U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Prineville District Office
185 East 4th Street, P.O. Box 550,
Prineville, Oregon 97754

October 10, 1994

Land Tenure Adjustment

Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment for the John Day Resource Management Plan

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Summary

This environmental assessment analyzes the impacts of four alternatives for land tenure adjustment within the Grant County portion of the John Day planning area. The four altcmativcs were developed through the BLM planning system and public comments on the scoping brochure published on January 3, 1994. The alternatives and associated environmental assessment evaluate options for rctcntion. exchange and disposal of public land. Also included is an assessment of issues involving seven proposed land exchanges.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Purpose and Need

The existing John Day Resource Management Plan (RMP) does not provide a framework suitable for the disposal and exchange of various parcels of public land in Grant County. It also does not address various land tenure situations that have arisen since its completion in 1985.

The purpose of this plan amendment is to expand, clarify and strengthen the management direction for land tenure adjustments in Grant County to adequately meet specific standards outlined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMX) for making land ownership adjustments of particular parcels of public land to serve the national interests.

The plan amendment will provide management guidance in areas such as:

- which lands contain important public resource values that should be retained or acquired;
- where ownership adjustment opportunities exist to increase and/or improve resource values;
- eliminating administrative inefficiency of scattered public land containing less Important resource values.

Upon completing the plan amendment, resource decisions from the existing RMP will apply to all projects involving land ownership adjustments.

Since the John Day RMP was completed, there has been increased demand from the public for acquiring public land and/or exchanging private land for public land. There have been requests for public land to accommodate such things as recreation and public purposes and community needs. The need to respond to these requests and opportunities for land ownership adjustment, necessitates completing this plan amendment.

Land ownership adjustments, whether they involve an exchange, sale or acquisition of private land, have varying effects on the multitude of resources available for public use. Every project must be assessed on a case-by-case basis and cannot be specifically examined or analyzed in this publication. This Plan Amendment/EA may best be described as a programmatic statement concerning land tenure in the plan amendment area; however, it does consider seven exchanges which have been proposed and are described in Appendix B.

It is very important to realize that the BLM's overall intent and responsibility arc to retain and manage the public lands for the benefit of the American people. Throughout this document continual reference to land disposal may

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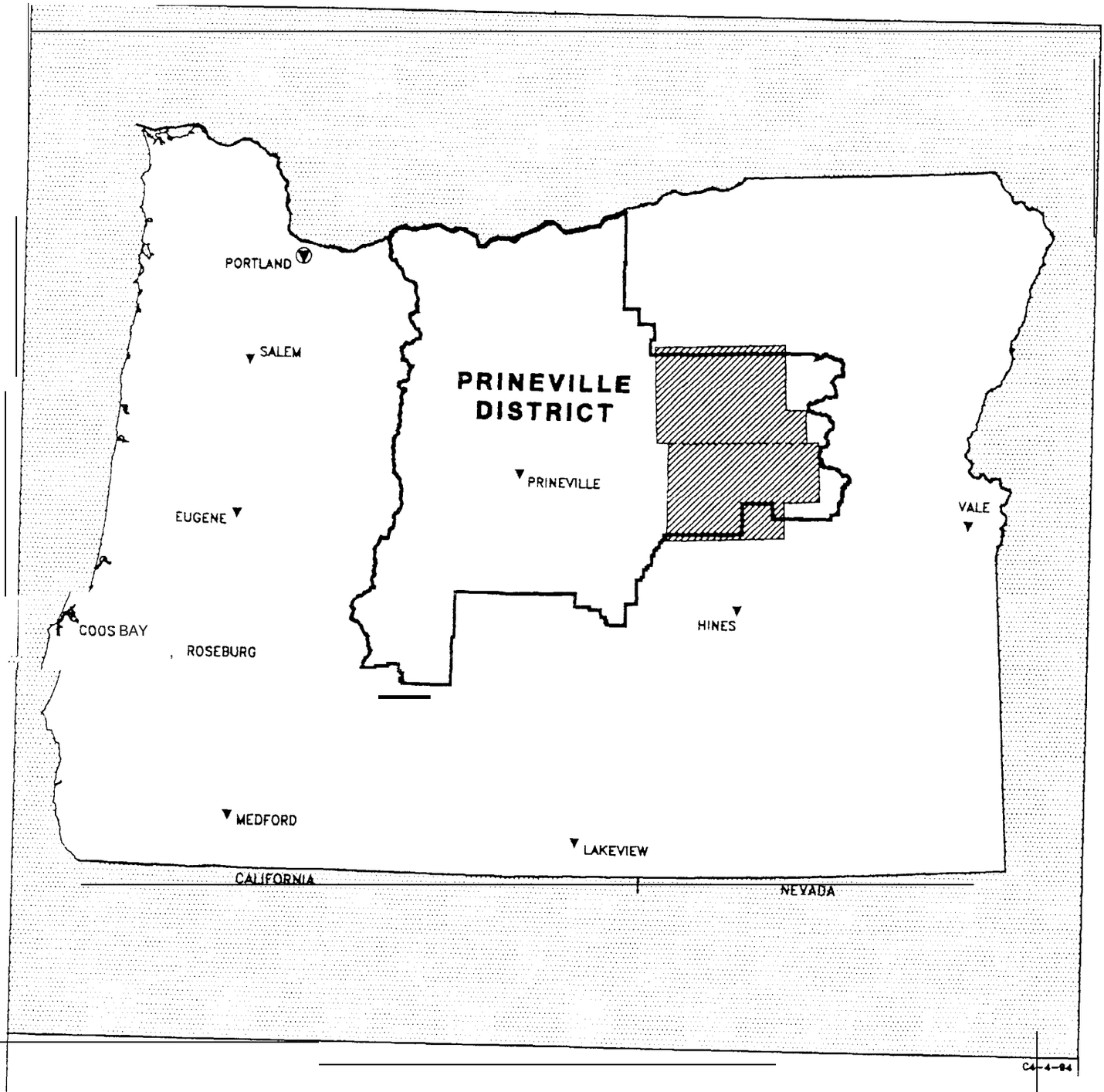

BLM State Office

BLM District Office

Prineville District Boundary

John Day Planning Area

KILOMETRES 0 10 25 50

0 10 25 50 MILES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

JOHN DAY PLANNING AREA

September 1994

MAP 1
General Location

lead one to believe otherwise. Although FLPMA does mandate the retention of the public lands, it also provides exceptions for disposal under very specific circumstances. This planning document is designed to address those exceptions.

About the Area

This portion of the BLM Central Oregon Resource Area contains approximately 182,000 acres of public land located in Grant County, Oregon (see Map 1). The resource area is bordered on the north and east by the Vale BLM District, on the west by Crook and Wheeler Counties and on the south by the Bums BLM District.

This proposed amendment will update the original John Day Resource Management Plan completed in 1985. The 1985 Plan makes land use allocations and provides management direction for the BLM-administered resources. Only decisions relating to land tenure adjustments will be affected by this proposed amendment. All other decisions in the 198.5 Plan will remain unchanged.

Resources found on these public lands include important wildlife habitats, including threatened or endangered species habitats, significant riparian and water resources and fish habitats; important river related and upland recreation opportunities; commercial forest lands, livestock grazing as well as cultural resources. There are also Congressionally-designated wild and scenic rivers and two (2) wilderness study areas.

The Planning Process

This document presents a proposed amendment to the John Day RMP and analyzes associated environmental consequences. Initial steps of the plan amendment included the identification of issues and the development of planning criteria (see Chapter 2). Issues were identified through public comments and focused on concerns and needs, as we!! as opportunities for resource use, enhancement and protection. Planning criteria were based on BLM's policy and guidance, applicable law, the results of public participation, and coordination with other federal agencies and state and local governments.

The preliminary issues, draft planning criteria and possible alternatives were identified in the planning newsletter dated January 3, 199-l. This scoping process was intended to obtain suggestions, concerns and comments from the public on possible issues. criteria and alternatives to management.

Conformance and Consistency

The four alternatives discussed in Chapter 2 of this document have varying degrees of conformance and consistency with existing land use plans.

All BLM planning and major actions are coordinated with other federal, state and local government agencies. In this way, potential conflicts are avoided and maximum consistency with affected agency land use plans is accomplished. For example, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) is required by the BLM planning regulations and guided by a 1986 National Level Memorandum of Understanding. All BLM planning and major resource management actions are coordinated with the State of Oregon. Planning is also coordinated with county courts and/or county planning departments, as well as incorporated cities.

This plan amendment is consistent, insofar as is possible, with resource related plans officially, approved or adopted by state and local agencies and with plans, policies and programs of federal laws and regulations. The comprehensive plans for Grant County and applicable cities have been acknowledged by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission and are in conformance with statewide planning goals and objectives. Proposed BLM land uses are compatible with county plan guidelines for the various zone classifications. The ownership adjustment of small parcels of public land would not violate county plans because the new owners would still be subject to county zoning requirements. In a similar manner, new landowners would need county approval for new nonconforming or excepted land uses.

Relationship of the Preferred Alternative and Other Alternatives to Indian Tribal Interests

Four tribal governments maintain traditional interests for certain public lands in the planning areas addressed in the Prineville District RMPs (Two Rivers, Brothers/LaPine and John Day). Included are lands ceded to the U.S. Government by tribal governments of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, The Klamath Tribes and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in ratified treaties. Also included are lands of traditional interest to the Burns Paiute for which no treaties were ratified. Treaty rights provide for off-reservation hunting, fishing, gathering and grazing activities by Warm Springs and Umatilla tribes.

The heritage-related interests oi contemporary American Indians include the protection of Indian burials and archaeological sites, as well as the perpetuation of traditional practices. Federal legislation and Departmental policy recognizes that federal land-managing agencies have a continuing responsibility to honor the terms of the treaties and to protect the rights of Indian Nations, as well as the resource that provides for those rights.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been developed between the Bureau oi Land Management and the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla (one has been initiated, but not yet signed, with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) regarding the appropriate level and timing for consultation that may be required by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, the National Historic4 Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969. That is, the BLM will consult with the appropriate tribal representatives in the earliest stages of project or activity planning that may affect tribal interests. MOUs will also be pursued with the Bums Paiute and The Klamath Tribes.

Ongoing Public Participation

The public will have a continuing opportunity to participate in the Plan Amendment EA process. Written comments are requested from those reviewing this document. Records of public involvement activities, correspondence and results are summarized in Appendix A.

Requirements for Further Environmental Analysis

Under any of the four alternatives, the public lands in the plan amendment area would be managed under existing statutes and BLM resource allocations and directions in the existing land use plans. Except for the seven proposed land exchanges, all subsequent land ownership adjustments would involve additional public participation with appropriate notification through *the Federal Register,* news media and letters to affected and interested parties. The seven proposed exchanges analyzed in this document will be exceptions since this Plan Amendment/EA and applicable referenced documents provide for public participation and environmental analysis on those affected lands.

Following the completion of the plan amendment, although a land ownership adjustment may be in conformance with existing land use plans, a site-specific environmental analysis (including categorical exclusion where appropriate) would continue to be required for newly proposed projects.

public and private lands through application of a good neighbor policy. The BLM will work closely with both county and city entities to identify tracts important to them and will cooperate in an attempt to meet local government needs.

2. Lands will be acquired, sold or exchanged in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable federal laws and regulations to provide for more efficient management of the public and private lands. Public lands identified for possible sale or exchange will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to the criteria outlined under Criteria for Land Ownership Adjustment in this document. XII land tenure adjustment transactions will be based on equal values as determined by fair market value appraisals. The BLM acknowledges the county government concern about these transactions reducing the tax base and will remain sensitive to this issue when considering any land tenure adjustment transaction.

3. Public lands will be managed for the protection and enhancement of state and federal sensitive, threatened or endangered plant and animal species. All known or potential habitat of these species will be evaluated prior to implementing actions which may affect them. Consultation in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Spccics Act will be conducted as appropriate.

4. To ensure that cultural resources receive appropriate consideration, all public lands proposed for disposal will be inventoried for cultural resources. Tracts with resources present will either be evaluated for National Register eligibility (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended and E.O. 11593, 1971) or dropped from consideration for disposal. Lands with sites eligible for the Register will not be disposed of without adverse impacts having been satisfactorily mitigated.

5. Private inholdings which are acquired within Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will be managed consistent with BLM's Wilderness Interim Management Policy (IMP). Congress designates areas as wilderness or decides they are unsuitable for designation. Current IMP guidance prohibits disposal of public lands within WSAs.

6. Consistency with county zoning regulations and land use plans and other federal agency land use plans will be maintained pursuant to Department of Interior regulations and BLM policy.

7. The BLM recognizes that the public lands are an important present and future source of the Nation's mineral rind energy resources. In order to maintain the availability of the public land as a source of mineral and energy resources, areas with high locatable mineral potential will normally be retained in public ownership. Howcvcr, as with any resource, tradeoffs may occur when evaluating the public benefit of acquiring or disposing of lands involved in land tenure adjustments.

