

## **Exhibit R Scenic Resources**

### **Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project**



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*Amended Preliminary Application for Site Certificate*

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Amended Project Order	First Amended Project Order, Regarding Statutes, Administrative Rules and Other Requirements Applicable to the Proposed Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line (December 22, 2014)
ASC	Application for Site Certificate
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
CTUIR	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
EFSC or Council	Energy Facility Siting Council
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS for Draft and FEIS for Final)
FWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
INRMP	Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan
IPC	Idaho Power Company
KOP	Key Observation Point
kV	kilovolt
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
MA	Management Area
MP	milepost
N/A	Not applicable
NF	National Forest
NHOTIC	National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
NWSTF	Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility
OAR	Oregon Administrative Rule
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
ODOE	Oregon Department of Energy
OHV	off-highway vehicle
OPRD	Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
OR	Oregon (State) Highway
ORV	Outstanding Remarkable Values
Project	Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project
RMP	resource management plan
ROW	right-of-way
SEORMP	Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan
SMS	Scenery Management System
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
U.S.	United States
USFS	United States Forest Service
VMS	Visual Management System
VQO	Visual Quality Objective
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WSR	Wild and Scenic Rivers

## 1 Exhibit R 2 Scenic Resources

### 3 1.0 INTRODUCTION

4 Exhibit R provides an analysis of scenic resources for the Boardman to Hemingway  
5 Transmission Line Project (Project). Specifically, Exhibit R shows the Project—taking into  
6 account Idaho Power Company’s (IPC) proposed mitigation measures near the National Historic  
7 Oregon Trail Interpretive Center and the Birch Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern—is  
8 not likely to result in significant adverse impacts to scenic resources and values identified as  
9 significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans, and federal land  
10 management plans for any lands located within the analysis area described for the Project.

### 11 2.0 APPLICABLE RULES AND STANDARDS

#### 12 2.1 General Standards for Siting Facilities

13 The Scenic Resources Standard at Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 345-022-0080 provides:

14 *(1) Except for facilities described in section (2), to issue a site certificate, the Council*  
15 *must find that the design, construction and operation of the facility, taking into account*  
16 *mitigation, are not likely to result in significant adverse impact to scenic resources and*  
17 *values identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land*  
18 *management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the*  
19 *analysis area described in the project order.*

20 *(2) The Council may issue a site certificate for a special criteria facility under OAR 345-*  
21 *015-0310 without making the findings described in section (1). However, the Council*  
22 *may apply the requirements of section (1) to impose conditions on a site certificate*  
23 *issued for such a facility.*

#### 24 2.2 Site Certificate Application Requirements

25 OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r) requires that Exhibit R include the following regarding scenic  
26 resources:

27 *An analysis of significant potential impacts of the proposed facility, if any, on scenic*  
28 *resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land*  
29 *management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the*  
30 *analysis area, providing evidence to support a finding by the Council as required by OAR*  
31 *345-022-0080, including:*

32 *(A) A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands within the*  
33 *analysis area.*

34 *(B) Identification and description of the scenic resources identified as significant*  
35 *or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the*  
36 *management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important.*

37 *(C) A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the scenic resources*  
38 *identified in (B), including, but not limited to, impacts such as:*

39 *(i) Loss of vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of*  
40 *construction or operation; and*

1 (ii) Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.

2 (D) The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate  
3 any significant adverse impacts.

4 (E) A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources described under  
5 (B).

6 (F) The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic  
7 resources.

## 8 **2.3 Amended Project Order Provisions**

9 The Amended Project Order includes the following discussion regarding Exhibit R:

10 *The application should include visual depictions (photo-simulations) of the project's*  
11 *impact on scenic resources within the analysis area. It is recommended that visual*  
12 *simulations include depictions from select viewpoints in protected areas identified in*  
13 *Exhibit L that may be affected by the proposed facility. Photo-simulations and visual*  
14 *impacts assessments of permanent structures should include switching*  
15 *stations/substations, in addition to transmission lines, towers, and roads. For the*  
16 *purposes of Exhibit R, "local" land use plans include state, county, and city planning*  
17 *documents or inventories. The applicant shall also describe the measures it will take to*  
18 *minimize significant adverse impacts to important scenic resources identified by*  
19 *reviewing agencies.*

20 *If the applicant engages a multi-agency workgroup to inventory scenic resources or to*  
21 *assess visual impacts to scenic resources, incorporate into Exhibit R a description of the*  
22 *workgroup, its purpose, its membership, and any agreements made by the involved*  
23 *parties related to potential visual impacts of the proposed facility.*

24 (Amended Project Order, Section III(r))

## 25 **3.0 ANALYSIS**

### 26 **3.1 Analysis Area**

27 The analysis area for Exhibit R is the Site Boundary and 10 miles from the Site Boundary (see  
28 Amended Project Order, p. 25). The Site Boundary is defined as "the perimeter of the site of a  
29 proposed energy facility, its related or supporting facilities, all temporary laydown and staging  
30 areas, and all corridors and micro-siting corridors proposed by the applicant" (OAR 345-001-  
31 0010(55)). The Site Boundary encompasses the following facilities in Oregon:

- 32 • The Proposed Route, consisting of 270.8 miles of new 500-kilovolt (kV) electric  
33 transmission line, removal of 12 miles of existing 69-kV transmission line, rebuilding of  
34 0.9 mile of a 230-kV transmission line, and rebuilding of 1.1 miles of an existing 138-kV  
35 transmission line;
- 36 • Four alternatives that each could replace a portion of the Proposed Route, including the  
37 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1 (3.7 miles), West of Bombing Range Road  
38 Alternative 2 (3.7 miles), Morgan Lake Alternative (18.5 miles), and Double Mountain  
39 Alternative (7.4 miles);
- 40 • One proposed 20-acre station (Longhorn Station);

- 1 • Ten communication station sites of less than ¼-acre each and two alternative  
2 communication station sites;
- 3 • Permanent access roads for the Proposed Route, including 206.3 miles of new roads  
4 and 223.2 miles of existing roads requiring substantial modification, and for the  
5 Alternative Routes including 30.2 miles of new roads and 22.7 miles of existing roads  
6 requiring substantial modification; and
- 7 • Thirty-one temporary multi-use areas and 299 pulling and tensioning sites of which four  
8 will have light-duty fly yards within the pulling and tensioning sites.

9 The Project features are fully described in Exhibit B and the Site Boundary for each Project  
10 feature is described in Exhibit C, Table C-24. The location of the Project features and the Site  
11 Boundary is outlined in Exhibit C. The extent of the analysis area for scenic resources (the Site  
12 Boundary plus 10 miles) is identified on the maps provided in Attachment R-2.

## 13 **3.2 Methods**

14 The methodology used in analyzing the potential significant impacts of the Project on scenic  
15 resources identified as significant or important in local, tribal, and federal land use management  
16 plans involved a comprehensive review of the applicable plans, application of recognized  
17 assessment methods of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and United States Forest  
18 Service (USFS), applying the Energy Facility Siting Council's (EFSC or Council) definition of  
19 "significant" per OAR 345-001-0010(53)<sup>1</sup> and identifying areas that will require mitigation to  
20 reduce visual impacts to levels that are below significant. Section 3.2.1 describes the  
21 consultation process through which the study methodology was developed, and Section 3.2.2  
22 provides a summary of the assessment process. Section 3 of the Visual Resources Impact  
23 Assessment Methodology (Attachment R-1) describes in more detail the steps in the  
24 assessment process.

### 25 **3.2.1 Visual Resource Workgroup Process**

26 Staff from the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), BLM, USFS, IPC, and consultants to IPC  
27 and the federal agencies functioned as a visual resources workgroup to define the study  
28 approach on July 27, 2011. IPC's consultant presented an initial draft of a visual resources  
29 study plan at that meeting. Workgroup participants provided comments on the development of  
30 the study plan. Substantive review questions were resolved at meetings held on May 30, 2012  
31 and June 25, 2012. Each of these meetings were attended by the BLM, USFS, IPC, and  
32 consultants to IPC. ODOE or its contractors attended the June 25, 2012 meeting. Based on the  
33 workgroup's input and additional requests for information from ODOE, IPC developed the visual  
34 impact methodology described below in Section 3.2.2.

### 35 **3.2.2 Summary of Visual Impact Assessment Methodology**

36 IPC's visual impact methodology considers the combined outcome of context of the impact,  
37 impact intensity and the degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed  
38 action to determine whether impacts are potentially significant (see OAR 345-001-0010(53)  
39 defining "significant"). Attachment R-1 includes the complete visual impact assessment

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<sup>1</sup> OAR 345-001-0010(53) defines "significant" as "having an important consequence, either alone or in combination with other factors, based upon the magnitude and likelihood of the impact on the affected human population or natural resources, or on the importance of the natural resource affected, considering the context of the action or impact, its intensity and the degree to which possible impacts are caused by the proposed action. Nothing in this definition is intended to require a statistical analysis of the magnitude or likelihood of a particular impact."

1 methodology developed for Exhibit R (the same methodology was also applied to assess the  
2 visual impacts to protected areas in Exhibit L and recreation sites in Exhibit T). Photosimulations  
3 were developed from a subset of Key Observation Points (KOPs) relevant to scenic resources  
4 analyzed in Exhibit R. These photosimulations were used to inform the visual impact analysis  
5 and are included in Attachment R-4. The visual impact methodology was implemented in a  
6 series of 3 parts, summarized below.

### 7 **Part 1: Baseline Conditions**

8 Information on existing scenic quality/attractiveness and landscape character was analyzed for  
9 each scenic resource to establish consistent baseline data to support the impact assessment.  
10 Sites were located in lands administered by multiple jurisdictions, including both the BLM and  
11 USFS. The BLM and USFS have established baseline inventory and impact assessment  
12 procedures.

13 The BLM manages visual resources through the Visual Resource Management (VRM) System  
14 (BLM 1986). Visual values are established through the Visual Resource Inventory process,  
15 which classifies scenery based on the assessment of three components: scenic quality, visual  
16 sensitivity, and distance. Visual resources are then assigned to management classes with  
17 established objectives:

- 18 • **Class I Objective:** To preserve the existing character of the landscape. The level of  
19 change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
- 20 • **Class II Objective:** To retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of  
21 change to the characteristic landscape should be low.
- 22 • **Class III Objective:** To partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level  
23 of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate.
- 24 • **Class IV Objective:** To provide for management activities that require major  
25 modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the  
26 characteristic landscape can be high.

27 Within the study area, the USFS manages scenic resources through the Visual Management  
28 System (VMS) established in The National Forest Management, Volume 2, Agricultural  
29 Handbook 462 (1974) to inventory, classify, and manage lands for visual resource values.  
30 Visual resources are managed by the following five visual quality objectives, which describe a  
31 degree of acceptable alteration of the natural landscape:

- 32 • **Preservation:** Allows for ecological changes only. Management activities, except for  
33 very low visual impact recreation facilities, are prohibited.
- 34 • **Retention:** Provides for management activities that are not visually evident.
- 35 • **Partial Retention:** Provides for management activities that remain subordinate to the  
36 characteristic landscape.
- 37 • **Modification:** Allows for management activities that physically dominate the original  
38 character.
- 39 • **Maximum Modification:** Allows for management activities of vegetation and landform  
40 alteration that dominate the characteristic landscape; however, when viewed as  
41 background, the visual characteristics must be those of natural occurrences within the  
42 surrounding area or character type.

1 The BLM and USFS systems were adapted to this Project-level assessment to remain  
2 consistent with these procedures within lands administered by either agency. Resources not  
3 administered by either agency were assessed using one of the two procedures based on  
4 whether the resource was located in forested or non-forested areas. Resources located in non-  
5 forested areas were analyzed using the BLM methodology, whereas those located in forested  
6 areas were analyzed using the USFS methodology. Baseline inventory procedures are  
7 discussed in detail in Attachment R-3.

8 Baseline data collected for this analysis included measures of scenic quality/attractiveness,  
9 landscape character, and information on viewer groups and characteristics. Baseline data  
10 collection methods are summarized below.

11 **Scenic Quality / Attractiveness.** Scenic quality on BLM-administered lands was quantified  
12 through the scoring of seven key factors: landform, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery,  
13 scarcity, and cultural modifications. Ranking is relative to other similar features within the  
14 physiographic province. Each key factor was scored based on guidelines and scoring criteria  
15 described in detail in Exhibit T, Attachment T-4. After the scenic quality evaluation was  
16 completed, scores for each key factor were totaled to derive an overall Scenic Quality  
17 Classification for the resource. Scenic quality was classified as Class A, B, or C, with Class A  
18 receiving a total score of 19 or more, Class B receiving a score from 12 to 18, and Class C  
19 scoring 11 or less. Landscapes ranked as Class A have the highest apparent scenic quality,  
20 while landscapes ranked as Class C have the lowest (BLM 1986).

21 Baseline conditions for resources located on USFS-administered lands were described in terms  
22 of both "Scenic Attractiveness" and "Scenic Integrity." Scenic attractiveness pertains to the  
23 "intrinsic scenic beauty of the project area," and is categorized as: Class A (Distinctive),  
24 B (Typical), or C (Indistinctive). The combination of valued landscape elements such as  
25 landform, water characteristics, vegetation, and cultural features are used in determining the  
26 measure of Scenic Attractiveness. Scenic integrity refers to the degree to which a landscape is  
27 free from visible disturbances that detract from the natural or socially valued appearance (i.e.,  
28 valued landscape character). Scenic integrity is evaluated by measuring degree of alteration in  
29 line, form, color, and texture from natural or naturally appearing landscape character by  
30 measuring changes in scale, intensity, and pattern against the attributes of that landscape  
31 character. Based on this assessment, scenic integrity classified as very high, high, moderate,  
32 low, very low, and unacceptably low.

33 **Landscape Character.** Landscape character is a descriptive means to assess a landscape.  
34 Attributes of landform, vegetation, waterform, wildlife, spatial character, and cultural or historic  
35 features were described in terms of their relative dominance or prominence to the characteristic  
36 landscape and influence on the "sense of place" (USFS 1995). Because the BLM does not have  
37 a classification system for landscape character, landscape character for all resources was  
38 classified per the USFS system (1995), regardless of jurisdiction or physiography of the  
39 resource. Landscape character classes are described below:

40 *Naturally Evolving:* Landscape character expresses the natural evolution of biophysical  
41 features and processes, with very limited human intervention.

42 *Natural Appearing:* Landscape character expresses predominantly natural evolution, but  
43 also human intervention including cultural features and processes.

44 *Cultural:* Landscape character expresses built structures and landscape features that  
45 display the dominant attitudes and beliefs of specific human cultures.

1 *Pastoral*: Landscape character expresses dominant human-created pastures, “meadows,”  
2 and associated structures, reflecting valued historic land uses and lifestyles.

3 *Agricultural*: Landscape character expresses dominant human agricultural land uses  
4 producing food crops and domestic products.

5 *Historic*: Landscape character expresses valued historic features that represent events and  
6 period of human activity in the landscape.

7 *Urban*: Landscape character expresses concentrations of human activity, primarily in the  
8 form of commercial, cultural, education, residential, transportation structures, and supporting  
9 infrastructure.

