

rights-of-way for overhead, surface, or subsurface proposals. Map 6 identifies all of the avoidance areas for these three categories. All of the identified avoidance areas on Map 6 would preclude surface rights-of-way.

Response 27.3 - The avoidance areas contain important and sensitive resources that were identified during the planning process as needing protection from rights-of-way development. The identified avoidance areas are generally small and we feel that flexibility exists to locate rights-of-way around these areas. If there are no feasible alternatives for a right-of-way other than through an avoidance area, provisions exist for changing the plan through the plan amendment process.

Response 27.4 - Avoidance areas are now defined in the Glossary. Map 6 shows the identified avoidance areas which includes 14 developed recreation sites and 13 sensitive plant sites. A more detail map of these areas is available at the Boise District Office.

Response 27.5 - Our regulations pertaining to rights-of-way are found at 43 CFR Part 2800. Subpart 2806 addresses corridor designation. Although provisions exist to designate corridors in land use plans we have chosen to identify areas to be avoided rather than identify specific areas for transportation and utility locations. This option was chosen since it is a more realistic approach for the Cascade Resource Area because of the fragmented land ownership pattern and numerous existing rights-of-way. This approach provides more flexibility for locating rights-of-way since the majority of the BLM lands are available and the avoidance areas are quite small.

Response 28.1 - See Response 7.1.

Response 29.1 - When a tract of land is identified for sale, it has been determined to meet the disposal criteria of Section 203 of FLPMA. The future uses of the land are not analyzed because there is no means by which all of the potential uses could be identified. In this particular case, the counties have identified these parcels of land for possible use as sanitary landfills. However, we do not make an analysis of the geology and hydrology of an area to be sold. The counties must obtain approval from the State Department of Health and Welfare before they can open a sanitary landfill. The State makes the analyses mentioned and approves or rejects the site as suitable for a sanitary landfill. We believe that the counties will have the necessary analyses and permits before they request us to make these sales. If they do not, and the state fails to approve their sites, those lands would have to be used for other purposes by the counties.

Response 30.1 - The lands that we have identified for possible transfer from federal ownership went through several screenings using various criteria (FLPMA, R&PP, DLE and CA, and retention criteria for other resource values - wildlife, recreation, etc.). The lands identified under Alternative B is the maximum amount of land that would be considered for transfer for the current Resource Management Planning process. Any public land not identified in Alternative B (as shown on Map 2-1 B) is outside the scope of this RMP and EIS and therefore would require a plan amendment with full public involvement. The proposed land transfer identified in the

Proposed Plan (draft Preferred Alternative E as modified) meets the criteria of the 1986 State/BLM Exchange Strategy Agreement. We were not aware of the land transfer proposal referenced in your comment letter during the preparation of this land use plan. We feel that it would be more efficient to address this proposal in our land use plan amendment process.

Before the identified public lands could be transferred from federal ownership, a lands report would be prepared along with a site specific environmental assessment. In this process, clearances for cultural and paleontological resources would be completed as well as reviews for wildlife and Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species values, etc. Lands that pass through these screens would be available for sale or exchange.

Response 32.1 - Alternative D would manage 25,347 acres of suitable commercial forest land (CFL) and would provide an annual harvest level of approximately 2.9 million board feet through the use of full intensive management practices.

Our draft Alternative E would have managed 1,316 more acres of suitable CFL for a total of 26,663 acres of suitable CFL. The approximately 1 million board foot annual harvest level was based primarily on the administrative capacity to offer timber sales. Our preferred alternative (Proposed Plan) now includes an annual average harvest of 1.7 million board feet.

Response 33.1 - See Response 23.1. The Cascade Proposed Plan (Preferred Alternative E) includes a float boat put-in/take-out site to be developed on public lands on the Weiser River in Township 11 North, Range 4 West.

We feel that to accommodate the existing and anticipated public needs the recreational facilities on Paddock Reservoir need to be improved and have included a camping facility to be developed in the Proposed Plan (Preferred Alternative E).

The level of historical recreational use around Crane Creek Reservoir has not been great enough to warrant the development of recreation facilities there. However, if use continues to increase as the trend over the past several years indicates, we will consider developing recreation facilities on Crane Creek Reservoir through the land use plan amendment process. The Washington County Waterways Board has installed boat ramps on the east and west ends of Crane Creek Reservoir on private lands. Additional facilities such as toilets and parking may be needed to accommodate use generated by these boat ramps and should meet the public need.

Response 34.1 - During the fall of 1986, the BLM established the Squaw Butte Shrub Restoration Committee (10 member group of agency, livestock, conservation, sportsman, research and citizen representatives) to help BLM develop a long-range restoration program. The recommendations of the group are being implemented and the long-range aspects of their recommendations have been integrated into the proposed RMP/FEIS.