8. In order to conserve scarce habitats and meet biodiversity goals, the habitat types limited in availability due to natural or management causes, such as old-growth forests, riparian and wetland habitat, will be acquired whenever possible. When desiring to exchange out of these types of habitat, equal acreage of selected and offered lands will be the desired goal. However, if less acres of habitat arc oifcred which will better block up public lands or if habitat, Threatened, Endangered or other special species can be acquired, the equal acreage standards may be modified to allow flexibility.

The Zone Concept

A three-zone concept is being used to categorize the public lands for all forms of retention, disposal and exchange. The three-zone concept was utilized in the other approved RMPs in the Prineville District, per Oregon/Washington policy. Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 incorporate the zone concept and would permit the BLM to make ownership adjustments within the plan amendment area. The zone proposals by alternative arc delineated on Maps 2, 3 and 4.

Zone 1 lands are public lands with high resource values. Public land within zone 1 will be retained in public ownership, although they may be traded for other land within zone 1 having higher public value. Private land within zone 1 is generally considcrcd desirable for acquisition, however each tract will be cvaluatcd on a case-by-case basis.

Zone 2 lands may bc scattered and isolated, or found in large blocks. Some tracts are low in public value and others contain high public values. They will generally be retained but may be exchanged for lands with higher public values within the zone or in other zones. Each tract of public land considered for disposal will bc cvaluatcd on a case-by-case basis.

Zone 3 lands arc public lands which are fragmented or scattered and generally lack public access. They are potentially suitable for disposal through transfer to another agency, exchange or public sale. It should be noted that in most cases, public sale will not be used for disposal of

Alternative 2

Of the four alternatives, this alternative has the greatest amount of land within Zone 1 and least amount within Zone 3 (see Map 3). Public land within Zone 1 would be retained. Exchanges from Zone 2 to Zone 1 or from Zone 3 to Zones 1 or 2 would be considered. Exchanges within zones would also be considered. No public land other than those identified in the immediate vicinity of John Day would be offered for sale. Acquisition of private lands which have important resource values within Zone 1 and 2 would be emphasized. Under this alternative public lands in the Dixie Creek area would be retained in federal ownership.

Alternative 3

Of the four alternatives, this is the preferred alternative (see Map 4). It combines resource value protection with land exchange and disposal, and best represents the combined comments received from the public during the 30-day comment period. Every zone has received some modification to adapt it to the comments received and to balance the broad range of interests involved.

Public lands within Zone 1 would be retained or exchanged for lands of high resource value within Zone 1. Acquisition of private lands which have important resource values within Zones 1 and 2 would be emphasized, although some land in the immediate vicinity of John Day would still be considered for sale. The preferred method of disposal of all other tracts would be by exchange.

Public land in the Dixie Creek area would be retained in federal ownership. Under Section 204 of Public Law 94-579, Oct. 21, 1976 (Federal Land Policy and Management Act), the "Small Tract" located in T. 12 S., R. 33 E., Section 14 would be reclassified and withdrawn from mineral entry to be used as an outdoor classroom for forest practices and environmental education by the Prairie City, John Day and Canyon City schools. The Dixie Creek drainage would be designated as Prairie City's municipal watershed and the "Small Tract" could be used as a water quality monitoring site by both the BLM and Prairie City in addition to its use as an outdoor classroom. The possibility of this site being leased by Grant County under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act would also be considered under this alternative.

Alternative 3

Under this alternative the existing land use plan would not be amended. (This is the No-Action Alternative.) Land exchange proposals would generally not be possible since the current land use plan does not specifically identify sufficient public land for disposal to make land exchanges a real possibility. Additionally, the existing plan does not operate on the zone system and therefore does not identify high value public land to retain or private land to acquire. Under this plan the Prineville District has not pursued land exchanges and would not in the future.

No action would be taken on the "Small Tract" near Dixie Creek under this alternative and it would remain withdrawn from mineral entry under the Small Tract Act.

There was considerable public comment regarding the Dixie Creek drainage. Comments ranged from requests for the sale and disposal of the Ophir Millsite, to making it an outdoor classroom for the schools of Prairie City, John Day and Canyon City. Prairie City also requested that the drainage be designated and managed as a watershed for their city. Consequently, you will see these issues addressed in each of the four alternatives.

Criteria for Land Ownership Adjustment

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and other federal laws, Executive Orders and policies suggest criteria for use in evaluating public land for retention or disposal and for identifying acquisition priorities. This list is not considered all inclusive, but represents the major factors to be considered. They include:

- Areas within National Wild and Scenic River or State Scenic Waterway Boundaries;
- Threatened or endangered or sensitive plant and animal habitat;
- Fish habitat and riparian areas;
- Nesting/breeding habitat for game animals;
- Key big-game seasonal habitat:
- Developed recreation sites and recreation access;
- High visual resources;
- Areas containing scientific value;
- Energy and mineral potential;
- Significant cultural resources and sites eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places;
- Wilderness and areas being studied for wilderness;
- Accessibility of the land for public uses;
- Amount of public investments in facilities or improvements and the potential for recovering those investments;
- Difficulty or cost of administration (manageability);
- Suitability of the land for management by another federal agency;
- Significance of the decision in stabilizing business, social and economic conditions. and/or lifestyles;
- Encumbrances, including but not limited to. with-

Table 1 - Alternative Comparison

Management Issues	Alternative			
	1	2	3 (Preferred)	4 (No Action)
Retention of Public land emphasized - Zones 1 & 2	NO	YCS	Yes	NO
Retention of Public land emphasized - Zone 3	so	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emphasize exchange opportunities - Zones 1 & 2	NO	Yes	Yes	NO
Land Sales possible in Zone 1	NO	NO	No	NO
Land Sales possible in Zone 2	Yes	No	Yes but not emphasized	Limited
Land Sales possible in Zone 3	Yes	John Day area only	Yes but no emphasized	Limited
Exchange for acquisition of private holdings with important resource values emphasized	NO	Yes	Yes	NO

drawals, rights-of-way or existing leases or permits;

- Consistency with cooperative agreements and plans or policies of other agencies; and
- Suitability (need for change in land ownership or use) for purposes including, but not limited to, community expansion or economic development, such as industrial, residential or agricultural (other than grazing) development.

These land ownership adjustment criteria will be considered in land reports and environmental analyses prepared for specific adjustment proposals.

Transfers to other public agencies will be considered where improved management efficiency would result. Minor adjustments involving sales or exchanges or both, may be permitted based on site specific application of the land ownership adjustment criteria.

Generally speaking, the BLM will be looking to acquire tracts with high public values that block up the land it manages, improves public access, enhances management opportunities for forest and old growth management, riparian and anadrornous fish habitat, wildlife management, improves recreational opportunities for the public or acquires into public ownership lands with other determined public values. Each exchange will be evaluated and prioritized on the basis of the net gain in public and natural resource values. Mineral resources will also be evaluated in every disposal action and the BLM will strive to avoid creating "split-estate" situations where the surface and subsurface are owned by different parties.

Habitat types limited in availability (such as old growth forest, riparian and wetlands) will be acquired whenever possible with the goal of maintaining landscape scale habitat diversity. When necessary to exchange out of these types of habitat, equal acreage of selected and offered lands will normally be the desired goal. However. if less acres of habitat are offered which will better block up public lands or if habitat for officially designated Threatened. Endangered or other special status species can be acquired. the equal acreage standard may be modified to allow flexibility.

Each exchange proposal will also be evaluated on the basis of its socio-economic impacts to Grant County, the region and the State of Oregon. While all exchange transactions are completed on an equal value basis as determined by Fair Market Value appraisals, it will be the goal of the BLM to minimize the impact of each land tenure adjustment on the county tax base. Acquired lands would be managed so as to be consistent with pertinent federal and state laws such as the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Oregon State Scenic Waterways Act.

The above outlines the general goals of the exchange program, but each proposal will be evaluated on its own merits. The criteria outlined above are not intended to emphasize one resource over another. The value of each criterion is considered both individually and as a part of the entire impact of the land ownership adjustment. Flexibility in assessing the value of all the resources is mandatory to ensure that the best decisions are made.

To be sold, public land must meet the following disposal criteria derived from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act:

- such land is difficult and uneconomical to manage as part of the public lands, and is not suitable for management by another federal department or agency: or
- such land was acquired for a specific purpose and is no longer required for that or any other federal purpose; or
- disposal of such land will serve important public objectives that cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land, and these objectives outweigh other public objectives and values that would b-e served by maintaining such land in federal ownership.

Generally, exchanges are the preferred method of disposal but sales will be utilized when:

- it is required by nations1 policy:
- it is required to achieve disposal objectives on a timely basis, and where disposal through exchange would cause unacceptable delays;
- the level of interest in a specific [illegible] indicates that competitive bidding is desirable for reasons of fairness;
- disposal through exchange is not feasible; and
- the criteria in Section 206 of FLPMA area met.

The preferred method of selling public land will be competitive bidding at public auction to qualified purchasers. However, modified competitive bidding procedures may be used when there is no legal public access to a tract, when necessary to avoid jeopardizing an existing use on adjacent land, or to avoid dislocation of existing public land users.

Public land may be sold by direct sale at fair market value when the criteria in Section 206 of FLPMA are met and:

- such land is needed by state or local governments;
- direct sale is needed to protect equities arising from authorized use;
- direct sale is needed to resolve inadvertent, unauthorized use; or
- there is only one adjacent landowner and no legal public access.

Cultural/Paleontological Resources

Prehistory/History

The majority of public lands in the planning area arc concentrated along the John Day River, especially the Main Stem between Spray and Dayville, the South Fork and to a lesser degree, the North Fork. Minor concentrations of public land occur around Canyon City, Dixie Creek and the Cottonwood Creek area near Monument. Much of the land administered by the BLM is of a type not necessarily conducive to high probability for significant prehistoric habitation or use.

Archaeologically speaking, little formal study has occurred on these lands. Currently available information comcx from project specific surveys, which arc not extensive. The majority of known prehistoric sites occurs on public lands along the South Fork. Here are found a wide range of sites including rockshelters, house pit village sites, surface lithic flake/tool scatters, pictographs and rock features. Most of these, however, arc not found along the river corridor, but are associated with secondary drainages away from the river. The Main Stem between Spray and Dayville also exhibits some prehistoric use. At least one surface lithic flake/tool scatter, a rockshcltcr and a complex of pictogrsphs are known to occur within the river corridor. Recent surveys on the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument have revealed additiona! discovcrics, but the exact nature of these are not known. One small house pit village is known to occur within the river corridor on the North Fork.

An ethnographic overview of the planning unit reveals that the composition of occupation by Indian groups has changed through time. Prior to 1830, the region was primarily occupied by the Northcm Paiute, with some USC by Sahaptian-speaking groups. It was only after this period, due to the introduction of the horse, firearms and disease, that the Sahaptian-speaking groups (specifically Umatilla, Cayuse and Tenino) were able to displace the Northern Paiute and occupy the area on a more regular basis. However, there arc indications that occupation of the upper John Day country was dynamic, exhibiting varying dcgrccs of utilization by both the Northern Paiute and the Sahaptian-speaking groups during this period.

The signing of the Treaty of 1855 with the Indians of Middle Oregon caused this entire area to fall within the ceded boundaries of what is now known as the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation. The treaty provided exclusive rights for fishing "in streams running through and bordering said reservation ... and at all other usual and accustomed stations iii common with citizens of the United States..." It also allowed for "the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their stock on unclaimed lands, in common with citizens..." That same year, a similar treaty was negotiated with the Walla Walla, Cayuse, etc. Indians, which are now known as the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation. These groups were also afforded the same rights and privileges on ceded lands which include only a small portion of the North Fork John Day River. However, both the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs and Umatilla consider much of this area a usual and accustomed joint USC area.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla are said to have information indicating that they have an extensive array of documented usual and accustomed sites for fishing, hunting, camping, root digging, berry picking and other cultural and traditional uses. The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs are said to have pursued "usual and uccusromcd" activities in this area as well. This office, howcvcr. has no information on file for any particular locations currently being used by members of either reservation. Each tribe will be consulted during the formulation stage of an exchange.

Gold mining is historically important to the upper John Day River basin. It was the discovery of gold in the 18605 that promoted settlement of the area, especially at Dayville and Prairie City. The Dixie Creek area exhibits the most visible features of this and later mining areas on BLM-administered lands in this region. Ditches, tailings, adits and collapsed structures dot the landscape in this location. Accompanying the influx of miners were folks with a variety of supporting skills, most notable being farming/ ranching and timber/milling. These activities over the past 100 years have left the most enduring imprint on the lands of this region. Another feature associated with the early development of the region is the travel corridor. Examples include The Dalles Military Wagon Road and the Yreka-Canyon City Wagon Road.