10 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups associated with each resource were  
11 evaluated to understand certain characteristics that inform the extent to which potential changes  
12 in landscape character and quality would be perceived (perception of change). This assessment  
13 focuses on understanding characteristics that describe the relationship of the observer to the  
14 potential impact and the landscape context of that relationship. Viewer characteristics assessed  
15 included viewer location (distance), viewer geometry (superior, inferior, or at grade), and viewer  
16 duration or exposure (BLM 1986). The landscape context included consideration of landscape  
17 type—i.e., focal or panoramic.

## 18 **Part 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

19 **Likelihood of Impact.** Per the Council’s rule OAR 345-001-0010(53), an “important  
20 consequence” is in part determined by the likelihood and magnitude of the impact. In Part 2 of  
21 the analysis, IPC first identified the Project-related actions that could affect the resource, which  
22 included construction and operation of Project facilities including permanent features (and other  
23 actions, such as revegetation or restoration that could be prolonged in time, but not permanent).  
24 Next, IPC evaluated the likelihood and magnitude of the impact, considering such factors as the  
25 duration of the impact, visual contrast and scale dominance, and resource change and viewer  
26 perception. IPC considered **all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.**

27 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration.** The type of Project-related actions that could affect  
28 the resource and the expected duration of their potential impacts were determined. “Impact  
29 duration” was categorized as temporary, short-term, or long-term based on whether an impact  
30 will occur for up to 3 years (i.e., Project construction), for less than 10 years (i.e., restoration), or  
31 for the life of the Project (i.e., transmission towers and roads). Only those actions identified as  
32 long-term are considered potentially significant. Temporary and short-term impacts are  
33 disclosed but are not considered potentially significant because they would not permanently  
34 alter scenic quality or landscape character, or jeopardize the ability of the resource to provide  
35 the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in relevant land use plans.

36 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance.** The “magnitude” of impacts  
37 was measured by assessing the level of visual contrast and scale dominance of Project  
38 components relative to the existing landscape. Visual contrast was determined by implementing  
39 the visual contrast rating to evaluate the extent to which basic elements of form, line, color, and  
40 texture of the proposed Project contrast with the existing landscape (BLM 1986). Magnitude of  
41 impacts was classified as low, medium, or high. Medium and high magnitude impacts were  
42 considered potentially significant. Low magnitude impacts are disclosed but are not considered  
43 potentially significant; impacts determined to be of weak visual contrast and subordinate to  
44 existing landscape character would not have the potential to alter scenic quality or landscape  
45 character or be perceived by viewers.



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception.** The determination of  
2 magnitude was used to evaluate the level of change to scenic quality/attractiveness and  
3 landscape character of the resource (“resource change”) and how that change will be perceived  
4 by viewers (“viewer perception”). Resource change was classified as low, medium, or high  
5 based upon the geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts and the extent to  
6 which those impacts alter landscape quality/attractiveness and/or character of the landscape.  
7 The effects of past and present actions were taken into account, and the Project’s overall  
8 contribution to resource change was disclosed. Viewer perception was also considered low,  
9 medium, or high based on the location of the viewer relative to the medium to high magnitude  
10 impact (i.e., elevated, neutral, or inferior vantage point) and whether views are predominantly  
11 peripheral or head-on and episodic, intermittent, or continuous.

### 12 **Part 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

13 Per the Council’s rule OAR 345-001-0010(53), an important consequence also considers the  
14 “context of the action or impact, its intensity, and the degree to which the possible impacts are  
15 caused by the proposed action.” Drawing from impact determinations made in Part 2,  
16 significance criteria addressing each of these components was assessed as described below.

17 **Impact Intensity.** The “intensity” of impacts was determined by considering the level of  
18 resource change, either alone or with consideration of how that level of resource change was  
19 perceived by viewers. Impacts were considered to be of high intensity if the level of resource  
20 change was ranked as high, despite whether that level of resource change is perceived by  
21 viewers. Resource change ranked as medium was considered to be of high intensity where  
22 viewer perception of this change was considered high. Impacts judged to be of low intensity  
23 were not considered potentially significant and were not studied further because they would not  
24 have the potential to alter scenic quality or landscape character or be perceived by viewers.

25 **Degree to Which the Possible Impacts are Caused by the Proposed Action.** The degree to  
26 which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action is disclosed for resources  
27 determined to be adversely impacted by the Project. The contribution of the Project to adverse  
28 impacts is based on the level of resource change, taking into account baseline conditions (past  
29 or present actions) and direct and indirect impacts of the Project. Per the definition of  
30 “significant” in OAR 345-001-0010(53), an “important consequence” may occur either alone or in  
31 combination with other factors. Accordingly, the degree to which possible impacts may be  
32 caused by the Project are analyzed; however, this aspect of the significance criteria was not  
33 considered a discriminator of significance. Instead, it clarifies the potential role of the Project in  
34 altering baseline conditions by re-stating metrics used to determine resource change.

35 **Context.** For those impacts judged to be long-term and medium to high intensity, a  
36 determination of significance was made by considering the context of adverse impacts. The  
37 context of the impact considered the role of scenery as a valued attribute of the resource<sup>2</sup> and  
38 the extent to which expected impacts would preclude the ability of the resource to provide the  
39 scenic value for which it was recognized. The consistency of the impact with the standards and  
40 guidelines of relevant land management objectives was considered in this assessment. As  
41 follows, a conclusion of “less than significant” impact could be reached if the valued attributes of  
42 the resource could persist despite a high intensity impact. If, because of medium or high  
43 intensity impacts, the resource would no longer provide the valued scenic attribute(s) for which it  
44 was deemed important, the impact was found to be “significant.”

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<sup>2</sup> For Exhibit R, scenery is considered a valued attribute of all scenic resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans, and federal land management plans per OAR 345-022-0080.

1 **Potential Significance.** A conclusion of “less than significant” could be reached if the valued  
2 scenic attributes of the resource could persist. If, because of medium to high intensity impacts,  
3 the scenic resource would no longer provide the valued scenic attribute(s) for which it was  
4 deemed important, the impact was found to be “potentially significant.”

5 **3.3 List of Plans and Identification of Significant or Important Scenic**  
6 **Resources**

7 OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r): . . . (A) A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands  
8 within the analysis area. (B) Identification and description of the scenic resources identified  
9 as significant or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the  
10 management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important. . . .

11 IPC reviewed local, tribal, state, and federal planning documents listed in Table R-1 to identify  
12 scenic resources recognized in these plans as significant or important. The planning documents  
13 varied in their treatment of scenic resources. In most cases, areas were clearly defined;  
14 however, there were cases where interpretation of language in the planning document did not  
15 support a definitive conclusion regarding the potential significance or importance of a scenic  
16 resource or value (i.e., Umatilla County). In these cases, IPC consulted directly with the relevant  
17 jurisdiction to discuss the intent of the planning document regarding scenic resources. Where  
18 applicable, the outcome of these discussions is described by jurisdiction, below.

19 The following sections document significant or important scenic resources identified in  
20 applicable land use plans. Relevant land use plans are addressed in the following sequence:  
21 county plans, municipal plans, state plans, tribal plans, and federal plans.

22 Table R-1 below lists applicable land use plans and corresponding scenic resources identified  
23 as significant or important. The “Map ID” entries in Table R-1 correspond to the label used to  
24 indicate scenic resources in maps provided in Attachment R-2 (Map Figures) and Attachment R-  
25 6 (Viewshed Maps).

**Table R-1. Scenic Resources Identified as Significant or Important**

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	Map ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
<b>COUNTIES</b>							
Morrow County, OR	Morrow County Comprehensive Plan (1986) and Zoning Ordinance, as updated through 2011	N	None identified	Natural Resources Element, p. 96	Not applicable (N/A)	N/A	N
Umatilla County, OR	Umatilla County Comprehensive Plan (2008)	Y	Wallula Gap	pp. 8-11	On the Columbia River at and adjacent to the northern boundary of the county; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
Union County, OR	Union County Land Use Plan (1979) and Technical Supplement (1984)	Y	Blue Mountain Forest Wayside <sup>1</sup>	Appendix J – Scenic Areas (p. 99)	The Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is a 0.5-mile-wide corridor of land located west of La Grande along Interstate 84 (I-84) within the analysis area. The area corresponds to the Union County portion of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor, which also includes lands in Umatilla County.	SR U1	Y
			Minam River	Appendix J – Scenic Areas (p. 99)	45 miles of the river from Minam Lake to the confluence with the Wallowa River in the eastern part of Union County; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	Map ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
Baker County, OR	Baker County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1993, 2000), as updated through 2012	Y	United States (U.S.) Highway 26	Appendix I, Plate 10	Grant County line to junction with Oregon (OR) Highway 245, and east of Unity; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
			OR Highway 245	Appendix I, Plate 10	From milepost (MP) 2.46 Unity Lake Park Entrance) to MP 37.03 (Junction Whitney Highway)	SR B3	Y
			OR Highway 203	Appendix I, Plate 10	From MP 22.9 (Baker/Union County line) to MP 31.09 (Salt Creek, east of junction with Sunnyslope Lane)	SR B1	Y
			I-84	Appendix I, Plate 10	From MP 317.39 (Pleasant Valley Interchange) to MP 329.24 (1.81 miles southeast of Durkee Interchange) within the analysis area	SR B4	Y
			I-84	Appendix I, Plate 10	From MP 345.78 (Huntington Interchange) to MP 352.0 (Baker/Malheur County line) within the analysis area	SR B5	Y
			OR Highway 86	Appendix I, Plate 10	Flagstaff Hill eastward; from MP 4.81 (east of Sunnyslope Lane) to MP 40.64 (Eagle Creek)	SR B2	Y

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
Baker County (cont.)	Baker County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1993, 2000)	Y	OR Highway 86	Appendix I, Plate 10	East of Richland and east of Halfway to Copperfield; both segments outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
			Halfway-Cornucopia Highway	Appendix I, Plate 10	Cornucopia to Carson; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
Malheur County, OR	Malheur County Comprehensive Plan (1982)	N	None identified	Section 2, pp. 110-113; Section 3, p. 226	N/A	N/A	N
Owyhee County, ID	Owyhee County Comprehensive Plan (2010)	Y	Bruneau River Canyon	p. 22	Upstream from C.J. Strike Reservoir in eastern Owyhee County; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
			Owyhee Mountains	p. 22	Location not specified in the plan.	N/A	N
			Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area	p. 22	Primarily in Ada County, north and east of Swan Falls; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
			Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park	p. 22	East of C.J. Strike Reservoir in eastern Owyhee County; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
Canyon County, ID	Canyon County 2020 Comprehensive Plan (2011)	N	None identified	Chapters 6, 10	N/A	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
Washington County, ID	Washington County Comprehensive Plan (2010)	N	None identified	pp. 34-37, 51-58	N/A	N/A	N
Benton County, WA	Benton County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2006)	Y	Rattlesnake uplift	Chapter 3, pp. 3-14	West of Richland; outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
<b>CITIES</b>							
City of Boardman	City of Boardman Comprehensive Plan (2003)	N	None identified	Chapter V	N/A	N/A	N
City of Irrigon	City of Irrigon Transportation System Plan (2005) and Development Code (2012)	N	None identified	Chapters IV-VI	N/A	N/A	N
City of Ione	City of Ione Transportation Plan (1999)	N	None identified	Section 5	N/A	N/A	N
City of Umatilla	City of Umatilla Comprehensive Plan (2010)	N	None identified	pp. 6-7, 21-25	N/A	N/A	N
City of Hermiston	City of Hermiston Comprehensive Plan (1984) and Development Code, as updated through 2012	N	None identified	Chapters II, III	N/A	N/A	N

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)</b>	<b>Name of Scenic Resource</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Location of Scenic Resource</b>	<b>GIS ID No.</b>	<b>Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)</b>
City of Stanfield	City of Stanfield Comprehensive Plan (2003) and Development Code (2003)	N	None identified	Development Code Chapters 2-3	N/A	N/A	N
City of Pilot Rock	City of Pilot Rock Comprehensive Plan (1979), Ordinance 489 (2001)	N	None identified	Chapters V, VIII	N/A	N/A	N
City of Pendleton	City of Pendleton Comprehensive Plan (1983, updated in 1990)	Y	Umatilla River and tributaries	Chapter I, p. TR-2; Chapter II, p. TR-44	Umatilla River and its tributaries within the city limits and within the analysis area. The Umatilla River is located north of the City of Pendleton.	N/A	N
City of La Grande	City of La Grande Comprehensive Plan (2009), Ordinance 3182 (2009)	N	None identified	p. 23	N/A	N/A	N
City of Island City	City of Island City Comprehensive Plan (1984, 2001)	N	None identified	Chapter II, p. 19	N/A	N/A	N
City of Union	City of Union Land Use Plan (1984)	N	None identified	pp. 16-17	N/A	N/A	N
City of North Powder	City of North Powder Comprehensive Plan (1983)	N	None identified	N/A	N/A	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
City of Haines	City of Haines Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1979)	N	None identified	p. 3; Technical Information, Chapter 4	N/A	N/A	N
City of Baker City	City of Baker Comprehensive Plan (1978), as updated through 2012	N	None identified	p. 1 plus	N/A	N/A	N
City of Huntington	City of Huntington Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1987)	N	None identified	N/A	N/A	N/A	N
City of Vale	City of Vale Comprehensive Plan (2003) and Development Code	N	None identified	Development Code, Title VIII	N/A	N/A	N
City of Adrian	City of Adrian Comprehensive Plan (1978)	N	None identified	p. 11, Appendix B	N/A	N/A	N
<b>STATE</b>							
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)	No master plans applicable to seven state park system units within the analysis area; however, area was identified by OPRD.	Y	Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor	N/A	Corridor is located along I-84, west of La Grande.	SR U1	Y



Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
OPRD	State Scenic Waterways (OPRD 2012b)	Y	State Scenic Waterways	N/A	Outside of Analysis Area	N/A	N
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)	Columbia Basin Wildlife Areas Management Plan (2008a; includes Coyote Springs Wildlife Area)	N	N/A	Description and Environment	N/A	N/A	N
	Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area Management Plan (2008b)	N	N/A	Description and Environment	N/A	N/A	N
	Elkhorn Wildlife Area Management Plan (2006)	N	N/A	Description and Environment	N/A	N/A	N
Oregon Department of Transportation	Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (Eastern Oregon Visitors Association/ Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Committee, 2004)	N	N/A	III. Intrinsic Qualities and Context Statement	N/A	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
Oregon Department of Transportation	Journey Through Time Tour Route Management Plan (Michael Wetter and Associates 1996)	N	N/A	Background; Vision, Goals, Objectives	N/A	N/A	N
	No corridor management plan	N	N/A	II. Resource Inventory	N/A	N/A	N
	Elkhorn Drive National Forest Scenic Byway Management Plan (1996)	N	N/A	Resource Inventory	N/A	N/A	N
<b>TRIBAL</b>							
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)	Comprehensive Plan for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (2010)	N	None identified	5. Plan Elements: Goals & Objectives	N/A	N/A	N
<b>FEDERAL</b>							
BLM, Vale District, Baker Resource Area	Baker Resource Management Plan (1989a)	Y	BLM-administered lands managed as VRM Class I and Class II	pp. 49-50, Map 5	Multiple tracts of BLM-administered lands within the Baker Resource Area and within the analysis area	VRM B1 – VRM B7	Y

