

BRETT JANTZE  
GUIDING SERVICE  
SPECIAL RECREATION  
PERMIT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

OR-020-03-040

OR-020-RP-02-06

Bureau of Land Management  
Burns District Office  
28910 Hwy 20 West  
Hines, Oregon 97738

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## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

### A. Introduction

Brett Jantze Guiding Service, LLC (Jantze), operated by Brett Jantze, has held Districtwide, commercial Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) for big game and bird hunting in the Burns District since 1999. The Wagontire Hunt Unit in the Lakeview District was added to the permit in 2001. Jantze does not operate in the Steens Mountain Hunt Unit. Most of Jantze's activities occur on private land, but adjacent public land is used. Jantze also has SRPs issued by the Vale District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Malheur National Forest.

### B. Purpose of and Need for Action

The proposed action would allow specialized recreation activities to continue under permit. Evaluation of the effects associated with this SRP (OR-020-RP-02-06) would allow the BLM to better manage the SRP through impact avoidance, permittee/BLM coordination, and monitoring.

Completion of this Environmental Assessment (EA), the Finding of No Significant Impact, and the Decision Record would allow Jantze to continue operations through the 2004 fall season. The Andrews/Steens Resource Management Plan (RMP) is scheduled for completion in October 2004. At that time, a new EA would be prepared in conformance with the RMP Records of Decision and a new SRP would be issued.

### C. Land Use Plan Conformance Statement

While the Andrews Management Framework Plan (MFP) is silent concerning the proposed action and alternative, it is a stated objective of the MFP to "Provide a variety of recreation opportunities. . ." (p. 7). The Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (RMP) is also silent for the proposed action and alternative. However, one Recreation objective includes the specification to "provide for unstructured outdoor recreation activities with the necessary . . . services." Issuance of a permit would be in compliance with all State, local, and tribal government laws, regulations, and land use plans.

## CHAPTER II. ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

### A. Proposed Action

Jantze would supply guide services for deer, elk, antelope, and bird hunting trips in the Burns District. A majority of the use would be on private land in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Malheur River hunt unit (Map 1), with 5 to 10 percent of the time spent on public land in the Burns District. The base camps would use private facilities on private land. Four-wheel drive vehicles would be used for transportation.



Jantze does not use pack or saddle stock or All-Terrain Vehicles. This does not represent a change from the current operating plan.

Appropriate stipulations would be carried forward from the current special stipulations (Appendix 1) and additional special stipulations would be developed to address concerns raised during preparation of this EA. It is not expected that Jantze's use would increase noticeably during the next 2 years. Intensive and regular monitoring of the SRP would identify any emerging problems or issues.

B. No Action Alternative

Jantze would continue to operate hunting trips as has been done in the past. The special stipulations attached to Jantze's current permit would remain in effect. Jantze's hunting use for 1999 through 2001 averaged 1 trip and 5 client days per year.

CHAPTER III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A. Critical Elements

The following critical elements of the human environment are not known to be present or would not knowingly be affected by the proposed action or alternative:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern  
Adverse Energy Impacts  
Air Quality  
American Indian Religious Concerns  
Environmental Justice  
Farm Lands (prime or unique)  
Floodplains  
Paleontology  
Threatened, Endangered or Special Status Species  
Wastes (hazardous or solid)  
Water Quality (drinking/ground)  
Wild and Scenic Rivers

The following critical elements of the human environment are present or may be affected by the proposed action or alternative:

1. Cultural Resources

Prehistoric archaeological sites in the Burns District range in complexity from surface lithic scatters to significant, buried, stratified, long-term encampments. Sites are often situated in locations that appeal to modern campers and, similarly, to commercial guide services. Historic sites also tend to be located in appealing camp areas.

## 2. Migratory Birds

More than 70 species of migratory birds are known to pass through or breed and nest in the project area. Some species documented in surveys include sage thrasher, Brewer's sparrow, chipping sparrow, American robin, dusky flycatcher, gray flycatcher, loggerhead shrike, western meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, Brewer's blackbird, mourning dove, as well as many species of migratory shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and other songbirds.

## 3. Noxious Weeds

There are numerous infestations of noxious weeds in the Burns District, including the areas proposed for activities. However, most are very small. More information on exact types and locations is available at the Burns District Office.

## 4. Wetlands and Riparian Zones

Wetlands and riparian zones are water-dependent ecosystems bordering rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, springs, and seeps throughout the Burns District. These areas act to dissipate stream energy and wave action, reduce streambank or shoreline erosion, filter sediments, and may provide temporary storage and later release of water. Riparian plant communities are generally more diverse than the surrounding upland plant communities and support a greater variety of aquatic and terrestrial species. Riparian areas surrounding springs and seeps are especially important in high desert ecosystems. Typical riparian vegetation includes willow, alder, sedges, rushes, and aspen.

