventing unnecessary or undue degradation; provide for reclamation of disturbed areas; and provide for coordination with state agencies. The 43 CFR 3809 regulations establish minimum inspection frequencies for mining operations as follows: at least four times each year, the BLM would inspect all operations using cyanide or other leachate or where significant potential for acid drainage exists. There is no stated frequency for inspections for all other activities. According to BLM policy, activities in sensitive areas or activities with a high potential for greater than usual impacts would be inspected more often than annually.

### *Leasable Minerals*

For leasable minerals, inspections would be conducted to determine compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the requirements of approved exploration and development plans. Where mineral production is occurring, inspections would show (1) an accurate accounting of materials removed; (2) proper compensation to the federal government; and (3) protection of the environment, public health, and safety. Activities in sensitive areas or activities with a high potential for greater than usual impacts would be inspected more frequently, according to BLM policy.

### *Saleable Minerals*

Inspections of saleable minerals operations would be conducted to determine compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the requirements of approved exploration and development plans. Where mineral production is occurring, inspections would show (1) an accurate accounting of materials removed; (2) proper compensation to the federal government; (3) protection of the environment, public health, and safety; and (4) identification and resolution of saleable mineral trespass. Activities in sensitive areas or activities with a high potential for greater than usual impacts would be inspected more frequently, according to BLM policy.

## 2.14 **Wild Horses and Burros**

**2.14.1 Goal 1 – Manage and maintain healthy wild horse herds in established HMAs at AMLs to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance between wild horse populations, wildlife, livestock, vegetation resources, and other resource values. Enhance and perpetuate the special or rare and unique characteristics that distinguish the respective herds.**

### 2.14.1.1 Management Framework

The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, as amended, requires the BLM to protect and manage wild horses in areas where they were found at the time the Steens Act was passed, and in a manner designed to achieve and maintain a thriving ecological balance in keeping with the public land multiple-use concept. BLM policy regulations direct that wild horses shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of healthy animals. The physical traits of members of various herds are historic characteristics and are desirable to retain and maintain.

### 2.14.1.2 Management Direction by Alternatives

**Objective 1.** Designate/Retain/Adjust Herd Management Areas.

#### Alternative A

The existing HMAs would be retained (see Map2.1 and Table 2.5).

#### Alternatives B and C

The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications: the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District) and managed under the guidelines and decisions

of the SEORMP (USDI 2002); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; the South Steens HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges and the removal of the Ankle Creek Basin portion of the "No Livestock Grazing Area" (see Map 2.2 and Table 2.5).

#### Alternative D

The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications: the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District) and managed under the guidelines and decisions of the SEORMP (USDI 2002); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; the South Steens HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges (see Map 2.1 and Table 2.5).

#### Alternative E

The existing HMAs would be retained, except for the following modifications; the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (Burns District) would be combined with the Coyote Lake HMA (Vale District) and managed under the guidelines and decisions of the SEORMP (USDI 2002); the Kiger HMA would be reduced in acreage and its boundary changed to reflect the legislated Steens land exchanges; the net size of the South Steens HMA would be increased and its boundary changed to reflect the addition of a portion of the No livestock Grazing Area known as the Dry Creek and Big Springs Pastures of the Fish Creek-Big Indian Allotment (#06003), the addition of that part of the South Steens Herd Area that includes Serrano Point Allotment (#6019), Carlson Creek Allotment (#6027), and Bone Creek and Miners Field pastures in the Alvord Peak Allotment (#6038), and the loss of public land acreage due to the legislated Steens land exchanges (see Map 2.3 and Table 2.5).

**Objective 2.** Designate/Retain/Adjust Herd Areas in inactive status.

#### Alternative A

Retain current Herd Areas (see Map 2.1 and Table 2.6).

#### Alternatives B and C

The existing Herd Areas would be retained except for the following modifications: A Kiger Herd Area would be created to reflect the loss of public lands resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens Herd Area would be increased in size to reflect the addition of the Ankle Creek Basin portion of the No Livestock Grazing Area and the changes in land ownership resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges (see Map 2.2 and Table 2.6).

#### Alternative D

The existing Herd Areas would be retained except for the following modifications: a Kiger Herd Area would be created to reflect the loss of public lands resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens Herd Area would be increased in size to reflect the change in land ownership resulting from the legislated Steens land exchange (see Map 2.1 and Table 2.6).

#### Alternative E

The existing Herd Areas would be retained except for the following modifications: a Kiger Herd Area would be created to reflect the loss of public lands resulting from the legislated Steens land exchanges; and the South Steens Herd Area would be decreased in size to reflect the increase of the South Steens HMA to include the Serrano Point Allotment (#6019), Carlson Creek Allotment (#6027), and Bone Creek and Miners Field pastures in the Alvord Peak Allotment (#6038) as well as reflect the change in land ownership resulting from the legislated Steens land exchange (see Map 2.3 and Table 2.6).

#### Alternative A

The current AMLs and wild horse forage allocations would be maintained in all HMAs (see Table 3.19).

**Objective 3.** Maintain/Adjust AMLs and yearlong forage allocations for each HMA.

Alternatives B, C, D, and E

The current AMLs and wild horse forage allocations would be maintained in all HMAs (See Table 3.19). Permanent increases or decreases in AML and forage allocations would be considered if monitoring data determines changes in long-term forage availability.

**Objective 4.** Maintain a thriving natural ecological balance within HMAs.

Alternative A

Wild horses would be periodically gathered and removed based on rangeland monitoring studies, climatic conditions, census data, and the occurrence of catastrophic events such as wild fire and drought. Wild horse numbers would be reduced to the low end of the AML range when gathering is conducted.

HMA perimeter fences would be maintained and any wild horses that stray outside HMA boundaries would be removed or returned to the HMA. Gates in interior pasture division fences would be managed to maximize horse access to the HMA.

**Table 2.5: Herd Management Area Acres by Alternative**

Total BLM Acres					
HMA	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Alvord-Tule Springs-Coyote Lake	343,201	556,981	556,981	556,981	556,981
Heath Creek/Sheepshead	62,427	198,843	198,843	198,843	198,843
Kiger	38,359	26,873	26,873	26,873	26,873
Riddle Mountain	28,346	28,346	28,346	28,346	28,346
South Steens	127,838	102,343	102,343	126,732	182,485
<b>Total</b>	<b>600,171</b>	<b>913,387</b>	<b>913,387</b>	<b>937,775</b>	<b>993,528</b>

**Table 2.6: Herd Area Acres by Alternatives**

Total BLM Acres					
Herd Area	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Kiger	0	2,769	2,769	2,769	2,769
Pueblo-Lone Mountain	233,084	233,084	233,084	233,084	233,084
South Catlow	42,078	42,078	42,078	42,078	42,078
South Steens	58,947	84,444	84,444	60,055	15,983
<b>Total</b>	<b>334,109</b>	<b>362,375</b>	<b>362,375</b>	<b>337,986</b>	<b>293,914</b>

Alternatives B, C, D, and E

Wild horse numbers would be managed through gathering, removal, and other approved methods of population control. The initiation of gathering and/or other methods of population control would be based on census data, herd health, rangeland health, and productivity, as determined by rangeland monitoring studies, climatic conditions, and the occurrence of catastrophic events such as wild fire and drought. Wild horse numbers would normally be reduced to the low end of the AML range when gatherings are conducted.

Perimeter fences would be maintained and any wild horses that stray outside HMA boundaries would be removed or returned to the HMA. Gates in interior pasture division fences would be managed to maximize horse access to the HMA.

**Objective 5.** Maintain/Improve year-round water sources to sustain wild horse herds.

Alternative A

Water sources that are critical to wild horses would be maintained.

Alternatives B and C

Management would maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses; develop additional water sources in areas where greater animal distribution would benefit natural processes and values and where water is lacking during periods of drought; and acquire legal access to private water sources that are critical to wild horses.

Alternative D

Management would maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses; develop additional water sources to improve animal distribution and provide more stable water sources during periods of drought; and seek cooperative management agreements for access to or acquire legal access to private water sources that are critical to wild horses.

Alternative E

Management would maintain water sources that are critical to wild horses and develop additional water sources to improve animal distribution and provide water during periods of drought.

**Objective 6.** Maintain herd viability, genetic diversity, and the genetic and physical characteristics that distinguish individual herds.

Alternative A

A 50:50 male/female sex ratio and a diverse age structure would be maintained. New animals would occasionally be introduced to small herds to maintain genetic diversity.

An HMA's animals returned to the range after a gather and those introduced from outside HMAs would possess characteristics representative of the herd's conformation, size, unique markings, and color.

Alternatives B, C, D, and E

A diverse age structure and sex ratios ranging from 40 to 50 percent female and 50 to 60 percent male would be maintained. An HMA's animals that are returned to the range after a gather would possess representative characteristics of the herd's conformation, size, color, and unique markings. New animals from outside HMAs would be introduced when needed to increase the diversity of the genome or maintain the herds' characteristics.

**2.14.2 Monitoring**

Wild horses and their habitat would be monitored to determine the need for and timing of gatherings, which animals to remove, and whether to maintain or adjust AMLs. Habitat monitoring would include collecting climatic data, conducting vegetation utilization studies, recording actual use by horses and livestock, and determining vegetation condition, trend, and areas of use by livestock and horses. Animal monitoring would include periodic horse counts, determination of horse

locations and seasonal movements/use areas, annual reproduction rates, herd age structure, sex ratios, physical traits (size, color, weight, unique markings), and establishment and reassessment of herd baseline genomes.

## **2.15 Grazing Management**

### **2.15.1 Goal - Manage for a sustained level of livestock grazing while maintaining healthy public land resources.**

#### **2.15.1.1 Management Framework**

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 provides the basic legislative authority for livestock grazing on public lands, with provisions for protection of the lands from degradation and for orderly use and improvement of public rangelands. The Taylor Grazing Act established a system for the allotment of grazing privileges to livestock operators based on grazing capacity and use priority, and for the delineation of allotment boundaries. It also established standards for rangeland improvements and implemented grazing fees. Approximately 142 million acres of land in the western United States were placed under the jurisdiction of the Grazing Service, which became the BLM in 1946. The FLPMA and PRIA mandate the management of public land for multiple use and sustained yield. Specifically, these acts call for rangeland management strategies that provide for the maintenance or restoration of watershed function, nutrient cycling, water quality, and habitat quality for special-status species and communities of native plants and animals. These management strategies have been supported and implemented by the development of national policies and the S&Gs. The five specific applicable Standards are described in Section 3.15.1.

#### **2.15.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative**

**Objective 1.** Provide for a sustained level of livestock grazing in the AMU while meeting resource objectives and requirements for the S&Gs.

#### **Management Common to All Alternatives**

Where livestock grazing is found to limit achievement of multiple use objectives, management changes would be required in order to meet habitat and other resource objectives. The intent of grazing management is to leave sufficient herbaceous material to provide adequate soil and watershed protection, to provide forage and cover for wildlife and wild horses, and to meet other resource objectives. Wherever existing grazing management practices on public land are determined to be contributing to nonattainment of resource objectives, appropriate actions would be implemented.

Current grazing levels and management practices (summarized in Appendix I) would be maintained until evaluation of monitoring data or rangeland health assessments identify a specific need for change in order to meet objectives.

Areas burned by wildland or prescribed fire would be rested for a minimum of two growing seasons before being reopened to grazing, and then only when monitoring data support resumption of grazing. Rest for less than two growing seasons may be justified on a case-by-case basis, based upon resource data and plant community requirements.

#### **Alternative A**

Livestock grazing use would continue to be authorized in the AMU, consistent with the existing land use plan, the S&Gs (USDI 1997a), and applicable activity plans.

Additional forage, periodically available as the result of favorable growing conditions, would be made available to qualified applicants through temporary nonrenewable (TNR) grazing authorizations as consistent with existing land use plans.

#### **Alternatives B and C**

Nonconsumptive uses would be emphasized in the AMU while providing for minimal sustainable livestock grazing that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives, and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

Additional forage production, available during years of favorable growing conditions, would not be made available to livestock. The additional forage would be retained on site for values other than livestock production.

### Alternative D

Management actions would provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the AMU that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives, and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Revision of AMPs would be based on evaluations and rangeland health assessments, which would determine allowable AUMs and plant community management.

TNR grazing use may be authorized to make additional forage available to livestock operators in years of favorable growing conditions, consistent with meeting resource objectives. Resource objectives may include reducing competition from undesirable annual species with desirable perennial species or reducing the quantity of standing, dead herbaceous material in nonnative seedings.

### Alternative E

Grazing opportunities would be maximized in the AMU, to the extent possible, while meeting the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

Optimize authorization of TNR grazing use of additional production in years of favorable growing conditions, consistent with meeting resource objectives.

**Objective 2.** Promote viable and sustainable livestock grazing operations in the CMPA while meeting resource objectives and requirements for the S&Gs.

### Management Common to All Alternatives

Where livestock grazing is found to limit achievement of multiple use objectives, management changes are required to meet habitat and other resource objectives. The intent of grazing management is to leave sufficient herbaceous material to provide adequate soil and watershed protection, to provide forage and cover for wildlife and wild horses, and to meet other resource objectives. Wherever existing grazing management practices on public land are determined to be contributing to nonattainment of resource objectives, appropriate actions would be implemented.

Current grazing levels and management practices (summarized in Appendix I) would be maintained until evaluation of monitoring data or rangeland health assessments identifies specific need for change in order to meet objectives.

Areas burned by wildland or prescribed fire would be rested for a minimum of two growing seasons before being reopened to grazing, and then only when monitoring data support resumption of grazing. Rest for less than two growing seasons may be justified on a case-by-case basis based upon resource data and plant community requirements.

### Alternative A

Livestock grazing use would continue to be authorized in the CMPA consistent with the existing land use plans, the Steens Act, the S&Gs (USDI 1997a), and applicable activity plans.

### Alternatives B and C

Nonconsumptive uses would be emphasized in the CMPA, while providing for sustainable livestock grazing consistent with the Steens Act, and also meeting allotment management (natural resource) objectives, and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

### Alternative D

Management actions would provide for sustainable livestock grazing in the CMPA that is consistent with the Steens Act and that meets allotment management (natural resource) objectives, and the S&Gs (USDI 1997a). Revision of AMPs would be based on evaluations and rangeland health assessments, which would determine allowable AUMs and plant community management.

### Alternative E

Grazing opportunities would be maximized in the CMPA consistent with the Steens Act, and to the extent possible, while meeting the S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

**Objective 3.** Implement administrative solutions and rangeland projects to provide proper management for livestock grazing while meeting resource objectives and requirements for S&Gs (USDI 1997a).

Alternative A

Interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels would continue to be adjusted in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments. Accepted livestock management practices would continue to be implemented (e.g. adjustment of the timing, duration, frequency of grazing, and/or periodic rest or deferment). These practices would continue to be supplemented by administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusionary pastures and/or rangeland projects) to accomplish natural resource management objectives.

Relinquished permits and vacant allotments would continue to be handled on a case-by-case basis through land use plan amendments. Non-use would continue to be authorized for periods of up to three years.

Alternative B

Within the CMPA, administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusion of livestock from specific areas) would be emphasized to accomplish natural resource management objectives. Rangeland projects and/or accepted livestock management practices would be implemented when administrative actions alone would not accomplish natural resource objectives. In the AMU, rangeland projects would not be planned or implemented in support of livestock grazing. Rangeland projects that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives would be removed, and project sites would be rehabilitated.

Permitted use would be discontinued in all allotments where permits have been relinquished.

Alternative C

Administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusion of livestock from specific areas) would be emphasized to accomplish natural resource management objectives. Rangeland projects and/or accepted livestock management practices would be implemented when administrative actions alone would not accomplish natural resource objectives. Rangeland projects that do not function to enhance resource values and/or assist in meeting management objectives would be removed, and project sites would be rehabilitated.

Allotments with relinquished permits would be held in vacant status for two years. During this period, permitted grazing use in allotments having resource conflicts may be transferred to vacant allotments with few or no resource conflicts. Permitted use would be discontinued in vacant allotments that have resource conflicts.

Alternative D

Interim and long-term grazing management and stocking levels would be adjusted in accordance with results of monitoring studies, allotment evaluations, and rangeland health assessments. Accepted livestock management practices (e.g. adjustment of the timing, duration, frequency of grazing, and/or periodic rest or deferment) would be implemented. These would be supplemented by administrative actions (e.g. season of use changes, stocking level adjustments, exclusionary pastures) and/or rangeland projects to accomplish natural resource management objectives.

Allotments with relinquished permits would be held in vacant status for two years. During this period, where few or no resource conflicts exist, the vacant allotment could be used as a reserve forage allotment to help resolve resource conflicts in other allotments, or permitted grazing use could be reallocated to the vacant allotment. In vacant allotments with high resource conflicts, permitted use could be reserved, discontinued, or reallocated.

Alternative E

Rangeland projects and accepted livestock practices would be emphasized as the preferred solution to meet natural resource management objectives. Administrative actions would be applied when structural developments and/or accepted livestock management practices would not accomplish natural resource management objectives.

Allotments with relinquished permits having management that meets all natural resource objectives could be reallocated to other qualified applicants.

### 2.15.2 Monitoring

Monitoring of livestock grazing includes recording actual use, measurements of forage utilization, climate and trend. This monitoring data is utilized to determine attainment of the five standards. Trend in rangeland condition is monitored to provide data for periodic evaluation to determine effectiveness of current grazing management practices in attaining resource objectives.

## 2.16 Wildland Fire Management

### 2.16.1 **Goal 1 - Provide an appropriate management response to all wildland fires emphasizing firefighter and public safety.**

#### 2.16.1.1 Management Framework

Firefighter and public safety are the highest priority during all wildland fire incidents. Once life safety has been secured, protection of private property and natural and cultural resources becomes the priority in suppression actions.

The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review (USDA/USDI, 1995) states that fire is a critical natural process and that it must be reintroduced into the ecosystem on a landscape scale. In many areas, this should occur at a higher frequency (shorter return interval) than has been the case over the past 50 or more years. Wildland fire evaluations and management decisions are based upon approved fire management and activity level plans that are or would be tiered to current and future RMPs. The Policy emphasizes that for all natural (i.e., lightning caused) ignitions, the manager must be able to choose from the full spectrum of management actions from prompt and full suppression to allowing a wildland fire to burn freely and function in its natural ecological role. Wildland fire management strategies and suppression activities should minimize damage to long-term ecosystem function and emphasize the protection, restoration, or maintenance of key habitat types.

A Fire Management Plan (FMP) would be developed for the Burns District, including the Planning Area. Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas would be identified in the FMP. Fire suppression actions within the Planning Area would follow current agency policy. Firefighter and public safety are the first priority in all fire management actions. All naturally ignited wildland fires would be evaluated to determine whether they are appropriate for wildland fire use to achieve resource benefits. Fire suppression actions, including the use of heavy equipment and aerially delivered retardant, would follow current agency policies and procedures.

#### 2.16.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Implement appropriate fire suppression actions in the WUI and areas identified as possessing significant values that could be significantly altered by unplanned wildland fire.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

All wildfires would be suppressed using appropriate management actions. An FMP would be developed for the Burns District, including the Planning Area.

#### Alternative A

Under current management, WUI areas have not been identified in the Burns District.

#### Alternatives B, C, D, and E

WUI areas within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone would be identified.

**Objective 2.** Implement the appropriate management actions upon discovery of wildland fires in areas outside of the designated WUI or areas that possess significant values that could be impaired by uncontrolled wildfire.

### Alternative A

All wildfires would continue to be suppressed using appropriate fire management methods.

### Alternative B

All wildfires that threaten human life, private property, or areas that possess significant resource value would be suppressed using appropriate fire management methods. Wildland fires would be evaluated to determine whether they are appropriate for wildland fire use for resource benefits. The appropriate suppression action would be implemented on all wildland fires that are not suitable for wildland fire use.

### Alternative C

All wildfires that threaten human life, private property, or areas that possess significant resource value would be suppressed using appropriate fire management methods. Wildland fires would be evaluated to determine whether they are appropriate for wildland fire use for resource benefits. The appropriate suppression action would be implemented on all wildland fires that are not suitable for wildland fire use.

### Alternative D

All wildfires that threaten human life, private property, or areas that possess significant resource or economic value would be suppressed using appropriate fire management methods.

### Alternative E

All wildfires would be suppressed using appropriate fire management methods.

## **2.16.2 Goal 2 - Restore and maintain the integrity of ecosystems consistent with appropriate fire regimes and land uses.**

### 2.16.2.1 Management Framework

Fire is recognized as an ecological process. However, past management actions have intentionally and unintentionally altered the role of fire in the Planning Area. Changes to the role of fire have resulted in unprecedented fuel loads and in many cases have increased the risk of large, catastrophic wildland fires. Naturally ignited wildland fires may not be sufficient to achieve desired ecosystem conditions; therefore, prescribed fire and mechanical treatments may be used to reduce hazardous fuels and restore ecosystems.

The BLM's Emergency Fire Rehabilitation Handbook (H-1742-1) outlines the process for implementing emergency fire rehabilitation projects following wildland fires. Emergency fire rehabilitation funds may be used for the following purposes:

- to protect life, property, and soil, water, and vegetation resources;
- to prevent unacceptable on-site or off-site damage;
- to facilitate meeting land use plan objectives and complying with applicable laws; and
- to reduce the invasion and establishment of undesirable or invasive plant species.