Response 34.2 - The RMP is meant to be a general long range planning document to guide the BLMs various programs. Detail plans, such as

rehabilitation and activity plans, are considered the second level plans where specifics such as seed mixtures, etc. are developed. The fire rehabilitation plan, which included recommendations made by the Squaw Butte Shrub Restoration Committee does contain references to seed mixtures, application rates, and locations for reseedling.

Response 35.1 - Refer to Appendix R for a display by alternative of the vegetation condition changes and amount of nonnative seedlings proposed.

With the methods available we cannot give an accurate estimate of how much land would be moved from one condition class to another. Most predicted improvements would be within a class (i.e., from fair to high fair). Some land in the upper end of its condition class would move to the next higher class (i.e., high fair to good).

We feel that the RMP does answer the issue questions and actions addressed in the DRMP pp. 4-5. We feel that the effects described in Chapter 4 provide sufficient information when compared with the various maps showing where the vegetation exists (Map 3-1), what the current condition is (Map 3-2), what the proposed land treatments (Map 7) by allotment are. Appendix F illustrates the AUM changes that will result after the projects/land treatments are completed. Appendix E shows the current condition by acres.

Response 35.2 - Alternative C proposes a 19% decrease in AUMs. The economic effects of this alternative are discussed in Chapter 4. The range improvement projects are funded from grazing fee receipts that are returned to the states/districts. These monies are used for rangeland improvement projects for livestock and wildlife. These projects are not funded from general account monies.

Response 35.3 - The approximate location of the proposed riparian/aquatic improvement projects are shown on Map 8 and would only occur on public lands. The specific locations are identified in Appendix H. The condition of the riparian/aquatic areas are described in Appendices I and J. See also Maps 3-6 and 3-7.

Response 35.4 - See Response 11.1.

Response 35.5 - A fire rehabilitation plan has been prepared for areas burned in the Squaw Butte area during 1986. The Squaw Butte Shrub Restoration Committee has helped develop our rehabilitation program. The Proposed Plan/Final EIS describes the fire effects on the various resources and what measures have been taken in Chapter 3. Future fire actions and rehabilitation will adhere to the resource management guidelines identified for fire management. Environmental Assessments (EAs) will be prepared for all rehabilitation projects. Interested publics will have an opportunity to provide input into those EAs.

Response 37.1 - The safeguards will be the incorporation of rest rotation grazing systems in AMPs. We will incorporate rest rotation in lower elevation areas also, but the emphasis is to start in higher elevations because of the good perennial base currently existing.

Response 37.2 - Interseeding and reseedling projects to benefit wildlife will use shrub species that are adapted to the elevation and soil type of the area. We will also seed as many native grass species as are available. We will attempt to plan seedings far enough in advance to assure that adequate seed is available.

Response 37.3 - Depending on seed availability, the emphasis will be to plant forbs on important brood ranges.

Response 37.4 - Approximately one mile of Dukes Creek and one mile of Little Pine Creek are the creeks identified for transfer. These creeks are unsurveyed for riparian values, but were surveyed for fisheries values and appear in the table in Appendix J. Neither is identified for transfer in Alternative A and the correction is made on page 4-5. Where Dukes Creek is identified for transfer it would be exchanged with the State of Idaho. Where Little Pine Creek is identified for transfer it would either be through sale or exchange. Little Pine Creek is on an isolated parcel surrounded by private land with no access presenting a difficult management situation. The proposed exchange is part of an exchange proposed by a State agency and meets the criteria of FLPMA. The proposal was analyzed under the various alternatives and the decision to make it available for transfer was incorporated in the Proposed Plan (Preferred Alternative E) because the transfer would have minimal effects on the environment and would satisfy the intent of Section 206(a) of FLPMA.

Also see Response 30.1.

Response 37.5 - Map 3 identifies the approximate location of those lands proposed for transfer from federal ownership. Detailed large scale maps are available for review at the Boise District Office. The legal description of the proposed transfer lands are now included in Appendix V.

Response 37.6 - The text has been revised to incorporate this information.

Response 37.7 - The text has been revised to clarify this sentence (... maximum opportunity for survival of local wildlife populations.).

Response 37.8 - The sage grouse habitat will be improved through livestock management, use of grazing systems, and implementing AMPs. Grass and forb species will be selected based on key wildlife species, present vegetation and ecological site potential. Shrub interseeding will be selected based on key wildlife species and ecological site potential (soils and elevation).

Response 37.9 - There are currently no commercial varieties of crested wheatgrass available that have growth characteristics that are compatible with long-billed curlew. They will be considered as they become available.

Response 37.10 - The Idaho ground squirrel is identified in Chapter 3 as candidate species. The needs of the Idaho ground squirrel will be addressed when site specific proposal may affect their habitat.