## 5. Wilderness Study Areas

*Naturalness* - Naturalness refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." (BLM Manual 8560 - Management of Designated Wilderness)

The Burns District Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are in outstanding natural condition except for certain areas that contain reservoirs, fences, and other humanmade elements. These features and ways are generally not noticeable except when viewed from higher terrain or in the immediate vicinity.

*Solitude* - Solitude is defined as "the state of being alone or remote from habitations; isolation. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place." (BLM Manual 8560 - Management of Designated Wilderness)

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are enhanced by the varied and rugged topography. Vegetative screening in some areas, especially the creek and canyon bottoms, supplements the topographic screening.

In wilderness there is an expectation that encounters with other users would be infrequent.

*Primitive and Unconfined Recreation* - Primitive and unconfined recreation is defined in 43 CFR 6301.5 as nonmotorized types of outdoor recreation activities that do not require developed facilities or mechanical transport.

There are outstanding opportunities throughout the WSAs for primitive and unconfined recreation including hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, photography, and sightseeing.

*Supplemental Values* - Supplemental values are listed in the Wilderness Act as "ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

Supplemental values of the WSAs are geology, scenery, vegetation, and wildlife. Historical values, including the remains of old homesteads, can be found in many WSAs.

## B. Noncritical Elements

Bureau specialists have determined that the following resources, although present in the project area, are not affected by the proposed action or alternative: forestry/woodlands, geologic resources, lands and realty, livestock grazing, recreation, soils, vegetation, visual resources, and wild horses.

The following noncritical elements are present or may be affected by the proposed action or alternative:

### 1. Socioeconomics

The primary economic activities in Harney County are ranching, farming, manufacturing, and tourism. Federal, State, county, and local governments are major contributors to the Harney County economy. A 1994 study found that tourism associated with the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge generated \$4.4 million in Harney County over a 1-year period. Unemployment in Harney County is among the highest in the State - 14.1 percent in 2001 and approximately 8 percent in May 2002.

## 2. Wildlife

Wildlife commonly occurring in the Burns District includes mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, coyotes, badgers, ravens, magpies, golden eagles, chukar partridges, California quail, weasels, raccoons, porcupines, ground squirrels, chipmunks, mice, shrews, bats, woodrats, beavers, mountain lions, bobcats, black-tailed jackrabbits, and cottontail rabbits. The project area provides yearlong habitat for most of the species listed above.

## CHAPTER IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### A. Critical Elements

#### 1. Cultural Resources

##### a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Ground-disturbing activities at campsites could disturb both surface and buried cultural and historic artifacts. Surface and buried artifacts could be collected and removed from sites. This would reduce the integrity of sites and reduce the information that could be gathered.

#### 2. Migratory Birds

##### a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Outfitter activities could affect breeding and nesting migratory birds, primarily at campsites. Camping activities in and near riparian areas disturb migratory birds, causing them to flush from their nests. The nests are then open to predation and nest destruction or nest parasitism by brown-headed cowbirds.

#### 3. Noxious Weeds

##### a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Noxious weed seeds could be brought into the Burns District through the permittee's activities. Equipment and vehicles could bring in noxious weeds from other areas of the State or neighboring states.

4. Wetlands and Riparian Zones

a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Camping in riparian areas could affect riparian vegetation and streambanks, leading to soil compaction, increased erosion into streams, and reduction of shade over streams. Human waste not packed out or properly disposed of away from water sources could lead to nutrient enrichment and bacterial contamination of the water.

Many existing campsites throughout the Burns District are located in riparian areas. Requiring a permitted outfitter to camp outside of riparian areas would not reduce effects to these areas, because the general public would continue to use these sites. There would be an overall disturbance increase because new campsites would be created if the permittee is required to camp outside of riparian areas.

5. Wilderness Study Areas

a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

*Naturalness* - Any new disturbances at any WSA campsites, including fire pits, rock rings, and vegetation loss from existing camping or new campsites, would affect naturalness.

*Solitude* - This wilderness value would not be affected.

*Primitive and Unconfined Recreation* - This wilderness value would not be affected.

*Supplemental Values* - Geologic, historic, scenic, and vegetation supplemental values would not be affected. Effects to the supplemental value of wildlife are discussed in the Wildlife section.

