familiar with the areas can provide tips to help make your stay safe, enjoyable, and compatible with WSA or Wilderness Area requirements. We appreciate your interest in BLM's wilderness program and invite you to direct your questions to any of the following offices:

Burns
HC 74-12533 Hwy 20 West
Hines, OR 97738
Phone (503) 573-5241
Michael T. Green, Mgr.

Coos Bay
1300 Airport Lane
North Bend, OR 97459
Phone (503) 756-0100
Melvin E. Chase, Mgr.

Medford
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504
Phone (503) 770-2200
David A. Jones, Mgr.

Prineville
185 East Fourth Street
P.O. Box 550
Prineville, OR 97754
Phone (503) 447-4115
James L. Hancock, Mgr.

Vale
100 Oregon Street
Vale, OR 97918
Phone (503) 473-3144
James E. May, Mgr.

Eugene
2890 Chad Drive
P.O. Box 10226
Eugene, OR 97440
Phone (503) 683-6600
Ronald L. Kaufman, Mgr.

Lakeview
1000 Ninth Street S.
P.O. Box 151
Lakeview, OR 97630
Phone (503) 947-2177
Judy E. Nelson, Mgr.

Roseburg
777 NW Garden Valley Blvd.
Roseburg, OR 97470
Phone (503) 672-4491
James A. Moorhouse, Mgr.

Salem
1717 Fabry Road, S.E.
Salem, OR 97306
Phone (503) 375-5646
Van W. Manning, Mgr.

Spokane
East 4217 Main
Spokane, WA 99202
Phone (509) 353-2570
Joseph K. Buesing, Mgr.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
OREGON STATE OFFICE
P.O. BOX 2965 503-280-7062
(1300 N.E. 44th Avenue)
PORTLAND, OREGON 97208

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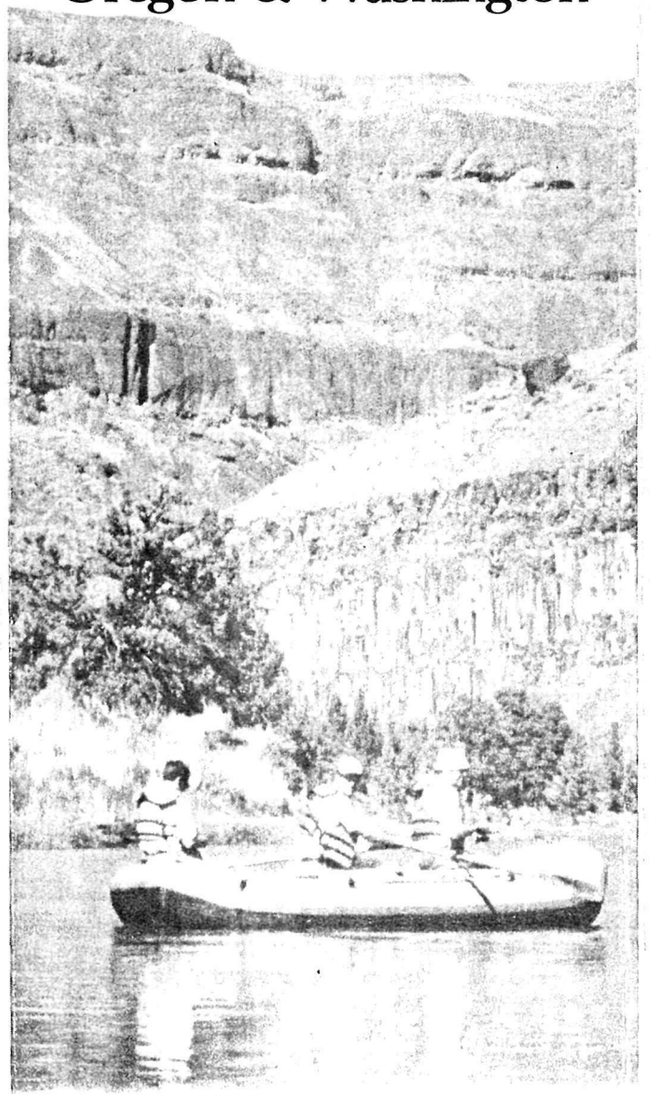
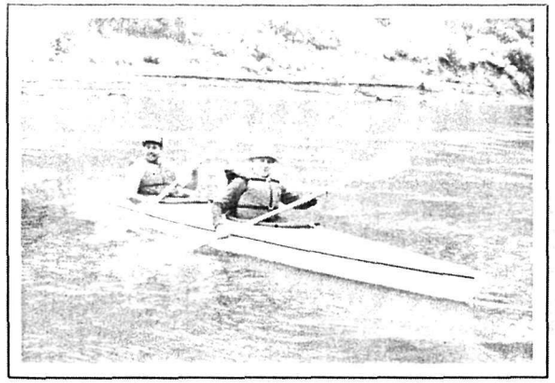
Bureau of Land Management