### 2.16.2.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Implement management actions across the Planning Area that maintain or return plant communities to the historic fire regime, except where changes to the biophysical environment have progressed to the point that a return to historic conditions is impractical. In areas where the biophysical environment has changed significantly and a return to historic conditions is not possible or ecologically desirable, the appropriate fire regime would be determined based upon current conditions. Management actions would be implemented to establish the appropriate fire regime.

Alternative A

Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire would continue to be used to reduce hazardous fuel accumulations and for the restoration of ecosystems across the Planning Area.

Alternative B

WUI and other areas with resource values that are suitable for fuels reduction treatment would be identified. Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire would be used to reduce fuel loading in areas where the fire regime has been altered.

Alternative C

WUI and other areas with resource values that are suitable for fuels reduction treatment would be identified. Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire would be used to reduce fuel loading in areas where the fire regime has been altered.

Alternative D

WUI and other areas with resource values that are suitable for fuels reduction treatment would be identified. Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire would be used to reduce fuel loading in areas where the fire regime has been altered. The BLM would assist local government in developing new markets for by-products from fuels reduction treatments.

Alternative E

WUI and other areas with resource values that are suitable for fuels reduction treatment would be identified. Mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire would be used to reduce fuel loading in areas where the fire regime has been altered. The BLM would assist local government in developing new markets for by-products from fuels reduction treatments.

**Objective 2.** Assess burned areas for appropriate biological and physical rehabilitation activities.

Alternative A

All burned areas would continue to be evaluated for rehabilitation actions. A combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment would continue to be used to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression activities. Burned areas would be evaluated for the necessity of seeding. Species considered for revegetation following wildland fire would include native and introduced varieties adapted to local systems.

Alternative B

All burned areas would be evaluated for rehabilitation actions. A combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment would be used to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression activities. A mixture of native plant species would be used to rehabilitate burned areas where natural recovery is observed or expected to be limited.

Alternative C

All burned areas would be evaluated for rehabilitation actions. A combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment would be used to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression activities. A mixture of native plant species would be used to rehabilitate burned areas where natural recovery is observed or expected to be limited.

Alternative D

All burned areas would be evaluated for rehabilitation actions. A combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment would be used to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression activities. A mixture of native and introduced plant species would be used to enhance economic and natural resource values.

### Alternative E

All burned areas would be evaluated for rehabilitation actions. A combination of mechanized and nonmechanized equipment would be used to rehabilitate areas altered by fire suppression activities. A mixture of native and introduced plant species would be used to provide maximum economic production.

#### **2.16.3 Goal 3 - Identify areas that qualify for suitable fuels reduction treatments to protect urban interface areas, resource developments, and other resource values.**

##### 2.16.3.1 Management Framework

Although the desirability of increasing fire frequencies in many areas is well established and is described above, current fuel loads are sufficiently high that wildfires or prescribed burns may result in intense fires that are harmful to soil conditions and other habitat values. In such areas, mechanical reduction in fuel quantity or alteration of the fuels' character may be needed to reduce prescribed or wildfire risks.

##### 2.16.3.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Develop a management strategy that specifically identifies the WUIs, resource values, and resource developments that need to be considered for fuels reduction planning throughout the Planning Area.

### Alternative A

There is currently no management direction concerning WUI areas or areas within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone possessing significant resource values.

### Alternatives B through E

WUIs would be identified in the FMP according to the current WUI definition. Areas within the Burns Interagency Fire Zone that possess significant resource values would be identified.

#### **2.16.4 Monitoring**

Monitoring carried out after fires are suppressed would determine whether management strategies and suppression activities met safety standards and resource management objectives.

Monitoring studies are encouraged on all emergency fire rehabilitation projects to determine whether rehabilitation objectives are being met. Monitoring would be carried out on all projects that employ new techniques, seed mixes, or other rehabilitation methods. Emergency fire rehabilitation funds may be used to fund monitoring studies for up to three growing seasons following fire control.

Monitoring of fuel loads, vegetation conditions, and other ecological parameters would be used to determine the appropriate course of action for prescribed fires, fuels reduction treatments, and fire management in case of natural ignitions. Monitoring would also be applied to determine whether the strategy or specific treatment that was implemented is meeting resource objectives.

### **2.17 Lands and Realty**

#### **2.17.1 Goal 1 - Provide lands, interests in land, and authorizations for public and private uses while maintaining and improving resource values and public land administration.**

##### 2.17.1.1 Management Framework

Section 102 of the FLPMA requires that public land be retained in federal ownership unless disposal of a particular parcel would serve the national interest. Acquisition and disposal of land are necessary to consolidate ownership patterns to provide for more efficient land management and administration for both public and private landowners. Retention and

acquisition of land containing important resource values would provide for long-term protection and management of those values.

ROWs and other land uses including wind, solar, biomass, and other forms of renewable energy development are recognized as major uses of the public lands and are authorized pursuant to sections 302 and 501 of the FLPMA.

The BLM has new policy guidance on military activities and both renewable and nonrenewable sources of energy. Many of these types of public land uses are typically authorized by ROWs or other realty use authorizations. The policies provide consistent guidance on timely processing of applications for these uses and recognize that military and energy uses are legitimate uses of public lands, are authorized by law, and encouraged in acceptable areas on public lands.

Section 503 of the FLPMA provides for the designation of ROW corridors and encourages utilization of ROWs in common to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs. BLM policy, as described in BLM Manual 2801.13B1, is to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors. Designation of avoidance and exclusion areas would provide early notice to potential applicants when they are planning ROW, realty use, and renewable energy projects. Only facilities and uses that are consistent with the specially designated avoidance areas would be permitted. Designation of exclusion zones would provide protection of lands and resources that have values incompatible with ROW, realty, and renewable energy uses.

The primary form of authorization for wind and solar projects would be a ROW or other realty use authorization. Although off-lease infrastructure such as roads, pipelines, and powerlines would be permitted by realty authorizations, the primary authority for geothermal development is the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970. Management actions and the effects of geothermal leasing may be found in the Energy and Minerals sections of this document.

Both hazardous and nonhazardous waste disposal are prohibited on public lands to limit the United States' potential liability associated with the disposal of wastes. Private lands are generally available for private waste disposal. If a bonafide public need for new waste disposal sites arises, land could be made available by sale or exchange. Currently, no authorized waste disposal sites are located on public lands in the Planning Area.

Unauthorized uses of public lands result in financial loss to the United States and damage to the public land and its resources. Section 102(a)(9) of the FLPMA makes it the policy of the United States to collect fair market value for use of the public lands. Unless uses are authorized, no compensation is received. Further, Section 303(g) of the Steens Act states that "Abuse, occupancy, or development of the public lands is contrary to any regulation of the Secretary...is unlawful and prohibited."

Due to the generally intermingled nature of public and private lands in some parts of the resource area, the need to acquire legal public and administrative access is required to continue effective administration and public use of these lands. This need becomes more acute as public use of these lands increases and as landowners become more aware of the value of public and private land for recreation and other purposes. Land tenure adjustment actions (exchanges or fee purchases) can be a valuable tool for access acquisitions. However, without careful review, lands actions, particularly exchanges, can result in lost access. Other tools can also be utilized, such as constructing new roads around lands where access is restricted and acquisition cost is excessive, or where such acquisition is not feasible.

Section 204 of the FLPMA gives the Secretary of the Interior the authority to make, modify, extend, or revoke withdrawals, and mandates review of withdrawals.

Interior Departmental Policy (DM 603) further requires that:

- 1) All withdrawals shall be kept to a minimum, consistent with the demonstrated needs of the agency requesting the withdrawals.
- 2) Lands shall be available for other public uses to the fullest extent possible, consistent with the purposes of the withdrawal.
- 3) A current and continuing review of existing withdrawals shall be instituted.

2.17.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Retain, consolidate, and/or acquire land or interest in land with high public resource values for effective administration and improvement of resource management. Make available for disposal public land meeting the disposal criteria contained in Section 203(a) of the FLPMA.

Management Common to All Alternatives

Land tenure would be based on three general zones (see Table 2.7): (1) Zone 1 land is identified for retention in public ownership and includes high resource value lands such as wilderness, WSAs, WSRs and ACECs. Nonpublic lands in Zone 1 would be given a higher priority for acquisition than those in other zones; (2) Zone 2 includes BLM administered lands outside of Zone 1 areas and has been identified generally for retention and consolidation of ownership, but may be considered for limited disposal by exchange or other methods. Nonpublic lands in Zone 2 generally would not receive high priority for acquisition, depending upon the Alternative; and (3) Zone 3 land generally has low or unknown resource values and meets the disposal criteria of section 203 of the FLPMA. It is potentially suitable for disposal by a variety of means (see Appendix J for a complete explanation of land tenure). Nonpublic lands in Zone 3 would receive the lowest or no priority for acquisition. Newly acquired lands would be managed for the highest potential purpose for which they are acquired. Acquired lands within wilderness, WSAs, ACECs, WSRs or those that have unique or fragile resources would be managed the same as the surrounding designation. Lands acquired without special values or management goals would be managed in the same manner as comparable surrounding public lands. All forms of acquisition would be with willing landowners except as provided for in Section 205(a) of the FLPMA. This exception provides for use of eminent domain only to secure access to public lands and only to the minimum corridor necessary to achieve this purpose. With this exception, the BLM does not have condemnation authority in the Planning Area.

**Table 2.7: Land Tenure**

	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
Zone 1 Acres	1,533,505	1,649,470	1,202,317	845,282	705,072
Zone 1A Acres	0	0	171,019	171,019	171,019
Zone 1B Acres	0	0	257,136	257,136	257,136
Zone 2 Acres	108,219	0	15,158	364,771	503,947
Zone 2A Acres	0	0	0	1,319	0
Zone 3 Acres	7,744	0	3,837	9,940	12,296

All lands identified for any form of disposal in this land use plan, including leases and conveyances under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, Desert Land Act, State Indemnity Selections, or other applicable authority are hereby classified for such disposal under Sec. 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act (42 U.S.C. 315f) and 43 CFR 2400.

All past and future public lands sold or exchanged under 43 U.S.C. 869 (Recreation and Public Purposes Act [R&PP]), 43 U.S.C. 1713 (Sales), or 43 U.S.C. 1716 (Exchanges), where minerals are reserved to the United States, shall be opened to operation under the mining laws upon the publication of opening orders in the Federal Register informing the public of such action unless otherwise closed to the land and mineral laws in accordance with the Steens Act or other applicable law.

Alternative A

Land tenure adjustments would be consistent with existing land use planning with emphasis on acquiring land with high public resource values such as lands within ACECs or WSAs, T&E species habitat, or riparian/wetland areas, etc.

Under this alternative, Zone 1 lands include WSAs; ACECs; important wildlife, range, and recreational values; and well blocked areas of public land. Zone 2 lands have generally fragmented ownership patterns or are suspected of having relatively lower resource values. Zone 3 lands are those that have been found to be difficult and uneconomical to manage, are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency, and have relatively low resource values.

Specifically, public lands in Zone 1 as shown on Map 2.4 would be retained. Public lands in Zone 2 may be exchanged for higher resource value lands in Zone 1 or 2. Zone 2 lands would not be sold. Zone 3 lands may be exchanged to acquire higher resource value lands in Zones 1 or 2 or may be sold if exchange is unlikely. Lands may be acquired in any zone on a case-by-case basis by exchange, donation, or purchase, consistent with existing land use planning, regulation, and law.

### Alternative B

All public lands in the Planning Area would be identified for retention (Zone 1) to protect resources from commodity producing activities that could occur if the lands were conveyed into nonpublic ownership. No lands would be identified for disposal by any means; thus, no Zone 2 or 3 would be designated. Since no disposal is authorized, all acquisition of land would be by donation or purchase with emphasis on acquiring lands with natural values and eliminating commodity production. Land may be acquired by exchange only where the public lands involved in the exchange are located outside the Andrews RA.

### Alternative C

Under this alternative, Zone 1 lands are those lands outside the CMPA that contain WSAs, ACECs, HMAs, special status species habitat, significant cultural/historical sites, Class I and Class II VRM areas, important wildlife, range, and recreational values, and well blocked areas of public land. Zone 1A consists solely of lands within the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Zone 1B lands are all lands within the CMPA that are not designated wilderness. Zone 2 lands have generally fragmented ownership patterns and are suspected of having relatively low resource values. Zone 3 lands are those that have been found to be difficult and uneconomical to manage, are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency, and have relatively low resource values.

Public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A and 1B as shown on Map 2.5 are retention/acquisition zones and would be retained and increased, with emphasis on acquiring land with natural or cultural values. Zone 1 and 1A lands may not be disposed of under any circumstances. Zone 1B lands may be disposed of only by exchange that furthers the purpose and objectives of the Steens Act. Disposal of lands by exchange in Zones 2 and 3 may be utilized in some cases to resolve agricultural or occupancy trespass and to acquire lands with natural or cultural values. Only Zone 3 lands may be made available for disposal by state indemnity selection, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method.

Nonpublic lands in Zones 1, 1A, and 1B containing important natural or cultural values may be acquired by exchange, purchase, or donation with the goal of ultimately achieving full fee interest in these zones. Nonpublic lands containing important natural or cultural values in Zones 2 and 3 may be acquired only by purchase or donation.

In Zones 1, 1A, and 1B where fee acquisition is not possible, special emphasis would be placed upon entering into conservation management agreements, acquiring conservation easements, and providing incentive payments for nondevelopment /conservation purposes to protect natural or cultural values.

### Alternative D

Under this alternative, Zone 1 lands are those lands outside the CMPA that contain WSAs, ACECs, HMAs, important cultural/historical sites, and important wildlife, range, and recreational values. Zone 1A consists solely of lands within the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Zone 1B lands are all lands within the CMPA that are not designated wilderness. Zone 2 lands have generally fragmented ownership patterns or are well-blocked public lands that are suspected of having relatively low resource values. Zone 2A lands are potentially suitable for community expansion and are adjacent to the rural communities of Frenchglen, Fields, and Denio. Zone 3 lands are those that have been found to be difficult and uneconomical to manage, are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency, and have relatively low resource values.

Public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A and 1B as shown on Map 2.6 would be retained and increased, with emphasis on acquiring land with high public resource values. Zone 1A lands may not be disposed of under any circumstances. Zone 1B lands may be disposed of only by exchange that furthers the purpose and objectives of the Steens Act. Zone 1 lands may be disposed of only by exchange for nonpublic lands meeting one of the following criteria: a) The nonpublic lands must be within an ACEC, the CMPA, WSA, or proposed or designated WSR; or b) The nonpublic lands must contain a critical access need as identified in an approved BLM land use plan, riparian or wetland values, habitat for listed T&E species, or cultural/historical resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Public lands in Zone 2 may be disposed of by exchange for nonpublic lands containing important public resource values in Zone 1, 1A or 1B or by R&PP Sale. Lands in Zone 2A may be disposed of for community expansion purposes only by exchange for nonpublic lands in Zone 1A. Such exchange may be considered only after the Zone 2A lands are designated by Harney County as a Rural Community Zone or otherwise approved by the county for community expansion.

Public land in Zone 3 would be made available for disposal by state indemnity selection, private or state exchange, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method, as applicable.

Nonpublic lands in Zones 1, 1A, and 1B may be acquired by exchange, purchase, donation, or other authorized method. Only in Zone 1A would there be a goal of ultimately achieving full fee title in the zone. Acquisition of nonpublic lands in Zone 2 would be limited to those lands containing the following resource values or necessarily included in a larger acquisition of Zone 1, 1A, and 1B lands: a) The nonpublic lands must be within an ACEC, the CMPA, WSA, or proposed or designated WSR; or b) The nonpublic lands must contain a critical access need as identified in an approved BLM land use plan, riparian or wetland values, habitat for listed T&E species, or cultural/historical resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Lands in Zone 2 may only be acquired by exchange or donation.

Nonpublic lands in Zone 3 may not be acquired unless necessarily included in a larger acquisition of Zone 1, 1A, and 1B lands.

Where fee acquisition is not possible in Zone 1A and 1B, special emphasis would be placed upon entering into conservation management agreements, acquiring conservation easements, and providing incentive payments for nondevelopment/conservation purposes to protect and manage lands with important public values.

#### Alternative E

Under this alternative, Zone 1 lands are those lands outside the CMPA that contain WSAs, ACECs, and lands that by law or policy must be retained. Zone 1A consists solely of lands within the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Zone 1B lands are all lands within the CMPA that are not designated wilderness. Zone 2 lands have generally fragmented ownership patterns or are well-blocked public lands that are suspected of having relatively low resource values. Zone 3 lands are those that have been found to be difficult and uneconomical to manage, are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency, and have relatively low resource values.

Public land holdings in Zone 1, 1A and 1B as shown on Map 2.7 would be maintained in their approximate current acreage. Zone 1 and 2 lands may be disposed of by exchange that facilitates commodity production or by R&PP sale. Zone 1A lands may not be disposed of under any circumstances. Zone 1B lands may be disposed of only by exchange that furthers the purpose and objectives of the Steens Act and facilitates commodity production.

Public land in Zone 3 would be made available for disposal by state indemnity selection, private or state exchange, R&PP Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method, as applicable.

Acquisition efforts would place emphasis on securing land that contains commodity producing values or that facilitates commodity production. Acquisition of land would only be authorized in Zone 1, 1A and 1B and only by exchange. No lands would be acquired in Zones 2 or 3. There would be no acquisition by purchase or donation in any Zone under this alternative.

**Objective 2.** Meet public, private and federal agency needs for realty related land use authorizations and land withdrawals including those authorizations necessary for wind, solar, biomass, and other forms of renewable energy development.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Generally, there is no regulatory width that dictates ROW corridors. Variation in designated width may occur within the range of alternatives.

Applications for ROWs, realty, and renewable energy authorizations such as ROWs, leases, and permits would be processed in a timely manner, on a case-by-case basis, in compliance with the NEPA process. In accordance with current

policy, land-use authorizations may not be issued for any use that would involve disposal or long-term storage of materials that could contaminate the land (e.g., landfills, hazardous waste disposal sites, etc.).

Valid existing rights that are not currently noted on the BLM's land status records will be adjudicated, acknowledged, and noted in accordance with applicable law.

Withdrawal review continuations, modifications, and revocations would continue in the future, as the need arises.

### Alternative A

Existing corridor designations would continue (see Table 2.8). Nominal corridor width would be 2000 feet wide. New ROW facilities would be located within corridors on a case-by-case basis and designed to minimize impairment to special designated areas. There would be no ROW, realty, and renewable energy exclusion or avoidance areas, except the Stonehouse WSA, which was designated an exclusion zone, and the Kiger HMA, which was designated an avoidance area by the Three Rivers RMP. Special designations, planning decisions, and other factors may constrain or exclude ROWs or other realty land use authorizations in the remainder of the Planning Area. Subject to these constraints, the entire Planning Area would be available on a case-by-case basis to ROWs and other land uses including energy development, communications sites, and military uses. No attempt would be made to consolidate existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat.

**Table 2.8: ROW, Realty, and Renewable Energy Use Authorizations**

	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
ROW Corridor Miles	339	0	246	246	354
Avoidance Area Acres	17,834	0	222,784	699,611	678,389
Exclusion Area Acres	14,812	1,649,470	995,037	171,301	171,301
<b>Total Exclusion/Avoidance Acres</b>	<b>32,646</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,217,821</b>	<b>870,912</b>	<b>849,690</b>

Withdrawal and land classification actions would also be managed on a case-by-case basis. No attempt would be made to clarify management responsibilities or adjust boundary alignments with the Malheur NWR.

### Alternative B

The entire Planning Area would be considered a ROW, realty use, and renewable energy exclusion zone except for those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interest in land. Existing corridors would be eliminated and no new corridors would be designated. No authorizations or withdrawals necessary for energy development, communications uses, or for military activities would be considered. Although valid existing rights would be honored, where possible and when opportunities arise, existing authorizations would be terminated and facilities removed from public land, including the existing communications site at Buckskin Mountain. Until such time as facilities can be removed, existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat would be consolidated.

The entire Planning Area would be recommended for withdrawal to protect the lands from mining, energy and mineral development, military activities, and other commodity production. Favorable consideration would be given to the BLM and other agency requests for renewals, continuations, or new withdrawals for protection of resource values. Conversely, both the BLM and other agency withdrawals, which support commodity producing activities, would be relinquished and terminated.

MOUs would be developed with the USFWS or withdrawals and restorations would be considered to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR, with special emphasis on excluding commodity production.

### Alternative C

The designated corridors would include all existing trans-district electrical transmission lines identified by the Western Regional Corridor Study, federal and state highways, and the Fields-Denio and Catlow Valley County Roads. Nominal corridor width would be 1,000 feet on each side of centerline of existing facilities, except where the alignment forms the boundary of a special designated area, where the width would be 2,000 feet on the side opposite that boundary.

Where the specified corridor width is constrained on both sides by special designated areas, the corridor width would be the area between the boundaries of the special designated areas. All ROWs for electrical transmission lines greater than 69 kV, all mainline communications facilities, and all pipelines greater than ten inches would be required to locate in the designated corridors.

All ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, the Steens Mountain Wilderness, and the CMPA would be designated as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy exclusion areas, except those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land. All lands within 0.6 miles of sage grouse leks, deer and elk winter range, and bighorn sheep habitat would be designated as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy avoidance areas. No new communications sites would be authorized in the Planning Area. The existing communications uses at Buckskin Mountain would continue until they are obsolete, at which time they may be terminated, the facilities removed, and the lands restored. Except as noted above, applications for ROW, realty use, and renewable energy in the remainder of the Planning Area, including those for energy development and military uses, would be processed in a timely manner, on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the NEPA and other applicable law.