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
BLM, Vale District, Baker Resource Area			Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	pp. 46-49, Map 6	Six parcels of BLM-administered land in Umatilla, Union, and Baker Counties	SR B6	Y
			Powder River Canyon ACEC	pp. 46-49, Map 6	Along Powder River in north-central Baker County	SR B7	Y
	Powder River	Y	Powder River WSR	p. 10	From Thief Valley Dam to the Highway 203 Bridge.	SR B7	Y
	Oregon National Historic Trail Management Plan (1989b)	Y	Oregon National Historic Trail	p. 11	Fourteen properties in management area; relevant properties include Tub Mountain, Birch Creek, Powell Creek, Straw Ranch I, Straw ranch II, Flagstaff Hill	SR B6	Y
BLM, Vale District, Malheur Resource Area	Proposed Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Statement (2001b)	Y	BLM-administered lands managed as VRM Class I and Class II	Chapter 2, p. 101; Chapter 3, pp. 274-276; Map VRM-Proposed Resource Management Plan	Multiple tracts of BLM-administered lands within the Malheur Resource Area and within the analysis area	VRM M1 – VRM M8	Y
			Oregon Trail ACEC	pp. 68-102	Three tracts of BLM-administered lands in eastern Malheur County, all managed as VRM Class II	VRM M1, M2, M4	Y

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
BLM, Vale District, Malheur Resource Area	Proposed Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Statement (2001b)	Y	Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC	pp. 68-102	Tract of BLM-administered lands in Lower Owyhee Canyon in eastern Malheur County, all managed as VRM Class II	VRM M5	Y
			Owyhee Views ACEC	pp. 68-102	Multiple tracts of BLM-administered lands adjacent to Lake Owyhee in eastern Malheur County, all managed as VRM Class I	VRM, M7	Y
			Castle Rock, Dry Creek Gorge, North Fork Malheur river, and Leslie Gulch ACECs	pp. 68-102	Outside the Analysis Area	N/A	N
BLM, Boise District, Owyhee Resource Area	Owyhee Resource Management Plan (1999)	Y	BLM-administered lands managed as VRM Class I and Class II	p. 44; Appendix VISL-1; Map VISL-1	Jump Creek Canyon area southwest of Marsing, within the Owyhee Resource Area and within the analysis area	VRM O1	Y
			Jump Creek Canyon ACEC	pp. 47-48, 81-85, Map ACEC-1	Portion of Jump Creek Canyon area managed as VRM Class I	VRM O1	Y
			Castle Rock, Dry Creek Gorge, North Fork Malheur River, and Leslie Gulch ACECs	pp. 47-48, 81-85, Map ACEC-1	Outside the Analysis Area	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
BLM, Boise District, Cascade Resource Area	Cascade Resource Management Plan (1987a)	Y	BLM-administered lands managed as VRM Class II	pp. 59, 2-6, 3-26; Map 3-8	Oxbow-Brownlee Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), along east side of Brownlee Reservoir, within the analysis area	VRM C1 – VRM C2	Y
			Boise Front ACEC	pp. 31-37, Map 4	Tract of BLM-administered lands northeast of Boise in Ada and Elmore Counties, outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
BLM, Spokane District	Spokane Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (1987b)	Y	Badger Slope	pp. 16-17 (re: ACECs)	South of Yakima River between Prosser and Richland, outside of the analysis area	N/A	N
USFS, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (NF)	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1990a)	Y	NF lands managed as Visual Quality Objective (VQO) Preservation (none in analysis area) and Retention	Chapter Four, p. 4-42	Multiple areas of USFS-administered lands within the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and within the analysis area	VQO 1 – VQO 6; VQO 8	Y
USFS, Umatilla NF	Land and Resource Management Plan, Umatilla National Forest (1990b)	Y	NF lands managed as VQO Preservation and Retention (none in either category in analysis area)	pp. 4-22, 49, 95-198	No lands with Preservation or Retention VQO within analysis area	N/A	N

Jurisdiction	Plan	Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)	Name of Scenic Resource	Location in Plan	Location of Scenic Resource	GIS ID No.	Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)
USFS, Umatilla NF	Wild and Scenic River (WSR) Study Report and Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement for Eight Rivers (1997)	Y	Five Points Creek; Recommended for inclusion in the WSR system; Outstanding Remarkable Values (ORVs) include scenery	p. 11-4	Approximately 1 mile northeast of Hilgard	N/A	Y
Department of Defense, U.S. Navy, Naval Weapons System Training Facility, Boardman	Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan: Naval Weapons System Training Facility, Boardman, Oregon (1999)	N	None identified	N/A; scenic resources not addressed in plan	N/A	N/A	N
Bureau of Reclamation	Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan (1994)	Y	The Honeycombs, Leslie Gulch, Painted Canyon, Three Fingers Gulch, Carlton Canyon	pp. 2-49 through 2-55	BLM-administered lands adjacent to Owyhee River and Owyhee Reservoir within the analysis area; addressed above under BLM Vale District, Malheur Resource Area	N/A	Y
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge	Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (2007)	N	None identified	N/A; scenic resources not addressed in plan	N/A	N/A	N

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Scenic Resources Identified? (Y/N)</b>	<b>Name of Scenic Resource</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Location of Scenic Resource</b>	<b>GIS ID No.</b>	<b>Analyzed in Exhibit R? (Y/N)</b>
FWS, McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge	N/A; Comprehensive Conservation Plan in process, no plan prepared or adopted yet	N	N/A	N/A (no existing plan)	N/A	N/A	N
FWS, Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge	N/A; Comprehensive Conservation Plan in process, no plan prepared or adopted yet	N	N/A	N/A (no existing plan)	N/A	N/A	N

<sup>1</sup>This resource is analyzed as part of the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor administered by OPRD.

### 1 **3.3.1 Land Use Plan Descriptions**

2 The following sections describe the applicable land use plans and the interpretation of the plan  
3 content relative to identification of significant or important scenic resources in the analysis area.  
4 Relevant land use plans are addressed in the following sequence: county plans, municipal  
5 plans, state plans, tribal plans, and federal plans.

#### 6 **3.3.1.1 Counties**

7 The following sections summarize language pertinent to scenic resources or values contained in  
8 land use planning documents for the 10 counties located within the analysis area. IPC's review  
9 concluded that only Union and Baker County identify significant or important scenic resources  
10 within these planning documents.

#### 11 **Morrow County, Oregon**

12 In the Natural Resources Element of the Morrow County (1986) Comprehensive Plan, under the  
13 heading "Scenic Views; Sites" (p. 96) is the statement, "Addressed in plan (p. 69) but none  
14 identified." No information on scenic views or sites is found in the indicated location. The Goal 5  
15 Resources section of the plan (p. 119) states: "Morrow County contains a variety of landscapes,  
16 many of which may be considered to be scenic. The County has not, however, designated any  
17 sites or areas as being particularly high in scenic-resources value." Accordingly, the Morrow  
18 County Comprehensive Plan does not identify any specific scenic resource or value as  
19 important or significant.

#### 20 **Umatilla County, Oregon**

21 The Umatilla County (2008) Comprehensive Plan addresses the 14 statewide planning goals  
22 adopted by the State of Oregon. Chapter 8 of the plan addresses Goal 5 "to conserve open  
23 space and protect natural and scenic resources." The plan states: "there are areas and views  
24 which are commonly recognized as striking in their effect on those who experience them.  
25 Geological features, green vegetation, and water are major scenic features; human works and  
26 dry, shrub-steppe landscapes are other attractions. So that areas do not lose their eye-catching  
27 attributes, plans attempt to identify 'commonly recognized' scenic features, and suggest uses for  
28 these areas that minimize conflicts with the valuable features" (p. 8-11). No specific scenic  
29 resources are identified in this portion of Chapter 8.

30 Chapter 8 also states that "Umatilla County has a number of outstanding scenic views and  
31 pleasant vistas" (p. 8-10). The Plan establishes a series of policies aimed at the protection of  
32 scenic views in the county. One of the policies states that a site known as the "Elephant Rock"  
33 site (location not defined) shall be studied to determine if there is any scenic significance.  
34 Another policy states that Wallula Gap (a prominent physiographic feature along the Columbia  
35 River where it enters Oregon) has been recognized as a significant scenic resource and the  
36 County shall enact special land use measures to protect this area (p. 8-12).

37 Wallula Gap is the only scenic resource identified by Umatilla County as important or significant.  
38 Wallula Gap is located more than 10 miles outside the analysis area and will not be addressed  
39 further in this Exhibit. Umatilla County planning staff confirmed they are unaware of any studies  
40 regarding the visual significance of Elephant Rock (Jennings and Alford 2012). Therefore, no  
41 scenic resources for Umatilla County are addressed in this Exhibit.

#### 42 **Union County, Oregon**

43 The Preface of the Union County (1979) Land Use Plan states: "The natural beauty of Union  
44 County is worthy of preservation and should be preserved consistent with the stated purposes  
45 of this Plan" (p. 9). The Plan Policies acknowledge the state planning goal to conserve open



1 space and protect natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources, stating “development will  
2 maintain or enhance attractiveness of the area and not degrade resources” (pp. 33–34). The  
3 Recommendations section of the plan (pp. 46–47) contains a heading for Open Space, Scenic  
4 and Historical Areas, and Natural Resources, but none of the five recommendations under that  
5 heading address scenic resources.

6 There are 15 appendices to the plan, including Appendix J, Scenic Areas (p. 99). Appendix J  
7 notes that “Several areas in the County have been considered by either State or Federal  
8 agencies for inclusion into their respective scenic programs. The only two areas actually  
9 designated are shown on the Plan Map as the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside and the Minam  
10 River, both designated by the Oregon Transportation Commission.” Appendix J describes the  
11 Blue Mountain Forest Wayside (a corridor of land approximately one-half mile wide west of  
12 La Grande, along Interstate (I) 80N, with a purpose to preserve the scenic character of this  
13 portion of the Grande Ronde River and provide a rest area for travelers) and the entire Minam  
14 River from Minam Lake downstream a distance of approximately 45 miles to its confluence with  
15 the Wallowa River (and included in the Oregon Scenic Waterways System). Appendix J also  
16 notes that the Grande Ronde River from its confluence with the Snake River to the junction with  
17 the Wallowa River and the entire Minam River were under study at the time for possible  
18 inclusion into the national Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) program.

19 Union County (1984) supplemented the land use plan to provide additional information about  
20 Goal 5 resources. Section IX of this document addresses Outstanding Scenic Views and Sites  
21 (p. 44). This portion of the supplement likewise indicates the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside and  
22 the Minam River are given special consideration by the Oregon Department of Transportation,  
23 and that no uses conflicting with these protected resources are anticipated.

24 IPC concludes that Union County has identified the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside and the  
25 Minam River as important scenic resources. The Minam River is located more than 10 miles  
26 outside the analysis area and will not be addressed further in this Exhibit. The Blue Mountain  
27 Forest Wayside is within the analysis area, and the Project effects on the scenic resource are  
28 addressed in the Exhibit.

## 29 ***Baker County, Oregon***

30 Part 2, Section V of the Baker County (1993) Comprehensive Plan addresses open space,  
31 scenic/historic areas, and natural areas. In the findings regarding Goal V Open Spaces and  
32 Scenic Areas, the plan states that “Scenic views and sites are a resource indigenous to Baker  
33 County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of  
34 Transportation and mapped on Plate 10 in the *Technical Information and Inventory Data for*  
35 *Land Use Planning in Baker County*. The County, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative  
36 Rule identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000” (p. V-68). Applicable  
37 conclusions and policies indicate that “Natural Areas identified as 2A sites are to be protected to  
38 ensure the preservation of the resource site” (p. V-79) and that “[t]hose resources collectively  
39 known as scenic resources and sights are identified, after review, as not in known conflict with  
40 other land uses and as having no impact areas. The County will promote land uses designed to  
41 conserve the natural splendor of the region” (p. V-82).

42 The technical information background document referenced above is identified as Appendix I of  
43 the plan. Plate 10 in the appendix provides a schematic map of scenic routes in Baker County.  
44 The map identifies 11 highway segments within the county as scenic routes (Baker County  
45 2010). The segments are part of the following roadways:

- 46 • I-84 (2 locations)
- 47 • U.S. Highway 26

- 1 • Oregon State Highway (OR) 245
- 2 • OR 203
- 3 • OR 86
- 4 • Halfway-Cornucopia Highway

5 The designation of these highway segments are maintained in the July 2000 re-adoption of the  
6 Baker County Comprehensive Plan (Baker County 2000), including specific highway milepost  
7 references for each segment. These segments are described in Table R-1 and are addressed  
8 as important scenic resources in this Exhibit.

### 9 **Malheur County, Oregon**

10 The Malheur County (1982) Comprehensive Plan includes a section titled “Natural Resources of  
11 Unique Significance” (pp. 101–113) that addresses open space, significant natural areas, scenic  
12 areas, wilderness areas, and wild and scenic rivers. The plan content on Scenic Areas states  
13 that “Malheur County has no views and sites specifically identified as scenic areas. However,  
14 there are an abundance of areas which fall within the category of ‘lands valued for their  
15 aesthetic appearance.’ Most of these are components of natural resource lands and are  
16 protected from destruction by the BLM and other managers of resource lands” (p. 110). The  
17 plan also states that the county should consider the aesthetic values of areas when it is making  
18 land use decisions (refer to Exhibit K for discussion of Project compliance with local land use  
19 authorization provisions.)

20 The plan establishes numerous goals and policies for the respective topical areas. Policies for  
21 Natural and Scenic Areas are that: (1) within the next 3 years, the Planning Department will  
22 review The Nature Conservancy inventory of potential natural and scenic areas and identify  
23 those sites that Malheur County believes are significant and should be protected as natural and  
24 scenic areas; (2) the Planning Department will continue to inventory the location, quality, and  
25 quantity of each area to be protected; and (3) the county will cooperate with agencies  
26 responsible for the management of designated natural and scenic areas and encourage the  
27 expanded protection of these resources on publicly owned land (p. 226). The plan also includes  
28 a subsequent policy that the county will cooperate with the state and the BLM in their efforts to  
29 protect the segments of the Owyhee River designated as a scenic waterway.

30 Malheur County has to-date not identified any scenic resources as important or significant.  
31 Malheur County planning staff indicated that recent requests for plan and ordinance updates  
32 have not received funding and no update to the plan is anticipated, although the staff will try to  
33 resolve some inconsistencies with the state statutes (Beal 2012). Therefore, no scenic  
34 resources for Malheur County are addressed in this Exhibit.

### 35 **Owyhee County, Idaho**

36 A stated land use goal in the Owyhee County (2010) Comprehensive Plan is “To protect and  
37 maintain soil, water, air, wildlife and other natural environmental and scenic qualities so that  
38 they may be utilized now and in the future” (p. 14). Section 8 of the plan addresses Scenic and  
39 Natural Areas. The plan notes that “Owyhee County is rich in natural scenic areas. Some of the  
40 more outstanding include the Bruneau River Canyon, Owyhee Mountains, Morley Nelson Snake  
41 River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, and the Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park”  
42 (p. 22).

43 Among the areas identified in the plan, the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National  
44 Conservation Area and Bruneau Dunes State Park have defined administrative boundaries that  
45 identify the geographic extent of the resource. While the Bruneau River Canyon is a  
46 physiographic feature and does not have administrative boundaries, the geographic extent of

1 this feature could be reasonably defined based on the location of the canyon rim. All three of  
2 these features are located more than 10 miles outside the analysis area and are not addressed  
3 further in this Exhibit.