Paleontology

Paleontological rcsourccs within this region arc scattered, varied and, in many instances, significant. Vertebrates, Invertebrate and botanical fossils occur primarily in the western half of the region. The most significant area for vertebrate fossils is undoubtedly found along the John Day River between Kimberly and Dayville. In this stretch are fossiliferous exposures belonging to the John Day, Mascall and Rattlesnake Formations which cover the last 30 million years. The Sheep Rock Unit of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is also located within this area. BLM lands adjacent to the National Monument are known to have as good as, if not better fossil resources, however BLM has not conducted a paleontological inventory of public lands in this area. The paleontologist

from the National Park Service regularly assists with the management of fossils on these lands as part of an inter-agency agreement.

The **South** Fork of the John Day, especially the northern portion, is another area that has the potential for significant vertebrate fossil resources. Little work has been conducted in this area. Lands south of Monument also contain fossiliferous exposures which are receiving study and may prove to be another significant source of vertebrate fossils.

South of the John Day River between Dayville and John Day is a location of the botanical fossils belonging to the Mascall Formation. This appears to be important as an example of flora for this particular period. In the upper stretch of the South Fork, near Izee, are fossil marine invertebrate localities. Some work has been done in this area, but these do not appear to be particularly significant.

Recreation/Visual Resources

Three developed recreation sites are situated on public lands in the planning area. These include the Lone Pine and Big Bend Campgrounds and the Monument Recreation Site.

Opportunities for undeveloped camping and picnicking exist in numerous areas throughout the planning area. Hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hiking and sightseeing opportunities exist on much of the public lands. The mixed private and federal land ownership pattern, however, limit these recreational opportunities in many areas.

A National Backcountry Byway parallels the South Fork John Day River between Dayville and the Malheur National Forest. This route provides numerous sightseeing opportunities. An interpretive plan is currently being developed. In addition, the route provides vehicle access to the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area, cooperatively managed by BLM and Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife, providing opportunities for hunting, fishing and wildlife watching.

Three State Scenic Waterway segments, the North Fork, South Fork and Middle Fork John Day River are located in the planning area. Sightseeing, fishing and camping opportunities exist along these rivers. Rafting opportunities can be found on the North Fork John Day River during high flows. The South Fork John Day River is a federally-designated Wild and Scenic River between Smokey Creek and the Malheur National Forest.

Public lands adjacent to the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Sheep Rock Unit, contribute to sightseeing opportunities and primitive recreational opportunities. A description of the Recreation/Visual Resources involved in each exchange proposal is discussed below:

EXCHANGE 1: Recreational opportunities that would be available in the offered lands include hunting, hiking, wildlife watching and fishing. The selected land provides for few or no recreational opportunities in that they are small scattered tracts completely surrounded by private land and consequently have limited or no legal public access.

EXCHANGE 2: The offered lands include several miles of the Middle Fork John Day River. Recreational opportunities that would be available include fishing, picnicking, access *for* boating the river during high flows and scenic opportunities for vehicle touring. The selected land provides for few recreational opportunities in that they consist mostly of small scattered tracts surrounded by private land with limited or no legal public access. Selected lands in T. 7 S., R. 28 E., Section 7, however, are adjacent to National Forest lands and contribute to some opportunities for hunting and fishing.

EXCHANGE 3: All of the land offered is located along the North Fork John Day River. Opportunities would exist for rafting, fishing, scenic vehicle touring, picnicking and possibly hunting. In addition, opportunities for dispersed camping accessed by either vehicle or raft would become available. The selected land offered consists of both tracts with and without legal access. Recreational opportunities on selected lands in the northeast corner of T. 7 S.. R. 30 E. include scenic views, hunting and hiking opportunities. There are no or few recreational opportunities on the other tracts as they have limited or no public access.

EXCHANGE 4: The offered land is located on the South Fork John Day Wild and Scenic River within the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area and along the South Fork John Day National Backcountry Byway. Recreational opportunities on the offered land includes fishing, hunting and scenic vehicle touring. Some additional dispersed vehicle camping would also become available. The selected land provides for few or no recreational opportunities in that it consists of tracts completely surrounded by private land with no legal public access.

EXCHANGE 5: As no land has been offered at this time, an evaluation cannot be made. Opportunities on the selected federal land on the east line of T. 13 S., R. 28 E. include hunting and hiking. These lands are adjacent to state lands in the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area. There are few or no recreational opportunities in the remaining selected land due to limited or no legal public access.

EXCHANGE 6: The bulk of the offered land is located along Wall Creek near the North Fork of the John Day River. Recreational opportunities on the offered land include fishing, hunting and scenic vehicle touring. Some additional dispersed vehicle camping would also become available. The proximity of the selected lands to the cities of John Day and Canyon City promote recreational uses such as open space and evening walks. Some hiking and scenic opportunities are also present. Thcsc opportunities are somewhat limited by a lack of access on some of the tracts.

EXCHANGE 7: Rccrcational opportunities that would bc available in the offered lands include hunting, hiking, wildlife watching and fishing. Public ownership of these tracts would form a larger cohesive unit of public lands and help to establish a public lands corridor between BLM lands and the Umatilla National Forest. The selected land provides for few or no recreational opportunities in that they are small scattered tracts surrounded by private land and consequently have limited or no legal public access.

Wilderness

Two Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are located in the planning area including the Aldrich Mountain WSA (9,395 acres) and the Strawberry Mountain WSAs (1 ,149 acres). The Strawberry Mountain WSAs arc adjacent to the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness administered by the Malheur National Forest. Public lands in the South Fork John Day River canyon neighbor the Black Canyon Wilderness also administered by the Ochoco National Forest. None of the seven proposed land exchanges will affect any of the designated WSAs.

Social/Economic Values

The Grant County economic base is built primarily upon the ranching and timber industries. Only 2.5 percent of the total value of gross business activity in Grant County can be attributed to visitor expenditures.

John Day and Canyon City form the hub of the business community in Grant County and as with most rcsourcc-based economics the rest of the population is widely scsttcrcd throughout the rest of the county. Other smaller communities include Prairie City, Dayville, Kimberly and Monument.

There arc nearly 182,000 acres of public land in Grunt County, most of which arc leased for grazing but also produce timber for local markets.

These communities arc highly dependent on the natural resource base available to them and access to these resources will directly impact their economic well being

Forest Resources

The planning area contains approximately 3 1,383 acres oi Bureau-administered forest land spread throughout Grant County. Of these acres, approximately 28,027 acres arc considered commercial forest land. Commercial forest land is land which is capable of yielding at least 20 cubic feet of wood per acre per year.

Approximately 25 percent of these commercial forest land acres arc located on scattered and/or isolated parcels of BLM-administered public land. Isolated refers to small parcels that lack legal administrative or public access. There are some large blocks of BLM-administered forest land within the area where forest management activities are ongoing. Private (offered) and public (selected) commercial forest land acreage included in exchange proposals i-7 arc summarized in Table 2. The commercial forest land (CFL) in the area consists primarily of ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, white fir, western larch (tamarack) and lodgepole pine. Some of the forest stands contain one species while other stands consist of a mixture of two, three, four or five species. Locations and classifications ot these forested lands have been mapped and are available for review at BLM's John Day field office in John Day, Oregon.

Botanical/Special Status Plants

Public land within the John Day RMP area contains diverse habitat and is home to at least four special status plant (SSP) species, all of which are candidates for federal listing as endangered or threatened. Another 11 spccics arc suspected of occurring on BLM land within the RMP area. Table 3 lists those species known or suspected of occurring on BLM land within the planning area:

Most of thcsc species occur in specialized habitats containing endemic soils or other features.

Most are being impacted to some degree by ongoing livestock grazing, timber harvest, mining and other uses of the land throughout the planning area. Only *Luina serpentina* (BLM populations) is found in habitat which is not currently impacted by human use.

Where populations of SSP arc being negatively impacted by human activities, measures arc taken to minimize impacts. Depending on the magnitude of thrcut, location and other factors, protective measures such as change in

Table 2 - Acres of Commercial Forest Land (CFL) by Exchange Proposal

Exchange #	CFL Acres *1 Selected	CFL Acres *2 Offered	Acres of CFL Gain or (Loss)
1	Unspecified	Unspecified	Could equalize
2	202	52	(150)
3	689	189	(500)
4	200	20	(180)
5	173	Unknown	Probable (loss)
6	85	5	(80)
7	0	0	0
Totals	1350	266 Unknown = 174	(910)

*1 - All selected numbers are from BLM inventory records
*2 - All offered numbers are approximate

Table 3. Special Status Plants In The John Day Rmp Area

KNOWN TO OCCUR ON BLM LAND	STATUS*
Astragalus diaphanus var. *diurnus*	FC2
Luina serpentina	FC1
Mimulus washingtonensis var. washingtonensis	FC2
Thelypodium eucosmum	FC2
SUSPECTED OF OCCURRING ON BLM LAND	**STATUS***
Camissonia pygmaea	BS
Carex hystricina	AS
Cryptantha rostellata	AS
Cymopterus bipinnatus	AS
Lomatium ravenii	AS
Mimulus evanescens	BS
Oryzopsis hendersonii	BS
Rorippa columbine	FC2
Texosporium sancti-jacobi	FC2
Thelypodium howeilii spp. *howeilii*	AS
Utricularia minor	AS

*Status:
AS - Assessment species
BS - Bureau sensitive
FC1 - Federal Candidate Category 1 for listing as endangered or threatened
FC2 - Federal Candidate Category 2 for listing as endangered or threatened

livestock grazing management, fencing and/or intensive monitoring may be undertaken. Presently, all known populations of Federal Candidate and Bureau Sensitive plants are qualitatively monitored every 2-3 years to detect any adverse changes or threats. Populations appear to be stable at this time.

Approximately nine percent of the public land tentatively identified for disposal has been inventoried for the presence or absence of SSP, mainly portions of exchanges 1 and 5 in association with past timber sales. No SSP were found or are suspected of occurring on these tracts which have been inventoried.

Based on known occurrences within the RMP area, there is a strong possibility that *Astragalus diaphanus* var. *diurnus* would be found on tracts identified for disposal in Exchange 4. *Mimulus washingtonensis* and *Thelypodium eucosmum* would be suspected on tracts identified for disposal in Exchanges 6 and 7.

For tracts identified for acquisition by the federal government, it is likely that Exchanges 1 and 7 would provide additional habitat for *Mimulus washingtonensis* and *Thelypodium eucosmum,* and Exchanges 4 and 6 could provide additional habitat for *Mimulus washingtonensis* and *Astragalus diaphanus* var. *diurnus.*

Livestock Grazing

The Bureau-administered rangelands in the plan amendment area are nearly all grazed by livestock on 143 allotments with approximately 25,323 animal unit months (AUMs). The livestock are grazed on public lands that are intermingled with private lands.

Grass species along the rivers include bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*), basin wildrye (*Elymus cinereus*), Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), bluegrasses (*Poa spp.*); other shrubs and trees include: wild rose (*Rosa sp.*), snowberry (*Symphyoricurpos albus*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), juniper (*Juniperus spp.*), Douglas-fir (*Psuedopsuga menziesii*), and white fir (*Abies concolor*). On the dryer upland sites, bluebunch wheatgrass is the dominant forage. Other grasses include Idaho fescue (*Festuca iduhoensis*), Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), and needle grasses (*Stipa spp.*). Forbs include yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), buckwheat (*Eriogonum sp.*), lupine (*Lupinus spp.*), and phlox (*Phlox sp.*). Shrub and tree species include juniper, bitterbrush (*Purschia tridentata*), basin big sage (*Artemisia tridentat*), low sage (*Artemisia arbuscula*), and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus sp.*). Idaho fescue is the dominant forage species on the higher elevation upland sites. Other grasses here include: bluebunch wheatgrass, bluegrasses, bottlebrush squirreltail (*Siranion hystrix*) and bromes (*Bromus spp.*). Herbaceous plants include yarrow, indian paintbrush (*Castilleja sp.*), and onion (*Allium sp.*). Trees and shrubs include: sagebrush, juniper, bitterbrush, wild rose, snowberry and Oregon grape (*Berberis sp.*). Cheatgrass or downy brome (*Bromus tectorum*) is common throughout all sites. Woodland sites consist of ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta latifolia*), white fir, elk sage (*Carex geyeri*), pinegrass (*Calamogrotis sp.*), wild rose, snowberry, Oregon grape, yarrow, and many other plant species.

The effect of each proposed exchange (Appendix B) on Livestock Grazing is discussed below.

Exchange 1 - The affected allotment is managed jointly with the adjacent private landowner. Livestock graze the pastures for two to three months each year. Public access is available using the Dick Creek and Timber Basin (Frank's Creek) roads.

Exchanges 2 and 3 - The public land affected by these exchanges has limited access and present grazing management is deferred rotation.