Wilderness Program in Oregon & Washington





Wilderness Program

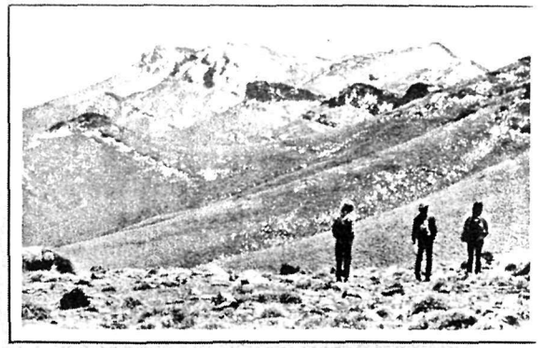
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been managing a wilderness program since 1976, when the President signed a law which directed the agency to conduct a study of its remaining roadless areas. Many citizens have been involved in this study, and a great deal of interest has been expressed concerning the future management of these undeveloped lands.

What is the BLM's wilderness program all about and what does the future hold? We would like to give you an update on where we have been and where we are headed.

Remember, these public lands are your lands, and we hope you will join with us in protecting their natural beauty until final wilderness decisions are made by Congress. Should you have questions about the wilderness program after you finish reading this brochure, we hope that you will contact one of our offices. We would like to talk with you.

A brief description of:

- ☐ How Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) were identified
- ☐ How they may be designated as Wilderness Areas or released from further wilderness review
- ☐ What activities are allowed in them
- ☐ What will change if a WSA becomes a Wilderness Area
- ☐ How you can participate
- ☐ Where you can get more information



How Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) Were Identified

Congress established a National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) on Federal lands when it passed the 1964 Wilderness Act. The BLM became involved with the wilderness review process when the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of October 21, 1976, directed the agency to inventory and study its remaining roadless areas and make recommendations whether or not each area should become a Congressionally designated Wilderness Area.

In 1980, The BLM completed a detailed field inventory identifying WSAs in Oregon and Washington. There are presently about 2.8 million acres in eighty-seven WSAs in Oregon and one 5,518-acre WSA in Washington. These areas have defined wilderness characteristics and are being studied for possible wilderness designation. The WSA selection process and actual selection were subjected to extensive public review and comment. Each WSA was determined through the inventory process to possess the following mandatory characteristics:

Size—roadless areas of at least 5,000 acres or of a manageable size, and roadless islands;
Naturalness—generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature;
Opportunities—provides outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation

In addition, WSAs often are characterized by special qualities such as ecological, geological, educational, historical, scientific and scenic values.

How WSAs May Be Designated As Wilderness Areas

Each WSA is studied to determine if the area should be recommended to the Secretary of Interior as either suitable or unsuitable for wilderness designation.

In developing a recommendation for each WSA, BLM considers the following factors:

- ☐ Evaluation of the wilderness values present.
- ☐ Capability of the area to be effectively managed as a wilderness.
- ☐ Presence of any identified or potential energy and mineral resources.
- ☐ Presence of other resource values or uses that would be foregone or adversely affected if the area is designated as a wilderness.
- ☐ Impact on wilderness values if the area is not designated as a wilderness.
- ☐ Public comments.
- ☐ Local social and economic effects of either wilderness designation or non-designation.
- ☐ Consistency with resource-related plans of other agencies, governmental bodies, and Indian Tribes.

The BLM develops recommendations for each WSA through its multiple resource planning process and analyzes the environmental consequences of designating or not designating each WSA as a Wilderness Area. An environmental assessment was finalized in 1986 for the single WSA in Washington, and the final environmental impact statement (EIS) for WSAs in Oregon is scheduled for publication in 1989.