The feasibility of consolidating existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat would be evaluated. Where deemed feasible, consolidation of facilities would be implemented for critical areas.

Approximately 255,137 acres as identified in Table 2.4 would be recommended for withdrawal from the public land and mining laws. In addition, the existing withdrawal at the BLMs Fields Administrative Site would be recommended for renewal and expansion to 40 acres (NENE, Section 23, Township 38 South, Range 34East [NE1/4NE1/4, Sec. 23, T.38S., R.34E.]) to include all existing facilities and adjacent undeveloped lands within the fenced confines of the site. Other federal agency requests for new withdrawals would be recommended for approval only if they would limit commodity production and protect natural values. Withdrawal and classification continuations, modifications, revocations and terminations would be recommended, as necessary. Other agencies would be encouraged to relinquish withdrawals that provide for commodity uses, while favorable consideration would be given to continuations of other agency protective withdrawals. Those withdrawal and classification reviews not scheduled or known would be considered on a case-by-case basis with emphasis on protecting natural values.

MOUs would be developed with the USFWS or withdrawals and restorations would be considered to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR, with special emphasis on providing protection of natural values.

#### Alternative D

Corridor designations would be the same as Alternative C. All large-scale facilities, as specified in Alternative C, would be encouraged to locate in the designated corridors.

All WSRs and The Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy exclusion areas, except those authorizations necessary to provide reasonable access to nonpublic lands and interests in land. All WSAs and ACECs would be designated as ROW, realty use, and renewable energy avoidance areas. Buckskin Mountain would be designated as a Communication Site and additional communications uses could be allowed at the site. Upon designation of the site, a site management plan would be developed to facilitate efficient, timely development of compatible communications uses. Communications lease applications for new locations would be considered on a case-by-case basis, and site management plans would be developed concurrent with processing applications. Except as noted above, applications for ROW, realty use, and renewable energy authorizations in the remainder of the Planning Area, including those for energy development and military uses, would be processed in a timely manner, on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the NEPA and other applicable laws.

The feasibility of consolidating existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat would be evaluated. Where deemed feasible, consolidation of facilities would be implemented for critical areas.

As identified in Table 2.4, 20,367 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from the public land and mining laws. In addition, the existing withdrawal of five acres at the BLMs Fields Administrative Site would be recommended for renewal and expansion to ten acres in the NENE, Sec. 23, T.38S., R.34E. to include all existing facilities. In the interim, a ROW reservation would be approved to protect the additional acreage. Other federal agency requests for new withdrawals or existing withdrawal relinquishments and modifications would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Withdrawal and classification continuations, modifications, revocations, and terminations would be recommended, as

necessary, with special emphasis given to reviewing, revoking and terminating all overlapping and duplicative withdrawals and classifications within the CMPA and Steens Act mineral withdrawal area. Those withdrawal and classification reviews not scheduled or known would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

MOUs would be developed with the USFWS, or withdrawals and restorations would be considered to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR.

#### Alternative E

The designated corridors would include all corridors identified by the Western Regional Corridor Study, all county roads, and all federal and state highways. Additional routes would be considered where proposals arise. Nominal corridor width would be 2,500 feet on each side of centerline of existing facilities, except where the alignment forms the boundary of a special designated area, where the width would be 5,000 feet on the side opposite that boundary. Site management plans would be developed at Buckskin Mountain and any new communications sites only when a need or conflict between users arise. Otherwise, corridor management, exclusion and avoidance designations, and general ROW, realty use, and renewable energy administration would be the same as Alternative D.

The feasibility of consolidating existing parallel utility ROW facilities through crucial wildlife habitat would be evaluated, but no action would be taken to consolidate the facilities.

Leases, permits and other authorizations would be considered and encouraged for agricultural, occupancy, filming, and other commodity producing land uses.

No new protective withdrawals would be considered for public land. Although the existing five acre withdrawal at the BLM's Fields Administrative Site in the NENE, Sec. 23, T.38S., R.34E. would be recommended for renewal, no expansion of the withdrawal would be recommended. To provide a minimal level of protection for facilities outside the existing withdrawal, a ROW reservation would be approved. New withdrawal requests by other federal agencies would be recommended for approval only if they emphasize commodity production. Agencies would be encouraged to relinquish protective withdrawals, with favorable consideration given to continuations of other agency withdrawals that facilitate commodity uses. Withdrawal and classification continuations, modifications, revocations, and terminations would be recommended, as necessary, with special emphasis given to reviewing, revoking, and terminating all protective withdrawals and classifications. Those withdrawal and classification reviews not scheduled or known would be considered on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to reviewing, revoking, and terminating all protective withdrawals and classifications to facilitate commodity production.

MOUs would be developed with the USFWS or withdrawals and restorations would be considered to clarify management responsibilities along the boundary of the Malheur NWR, with emphasis on facilitating commodity production.

**Objective 3.** Acquire legal public or administrative access to public land.

#### Alternative A

Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired on a case-by-case basis as the need arises. Emphasis would be placed on providing access for BLM administrative facilities and program-related activities. All land tenure actions would be reviewed for their effect on access.

Construction of new roads around private lands may be considered where easement acquisition is not feasible or desirable, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act.

#### Alternative B

Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired with emphasis on controlling public access for protection of sensitive resource values. Land tenure actions would be designed such that they do not facilitate public access to these areas.

Construction of new roads around private lands would not be considered as an alternative for access easement acquisition. Roads that provide public access to lands containing sensitive resource values would be closed.

### Alternative C

Access and easement acquisition management would be the same as Alternative B, except that closed roads would be actively reclaimed.

### Alternative D

Legal public or administrative access, including conservation and scenic easements, would be acquired where public demand or an administrative need exists, including any rights necessary to control and minimize access to areas containing sensitive resource values. Emphasis would be placed on providing access to areas containing high public values and the protection of natural values. Land tenure transactions would be designed to maintain and improve public access.

Where easement acquisition for access is not feasible or desirable, but a critical access need has been identified, new roads would be constructed around nonpublic lands, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act.

### Alternative E

Legal public or administrative access would be acquired, with emphasis on providing access to facilitate commodity production. No conservation or scenic easements would be considered.

New roads would be constructed around private lands where easement acquisition is not feasible or desirable, subject to the limitations expressed in the Steens Act. Land tenure transactions would be designed to maintain and improve public access.

**Objective 4.** Eliminate unauthorized use of public lands.

### Management Common to All Alternatives

Realty-related unauthorized uses on public land would be detected, confirmed, and abated on all lands.

### Alternative A

Unauthorized use of public land would be detected, confirmed and abated, either by formal authorization or termination, on a case-by-case basis. Active restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use would be implemented. Agricultural or occupancy trespass would be terminated or may be authorized, consistent with the land tenure zones, by long-term lease, sale, or exchange.

### Alternative B

All unauthorized use of public lands, including agricultural and occupancy uses, would be detected, confirmed and terminated. All facilities and structures would be removed and natural restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use would be allowed. No authorizations would be considered to allow the use to continue.

### Alternative C

All unauthorized use of public lands would be detected, confirmed and terminated except occupancy and agricultural uses that may be authorized by land exchange for nonpublic lands containing important natural values, consistent with the land tenure zones. Short-term permits may be utilized to authorize occupancy or agricultural trespass until an exchange can be affected. Active restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use would be implemented.

### Alternative D

Unauthorized use of public land would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. All such use would be terminated or authorized. Agricultural or occupancy trespass may be authorized by long-term lease, sale or exchange, consistent with the land tenure zones where the lease, sale, or exchange would serve other important public objectives in addition to resolving the trespass. Regardless of the zone, long-term, inadvertent agricultural or occupancy trespass may be

authorized or survey hiatus corrected by sale of the minimum feasible acreage necessary to abate the unauthorized use provided the disposal criteria of the FLPMA, other applicable laws, and the approved land use plan are met. Short-term permits may be utilized to authorize occupancy or agricultural trespass until a lease, sale, or exchange could be affected. Active restoration of lands damaged by unauthorized use would be implemented.

### Alternative E

All unauthorized use of public lands would be detected, confirmed and authorized. All agricultural or occupancy trespass would be authorized by long-term lease, sale, or exchange, regardless of the land tenure zone.

### **2.17.2 Monitoring**

Monitoring of land tenure or land use proposals would occur as proposals are evaluated through the NEPA process. Individual projects would be monitored to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the authorizing document and through the normal BLM accomplishment and RMP implementation tracking process. Development in sensitive areas, or activities with a high potential for greater than usual impacts, would be inspected more frequently than those in less sensitive areas or those having less impact potential. Newly acquired lands would be incorporated into existing resource monitoring procedures ongoing on adjacent or comparable lands.

### **2.18 Transportation and Roads**

#### **2.18.1 Goal 1- Provide travel routes to and through BLM managed lands as appropriate to meet resource objectives while providing for private and public access needs.**

##### 2.18.1.1 Management Framework

Numerous federal laws and internal regulations give the BLM the authority and/or guidance to develop and manage a transportation system. Section 112 of the Steens Act calls for the development of a comprehensive Transportation Plan for the CMPA (Transportation Plan). This section of the RMP is intended to meet this legislative requirement. The remainder of the Planning Area would continue under present transportation direction and if needed, an additional transportation plan will be developed in the future. Other laws, executive orders and policy statements that give the BLM authority and/or guidance can be found in Appendix D.

The following Route Management Categories and Maintenance Levels for the CMPA are common to all alternatives:

#### *Route Management Categories*

**Common Use Routes:** Routes that are open to the public but may be closed, or have seasonal use restrictions, during certain sensitive periods to protect resource values such as road conditions. These include routes on BLM managed lands and private lands where public access easements have been acquired.

**Cooperative Managed Routes:** Routes across private, state, BLM administered, or other agency lands that are cooperatively administered and maintained. Routes may have specified levels of public use, season of use, and type of use. Administration and maintenance may be facilitated through a cooperative agreement.

**Service/Permit Use Routes:** Routes used only for administration, facility service, property maintenance, or those associated with an authorized permit. Motorized public use is not allowed.

**Private Property Access Routes:** Routes across public land used to access private property. Motorized use allowed only for private property interests and BLM administration.

**Private Routes:** Routes across private lands that are not open for use by the public.

**Note:** access descriptions within the above Route Management Categories may be subordinate to other rights, agreements, or privileges as provided by law, policy, or other legal instrument.

### *Maintenance Levels*

Level 1: This level is assigned to roads where maintenance is limited to protecting adjacent lands and resource values. These roads are no longer needed and are closed to traffic. The objective is to remove these roads from the transportation system. At a minimum, drainage and runoff patterns will be maintained as needed to protect adjacent lands. Grading, brushing, or slide removal will not be performed unless roadbed drainage is being adversely affected or is causing erosion. Closure and traffic restrictive devices will be maintained.

Level 2: This level is assigned to roads open seasonally or year round and uses may include commercial, recreation, private property access, and administration purposes. Typically, these roads are passable by high clearance vehicles and are maintained, as needed, depending on funding levels. Seasonal closures or other restrictions may be needed to meet resource objectives or due to snow levels or other weather conditions. At a minimum, drainage structures will be inspected within a three year period and maintained as needed. Grading will be conducted as necessary to correct drainage problems. Brushing will be conducted as needed and slides may be left in place provided they do not adversely affect drainage.

Level 3: This level is assigned to roads open seasonally or year round and uses may include commercial, recreation, private property access and administrative purposes. Typically, these roads are natural or aggregate surfaced, but may include bituminous surface roads. These roads have a defined cross section with drainage structures such as rolling dips, culverts or ditches; They may normally be negotiated by passenger cars driving cautiously. User comfort and convenience are not considered a high priority. At a minimum, drainage structures will be inspected annually and maintained as needed. Grading will be conducted to provide a reasonable level of riding comfort at prudent speeds for the road conditions. Brushing will be conducted as needed to improve site distance. Slides adversely affecting drainage will receive high priority for removal and other slides will be removed on a scheduled basis.

Level 4: This level is assigned to roads open seasonally or yearlong. Uses include commercial, recreation, private property access, and administrative purposes. Typically, these roads are single or double lane and have an aggregate or bituminous surface. This maintenance level provides access for passenger cars traveling at prudent speeds. At a minimum, the entire roadway will be maintained at least annually, although a preventive maintenance program may be established. Major problems will be repaired as discovered.

Level 5: This level is assigned to roads open seasonally or yearlong that carry the highest traffic volume of the transportation system. Uses include commercial, recreation, private property access, and administrative purposes. Typically, these roads are single or double lane and have an aggregate or bituminous surface. This maintenance level provides access for passenger cars traveling at prudent speeds. The entire roadway will be maintained at least annually and a preventive maintenance program will be established. Problems will be repaired as discovered.

#### 2.18.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage roads and ways within the CMPA consistent with the Route Management Categories and Maintenance Levels identified for each alternative.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

The roads and ways currently shown on Map 2.8 represent the current BLM route coverage within the CMPA. Management actions within this Transportation Plan pertain only to the currently mapped routes. Other routes are known to exist; however, the exact location and uses of most of these routes are not currently known. Once these unmapped routes are inventoried, an EA would be conducted to determine if they would be added to the transportation system, converted to hiking trails, or closed and rehabilitated. Currently mapped routes may also be reevaluated through an EA process and closed or upgraded if needed to meet resource objectives. Public input to the EA(s) would be sought.

The Steens Act closed about 104 miles of motorized routes upon designation of the Steens Mountain Wilderness. These routes would remain closed across all RMP alternatives.

Route Management Categories describe the primary purpose for each route. Maintenance levels outline the degree of maintenance to be performed, dependent on funding levels. Route maintenance is generally prioritized, based on safety

concerns and degree of use. Route Management Categories and Maintenance Levels are monitored and may be modified if needs and conditions change.

Ways within WSAs are not maintained other than by the passage of vehicles, with certain exceptions. Exceptions are limited to the minimum mechanical maintenance necessary to provide access as follows: 1) for emergencies such as suppression activities associated with wildfire or search and rescue; 2) to grandfathered grazing uses and facilities as defined by the WSA IMP; 3) to sites where reclamation or stabilization is needed to protect or enhance the land's wilderness values; and 4) to private inholdings. In these exceptions, maintenance would occur using the "minimum tool concept" described in the WSA IMP. An EA is required to analyze maintenance alternatives except in the case of emergencies.

BMPs for the construction, maintenance, and general management of the transportation system are listed in Appendix F. These BMPs are consistent across all alternatives.

Easements across nonfederal lands, both public and administrative, will be sought as needed to meet resource objectives.

### Alternative A

Retain the current road use maintenance levels and seasonal restrictions for the existing road system (Map 2.8) within the CMPA, subject to implementation of the Steens Act.

Existing management directions currently identified for the CMPA include the following:

- Keep the entire Steens Loop Road open at a Maintenance Level 5. This includes the use of bentonite clay as needed.
- Use the existing gate system to close the Steens Loop Road to public motorized use from approximately November 15 to May 15 each year except to access the snowline on the North Steens Loop Road for winter recreation by permit.
- Decommission prelegislative closed routes leading from the Steens Loop Road as needed.
- Continue to seek voluntary public access easements across private lands to benefit recreation opportunities.

### Alternative B

Under this alternative, the transportation system would be managed to meet resource goals and objectives consistent with maximizing natural processes. Route closures outside of wilderness or WSAs would also prohibit mechanized use.

Management directions under Alternative B include the following:

- Close the upper portion of the Steens Loop Road from the Kiger Overlook access road to the wilderness boundary approximately one mile west of Blitzen Crossing. Approximately 18 miles of the Steens Loop Road would be closed to motorized and mechanized use. Maintain the open portion of the Steens Loop Road at a Level 3.
- In addition to the Steens Loop Road, close all roads currently bounded on both sides by wilderness. Closed roads include Fish Creek, Cold Springs, Indian Creek, Bone Creek, Big Alvord Creek and Three Springs. Approximately 31 miles of roads would be closed to motorized and mechanized use.
- Close all cherrystem roads and ways associated with WSAs. Approximately 107 miles of WSA routes would be closed to motorized and mechanized use.
- Assign a Maintenance Level 2 to all remaining open roads within the CMPA. Consider seasonal closures as needed to reduce damage to road surfaces, protect resources, or provide for public safety.
- Use the existing gate system to close the Steens Loop Road to public motorized use from approximately November 15 to May 15 each year. Open gates as snow and road conditions allow. Seasonally close all other routes within the CMPA from February 1 to May 15.
- Install a gate on the Moon Hill Road near the Diamond Grain Camp Road to protect road surfaces and enhance natural values.
- Develop Cooperative Road Management Agreements or acquire voluntary easements from private landowners and other entities that enhance natural values.

### Alternative C

Under this alternative, the transportation system would be managed to meet resource goals and objectives consistent with emphasizing the protection of natural values. Route closures outside of wilderness or WSAs would be for motorized vehicles only; therefore, mechanized use (e.g., mountain bikes) would be allowed.

Management directions under Alternative C include the following:

- Close the Rooster Comb portion of the Steens Loop Road to motorized use. Approximately three miles of the road would be affected. Continue to allow mechanized and other nonmotorized forms of access. Maintain the open portion of the Steens Loop Road at a Level 4.
- Close the Cold Springs Road west of Nye Cabin.
- Close the Fish Creek Road where it is currently bounded on both sides by wilderness.
- Close specific routes as shown on Map 2.11. Approximately seven miles of routes would be closed. Assign a Maintenance Level 2 to all remaining open roads within the CMPA. Consider seasonal closures as needed to reduce damage to road surfaces, protect resources, or provide for public safety.
- Use the existing gate system to close the Steens Loop Road to public motorized use from approximately November 15 to May 15 each year except to access the snowline on the North Steens Loop Road for nonmotorized forms of winter recreation by permit.
- Install a gate to seasonally close the Moon Hill Road from February 1 to May 15 each year to protect road surfaces and enhance natural values.
- Develop Cooperative Road Management Agreements or acquire voluntary easements from private landowners and other entities that enhance natural values.
- Close the Indian Creek Road north of Indian Creek along the WSA/wilderness boundary.

### Alternative D

Under this alternative, the transportation management system would be managed to meet resource goals and objectives that strike a balance between cultural, economic, ecological, and social values in a manner that encourages cooperative management practices.

Management directions under Alternative D include the following:

- Keep the entire Steens Loop Road open to motorized use at a Maintenance Level 5 except the Rooster Comb section, which would be upgraded to a Maintenance Level 3.
- Retain Maintenance Level 3 as currently prescribed for the Moon Hill road system.
- Use the existing gate system to close the Steens Loop Road to public motorized use from approximately November 15 to May 15 each year except to access the snowline on the North Steens Loop Road for motorized and nonmotorized forms of winter recreation.
- Close specific routes as shown on Map 2.12. Approximately seven miles of routes would be closed.
- Assign a Maintenance Level 2 to all remaining open roads within the CMPA unless otherwise prescribed under a Cooperative Management Agreement. Consider seasonal closures and road upgrades as needed to reduce damage to road surfaces, protect resources, or provide for public safety.
- Install a gate to seasonally close the Moon Hill Road from February 1 to May 15 each year to protect road surfaces and enhance natural values.
- Develop Cooperative Road Management Agreements or acquire voluntary easements with private landowners and other entities that provide recreation opportunities, enhance natural values, or otherwise improve access for private and/or public purposes.
- Allow motorized access to dispersed campsites along routes shown on Map 2.8.
- Allow the parking of motorized vehicles within 100 feet of many of the open routes shown on Map 2.8 unless precluded by special designation or other resource concerns. Vehicles would be allowed to travel perpendicular to the identified roads in order to park. Parking along the Steens Loop Road from Jackman Park Campground to the Rooster Comb Gate would be restricted to the existing disturbance of the Steens Loop Road.

### Alternative E

Under this alternative, the transportation management system would be managed to meet resource goals and objectives that emphasize commodity production and public uses.

Management directions under Alternative E include:

- Keep the entire Steens Loop Road open to motorized use at a Maintenance Level 5 except the Rooster Comb section, which would be upgraded to a Maintenance Level 3.
- Expand seasonal access on the Steens Loop Road by allowing winter-long motorized public access to the snowline on the North Steens Loop Road and by allowing winter-long motorized access to the South Steens Campground on the South Steens Loop Road. Expanded access on the South Steens Loop Road would be dependent on upgrading the road as necessary to prevent road damage during wet periods. Plowing of snow would be limited so access would also be dependent on snow and road conditions.
- Retain Maintenance Level 3 as currently prescribed for the Moon Hill Road system.
- All motorized routes within the CMPA would remain open. Consider seasonal closures and road upgrades as need to reduce damage to road surfaces.
- Assign a Maintenance Level 2 to all remaining open roads within the CMPA unless otherwise prescribed under a Cooperative Management Agreement.
- Develop Cooperative Road Management Agreements or acquire voluntary easements with private landowners and other entities that provide recreation opportunities, or otherwise improve access and commodity potential for private and/or public purposes.
- Allow motorized access to dispersed campsites along routes shown on Map 2.8.
- Allow the parking of motorized vehicles within 100 feet of the open routes shown on Map 2.8. Vehicles would be allowed to travel perpendicular to the identified roads in order to park vehicles. Off road use remains prohibited within the wilderness and WSAs.

### 2.18.2 Monitoring

Roads are typically monitored in conjunction with other federal, state and local programs. They are monitored on approximately an annual basis to determine maintenance needs. This information is factored into the budget request for the upcoming fiscal year. The amount of road maintenance done each year is based on the budget and the criteria outlined in the Transportation Management Plan.