4 The Owyhee Mountains collectively comprise a physical feature that occupies a large majority of  
5 the area within Owyhee County, as well as adjacent areas in Oregon. While there may be a  
6 common, general understanding of the term “Owyhee Mountains” among residents of the  
7 region, there is no defined boundary and no established construct for the geographic extent of  
8 the area. The plan language is not sufficiently specific to define the Owyhee Mountains as an  
9 important scenic resource to be considered in this Exhibit. IPC also notes that lands in and near  
10 the Owyhee Mountains are predominantly federal lands administered by the BLM, and that  
11 important scenic resources in this area have been identified by applicable BLM VRM  
12 classifications (see Section 3.4.1.5).

### 13 **Canyon County, Idaho**

14 The Canyon County (2011) 2020 Comprehensive Plan was reviewed for content regarding  
15 designated scenic resources or sites. The plan includes a Natural Resources Component  
16 (Chapter 6) and a Special Areas, Sites and Recreation Component (Chapter 10).

17 The Natural Resources Component (pp. 43–48) addresses agricultural land, fish and wildlife  
18 habitat, water, air, and mineral resources; it does not include background information or  
19 planning guidance specific to scenic resources.

20 The Special Areas, Sites, and Recreation Component (pp. 63–72) likewise does not include  
21 background information or planning guidance specific to scenic resources. This chapter  
22 presents an overview of the county’s history, followed by statements of goals, policies, and  
23 implementation actions applicable to a lengthy list of recreation resources. On page 63, the plan  
24 states: “[f]or information regarding natural resource features, ecologic, wildlife or scenic  
25 significance pertaining to special areas or sites, refer to Chapter 6 of this Plan.” As noted above,  
26 however, Chapter 6 does not include information or guidance specific to scenic resources. In  
27 addition, the goals, policies, and implementation actions stated in Chapter 10 refer to special  
28 areas, recreational opportunities and facilities, and various types of cultural resources, but do  
29 not refer specifically to scenic resources or sites. Therefore, the applicable language in  
30 Chapters 6 and 10 of the plan demonstrates the document does not identify significant scenic  
31 resources in the county.

32 Chapter 10 of the plan does include a six-page table of recreational resources within the county  
33 that are grouped according to the category of opportunity they provide (e.g., archeology, bird  
34 watching, fishing, hiking, historic, and photography). Under the category “Scenic,” the table lists  
35 six resources: the Boise River (which is bordered by lands under private and public ownership);  
36 Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge (under federal ownership); the Lower Dam and Upper Dam  
37 Recreation Areas on Lake Lowell (county ownership); and Guffy Bridge and Lizard Butte (both  
38 also under county ownership). The plan includes a map of Recreation and Special Sites on  
39 which the Boise River and Deer Flat are identified and labeled by name, the Lower and Upper  
40 Dam areas are shown as parks, Guffy Bridge is labeled as a sportsman’s access, and Lizard  
41 Butte is identified as a geologic feature; no resources identified on the map are categorized as  
42 scenic sites. The plan does not prescribe scenic management direction for the recreation  
43 resources listed under the Scenic category. Because the plan does not state or suggest that the  
44 recreational features identified in the Scenic category warranted specific resource protection,  
45 IPC concluded that the plan did not identify them as important scenic resources.

46 Based on the specific content of the plan, IPC concludes that there are no features within  
47 Canyon County that are identified as important or significant scenic resources.

## 1 **Washington County, Idaho**

2 The Washington County (2010) Comprehensive Plan was reviewed for designated scenic  
3 resources or sites. The Natural Resources section of the Plan (pp. 34–37) addresses animal,  
4 vegetation, mineral, and water resources; scenic resources are not discussed in this section of  
5 the plan. The Recreation section of the plan (pp. 51–58) lists 11 objectives in support of the goal  
6 to ensure the availability of adequate recreational facilities; one of the stated objectives is that  
7 the county shall consider properly identifying recreation potential and scenic points of interest.  
8 This part of the plan also states (p. 53) that “Scenery ranges from mountain to desert, for those  
9 artists who paint or use a camera. Indianhead Mountain is a landmark which has been featured  
10 in many photographs and paintings, both by local and nationally known artists.” However, the  
11 plan does not prescribe scenic management direction for the area or indicate interest in  
12 development of a scenic point of interest. Therefore, the plan does not identify it as an important  
13 scenic resource. Based on the specific content of the plan, there are no features within  
14 Washington County that are identified as important or significant scenic resources.

## 15 **Benton County, Washington**

16 The current Benton County (2006) Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2006 and updated most  
17 recently in March 2015; updates to the plan are scheduled to occur every 7 years (Benton  
18 County 2012), indicating that the next update could be expected in 2022. The plan includes  
19 chapters addressing Natural Resources, Goals, Policies and Actions, and the various plan  
20 elements (e.g., Land Use, Rural Lands, and Parks and Recreation). The topics covered in the  
21 Natural Resources and Parks and Recreation chapters do not include scenic resources. The  
22 plan establishes Goal 40-1 (pp. 3-13): “[t]o conserve as undeveloped and unmarked for  
23 posterity the visually prominent naturally vegetated ridges that define the Columbia Basin  
24 landscape and are uniquely a product of the Ice Age Floods.” The corresponding policies  
25 include a statement that the county encourages public and/or private acquisition of the  
26 prominent ridges within the unincorporated areas of the county to preserve views, protect  
27 habitat, and provide public access to these landscapes. Another policy states that the county  
28 should be open to a variety of means to protect the natural landforms and vegetative cover of  
29 the Rattlesnake uplift, specifically Rattlesnake, Red, Candy, and Badger mountains at or above  
30 elevation 900 feet. The plan content is somewhat ambiguous, but could be considered to  
31 identify these mountains as important scenic resources.

32 The analysis area includes a small area in the southwestern part of Benton County, extending  
33 westward from approximately I-82 near Plymouth to the boundary with Klickitat County. The  
34 Rattlesnake uplift features referenced above are not included within this portion of Benton  
35 County. No features within the Benton County portion of the analysis area are identified as  
36 important or significant scenic resources.

### 37 **3.3.1.2 Municipalities**

38 Seventeen municipalities are located within the analysis area. Land use planning information  
39 pertinent to scenic resources is summarized below. Information is presented by county, moving  
40 west to east in Oregon, north to south in Idaho, and finishing with Washington State.

#### 41 **City of Boardman**

42 Boardman is an incorporated community located on the Columbia River in the northwestern part  
43 of Morrow County, with a population of approximately 3,220 persons (Portland State University  
44 2011). The City of Boardman (2003) adopted its Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations  
45 in 1976 and completed an initial review of the plan and regulations in 1988. The current  
46 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2003. The plan includes 14 chapters; Chapter V, Natural  
47 Resources (p. 11) states: “[d]ue to the City’s topography, vegetation, and existing infrastructure

1 development, the City believes there are limited scenic views, none of which could be  
2 considered outstanding.” Therefore, the City of Boardman has not identified any features as  
3 important or significant scenic resources.

4 **City of Irrigon**

5 Irrigon is an incorporated community located on the Columbia River in the northeastern part of  
6 Morrow County, with a population of approximately 1,825 persons (Portland State University  
7 2011). The City of Irrigon initially developed a comprehensive plan as part of a technical report  
8 that was completed in 1978 and updated in 1991 and 2005 (Oregon Secretary of State 2012).  
9 Chapter V of the plan addresses the Natural Environment, while Chapter VI addresses the  
10 Socio-Economic Environment; neither chapter includes topical coverage for scenic areas or  
11 resources. Chapter IV, Goals and Objectives, includes a goal (p. A-2) to “[c]onserve open space  
12 and protect natural and scenic resources.” The policy statement corresponding to that goal is to  
13 “[e]xamine any publicly owned lands including street ROWs for their potential open space use  
14 before their disposition.”

15 Comprehensive planning guidance and zoning are integrated into the city’s development code,  
16 which is documented as Title 10 of the Irrigon City Code (Sterling Codifiers, Inc. 2012). The land  
17 use districts defined in Chapter 2 of the development code correspond to the Comprehensive  
18 Plan designations and do not include any districts oriented to scenic resources. Chapter 3 of the  
19 development code establishes community design standards that apply to proposed land use  
20 actions; the standards include provisions that relate to the aesthetic aspects of development,  
21 but not to geographic areas or features for which aesthetic concerns have been identified.

22 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan and development code, there are no  
23 features within the City of Irrigon identified as important or significant scenic resources. City staff  
24 confirmed that no significant scenic resources were identified in the original comprehensive plan  
25 or any subsequent updates (Breazeale 2012).

26 **City of Lone**

27 Lone is a small, incorporated community located in the west-central part of Morrow County, with  
28 a population of approximately 330 persons (Portland State University 2011). The City of Lone  
29 (1999) initially developed a Transportation Plan and implementing regulations that were  
30 approved in 1979 and have been subsequently amended several times. Section 5 of the plan  
31 establishes Plan Goals and Policies for a series of topical areas corresponding to the statewide  
32 planning goals. Section 5 states a policy for Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and  
33 Natural Resources to “[e]xamine any publicly owned lands including street ROWs for their  
34 potential open space use before their disposition; and conserve the area’s natural resources  
35 and protect open space and natural resources which should be preserved from urban  
36 development.”

37 The Lone zoning ordinance (Ordinance #158, as amended) implements the Transportation Plan  
38 (City of Lone 1999). The ordinance defines land use districts and establishes corresponding  
39 standards for the districts, along with other development standards.

40 Based on the available information about the content of the comprehensive plan and zoning  
41 code, there are no features within the City of Lone identified as important or significant scenic  
42 resources.

43 **City of Umatilla**

44 Umatilla is a small city with approximately 6,905 residents (Portland State University 2011)  
45 located on the Columbia River in the northwestern part of Umatilla County. The City of Umatilla  
46 Comprehensive Plan (2010) includes an element titled Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas,

1 and Natural Resources. This element of the plan addresses fish and wildlife resources, aquatic  
2 resources, drylands (sagebrush), ground water, and gravel and historic sites, but includes no  
3 substantive content regarding scenic areas. The Goals, Objectives, and Policies chapter of the  
4 Plan (pp. 6-7) includes a goal “[t]o protect and enhance through proper use and development  
5 the open spaces, scenic and historic areas, and natural resources of the area.” The statements  
6 of objectives and policies corresponding to that goal do not include any specific references to  
7 scenic areas or resources. Consequently, there are no features within the City of Umatilla  
8 identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 9 **City of Hermiston**

10 Hermiston is a community of approximately 16,795 residents (Portland State University 2011)  
11 located along I-84 in the northwestern corner of Umatilla County. The City of Hermiston (2012)  
12 initially developed a comprehensive plan and supporting technical report in 1984, and the plan  
13 is updated through amendments to the city development code. Chapter II of the plan documents  
14 Background Information and Findings. Under the heading Other Goal 5 Resources, this chapter  
15 indicates: “[a]ccording to Oregon State Parks and Recreation Division, there are no wilderness  
16 areas, potential or approved Oregon wilderness trails, or state and federal wild/scenic  
17 waterways within the Hermiston UGB. Other Goal 5 resources, including outstanding scenic  
18 views/sites and indigenous energy resources, are discussed in the appropriate sections below.”  
19 (City of Hermiston 1984). Subsequent content in Chapter II addresses air, noise, and water  
20 quality; natural hazards and development limitations; energy resources and conservation; and  
21 open space and recreation, but does not include specific information about scenic sites or  
22 views.

23 Chapter III of the Plan identifies policies for the respective topical areas. Under the heading E.  
24 Resources (Goals 5, 6, 7, and 13), Policy 7 (p. III-10), the plan states: “The City of Hermiston  
25 will protect natural resources to the maximum degree possible.” The subsequent discussion of  
26 implementing actions references the Open Space designation applied to the 100-year  
27 floodplain, wetlands in the northeastern part of the city, and the Oregon State University  
28 Agricultural Experiment Station. A footnote related to Policy 7 states that “[f]or other Goal 5  
29 resources, see Policy 8: Surface and Groundwater Resources, Policy 9: Aggregate Resources,  
30 Policy 10: Historic Resources, and Policy 16: Parks, Recreation and Open Space.” Policy 16  
31 (p. III-18) indicates that Hermiston will acquire and develop additional parks and will preserve as  
32 open space city-owned land that possesses recreational, scenic, and other environmental  
33 qualities or is subject to natural hazards.

34 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan, there are no features within the City of  
35 Hermiston identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 36 **City of Stanfield**

37 Stanfield is an incorporated community with a population of approximately 2,045 residents  
38 (Portland State University 2011) located adjacent to I-84 in the northwestern part of Umatilla  
39 County. The City of Stanfield (2003) initially adopted a comprehensive plan in 1983. The  
40 technical report supporting the comprehensive plan was updated in 1984, and a zoning  
41 ordinance was adopted in the same year. The plan and technical report include 14 goals  
42 corresponding to the 14 statewide planning goals. Comprehensive planning guidance and  
43 zoning are integrated into the City of Stanfield (2003) development code. The land use districts  
44 defined in Chapter 2 of the development code correspond to the comprehensive plan  
45 designations; they include an Open Space District, but do not include any districts oriented to  
46 scenic resources. Chapter 3 of the development code establishes design standards that include  
47 landscaping and screening provisions that relate to the aesthetic aspects of development. The

1 development code does not identify geographic areas or features for which aesthetic concerns  
2 have been identified.

3 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan and development code, there are no  
4 features within the City of Stanfield identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 5 **City of Pilot Rock**

6 Pilot Rock is an incorporated community with a population of approximately 1,505 residents  
7 (Portland State University 2011) located near the center of Umatilla County. The City of Pilot  
8 Rock (1979) Comprehensive Plan addresses statewide Goal 5 concerning natural resources.  
9 The Goals and Policies section of the Plan (p. V-3) establishes a goal: “[t]o conserve open  
10 space and protect natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources.” The first of eight policies  
11 defined in support of that goal is to “identify open spaces; scenic, cultural and historic areas;  
12 and natural resources which should be preserved from urban development.” The second policy  
13 is: “[t]o distribute open space throughout the urban area to insure visual relief within the urban  
14 environment and to provide sufficient space for passive and active recreation.” Content  
15 elsewhere in the plan does not discuss or identify any specific scenic resources. The Natural  
16 Environment (Chapter VII) and Socioeconomic Environment (Chapter VIII) sections of the plan  
17 each address multiple topical areas, but scenic areas are not included in either chapter. A 2001  
18 update of the plan includes the same content regarding Goal 5 resources (City of Pilot Rock  
19 2001). There are no features within the City of Pilot Rock identified as important or significant  
20 scenic resources.

### 21 **City of Pendleton**

22 Pendleton is a community of approximately 16,605 residents (Portland State University 2011)  
23 located along I-84 near the center of Umatilla County and is the county seat. The City of  
24 Pendleton initially developed a comprehensive plan as part of a technical report that was  
25 completed in 1983 and updated in 1990. Chapter I of the plan/technical report (p. TR-2)  
26 identifies a goal “[t]o conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources,” and  
27 directs that “[p]rograms shall be provided that will (1) ensure open space; (2) protect scenic and  
28 historic areas and natural resources for future generations; and (3) promote healthy and visually  
29 attractive environments in harmony with the natural landscape character” (City of Pendleton,  
30 1990). Chapter II of the Plan addresses Nature, and the Open Space section of that chapter  
31 includes a discussion of Scenic Areas. The scenic areas content (pp. TR-44, -45) indicates that  
32 the Umatilla River and its tributaries constitute the most significant scenic area in the city, and  
33 that any urban use that intrudes into the vegetation or alters the banks of the levee may conflict  
34 with the scenic beauty of the waterway. Correspondingly, the plan states that the city needs to  
35 have a permit process to review all development within a specific distance of the floodway to  
36 ensure compatibility of any development along the river and protect and enhance the scenic  
37 values of the waterways.