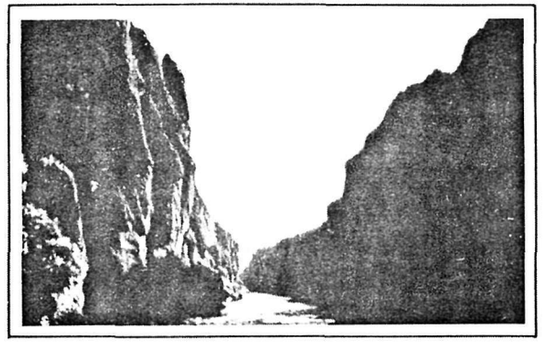
Statewide recommendations for all Oregon WSAs will be submitted by the BLM to the Secretary of Interior after it has reviewed the results of mineral surveys now underway. The U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines are conducting these surveys on areas recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, to be completed in late 1990. The Secretary will then transmit recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991, fifteen years after passage of FLPMA. The President must then submit recommendations to Congress within two years, and Congress will make a final decision on each WSA via legislation to add all or a part of a WSA to the NWPS or to release it from wilderness review. There are no time limitations on Congress, so it is uncertain when final decisions will be made.

What Activities Are Allowed in WSAs?

Until Congress makes its decision FLPMA requires the BLM to protect the wilderness character of each WSA regardless of its recommendation. By law, management of WSAs is generally less restrictive than management of Wilderness Areas, but activities that would impair wilderness suitability are prohibited. Examples of activities that are allowed in WSAs are:

- Hunting, fishing and trapping under State and Federal laws; rockhounding; travel with motorized vehicles on most existing routes; camping, hiking and horseback riding; staking mining claims and prospecting by the public without use of mechanized earth moving equipment, explosives, or the use of vehicles off existing routes.
- Existing mining and livestock grazing may continue in the "same manner and degree" as when FLPMA was passed. Some mineral lessees, mining claimants, or holders of rights-of-way have valid rights that must be honored, even if doing so impairs wilderness values. These activities must be conducted in a manner that avoids unnecessary impacts to wilderness resources.

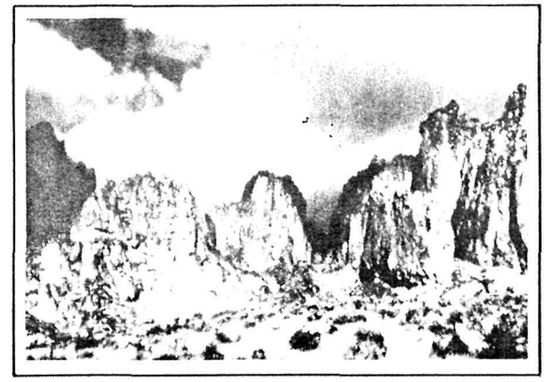
Detailed information on permitted and prohibited activites in WSA's may be found in the *Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review*, which was revised in November 1987 and is available at any BLM office.



What Will Change If A WSA Is Designated A Wilderness Area?

Two Wilderness Areas already exist on BLM lands in Oregon and Washington: Table Rock in the Salem District and Juniper Dunes in the Spokane District. In addition, portions of the Wild Rogue, Hells Canyon, and Oregon Islands Wilderness Areas contain BLM Lands. These areas and future Wilderness Areas will be managed under Wilderness Act guidelines which require that the wilderness character of each area be preserved unimpaired in the future. The BLM must provide opportunities for the public to use wilderness for recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical purposes in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness.

The guidelines for wilderness management are more strict than those used to manage WSAs. For example, new mining claims can no longer be staked because each Wilderness Area is withdrawn from mineral entry. Use of motor vehicles, mechanical transport, and motorized equipment would normally be prohibited, although in certain special cases, limited motorized use may be allowed under permit. Vehicle use could continue on boundary roads, including many dead-end "cherrystem" roads that sometimes form part of a wilderness boundary. Camping, horseback riding, and hiking is permitted as well as hunting, fishing, and trapping under State and Federal laws. Commercial outfitting and guiding services are normally considered appropriate Wilderness Area activities to be managed under special use permits.



How To Participate

The wilderness review process is necessarily lengthy and involved. Decisions that will eventually be made by Congress will affect how a significant portion of the public lands will be managed and used by present and future generations of Americans. Public participation has been and will continue to be a cornerstone of the wilderness program. Many public meetings, hearings and written comment periods have been held since planning for the inventory began and as recommendations for each WSA were developed.

Formal public comment periods on the mineral survey information being collected on WSAs started in 1988, and more will be held in 1989 and 1990.

The final wilderness EIS will be filed by the Secretary of Interior in 1989, but final recommendations on each WSA will not be made until all mineral surveys and associated public comments have been reviewed. Congress will likely hold additional public hearings on proposed wilderness legislation. After Wilderness Areas are designated, the public will have opportunities to participate in developing wilderness management plans to guide long-term management of each special area.

It's important that those who manage and use the WSAs work together to preserve wilderness suitability until Congress either designates an area as wilderness or releases the land from further consideration. Before visiting a WSA or a Wilderness Area, we suggest that you contact your local BLM office. Detailed maps are available, and people