## 2.19 Off-Highway Vehicles

### 2.19.1 Goal - Manage motorized (OHV) and mechanized (nonmotorized) vehicle use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide OHV and mechanized vehicle use opportunities where appropriate and allowable, and minimize conflicts among various users.

#### 2.19.1.1 Management Framework

Federal regulations (43 CFR Part 8340) and BLM planning guidance require the BLM to designate all BLM-administered land as either open, limited, or closed, in regard to off-road (now termed "off-highway") vehicle use. These designations are to help meet public demand for OHV and mechanized vehicle activities, protect natural resources, promote public safety, and minimize conflicts among users.

#### 2.19.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage OHV and mechanized vehicle use in conformance with OHV designations.

#### 2.19.1.3 Management Common to All Alternatives

The Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use. If not otherwise restricted, the remainder of the CMPA, outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness and including the WSAs, would be designated as limited to designated roads, ways, and trails. Only those roads identified in the CMPA Transportation Plan would be available for OHV and mechanized vehicle use.

All management actions for those portions of ACECs within WSAs would be governed by the WSA IMP until such time as Congress makes a determination regarding wilderness designation. The OHV designations for WSAs would remain in effect until Congressional release of the WSAs, or until such time that actual or unforeseeable use levels may cause the nonimpairment criteria to be violated, in which case more restrictive designations may be made. Every effort will be made to maintain or create OHV designations that will prevent impairment of wilderness characteristics. Areas

released from WSA status and not designated as wilderness would be managed according to the designations of the surrounding or adjacent area, unless local conditions indicate a different designation would be appropriate.

The limitations to OHV and mechanized vehicle use proposed under these alternatives do not apply to official use; any fire, military, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle when used for emergency purposes; any combat or combat support vehicle when used for national defense purposes; and any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized under a permit, lease, license, or contract.

Within the CMPA, all alternatives must abide by the Steens Act, specifically Section 112(b):

(1) PROHIBITION. – The use of motorized or mechanized vehicles on Federal lands included in the Cooperative Management and Protection Area –

(A) is prohibited off road; and

(B) is limited to such roads and trails as may be designated for their use as part of the management plan.

(2) EXCEPTIONS. – Paragraph (1) does not prohibit the use of motorized or mechanized vehicles on Federal lands included in the Cooperative Management and Protection Area if the Secretary determines that such use-

(A) is needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency; or

(B) is appropriate for the construction or maintenance of agricultural facilities, fish and wildlife management, or ecological restoration projects, except in areas designated as wilderness or managed under the provisions of section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782).

An OHV is any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding the following: 1) any nonamphibious registered motorboat; 2) any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes; (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly permitted by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved; 4) vehicles in official use; and 5) any combat or combat support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies.

Mechanized vehicle means any vehicle, device, or contrivance for moving people or material in or over land, water, snow or air that has moving parts. This includes, but is not limited to, sailboats, sailboards, hang gliders, parachutes, bicycles, game carriers, carts, and wagons. It does not include wheelchairs, horses or other pack stock, skis, snowshoes, nonmotorized river craft, sleds, travois, or similar devices without moving parts.

#### Alternative A

##### *Planning Area*

OHV and mechanized vehicle use would be managed in accordance with the existing open, limited, and closed OHV designations in Table 2.9. OHV and mechanized vehicle organized events would be allowed when consistent with the protection of resource values and OHV designations. In addition, existing OHV designations for ACECs/RNAs would continue (Table 2.11). All OHV and mechanized vehicle use in WSAs is limited to existing, designated ways and trails. All WSA cherrystem roads and ways would be available for use.

##### *CMPA*

The Fish Creek Road, Cold Springs Road, Newton Cabin Road, Bone Creek Road, Indian Creek Road, the road north from Indian Creek Road, and Big Alvord Creek Road would remain open. The seasonal closure in the Steens would continue. See Map 2.9.

##### *AMU*

The Alvord Desert playa would remain open to OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Snow would be allowed to block access to the Trout Creek Mountains and Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows areas.

Alternative B*Planning Area*

Areas designated as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use would be maximized. All other areas would be designated as limited to designated roads and trails with a minimum number of roads and trails identified (Table 2.9 and Map 2.10). All WSAs, including cherrystem roads and ways, would be designated as closed to OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Organized OHV or mechanized vehicle events would not be allowed. Table 2.11 specifies the OHV designations for the ACECs/RNAs.

*CMPA*

The following roads bounded by the Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as closed to all motorized and mechanized vehicle use: Fish Creek, Cold Springs, Steens Loop Road from the Kiger Overlook Road to west of Blitzen Crossing, Newton Cabin, Bone Creek, Indian Creek, the road north from Indian Creek Road, and Big Alvord Creek. The entire CMPA would be closed seasonally. A gate would be installed on the Moon Hill Road at the Diamond Grain Camp Road.

**Table 2.9: OHV Designation Acreages by Alternative in the Planning Area (Public Land Acres Only)**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Alternative A (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative B (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative C (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative D (acres)</b>	<b>Alternative E (acres)</b>
Open	675,918	0	0	25,286	681,874
Limited to Existing	123,460	0	0	656,590	510,504
Limited to Designated	680,016	796,626	1,476,034	794,496	283,994
Closed	170,076	852,844	173,436	173,098	173,098
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>	<b>1,649,470</b>
Seasonal Closure	93,444	161,154	266,975	236,447	119,591

*AMU*

The Catlow Valley parcels and the Alvord Desert playa would be designated as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use, while the remainder of the AMU would be designated as limited to designated routes. In addition, the Trout Creek Mountains and Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows areas would be closed seasonally to OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Two gates would be installed on the Trout Creek Mountains Road. Gates would also be installed on the Ten Cent Meadows and Starr Ridge Roads.

Alternative C*Planning Area*

OHV and mechanized vehicle use would be minimized in accordance with the limited and closed OHV designations (Table 2.9 and Map 2.11). Emphasis would be on the protection of natural values. Organized OHV or mechanized vehicle events would be allowed only on designated roads and trails within areas designated as limited. Table 2.11 specifies the OHV designations for the ACECs/RNAs. All WSA cherrystem roads and ways would be available for use. Four parcels found to contain wilderness values would be designated as limited to designated roads and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use.

*CMPA*

The following roads bounded by the Steens Mountain Wilderness would be designated as closed to all motorized use: the Rooster Comb section of the Steens Loop Road, Fish Creek, Cold Springs from west of Nye Cabin to Riddle Bothers Ranch, and the road north from the Indian Creek Road toward Dry Creek. The core of the CMPA would be closed seasonally with an additional gate installed on Moon Hill Road at the Diamond Grain Camp Road. The existing seasonal closure would be expanded to include all public lands affected by gate closures.

*AMU*

The Catlow Valley parcels and the Alvord Desert playa would be designated as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The remainder of the AMU, including the WSAs, would be designated as limited to designated roads, ways,

and trails for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. In addition, the Trout Creek Mountains and Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows areas would be closed seasonally to OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Two gates would be installed on the Trout Creek Mountains Road; gates would also be installed on the Ten Cent Meadows and Starr Ridge Roads.

#### Alternative D

##### *Planning Area*

OHV and mechanized vehicle use would be cooperatively managed in accordance with OHV designations in Table 2.9 and Map 2.12. The BLM would seek cooperative agreements with OHV and mechanized vehicle clubs and other users. OHV and mechanized vehicle organized events would be allowed, when consistent with the protection of resource values and OHV designations. The OHV designations for ACECs/RNAs would be as specified in Table 2.11. All WSA cherrystem roads and ways would be available for use.

##### *CMPA*

The Fish Creek Road, Cold Springs Road, Newton Cabin Road, Bone Creek Road, Indian Creek Road, the road north from the Indian Creek Road, and Big Alvord Creek Road would remain open. The Bone Creek road from the Carlson Creek intersection to the top of Whiskey Hill would be closed to public use. The core of the CMPA would be closed seasonally with an additional gate installed on Moon Hill Road approximately ten miles south of the Diamond Grain Camp Road. The existing seasonal closure would be expanded to include all public lands affected by gate closures.

##### *AMU*

All WSAs would be designated as limited to designated ways and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The Catlow Valley parcels would be designated as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The Alvord Desert playa would be designated as open to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The remainder of the AMU would be designated as limited to existing routes for all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. In addition, the Trout Creek Mountains and Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows areas would be closed seasonally. Two gates would be installed on the Trout Creek Mountains Road; gates would also be installed on the Ten Cent Meadows and Starr Ridge Roads.

#### Alternative E

##### *Planning Area*

OHV and mechanized vehicle opportunities would be maximized, except in areas designated closed or limited, in compliance with existing laws, regulations, and policies (Table 2.9 and Map 2.13). Opportunities for organized OHV and mechanized vehicle events would be increased. OHV designations for the ACECs/RNAs would be as specified in Table 2.11. All WSA cherrystem roads and ways would be available for use.

##### *CMPA*

The Fish Creek Road, Cold Springs Road, Newton Cabin Road, Bone Creek Road, Indian Creek Road, the road north from the Indian Creek Road, and Big Alvord Creek Road would remain open. The upper Steens Mountain area would be closed seasonally. Motor vehicles would be allowed to the 5,600-foot elevation level on the North Steens Loop Road and to South Steens Campground on the South Steens Loop Road without winter recreation permits, when road conditions are suitable. A gate would be installed on the North Steens Loop Road at about the 5,600-foot elevation level.

##### *AMU*

All WSAs would be designated as limited to existing ways and trails for OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The Catlow Valley parcels would be designated as closed to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. The Alvord Desert playa and the remainder of the AMU would be designated as open to all OHV and mechanized vehicle use. Snow would be allowed to block access to the Trout Creek Mountains and Arizona Creek/Stergen Meadows areas.

## **2.19.2 Monitoring**

Monitoring would include periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, and visitor use. Closures and designations would be monitored to promote public safety and to protect affected roads or areas.

## 2.20 Recreation

### 2.20.1 **Goal - Provide developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities, while protecting resources, to manage the increasing demand for resource-dependent recreation activities.**

#### 2.20.1.1 Management Framework

The FLPMA provides for recreation use of public land as an integral part of multiple use management. Dispersed, unstructured activities typify the recreational uses occurring throughout the majority of the Planning Area. Policy guidelines in BLM Manual 8300 direct the BLM to designate special units known as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). Management within these SRMAs focuses on providing recreation opportunities that would not otherwise be available to the public, reducing conflicts among users, minimizing damage to resources, and reducing visitor health and safety problems. Major investments in recreation facilities and visitor assistance are appropriate in SRMAs when required to meet management objectives.

Public lands in a Resource Area not designated as SRMAs become an Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMA). Management direction within an ERMA focuses on actions to facilitate recreation opportunities by providing basic information and access. Visitors to an ERMA are expected to rely heavily on their own equipment, knowledge, and skills while participating in recreation activities.

In accordance with the FLPMA, the "BLM's Recreation 2000 Plan and Update" sets recreation policy on the national level. The policy emphasizes resource-dependent recreation opportunities that typify the vast western landscape; striving to meet the social and economic needs of present and future generations; providing for the health and safety of the visitor; and accomplishing these goals within the constraints of achieving and maintaining healthy ecosystems.

#### 2.20.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Establish and manage recreation areas where the presence of high quality natural resources and the current or potential demand warrants intensive management practices to protect areas for their scientific, educational, and/or recreational values while accommodating anticipated increases in use for recreation activities in specific areas.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

Throughout the Planning Area, occupancy and use for recreational camping is limited to 14 days in one location. All lands not designated as SRMA(s) would become an ERMA.

#### Alternative A

The CMPA would be managed as an undesignated SRMA (see Map 2.17). The Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation would be maintained.

#### Alternative B

Recreation management would be kept to a minimal level. SRMAs would not be designated and all public land would become an ERMA. Congressionally and administratively designated areas (CMPA, WSRs, Steens Mountain Wilderness, WSAs, ACECs, etc.) would be subject to a minimum level of management. The Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation would be removed.

#### Alternative C

The CMPA would be designated as SRMA (see Map 2.15). The 94,897 acres in the Pueblo Mountains and 92,927 acres in the Trout Creek Mountains would be designated as SRMAs. The Trout Creek Mountains and Pueblo Mountain SRMAs would be managed with an emphasis on undeveloped, dispersed recreation opportunities and protection of natural values, while providing an associated level of support facilities. The Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation would be removed.

### Alternative D

The CMPA, 94,897 acres in the Pueblo Mountains, and 92,927 acres in the Trout Creek Mountains would be designated as SRMAs (see Map 2.16). The Pueblo Mountains and the Trout Creek Mountains SRMAs would be managed to provide quality recreation opportunities while protecting resource values. The Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation would be removed.

### Alternative E

The CMPA, 94,897 acres in the Pueblo Mountains, and 92,927 acres in the Trout Creek Mountains would be designated as SRMAs (see Map 2.14). The Pueblo Mountains and the Trout Creek Mountains SRMAs would be managed to enhance tourism and recreation opportunities. The Steens Mountain Recreation Lands designation would be removed.

**Objective 2.** Manage recreation facilities to protect natural resources and to meet user needs.

### Management Common to All Alternatives

Management and maintenance of existing developed recreation sites would continue.

### Alternative A

#### *Planning Area*

Expansion of existing developed recreation sites would be considered and tourism opportunities would be provided.

#### *CMPA*

The Mann Lake Recreation Site would be maintained in its present condition. Existing horse trailhead facilities at South Steens Campground would be maintained. Toilet(s) would not be installed along the Steens Loop Road. A group camping area would not be developed nor would facilities for winter recreation. Lily Lake would be managed as a dispersed recreation site. Trail access would not be provided to the Fir Grove.

#### *AMU*

New campgrounds would not be developed nor would toilets be installed at Pike Creek or Frog Spring. Trailhead parking would be provided near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.

### Alternative B

#### *Planning Area*

Undeveloped recreation sites would be minimally managed. If natural processes were being jeopardized, undeveloped sites would be rehabilitated or closed.

#### *CMPA*

The Mann Lake Recreation Site would be maintained in its present condition. Existing horse trailhead facilities at South Steens Campground would be maintained. Toilet(s) would not be installed along the Steens Loop Road. A group camping area would not be developed, nor would facilities for winter recreation. Lily Lake would be designated as a day use area. Trail access would not be provided to the Fir Grove.

#### *AMU*

New campgrounds would not be developed nor would toilets be installed at Pike Creek or Frog Spring. A staging area would not be provided near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.

### Alternative C

#### *Planning Area*

Recreation management would focus on dispersed activities, while assuring protection of natural and cultural values. Recreation developments would be allowed only for the protection and interpretation of cultural and natural values and for public health and safety. If resource values were affected beyond acceptable levels, undeveloped site(s) would be rehabilitated or closed.

*CMPA*

The Mann Lake Recreation Site would be maintained in its present condition. Existing horse trailhead facilities at South Steens Campground would be maintained. One toilet would be installed and maintained along the North Steens Loop Road in the Fish Lake area. A group camping area would be developed within the confines of an existing campground. A nonmotorized winter recreation staging area would be developed along the North Steens Loop Road. Lily Lake would be designated as a day use area and interpretive signs would be installed. The route to the Fir Grove would be minimally maintained to protect natural values and provide for public safety.

*AMU*

New campgrounds would not be developed nor would toilets be installed at Pike Creek or Frog Spring. A staging area would be provided near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.

Alternative D*Planning Area*

Management of existing recreation sites, areas, and their associated improvements would continue and site expansion would be allowed. If demand warrants, new recreation sites and areas would be developed to protect cultural and natural values and provide for public health and safety. Tourism opportunities would be allowed if consistent with other resource objectives.

*CMPA*

The Mann Lake Recreation Site would be improved with minimal development to reduce resource damage. A site plan would be developed and resources monitored. A trailhead facility (parking, hitching rail, loading ramp, information) for horse users would be developed in or near the South Steens Campground to improve public safety and limit resource damage. Trails connecting the new trailhead to existing trails would be designed and constructed. One toilet would be installed and maintained along the North Steens Loop Road in the Fish Lake area. In cooperation with private landowners, a group camping area would be developed east of Fish Lake. A winter use staging area would be developed along the North Steens Loop Road. A system of cross-country ski trails and nonmotorized winter play area would be developed at the west end of the WJMA. Lily Lake would be managed as a dispersed recreation site. Trail access would not be provided to the Fir Grove.

*AMU*

A toilet and fire rings would be installed in the Frog Spring area. A toilet would also be installed and maintained at Pike Creek, in cooperation with the private landowner. A staging area with information and a toilet would be provided near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.

Alternative E*Planning Area*

Tourism opportunities would be increased through the expansion of existing developed and undeveloped recreation sites. New developed recreation sites and areas would be established to meet increased recreation demand.

*CMPA*

The Mann Lake Recreation Site would be upgraded to a full-service campground. A trailhead facility (parking, hitching rail, loading ramp, information) for horse users would be developed near the South Steens Campground. Trails connecting the new trailhead to existing trails would be designed and constructed. Toilets would be installed and maintained at the three overlooks at the top of the Steens Loop Road. In cooperation with private landowners, a group camping area would be developed east of Fish Lake. A winter use staging area would be developed along the North Steens Loop Road. A system of cross-country ski trails and a nonmotorized winter play area would be developed at the west end of the WJMA. Lily Lake would be managed as a dispersed recreation site and a toilet would be installed. A small trailhead would be developed adjacent to the North Steens Loop Road and the route to the Fir Grove would be marked and minimally maintained.

*AMU*

A developed campground would be constructed in the Frog Spring area. A toilet would be installed and maintained at Pike Creek, in cooperation with the private landowner. A staging area with information, a toilet, and horse support facilities would be provided near the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon.

**Objective 3.** Outside of the intensive-use areas and developed recreation sites, manage the remainder of the Planning Area for dispersed recreation.

Alternative A

*Planning Area*

Management of existing undeveloped recreation sites would continue. Public safety and resource protection would be provided. Dispersed tourism opportunities would be developed.

*CMPA*

Trails would not be developed outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness.

Alternative B

*Planning Area*

Minimal management of existing undeveloped recreation sites would continue, while protecting natural processes. If natural processes were being jeopardized, site(s) would be rehabilitated or closed.

*CMPA*

Trails would not be developed outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness.

Alternative C

*Planning Area*

Management of existing undeveloped recreation sites would continue. Recreation management would focus on dispersed activities while protecting natural and cultural values and providing for public health and safety. If resource values are affected beyond acceptable levels, site(s) or would be rehabilitated or closed.

*CMPA*

Outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, trails would be developed where necessary to protect natural values.

Alternative D

*Planning Area*

Natural and cultural values would be protected while providing for public safety. Dispersed recreation opportunities, that are consistent with other resource objectives, would be developed.

*CMPA*

Outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, trails would be developed where necessary to protect natural values and to provide for public health and safety.

Alternative E

*Planning Area*

Tourism opportunities would be increased through management of undeveloped recreation sites and by providing additional opportunities for dispersed recreation.

*CMPA*

Outside of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, trails would be developed to provide additional hiking and nonmotorized recreation opportunities.

**Objective 4.** Manage visitor use in the Planning Area to protect natural resources and to provide a variety of recreation opportunities.

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### Alternative A

#### *Planning Area*

Visitor use would be managed for unlimited recreation opportunities. Group size would not be limited for any recreation activity.

#### *CMPA*

Camping locations would not be restricted. Parking on the Rooster Comb section of the South Steens Loop Road would not be restricted. Snowmobile use would be limited as follows: Snowmobiles are allowed on the North Steens Loop Road from the 5,600-foot level to the Kiger Overlook. An authorized guide must accompany snowmobilers to the Nye Place and along the Dingle Creek road. Recreational river use would only be allowed when the lowest gate on the South Steens Loop Road is open. Visitor use at the overlooks would not be restricted. Permits would not be required to visit the CMPA.

#### *AMU*

Camping would be allowed anywhere, including all AMU ACECs/RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs. Dispersed users would be allowed to use whatever method of solid human waste disposal they prefer. Routes for mechanized vehicles (i.e., mountain bikes) would not be developed.

### Alternative B

#### *Planning Area*

Visitor use would be managed for minimum recreation opportunities through closures, regulations, or other means, to maximize natural processes. Group size would be limited for all activities in order to allow natural processes to be unimpaired.

#### *CMPA*

The following areas would be closed to camping: all RNAs, the Steens Loop Road above Jackman Park and South Steens Campgrounds, the Wildhorse Road, all overlooks, Wildhorse Lake basin, and all areas above timberline within view of the Steens Loop Road. Camping would be allowed only in developed campgrounds (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness). All snowmobile use in the CMPA would be eliminated. The existing permit system for nonmotorized winter recreation would be continued. Recreational river use would not be allowed. Visitor use at the overlooks would be limited to designated trails and the interpretive signs would be moved to the parking lots. Permits would be required for all CMPA users.

#### *AMU*

Mickey Hot Springs would be closed to camping. Dispersed users would be required to pack out all solid human waste. Routes for mechanized vehicles (i.e., mountain bikes) would not be developed.

### Alternative C

#### *Planning Area*

Visitor use would be managed to protect natural values. Group size would be limited.

#### *CMPA*

The following areas would be closed to camping: all RNAs, the Steens Loop Road above Jackman Park and South Steens Campgrounds, the Wildhorse Road, all overlooks, and Wildhorse Lake basin. Camping would be allowed only in developed campgrounds and designated sites (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness). All snowmobile use associated with the North Steens Loop Road would be eliminated. The existing permit system for nonmotorized winter recreation would be continued. Recreational river use would be allowed only when the lowest gate on the South Steens Loop Road is open and only if it does not affect ORVs. Visitor use at overlooks would be limited to designated trails and the interpretive signs would be moved to the parking lots. Permits would be required for all Steens Loop Road users.