Exchange 4 - These tracts of public land are primarily timbered and have no public access. A deferred grazing system is in use here with grazing occurring during late summer and early fall.

Exchange 5 - Public land here consists of scattered upland tracts which receive little or no grazing. There is no public access.

Exchange 6 - Generally, grazing consists of light to moderate livestock use, seasonlong, because the public land is scattered and isolated. There is no public access to these tracts.

Exchange 7 - Grazing is variable and occurs over a portion of the year. There is no access to the public lands.

Chapter IV - Environmental Consequences

Introduction

Many of the environmental consequences of a particular land ownership adjustment (i.e. sale, purchase, exchange, etc.) would result from two factors: 1) total acreage (with its associated resource values) leaving public ownership compared to what is coming into public ownership, and 2) the future land uses of the lands which change ownership.

In all land ownership adjustments (specifically exchanges), an appraisal to determine fair market value of the private and public lands is conducted. The final size of the exchange is based upon the findings of this appraisal. Per acre land values between the private and public lands may be similar or quite different. The exchange proponent may equalize values with a cash payment of up to 25% of the appraised value of the public land. It is possible, therefore, that either the public land base or private land base may be increased in a particular exchange.

This plan amendment includes four alternatives and also addresses seven separate land exchange proposals. The specific land exchange proposals do not differ between the alternatives, as the same tracts of land are involved. All of the proposals are consistent with each of the alternatives except for the no-action alternative (Alternative 4). Under Alternative 4 the current management considerations regarding land exchanges would remain in effect. Essentially, this means that only specific land parcels identified in the John Day Resource Management Plan would be available for sale or disposal and no exchanges would be permitted. This means that only a portion of the public land specified in Exchange proposals 3 and 6 would be allowed for sale. Due to the consistency of the proposals with all the alternatives, they are compared according to the resources affected and then each proposal is analyzed separate from alternatives 1-3. Refer to Maps 2, 3 and 3 regarding the discussion of each alternative and Appendix B for the legal description of each exchange proposal.

Management Actions Common To All Alternatives

All land exchanges require an analysis of the mineral estate and a minerals report will be completed prior to the completion of any exchange. Generally, mineral estates will be traded with the surface estate, provided that both parties own their respective mineral estates and that it is considered to be of equal value, to prevent creating a split-estate situation.

All tracts will also be inventoried for hazardous materials. Generally, any tract found to contain hazardous materials will not be traded or acquired.

Each tract will also be inventoried for threatened and endangered species and cultural resource values. Public land found to contain threatened or endangered plant or animal species will not be traded. Tracts containing high cultural resource values will either be retained or have the resource information recovered prior to disposal.

All public lands considered for exchange will be inventoried for wildlife values and dropped from the exchange if the land is considered important to a sensitive species.

These inventories and reports will be completed prior to any exchange and tracts will be dropped from consideration as necessary.

A determination has been made that the public interest will be well served by making these exhanges and the values and objectives on the federal lands to be conveyed are not more than the values and public objectives of the non-federal lands to be acquired.

All of the following critical elements of the human environment will be considered prior to the completion of any land tenure adjustment proposal: ACECs, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Floodplains, Hazardous Materials, Native American Religious Concerns, Prime or Unique Farmland, Solid Waste, Special Status Plants or Animals, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness, Water Quality and Riparian Areas.

Impacts to Fish/Watershed Resources

In general, resources located on lands in Zone 2 will not have any adverse effects; however, the impacts must be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Removal from public ownership of the scattered lands in Zone 3 will not change current resource conditions since most of the land in those areas is already in private ownership. The fish and watershed resource values will be dependent on how the private lands arc managed, whether or not the BLM administers a few scattered tracts of land in a drainage. Acquisition of lands in Zone 1 will benefit fish and watershed resources by blocking up important resident and anadromous fish habitat, including summer steelhead and spring chinook salmon, The conglomeration of lands along the wild and scenic portions of the South Fork and North Fork of the John Day River will allow for more contiguous management activities which could lead to healthier riparian areas. These healthier areas would in turn lead to lower water temperatures due to increased shade, cleaner water due to the filtering effect of riparian vegetation, and high bank stability to dissipate high flows and collect sediment. These areas could then improve the water conditions and mitigate for disturbance or improper management farther upstream in the watershed.

Alternative 1 designates most of the BLM holdings in the Middle Fork and upper mainstem of the John Day as Zone 3. Although these stretches of river provide habitat for summer steelhead and spring chinook, the small amount of public land in these areas cannot be administered effectively to provide good water quality or good fish habitat. However, the Standard and Dixie Creek area has also been designated Zone 3 under this alternative. This area has historically supported bull trout (*Salvelinus malma confluentus*) which is being considered for listing under the Federal Threatened and Endangered Species Act. The Zone 1 lands arc located along the North Fork and South Fork where there is presently known summer steelhead and spring chinook habitat, so acquisition of lands in these areas would be beneficial. Alternatives 2 and 3 are similar to Alternative 1 in consequences except the Standard and Dixie Creek areas are not designated as Zone 3 but differ in area that is designated as Zone 1 and 3. Alternative 3 provides the best mix of land areas and designation for management of the fish and watershed resources.

The specific land exchange proposals primarily suggest transferring public ownership from scattered tracts in the uplands to more consolidated lands along the major river corridors and other small stream basins. Consolidation of land in this manner is beneficial to stocks of fish, both native and anadromous. Although Exchange 2 would relinquish land in historical summer steelhead drainages, the acquired tracts occur along major thoroughfares for summer steelhead and spring chinook salmon. Proposals 1 and 7 suggest relinquishing land in historical summer steelhead drainages and blocking up land in some smaller non-anadromous drainages. Although there would be loss of management for anadromous species in these exchanges, the acquired land blocks up smaller drainages that can be managed for water quality much easier.

Exchange proposal #6 offers some important riparian areas along the South Fork and North Fork (Wall Creek) of the John Day River, but the main focus of this exchange proposal is the disposal of a large amount of public land. Some of these lands arc located within the zone 3 areas for which the public would acquire significant riparian land along anadromous streams. There would be no impact under Alternative 3.

Impacts to Wildlife/Special Status Animals

Each alternative (1-3) designates a different amount of land in each zone classification. Alternative 3 provides the best combination of these designations to benefit wildlife. Overall, lands along the river are designated as Zone 1 and dispersed lands in the uplands arc Zone 3. Riverfront property where riparian zones arc located arc important

habitat for numerous species. Studies have shown that many (75 percent) of the wildlife species inhabiting the Blue Mountains area of Oregon are directly dependent on riparian zones or use them more than other habitats. Therefore, riparian areas are critical wildlife habitats and consolidating those lands in public ownership could benefit the resource.

There is very little site specific data regarding special status species in this area; however many species are suspected to occur. These species include: western toad (*Bufo boreas*), spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), northern pygmy owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), flammulated owl (*Otus Flammeolus*), white-headed woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*), black-backed woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*), pygmy nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*), Williamson's sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), ferruginous hawk (*Bureo regalis*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), greater sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), mountain quail (*Oreortyx picta*), bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), western bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*), great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*), and California wolverine (*Gulo gulo luteus*). Before any land can be exchanged, all proposed areas will be inventoried for the possible presence of any of the previously mentioned special status species.

Due to the number of proposed exchanges, it is impractical and inefficient to attempt to inventory all offered and selected tracts for the above species for inclusion in this document under each alternative. Clearances of each selected and offered tract will begin when individual exchanges are identified as being in the planned work for that year. At that time, an inventory plan will be completed which will identify protocols to be followed for that exchange. Normally, this will be a 2-year inventory process.

Habitat types limited in availability due to natural or management causes (such as old growth forest. riparian and wetlands) will be acquired whenever possible. When desired to exchange out of these types of habitat. equal acreage of selected and offered lands will be the desired goal. However. if less acres of habitat arc offered which will better block up public lands or if habitat for threatened, endangered or other special species can be acquired, the equal acreage standard may be modified to allow the necessary flexibility.

In the event that any proposed or listed species is found to be making more than incidental use of any tract, that tract will be dropped from further consideration. Tracts that arc receiving incidental use and remain in consideration for exchange will have coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted on them. Tracts that are identified to have use by any C2 or Bureau sensitive species and that remain in the exchange will have informal consultation with the USFWS conducted on them.

Generally, the exchanges represent 3 transfer of land from the uplands to the riparian areas oi selected rivers or streams barring the presence of special status species. Since riparian areas are important wildlife habitat areas, these proposals would tend to allow for the improvement of this type of habitat. However. just focusing on riparian areas and neglecting important or critical habitats on the uplands can also be disruptive to wildlife populations since both habitat quality and diversity play key roles in the survival of wildlife species.

Impacts to Cultural/ Paleontological Resources

Under all alternatives, cultural and paleontological resources will be inventoried and evaluated prior to the disposition of any public land. Those tracts found to contain significant resource values will normally be retained in public ownership.

Impacts to Recreation/Visual Resources

Alternative 1 would emphasize reserving the Aldrich Mountain and Strawberry Mountain WSAs, South Fork John Day Wild and Scenic River and North Fork John Day State Scenic Waterway special management areas as Zone 1. All other land would be available for exchange and a majority of the small isolated range lands would be highlighted as exchange priorities under Zone 3. This alternative would not emphasize reserving land adjacent to or iorming corridors bctwccn federal lands managed by other agencies. There would bc no emphasis for reserving public lands with high recreational values in areas outside of special management areas as Zone 1. Under this alternative, a larger number of exchange options would be possible. Recreational opportunities could bc enhanced, but some areas that arc outside of special management areas, and containing high recreational values, could be subject to cxchangc.

Alternative 2 would emphasize reserving all federal and state designated special management areas and lands surrounding those areas as Zone 1. with the exception of Middle Fork John Day State Scenic Waterway which would be classified as Zone 2. Emphasis would bc placed on reserving land adjacent to or forming corridors between federal lands managed by other agencies and state land. In

addition, emphasis would be placed on reserving public lands on Rudio Mountain as Zone 1. Alternative 2 would not emphasize the many small isolated range lands under Zone 3 as desirable exchange priorities. This alternative could limit, somewhat, the land available for exchange and potentially limit the opportunities for land exchanges. Consequently, recreational opportunities would be expected to be enhanced under this alternative but on a limited scale.

Alternative 3 (preferred) would emphasize reserving most federal and state designated special management areas as Zone 1. In addition, emphasis would be placed on reserving public lands on Rudio Mountain. Under Alternative 3, many of the small isolated range lands would be highlighted as desirable exchange priorities under Zone 3. This alternative would not specifically reserve public lands adjacent to special management areas under Zone 1 nor would an emphasis be placed on reserving land adjacent to or forming corridors between federal lands managed by other agencies. This alternative. would make a large number of exchange opportunities possible. The ability to enhance recreational opportunities would be expanded, but some areas containing high recreational values could be subject to exchange.

There would be no impact to recreational opportunities under Alternative 3.

Exchange 1

Public ownership of these tracts of offered land would help to provide legal public access to approximately 7,000 acres of federally-owned lands which currently do not have legal access. Recreational opportunities for hunting, hiking, wildlife watching and fishing would be expanded. The release of selected BLM land in and around the north portion of T. 12 S., R. 27 E. and T. 12 S., R. 28 E. could forego the ability to establish a public lands corridor between the Malheur National Forest and BLM and John Day Fossil Beds National Monument lands. Thcrc would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities in the other selected tracts.

Exchange 2

Recreational opportunities would be opened up to the Middle Fork John Day River along Highway 395 including fishing, picnicking, water play and scenic vehicle touring. In addition, rhe offered lands could provide a site suitable for a designated campground. Selected lands in T. 7 S., R. 28 E., Section 7, are adjacent to National Forest lands and contribute to some opportunities for hunting and hiking. There would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities in the other selected lands.

Exchange 3

Recreational opportunities for rafting, fishing, scenic vehicle touring and picnicking would be incrwscd greatly along the North Fork John Day River. Additional opportunities for dispersed camping would also be created. In addition, these tracts of offered land would help to establish a public lands corridor between detached portions of the Umatilla National Forest. Some of the lands in T. 7 S., R. 30 E. are adjacent to BLM and National Forest lands. The release of these lands could forego the ability to establish a public lands corridor between detached portions of the Umatilla National Forest. In addition, release of these lands could impact the scenic quality of the river by making them available for logging. Some limited recreational opportunities exist on the other selected federal tracts, however the opportunities that would bc lost would be fully replaced by the offered lands.

Exchange 4

Additional recreational opportunities for fishing, hunting, scenic vehicle touring and dispersed vehicle camping would become available. Federal ownership of these offered lands would help to establish a contiguous block of public lands within the South Fork John Day Wild and Scenic River and the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area. There would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities in the selected federal lands.

Exchange 5

As no land has been offered at this time, an evaluation cannot be made. Selected lands on the cast line of T. 13 S., R. 28 E. are adjacent to state lands in the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area and contribute some opportunities for hunting, hiking and wildlife observation. There would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities in the other selected lands.