38 Based on the specific content of the plan, the Umatilla River and its tributaries within the City of  
39 Pendleton have been identified as an important or significant scenic resource. Pendleton is  
40 located outside of the 10-mile radius for the analysis area; consequently, the Umatilla River is  
41 not addressed in this Exhibit.

### 42 **City of La Grande**

43 La Grande is a community of approximately 13,095 residents (Portland State University 2011)  
44 located along I-84 near the center of Union County and is the county seat. The City of La  
45 Grande (2009) prepared its original Comprehensive Plan in 1973, and approved updates of the  
46 plan in 1977, 1990, 1999, 2003, 2005, and 2009. The most recent update was documented as  
47 Ordinance Number 3182. The section of the ordinance addressing Statewide Planning Goal 5 –

1 Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources includes the following  
2 information (pp. 23-24) regarding Scenic Views and Sites:

3 *The primary scenic resources under jurisdiction by the City are contained in the park*  
4 *system. There are other scenic attractions in the area but most of these are seen from*  
5 *La Grande and are not in La Grande. No official scenic viewpoints have been*  
6 *designated. The City Land Development Code does contain building height restrictions*  
7 *that serve to preserve views of the surrounding mountains. Developers have the option*  
8 *to further regulate building heights by deed restriction in areas where views are*  
9 *important.*

10 The ordinance also discusses the portion of the Grande Ronde River that has been designated  
11 as a federal wild and scenic river and a state scenic waterway and notes that this river segment  
12 is some distance from La Grande and is not within the jurisdiction of the city.

13 The 2009 update to the plan addressed an expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary and  
14 revisions to Chapter 9 on economic development. The plan was amended in 2013 to address  
15 chapters on Goals 9, 11, and 12 (Boquist 2012; City of La Grande 2009). City staff also  
16 confirmed that La Grande does not have any standards that protect viewsheds.

17 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan, there are no features within the City of  
18 La Grande identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 19 **City of Island City**

20 Island City is an incorporated community located just northeast of La Grande in Union County,  
21 with a population of approximately 440 persons (Portland State University 2011). Island City  
22 (1984) initially developed a comprehensive plan in 1980 and replaced the plan in 1984. The  
23 most recent plan update was adopted in 2001 (Oregon Secretary of State 2012). Chapter II of  
24 the plan includes a section addressing Goal V: Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and  
25 Natural Resources. With respect to Scenic Views and Sites, the plan (p. 19) states “[t]here are  
26 no specifically designated scenic views or sites to protect in the City.” The policy statements  
27 applicable to Goal V indicate that public facilities will be designed and maintained to be visually  
28 attractive and identify concerns (such as maintaining vegetative cover and minimizing the size  
29 of signs) that will be taken into account in protecting visual attractiveness. Based on the specific  
30 content of the comprehensive plan, there are no features within Island City identified as  
31 important or significant scenic resources.

### 32 **City of Union**

33 Union is an incorporated community located southeast of La Grande in Union County, with a  
34 population of approximately 2,130 persons (Portland State University 2011). The City of Union  
35 (1984) Land Use Plan addresses the applicable statewide planning goals. With respect to  
36 Scenic Views and Sites, the section of the plan addressing Goal 5: Open Spaces, Scenic and  
37 Historic Areas, and Natural Resources (p. 17) states “[n]o specific sites have been identified  
38 within the community by private or governmental sources. The hills flanking Catherine Creek to  
39 the east and Craig Mountain to the west provide a peaceful backdrop for many areas of the  
40 City.” However, there is no language suggesting that the plan intends that these hills should be  
41 accorded any heightened protections. There are no features within the City of Union identified  
42 as any important or significant scenic resources.

### 43 **City of North Powder**

44 North Powder is a small, incorporated community with a population of approximately 440  
45 persons (Portland State University 2011) located at the southern edge of Union County. State  
46 records indicate a comprehensive plan for the city was acknowledged in 1983 (Oregon



1 Secretary of State 2012). IPC has not been able to access a record of the plan. The City of  
2 North Powder does not maintain a website and no city documents are on file with the statewide  
3 repository for planning documents at the University of Oregon. IPC's consultant submitted an  
4 electronic mail request for a copy of the plan in June 2012 and received no response. A  
5 subsequent attempted telephone contact also received no response. City staff ultimately replied  
6 to an October 2012 voicemail message, indicating that the City's plan had not been updated  
7 since it was adopted however, did plan to update in the near future (Wendt 2012). City staff also  
8 noted that the plan does not include specific language identifying scenic resources. Based on  
9 the available information, there are no features within the City of North Powder identified as  
10 important or significant scenic resources.

### 11 **City of Haines**

12 Haines is a small, incorporated community located in the northeastern part of Baker County,  
13 with a population of approximately 415 persons (Portland State University 2011). Part 2 of the  
14 City of Haines (1979) Comprehensive Land Use Plan presents goals, policies, and  
15 recommendations. With respect to Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural  
16 Resources, the plan (p. 3) identifies a goal "[t]o conserve open space and protect natural,  
17 cultural, historical and scenic resources." The goal is accompanied by a policy statement that  
18 the significance of historical sites will be protected and a recommendation that a zoning  
19 ordinance be established to ensure continuation of the town character and visual attractiveness.  
20 A portion of the plan document is titled "Technical Information and Inventory Data for Land Use  
21 Planning." Chapter 4 of that material addresses Historical, Recreational, Cultural, Scenic, or  
22 Forest Areas; it includes statements that there are no wild or scenic waterways inventoried for  
23 Haines and that there are no designated scenic areas either within the City of Haines or along  
24 U.S. Highway 30 or Anthony Lakes Highway nearby but outside the town.

25 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan, there are no features within the City of  
26 Haines identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 27 **City of Baker City**

28 Baker City, the county seat for Baker County, is located along I-84 near the center of the county  
29 and has a population of approximately 9,830 persons (Portland State University 2011). The  
30 introductory section of the City of Baker (1978) Comprehensive Plan restates the statewide  
31 planning goals. With respect to Goal 5, "To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic  
32 resources," the plan (p. 1) states "Refer to Public Facilities and Services – Parks and Recreation,  
33 Existing Natural Features and Land Use, Land Suitability, Historic Preservation." None of the  
34 referenced sections of the plan discusses scenic resources or identifies any such features as  
35 significant or important. The city has made many minor revisions to the plan since it was adopted,  
36 most recently in 2012; the revisions have been to implement specific changes in zoning and the  
37 Urban Growth Boundary, and a full update of the plan is not anticipated (Long 2012).

38 Based on the specific content of the comprehensive plan, there are no features within Baker  
39 City identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 40 **City of Huntington**

41 The City of Huntington is a small, incorporated community located in the southeastern corner of  
42 Baker County, with a population of approximately 440 persons (Portland State University 2011).  
43 State records indicate that a comprehensive plan for the city was acknowledged in 1980 and  
44 reviewed in 1998 (Oregon Secretary of State 2012). To date, IPC has been unsuccessful in  
45 attempts to access or obtain a copy of the comprehensive plan. A Transportation System Plan  
46 for the city indicates that a Comprehensive Land Use Plan was approved in July 1987, but it  
47 does not address comprehensive plan contents other than the transportation goal (City of

1 Huntington 2001). No other city planning documents are on file with the statewide repository for  
2 planning documents at the University of Oregon. The city does not maintain a website, and  
3 information about city policies and documents appears to have extremely limited availability.  
4 IPC's consultant submitted an electronic mail request for a copy of the plan in June 2012 and  
5 received no response. A subsequent attempted telephone contact also received no response.  
6 IPC's consultant again attempted to contact City staff by telephone on October 31, 2012, and  
7 left a voicemail request with the assistant city recorder for a return phone call. No response to  
8 that request has been received to date.

9 Based on the content of comprehensive plans for other incorporated communities of  
10 comparable size within the analysis area, there are no features within the City of Huntington  
11 identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 12 **City of Vale**

13 Vale is an incorporated community with a population of approximately 1,875 residents (Portland  
14 State University 2011) located in the northeastern part of Malheur County and is the county  
15 seat. The city adopted its original Comprehensive Plan in 1977 and completed updates of the  
16 plan in 1992, 1998, and 2003 (City of Vale 2003). Chapter 5 of the plan addresses Natural and  
17 Historic Resources; the discussion in that chapter and the corresponding strategies are limited  
18 to geothermal resources and historic preservation and do not include coverage of scenic  
19 resources. Similarly, Appendix II: Land Capabilities and Natural Resources includes information  
20 about soil characteristics, natural hazards, agricultural land, geothermal energy, and gravel, with  
21 no discussion of scenic resources. The city development code is available online, and the code  
22 does not identify protection of scenic resources as the purpose for any of the zoning districts.

23 Based on the content of the Comprehensive Plan and development code, there are no features  
24 within the City of Vale identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 25 **City of Adrian**

26 Adrian is a small, incorporated community located near the Oregon/Idaho state line in the  
27 northeastern part of Malheur County, with a population of approximately 175 persons (Portland  
28 State University 2011). The City of Adrian (1978) prepared a draft Comprehensive Plan in 1978,  
29 and a plan was adopted in 1980 (City of Adrian 1978; 1998). The draft plan includes a brief  
30 summary of Land Capabilities and Natural Resources (p. 11); Appendix B includes more  
31 detailed description of natural resources including geology, soils, climate, and water resources,  
32 but does not include information about scenic resources. Similarly, Appendix A documents  
33 policy objectives that address environmental quality and wildlife habitat, but does not include  
34 policies regarding scenic resources.

35 Based on the specific content of the Comprehensive Plan, there are no features within the City  
36 of Adrian identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 37 **3.3.1.3 State Plans**

38 State management plans are not specifically referenced in OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r), which  
39 defines the requirements for Exhibit R in an Application for Site Certificate (ASC), or in OAR  
40 345-022-0080(1), which defines the EFSC Scenic Resource Standard. However, per the Project  
41 Order and related communications from ODOE, IPC conducted a review of state management  
42 plans for information pertaining to significant or important scenic resources. This review  
43 included plans for state park system units, several state wildlife areas, state scenic waterways,  
44 and state scenic byways. The results are summarized below.

## 1 **State Park System Units**

2 OPRD is the state agency responsible for managing the state park system. The system includes  
3 approximately 186 total units, which are variously classified as state parks, state trails, state  
4 recreation areas or sites, state natural areas or sites, state scenic viewpoints or corridors, state  
5 waysides, and state heritage areas or sites. To date, OPRD (2012a) has completed  
6 approximately 43 master plans addressing approximately 186 state park system units, and is  
7 currently developing master plans for an additional five units. The analysis area for scenic  
8 resources includes seven park system units (Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area, Blue  
9 Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor, Hilgard Junction State Recreation Area, Red Bridge  
10 State Wayside, Farewell Bend State Recreation Area, Lake Owyhee State Park, and Succor  
11 Creek State Natural Area). However, none of these units is addressed in completed or draft land  
12 management plans prepared by OPRD to date. Therefore, with the exception of the Blue  
13 Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor, IPC concludes that these park system units are not  
14 considered significant or important scenic resources, as they have not been identified as such in  
15 applicable state plans. Visual impact analysis for Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area, Hilgard  
16 Junction State Recreation Area, Red Bridge State Wayside, Farewell Bend State Recreation  
17 Area, Lake Owyhee State Park, and Succor Creek State Natural Area are provided in Exhibit L  
18 (Protected Areas).

19 The OPRD provided the following comment to IPC:

20 *OPRD owns the property in Union County identified as the Blue Mountain Forest*  
21 *Wayside. The property is managed as a State Scenic Corridor providing the public with*  
22 *an opportunity to relax and enjoy one of the few examples of mature evergreen forests*  
23 *along I-84. Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor is composed of intermittent*  
24 *stands of old-growth ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine and grand fir and*  
25 *contains undisturbed examples of native plants and animals. . . . All attempts to locate*  
26 *this project outside of the viewshed, or at the extreme edge of, allowing for no visibility*  
27 *should be made to ensure future generations can enjoy this unique area. (Beals 2010)*

28 The Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and Blue Mountain Forest Wayside are  
29 administered by OPRD. These resources are not mutually exclusive, and as such, will be  
30 collectively referred to herein as the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor.

31 Based on the comment provided by OPRD, IPC interprets the scenic value of this resource to  
32 be the aesthetic quality of contiguous old growth within the Blue Mountain State Scenic  
33 Corridor. The “natural appearing” character of the resource should be maintained as perceived  
34 from the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road in the Blue Mountains.

## 35 **State Wildlife Areas**

36 Portions of five state wildlife areas (Columbia Basin – Coyote Springs, Columbia Basin – Irrigon,  
37 Ladd Marsh, Elkhorn – Auburn, and Rogers) managed by ODFW are located within the analysis  
38 area for Exhibit R. To date, ODFW (2006, 2008a, 2008b) has prepared management plans  
39 addressing the Elkhorn, Coyote Springs, and Ladd Marsh wildlife areas. Each plan includes a  
40 purpose and need statement; a description of the wildlife area environment, including physical  
41 and biological resources, the social environment, and public use; and statements of goals,  
42 objectives, and strategies for ODFW management of the unit. These plans focus on the wildlife  
43 and habitat resources present within the respective wildlife areas and how those resources are  
44 to be managed to meet the defined purposes. Scenic resources or the visual qualities of the  
45 environment are not discussed in the plans, either as an existing resource value or as a  
46 management objective for these areas. Each plan identifies a goal to provide a variety of  
47 wildlife-oriented public recreational and educational opportunities that are compatible with the  
48 wildlife and habitat goals identified for the units, but those opportunities are not associated with

1 scenic resources or visual qualities. Accordingly, ODFW has not identified any scenic resources  
2 as significant or important. Visual impact analyses for Columbia Basin – Coyote Springs,  
3 Columbia Basin – Irrigon, Ladd Marsh, Elkhorn – Auburn, and Rogers wildlife areas are  
4 presented in Exhibit L.

### 5 **State Scenic Waterways**

6 Under the Scenic Waterways Act of 1970, the State of Oregon has designated portions of 19  
7 rivers and 1 lake as State Scenic Waterways. OPRD has administrative responsibility for the  
8 designated river segments. While scenic waterways are located in or near counties within which  
9 the Project will be sited, there are no State Scenic Waterways within the analysis area defined  
10 for Exhibit R. Therefore, this Exhibit does not address any scenic resources based on  
11 identification in management plans for State Scenic Waterways (OPRD 2012b).

### 12 **State Scenic Byways**

13 The Oregon Scenic Byways Program, administered by the Oregon Department of  
14 Transportation, currently includes 24 highway routes that have been designated as All-American  
15 Roads, National Scenic Byways, Oregon State Scenic Byways, or Oregon Tour Routes (ODOT  
16 2012). Portions of four of those routes are located within the analysis area: the Hells Canyon  
17 Scenic Byway All-American Road and the Journey through Time, Blue Mountain, and Elkhorn  
18 Drive State Scenic Byways. Byway designation occurs as a result of applications submitted by  
19 local sponsor organizations that are reviewed by a Scenic Byways Advisory Committee for  
20 consistency with established statewide criteria. A key provision of the byways program is that  
21 roads designated as byways are to have corridor management plans developed by the local  
22 applicant. IPC reviewed the following management plans prepared for scenic byways within the  
23 analysis area to determine whether they identified scenic resources as significant or important.