#### *AMU*

All AMU RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs would be closed to camping. Toilets would be installed and maintained at Cottonwood Creek and Frog Spring. Dispersed users would be encouraged to pack out all solid human waste. Routes for mechanized vehicles (i.e., mountain bikes) would not be developed.

### Alternative D

#### *Planning Area*

Visitor use would be managed in a manner that encourages economic growth and cooperative management practices for recreation opportunities that are consistent with other resource objectives. Group size limits would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

#### *CMPA*

Close Little Wildhorse RNA to camping. Allow camping in historically used campsites in the Little Blitzen and Rooster Comb RNAs when consistent with the Wilderness Management Plan and the purposes of the RNAs. Allow camping at Wildhorse Lake only in designated sites, however, overnight use of pack stock use would not be allowed. The Rooster Comb would be closed to parking or stopping, except at designated locations and a small pullout that would be developed at the east end of the Rooster Comb. Snowmobile and other over-the-snow mechanized equipment would be as follows: Public snowmobile use would be allowed on the North Steens Loop Road from the 5,600-foot level to the Kiger Overlook, on the Dingle Creek road, and on the Cold Springs Road to 0.75 mile west of the Nye Place. Snowmobile access to the Wildhorse parking area would be with an authorized SRP holder only. A cooperative agreement would be developed with private landowners for a winter play area. The existing permit system for all winter recreation would be continued. Dispersed camping would be allowed in areas more than one half mile from a developed campground (outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness). Recreational river use would be allowed only when the lowest gate on the South Steens Loop Road is open and only if it does not affect ORVs. Visitors would be encouraged to stay on designated trails at the overlooks and the interpretive signs would be moved to the parking lots. Permits would not be required to visit the CMPA.

#### *AMU*

All AMU RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs would be closed to camping. Toilets would be installed and maintained at Cottonwood Creek, Frog Spring, and other dispersed campsites. Other dispersed users would be encouraged to pack out all solid human waste. Routes for mechanized vehicles (i.e., mountain bikes) would be developed as demand warrants.

### Alternative E

#### *Planning Area*

Visitor use would be managed to maximize recreation opportunities that are consistent with other resource objectives. Group sizes would not be limited for any recreation activity.

#### *CMPA*

Camping would be allowed anywhere, unless otherwise restricted. The Rooster Comb would be closed to parking or stopping, except at designated overlooks and the small pullout that would be developed at the east end of the Rooster Comb. Snowmobile use would be allowed on all designated roads. The existing permit system for winter recreation would be continued. Camping would be allowed anywhere unless otherwise restricted. A river access system similar to the existing winter use permit system would be implemented, with the number of users not limited. Visitor use at the overlooks would not be restricted. The interpretive signs would be moved to the parking lots. Permits would not be required to visit the CMPA.

#### *AMU*

All AMU RNAs and Mickey Hot Springs would be closed to camping. Toilets would be installed and maintained at Cottonwood Creek, Frog Spring, and other dispersed campsites throughout the AMU. Other dispersed users would be encouraged to pack out all solid human waste. Routes for mechanized vehicles (i.e., mountain bikes) would be developed as demand warrants.

**Objective 5.** Provide information and educational opportunities to public land visitors.

### Alternative A

Visitor experiences would be enhanced by continuing to provide information (i.e., maps and brochures) and education opportunities. The current informational and directional sign installation and maintenance program would continue.

Alternative B

Visitor experiences would be enhanced by continuing to provide information (i.e., maps and brochures) and education opportunities. New sign placement would be minimized. Existing signs would be maintained and replaced only as needed for public health and safety.

Alternative C

Visitor experiences would be enhanced by continuing to provide information (i.e., maps and brochures) and education opportunities. New sign placement would be minimized. Existing signs would be maintained and replaced and new signs installed only as needed for public health and safety.

Alternative D

Visitor experiences would be enhanced by continuing to provide information (i.e., maps and brochures) and education opportunities. In the CMPA, existing signs would be maintained and replaced and new signs installed only as needed for public health and safety. In the AMU, signs would be installed, maintained, and replaced as needed.

Alternative E

Extensive information and education opportunities would be provided to increase tourism activities. Signs would be installed, maintained and replaced to maximize public safety and confidence.

**Objective 6.** Manage commercial, competitive, educational, and organized group recreation activities.

Alternative A*CMPA*

SRPs for commercial, competitive, and non-commercial activities would be issued on a case-by-case basis.

*AMU*

SRPs for commercial, competitive, and noncommercial activities would be issued on a case-by-case basis. SRPs for organized group and commercial use of the Alvord Desert playa could be issued if the wilderness values of the Alvord Desert WSA would not be impaired.

Alternative B*CMPA*

Existing, long-term SRPs would be managed and renewed, in conformance with existing laws and regulations. No new long- or short-term SRPs would be issued.

*AMU*

Existing SRPs would be cancelled and new SRPs would not be issued. SRPs would not be issued for the Alvord Desert playa.

Alternative C*CMPA*

SRPs would be issued, as needed, to meet the demand for permits, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. Allocations, such as limits on party size, number of trips and/or number of permittees, would be implemented.

*AMU*

SRPs would be issued, as needed, to meet the demand for permits, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. If needed, allocations, such as limits on party size, number of trips and/or number of permittees, would be implemented. SRPs would not be issued for the Alvord Desert playa.

#### Alternative D

##### *CMPA*

SRPs would be issued, as needed, to meet the demand for permits, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. If needed, allocations, such as limits on party size, number of trips and/or number of permittees, would be implemented.

##### *AMU*

SRPs would be issued, as needed, to meet the demand for permits, while protecting cultural and natural resource values and providing for public safety. If needed, allocations, such as limits on party size, number of trips and/or number of permittees, would be implemented. SRPs for organized group and commercial use of the Alvord Desert playa could be issued if the wilderness values of the Alvord Desert WSA would not be impaired.

#### Alternative E

##### *CMPA*

Commercial, competitive, and organized group opportunities and activities would be emphasized through the issuance of SRPs.

##### *AMU*

Commercial, competitive, and organized group opportunities and activities would be emphasized through the issuance of SRPs. SRPs for organized group, commercial, and competitive use of the Alvord Desert playa could be issued if the wilderness values of the Alvord Desert WSA would not be impaired.

**Objective 7.** Manage BCBs to protect the recognized values.

#### Alternative A

##### *Planning Area*

Existing BCBs would be managed in conformance with existing laws and regulations.

##### *CMPA*

Vehicle pullouts would not be constructed along the Steens Loop Road.

#### Alternative B

##### *Planning Area*

Current BCBs would be eliminated and new BCBs would not be designated. The Steens Mountain BCB designation would be removed because the Loop Road would be closed from the Kiger Overlook turnoff to west of the Blitzen River.

##### *CMPA*

Vehicle pullouts would not be constructed along the Steens Loop Road.

#### Alternative C

##### *Planning Area*

Same as Alternative A.

##### *CMPA*

Same as Alternative A.

#### Alternative D

##### *Planning Area*

Existing BCBs would be managed in conformance with existing laws and regulations. Interpretive management plans for existing BCBs would be developed and implemented. Additional byways or scenic tour routes that support cooperative management would be designated.

*CMPA*

Vehicle pullouts would be constructed along the Steens Loop Road to accommodate and manage visitor use.

Alternative E*Planning Area*

Existing BCBs would be managed in conformance with existing laws and regulations. Interpretive management plans for existing BCBs would be developed and implemented. Additional byways or scenic tour routes that support cooperative management would be designated. New BCBs would be designated to increase tourism potential and accommodate anticipated growth in driving for pleasure.

*CMPA*

Vehicle pullouts would be constructed at regular intervals along the Steens Loop Road.

**Objective 8.** Manage the Oregon High Desert National Recreation Trail to protect the recognized values and setting.

Alternative A

Management would continue under the current MOU with the Desert Trail Association. Trailhead facilities would not be developed for the High Desert Trail.

Alternative B

The Desert Trail Association MOU would be cancelled and the trail corridor would be removed from maps. Trailhead facilities would not be developed for the High Desert Trail.

Alternative C

Management would continue under the current MOU with the Desert Trail Association. Minimal trailhead facilities would be installed at Domingo Pass and Frog Spring.

Alternative D

Management would continue under the current MOU with the Desert Trail Association. Minimal trailhead facilities would be installed at Domingo Pass, Frog Spring, and near Denio. In cooperation with the Fields Store, facilities at Fields would be upgraded.

Alternative E

Management would continue under the current MOU with the Desert Trail Association. Complete trailhead facilities would be installed at Domingo Pass, near Denio, and at Frog Spring. In cooperation with the Fields Store, facilities at Fields would be upgraded.

**2.20.2 Monitoring**

Recreation use would be monitored through observations, road and trail counters, and reports from other resource personnel. SRPs would be monitored for compliance with permit stipulations and resource conditions at sites used. Winter recreation use would be monitored for compliance with winter use guidelines and regulations.

## **2.21 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

### **2.21.1 Goal - Retain existing and designate new ACECs where relevance and importance criteria are met and special management is required to protect the identified values.**

#### **2.21.1.1 Management Framework**

Section 202(c)(3) of the FLPMA mandates that priority be given to the designation and protection of ACECs. These areas are defined in section 103(a) as areas where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important values, resources, systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

Appendix K contains a description of each existing and proposed ACEC including the relevant and important values of each area. The appendix also contains a map of each area showing proposed boundaries by alternative. The ACEC designations and acreages for each Alternative are listed in Table 2.10. Alternatives B and E are shown on Map 2.14; Alternative C is shown on Map 2.15; and Alternative D is shown on Map 2.16.

Specific management actions that differ for alternatives within each existing or proposed ACEC are discussed under the heading for that ACEC. Actions are not separated by management objective as with other sections in this chapter. The common management actions are those that would be conducted in the same manner where they are identified as part of an ACEC alternative. All of the management actions are outlined in Table 2.11, Management Prescriptions for Each ACEC by Alternative. The following are the management actions that would apply to more than one ACEC and to more than one Alternative.

*Summary of ACEC Designation:* Under Alternative A, no new ACECs would be designated and those existing, totaling 132,162 acres, would be retained. Under Alternatives B and E, all existing ACEC designations would be revoked and one new ACEC, Mickey Hot Springs, would be designated for a total of 42 acres. Management under Alternative B for the areas where ACEC designations were revoked would be the same as applied across the Planning Area. Under Alternative C, all existing ACECs would be retained and seven proposed ACECs would be designated for a total of 143,426 acres. Under Alternative D, 12 of the existing ACECs would be retained, while the designation of three of the existing ACECs (Alvord Peak, Pickett Rim and Steens Mountain) would be revoked. Five new ACECs would be designated for a total of 66,870 acres. The various ACEC designations and acreages for each of the Alternatives are listed in Table 2.10.

*Research Natural Areas:* RNAs are managed to preserve natural features and ecosystems in as natural a condition as possible, for research and educational purposes that relate to the ACEC values. The ACEC management plan provides the guidance under which the BLM manages the RNAs.

*Special Status Plant and Animal Species:* Disturbances to all special status plant and animal populations would be avoided in all ACECs where they occur. General inventories, monitoring, and research would continue for special status plants. Conservation agreements would be written for all BLM sensitive plant species.

*Fire Management in ACEC:* Under Alternatives A, C, D, and E in all ACECs and RNAs, wildland fires would be managed according to appropriate management response; however, some ACECs would be analyzed for possible wildland fire use. Use of heavy equipment in ACECs, WSAs, and RNAs would be avoided and would require line officer approval. Use of retardant would be allowed within these areas for initial attack. Retardant use during an extended attack would be considered as a part of the wildland fire situation analysis, considering the resource values at risk. If used, heavy equipment would be restricted to existing roads and trails. Prescribed fires would be used in ACECs where they would preserve the desired characteristics of the ACEC and meet management objectives.

*Weed management in ACEC:* Noxious weeds would be aggressively controlled using integrated weed management methods such as biological control, site-specific spraying, and grubbing by hand that are consistent with protection and enhancement of relevant and important values. Any weed control measures proposed in WSAs within ACECs would be consistent with WSA IMP direction. Weed control measures proposed within wilderness or WSRs would be consistent with legislation covering those areas.

*WSA management in ACECs:* All management actions for those portions of the ACEC within a WSA would be governed by the WSA IMP until such time as Congress makes a determination regarding wilderness designation for that WSA. Any WSAs, or portions thereof, designated as an ACEC and later released from WSA status would be managed according to the applicable management direction for that ACEC. Under some alternatives, the proposed ACEC management within WSAs may be more restrictive than the WSA IMP, such as closing an area to livestock grazing or

limiting vehicle use to designated roads and trails rather than existing roads and trails. Nine proposed or existing ACECs overlap with existing WSAs.

*Wilderness and WSRs in ACECs:* All management actions for ACECs located within wilderness or WSRs would be governed by the Wilderness Act or the WSR Act as amended.

*Nondestructive research:* Nondestructive research is encouraged in all of the proposed and existing ACECs and is not limited only to those areas that have RNAs. Any research would need to be authorized by the BLM in writing and where necessary, subject to the permit process. It is assumed that the resultant data and information gathered would be shared with the BLM to help guide management of these areas.

*Recreation:* Recreational activities are not encouraged within ACECs unless the ACEC was designated with recreational use in mind. Commercial use, or use requiring a special permit, that occurs or is proposed within an ACEC would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and would be permitted, modified, or prohibited as needed to protect the ACEC values. Camping would be prohibited in RNA/ACECs, except at specified RNAs under specific alternatives, and camping would be allowed in ACECs.

*Minerals (Leasable, Locatable, Saleable):* According to 43 CFR 3809.11, an approved plan of operations is required prior to commencing any operation, other than casual use, involving locatable minerals in a designated ACEC, regardless of the size of the disturbed area.

#### 2.21.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Retain and manage existing ACECs if they meet relevance and importance criteria and require special management or protection.

#### **Alvord Desert ACEC**

##### Alternative A

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 17,933 acres. Since the ACEC is entirely within the Alvord Desert WSA, the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I. The roads that run through the ACEC are maintained regularly due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use is limited to the existing roads and trails. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The ACEC is located within the Alvord Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from December to April. Since the ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

##### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

##### Alternative C

The ACEC would be retained and an additional 3,682 acres added, making the total designation 21,615 acres. The road through the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property.

The area within the ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

**Table 2.10: Areas Of Critical Environmental Concern Acres by Alternative**

	Located in Withdrawal Area	Located in CMPA	Located in AMU	Alternative A Acres	Alternative B Acres	Alternative C Acres	Alternative D Acres	Alternative E Acres
<b>EXISTING ACEC</b>								
Alvord Desert ACEC	Yes	No	Yes	17,933	0	21,615	21,615	0
Alvord Peak ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	14,040	0	14,040	0	0
Borax Lake ACEC	Yes	No	Yes	520	0	600	600	0
East Kiger Plateau RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	1,216	0	1,216	1,216	0
Kiger Mustang ACEC	Yes <sup>2</sup>	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No	31,725	0	31,725	31,725	0
Little Wildhorse Lake RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	241	0	241	241	0
Little Blitzen RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	2,530	0	2,255	2,255	0
Long Draw RNA/ACEC	No	No	Yes	441	0	441	441	0
Mickey Basin RNA/ACEC	Yes	No	Yes	560	0	560	560	0
Pickett Rim ACEC	No	No	Yes	3,941	0	3,941	0	0
Pueblo Foothills RNA/ACEC	No	No	Yes	2,503	0	2,424	2,424	0
Rooster Comb RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	716	0	683	683	0
South Fork Willow Creek RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	231	0	186	186	0
Steens Mountain ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	57,501	0	57,501	0	0
Tum Tum Lake RNA/ACEC	No	No	Yes	2,064	0	1,689	1,689	0
<b>TOTAL EXISTING ACEC ACRES<sup>1</sup></b>				<b>136,162</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>139,117</b>	<b>63,635</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PROPOSED ACEC</b>								
Big Alvord Creek RNA/ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	1,676	1,676	0
Catlow Redband Trout ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	6,800	0	0
East Fork Trout Creek RNA/ACEC	No	No	Yes	0	0	361	361	0
Fir Groves ACEC	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	477	477	0
Mickey Hot Springs ACEC	Yes	No	Yes	0	42	42	42	42
Serrano Point RNA/ACEC	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	679	679	0
<b>TOTAL EXISTING &amp; PROPOSED<sup>1</sup></b>				<b>136,162</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>149,152</b>	<b>66,870</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>ACEC OVERLAP ACRES<sup>3</sup></b>				<b>4,050</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,726</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL ACEC ACRES</b>				<b>132,112</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>143,426</b>	<b>66,870</b>	<b>42</b>

<sup>1</sup>The total ACEC acres include areas of overlap with each ACEC total accounted for.

<sup>2</sup>Part of the Kiger Mustang ACEC is in the Withdrawal Area and the CMPA (31,859 acres), and the rest is in the Three Rivers RA.

<sup>3</sup>To eliminate double counting acres, the ACEC overlap areas are accounted for and deducted.

**Table 2.11: Management Prescriptions for Each ACEC by Alternative**

ACEC/RNA	Alternative	Acres	ROWs	OHV	VRM	Grazing	Wood/ Plant Collect	Roads	Minerals		
									Leasable	Locatable	Saleable
Alvord Desert	A	17,933	AV	Le	I	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	21,615	E	Ld	I	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	21,615	AV	Ld	I	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Alvord Peak	A	14,040	E	C	I	O	L	NA	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	14,040	E	C	I	O	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	-									
	E	-									
Borax Lake	A	520	O	Le	III	O/C	O	L	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	600	E	C	II	O/C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	600	AV	C	II	O/C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E										
Pickett Rim	A	3,941	O	Le	II	O	O	L	O	O	O
	B	-									
	C	3,941	E	Ld	II	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	-									
	E	-									
Steens Mountain	A	57,501	E/AV/O	C/Le	I/II	O/C	L	L	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	57,501	E	C/Ld	I	O/C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	-									
	E	-									
Kiger Mustang	A	31,725	AV/E	O/Le	I/IV	O	O	L	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	31,725	E	Ld	I/II	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	31,725	AV	Ld	I/IV	O	O	L	NL	W	C
	E	-									
East Kiger Plateau RNA	A	1,216	AV/E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C

ACEC/RNA	Alternative	Acres	ROWs	OHV	VRM	Grazing	Wood/ Plant Collect	Roads	Minerals		
									Leasable	Locatable	Saleable
	B	-									
	C	1,216	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	1,216	AV/E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Little Blitzen RNA	A	2,530	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	2,255	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	2,255	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Little Wildhorse Lake	A	241	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	241	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	241	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Long Draw RNA	A	441	AV	Le	I	O	L	L	NL	O	C
	B	-									
	C	441	E	Ld	I	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	441	AV	Ld	I	O	L	L	NSO	O	C
	E	-									
Mickey Basin RNA	A	560	AV	Le	I	O/C	L	L	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	560	E	Ld	I	O/C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	560	AV	Ld	I	O/C	L	L	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Pueblo Foothills RNA	A	2,503	AV	Le	I	O	L	L	NL	O	C
	B	-									
	C	2,424	E	Ld	I	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	2,424	AV	Ld	I	O	L	L	NSO	O	C
	E	-									
Rooster Comb RNA	A	716	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	683	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	683	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C

ACEC/RNA	Alternative	Acres	ROWs	OHV	VRM	Grazing	Wood/ Plant Collect	Roads	Minerals		
									Leasable	Locatable	Saleable
	E	-									
South Fork Willow Cr RNA	A	231	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	B	-									
	C	186	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	186	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Tum Tum Lake RNA	A	2,064	O	Le	III	O	L	L	O	O	O
	B	-									
	C	1,689	E	Ld	II	C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	1,689	AV	Ld	II	C	L	L	O	O	C
	E	-									
East Fork Trout Cr RNA	A	-									
	B	-									
	C	361	E	Ld	I	C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	361	AV	Ld	I	O	L	L	NSO	O	C
	E	-									
Mickey Hot Springs	A	-									
	B	42	E	C	I/II	C	O	NA	NL	W	C
	C	42	E	C	I/II	C	O	NA	NL	W	C
	D	42	AV	C	I/II	C	O	NA	NL	W	C
	E	42	AV	C	I/II	C	O	NA	NL	W	C
Serrano Point RNA	A	-									
	B	-									
	C	679	E	Ld	II	C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	679	AV	Ld	II	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Big Alvord Cr RNA	A	-									
	B	-									
	C	1,676	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	1,676	E	C	I	C	L	NA	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Fir Groves	A	-									

ACEC/RNA	Alternative	Acres	ROWs	OHV	VRM	Grazing	Wood/ Plant Collect	Roads	Minerals		
									Leasable	Locatable	Saleable
	B	-									
	C	477	E	Ld	II	C	L	L	NL	W	C
	D	477	AV	Ld	II	O	L	L	NL	W	C
	E	-									
Catlow Redband Trout	A	-									
	B	-									
	C	6,800	E	C/Ld	I	O	L	NA	NL	W	C
	D	-									
	E	-									

AV-Avoidance area form ROWs

C -Closed to mineral material removal, OHV use, and grazing

E - Exclusion area for ROWs

Le - Limited to OHV use on existing roads and trails

Ld - Limited to OHV use on designated routes

L - Limited; with limitations applicable to plant collection and road maintenance

NL - No Lease; Not available for mineral leasing

NA - Not applicable; no roads occur here so road maintenance does not apply

NSO - No surface occupancy; open to mineral leasing subject to stipulations

O - Open; the activity is allowed in the area

W - Withdrawn from mineral exploration and development

Alt A - Present Management; No Action

Alt B - Exclude commodity production

Alt C - Emphasize natural values

Alt D - Balances commodity and natural values

Alt E - Emphasize commodity production

Alternative D

The existing ACEC would be retained and an additional 3,682 acres added, making the total designation 21,615 acres. The road through the ACEC would be maintained as needed. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. The ACEC would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

**Alvord Peak ACEC**Alternatives A and C

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size of the ACEC would remain at 14,040 acres. Since the ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, the area would be managed as VRM Class I.