Exchange 6

The offered lands include frontage on the Middle Fork John Day River, South Fork John Day River and Wall Creek. Recreational opportunities that would be available include fishing, picnicking, hunting and scenic opportunitics for vchiclc touring.

Federal ownership of lands on the South Fork John Day River would help to establish a contiguous block of public lands within the Wild and Scenic River corridor and within the Murderer's Creek Wildlife Management Area. Federal ownership of lands on Wall Creek and Middle Fork John Day River would contribute to recreational opportunities for fishing and scenic vehicle touring.

Recreational opportunities that would be lost or altered include open space-related recreation for the cities of John Day and Canyon City. The small BLM tracts adjacent to Forest Service lands provide recreational opportunities in association with the larger block of federally-owned National Forest land they arc adjacent to. Some scenic, hiking and hunting opportunities would be lost or altered for these lands. There would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities on the isolated tracts identified.

The selected lands in and around T. 8 S., R. 29 E., Section 27 and T. 13 S., R. 33 E., Section 24 provide for few recreational opportunities in that they consist of small scattered tracts surrounded by private land with limited or no legal public access. Selected lands in and around T. 13 S., R. 32 E. are located near the cities of John Day and Canyon City and provide open space-related recreational opportunities. These opportunities are somewhat limited by the condition of the land due to past and current uses, and a lack of access on some of the tracts. All other selected tracts are adjacent to public lands administered by the Malheur National Forest and contribute to hunting and hiking opportunities.

Exchange 7

Public ownership of these tracts of offered land would help to establish a more contiguous block of public lands and contribute to hunting and hiking opportunities. in addition, public ownership would help to establish a public lands corridor between BLM lands and the Umatilla National Forest. There would be little or no loss of recreational opportunities in the selected federal lands.

Impacts to Wilderness Resources

Alternative 1

Under this alternative, the Aldrich Mountain WSA and the Sheep Gulch unit of the Strawberry Mountain WSA would be classified as Zone 1. The Pine Creek and Indian Creek units of the Strawberry Mountain WSA would be classified as Zone 2. All the units arc adjacent to the designated Strawberry Mountain Wildcmcss managed by the Malheur National Forest.

Alternative 2

Under this alternative, the Aldrich Mountain WSA and all units of the Strawberry Mountain WSA would be classified as Zone 1.

Alternative 2 would provide a greater emphasis to reserving tracts adjacent to the designated Strawberry Mountain Wilderness administered by the Malheur National Forest. This would provide an area of federally-managed land that would help buffer the wilderness from uses occurring on nearby private land.

This alternative would emphasize acquiring lands on the South Fork John Day River including those adjacent to the designated Black Canyon Wilderness administered by the Ochoco National Forest. Acquisition of lands in this area would provide an area of federally-managed land that would help buffer the wilderness from the more intensive uses of private land.

Alternative 3

Under this alternative, the Aldrich Mountain WSA would be classified as Zone 1. All units of the Strawberry Mountain WSA would be classified as Zone 2. These units arc adjacent to the designated Strawberry Mountain Wilderness managed by the Malheur National Forest.

If the Strawberry Mountain WSA units were released, a federally-managed zone would not be present as a buffer for the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness. Private ownership could result in intensive management or structures being located on the wilderness boundary which could impact the wilderness even greater than non-wilderness federal management. The Strawberry Mountain WSX units, howcvcr, could only bc exchanged if Congress were to release them from wilderness review.
Alternative 3 would emphasize acquiring lands on the South Fork John Day River including those adjacent to the designated Black Canyon Wildcmcss administered by the Ochoco National Forest. Acquisition of lands in this area would provide an area of federally-managed land that would help buffer the wilderness from the more intensive uses of private land.

There would be no impact under Alternative 4.

Impacts to Social/Economic Values

As noted in the 1993 Oregon State University economic report for Grant County, the timber industry and ranching make up the economic base of Grant County. The report also points out that only 2.5 percent of the "total value of gross business activity in Grant County" can bc attributed to visitor expenditures. Put differently, the results suggest that visitations would have to triple to replace the income derived from the local ranching industry and would have to increase ten-fold to replace the local wood products processing industry.

This being the case, land tenure adjustment decisions will need to reflect a careful consideration of the impacts to the timber and ranching industries in Grant County. Some actions may help these industries by making tracts of isolated timber available to industry. Other actions may block up private land and make livestock management easier. Additionally, some transactions may improve access to and/or bring into public ownership tracts of land that bring additional visitors to the Grant County area and build the economic base attributable to visitor USC. Of course the opposite can happen in each of these areas if careful consideration is not given to the economic impacts of each proposed transaction.

When considering the feasibility of a land tenure adjustment proposal, social and economic impacts in the private and public sectors will be fully analyzed and weighed against each other. This analysis includes proposals that would result in the BLM acquiring buildings, agricultural fields, water rights and related facilities. Proposals shall be closely coordinated with county government to ensure consistency with local plans.

The other side of the local economic issue is the concern that these transactions may reduce the county tax base. On open range land the county receives approximately S.15/ acre in taxes. Conversely, the annual payment in-lieu of taxes (PILT) the county receives for each acre of federal land is S. 10/acre.

The following examples illustrate this difference.

Example 1: BLM trades 7.50 acres of public land for 1,000 acres of private land. Before the trade, the county received $150.00 in taxes from the private land and $75.00 from the PILT payment, for a total of $225.00. After the trade, the county receives $112.50 in taxes from the public land that is now private and $100.00 from the PILT payment for private land that is now public. The total is $212.50 which is a difference of only $12.50 on a land exchange that put 250 more acres into public ownership than went onto the tax rolls.

Example 2: BLM trades 1,200 acres of public land for 1,000 acres of private land. Before the trade, the county received $150.00 in taxes from the private land and $100.00 from the PILT payment, which totals $250.00. After the trade, the county receives S 180.00 in taxes from the public land that is now private and S 100.00 from the private land that is now public. The total is $280.00 and the county would gain 930.00 in revenue.

Naturally, exchanges of equal acreage would result in no change in the tax base.

It should also be noted that as a result of this plan, various tracts of land in and around John Day and Canyon City will probably be considered for sale. These properties will most likely be developed and taxed at a much higher rate than open range land used in the examples above. As long as BLM attempts to minimize the loss of tax dollars through its exchanges, the amount of taxes raised from these tracts alone would make up for almost any negative effect that could accrue from the consummation of land exchanges that don't benefit the county tax base.

Consequently, the net effect of land tenure adjustments on the county tax base should be negligible.

Impacts to Forest Resources

General forest management would be improved by consolidating ownership into more manageable blocks of commercial forest land (CFL). Consolidated manageable blocks would lend themselves to logical access patterns (both public and administrative) and would result in a reduction in the need for identifying boundaries between public and private lands. All of the proposed exchanges except Exchange 5, would consolidate CFL ownership to an extent that would improve access (administrative and public) and reduce the number of miles of property lines between public and private lands.

Proposed Exchange 5 is an unknown at this time since the location of offered lands has not been identified.

Exchange 1: This proposed exchange is located in the Rudio Mountain area. This exchange has the greatest potential of all proposals to balance the offered and selected commercial forest lands. The end result could be a very favorable block of ownership which would enhance forest management as well as provide for improved public access for recreation and improved administrative access for the general management of the area. Forest management would be enhanced economically due to the fact that access would be secure, property line surveying would be reduced and the costs associated with logging would be favorable.

Exchanges 2 and 3: Thcsc exchange proposals are similar since they both dispose of scattered parcels which contain commercial forest lands. Likewise, both acquire riparian parcels that contain commercial forest lands. Overall, the number of CFL acres in government control would decrease by more than 150 acres in Proposal 2 and by more than 500 acres in Proposal 3. The acquired CFL acres would generally be unavailable for intensive forest management since they arc located within State Scenic Waterways which arc subject to special forest management restrictions.

Exchange 4: The offered parcel in this proposal is partially located in a riparian area and contains less than

20 acres of CFL. The selected parcels contain approximately 200 acres of CFL. Approximately 135 acres of the selected commercial forest lands are classified as a non-problem site which means these lands require no special harvesting, reforestation or other restrictive measures in order to be managed on a sustained yield basis. Overall, 200 acres of CFL would be lost and approximately 20 acres of restricted CFL which is located within a Wild and Scenic River corridor, would be gained. Currently, the selected parcels are in close proximity to John Day and are easily accessible via administrative easements.

Exchange 5: These selected parcels contain approximately 174 acres of CFL of which 140 acres are classified as non-problem and 34 acres are classed as restricted. The offered lands are not identified at this time so no impacts on the forest resource can be analyzed.

Exchange 6: These offered parcels (3) are all located in primary riparian areas. Parcel #1 has no more than 20 acres of CFL. Parcel #2 has a small stand of CFL which would be difficult to manage because of its steep slopes and proximity to the Middle Fork John Day River. Parcel #3 has a good stand of approximately 300 acres of CFL, some of which are located within the riparian area on Wall Creek. Forest management of all parcels would be restricted due to their proximity to apparent important riparians.

The selected parcels contain a total of approximately 1,192 acres of CFL. Stand sizes range from 30 acres to 196 acres per parcel. All selected parcels are located on scattered parcels throughout the county. Past forest management on these parcels has been very limited due to their isolation. Transportation and legal access are economically limiting factors.

In summary, this exchange proposal would result in a reduction of approximately 1,192 acres of CFL which has historically received very little forest management. The CFL gamed would receive very limited forest management due to other resource values. One advantage to this proposal would be the loss of scattered parcels which have limited value for BLM management and public USC, and the acquisition of lands which would be very accessible for management of all resources as well as public USC.

Exchange 7: This proposal would create no impacts to the forest resource since no known commercial forest lands are involved in either the selected or the offered lands.

Dixie Creek Small Tract: General for all options: Management of this 5-acre tract would be best served by keeping in the hands of BLM. Disposing to private ownership would create another piece of private land within this area that is already difficult for the management of the forest stand. Too many property lines already exist and are cause for difficulty in overall forest management. Since this parcel is totally surrounded by BLM, it would be unwise to further disperse this block of BLM forest land within the Dixie and Standard Creek drainages.

Option A: Outright sale would not be in the public interest since the sale would be for the benefit of a single individual or group (same reasoning as written above).

Option B: An R&PP lease of the forest would place some of our (BLM's) most productive forest land into private hands. Because of the numerous mining claims in this area, it would be best for the public interest to maintain this stand in BLM control so the mineral and forest resources can be managed together.

Option C: An R&PP lease of the 5-acre tract only would have minimal effect on the forest resource of the area. However, this would essentially place the tract into private control and result in the same problems (for forest management) as expressed above.

Option D: This option would keep the tract under BLM control and it could be managed for any number of purposes, including management of the forest resource. The forest resource on this tract has never been managed as an individual tract or as part of the larger block of forest land in this area.

The environmental consequences (impacts) to the forest resource would be the same under all alternatives. Therefore, this writeup can be applied to all alternatives except to the no-action alternative. The no-action alternative would continue the little to minimal management of the scattered parcels as is currently being done for the forest resource, and the forest resource would not be affected since no exchange would occur.

Impacts to Botanical/Special Status Plants

Three SSP, *Luina serpentina*, *Mimulus washingtonensis* var. *washingtonensis* and *Thelypodium eucosmum*, are known to exist on tracts located within portions of Zone 2 under all alternatives. Under the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 1, *Astragalus diaphanus* var. *diurnus* is also found within Zone 2. No SSP are known from tracts within Zone 3, under any alternative.

Even though SSP are known from tracts within Zone 2, it is unlikely that any of the alternatives would have an effect on them. BLM Manual 6840 (Special Status Species Management) and the Oregon-Washington Special Status Species Policy (Instruction Memorandum No. OR-Y I-57, November 5, 1990) require that special status species be

managed and conserved in a manner which will not result in a need to list them as endangered or threatened. Inventory for all special status species, either known or suspected, is required prior to any Bureau action, including land exchanges.

All lands proposed for disposal would be surveyed for the presence or absence of SSP prior to exchange. Should SSP be found, the exchange would most likely be modified to exclude the affected tracts from the exchange. This has been the most common scenario for land exchanges within the Prineville District. Should it be determined that it is clearly in the best interests of the federal government to dispose of a tract containing a special status plant, technical assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be requested to ensure the exchange would not be detrimental to the species as a whole. In some situations, tracts containing SSP could be exchanged for tracts with greater special status plant values. The environmental consequences of each exchange would be analyzed in an environmental assessment, including all reasonable foreseeable consequences to any SSP as a result of a change in land ownership.