#### 24 **Hells Canyon Scenic Byway All-American Road**

25 The Hells Canyon Scenic Byway was designated as a National Forest Scenic Byway by the  
26 USFS in 1992, as an Oregon Scenic Byway in 1996, and as an All-American Road in 2000  
27 (Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Committee 2004). The byway route includes portions of OR 82,  
28 86, and 350, and Forest Road 39 in Union, Wallowa, and Baker counties. The corridor  
29 management plan for the byway identifies five goals for the byway, of which Goal I (p. 6) is to  
30 “[s]howcase the unique, diverse and outstanding scenery in Northeast Oregon.” Objectives  
31 associated with that goal are to (a) apply scenic quality objectives within public land  
32 management actions; (b) complete a viewshed management plan for the byway; (c) work with  
33 county and state highway departments to help capture and maintain the characteristic  
34 landscape of the byway; and (d) develop an interpretation plan that identifies specific  
35 construction actions. The plan describes the intrinsic scenic quality of the area around the  
36 byway as truly outstanding and of national significance, and references general characteristics  
37 such as upland range, lush valleys, wild and scenic rivers, dramatic basalt formations, thick  
38 forests, magnificent peaks, and several man-made elements that add to the scenic quality.  
39 Concerning management and development strategies related to the intrinsic quality  
40 assessment, the plan notes that the USFS, BLM, and Union, Wallowa, and Baker counties have  
41 the primary responsibility to identify, evaluate, protect, document, manage, and review land use  
42 plans for their jurisdiction along the route.

43 The existing conditions inventory of the plan includes a section addressing visual resource  
44 management and recreation opportunities (Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Committee 2004). With  
45 respect to visual resource management, this section describes the concepts of visual quality  
46 objectives, landscape character type, distance zones, variety classes, and sensitivity levels that  
47 are employed in the USFS and BLM visual resource systems. A review of scenic views and  
48 landmarks references 31 points or features of interest within the surrounding region that can be

1 accessed from the byway. Some of these places are defined rather specifically (e.g., Indian  
2 Rock Viewpoint, the Lick Creek Guard Station, and the Wallowa Mountains Visitor Center),  
3 while others are much more general in nature (including all of the communities along the route,  
4 “pastoral views,” and the Wallowa Mountains).

5 Although the corridor management plan includes discussion of the landscape and scenic  
6 qualities within the byway region, it does not include language that clearly identifies specific  
7 scenic resources as significant or important. The plan recognizes the responsibilities of the  
8 federal land management agencies and the counties for land use planning and appears to defer  
9 to those responsibilities regarding management of scenic quality. Therefore, this plan does not  
10 identify important or significant scenic resources for the purpose of the Exhibit R analysis.

### 11 **Journey through Time Scenic Byway**

12 The Journey Through Time State Scenic Byway is a 286-mile route through north-central  
13 Oregon. The route extends from the Columbia River at Biggs to Baker City, and includes  
14 segments of U.S. Highways 97 and 26 and OR 218, 19, and 7. The byway was originally  
15 designated as a State Tour Route and subsequently became a State Scenic Byway.  
16 Approximately 10 miles of OR 7 approaching Baker City, at the eastern end of the byway, are  
17 within the analysis area.

18 A management plan for the Journey through Time Tour Route was prepared in 1996. The plan  
19 focuses on improvements that would be undertaken by participating counties, cities, and other  
20 partner organizations to enhance the experience of people traveling the route (Michael Wetter  
21 and Associates 1996). The plan is not a land management plan and does not grant or imply  
22 authority for land use management for any lands, including those within the highway right-of-  
23 way. The plan identifies goals to create jobs, maintain rural lifestyles, protect important values of  
24 the region’s heritage, and build identity for the surrounding region. Objectives to support the  
25 rural lifestyle goal are to interpret industry, support authenticity and attract quality visitors;  
26 objectives to protect important values are to protect historical attractions and educate visitors.

27 Although the management plan lists 23 “highlights” along the route (some of which are quite  
28 specific, such as the Sherman County Museum in Moro, and others that are quite general, such  
29 as “unusual rock formations”) and includes references to scenic views (e.g., Picture Gorge and  
30 the Strawberry Mountains), it does not identify specific scenic resources or views within the  
31 Project analysis area. Therefore, this plan does not identify important or significant scenic  
32 resources for the purpose of the Exhibit R analysis.

### 33 **Blue Mountain Scenic Byway**

34 The Blue Mountain State Scenic Byway is a 145-mile route through north-central Oregon,  
35 extending from Arlington on the Columbia River to Baker City. The route includes part of OR 74  
36 and segments of multiple county highways and USFS roads. The eastern end of the byway  
37 overlaps with the Elkhorn Drive Scenic Byway. The Proposed Route crosses the byway twice  
38 near Cecil in western Morrow County, and approximately 30 miles at the western end of the  
39 byway are within the analysis area.

40 The Blue Mountain Byway was originally designated by the USFS as a National Forest Scenic  
41 Byway in 1989. The USFS (1993) subsequently prepared a Blue Mountain National Scenic  
42 Byway Interpretive Guide to provide direction for development of interpretive services and visitor  
43 accommodations associated with the byway. The route was designated as a state scenic byway  
44 in 1997; however, a corridor management plan for this byway was not prepared following the  
45 1997 state designation. While the USFS interpretive guide is not a management plan for the  
46 byway, IPC nevertheless reviewed the document for potentially applicable information. The  
47 document identifies six goals for interpretation, which include improving public understanding of  
48 national forest programs and activities, recognizing the cooperative aspect of byway

1 administration, and encouraging appreciation for cultural resources and history of the region, but  
2 does not address scenic resources (USFS 1993). Similarly, the interpretive guide includes a  
3 resource inventory section that addresses the environment (geology, wildlife, vegetation, water  
4 and fire), heritage sites (the Oregon Trail, several communities, and facilities such as the  
5 Fremont Powerhouse), and uses and events, but not scenic resources.

6 Based on the results of the review, there is no official management plan for the Blue Mountain  
7 Scenic Byway and that the existing document that most closely resembles a management plan  
8 does not identify any important or significant scenic resources. Therefore, no important scenic  
9 resources specifically associated with the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway are assessed in the  
10 Exhibit R analysis. IPC notes, however, that three locations along the byway within the analysis  
11 area are identified as KOPs in the assessment documented in Attachment R-1.

### 12 **Elkhorn Drive Scenic Byway**

13 The Elkhorn Drive State Scenic Byway is a 106-mile loop route west of Baker City through parts  
14 of Baker, Union, and Grant counties. The route includes parts of U.S. Highway 30, OR 7,  
15 multiple county highways, and Forest Road 73. The byway overlaps with parts of the Blue  
16 Mountain and Journey through Time Scenic Byways. The eastern part of the byway is within the  
17 analysis area.

18 The history of the Elkhorn Drive is very similar to that for the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway, as  
19 described above. The Elkhorn Drive was originally designated by the USFS as a National Forest  
20 Scenic Byway in 1989. The route was designated as a state scenic byway in 1997. The USFS  
21 prepared a visitor services and management plan for the Elkhorn Drive National Forest Scenic  
22 Byway in 1994, to provide a strategy for development of visitor services and facilities associated  
23 with the byway. The USFS plan was incorporated into a subsequent addendum prepared for the  
24 Oregon Scenic Byway Committee (Pound and Koon 1996), evidently as part of the application  
25 package for state scenic byway designation. A corridor management plan specific to the state-  
26 designated scenic byway was not prepared following the 1997 state designation.

27 The USFS (1994) management plan identifies five goals for plan implementation; they include  
28 promoting public understanding of ecosystem management and forest ecology, recognizing the  
29 cooperative aspect of byway administration, and encouraging appreciation for cultural resources  
30 and history of the region, but do not address scenic resources. Similarly, the plan includes a  
31 resource inventory section that addresses the environment (location, climate, topography,  
32 geology, water, vegetation, wildlife, and fire), heritage resources (Native Americans, Euro-  
33 Americans, and Chinese), sites and features (several communities and facilities such as the  
34 Dooley Highway, Sumpter Valley Dredge, Fremont Powerhouse, and Anthony Lakes Mountain  
35 resort), and uses and events, but not scenic resources.

36 The Elkhorn Drive Scenic Byway management plan does not identify any important or  
37 significant scenic resources. Therefore, no important scenic resources specifically associated  
38 with the Elkhorn Drive Scenic Byway are assessed in the Exhibit R analysis. IPC notes,  
39 however, that multiple locations along or near the byway within the analysis area are identified  
40 as KOPs in the assessment documented in Attachment R-1.

#### 41 **3.3.1.4 Tribal Plans**

42 The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) most recently adopted a  
43 Comprehensive Plan for the Reservation in 2010. The plan indicates the Tribes' first  
44 comprehensive plan was completed in 1979 and updated in 1996. In the current plan,  
45 substantive policy direction is presented in Chapter 5, Plan Elements: Goals and Objectives.  
46 The chapter addresses 15 elements, including Economy, Land Base Restoration, Community  
47 Development, Natural Resources, and Cultural Heritage (CTUIR 2010). The resources

1 addressed in Chapter 5 and other portions of the document do not address scenic resources.  
2 Based on the content of the Comprehensive Plan, the CTUIR have not identified any features  
3 as significant or important scenic resources.

#### 4 **3.3.1.5 Federal Lands**

5 Federal lands within the analysis area primarily include one NF, administered by the USFS, and  
6 extensive areas managed by the BLM. The BLM jurisdiction includes tracts of land remaining  
7 from the original public domain or that have reverted to federal ownership. Smaller areas of  
8 federal lands within the analysis area are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense,  
9 Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the FWS.

10 The scenic resource management direction applied to the resources under the jurisdiction of  
11 each agency is summarized in the following subsections.

#### 12 **Bureau of Land Management**

13 The analysis area overlaps with the geographic boundaries of the BLM Vale (Baker and  
14 Malheur Resource Areas), Boise (the Owyhee and Cascade Resource Areas), and Spokane  
15 Districts. The BLM manages scenic resources on the federal lands under its jurisdiction through  
16 application of the VRM system. The VRM system includes procedures for inventorying scenic  
17 values, establishing management objectives for those values through the resource management  
18 planning process, and evaluating proposed activities to ensure their compliance with the  
19 management objectives. The VRM system consists of two stages: inventory and analysis. The  
20 Visual Resource Inventory stage involves rating the visual appeal of a tract of land, measuring  
21 public concern for scenic quality, and determining whether the tract of land is visible from travel  
22 routes or observation points (BLM 1986). Based on this analysis, visual resources are assigned  
23 to an inventory class as described in BLM Handbook H-8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory  
24 (BLM 1986). The results of the visual resource inventory become an important component of  
25 BLM's Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the area. The RMP establishes how the public  
26 lands will be used and allocated for different purposes, and it is developed through public  
27 participation and collaboration. Visual values are considered throughout the RMP process, and  
28 the area's visual resources are then assigned to VRM classes with established objectives. The  
29 objectives for VRM classes are as follows (BLM 1986):

- 30 • Class I – To preserve the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the  
31 characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
- 32 • Class II – To retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the  
33 characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should  
34 not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic  
35 elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the  
36 landscape.
- 37 • Class III – To partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change  
38 to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract  
39 attention, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should  
40 repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic  
41 landscape.
- 42 • Class IV – To provide for management activities that require major modification of the  
43 existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape  
44 can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major  
45 focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the  
46 impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating  
47 the basic elements.

1 The analysis stage involves determining whether the potential visual impacts from proposed  
2 activities will meet the management objectives established for the area. The BLM utilizes  
3 guidelines described in BLM Handbook H-8431-1 (BLM 2001a) to rate the degree of visual  
4 contrast associated with a proposed activity.

5 IPC reviewed the following federal plans to identify important scenic resources on BLM-  
6 managed lands within the Project analysis area:

- 7 • BLM Baker Resource Management Plan (1989a)
- 8 • BLM Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (2001b)
- 9 • BLM Owyhee Resource Management Plan (1999)
- 10 • BLM Cascade Resource Management Plan (1987a)
- 11 • BLM Spokane Resource Management Plan (1987b)

12 For the purpose of this analysis, VRM Class I and II are considered important scenic resources,  
13 based on the level of visual resource protection afforded to those lands). Discussion of  
14 management direction for scenic resources documented within those plans is summarized  
15 below.

#### 16 **Vale District, Baker Resource Area**

17 BLM-administered lands in Umatilla, Union, and Baker counties are within the Baker Resource  
18 Area of the Vale District. The BLM Vale District issued the current RMP for the Baker Resource  
19 Area in 1989. Chapter 2 of the RMP provides direction for a wide range of resource topics,  
20 including visual resources (BLM 1989a). It also assigns the lands within the Baker area of the  
21 district to 14 geographic unit management allocations, identified as the Lookout Mountain, Burnt  
22 River, Keating, Pedro Mountain, Grande Ronde, Homestead, Pritchard Creek, Oregon Trail,  
23 Unity Reservoir – Bald Eagle Habitat, Sheep Mountain, Hunt Mountain, Powder River Canyon,  
24 Blue Mountain, and Baker County Miscellaneous units, and provides direction for management  
25 of each geographic unit.

26 In general, RMP guidance for visual resources is to emphasize management of scenic  
27 resources in selected areas of high visitor use and/or high visual quality. The plan indicates the  
28 BLM will use the VRM system to retain or preserve scenic quality, to address visual resource  
29 management issues, and to use the visual resource contrast rating system during project-level  
30 planning to evaluate consistency of proposed management activities with visual resource  
31 management objectives.

32 As is commonly done in RMPs, the plan assigns VRM class designations to all lands addressed  
33 by the plan. No areas within the Baker Resource Area were assigned to VRM Class I. The RMP  
34 does indicate that lands within the river corridors of the Grande Ronde and Powder Wild and  
35 Scenic Rivers will be inventoried and classified appropriately for the protection of high scenic  
36 values. In addition, the plan states that activities that will result in significant, long-term adverse  
37 effects will not be permitted in areas of high scenic quality such as the Burnt River, Powder  
38 River, or Snake River canyons. Activities in other areas of high visual quality might be permitted  
39 if they do not attract attention or leave long-term visual changes on the land.

40 The RMP assigns nearly 152,000 acres of the Baker Resource Area (35 percent of the total  
41 acreage) to VRM Class II. Map 5 of the RMP identifies the distribution of Areas of High Visual  
42 Quality, indicated on the map legend Class II. The body of the plan states: "VRM classifications  
43 are shown on Map 5" (p. 45).

44 The Baker Resource Area RMP designates the Oregon Trail ACEC, including approximately  
45 1,500 acres of land distributed among seven separate, widely scattered parcels located in



1 Umatilla, Union, and Baker counties. The Plan indicates that “[n]ew uses incompatible with  
2 maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded in a mile corridor”  
3 (BLM 1989a). The ACECs included in this assessment include: Blue Mountain Parcel, National  
4 Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center (NHOTIC) Parcel, White Swan Parcel, Straw Ranch  
5 Parcel 2, Straw Ranch Parcel 1, and Powell Creek Parcel. These areas include historic sites  
6 identified in the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan  
7 describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas  
8 where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “Locations on the Oregon Trail which  
9 have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape  
10 encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual  
11 sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the  
12 historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.” The plan generally references  
13 applicable VRM classes for the trail; however, these VRM designations are more clearly defined  
14 in the Baker RMP (1989a).