The roads through the ACEC have been closed to OHV use due to wilderness designation. Road maintenance is not an issue. The Alvord Peak ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs and other realty use authorizations unless access is needed to nonpublic property.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The ACEC is located within the Alvord Peak Grazing Allotment and would be open to grazing from April to November. Grazing would be under the control of existing permit stipulations and the approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection or removal of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize natural processes. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

Alternative D

The ACEC designation would be revoked. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### **Borax Lake ACEC**

#### **Alternative A**

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 520 acres. The visual resources would continue to be managed as VRM Class III within the ACEC. OHV use in the ACEC would be limited to the existing roads and trails. The roads within the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access. The area would continue to be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Most of the ACEC is fenced, and that portion of the ACEC inside the fence is closed to livestock grazing. A total of 120 acres of the ACEC is outside the fence in the Tule Springs Grazing Allotment. This area is grazed in the winter by cattle and wild horses, but grazing animals rarely reach that part of the allotment containing the ACEC. The ACEC is open to collection of plant materials.

#### **Alternative B**

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. Management of the Borax Lake area would be the same as prescribed for the adjacent area.

#### **Alternative C**

The existing ACEC designation would be retained and 80 acres added, making the total designation 600 acres. The roads through the ACEC would be closed to OHV use and not maintained. No new ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be allowed. The ACEC would be managed as VRM Class II.

The ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area within the fenced enclosure would be closed to livestock grazing. Livestock grazing and wild horse use would continue on 120 acres of the ACEC outside the fenced enclosure. Livestock use would be managed under the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The use of plant materials would be limited to collection by permit only.

#### **Alternative D**

The existing ACEC designation would be retained and 80 acres added, making the total designation 600 acres. The roads through the ACEC would be closed and not maintained. The entire area would be closed to OHV use. ROWs and other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Actions would be pursued to acquire private inholdings from willing private landowners. The ACEC would be managed as VRM Class II.

The ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area within the fenced enclosure would be closed to livestock grazing. Livestock grazing and wild horse use would continue on 120 acres outside the fenced enclosure. Livestock use would be managed under the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The use of plant materials would be limited to collection by permit only.

#### **Alternative E**

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. Management of the Borax Lake area would be the same as prescribed for the adjacent area.

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### **East Kiger Plateau RNA/ACEC**

#### **Alternatives A and D**

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 1,216 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness and High Steens WSA, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in or around this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROW or realty use authorizations in the Wilderness Area. In the WSA, new ROW or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal.

The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### **Alternative B**

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act and the WSA IMP.

#### **Alternative C**

The RNA/ACEC would be the same as Alternative A except the entire area would be an exclusion area for ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

#### **Alternative E**

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act and the WSA IMP.

### **Kiger Mustang ACEC**

#### **Alternative A**

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 31,725 acres. That part of the ACEC located within the Stonehouse WSA is managed as VRM Class I. The portion of the ACEC outside of the WSA is managed as VRM Class IV.

The roads that run through the ACEC are maintained regularly due to important access considerations. Road maintenance is limited to the existing roadway. OHV use is open outside the WSA and limited to the existing roads and trails inside the WSA. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided on non-WSA parcels unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be excluded from the portions of the ACEC located within the WSA unless access is needed to nonpublic property.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal.

The Kiger Mustang ACEC is located within portions of the Burnt Flat, Smyth/Kiger, and Riddle Mountain Grazing Allotments and is open to livestock grazing from April until October. The area is open to the collection of plant materials.

### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. That portion of the ACEC located within the WSA would continue to be managed under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area. The rest of the area would be managed as prescribed for similar adjacent areas.

### Alternative C

The ACEC would be retained at 31,725 acres. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in the WSA and VRM Class II outside the WSA. The roads through the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property.

The area within the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be limited to permit only.

### Alternative D

The existing ACEC would be retained at 31,725 acres. Roads through the ACEC would be maintained as needed using only the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources in the ACEC would be managed as VRM Class I in the WSA, and VRM Class IV outside the WSA.

The area within the ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. That portion of the ACEC located within the WSA would continue to be managed under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area. The rest of the area would be managed as prescribed for similar adjacent areas.

## **Little Blitzen RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 2,530 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Little Blitzen RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative B

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### Alternatives C

The RNA/ACEC would be the same as Alternative A except that 275 acres would be dropped on the east and south sides of the Steens Loop Road. The size of the RNA/ACEC would become 2,255 acres.

### Alternatives D

The RNA/ACEC would be the same as Alternative A except that 275 acres would be dropped on the east and south sides of the Steens Loop Road. The size of the RNA/ACEC would become 2,255 acres. Overnight camping would be allowed in historically used areas that are consistent with the purpose of the RNA and the Wilderness Plan objectives.

### Alternative E

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

## **Little Wildhorse Lake RNA/ACEC**

### Alternatives A, C, and D

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 241 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Little Wildhorse Lake RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative B

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### Alternative E

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

## **Long Draw RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 441 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Hawk Mountain and Rincon WSAs, the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The road that runs through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained regularly due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

The Long Draw RNA/ACEC would be open to locatable mineral entry but closed to mineral leasing and saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from December to April. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative B

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

#### Alternative C

The RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 441 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative D

The RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 441 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. In the RNA/ACEC, new ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be managed as NSO for leasable minerals and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be open to locatable mineral entry. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative E

The RNA/ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP for wilderness until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

### **Mickey Basin RNA/ACEC**

#### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 560 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the East Alvord WSA, the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The road that runs through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained regularly due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Mickey Basin RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal.

A fenced enclosure protects most of the relevant and important values from grazing by wild horses and livestock. The enclosure, however, does not encompass the entire RNA/ACEC. That portion of the RNA/ACEC outside the enclosure is within the Alvord Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from December to April. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

#### Alternative C

The RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 560 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would be closed within the fenced enclosure. Grazing would continue outside the enclosure fence under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative D

The RNA/ACEC would be the same as Alternative C except that new ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

#### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

### **Pickett Rim ACEC**

#### Alternative A

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 3,941 acres. The area would continue to be managed as VRM Class II. The roads within the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access. OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. The area would continue to be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

The area within the Pickett Rim ACEC is open to leasable and locatable mineral entry and saleable mineral removal. The ACEC is located within the LaVoy Tables Grazing Allotment and would be open to grazing from April until November.

Grazing would be under the control of existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The ACEC is open for collection or removal of plant materials.

#### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. Management of the Pickett Rim area would be the same as prescribed for the adjacent area.

#### Alternative C

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size of the ACEC would be 3,941 acres and it would be managed as VRM Class II. The roads in the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access and OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The area would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property.

The area within the ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative D

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Management of the Pickett Rim area would be the same as prescribed for the adjacent area.

#### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. Management of the Pickett Rim area would be the same as prescribed for the adjacent area.

### **Pueblo Foothills RNA/ACEC**

#### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 2,503 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Pueblo Mountain WSA, the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The road that runs through a small corner of the RNA/ACEC would be maintained regularly due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

The Pueblo Foothills RNA/ACEC would be open to locatable mineral entry but closed to mineral leasing and saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from April until July. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to

be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

### Alternative C

The existing RNA/ACEC designation would be retained except for 79 acres that would be deleted from the southeast corner. The area to be deleted is in early seral ecological status and does not contain the relevant and important values. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be changed to 2,424 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative D

The existing RNA/ACEC designation would be retained except for 79 acres that would be deleted from the southeast corner. The area to be deleted is in early seral ecological status and does not contain the relevant and important values. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be changed to 2,424 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. In the RNA/ACEC, new ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be managed as NSO for leasable minerals and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be open to locatable mineral entry. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

## **Rooster Comb RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 716 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Rooster Comb RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### Alternative C

The existing RNA/ACEC designation would be retained. Thirty-three acres would be dropped on the south side of the Steens Loop Road. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be 683 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I. Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Rooster Comb RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative D

The existing RNA/ACEC designation would be retained. Thirty-three acres would be dropped on the south side of the Steens Loop Road. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be 683 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I. Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Rooster Comb RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only. Overnight camping would be allowed in historically used areas that are consistent with the purpose of the RNA and the Wilderness Plan objectives.

### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

## **South Fork Willow Creek RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 231 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the South Fork Willow Creek RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### Alternatives C and D

The existing RNA/ACEC designation would be retained; however, 45 acres would be dropped where the East Rim Viewpoint is located. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be 186 acres. Since the RNA/ACEC is entirely within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

Since no roads are located in this RNA/ACEC, road maintenance is not an issue. The area would be closed to OHV use. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the South Fork Willow Creek RNA/ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The RNA/ACEC is located within the No Livestock Grazing Area on Steens Mountain and is closed to grazing. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

## **Steens Mountain ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 57,501 acres. The ACEC is contained within a large part of the Steens Mountain Wilderness as well as some areas of WSA and non-WSA. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in the Wilderness Area and WSAs and as VRM Class II in the rest of the ACEC.

The trails and roads through the ACEC have been closed to OHV use in the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Outside the wilderness, OHV use is limited to existing roads and trails. Road maintenance is not an issue in the Steens Mountain Wilderness, but is limited to the existing roadbed in the other areas. New ROWs and other realty use authorizations would be excluded in the Steens Mountain Wilderness except for access needs to nonpublic property. In the WSAs, realty actions would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Realty actions would be allowed in the remainder of the ACEC.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Steens Mountain ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Some of the ACEC is located within portions of the Alvord, Mann Lake, East Ridge, Chimney and Serrano Point Grazing Allotments and is open to grazing in those areas from April until November. Most of the ACEC is located within a large area legislated as a No Livestock Grazing Area. Livestock grazing is prohibited in that area. The collection or removal of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternatives B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed as wilderness, WSA, or as prescribed for the particular areas.

### Alternative C

The existing ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 57,501 acres. The ACEC is contained within a large part of the Steens Mountain Wilderness as well as some areas of WSA and non-WSA. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in the entire ACEC.

The trails and roads through the ACEC have been closed to OHV use in the Steens Mountain Wilderness. Outside the wilderness, OHV use is limited to designated roads and trails. Road maintenance is not an issue in the Steens Mountain Wilderness, but is limited to the existing roadbed in the other areas. New ROWs and other realty use authorizations would be excluded from the entire ACEC except for access needs to nonpublic property.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the Steens Mountain ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue in the areas open to grazing under management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing would be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and would be permitted if the values would be maintained or enhanced. Proposed range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. Most of the ACEC is located within a large area legislated as the No Livestock Grazing area. Livestock grazing is prohibited in that area. The collection or removal of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative D

The ACEC designation would be revoked. The area would continue to be managed as wilderness, WSA, or as prescribed for the particular areas.

### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed as wilderness, WSA, or as prescribed for the particular areas.

## **Tum Tum Lake RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

The existing RNA/ACEC designation and boundaries would be retained. The size would remain at 2,064 acres. The RNA/ACEC is not located within any WSA; therefore, visual resources would be managed as VRM Class III as determined in the original inventory.

The roads through the RNA/ACEC are not important for access to other areas. If maintenance is needed, any disturbance would be limited to the existing roadbed. OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails. The area would be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations

The Tum Tum Lake RNA/ACEC would be open to locatable and leasable mineral entry and open to saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the Pueblo-Lone Mountain Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from April through July. Since the RNA/ACEC was originally designated for protection of unique plant communities, collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative B

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would be managed as prescribed for the adjacent area.

### Alternative C

The RNA/ACEC designation would be retained and 375 acres dropped due to unmanageability and surface disturbance. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be 1,689 acres. The roads in the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed for

access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing. Collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative D

The RNA/ACEC designation would be retained and 375 acres dropped due to unmanageability and surface disturbance. The size of the RNA/ACEC would be 1,689 acres. The roads through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be open to leasable and locatable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing. Collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative E

The ACEC designation would be revoked. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would be managed as prescribed for the adjacent area.

**Objective 2.** Designate and manage new ACECs that meet relevance and importance criteria and need special management or protection.

### **Proposed Big Alvord Creek RNA/ACEC**

#### Alternative A

Since no RNA/ACEC would be designated, existing prescriptions would apply. The site is in the Steens Mountain Wilderness, so the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I. There are no roads in this RNA/ACEC, and the entire area would be closed to OHV use. The area would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

The area is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the legislated Steens Mountain No Livestock Grazing Area and therefore closed to grazing. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

#### Alternative B

No RNA/ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed as wilderness under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

#### Alternatives C and D

The proposed RNA/ACEC would be designated as the Big Alvord Creek RNA/ACEC covering 1,676 acres. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would be an exclusion area for ROWs or other realty use authorizations. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing and the collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative E

No RNA/ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed as wilderness under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

### **Proposed Catlow Redband Trout ACEC**

#### Alternative A

Since no ACEC would be designated, existing prescriptions would apply. The site would be managed as VRM Class I. The roads in the area would be maintained as needed for access. The area would be closed to OHV use in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and limited to existing roads and trails in other areas. The area would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations within the Steens Mountain Wilderness unless access is needed to nonpublic property. Outside the Steens Mountain Wilderness, the area would be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

The area is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the South Steens and Roaring Springs Fenced Federal Range Grazing Allotments and is grazed from April through November. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

#### Alternative B

No ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. Most of the area would continue to be managed as under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. A small part of the area is outside the wilderness and would be managed the same as prescribed for other adjacent areas.

#### Alternative C

The proposed ACEC would be designated as the Catlow Redband Trout ACEC covering 6,800 acres. Roads that are present in the ACEC would be maintained as needed for access. OHV use in the ACEC would be limited to designated routes. ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be excluded unless access is needed to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and VRM Class II in the rest of the ACEC.

The area within the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### Alternative D

No ACEC would be designated. Most of the area would continue to be managed as under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. A small part of the area is outside the wilderness and would be managed the same as prescribed for other adjacent areas.

#### Alternative E

No ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. Most of the area would continue to be managed as under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. A small part of the area is outside the wilderness and would be managed the same as prescribed for other adjacent areas.

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### **Proposed East Fork Trout Creek RNA/ACEC**

#### **Alternative A**

Since no RNA/ACEC would be designated, existing prescriptions would apply. The site is in the Mahogany Ridge WSA, so the visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I. The dead end road that runs into the area would be maintained due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails. The area would be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

The area would be open to locatable and leasable mineral entry and saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the Trout Creek Mountain Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing for five days in September. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

#### **Alternative B**

No RNA/ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

#### **Alternative C**

The proposed RNA/ACEC would be designated as the East Fork Trout Creek RNA/ACEC covering 361 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing. Collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### **Alternative D**

The proposed RNA/ACEC would be designated as the East Fork Trout Creek RNA/ACEC covering 361 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be managed as NSO for leasable minerals and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be open to locatable mineral entry. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

#### **Alternative E**

No RNA/ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would be managed as a WSA under the WSA IMP until Congress makes a decision regarding wilderness designation for the area.

### **Proposed Fir Groves ACEC**

#### **Alternative A**

Since no ACEC would be designated, existing prescriptions would apply. The site would be managed as VRM Class I. The roads in the area would be maintained in the existing roadway as needed for access. The area is closed to OHV use. The area would be open for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations within the provisions of the Steens Act.

The area is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the Bridge Creek Grazing Allotment and is grazed periodically during the spring and summer. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

#### Alternative B

No ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would continue to be managed the same as prescribed for adjacent areas.

#### Alternative C

The proposed ACEC would be designated as the Fir Groves ACEC covering 477 acres. OHV use in the ACEC would be limited to designated routes. ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be excluded unless access is needed to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing. Collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

The dense stand of trees along Little Fir Creek would be mechanically thinned to protect the site from catastrophic fire incidents and to allow for development of understory vegetation.

#### Alternative D

The proposed ACEC would be designated as the Fir Groves ACEC covering 477 acres. OHV use in the ACEC would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

The dense stand of trees along Little Fir Creek would be mechanically thinned to protect the site from catastrophic fire incidents and to allow for development of understory vegetation.

#### Alternative E

No ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, eliminating the designation would provide for the opportunity to maximize commodity production. The area would continue to be managed the same as prescribed for adjacent areas.

### **Proposed Mickey Hot Springs RNA/ACEC**

#### Alternative A

Since no ACEC would be designated, existing prescriptions would apply. A portion of the site is in the East Alvord WSA, so visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in that area. The non-WSA portion of the proposal would be managed as VRM Class II. OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. The area would be open to new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the Alvord Grazing Allotment but is fenced to keep livestock out of the hot springs. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

### Alternatives B and C

The proposed Mickey Hot Springs ACEC would be designated. The size of the ACEC would be 42 acres, or all of the land within the fenced enclosure. The road and parking area within the ACEC would be closed. The area would also be closed to OHV use. The ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class I in the WSA and VRM Class II outside the WSA.

Due to the implementation of the Steens Act, the ACEC is withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The fenced ACEC would be closed to livestock grazing and open to collection of plant materials.

### Alternatives D and E

The ACEC would be the same as Alternatives B and C except that new ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated.

## **Proposed Serrano Point RNA/ACEC**

### Alternative A

Since no RNA/ACEC would be designated, the existing prescriptions would apply. The site would be managed as VRM Class II. The road that runs through the area would be maintained due to important access considerations. Road maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway. The area would be open to OHV use and new ROWs or other realty use authorizations.

The area would be open to locatable and leasable mineral entry and saleable mineral removal. The area is located within the Tule Springs Grazing Allotment and is open to grazing from December until March. The area would be open to collection of plant materials.

### Alternative B

No RNA/ACEC would be designated. Under this alternative, the entire Planning Area would be managed to maximize natural processes; therefore, the additional designation would not be necessary. The area would be managed the same as prescribed for adjacent areas.

### Alternative C

The proposed RNA/ACEC would be designated as the Serrano Point RNA/ACEC covering 679 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. The RNA/ACEC would be an exclusion area for new ROWs or other realty use authorizations except for access needs to nonpublic property. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. The area would be closed to livestock grazing. Collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### Alternative D

The proposed RNA/ACEC would be designated as the Serrano Point RNA/ACEC covering 679 acres. The road through the RNA/ACEC would be maintained as needed in the existing roadway for access considerations. OHV use would be limited to designated routes. New ROWs or other realty use authorizations would be avoided unless the activity is compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated. Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II.

The area within the RNA/ACEC would be withdrawn from locatable and leasable mineral entry and closed to saleable mineral removal. Livestock grazing would continue under the management of the existing permit stipulations and approved grazing systems. Any proposed changes in grazing use or new range improvement projects would be evaluated for impacts, and permitted if relevant and important values would be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts

are identified, livestock use or range improvement projects would be adjusted. The collection of plant materials would be allowed by permit only.

### **2.21.2 Monitoring**

ACECs would be assessed on a periodic schedule in order to evaluate maintenance and enhancement of relevant and important values and to evaluate effectiveness of management in maintaining those values. Monitoring may include collection of both qualitative and quantitative data.

## **2.22 Wilderness**

### **2.22.1 Management Framework**

The Steens Act established the Steens Mountain Wilderness consisting of 170,084 acres of public land (Maps 2.17 and 2.19). Within the Steens Mountain Wilderness is a No Livestock Grazing Area consisting of 97,229 acres of public land, creating the first cattle-free wilderness of its kind. Wilderness within the Planning Area is managed according to the provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964, as amended; the FLPMA; BLM Manuals 8560/H-8560-1 (Management of Designated Wilderness Areas), and 8561 (Wilderness Management Plans); the BLM's Wilderness Management Regulations (43 CFR 6300); and the specific directives contained within the Steens Act. The specific provisions are specified in Section 202 of the Act and include the following:

(a) GENERAL RULE. - The Secretary shall administer the Steens Mountain Wilderness in accordance with this title and the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.). Any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of that Act (or any similar reference) shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) WILDERNESS BOUNDARIES ALONG ROADS. – Where a wilderness boundary exists along a road, the wilderness boundary shall be set back from the centerline of the road, consistent with the BLM's guidelines as established in its Wilderness Management Policy.

(c) ACCESS TO NON-FEDERAL LANDS. – The Secretary shall provide reasonable access to private lands within the boundaries of the Wilderness Area, as provided in section 112(d).

Section 112(e)(1) of the Steens Act states, “The Secretary shall provide reasonable access to non-federally owned lands or interests in land within the boundaries of the Cooperative Management and Protection Area and the Wilderness Area to provide the owner of the land or interest the reasonable use thereof.”

The road setbacks for wilderness boundaries are described in Section 3.18 of this document.

Except for the designated No Livestock Grazing Area (97,229 acres of public land), grazing of livestock will continue and be administered in accordance with the provision of section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act, in accordance with the provisions of the Steens Act, and in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Appendix A of House Report 101-405 of the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress.

The Wilderness Act (Section 4(d)(6)) states, “Commercial services may be performed within the wilderness areas designated by this Act to the extent necessary for activities that are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.”