Impacts to Livestock Grazing

Under Alternatives 1-3, if the ownership of the Zone 1 lands were consolidated, it would be more efficient to adjust the season of use to provide for growth requirements of perennial plants, manipulate grazing use of riparian zones, implement structural range improvements (fences, pipelines, water developments and springs) to benefit riparian and range habitat conditions, and to protect fragile soils. There would be an improved/enhanced opportunity to coordinate grazing treatments and range improvements with adjacent landowners. The best opportunity to accomplish these objectives would be under Alternative 3.

Under Alternative 4, it is more difficult to adjust the season of use to provide for growth requirements of perennial plants, manipulate grazing use of riparian zones, implement structural range improvements (fences, pipelines, water developments and springs) to benefit riparian and range habitat conditions, and protect fragile soils because there would still be intermingled ownership of lands. The opportunity to coordinate grazing treatments and range improvements with adjacent landowners under this alternative is substantially diminished.

Exchange 1

This proposal includes land entirely within the 2-county allotment and contains 1,105 AUMs. This exchange would provide an opportunity to benefit range habitat conditions on the uplands, adjust grazing seasons, and construct fences to improve the riparian condition along Holmes Creek by allowing the BLM to manage almost the entire watershed rather than just bits and pieces.

Exchange 2

This exchange would transfer all public lands currently in the Boneyard allotment; these lands contain 148 AUMs. In exchange, the BLM would gain an opportunity to adjust the grazing seasons along parts of the Middle Fork of the John Day to improve riparian habitat.

Exchange 3

This exchange the BLM would relinquish hard to manage, scattered timber lands and obtain riparian areas along the North Fork of the John Day River. The grazing prescriptions for these new areas could be adjusted to improve riparian habitat.

Exchange 4

This exchange would remove 15 AUMs located on a timbered parcel in an allotment from a present grazing lessee's active grazing preference. In exchange, a riparian area along the South Fork of the John Day located in the Rockpile allotment would be obtained. It would be easier to control and monitor unauthorized grazing in this area since all livestock graze the area at the same time as the adjacent public lands.

Exchange 5

This exchange would relinquish scattered tracts including 182 AUMs in exchange for more easily managed riparian areas along the North and South Forks of the John Day River. In these new areas, the grazing systems could be changed to improve the riparian habitat.

Exchange 6

The public lands which are offered for exchange are scattered tracts of uplands included within various allotment boundaries. There is no public access to these areas. These areas are managed in conjunction with the contiguous private lands because the public lands are not fenced separate from the private lands.

The private lands to be acquired are adjacent to riparian areas along the South Fork John Day River, Middle Fork John Day River, and Wall Creek. There would be an opportunity for the Bureau of Land Management to consolidate these scattered tracts into manageable units,

provide additional access to the public and initiate grazing management systems in these riparian areas.

Exchange 7

This exchange includes lands located along a known anadromous fish spawning area of Rudio Creek. The adjacent private lands along Rudio Creek are degraded because the lands are heavily grazed by livestock season-long. The banks are eroded and unstable with very little vegetative cover and diversity of vegetation. Relinquishing the public lands along Rudio Creek into private ownership would allow for more degradation of the stream. The private lands to be acquired are in better condition since they are farther from the ranch and livestock do not graze these areas as intensely.

Dixie Creek Small Tract: There are 2,538 acres of public land included within the Dixie Allotment (#4016) boundary. The allotment is divided into two pastures with intermingled public land and private land. Each year one pasture is grazed and one pasture is rested. The next year the grazing treatment is reversed on each pasture. Withdrawal of five acres would not affect the number of livestock that graze each pasture or the grazing season.

Mitigation Measures

If inventories reveal there will be impacts to critical elements noted on page 27 under "Management Actions Common To All Alternatives" which cannot be mitigated through management actions or the acquisition of similar properties, the tracts will be dropped from consideration for exchange

Residual Impacts

Residual impacts are expected to be positive. The public and private sectors will acquire human and natural resource values important to commercial and non-commercial management objectives. Private landowners and public land managers will acquire land within or adjacent to their respective properties, which will allow them to operate more efficiently and effectively. Attempts will also bc made to structure the exchanges so that there is no net negative effect on the tax base in Grant County. This plan will also provide opportunities for local government entities to solve issues relevant to their own land USC planning goals.

Chapter V - List Of Preparers

While certain individuals have primary responsibility for providing analysis for the John Day Resource Management Plan Amendment/EA, the document is an interdisciplinary team effort. In addition, internal review of the document occurs throughout preparation. Specialists at the Prineville District and Oregon State Office both review and supply information.

Bob Vidourek - Forestry
Ken Primrose - Range
Gary Torretta - Fisheries
Brent Ralston - Wildlife
John Zancanella - Archaeological/Paleontological
Ron Halvorson - Botanical
James Sippel - Recreation/Wilderness
Ron Lane - Lands and Rcalty/Socio-Economic
Connie McMillin - Word Processing
Brian Cunninghame - Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Dick Cosgriffe - Central Oregon Area Manager
Jim Hancock - Prineville District Manager

Chapter VI - List Of Agencies, Organizations And Persons To Whom Copies Of This Document Are Sent

Approximately 220 copies of this Plan Amendment/EA are sent to the various publics listed below:

Local News Media
Local, State and National Public Representatives
Wilderness Interest Groups
Environmental Interest Groups
Wildlife Intcrcst Groups
Dayville Grazing Assn
Desert Trail Assn
Eastern Oregon Mining Assn
Izaak Walton League
Monument Grazing Assn
Northwest Forestry Assn
OSU Extension Service
Sierra Club
Oregon Natural Resources Council
Audubon Society
Nature Conservancy

Government Entities

Grant County Court
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
Baker Resource Area, BLM
Oregon State Department of Forcstry
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Comm
Confederated Tribes, Umatilla
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Klamath Tribe
Bums Paiute Reservation
Congressman Robert Smith
Bums District, BLM
John Day Fossil Beds National Monument
Malheur National Forcst
Harncy County Court

Appendix A - Summary Of Public Participation

Preliminary issues, planning criteria, alternatives for defining management zones and potential land ownership adjustments were identified in John Day Resource Management Plan Amendment Scoping Brochure dated January 3, 1994. This packet was mailed to 208 public interests, including individuals, public land users, interest groups, federal and state agencies and county government officials. In addition, over one hundred (100) packets were handed out per public requests.

Two public meetings were held to provide information and answer questions regarding proposals in the Public Comment Packet. The first was an open house workshop held February 2, 1994 in Prineville, at the Central Oregon Resource Area office and was attended by three (3) individuals. The second was a public meeting held in John Day on February 3, 1994 at the Grant County Senior Center and was attended by 58 individuals.

During the 60-day comment period, nine (9) written comments and twenty-one (21) form letters *were* received. Numerous questions and comments regarding process and concerns were raised at the open house workshop and public meeting. The oral and written public comments are categorized by planning criteria, issues/concerns, management zones and land tenure adjustments, as follows:

Planning Criteria

1. Comment: County government and residents alike are opposed to losing tax base through direct purchases by the federal government and land exchanges that increase public or state lands and reduce the private land estate. In addition, some commentors (oral/written) favored consolidation of public lands with no net increase of public land holdings.

   Response: BLM's primary method of adjusting land ownership is through land exchange. All land tenure adjustment transactions are based on equal values as determined by fair market appraisals. In applying this value for value criteria, public land ownership in Grant County is not expected to change appreciably over time.

2. Comment: Private surface owners with facilities constructed over federally-reserved subsurface mineral estate expressed concern regarding protection of their investments. Other Commentors strongly suggested that known national mineral resources be retained.

   Response: *On* April 16, 1993, Congress passed Public Law 103-23 titled *"An* Act to Amend the Stock Raising Homestead Act to Resolve Certain Problems Regarding Subsurface Estates and for Other Purposes". This law provides some additional protection for those individuals that own surface estate where the federal government has reserved the mineral estate under the Stock Raising Homestead Act.

   The implementing regulations have yet to be completed but in essence, the law requires surface owner consent before any claimant can tile a claim or do any surface disturbance. If that consent cannot be received, then the BLM will review a Plan of Operations prior to any surface disturbance (this includes a mining claimant not being allowed to go on the private surface without surface owner approval or BLM review of a Plan). Included is the requirement that the surface owner be compensated for any damages to the surface and improvements and the requirement for bonding of any surface-disturbing activities.

   Further detailed information on this amendment to the law will be forthcoming when the implementing regulations are issued.

   The public lands are an important present and future source of the Nation's mineral and energy resources. In order to maintain the availability of the public land as a source of mineral and energy resources, areas with high locatable mineral potential and areas with high potential for mineral material close to communities will normally be retained in public ownership.

3. Comment: County government and citizens expressed a strong need for BLM to identify its criteria for determining land tenure adjustment priorities.

   Response: Land base adjustment proposals are evaluated on an interdisciplinary team of professional resource specialists representing the biological and social disciplines. The team first determines if the proposal is consistent with the specific zone criteria. The team then evaluates the proposal based *on Criteria for Lund Ownership Adjustment* as described in this document. The team then ranks the proposal in relation to other proposals in Grant County. High priority Grant County proposals are then weighed against other district land base adjustments by the Prineville District Management Team and scheduled for processing.

4. Comment: Oral and written Comments indicated considerable private interest and support regarding disposal of timber lands via sale or exchange.

   Response: In order to conserve scarce habitats and meet biodiversity goals, the "Criteria for Land Ownership Adjustment" regarding threatened and endangered or sensitive plant and animal species, native and anadromous fish and key wildlife habitats are expanded to include:

   Habitat types limited in availability due to natural or management causes, such as old growth, riparian and wetlands, will be acquired whenever possible. When desired to exchange out of these types of habitats, equal acreage of selected and offered lands will be the desired goal. However, if less acres of habitat are offered which will better block up public lands or if habitat for threatened, endangered or other special species can be acquired, the equal acreage standard may be modified to allow the necessary flexibility.

Issues and Concerns

1. Comment: Commentors suggested that public access to provided to acquired tracts of public land.

   Response: Public access is a primary consideration when evaluating land tenure adjustment proposals.

2. Comment: County government questions whether the federal government should be acquiring more river front property. This eliminates private business economic growth opportunities.

   Response: When considering the feasibility of a land tenure adjustment proposal, social and economic opportunities in the private and public sectors are fully analyzed and weighed against each other. Proposals are closely coordinate with county government to ensure consistency with local plans. For example, it is unlikely BLM would acquire lands zoned by the county for industrial development. BLM would most likely acquire lands in the "farm/forest" zone outside of urban growth boundaries.

3. Comment: General concern was issued by livestock grazing lessees when an independent party acquires the public land.

   Response: By law, BLM is required to give grazing lessees two years notification prior to disposal. In most land adjustment actions, the BLM is able to work out acceptable arrangements with lessees. The most common used process is "Land Pooling" where isolated public land tracts are exchanged to a third party (proponent). The proponent in turn sells the land to the adjacent land owner. In order to achieve the desired results, the process is closely controlled through an independent escrow account and appropriate legal agreements.

4. Comment: Commentors expressed interest in how BLM would manage acquired agricultural fields, water rights and facilities including buildings and ditches.

   Response: BLM would carefully evaluate the social and economic effects of acquiring any property that includes these types of improvements. Where it is appropriate for the BLM to acquire such property, the Bureau would manage and maintain the acquired property and rights through approved permits to qualified private land managers. Future uses of acquired (by BLM) lands would depend on the RMP direction and objectives *for* similar lands. Some agricultural areas could be restored to native vegetation to meet wildlife habitat or other objectives.

Management Zones

1. Comment: Several Commentors at the local level favored privatizing public lands in Grant County. Others took a more moderate approach and suggested expanded opportunities for disposal through sale. Some favored sale where exchange option was not feasible.

   Response: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (90 STAT. 274; 43 USC 1701) established the policy to retain the majority of public lands in federal ownership and allow disposal of particular parcels that serve the national interest.

   In response to these Comments, Alternative 1 was developed to provide an enlarged Zone 3 where public lands may be suitable for disposal through either sale or exchange.

2. Comment: Some Commcntors suggested expanding Zone 1 and Zone 3.

   Response: This was addressed when developing Altcmatives 1 and 2.

3. Comment: Several form letters were received which proposed modifying Zone 2 for the Dixie Creek Watershed by creating a small Zone 3 for the small tract parcel commonly referred to as Shangrila.

   Response: Prairie City Council and Grant County Commissioners propose to acquire Dixie Creek Watershed under RP&P (43 CFR 2740) for management and protection of the Prairie City water supply. In followup conversations with city and county officials, additional options discussed included implementation of Dixie Creek Forest Management Plan and creating a Natural Area for outdoor recreation for Prairie City public school students. Each of these options was analyzed in the Environmental Assessment for the Planning Amendment.

4. Comment: County government and other Commentors suggested that public lands within the urban growth boundaries of Canyon City and John Day be classified for disposal.

   Response: We concur and evaluated this proposal under Altcmatives 1, 2 and 3. Priority will be given to exchange and R&PP over sale.