15 The specific content of the Baker RMP references the Grande Ronde and Powder WSR  
16 corridors and the Burnt, Powder, and Snake River canyons as areas of high scenic values, and  
17 these areas can logically be presumed to be identified as important or significant scenic  
18 resources. The Powder River Final Management Plan / Environmental Assessment (BLM 1994)  
19 indicates the Powder River corridor as possessing “much diversity in vegetation and  
20 topographic land forms”, consistent with the Congressional Record regarding outstandingly  
21 remarkable scenic value of the Powder River.

22 While administrative boundaries exist for the WSR corridors, the Burnt, Powder, and Snake  
23 River canyons are only identified nominally, and the geographic extent of those areas has not  
24 been defined. Lands within the Baker Resource Area designated as VRM Class I and II are  
25 summarized in Table R-1 and identified on the maps in Attachment R-2 as important scenic  
26 resources.

27 The Baker RMP and subsequent South Fork Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment  
28 designates 10 areas totaling 40,244.69 acres as ACEC within the analysis area. For each  
29 ACEC, the RMP identifies in general terms the resource values that are to be protected through  
30 specific management for the area and indicates the types of uses that will be limited or  
31 excluded. The RMP indicates that scenic qualities or visual resources are identified among the  
32 primary reasons for designating six of the ACECs: the Grande Ronde, Powder River Canyon,  
33 Oregon Trail, Sheep Mountain, Homestead, and Walla Walla River ACECs. Accordingly, IPC  
34 considers these six ACECs to be important or significant resources within Baker Resource Area  
35 administered by the BLM.

36 The Grande Ronde, Sheep Mountain, Homestead, and Walla Walla ACECs are located outside  
37 of the analysis area for Exhibit R, while the Powder River Canyon and Oregon Trail ACECs are  
38 located within the analysis area. These ACECs are identified in Table R-1 and Project impacts  
39 for those resources located within the analysis area are addressed in Section 3.4.2.

#### 40 **Vale District, Malheur Resource Area**

41 Lands administered by the BLM Vale District (Malheur and Jordan Resource Areas) are  
42 managed per the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP) and Final  
43 Environmental Statement completed in 2001. The Jordan Resource Area includes the southern  
44 part of the Vale District, while the Malheur Resource Area comprises the northern part of the  
45 district. The Project analysis area includes a substantial portion of the Malheur Resource Area  
46 and none of the Jordan Resource Area.

47 The SEORMP (BLM 2001b) identifies nine planning issues to be addressed in the planning  
48 process, summarizes existing conditions within the planning area, discusses management

1 direction for the respective resources within the plan alternatives under consideration, and  
2 assesses the resource impacts that would result from the respective alternatives. The general  
3 objective for visual resources is to manage public land actions and activities in a manner  
4 consistent with VRM class objectives. Additional guidance for visual resources is to emphasize  
5 management of visual resources in selected high-use areas to retain or preserve scenic quality,  
6 to address visual resource management issues, and to use the visual resource contrast rating  
7 system during project-level planning to evaluate consistency of proposed management activities  
8 with visual resource management objectives.

9 Map VRM-PRMP in the SEORMP displays the assignment of VRM classifications under the  
10 plan. In general, areas with special management direction for resource protection purposes are  
11 to be managed as VRM Class I or II. These include wilderness and wilderness study areas (to  
12 be managed under VRM Class I, subject to change following any Congressional action  
13 releasing wilderness study areas from further wilderness consideration); designated national  
14 WSR areas, and river segments eligible for wild river designation (also VRM Class I); and some  
15 lands with ACEC designation (variable VRM classes). Overall, approximately 309,600 acres in  
16 the Malheur Resource Area (15% of the total acreage) are to be managed as VRM Class I, and  
17 144,400 acres (7% of the total) are to be managed as VRM Class II. Lands within the Malheur  
18 Resource Area currently designated as VRM Classes I and II are summarized in Table R-1 and  
19 identified on the maps in Attachment R-2 as important scenic resources.

20 The SEORMP also designates 20 areas totaling over 160,000 acres as ACECs. For each  
21 ACEC, the RMP identifies in general terms the resource values that are to be protected through  
22 specific management for the area and indicates the types of uses that will be limited or  
23 excluded. The RMP indicates that scenic qualities or visual resources are identified among the  
24 primary reasons for designating seven of the ACECs: the Castle Rock, Dry Creek Gorge, North  
25 Fork Malheur River, Leslie Gulch, Oregon National Historic Trail (three separate segments),  
26 Owyhee River below the Dam, and Owyhee Views ACECs. Based on the RMP information, IPC  
27 presumes that these seven ACECs are also identified as important or significant resources  
28 among BLM-administered lands in the Malheur Resource Area.

29 The Castle Rock, Dry Creek Gorge, North Fork Malheur River, and Leslie Gulch ACECs are  
30 located outside of the analysis area for Exhibit R, while the Oregon Trail, Owyhee River below  
31 the Dam, and Owyhee Views ACECs are located within the analysis area. These ACECs are  
32 identified in Table R-1 and Project impacts are addressed in Section 3.4.2.

### 33 **Boise District, Owyhee Resource Area**

34 BLM-administered lands in Owyhee County, Idaho, are located at the southeastern end of the  
35 analysis area for this Exhibit, within the Owyhee Resource Area of the Boise District. The BLM  
36 issued the current RMP for the Owyhee Resource Area in 1999. (At the time, the area was  
37 managed by the Boise Field Office within the Lower Snake River District. The Owyhee Field  
38 Office of the Boise District currently manages the Owyhee Resource Area.)

39 The Owyhee RMP (BLM 1999) includes separate sections addressing objectives, management  
40 actions, and allocations for a range of resources and management considerations. With respect  
41 to visual resources, the RMP establishes the following objective for visual resources: "VISL 1:  
42 Manage public lands for visual resource values under VRM Classifications" (p. 44). Subsequent  
43 content in this section summarizes the RMP assignments of VRM class designations to all lands  
44 addressed by the plan, without identifying specific geographic areas considered to have notable  
45 scenic values. Approximately 71,000 acres (6% of the total acreage) are to be managed as  
46 VRM Class I, and 242,000 acres (20%) are to be managed as VRM Class II. The RMP also  
47 allocates 123,000 acres to VRM Class II-IMP; these are wilderness study areas considered to  
48 be non-suitable for wilderness designation that will be managed as VRM Class II unless or until  
49 released from wilderness consideration by Congress, in which case they would be managed as

1 VRM Class IV. Figure VISL-1 in the RMP displays the geographic distribution of these  
2 classifications. Lands within the Owyhee Resource Area currently designated as VRM Classes I  
3 and II are summarized in Table R-1 and identified on Figure R-2-5 as important scenic  
4 resources.

5 The Owyhee RMP also designates 12 areas totaling over 167,000 acres as ACECs. For each  
6 ACEC, the RMP identifies in general terms the resource values that are to be protected through  
7 specific management for the area and indicates the types of uses that will be limited or  
8 excluded. The RMP indicates that scenic qualities or visual resources are identified among the  
9 primary reasons for designating seven of the ACECs: the Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat  
10 Area, Boulder Creek, Cinnabar Mountain, Jump Creek Canyon, North Fork Juniper Woodland,  
11 Sommercamp Butte, and The Badlands ACECs. Based on the RMP information, IPC presumes  
12 that these seven ACECs are also identified as important or significant resources among BLM  
13 lands in the Owyhee Resource Area.

14 The Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area, Boulder Creek, Cinnabar Mountain, North Fork  
15 Juniper Woodland, Sommercamp Butte, and The Badlands ACECs are located outside of the  
16 analysis area for Exhibit R, while the Jump Creek Canyon ACEC is located within the analysis  
17 area. This ACEC is identified in Table R-1 and Project impacts are addressed in Section 3.4.2.

#### 18 **Boise District, Cascade Resource Area**

19 Some BLM-administered lands located in Idaho along the eastern side of Brownlee Reservoir  
20 are within the analysis area. These lands are currently managed by the Four Rivers Field Office  
21 of the Boise District. The current RMP applicable to these lands is the RMP for the Cascade  
22 Resource Area (BLM 1987a).

23 The Cascade RMP (BLM 1987a) indicates that guidelines for visual resource management are  
24 to consider the scenic values of public lands whenever any physical actions are proposed on  
25 BLM-administered lands, and that the degree of alterations to the natural landscape will be  
26 guided by the VRM management classes and criteria. The plan states that objectives for visual  
27 resource management are to protect the scenic values of the public lands, particularly along the  
28 Payette River Scenic Route and along the South Fork of the Payette River, and to manage  
29 specific lands within the resource area under VRM Classes II, III, and IV (no lands are allocated  
30 to VRM Class I). Map 3-8 in the plan displays the allocation of lands to the VRM classes; the  
31 Class II designation applies to a continuous band of lands along the eastern side of Brownlee  
32 and Oxbow reservoirs. This classification corresponds to an area designated elsewhere in the  
33 plan as the Oxbow-Brownlee Special Recreation Management Area.

34 The specific content of the Cascade RMP references the Payette River Scenic Byway and the  
35 South Fork Payette River as corridors meriting protection of scenic values, and these areas can  
36 logically be presumed to be identified as important or significant scenic resources. Both areas  
37 are well beyond the analysis area for this Exhibit, however. Lands within the analysis area that  
38 overlap with the Cascade Resource Area currently designated as VRM Class II are summarized  
39 in Table R-1 and identified on Figure R-2-4 as important scenic resources.

40 The Cascade RMP also designates three areas totaling over 77,000 acres as ACECs. For each  
41 ACEC, the RMP identifies in general terms the resource values that are to be protected through  
42 specific management for the area and indicates the types of uses that will be limited or  
43 excluded. The RMP indicates that scenic qualities or visual resources are identified among the  
44 primary reasons for designating one of the ACECs, the Boise Front ACEC. Based on the RMP  
45 information, IPC presumes that this ACEC is identified as an important or significant scenic  
46 resource among BLM-administered lands in the Cascade Resource Area; however, the Boise  
47 Front ACEC is located outside of the analysis area for Exhibit R. Potential Project impacts to  
48 this ACEC are not applicable to the Exhibit R analysis.

## Spokane District

The BLM issued the current Spokane District RMP in 1985 and adopted that plan through a Record of Decision issued in 1987. With respect to visual resources, the RMP indicates that visual resources would continue to be evaluated as a part of activity and project planning; the document does not discuss specific areas with high scenic values and does not indicate where VRM classes have been assigned to lands within the District (BLM 1985). Similarly, the Record of Decision indicates that recreational activities and visual resources will be evaluated as part of specific activity plans and in relation to land use allocations made in the RMP and does not indicate where VRM classes have been assigned (BLM 1987b).

In 2010, the BLM initiated a planning process to develop a new management plan for the BLM-administered lands in the Spokane District and the San Juan Islands of Washington. A background document prepared in support of that planning process explains that visual resource inventory and management classes need to be determined for all Spokane District BLM-administered lands, because this information has not been updated since a management framework plan (MFP) was developed in 1982, and much of the MFP documentation has been lost (BLM 2011a). The same document also notes that the Badger Slope area was designated for management as VRM Class II through the Southeast Planning Area MFP prepared in 1981.

Based on the specific content of the available planning documentation for the Spokane District, IPC concludes that the Badger Slope area is the only area within the Spokane District that has been specifically identified as an important or significant scenic resource, based on the prescribed VRM classification. This area is located south of the Yakima River between Prosser and Richland and is well beyond the 10-mile radius for the analysis area.

The Spokane RMP (BLM 1987b) indicates that 12 areas totaling approximately 8,500 acres are designated as ACECs. Scenic qualities or visual resources are not identified among the primary reasons for designating any of these ACECs. The Analysis of the Management Situation for the in-process Eastern Washington and San Juan RMP (BLM 2011a) indicates the Spokane District includes 16 existing ACECs. Similar to the RMP, however, the resource values identified for the ACECs do not include scenic values or visual resources for any of the areas. Therefore, based on the RMP and Analysis of the Management Situation information, no scenic resources on BLM-administered lands in the Spokane District are included in this Exhibit.

## U.S. Forest Service

The analysis area overlaps with the geographic boundaries of the USFS Wallowa-Whitman and Umatilla NFs. The Proposed Route crosses lands within the Wallowa-Whitman NF. Neither the Proposed Route nor any alternate corridor segments cross lands within the Umatilla NF, but some Umatilla NF lands are within 10 miles of the Site Boundary. Therefore, review of area-specific USFS planning direction for scenic resources applies to both the Wallowa-Whitman NF and Umatilla NF.

The USFS uses a VMS established in *The National Forest Management, Volume 2, Agricultural Handbook 462* (1974) to inventory, classify, and manage lands for visual resource values. In 1995, the visual resource management guidelines and monitoring techniques evolved into the Scenery Management System (SMS) as described in *Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenic Management, Agricultural Handbook 701* (USFS 1995). While the overall visual resource framework is essentially the same between the two systems, the terminology within the SMS has been modified slightly, and it also provides best science when combined with VMS because it provides for assessment of biological, physical, and social/cultural resources within a geographic area. The Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) covering the forest was written in 1990, prior to the conversion to SMS, and therefore uses the former VMS provisions and classifications. Based on an inventory and evaluation of visual resources associated with

1 NF lands, VQOs are established to provide a measurable standard or objective form for  
2 management of visual resources. VQOs for areas of land are assigned by combining the variety  
3 class, distance zone, and sensitivity level. Each VQO indicates the acceptable degree of  
4 landscape alteration and classifies land in one of five categories: Preservation, Retention,  
5 Partial Retention, Modification, or Maximum Modification. Each VQO indicates the acceptable  
6 degree of landscape alteration and classifies land in one of five categories: Preservation,  
7 Retention, Partial Retention, Modification, or Maximum Modification.

- 8 • **Preservation:** Allows for ecological changes only. Management activities, except for  
9 very low visual-impact recreation facilities, are prohibited.
- 10 • **Retention:** Provides for management activities that are not visually evident. Under  
11 retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color, and texture that are frequently  
12 found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in their qualities of size, amount,  
13 intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.
- 14 • **Partial Retention:** Alterations to the natural landscape may be apparent, but they are  
15 visually subordinate to natural features. Management activities such as timber harvest  
16 and roading may occur but must be designed so they blend into the natural landscape.  
17 This category includes areas where changes in the basic elements (form, line, color, or  
18 texture) caused by a management activity may be evident in the characteristic  
19 landscape. However, the changes should remain subordinate to the visual strength of  
20 the existing character.
- 21 • **Modification:** Management activities may be visually dominant. They must be  
22 harmonious with features of the natural landscape in their size, form, and linear  
23 characteristics. Recreation developments, timber harvest units, and roads are examples  
24 of elements that may be found in a landscape that meets this VQO. Alterations to the  
25 landscape may not be in glaring contrast to natural forms. This applies to areas where  
26 changes may subordinate the original composition and character; however, they should  
27 reflect what could be a natural occurrence within the characteristic landscape.
- 28 • **Maximum Modification:** Management activities of vegetative and landform alternation  
29 may dominate the characteristic landscape. However, when viewed as background, the  
30 visual characteristics must be those of natural occurrences within the surrounding area  
31 or character type. When viewed as foreground or middleground, they may not appear to  
32 completely borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture. Alterations may  
33 also be out of scale or contain detail that is incongruent with natural occurrences as  
34 seen in foreground or middleground. Introduction of additional parts of these activities  
35 such as structure, roads, slash, and root wads must remain visually subordinate to the  
36 proposed composition as viewed in background.