B. Noncritical Elements

1. Socioeconomics

a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Using Jantze's average past use and the reported cost of \$2,900/hunting trip, revenue generated could total up to \$2,900. This figure was calculated using one trip with one hunter. Because Jantze is based in Bend, Oregon, it is expected that not all of this revenue would be spent in Harney County.

## 2. Wildlife

### a. Proposed Action and No Action Alternative

Most species of wildlife would be affected through disruption and/or displacement of wildlife, their activities, and their habitat. Of particular concern are hunting activities at isolated waterholes and guzzlers, where wildlife would be unwilling to approach the water. The degree of effect from the proposed action or no action alternative would vary with the number of trips.

## CHAPTER V. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There may be cumulative effects from other nonrecreation activities, but there is insufficient information to analyze them here.

The proposed action and alternative have been evaluated for potential cumulative effects to resources. It has been concluded that cumulative effects to Cultural Resources; Migratory Birds; Noxious Weeds; Wetlands and Riparian Areas; WSAs; and Wildlife would be negligible as a result of implementing the proposed action or alternative. Socioeconomic effects could be anticipated from outfitter/guide clients returning to the area as future tourists, thus contributing to the local economy.

This conclusion is based on a number of factors. The number of hunting trips would be small, when compared to general public hunting activities. Base camps are usually set up in existing, previously disturbed sites. Outfitter/guide clients frequently return to the area, further contributing to the Harney County economy. It is anticipated that overall use would not increase to the point that there would be cumulative effects to any resource.

## CHAPTER VI. MITIGATION MEASURES AND MONITORING

### A. Mitigation Measures

#### 1. Critical Elements

##### a. Cultural Resources

Traditionally used campsites would be inventoried and assessments would be made, to allow the BLM to make better judgments about the effects of this permit.

##### b. Migratory Birds

Camping would be limited to established campsites that are appropriate for group use.

c. Noxious Weeds

To ensure that noxious weed seeds are not spread from other areas, all vehicles and equipment would be cleaned prior to entry onto Burns District land. If permittee camps in or travels through noxious weed-infested areas, equipment and vehicles would be cleaned on-site.

Weed identification booklets and information would be given to the permittee. The permittee would be requested to notify the BLM of the location(s) of any noxious weeds found.

d. Wetlands and Riparian Zones

All human waste should be packed out on vehicle-supported trips.

Down trees would not be removed from streambanks.

e. Wilderness Study Areas

All permittee activities would incorporate "Leave No Trace" practices.

Travel would be single file on defined trails or spread out where no trails exist.

All toilet paper would be packed out.

All firewood would be "dead and down" - no collection from standing trees.

2. Noncritical Elements

a. Wildlife

All camps would be at least one-quarter mile away from isolated water sources to allow for wildlife access.

B. Monitoring

1. Critical Elements

a. Cultural Resources

Traditionally used campsites would be inventoried and any effects to cultural resources would be measured.

b. Migratory Birds

Bird monitoring transects would be established according to protocol along riparian areas used by the permittee.

c. Noxious Weeds

BLM would monitor the areas used for camping and parking for the presence of new or spreading noxious weeds.

2. Noncritical Elements

a. Wildlife

ODFW big game count data would be used as an indicator of effects to wildlife.

## CHAPTER VII. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

### A. List of Preparers

Karla Bird, Andrews Field Manager  
Dean Bolstad, Wild Horse Management Specialist  
Darren Brumback, Fisheries Biologist  
Jon Collins, Natural Resource Specialist  
Gary Foulkes, Planning and Environmental Coordinator  
Terri Geisler, Geologist (HazMat)  
Rick Hall, Natural Resource Specialist (Botanist)  
Fred McDonald, Natural Resource Specialist (Recreation)  
John Neeling, Outdoor Recreation Planner (Wilderness)  
Matt Obradovich, Wildlife Biologist  
Skip Renschler, Realty Specialist  
Jon Reponen, Natural Resource Specialist (Forester)  
Lesley Richman, Natural Resource Specialist (Noxious Weeds)  
Joan Suther, Three Rivers Field Manager  
Fred Taylor, Wildlife Biologist  
Nora Taylor, Botanist/Ecologist  
Scott Thomas, Archaeologist  
Evelyn Treiman, Outdoor Recreation Planner/Lead Preparer  
Cindy Weston, Fisheries Biologist

### B. Persons, Groups, and Agencies Consulted

Brett Jantze Guiding Service, Brett Jantze  
Steens Mountain Advisory Council

C. Public Notice and Availability

A notice will be placed in the Burns Times-Herald announcing the document's availability and a 30-day comment period. The document will also be available on the Burns District environmental documents Web page.