Land Tenure Adjustments

1. Comment: The Prineville District received two (2) new exchange proposals that were not included in the previous scoping document. One is located along the South Fork of the John Day Wild and Scenic River and the other includes Birch Creek, a perennial tributary to the North Fork of the John Day River.

   Response: Each of these exchanges will be analyzed within the alternatives considered in this plan amendment.

As a result of the comments, planning issues and criteria were refined and more clearly defined. Existing altcmativcs were expanded to accommodate reasonable public land tenure adjustment opportunities and the preferred alternative was developed.

Appendix B - Proposed Land Tenure Adjustments

The Prineville District is considering seven exchange proposals affecting approximately 12,000 acres of public land described as follows:

Exchange 1

T. 10 S., R. 27 E.,			
Sec.	21:	W1/2NW1/4	80
	22:	S1/2SW1/4	80
	26:	NW1/4SW1/4	40
	27:	SW1/4NW1/4, W1/2SW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	160
	28:	NW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4	80
	29:	SW1/4SW1/4	40
	30:	NW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	80
	32:	NW1/4NW1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4	200
	33:	E1/2SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	120
	34:	W1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4	160
T. 11 S.. R. 27 E.,			
Sec.	4:	NE1/4, W1/2NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	440
	5:	SW1/4NE1/4, S1/2SW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	160
	6:	SE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4	120
	7:	S1/2NE1/4	80
	9:	E1/2SE1/4	80
	11:	N1/2NE1/4	80
	21:	NE1/4, SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4	280
	22:	N1/2NE1/4, S 1/2NW1/4	160
	23:	NE1/4	160
	25:	NW1/4NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4	160
	27:	NW1/4NW1/4	40
	34:	E1/2NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4	120
	36:	N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4	120
T. 11 S., R. 28 E.,			
Sec.	5:	SE1/4SW1/4	40
	6:	E1/2NE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	120
	17:	SW1/4SW1/4	40
	18:	N1/2NE1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	280
	20:	W1/2NW1/4	80
	21:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
	30:	S1/2SW1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	120
	31:	N1/2NW1/4, SW1/4NW1/4	120
	32:	N1/2NE1/4	80
T. 12 S., R. 27 E.,			
Sec.	1:	NW1/4NW1/4	40
	2:	N1/2	320
		Approximately	4,220 ac.

Exchange 2

T. 7 S., R. 27 E.,

Sec. 13:	SE1/4NW1/4	40
21:	SE1/4	160
22:	S1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	120
23:	N1/2NW1/4	80
24:	NW1/4SE1/4	40
26:	SW1/4NW1/4	30
28:	E1/2NE1/4	80

T. 7 S., R. 28 E.,

Sec. 1:	NE1/4SW1/4	40
7:	N1/2NE1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4SE1/4	160
8:	NW1/4SW1/4	40
10:	SW1/4SE1/4	40
12:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
15:	SE1/4SE1/4	40
17:	SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, E1/2SE1/4	200
26:	SE1/4NW1/4	40
29:	SW1/4SW1/4	40
30:	NE1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	80
	Approximately	1,280 ac.

Exchange 3

T. 7 S., R. 29 E.,

Sec. 3:	W1/2NW1/4	40
9:	SW1/4NW1/4	40
10:	W1/2SE1/4	80
14:	S1/2NW1/4	80
15:	SE1/4NE1/4	40

T. 7 S., R. 30 E.,

Sec. 1:	NW1/4NW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4	160
2:	NE1/4NE1/4, W1/2NE1/4	120
5:	SE1/4SE1/4	40
8:	NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4	200
9:	NE1/4NW1/4	40
12:	NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4	200
15:	NW1/4NE1/4	40
23:	SE1/4SW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	80
24:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
	Approximately	1,200 ac.

Exchange 4

T. 14 S., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 28:	SE1/4NW1/4, SE1/4	200
	Approximately	200 ac.

Exchange 5

The adjoining landowner would like to acquire the tracts noted below and various proposals have been discussed. Although specific tracts have not been offered in exchange for the public land, the BLM would consider trading these tracts for private land along the North or South Forks of the John Day River.

T. 13 S., R. 28 E.,		
Sec. 17:	SE1/4	160
18:	Lots 3 and 4	80
19:	Lot 1, E1/2NE1/4	120
20:	N1/2N1/2, SW1/4NE1/4, SW1/4NW1/4	240
22:	S1/2SE1/4	80
24:	NE1/4SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	80
29:	SW1/4SW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	80
30:	Lots 3 and 4, SE1/4NW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	160
31:	Lot 4	40
32:	SE1/4NW1/4, E1/2SE1/4	120
33:	W1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	240
34:	NW1/4NE1/4	40
	Approximately	1,440 ac.

Exchange 6

T. 8 S., R. 29 E.,		
Sec. 22:	SW1/4SE1/4	40
27:	NE1/4, E1/2NE1/4, NW1/4SE1/4	280
T. 10 S., R. 31 E.,		
Sec. 29:	w 1/2SW1/2	80
30:	SW1/4NW1/4	40
T. 12 S., R. 30 E.,		
Sec. 24:	NW1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4, W1/2	560
25:	NW1/4NW1/4	40
T. 12 S., R. 31 E.,		
Sec. 30:	SW1/4NW1/4, SW1/4 west of Hwy	200
T. 12 S., R. 32 E.,		
Sec. 26:	NW1/4	160
28:	NE1/4	160
30:	SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4	120
T. 12 S., R. 33 E.,		
Sec. 30:	N1/2SE1/4, S1/2S1/2	240
T. 12 S., R. 34 E.,		
Sec. 16:	N1/2NW1/4, S1/2SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4	240
T. 13 S., R. 34 E.,		
Sec. 24:	SE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4	160

T. 14 S., R. 32 E.,		
Sec: 1:	Lots 1, 3, 4 and 5, NE1/4SE1/4	200
2:	E1/2	320
4:	NW1/4SE1/4	40
9:	SE1/4NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4	80
10:	NW1/4NE1/4	40
12:	SW 1/4NW1/4	40
T. 14 S., R. 33 E.,		
Sec. 7:	E1/2NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	120
8:	N1/2NW1/4, SW1/4NW1/4	120
	Approximatcly	3,280 ac.

Exchange 7

T. 9 S., R. 26 E.,		
Sec. 14:	NW1/4SW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4	80
22:	SW1/4SW1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, W1/2SE1/4	160
27:	SE1/4SE1/4	40
	Approximately	280 ac.

In Exchange For These Lands, The Federal Government May Acquire The Following:

Exchange 1

T. 9 S., R. 26 E.,		
Sec. 34:	S1/2SW1/4	80
T. 10 S., R. 26 E.,		
Sec. 3:	W1/2	320
4:	NW1/4SE1/4, S1/2S1/2	200
5:	SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4	240
8:	s 1/2NE1/4	80
9:	N1/2NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, SW1/4NW1/4	200
10:	W1/2E1/2, E1/2W1/2	320
14:	S1/2NE1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	200
15:	E1/2	320
16:	All	640
21:	NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4	240
22:	W1/2, N1/2NE1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4	600
23:	E1/2NE1/4, W1/2NW1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, S 1/2	520
24:	W1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4	120
25:	W1/2E1/2, W1/2NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4	320
26:	E1/2, E1/2W1/2, W1/2NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4	600
27:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
33:	NW1/4SW1/4	40
35:	N1/2NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, SW1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4, E1/2SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	440
36:	NW1/4NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4	120
T. 11 S., R. 26 E.,		
Sec. 1:	N1/2NE1/4, NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4	320
2:	N1/2NE1/4, E1/2NW 1/4, SW1/4NW1/4	200
10:	NE1/4NE1/4	40

11:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
12:	W1/2NW1/4	80

T. 11 S.. R. 27 E..

Sec. 7:	SE1/4SE1/4	40
8:	SW1/4SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4	120
17:	N1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4, W1/2NW1/4, S1/2	520
18:	NE1/4NE1/4	40
20:	N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4	120
	Approximately	7.160 ac.

Exchange 2

T. 8 S., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 31:	NE1/4 south of the county road
32:	N1/2 west and south of the county road
32:	E1/2SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4 west and south of the county road

T. 9 S., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 4:	Lot 4, SW1/4NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, SE1/4 west and south of the county road
5:	Lots 1 and 2, SE1/4NE1/4 west and south of the county road
9:	N1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4 west and south of the county road
9:	NE1/4NW1/4
10:	NW1/4 south of the road
10:	E1/2SW1/4 west and south of the county rd
	Approximately 850 ac.

Exchange 3

T. 7 S., R. 29 E.,

Sec. 1:	SW1/4NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, SE1/4	280
2:	SE1/4NE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4, E1/2SE1/4	160
3:	S1/2SE1/4	80
4:	S1/2SE1/4	80
9:	N1/2N1/2	160
10:	N1/2N1/2	160
11:	N1/2N1/2, S1/2NW1/4	200

T. 7 S., R. 30 E.,

Sec. 2:	N1/2NW1/4	80
3:	SW1/4NE1/4, NE1/4SW1/4	80
4:	S1/2NE1/4, NW1/4	240
5:	S1/2N1/2, N1/2SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4	280
6:	S1/2N1/2, N1/2S1/2	320
	Approximately	2,120 ac.

Exchange 4

T. 14 S., R. 26 E.,

Sec. 36:	W1/2	320
(or other property of equal value, along the South Fork of the John Day River)		
	Approximately	320 ac.

Exchange 5

Tracts to be acquired have not yet been identified, but the proponent has offered to purchase land along the North or South Forks of the John Day River.

Appraisals for these exchanges have not yet been completed. Therefore, the amount of land traded may be different than that shown after values are equalized.

The purpose of the exchanges are to acquire and block up lands in Grant County, particularly along the forks of the John Day River. These lands have high public value for riparian, fisheries, wildlife, recreation and scenic quality. Acquisition of this land would be consistent with the Bureau's planning system after the plan is amended. The value of the lands has not been determined; however, upon completion of the final appraisal, the acreage will be adjusted or money will be used to equalize values. The public lands will be transferred subject to: (1) A reservation to the United States of a rights-of-way for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States, Act of Aug. 30, 1890 (43 USC 945); (2) All valid existing rights-of-way, leases, permits or licenses in effect at the time of exchange. The mineral estate is expected to be included in the exchange.

Interest has also been expressed in a tract of public land described as:

T. 13 S., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 26:	SW1/4SW1/4	40
35:	NW1/4NW1/4	40
	Approximately	80 ac.

This land would be retained for use associated specifically with the airport and allow for expansion of airport activities. If not used in conjunction with the airport, the tract will become available for exchange.

Exchange 6

T. 14 S., R. 26 E.,

Sec. 36:	W1/2E1/2	160

T. 8 S., R. 30 E.,

Sec. 24 & 25 along the Middle Fork of the John Day below the bridge at Ritter		134

T. 8 S., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 30 & 31 along Middle Fork of John Day below the bridge at Ritter		21

T. 7 S., R. 27 E.,

Sec. 36:	SE1/4SE1/4	40

T. 7 S., R. 28 E.,

Sec. 31:	SW1/4SW1/4	40

T. 8 S., R. 27 E.,

Sec. 1:	NE1/4NE1/4	40

T. 8 S., R. 28 E.,		
Sec. 5:	SW1/4SW1/4	550
6:	All	
7:	NE1/4	
	Approximately	985 ac.

Exchange 7

T. 9 S., R. 26 E.,		
Sec. 20:	NE1/4SW1/4, S1/2SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	240
28:	SW1/4NW1/4, W1/2SW1/4	120
29:	NE1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4	320
32:	E1/2NE1/4	80
	Approximately	760 ac.

FONSI Determination

On the basis of the information contained in this Environmental Assessment and all other information available to me as summarized above, it is my determination that none of the four alternatives constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment (a finding of no significant action). Therefore, an environmental impact statement is unnecessary and will not be prepared. In addition, the amendments to the John Day Resource Management Plan do not substantially affect other resource programs to the extent that the district would initiate an Environmental Impact Statement.

