

## READERS GUIDE TO DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This document is structured into two basic sections. Part I is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Cascade Resource Area and was selected from the five alternative plans identified in the final environmental impact statement (FEIS), or Part II of the document.

This Proposed Plan is the preferred alternative (E) in the FEIS and is presented separately.

After consideration of public comments on the preferred alternative plan in the Draft RMP/EIS, the proposed Resource Management Plan was prepared with this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

### PART I

The Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP), or Part I, begins with a discussion of the purpose of the plan, the planning process, issues and management concerns addressed in the plan, and the criteria for plan development and selection (pages 1 to 8). The Bureau's rationale for selecting this alternative plan is given on pages 9 through 18. An explanation of Multiple Use and Transfer Areas begins on page 18.

The specific management objectives and actions required to implement the plan begin on page 24. The three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) proposed in the plan are discussed on pages 31-38. The standard management guidelines for each resource or activity are discussed on pages 38 through 61.

Part I concludes with a discussion on support requirements, the consistency of the RMP with other plans, and finally, a short summary on implementation (pages 62-65).

A summary of the Proposed RMP (Part I) is located on pages iv and v.

The General Location Map for the plan is found facing page i. All other maps referenced as part of the plan are found at the end of Part I.

### PART II

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), or Part II, describes and assesses the environmental impacts of five alternative plans for managing the 487,466 acres of public land resources in the Cascade Resource Area.

Chapter 1 discusses the purpose and need of the proposal. Chapter 2 outlines the management goals, objectives, and required actions for each alternative land use plan. The management proposals for each alternative are grouped by resource activity (range, wildlife, etc.). References are made in Chapter 2 to various appendices which give the management actions and resource conditions of each alternative plan. An impact summary of each of the alternatives is presented at the end of Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 is the description of the affected environment; Chapter 4 documents the environmental consequences of each alternative plan; and Chapter 5 outlines the public consultation and coordination which has occurred throughout the planning process to date, and the list of preparers.

The document concludes with a list of references, a glossary and several appendices that provide support data for each of the alternative plans and/or resource activities.

The General Location Map for the Final EIS is found at the beginning of Part II. All other maps referenced as part of the EIS are found at the end of Part II.

## CHANGES BETWEEN DRAFT PLAN/EIS AND PROPOSED PLAN/FINAL EIS

Revisions are incorporated into the Proposed Plan and Final EIS in response to public comments received on the draft EIS. These revisions include minor changes in the preferred alternative (E - Proposed Plan) and in other alternatives. Changes in Chapter 2 regard management actions while changes in other chapters are for accuracy, clarity and consistency. Brief discussions of the substantive revisions are presented below. Additional discussions may be found in the Response to Written Comments section in Chapter 5. Additional maps and appendices have also been included. Maps have been revised for accuracy.

### Off-Road Vehicle Use

Alternative E (Proposed Plan) now includes an additional 13,240 acres west of Crane Creek Reservoir which would be designated as limited to designated roads and trails for ORV use. This area in the draft EIS (Alternative E) was identified as open to ORV use. The area was reevaluated in response to public comment to provide opportunity for semi-primitive recreation in this area. The revision is incorporated to accommodate this need in light of manageability concerns and potential conflicts between user groups.

### Timber Harvest

Alternative E (Proposed Plan) now includes an annual average allowable timber harvest level of 1.7 million board feet. The draft EIS (Alternative E) identified this harvest level as 1.0 million board feet which is the current harvest level. This revision is incorporated in response to public

comment to provide a greater harvest level and in light of potential impacts on other resource values, and the capability of the forest resource to produce this harvest volume on a sustained yield basis. Timber harvest of 1.7 million board feet would occur on the same 26,663 acres as previously identified for Alternative E.

### Special Designations

In the draft EIS, alternatives B, C, D and E included 6 areas for Research Natural Area (RNA) designation. One of these areas, Peraphyllum Rock - 40 acres, was reevaluated in response to public comment regarding application of the criteria which qualify it as an RNA. The reevaluation resulted in dropping the RNA designation in these alternatives (B, C, D and E) since it was determined that the area did not meet the RNA qualifying criteria. The same special management actions have been retained for this area in the alternatives (B, C, D and E) to protect a sensitive plant species.