Section 115(b) of the Steens Act states, “The Secretary may renew a special recreation use permit applicable to lands included in the Wilderness Area to the extent that the Secretary determines that the permit is consistent with the Wilderness Act (16 USC 1131 et seq.). If renewal is not consistent with the Wilderness Act, the Secretary shall seek other opportunities for the permit holder through modification of the permit to realize historic permit use to the extent that the use is consistent with the Wilderness Act and this Act, as determined by the Secretary.”

Except as specifically stated in the Wilderness Act, the following activities are prohibited in wilderness (CFR 6302.20):

- Operate a commercial enterprise;
- Build temporary or permanent roads;
- Build aircraft landing strips, heliports, or helispots;
- Use motorized equipment or motor vehicles, motorboats, or other forms of mechanical transport;
- Land aircraft, or drop or pick up any material, supplies or person by means of aircraft, including a helicopter, hang-glider, hot air balloon, parasail, or parachute;
- Build, install, or erect structures or installations, including transmission lines, motels, vacation homes, sheds, stores, resorts, organization camps, hunting and fishing lodges, electronic installations, and similar structures, other than tents, tarpaulins, temporary corrals, and similar devices for overnight camping;
- Cut trees;
- Enter or use wilderness areas without authorization, where the BLM requires authorization;
- Engage or participate in competitive use, including those activities involving physical endurance of a person or animal, foot races, watercraft races, survival exercises, war games, or other similar exercises; or
- Violate any BLM regulation, authorization, or order.

### 2.22.2 Wilderness Management

Wilderness can mean many different things to a variety of people. There are two main concepts: one is the sociological idea that wilderness is a place where one can experience a recreational or social activity in a natural environment free from development. For a person from an urban environment with little experience in the natural environment, wilderness could be virtually any forested area that is relatively undeveloped. Secondly, legal wilderness is defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964; “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain”.

As part of the management of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, the BLM will implement the provision of the Leave No Trace principles. There are seven principles: Plan Ahead and Prepare; Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces; Dispose of Waste Properly; Leave What You Find; Minimize Campfire Impacts; Respect Wildlife; and Be Considerate to Other Visitors. The management of the wilderness will also integrate the appropriate provisions of the BLM’s Fire Management Plan.

The management of the Steens Mountain Wilderness would consider the level of use, or carrying capacity of the area under management. However, this would be done through the use of indicators to assess the health or condition of the wilderness, rather than the establishment of a specific levels of use. As outlined below, certain indicators would be monitored on a regular basis and the results of the monitoring would be used to adjust the type or level of management.

Two Monitoring Areas are defined in the Wilderness Area: the Gorges Area, and the Uplands Area. The boundaries of these two Monitoring Areas are generally defined by the patterns and types of historic use and the physiography of the wilderness area. Within the Gorges Management Area are five separate canyons: Little Blitzen, Big Indian, Little Indian, Wildhorse, and Kiger.

#### 2.22.2.1 Gorges Monitoring Area

This portion of the Wilderness Area is adjacent to primary access points and/or popular destination points. Overnight and day use are the primary types of usage. Encounters with other users will be moderate to frequent, due to spacial and temporal consideration of recreational use. Areas are monitored to protect natural conditions while providing for use and enjoyment of the recreational and natural features.

##### 2.22.2.1.1 Desired Conditions - Natural Environment

Natural succession occurs on all existing vegetative communities, and is influenced by natural processes and disturbance. The structure, composition and function, and spacial distribution of vegetation types are influenced and sustained by natural processes. Human influence on vegetation is minimal. Plant species are predominately native and indigenous to the immediate area. There are no increases in non-indigenous-species composition from the present baseline. Fire is reestablished as a natural ecological force. Fire management activities will be designed to retain the natural

characteristics of the ecosystem. Evidence of the effects of fire, insects, or disease may be present. Appropriate air quality standards are met; however, periodic smoke could occur from natural fire. Visibility is generally unimpaired.

Human influence on the composition, structure and function of aquatic ecosystems is minimal in most areas. Fish and wildlife management activities will emphasize the protection of natural processes and be implemented only to the minimum extent necessary to manage the area as wilderness. Fish stocking will not occur. A range of habitats is sustained for all naturally occurring species. Sensitive species do not move toward T&E listing. No additional non-indigenous wildlife species have been introduced. Human influence on physical features such as soils and geologic materials are minimal.

#### 2.22.2.1.2 Desired Conditions - Human Environment

The opportunity exists for a moderate level of risk and challenge. Contact with other users, livestock, or agency personnel is frequent. Encounters with large and small groups are more likely. Day-use opportunities are more common within this Monitoring Area. Campsites are dispersed and may be visible or audible from adjacent sites. Signage to indicate trail routes is not currently planned, but may occur in the future at trail intersections and other areas as needed. Boundary signs, trailhead signs, and other information are appropriate to educate and inform wilderness users. Signs are on unstained wood with routed letters and mounted on unstained posts.

Base camps are infrequent, especially in day-use areas. Permits for day-use activities are not currently planned. Effects from camping activity meet Natural Environment desired condition (see above). Permitted outfitters provide services to visitors for activities that meet identified public needs and cannot be provided in non-wilderness settings. Grazing actions meet requirements of current Allotment Management Plans. Structures and facilities may be allowed for resource protection and administration of the area. Evidence of historic and cultural sites may exist, but is not interpreted or signed.

#### 2.22.2.2 Uplands Monitoring Area

This area of the wilderness features natural environmental conditions and offers a moderate degree of solitude. Natural processes and conditions have not been and will not be affected by human activity (use). Areas are monitored to protect ecological conditions with effects of human activities minimized.

#### 2.22.2.2.1 Desired Conditions - Natural Environment

Natural succession occurs on all existing vegetative communities and is influenced by natural processes and disturbance. The structure, composition and function and spacial distribution of vegetative types are the result of natural successional processes. Human influence on vegetation is minimal. Plant species are predominately native and indigenous to the immediate area. There are no increases in non-indigenous species composition from an established baseline. Fire is reestablished as a natural ecological force. Fire management activities will be designed to retain the natural characteristics of the ecosystem. Evidence of the effects of fire, insects, or disease may be present. Appropriate air quality standards are met; however, periodic smoke could occur from natural fire. Visibility is generally unimpaired.

Human influence on the composition, structure, and function of aquatic ecosystems is unnoticeable in most areas. Fish and wildlife management activities will emphasize the protection of natural processes and be implemented only to the minimum extent necessary to manage the area as wilderness. Fish stocking will not occur. A range of habitats is sustained for all naturally occurring species. Sensitive species do not move toward T&E listing. No additional non-indigenous wildlife species have been introduced. Human influence on physical features such as soils and geologic materials is unnoticeable in most areas.

#### 2.22.2.2.2 Desired Conditions - Human Environment

The opportunity exists for a moderate to high level of risk and challenge. Contact with individuals or groups will occur more frequently on trails than while traveling cross-country. Encounters with large groups will occur less often than with small groups or individuals. Domestic livestock may also be encountered. Campsites are dispersed; visitors at adjacent campsites will usually not be seen or heard. Existing campsites are evident, as are maintained and user-established trails.

Established base camps may exist. Effects from camping will be minimally noticeable. Permitted outfitters provide services to visitors for activities that meet identified public needs and cannot be provided in non-wilderness settings.

Signage to indicate trail routes is not currently planned, but may occur at trail intersections and elsewhere as needed. Management information and administrative signage occur at trailheads as appropriate for resource protection. Signage blends in with the natural setting. Grazing actions adhere to appropriate guidelines for structures and campsites, and meet requirements of current Allotment Management Plans. Evidence of historic and cultural sites may exist, but is not interpreted on the ground or signed.

#### 2.22.2.3 Baseline Condition Assessment and Wilderness Condition Monitoring

Specific monitoring will be conducted on an annual basis commencing in 2003 and continuing for two years (through 2004) to assess the baseline condition within the wilderness area. After the baseline condition is determined, the annual monitoring will be used to assess the condition of the wilderness to determine the need for implementation of management options. The following are the six categories of monitoring that would be conducted to assess the baseline condition and the ongoing wilderness condition.

- Perception of Solitude - trailhead registration information, including length of stay, location of use, party size and makeup, and Wilderness Ranger interviews including location of use encounters; and;
- Campsite Density - number of campsites in a given area;
- Campsite Conditions - campsite changes;
- Length-of-Stay - trailhead registration and Wilderness Ranger interviews on the length of stay;
- Trail Condition - changes in trails, including width, depth, and number of social trails; and
- Recreational Stock-Use - root exposure, manure in campsites, and tree girdling.

#### 2.22.2.4 Management Options

This section describes the management options that are planned, to be used to help maintain or achieve the desired conditions in each Monitoring Area. Management options are techniques, regulations, or responses that can be implemented to affect wilderness conditions on the ground. Management options are categorized into three levels as follows: Level I management options are generally information and educational measures that can be implemented initially. Level II management options are generally indirect methods intended to return a given condition to compliance with a standard or guideline. Level III management options are more direct or restrictive and are not undertaken until guidelines are exceeded to a certain extent that is sustained for a certain period of time (described as thresholds).

Six specific standards have been developed for use in the evaluation of the Monitoring Area and include the following:

- Campsite Condition;
- Campsite Density;
- Perception of Solitude;
- Trail Density;
- Length-of-Stay; and
- Recreational Stock-Use.

The above monitoring data are applied to the threshold for each standard to determine whether each Monitoring Area, or individual canyon within the Gorges Area meets the standard. The following is a discussion of each standard and the management options that would be implemented, based on the degree to which a Monitoring Area or individual canyon in the Gorges Area exceeds a threshold for one or more standards.

Campsite Condition Standard - Campsite conditions reflect the visual imprint of human uses, as well as impacts to soil and vegetation and often, hydrologic and water quality. A modified Cole Campsite Monitoring System is used to classify camp-area conditions. The Cole Campsite Monitoring System was developed through the USFS to provide a method for the systematic monitoring of campsites to assess their use and conditions. Conditions are grouped into four categories based on a score that is determined by surveying a variety of factors that affect campsite impacts. The scale ranges from Condition Class 1, having the least impact, to Condition Class 4, having the highest impact.

<b>Campsite Condition - Management Options</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Level I Options</b>	<b>Level II Options</b>	<b>Level III Options</b>
Number of sites within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon that is within a Modified Cole Campsite Condition Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary dispersal of use through education efforts by agency personnel, volunteers, and publications.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside wilderness.</li> <li>- Emphasize Leave No Trace education efforts.</li> <li>- Increase wilderness information specialist (WIS) program and ghost rider program efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage the inclusion of information in publications or guidebooks that directs visitors to high-use areas.</li> <li>- Inform users about alternative areas.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide non-quota permit system to increase visitor education.</li> <li>- Limit improvements of trailhead access to areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit improvement of trail access in areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- Restrict campfire use to previously used areas.</li> <li>- Limit camping to designated campsites in high-use zones to minimize establishment of new sites.</li> <li>- Close and rehabilitate selected campsites where campsite density is high.</li> <li>- Limit group sizes to reduce impact on sites.</li> <li>- Implement regulations to restrict recreational stock from being tied to trees in campsites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shorten length-of-stay period.</li> <li>- Implement permit quota system for specific areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide permit quota system at trailheads or at individual destinations.</li> <li>- Implement closure of specific areas to the use of campfires and remove fire rings.</li> </ul>

Campsite Density Standard - The campsite density standard describes the maximum allowable number of established campsites, per section (one square mile) within the Uplands Monitoring Area, or per linear mile within the Gorge Monitoring Area or individual canyon. Established campsites are determined from evidence that continued or repetitive camping has occurred at the site in the past. Evidence could consist of fire ring(s), barren ground caused by compaction, long-term vegetation impacts, or other severe signs of human usage. Campsite density is also monitored at designated high-lake basins. The guideline for the maximum allowable established sites would be determined for each lake basin.

<b>Campsite Density - Management Options</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Level I Options</b>	<b>Level II Options</b>	<b>Level III Options</b>
<p>Number of existing campsites within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon,</p> <p>or</p> <p>Number of established campsites within a lake basin area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary dispersal of use through education efforts by agency personnel, volunteers, and publications.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside wilderness.</li> <li>- Emphasize Leave No Trace education efforts.</li> <li>- Agency personnel educate users to utilize existing campsites in high-use areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage the inclusion of information in publications or guidebooks that directs visitors to high-use areas.</li> <li>- Inform users about alternative areas.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide non-quota permit system to increase visitor education.</li> <li>- Limit improvements of trailhead access to areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit improvement of trail access in areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- In site-specific areas, increase the distance from campsite to water resources.</li> <li>- Restrict campfire use to previously used areas.</li> <li>- Limit camping to designated campsites in high-use zones to minimize establishment of new sites.</li> <li>- Close and rehabilitate selected campsites where campsite density is high.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shorten length-of-stay period.</li> <li>- Implement permit quota system for specific areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide permit quota system at trailheads or at individual destinations.</li> </ul>

Perception of Solitude Standard - Perception of Solitude is measured by campsite and trail encounters, the size of groups encountered, and by the degree of “perceived crowding”, as determined from surveying wilderness users. The Campsite Encounter Guideline monitors the average number of occupied campsites within sight or sound of the monitor’s campsite per Monitoring Area or individual canyon. The monitored number of encounters is averaged over the summer use season that varies by Monitoring Area or individual canyon.

The Trail Encounter Guideline monitors the average number of encounters with parties (groups) on a trail or cross-country route. Encounter rates depend on the length of time spent hiking or riding and are converted to an eight-hour period to obtain monitoring consistency. The location of a trail or route segment relative to the different Monitoring Areas determines the location of encounters. Trail or route encounters with large groups (defined as groups having more than ten people) are monitored by the same methodology. Crowding perception is monitored through surveys of wilderness users to obtain their viewpoints regarding crowding levels during their visit. The crowding scale ranges from Not Crowded to Extremely Crowded. The guideline refers to the percentage of respondents who reported being moderately to extremely crowded

Perception of Solitude - Management Options			
Indicator	Level I Options	Level II Options	Level III Options
Number of campsites occupied within sight or sound of your campsite per Monitoring Area or individual canyon (season average). or Number of party encounters on or off trail per eight-hour day (season average). or Percent of sampled visitors who report being moderately to extremely crowded within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary dispersal of use through education efforts by agency personnel, volunteers, and publications.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside wilderness.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of the type of experience (i.e. high encounter rate, numerous campsites, etc.) they are likely to have.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of areas or times best to visit that will reduce crowding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage the inclusion of information in publications or guidebooks that directs visitors to high-use areas.</li> <li>- Inform users about alternative areas.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide non-quota permit system to increase visitor education.</li> <li>- Limit group size in areas of concentrated use.</li> <li>- Limit improvements of trailhead access to areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit improvement of trail access in areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- In specific areas, increase the distance that campsites must be away from water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institute parking fees at high-use trailheads.</li> <li>- Shorten length-of-stay period.</li> <li>- Implement backcountry use fees for high-use areas.</li> <li>- Implement permit quota system for specific areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide permit quota system at trailheads or at individual destinations.</li> </ul>

Trail Condition Standard - The trail condition standard describes the maximum allowable number of social trails per Monitoring Area or individual canyon, as well as changes in the width and depth of the system trails. System and social trails refer to evidence that continued or repetitive use has occurred along a trail in the past. Evidence could consist of trampled vegetation, barren ground caused by compaction, long-term vegetation impacts, or other severe signs of human use. System trails are those that are managed for continual long-term use. Social trails are the result of random use patterns and are unplanned in their location.

<b>Trail Condition - Management Options</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Level I Options</b>	<b>Level II Options</b>	<b>Level III Options</b>
Number of social trails within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon. or Width and depth of system trails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary dispersal of use through education efforts by agency personnel, volunteers, and publications.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside wilderness.</li> <li>- Emphasize Leave No Trace education efforts.</li> <li>- Agency personnel educate users to utilize existing campsites in high-use areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage the inclusion of information in publications or guidebooks that directs visitors to high-use areas.</li> <li>- Inform users about alternative areas.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide non-quota permit system to increase visitor education.</li> <li>- Limit improvements of trailhead access to areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit improvement of trail access in areas where crowding is a concern.</li> <li>- In site-specific areas, increase the distance campsites must be away from water.</li> <li>- Limit camping to designated campsites in high-use zones to minimize establishment of new sites.</li> <li>- Close and rehabilitate selected trails where trail density is high.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shorten length-of-stay period.</li> <li>- Implement permit quota system for specific areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide permit quota system at trailheads or at individual destinations.</li> </ul>

Length-of-Stay Standard - The length-of-stay standard describes the maximum allowable number of days individuals or groups stay within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon. The length-of-stay will be based on information collected by voluntary reporting at trailheads and interviews by the Wilderness Rangers.

<b>Length-of-Stay - Management Options</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Level I Options</b>	<b>Level II Options</b>	<b>Level III Options</b>
Length-of-stay within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary reduction in the length-of-stays through education efforts by agency personnel, volunteers, and publications.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside wilderness.</li> <li>- Emphasize Leave No Trace education efforts.</li> <li>- Increase WIS program and ghost rider program efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage the inclusion of information in publications or guidebooks that directs visitors to high-use areas.</li> <li>- Inform users about alternative areas.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide non-quota permit system to increase visitor education.</li> <li>- Limit improvements of trailhead access to areas where length-of-stay is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit improvement of trail access in areas where length-of-stay is a concern.</li> <li>- Limit camping to designated campsites in high-use zones, to minimize establishment of new sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shorten length-of-stay period.</li> <li>- Implement permit quota system for specific areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Implement area-wide permit quota system at trailheads or at individual destinations.</li> <li>- Implement closure of specific areas to the use of campfires and remove fire rings.</li> </ul>

**Recreational Stock-Use Standard** - The impact of recreational stock-use on vegetation, meadow and riparian areas is determined by monitoring the amount of manure in campsite areas, and the condition tree roots, and presence of tree girdling in campsite areas.

<b>Recreational Stock-Use - Management Options</b>			
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Level I Options</b>	<b>Level II Options</b>	<b>Level III Options</b>
Amount of recreational stock-use within a Monitoring Area or individual canyon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educate public on proper use of recreational-stock in the backcountry.</li> <li>- Voluntary dispersal of use through educational efforts.</li> <li>- Inform visitors of opportunities outside these areas.</li> <li>- Emphasize Leave No Trace education efforts for all backcountry users, with emphasis for stock users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limit the number of stock-per-party in areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> <li>- Require certified weed free feed/hay be used for recreational livestock in place of grazing.</li> <li>- Prohibit picketing in areas where guidelines are exceeded.</li> <li>- Enforce regulations to prohibit resource damage caused by tying stock to trees.</li> <li>- Restrict grazing within areas that are exceeding guidelines to no more than one-third of the grazing season.</li> <li>- Establish an “on” date for recreational stock-use or a season of use.</li> <li>- Develop a rotational system within a compartment or drainage that would allow recreational-stock grazing only within specified areas.</li> <li>- Limit length-of-stay by recreational stock within areas that are exceeding guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close specific areas that are exceeding guidelines to use by recreational stock.</li> <li>- Close drainages or compartments to grazing by recreational stock.</li> </ul>

**2.22.3 Management Direction by Alternative**

The management direction for the wilderness, by alternative, will assess a range of thresholds that would trigger the implementation of the appropriate level of management based on the exceedence of the threshold. Thresholds are the upper limit in terms of time period or percentage of the standard or guideline that is exceeded, at which point the next level of management options would be undertaken.

**2.22.3.1 Goal 1 - Maintain or improve the wilderness values and the special features of the Steens Mountain Wilderness under a principle of nondegradation and in a manner that would leave these values unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, while providing opportunities for public use, enjoyment, and understanding**

**Objective 1.** Manage the wilderness to allow for areas of differing levels of resource use.

Alternative A

All areas in the wilderness would be classified in a similar way (no separate Monitoring Areas). There would be no limits on party sizes, and no restrictions on dogs in the wilderness. The use of catholes and proper disposal of toilet paper would be encouraged. There would be no restrictions on camping or stock. Self regulation at selected trailheads would be encouraged. Minimal maintenance would be conducted on Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake trails. No new trails would be constructed and inappropriate user created trails would be reclaimed. There would be no campsite restrictions. Length-of-stay in the wilderness would be limited to 14 days. The wilderness would be inventoried to establish baseline and monitoring data for resource and social impacts and to establish the limits of use. As outlined in the Wilderness Plan, two years of data collected in 2003 and 2004 would be utilized to establish the baseline condition.

The monitoring data would then be evaluated after three years and management actions would be modified, if necessary, to achieve the limits of use.

Alternative B

The wilderness would be classified in two Monitoring Areas. Within the Uplands Management Area, five individual canyons would be identified. No dogs would be allowed in the wilderness. Management of party sizes would limit groups to a maximum of six individuals and nine recreational stock. No provisions would be made for exceptions to the management of party size. All human waste and toilet paper would be required to be packed out of the wilderness. No camping would be allowed at Wildhorse Lake or in any RNA. Use of existing established campsites would be required. Tying recreational stock to trees would not be allowed. As outlined in the Wilderness Plan, two years of data collected in 2003 and 2004 would be used to establish the baseline condition. Monitoring data would then be evaluated after three years to determine whether the following thresholds have been exceeded, which would determine the implementation of appropriate management options as outlined in Section 2.21.2. Based on monitoring, management options would be implemented throughout a Management Area or individual canyon, as appropriate, unless otherwise identified.