Response 37.11 - This information has been noted and the text has been revised accordingly.

Response 37.12 - The issue questions are answered throughout the document in various sections. The proportions are shown in AUMs in each alternative under livestock and wildlife objectives. The other questions are answered in similar format and in the management guidelines sections of the plan. Activity plans and Environmental Assessments will be the mechanisms used to provide specific details on methods used for land treatments. The effects of the proposed actions and their success in addressing the issue questions are covered in Chapter 4 in the Vegetation, Soils, and Wildlife sections. This planning format was developed to conform with the Idaho RMP Guide Book and is used by all Idaho BLM districts preparing RMPs.

Response 37.13 - The indication from the Idaho State BLM office and the Washington Office is that monitoring will be funded. The 1987 Annual Work Plan Directives specifically emphasized monitoring as a priority. The Boise District has established and filled a Monitoring Coordinator position.

No alternative plans have been developed should monitoring funds be discontinued. Those alternative plans/actions would be developed at that time if needed.

Response 37.14 - See Response 20.8.

Response 37.15 - The criteria used to select public lands available for transfer from federal ownership are found in Sections 203, 206, and 212 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The application of this criteria provided lands identified for transfer under Alternative B. Selected forested lands, isolated lands on streams and in crucial wildlife areas were removed from T2 designation (sale or exchange). Lands with specific exchange proposals were retained. All lands identified for transfer in the Proposed Plan would still need additional review (also see Response 30.1).

The location of the recommended transfer lands for each alternative are shown on Maps 3, 2-1, and 2-2. The legal descriptions are found in Appendix V. Larger scaled maps are available for review at the Boise District Office.

Response 38.1 - Refer to the Soils section in Chapter 3 for existing erosion criteria. This section addresses area-wide average estimated soil loss and the range in acceptable soil loss tolerances on rangeland. Site specific erosion may be many times this average but the size of the affected areas are small in comparison to the total acreage.

The instream sediment component of stream habitat rates as poor (not acceptable) when fine sediments (2 millimeters) cover the stream substrate on more than 25% of the stream channel. This condition was observed on eight of the 21 sites evaluated. The primary source of this sediment is believed to originate from upstream land management practices on non-BLM lands. The Water Quality section in Chapter 3 has been revised to reflect this information.

Response 38.2 - The text has been revised for Alternative C to indicate that preservation of natural systems and nonconsumptive resources uses would be favored by management actions.

Response 38.3 - The management objective for an Outstanding Natural Area is to manage for the maximum recreation use possible without damage to the natural features that qualify the area as outstanding. Management guidance would follow the direction in 43 CFR 8352 and our Bureau Manual 1623.3. This management objective would not be applied to the lands adjacent to the 440 acre Box Creek area since those adjacent lands are administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the State of Idaho Department of Lands. The management guidelines that would apply under an Outstanding Natural Area designation for this area would be: 1) no timber harvest, 2) closed to off-road vehicle use, 3) withdrawn from mineral entry, 4) no surface occupancy for leasable minerals, and 5) no actions that would impair its natural values such as water diversions from the existing stream would be permitted. The Box Creek area is not proposed for Outstanding Natural Area designation in the preferred alternative (Alternative E).

Response 38.4 - The 12 miles of riparian habitat and 23 miles of aquatic habitat improvements in Alternative C are achieved through direct manipulation of habitat components. The EIS Summary on page v describes 140 and 142 miles of riparian and aquatic habitat improvements through increased emphasis on riparian habitat management in the new and revised AMPs. These 140 and 142 miles are additional miles of benefits derived from specific riparian/aquatic habitat objectives in these new and revised AMPs.

Response 38.5 - The difference between miles of habitat benefits between Alternative C and Alternatives B and D through new and revised AMPs result from both Alternatives B and D having more proposed AMPs, and therefore more miles of streams directly benefiting from specific riparian/aquatic habitat objectives.

Response 38.6 - For the purposes of this EIS the "benefits" to riparian/aquatic habitat are defined as measured increases in the woody shrub species resulting in greater biomass or diversity that positively affect the riparian/aquatic habitat components used in the qualitative evaluations. These benefits need not raise habitat condition ratings to the next higher condition class to be considered benefits.

Response 38.7 - The few miles predicted to experience a decrease in habitat condition quality have low potential, are remotely located, and will be considered for improvements on a case-by-case basis if monitoring indicates an unacceptable loss in habitat value.

Response 38.8 - The identification of site specific measures is beyond the scope of this RMP/EIS. An activity plan for the Boise Front area will discuss and identify these measures, the types of structures used, and where they are to be installed. Initial site assessment is to begin in the summer of 1987.

Response 38.9 - The proposed actions under the various alternatives (prescribed and slash burning) would cause some short-term (commonly less