District Manager

Date

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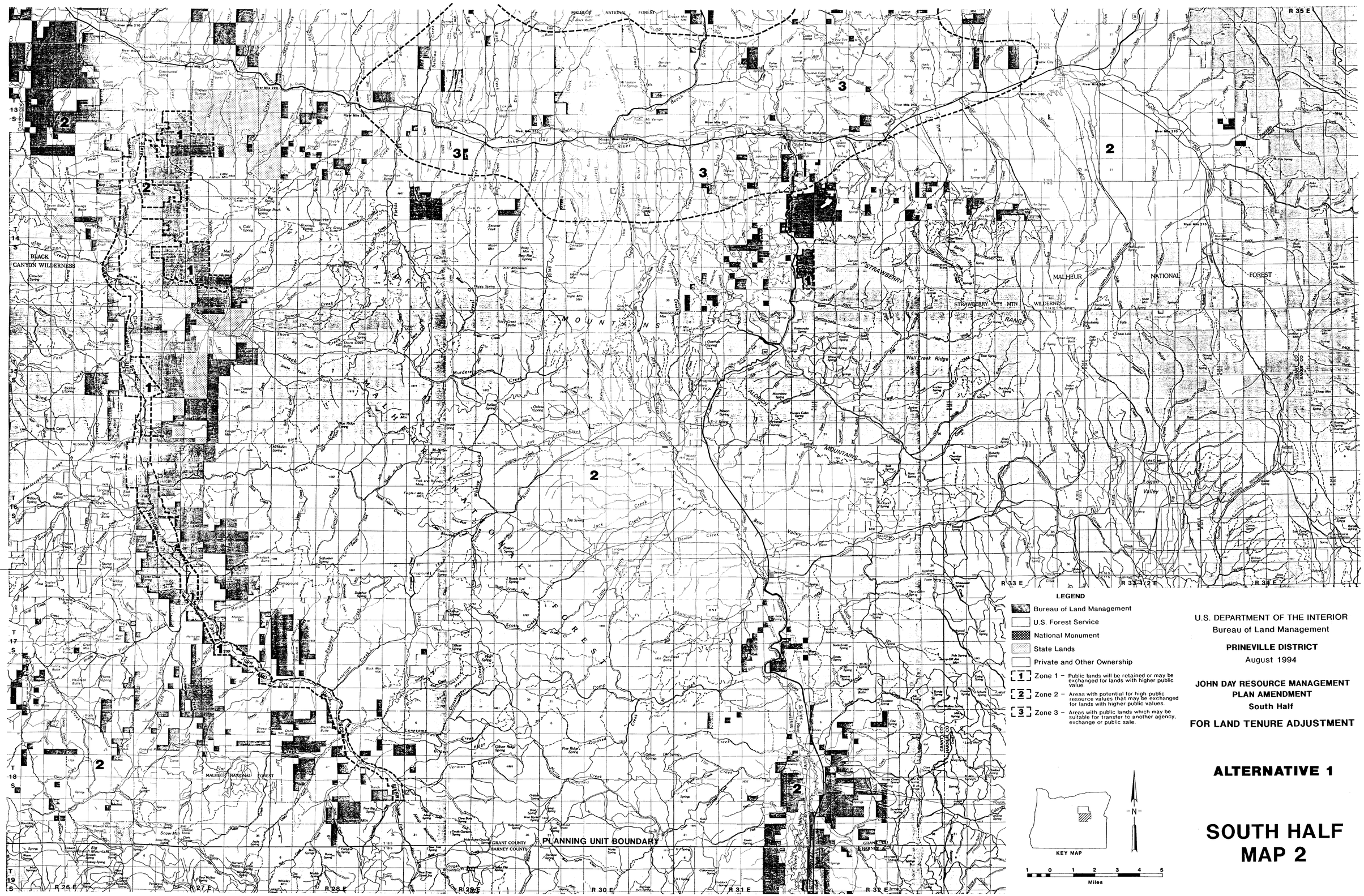


LEGEND

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- National Monument
- State Lands
- Private and Other Ownership
- 1 Zone 1 – Public lands will be retained or may be exchanged for lands with higher public value.
- 2 Zone 2 – Areas with potential for high public resource values that may be exchanged for lands with higher public values.
- 3 Zone 3 – Areas with public lands which may be suitable for transfer to another agency, exchange or public sale.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

August 1994

JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT
South Half

FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT

ALTERNATIVE 1

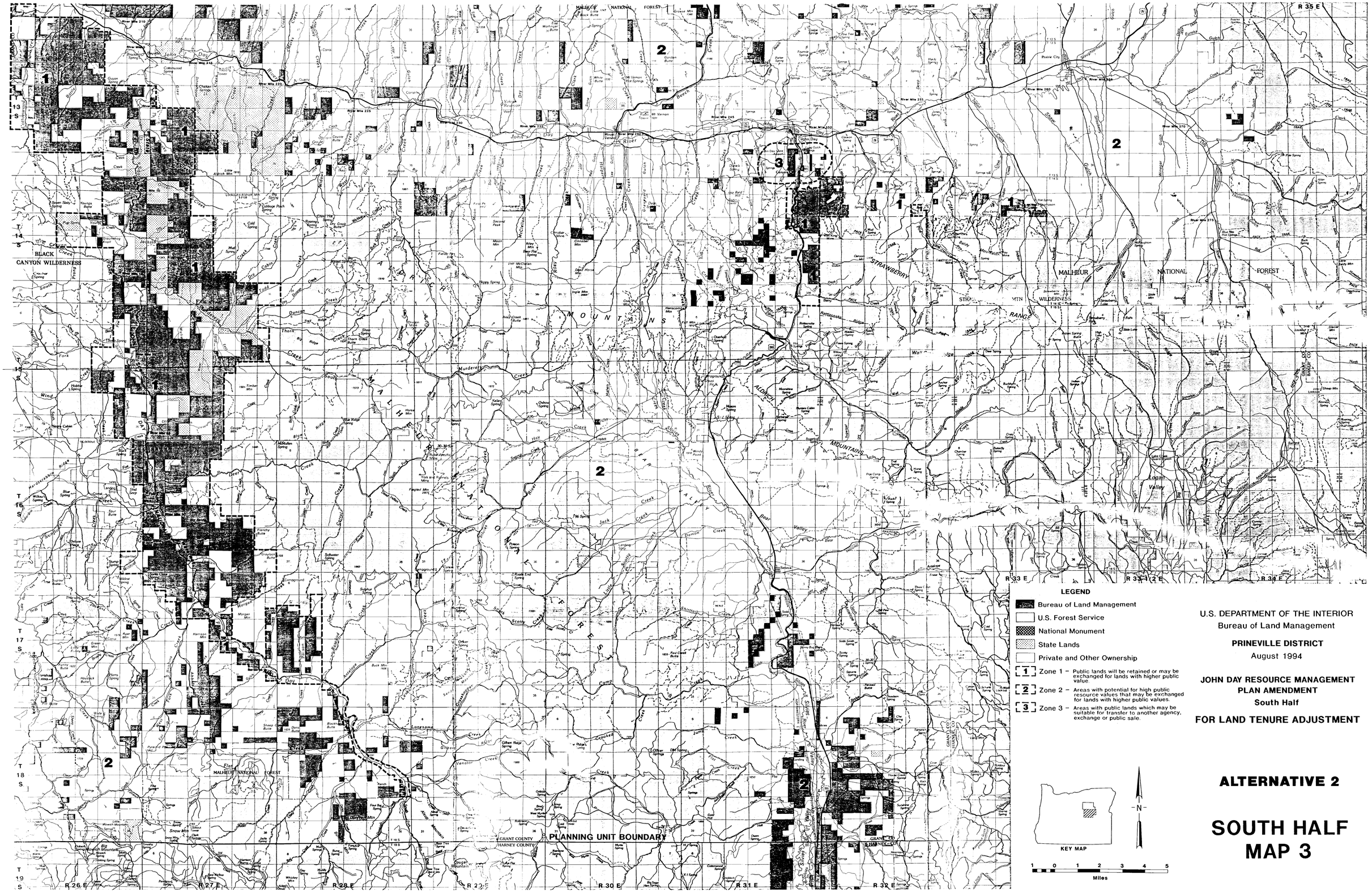
SOUTH HALF MAP 2

KEY MAP

N

1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
PRINEVILLE DISTRICT
August 1994
JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT
North Half
FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT
ALTERNATIVE 1
NORTH HALF
MAP 2
LEGEND
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Forest Service
National Monument
State Lands
Private and Other Ownership
Recreation and Public Purposes Lease
Zone 1 – Public lands will be retained or may be exchanged for lands with higher public value.
Zone 2 – Areas with potential for high public resource values that may be exchanged for lands with higher public values.
Zone 3 – Areas with public lands which may be suitable for transfer to another agency, exchange or public sale.
KEY MAP
Miles
UMATILLA NATIONAL FOREST
MALHEUR NATIONAL FOREST



LEGEND

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

August 1994

JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

South Half

FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT

KEY MAP

N

1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

ALTERNATIVE 2

SOUTH HALF MAP 3

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

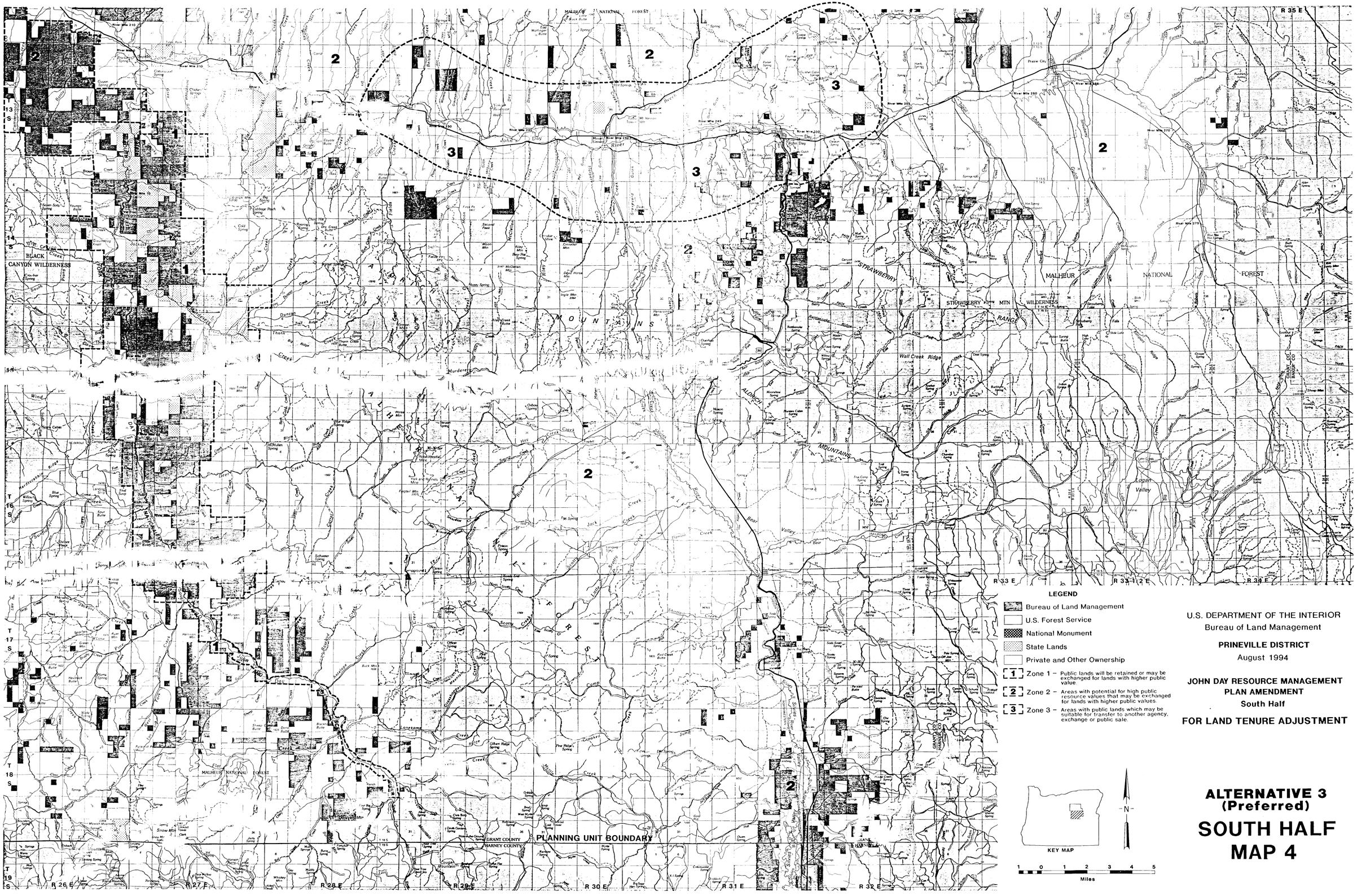
August 1994

JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT
North Half

FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT

ALTERNATIVE 2

NORTH HALF MAP 3



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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PRINEVILLE DISTRICT

August 1994

JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT
South Half

FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT

ALTERNATIVE 3 (Preferred)

SOUTH HALF MAP 4

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
PRINEVILLE DISTRICT
August 1994
JOHN DAY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT
North Half
FOR LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT
ALTERNATIVE 3
(Preferred)
NORTH HALF
LEGEND
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Forest Service
National Monument
State Lands
Private and Other Ownership
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KEY MAP
Miles
R 25 E
R 26 E
R 27 E
R 28 E
R 29 E
R 30 E
R 31 E
R 32 E
R 33 E
R 34 E
MALHEUR
NATIONAL FOREST