<b>Campsite Condition Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	- No greater than 20 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3 in two of three consecutive monitoring years at Level I; in three of four consecutive monitoring years at Level II; and in four of five consecutive monitoring years at Level III. - No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.
Uplands	- No greater than 20 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3 in two of three consecutive monitoring years at Level I; in three of four consecutive monitoring years at Level II; and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.

A campsite at Campsite Condition 4 would allow the implementation of management options on a campsite-specific basis to address the individual campsite impact.

<b>Campsite Density Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	- Two campsites per linear mile, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I; in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II; and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- Four campsites per section, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I; in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II; and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Perception of Solitude Guideline</b>				
Monitoring Areas	Guideline			
	Campsite Encounters	Trail/Route Encounters	Large Group Encounters	Crowding Perception
Gorges	Two per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Six per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	One per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than ten percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	One per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Three per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	0.5 per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than five percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Trail Condition Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<p>- 20 percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 25 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>
Uplands	<p>- Ten percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 20 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>

<b>Length-of-Stay Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	- 25 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- 20 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Recreational Stock-Use Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 25 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 25 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>
Uplands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 20 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 20 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>

Alternative C

The wilderness would be classified in two Monitoring Areas. Within the Gorges Management Area, five individual canyons would be identified. Dogs would be allowed in all areas but would be required to be under voice or physical control. Management of party sizes would limit groups to a maximum of nine individuals and 12 recreational stock. Provisions would be made for exceptions to the management of party size through the authorization of historic uses, on a case by case basis. Catholes for human waste would be required and at least 150 feet from all water sources, campsites, and trails. Toilet paper would be required to be packed out. No camping would be allowed in any RNA or Wildhorse Lake. High lines or picketing of recreational stock would be required. Tying stock to trees would not be allowed. Minimal maintenance would be conducted on Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake trails. No new trails would be constructed and inappropriate user created trails would be reclaimed. Selected closed roads in the wilderness would also be reclaimed. As outlined in the Wilderness Plan, two years of data, collected in 2003 and 2004, would be used to establish the baseline condition. The monitoring would be used to determine whether the following thresholds have been exceeded, which would determine the implementation of appropriate management options as outlined in Section 2.21.2.

<b>Campsite Condition Guideline</b>	
<b>Monitoring Areas</b>	<b>Guideline</b>
Gorges	- No greater than 30 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.
Uplands	- No greater than 30 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.

A campsite at Campsite Condition 4 would allow the implementation of management options on a campsite-specific basis to address the individual campsite impact.

<b>Campsite Density Guideline</b>	
<b>Monitoring Areas</b>	<b>Guideline</b>
Gorges	- Five campsites per linear mile, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- Six campsites per section, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Perception of Solitude Guideline</b>				
Monitoring Areas	Guideline			
	Campsite Encounters	Trail/Route Encounters	Large Group Encounters	Crowding Perception
Gorges	Four per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Nine per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Two per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than 20 percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	Two per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Four per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	One per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than 10 percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Trail Condition Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<p>- 35 percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 50 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>
Uplands	<p>- 20 percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 35 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>

<b>Length-of-Stay Guideline</b>	
<b>Monitoring Areas</b>	<b>Guideline</b>
Gorges	- 50 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- 35 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Recreational Stock-Use Guideline</b>	
<b>Monitoring Areas</b>	<b>Guideline</b>
Gorges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 50 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 50 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>
Uplands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 35 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 35 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- 35 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>

#### Alternative D

The wilderness would be classified in two Monitoring Areas, and within the Gorges Monitoring Area five individual canyons would be identified. Dogs would be allowed in all areas but would be required to be under voice or physical control. Management of party sizes would limit groups to a maximum of 12 individuals and 15 recreational stock. Provisions would be made for exceptions to the management of party size through the authorization of historic uses, on a case-by-case basis, with NEPA analysis. Catholes for human waste would be required and at least 150 feet from all water sources, campsites, and trails. Toilet paper would be required to be packed out. Overnight camping would be allowed at Rooster Comb and Little Blitzen RNAs in historically used areas that are consistent with the purpose of the RNA and the Wilderness Plan objectives. Camping would be allowed at Wildhorse Lake in a defined area and at designated sites. No overnight recreational stock use at Wildhorse Lake would be allowed. No camping would be allowed in the Little Wildhorse RNA. Grazing of recreational stock would be required to be consistent with the S&Gs. Tying recreational stock to trees would be allowed for loading and unloading. The Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake Trails would be maintained and new trails would be constructed as needed to preserve wilderness values and to protect resources from damage. Selected roads in the wilderness would be reclaimed to eliminate evidence of the road. Inappropriate user-created trails would be reclaimed. As outlined in the Wilderness Plan, two years of data, collected in 2003 and 2004, would be used to establish the baseline condition. The monitoring would be used to determine whether the following thresholds have been exceeded, which would determine the implementation of appropriate management options as outlined in Section 2.21.2.

<b>Campsite Condition Guideline</b>
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PRELIMINARY ANDREWS MANAGEMENT UNIT/STEENS MOUNTAIN COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No greater than 40 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.</li> </ul>
Uplands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No greater than 40 percent of sites within a Management Area or individual canyon at Campsite Condition Class 3, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> <li>- No sites at Campsite Condition Class 4 in any monitoring year, unless designated.</li> </ul>

A campsite at Campsite Condition 4 would allow the implementation of management options on a campsite specific basis to address the individual campsite impacts.

<b>Campsite Density Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Six campsites per linear mile, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>
Plateau Uplands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eight campsites per section, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</li> </ul>

<b>Crowding Guideline</b>				
Monitoring Areas	Guideline			
	Campsite Encounters	Trail/Route Encounters	Large Group Encounters	Crowding Perception
Gorges	Six per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	12 per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Three per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than 30 percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	Three per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Five per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Two per eight-hour period, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.	Less than 15 percent, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

<b>Trail Condition Guideline</b>	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	<p>- 50 percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 75 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>
Uplands	<p>- 30 percent increase in the density of trails per acre, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p> <p>- 50 percent increase in the width or depth of trails in a Management Area or individual canyon, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.</p>

Length-of-Stay Guideline	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	- 75 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- 50 percent increase, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

Recreational Stock-Use Guideline	
Monitoring Areas	Guideline
Gorges	- 75 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - 75 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - 75 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.
Uplands	- 50 percent increase in root exposure at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - 50 percent increase in tree girdling at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III. - 50 percent increase in manure present at campsites, in two of three consecutive monitoring years Level I, in three of four consecutive monitoring years Level II, and in four of five consecutive monitoring years Level III.

Alternative E

The entire wilderness would be classified in a similar manner with no Monitoring Areas. Dogs would be allowed in all areas. The use of catholes and proper disposal of toilet paper would be encouraged. There would be no restrictions on camping. There would be no management of party sizes. Recreational stock would be allowed in all areas. High lines or picketing of recreational stock would be allowed and would be required to occur at a distance greater than 150 feet from water sources. Minimal maintenance would be conducted on Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse Lake trails. New trails would be constructed, where appropriate, with increased use and to aid visitor travel. Selected closed roads in the wilderness would be reclaimed, while allowing the use of others as informal stock and hiking routes. Length of stay in the wilderness would be limited to 14 days. The wilderness would be inventoried to establish baseline and monitoring data for resources and social impacts, and to establish carrying capacity. As outlined in the Wilderness Plan, two years of data, collected in 2003 and 2004, would be used to establish the baseline condition. The monitoring data would then be evaluated after three years and management actions would be modified, if necessary, to achieve the limits of use.

**2.22.3.2 Goal 2 - Manage the wilderness in such a manner that the landscape is essentially unaffected by human manipulation and influences, while allowing natural processes to dominate.**

**Objective 1.** Accomplish necessary projects and activities occurring in wilderness with the minimum tool or requirement needed to achieve a desired result. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure would be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently.

Alternative A

No new recreation facilities would be constructed in wilderness or at trailheads. Historic structures would be allowed to deteriorate through natural processes, including fire. Limited maintenance of Nye Cabin would take place only to correct hazards. All fire suppression would be accomplished using the Appropriate Management Response, based on life, safety, and resource values. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using a full range of equipment after a minimum tool analysis.

Alternative B

No new recreation facilities would be constructed in wilderness or at trailheads. Historic structures would be allowed to deteriorate through natural processes, including fire. Nye cabin would not be maintained. Fire would be allowed to play its natural role. This would exclude areas along the wilderness boundary where life and property are at risk. All lightning fires would be considered for wildland fire use. Wildfires would be confined or contained within natural barriers unless additional measures are necessary to protect life/property values. No prescribed fire would be allowed. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using nonmotorized equipment.

Alternative C

No new recreation facilities would be constructed in wilderness. New facilities would only be constructed at trailheads if resource damage/hazards exist. All facilities (excluding trails) and structures in wilderness would be removed except for historic ones and those needed for grazing/wildlife purposes. Historic structures would be allowed to deteriorate through natural processes, including fire. Limited maintenance of Nye Cabin would take place only to correct hazards. Removal of the Page Springs weir. Fire would be allowed to play its natural role. This would exclude areas along the wilderness boundary where life and property are at risk. All lightning fires would be considered for wildland fire use. Wildfires would be confined or contained within natural barriers unless additional measures are necessary to protect life/property values. Prescribed fire would be allowed if needed to maintain the natural condition of a fire dependent ecosystem or to re-introduce fire where past strict wildfire control measures have interfered with natural ecological processes. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using a full range of equipment after a minimum tool analysis.

Alternative D

Recreation facilities would be constructed at trailheads as needed to prevent resource damage. Historic structures would be maintained to preserve them. Nonconforming structures would be removed or allowed to deteriorate except those needed for grazing and wildlife purposes. Nye cabin would be managed to maintain a safe and hazard-free environment and for its historic characteristics. Removal of the Page Springs weir would be considered. Fire would be allowed to play its natural role, excluding areas along the wilderness boundary where life and property are at risk. All lightning fires would be considered for wildland fire use. Wildfires would be confined or contained within natural barriers unless additional measures are necessary to protect life/property values. Prescribed fire would be allowed if needed to maintain the natural condition of a fire dependent ecosystem or to re-introduce fire where past strict wildfire control measures have interfered with natural ecological processes. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using a full range of equipment after a minimum tool analysis.

Alternative E

Recreation facilities would be constructed at trailheads as needed to prevent resource damage. Historic structures would be maintained to preserve them. Nonconforming structures would be removed or allowed to deteriorate except for those needed for grazing and wildlife purposes. Nye cabin would be managed as a rental cabin. All fire suppression would be accomplished using the Appropriate Management Response, based on life, safety, and resource values. Noxious weeds and other exotic plant species in wilderness would be controlled using a full range of equipment after a minimum tool analysis.

**2.22.3.3 Goal 3 - Manage nonconforming uses of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, allowed under the Wilderness Act and the Steens Act, to have the minimum impact on wilderness characteristics.**

**Objective 1.** Manage livestock grazing in wilderness under the stipulations of the Congressional Grazing Guidelines (HR 101-405 Appendix A).

Alternatives A, C, and D

Management would adhere to the decision records of the Motorized Access for Grazing Operations in Wilderness EA/Decision Record (2003).

Alternative B

No mechanized transport or motorized equipment would be allowed for grazing operations in wilderness.

Alternative E

Mechanized/motorized use would be allowed at historic use levels (predesignation).

**Objective 2.** Provide for the level and type of commercial services necessary to enable the public to use, access, enjoy and understand the recreational and other values of wilderness, emphasizing opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, inspiration, and solitude.

Alternative A

New proposals would be considered.

Alternative B

No commercial services would be allowed.

Alternative C

Outfitters would be limited at the current level. No permanent caches would be allowed.

Alternatives D and E

New proposals for outfitters would be considered after preparing a needs assessment. No permanent caches would be allowed.

**Objective 3.** Allow for a level of reasonable access for the use and enjoyment of private inholdings while protecting the wilderness values.

Alternatives A, C, and D

Management would adhere to the decision record of the Access for Inholdings in the Steens Mountain Wilderness EA/Decision Record (2003).

Alternative B

No mechanized transport or motorized use would be allowed for inholding access.

Alternative E

Access would be allowed at historic (predesignation) levels.

## 2.23 Wilderness Study Areas

### 2.23.1 **Goal - Manage WSAs and WSA additions so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness.**

#### 2.23.1.1 Management Framework

Under the FLPMA, wilderness preservation is part of the BLM's multiple use mandate, and wilderness is recognized as part of the spectrum of resource values considered in the land use planning process. According to the wilderness review program, the existing WSAs are managed in accordance with the BLM's WSA IMP (USDI 1995b). The general standard for interim management is that land under wilderness review must be managed so as not to impair suitability for preservation as wilderness. Wilderness characteristics and values, described in section 2 (c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-577) must be protected and enhanced in all WSAs. The initial task of identifying areas suitable for wilderness preservation has been completed as mandated in the FLPMA section 603, and is documented in BLM 1989 Oregon Final Wilderness EIS and the Wilderness Study Report for Oregon (USDI 1991c).

Lands acquired since that time were not included in the initial inventory for wilderness values. Sections 201 and 202 of the FLPMA provide for ongoing inventories of public land resources and designation of additional WSAs through the RMP process. If parcels of land are recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, those areas would be managed under authority of the FLPMA Sections 202 and 302.

#### 2.23.1.2 Management Direction by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Manage lands identified as additions to existing WSAs or any new areas found to be suitable for WSA designation, so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness.

##### Alternative A

No new WSAs or additions to WSAs would be designated.

##### Alternatives B, D, and E

The 40- and 80-acre parcels within the Mahogany Ridge WSA, acquired through a land exchange, would be incorporated into this WSA. A 40-acre parcel along the boundary between the Bridge Creek WSA and the WJMA would be incorporated into the Bridge Creek WSA.

##### Alternative C

The 40- and 80-acre parcels within the Mahogany Ridge WSA, acquired through a land exchange, would be incorporated into this WSA. A 40-acre parcel along the boundary between the Bridge Creek WSA and the WJMA would be incorporated into the Bridge Creek WSA.

The following parcels, found to contain wilderness values, would be protected: Bridge Creek (1,526 acres); High Steens (629 acres); Stonehouse (2,176 acres); and Alvord Desert (2,033 acres). Protection would include limited access to designated roads and trails, OHV designations, and VRM Class II designations (See Map 2.18).

**Objective 2:** Manage existing WSAs so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness.

##### Management Common to All Alternatives

All WSAs are managed under the WSA IMP until such time as Congress makes a determination regarding wilderness designation. The WSA IMP takes precedence over all other management direction unless other management direction is more restrictive and more protective of the wilderness resource. Management of any congressionally designated wilderness would be described in the legislation. Management direction for WSAs not designated by Congress and released from WSA status would be based on existing RMP management direction.

According to the WSA IMP, the use of "mechanical transport, including all motorized devices as well as trail and mountain bikes, may only be allowed on existing ways and within open areas that were designated prior to the passage of the FLPMA.....". Existing ways are those that were identified in the initial wilderness inventory.

The existing WSAs, which total 633,519 acres (Table 3.24) would continue to be managed under the WSA IMP until designated as wilderness by Congress or released from WSA status.

### **2.23.2 Monitoring**

Monitoring and surveillance of existing WSAs and any additions or new WSAs would be conducted on a regular basis. WSA boundary and OHV designation signs would be maintained and WSA IMP violations would be documented in the case files.

### **2.24 Wild and Scenic Rivers**

#### **2.24.1 Goal 1 – Manage the existing and newly designated WSRs in conformance with the WSR Act and the Wilderness Act.**

##### 2.24.1.1 Management Framework

The WSR Act (Public Law 90-542 and amendments), section 1(b), states that "certain selected rivers of the nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations." Section 10(a) describes the basic management requirement of protecting and enhancing the values that caused the river to be included in the national WSR system. For the descriptions of the management actions by alternative for managing the designated WSRs, refer to Chapter 2 of the resource section for each of their ORVs. Those resource sections for each river's ORVs are the following:

Donner und Blitzen Wild and Scenic River consists of the following segments: Donner und Blitzen River, Fish Creek, Little Blitzen River, Big Indian Creek, Little Indian Creek, and South Fork of Donner und Blitzen River (Map 2.19). The ORVs for the Donner und Blitzen Wild and Scenic River are as follows:

- Scenic qualities - refer to Visual Resources
- Geologic features - no management actions identified
- Recreation opportunities - refer to Wilderness and Recreation
- Native fisheries habitat - refer to RTR
- Abundant Wildlife - refer to Fish and Wildlife
- Variety of Vegetation Communities - refer to Vegetation
- Special status plant species - refer to Special Status Plant Species
- Historic cultural resources - refer to Cultural Resources

Mud and Ankle Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers ORVs areas follows:

- Same as Donner und Blitzen WSRs ORVs

Kiger Wild and Scenic River ORVs are as follows:

- Scenic geologic features - refer to Visual Resources
- Diversity of Wildlife Habitat - refer to Fish and Wildlife
- Special status fish species - refer to RTR

Wildhorse and Little Wildhorse Creek Wild and Scenic River ORVs are as follows:

- Scenic quality - refer to Visual Resources
- Recreation - refer to Wilderness and Recreation
- Wildlife habitat diversity - refer to Fish and Wildlife
- Special status plant species - refer to Special Status Species

### 2.24.1.2 Management Directions by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Protect and enhance the ORVs of the designated WSRs.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives

An integrated WSR/Wilderness Management Plan would be developed for all WSRs in the CMPA and the Steens Mountain Wilderness (see Map 2.19).

#### Alternatives A, B, and C

The existing wild classification would be maintained throughout the river corridor.

#### Alternatives D and E

A recommendation to Congress would be made to reclassify the Riddle Brothers Ranch Historic District, and the Page Springs and Jackman Park campgrounds from wild to recreational, and change the classification of the Blitzen Crossing to scenic.

**2.24.2 Goal 2 - Determine the suitability of eligible WSRs. Manage those rivers found suitable in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 (Wild and Scenic Rivers - Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management) for protective management of eligible and suitable WSRs.**

#### 2.24.2.1 Management Framework

Section 5(d) of the WSR Act requires federal agencies to consider potential wild, scenic, and recreational river areas in all planning for the use and development of water and related land resources. All rivers in the Andrews RA were evaluated for WSR eligibility in 1997 for the SEORMP. Eligible rivers that were not designated as WSRs by the Steens Act include the following: Big Alvord Creek, Home Creek, McCoy Creek, Mud Creek, Pike Creek, Threemile Creek, Willow Creeks, Little Cottonwood Creek, Van Horn Creek, and Big Trout Creek. In accordance with BLM Manual 8351 (Wild and Scenic Rivers - Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management), all eligible rivers will be evaluated for suitability for potential inclusion into the National WSR System by Congress. The planning determination of suitability provides the basis for any decision to recommend legislation. Factors to be considered (see section 4[a] of the WSR Act) in the suitability determination include the following: the current status of land ownership and use in the area; the reasonably foreseeable potential uses of the land and water that would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the area were included in the national WSR system, and the values that would be foreclosed or diminished if the river is not protected as part of the national WSR system; other agencies, organizations, or public interested in designation or nondesignation; administrative costs; ability of the agency to manage and/or protect the river area; and historic or existing rights. Refer to Appendix N for the Wild and Scenic River Suitability Evaluation for all eligible rivers listed below.

#### 2.24.2.2 Management Directions by Alternative

**Objective 1.** Protect and enhance the ORVs of rivers determined to be administratively suitable for potential inclusion into the National WSR System by Congress.

#### Alternative A

The following eligible rivers would continue to be managed in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 for protective management of eligible WSRs:

- Big Alvord Creek- 6.3 miles wild; ORVs are wildlife and botanic
- Willow Creek- 6.2 miles wild; ORV is botanic
- Threemile Creek- 4.3 miles scenic; ORVs are fish and cultural
- Pike Creek- 4.2 miles scenic; ORV is wildlife
- Mud Creek- 7.2 miles scenic; ORV is botanic
- McCoy Creek- 30.8 miles scenic; ORV is wildlife
- Home Creek- 5.5 miles scenic; ORVs are scenic, recreational, and fish

- Kiger Creek- 14.25 miles scenic; ORVs are scenic, fish, and wildlife
- Cottonwood Creek- 12.1 miles scenic; ORV is botanic
- Van Horn Creek- 9.9 miles scenic; ORV is recreational
- Big Trout Creek- 20.3 miles scenic; ORV is scenic

Alternatives B, D, and E

No eligible rivers would be recommended as administratively suitable for potential designation by Congress as WSRs. Unsuitable river segments would be managed in accordance with RMP management objectives.

Alternative C

The following rivers would be recommended as administratively suitable for potential designation by Congress as WSRs:

- Big Alvord - 6.3 miles wild; ORVs are wildlife and botanic
- Willow - 6.2 miles wild; ORV is botanic
- Threemile - 4.3 miles scenic; ORVs are fish and cultural
- Pike - 4.2 miles scenic; ORV is wildlife
- Mud - 7.2 miles scenic; ORV is botanic
- McCoy - 30.8 miles scenic; ORV is wildlife
- Home - 5.5 miles scenic; ORVs are scenic, recreational, and fish
- Kiger - 14.25 miles scenic; ORVs are scenic, fish, and wildlife
- Cottonwood - 12.1 miles scenic; ORV is botanic
- Van Horn - 9.9 miles scenic; ORV is recreational
- Big Trout - 20.3 miles scenic; ORV is scenic

All rivers found suitable for inclusion in the WSR system would be managed in conformance with BLM Manual 8351 as if they were designated wild and scenic rivers until Congress acts on whether to add these rivers into the National WSR system. All suitable rivers shall be administered in such a manner as to protect and enhance their ORVs.