Two other areas identified for RNA designation in alternatives B, C, D and E are now expanded in all alternatives to provide better protection for sensitive plant species and enhance their function as research natural areas. These two areas are Summer Creek which has been expanded from 200 to 240 acres and Buckwheat Flats which has been expanded from 60 to 200 acres. The same special management actions for the original areas are also identified for the expanded areas.

One additional area, Prostrate Ceanothus, is now identified for special management in all alternatives. This is a 80 acre site containing a sensitive plant species. No special designation is identified for this area but special management actions are included for leasable minerals, rights-of-way and ORV use.

### Recreation

One campground site of 5 acres at Paddock Reservoir has been added to alternatives D and E in response to public comment to provide additional recreational facilities in this area. Special management actions are identified for leasable minerals, rights-of-way and ORV use.

The Snake River Birds of Prey Conservation Area includes 640 acres in the southern tip of the Cascade Resource Area adjacent to the Snake River. This area is now identified in all alternatives as a Special Management Area. Special management actions for this area remain the same in all alternatives as identified in the draft EIS except that ORV use is now also identified as limited in Alternative B.

# PART I

## SUMMARY

### PROPOSED PLAN (ALTERNATIVE E)

This Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) is developed to guide the management of public land resources in the Cascade Resource Area and to ensure that the public lands and resources are planned for and managed in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield and other principles as outlined in BLM planning regulations. The plan focuses on resolving the following three key issues identified by the public: range resource management, land tenure adjustment; and management of the Payette River Corridor. Special management concerns also addressed in the plan include access, off-road vehicles, fire management, timber base allocation and special designations.

#### Goal

The goal of the plan (preferred alternative) is to provide an optimum mixture of protection and enhancement of the natural environment and commodity resource utilization (renewable and nonrenewable).

#### Plan Summary

After a 5 year monitoring and adjustment period, livestock use would be stocked at 68,000 Animal Unit Months (AUMs), a 3% increase over current levels with the 20 year objective of stocking at 70,536 AUMs. Range improvements would include 15 miles of pipeline and 60 miles of fence. Vegetative treatments would be applied on 18,279 acres. Vegetative treatments would be conducted with methods and seed mixtures of grasses, forbs, and shrubs that benefit both wildlife and livestock. Full fire suppression management would be applied to the entire resource area. The 4-mile wild horse herd would be managed to support 20 head at the end of 20 years.

Wildlife populations would increase for mule deer, elk and antelope. Habitat improvement projects would be done on 23,912 acres. Sage grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse would benefit from improved ecological condition, reduced competition for forbs needed by grouse chicks and inclusion of wildlife needs in range improvement projects.

Riparian habitat improvement projects would be initiated along 7 miles and aquatic habitat improvement projects would be initiated along 11 miles of streams.

For land tenure adjustment, 17,604 acres would be made available for transfer from federal ownership. Of this, 560 acres would be available for potential agricultural development under the Desert Land Entry (DLE) program; 563 acres would be made available for sale, 10,107 acres for sale or exchange, and 6,374 acres for exchange only. Utility rights-of-ways (ROWS) would be restricted on 6,696 acres in the Cascade Resource Area.

Eight miles of the South Fork of the Payette River is recommended for study for possible inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (as a recreation river). Approximately 19,000 acres of the Payette River system would be designated as a Special Recreation Management Area.

Approximately 94% of the resource area would be open to leasable (oil and gas and geothermal) mineral exploration and development and 94% open to locatable mineral (gold, silver, etc.) entry. Withdrawals from mineral entry totaling 31,185 acres would be in effect.

Special designation (National Register of Historic Places) and management of cultural resource areas would be applied to nine cultural resource sites. Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designation would be applied to the Boise Front, Long-billed Curlew Area and Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat. Special management would be applied to five research natural areas.

An allowable cut level would be applied to 26,663 acres of forest land. Cutting would permit a harvest of approximately 1.7 million board feet annually. Limited firewood cutting would continue.

The Box Creek WSA will be managed so as not to impair its suitability for preservation as wilderness under the provisions of the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review pending a final wilderness decision.

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