37 For the purpose of this analysis, lands managed as Preservation or Retention are considered  
38 important scenic resources, based on the level of visual resource protection afforded to those.

39 The VQOs prescribed within the Wallowa-Whitman NF and Umatilla NF are defined by and  
40 apply only to lands within the denoted Management Areas (MAs). Each MA has a specific  
41 resource emphasis and management objective guidelines to provide protection to the resource.  
42 The Project traverses several areas that have overlapping MAs. The LRMP states that within  
43 the selected acreages where MAs overlap, the VQOs that provide the highest level of visual  
44 quality protection take precedence. IPC addressed and reviewed the applicable VQO for all  
45 management areas crossed by the Proposed Route or an alternate corridor segment.

46 IPC reviewed the following federal plans to identify important scenic resources on the NFs  
47 within the Project analysis area:

- 48 • Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USFS 1990a)

- Land and Resource Management Plan, Umatilla National Forest (USFS 1990b)

The scenic resources identified in these plans are discussed below.

### **Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan**

With respect to scenic resources, the Wallowa-Whitman LRMP (USFS 1990a) indicates that “Management of the Forest’s scenic resources is emphasized within the viewsheds of federal and state highways and major Forest roads. The visible land areas adjacent to selected travel routes are managed for a variety of VQOs including retention, partial retention and modification.” The plan establishes a goal for landscape management to “manage all National Forest lands to obtain the highest possible visual quality, commensurate with other appropriate public uses, costs and benefits.” Discussion of standards and guidelines for visual resources addresses the assignment of VQOs and indicates that viewshed plans will be prepared for all Level I viewsheds.

The plan allocates the lands within the NF to management areas within 17 major categories (e.g., MA 1, Timber Production Emphasis; MA 4, Wilderness; and MA 5, Phillips Lake Area). For 12 of the 17 management areas, the landscape management prescription is to manage according to forest-wide standards and guidelines. The landscape direction for the other management areas references Preservation or Retention VQOs, as applicable to specific designations (e.g., Preservation for wilderness and WSR segments classified as wild). Appendix B of the plan also lists Sensitivity Level 1 and 2 travel routes. The “Sensitivity Level” is a measure of people’s concern for the scenic quality of the National Forests. Three sensitivity levels are considered: Level 1 (Highest Sensitivity), Level 2 (Average Sensitivity), and Level 3 (Lowest Sensitivity) (USFS 1990a). Landscape adjacent to Sensitivity Level 1 travel routes are managed such that changes to the landscape are not visually evident (VQO Retention), while landscapes adjacent to Sensitivity Level 2 travel routes are managed such that changes to the landscape may be evident but are visually subordinate (VQO Partial Retention).

The discussion of landscape conditions in the plan does not identify specific features or geographic areas as significant or important scenic resources. Lands within the Wallowa-Whitman NF currently assigned a VQO of Preservation or Retention are summarized in Table R-1 and identified on Figures R-2-2 and R-2-3 as important scenic resources.

### **Umatilla National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan**

The chapters of the Umatilla LRMP (USFS 1990b) that summarize the current management situation and the plan’s response to issues, concerns, and opportunities do not address visual resources. Chapter 4, which documents forest management direction, addresses visual resource management as a subset of recreation. The discussion of resource objectives indicates that wilderness areas will be managed for a Retention VQO, and that Retention and Partial Retention VQOs will be emphasized in sensitive viewshed corridors that include state highways, key forest travel routes, and major water features. Table 4-5 identifies 13 viewshed corridors classified as Sensitivity Level 1 (highest concern for scenic quality) and assigned a Retention VQO for the foreground viewing zone.

The plan also allocates the lands within the NF to 25 categories of management areas. Management areas that specifically reflect a scenic resource emphasis include A3 Viewshed 1, A4 Viewshed 2, A7 Wild and Scenic Rivers, and A8 Scenic Area. All lands within one management area (B1 Wilderness) are assigned a Preservation VQO, and all lands within six other management areas are assigned a Retention VQO. The visual resource direction for most of the other management areas specifies a range of VQOs that often includes Retention, as applicable to specific sites.

1 The discussion of visual resource conditions in the plan does not clearly identify specific  
2 features or geographic areas as significant or important scenic resources. IPC understands,  
3 however, that ODOE considers NF lands managed with Preservation or Retention VQOs to be  
4 important scenic resources, based on the level of visual resource protection afforded to those  
5 lands. There are no Umatilla NF lands within the analysis area that are currently assigned a  
6 VQO of Preservation or Retention. Therefore, no Umatilla NF lands are identified in Table R-1  
7 and Figure R-2-2 as important scenic resources.

### 8 **Department of Defense**

9 The U.S. Navy administers the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility (NWSTF) Boardman,  
10 commonly known as the Boardman Bombing Range. The range was established through a  
11 federal executive order in 1941. The facility includes more than 47,000 acres located south of  
12 Boardman in Morrow County. It is used for training and testing by the Navy, Oregon National  
13 Guard, and other federal, state, and local agencies (U.S. Navy 2012a).

14 The Navy has not developed a comprehensive plan for NWSTF Boardman that is comparable to  
15 the BLM and USFS management plans. In compliance with the Sikes Act, however, the Navy  
16 developed and implemented an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) for  
17 the facility. An INRMP was adopted in 1999 and a final draft of an updated plan was prepared in  
18 2010 (U.S. Navy 2012b) and an updated plan was approved in 2012 (U.S. Navy 2012a). A draft  
19 Navy environmental assessment of the 2010 updated plan indicates that the INRMP identifies  
20 management goals that include the following: "Goal 1. Protect, conserve and manage the  
21 watersheds, wetlands, natural landscapes, soils, forests, fish and wildlife and other natural  
22 resources, as vital elements of a natural resources program." The environmental assessment  
23 indicates that the INRMP management direction applies to vegetation management, wildlife,  
24 and fire management, and does not mention scenic resources as an applicable subject for  
25 management direction. Similarly, the resource conditions addressed in the environmental  
26 assessment do not include scenic or visual resources. IPC also reviewed an environmental  
27 impact statement (EIS) addressing military training activities at NWSTF that was issued by the  
28 Navy in September 2012. The EIS describes existing conditions and expected environmental  
29 consequences for 12 resource categories; scenic or visual resources are not represented  
30 among these 12 categories, nor are they addressed in the EIS sections on land use and  
31 recreation or socioeconomics and environmental justice (U.S. Navy 2012a).

32 Based on the specific content of these Navy documents, there are no features associated with  
33 NWSTF Boardman identified as important or significant scenic resources.

### 34 **Bureau of Reclamation**

35 Federal lands within the analysis area that are under the jurisdiction of the BOR are limited to a  
36 small portion of the Owyhee River canyon in Malheur County, Oregon. This area consists of  
37 federal lands associated with Owyhee Dam and Reservoir, which are operated by the BOR. The  
38 current management direction for this area is contained in the Owyhee Reservoir Resource  
39 Management Plan (BOR 1994).

40 The Owyhee Reservoir RMP describes a study area consisting of four management units, which  
41 are the Lower Owyhee River, Lower Owyhee Reservoir, Upper Owyhee Reservoir, and Upper  
42 Owyhee River. RMP Section 1.4 defines the scope of and goals for the plan; it does not  
43 specifically address scenic or visual resources. The visual resources portion of the inventory  
44 chapter states that the visual resource of the entire study area is considered outstandingly  
45 remarkable, and notes that adjacent BLM-administered lands are managed as VRM Class II.  
46 This section of the RMP describes the natural landscape character and human modifications in  
47 each of the four management units. This material references landscape features known as the  
48 Honeycombs, Leslie Gulch, Painted Canyon, Three Fingers Gulch, and Carlton Canyon as

1 some of the most outstanding visual features. Several visually dominant peaks and buttes are  
2 also identified.

3 The RMP direction for visual resources (p. 6-13) identifies a goal to “Preserve, protect and  
4 enhance scenic resources,” and objectives to “minimize development in areas that would  
5 adversely impact special scenic or wilderness characteristics” and to “maintain primitive,  
6 undeveloped character of landscape.” Associated management guidelines and actions address  
7 facility design, removal of trash dumps and other restoration actions, and aesthetic  
8 requirements to be applied to leaseholders.

9 Interpretation of the specific content of the Owyhee Reservoir RMP suggests that the plan  
10 identifies several specific landscape features as significant scenic resources. With some  
11 exceptions (the general locations of Leslie Gulch and Carlton Canyon are labeled), the specific  
12 locations of these landscape features are not identified on the RMP maps. Moreover, the maps  
13 indicate that the BOR-managed lands comprise a narrow band along the immediate margins of  
14 the Owyhee River and Reservoir, and that the specified landscape features are entirely or  
15 predominantly located on the adjacent BLM-administered lands. Given that the adjacent BLM-  
16 administered lands in this area are designated as VRM Class I or II, as discussed above, IPC  
17 assumes that the scenic features referenced in the Owyhee Reservoir RMP are incorporated  
18 within the important scenic resources identified through the BLM Malheur Resource Area  
19 planning direction. Therefore, no additional scenic resources based on the specific content of  
20 the Owyhee Reservoir RMP are identified in Table R-1 and Figure R-2-5.

## 21 **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

22 The FWS manages three national wildlife refuges that are partially or entirely located within the  
23 Project analysis area. They are the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Morrow County,  
24 the McKay Creek NWR in Umatilla County, and the Deer Flat NWR in multiple counties of  
25 southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon. The primary mission of the FWS as manager of  
26 the national wildlife refuge system is to provide valuable habitat for fish and wildlife. Various  
27 types of recreation are allowed or provided on many refuges, to the extent they are compatible  
28 with the purposes of a specific refuge.

### 29 **Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge**

30 The Umatilla NWR, located to the north and northeast of Boardman, Oregon, encompasses  
31 approximately 25,000 acres with a mix of open water sloughs, shallow marsh, seasonal  
32 wetlands, cropland, islands, and shrub-steppe upland habitats. The refuge is popular with bird  
33 watchers, wildlife enthusiasts, and photographers. IPC reviewed the Umatilla National Wildlife  
34 Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (FWS 2007) to identify potential scenic resources on  
35 FWS-managed lands in the refuge. The plan identifies management direction relative to several  
36 categories of wildlife species, multiple types of habitat present within the refuge, recreational  
37 activities compatible with the refuge purposes, and cultural resources; the plan does not  
38 prescribe management for visual resources or address visual resource conditions. Accordingly,  
39 this plan does not identify any scenic resource or value within the analysis area for inclusion in  
40 this Exhibit.

### 41 **McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge**

42 The McKay Creek NWR includes 1,837 acres within and adjacent to McKay Creek Reservoir, a  
43 small BOR water storage facility located between Pilot Rock and Pendleton in Umatilla County  
44 (FWS 2012a). The refuge provides a variety of open water, riparian, and shrub-steppe habitat. It  
45 supports considerable recreational use, primarily for fishing and upland bird hunting.

46 The FWS recently initiated a process to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the  
47 refuge. There is no plan that currently manages the McKay Creek NWR. However, the first



1 priority of each refuge is to conserve, manage, and if needed, restore fish and wildlife  
2 populations and habitats according to its purpose. Based on the limited documentation available  
3 to date and the lack of a plan specific to this refuge, IPC concludes that the FWS has not  
4 identified any scenic resources or values associated with the McKay Creek NWR, and no such  
5 resources are included in this Exhibit.

### 6 **Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge**

7 The Deer Flat NWR includes approximately 11,000 acres within two refuge units. The Lake  
8 Lowell Unit consists of approximately 9,000 acres surrounding Lake Lowell, a reservoir located  
9 west of Nampa in Canyon County, Idaho (FWS 2012b). The remaining acreage is within the  
10 Snake River Islands Unit and is distributed among more than 100 islands within a long reach of  
11 the Snake River from near Walter's Ferry in Idaho to Farewell Bend near Huntington, Oregon.  
12 The refuge provides a variety of habitat types for more than 200 species of birds and 30 species  
13 of mammals, and supports diverse, wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities.

14 According to the Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (FWS 2015), the Deer Flat NWR  
15 should achieve the following purposes:

- 16 • Enhance, maintain, and protect refuge habitats (including mudflats, emergent beds, and  
17 open water habitats of Lake Lowell, riparian forests, non-lake wetlands, and shrub-  
18 steppe) for the benefit of migratory birds and other wildlife.
- 19 • Gather sufficient scientific information to guide responsible adaptive management  
20 decisions.
- 21 • Provide visitors with compatible wildlife-dependent and non-wildlife-dependent  
22 recreational opportunities that foster an appreciation and understanding of the NWR's  
23 fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats, and have limited impacts to wildlife.
- 24 • Initiate and nurture relationships and develop cooperative opportunities to promote the  
25 importance of the refuge's wildlife habitat and support refuge stewardship.

26 Accordingly, FWS has not identified any scenic resources or values associated with the Deer  
27 Flat NWR, and no such resources are included in this Exhibit.

### 28 **3.3.2 Significant Potential Adverse Impacts**

29 OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(C): A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the  
30 scenic resources identified in (B) including, but not limited to, impacts such as: (i) Loss of  
31 vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of construction or operation; and (ii)  
32 Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.

33 A visual impact assessment for scenic resources within the analysis area identified in Table R-1  
34 was completed using methodology described in Attachment R-1. The results of the impact  
35 assessment are summarized below and in Table R-2. Detailed analysis records are provided in  
36 Attachment R-3.

37 The potential visibility of transmission facilities on the landscape, and their potential to result in  
38 impacts to scenic resources and views, depends on a variety of variables that affect a viewer's  
39 perception of Project features in the landscape (Sullivan et al, 2014). These variables,  
40 collectively known as "*visibility factors*" include, but are not limited to:

- 41 • *Physical elements* such as topography (landforms) and vegetation;
- 42 • *Viewer characteristics*, such as viewing geometry, duration, and distance; and

- 1 • *Project features and setting*, such as characteristics of the Project (i.e., form, line color,  
2 and texture; scale dominance) and its backdrop

3 Figure R-1 illustrates the influence of these visibility limiting factors, specifically that of viewer  
4 characteristics (distance) and project setting (backdrop). As demonstrated in Figure R-1,  
5 perceived visual contrast is expected to attenuate with distance. Likewise, visual contrast will  
6 decrease when Project features are backdropped, as facilities typically blend with the  
7 surrounding landscape. Conversely, greater visibility and contrast of transmission facilities is  
8 expected when facilities are located above the skyline, rather than against a terrain backdrop.  
9 This silhouetting of the facility against the sky is referred to as “skylining”.

10 In the application of the visual impact assessment, preliminary screening criteria were applied to  
11 filter out those resources where impacts will be of low intensity, and therefore less than  
12 significant, based on visibility factors. Specific visibility factors considered in the screening  
13 included (1) the physical elements of topography and vegetation that could screen views of  
14 Project features, and (2) Viewer characteristics, such as distance.

15 Impacts to scenic resources that were (1) located outside of the viewshed of Project facilities  
16 (physical visibility limiting factor), and/or (2) were located beyond 5 miles from the Proposed  
17 Route in non-forested areas, were considered to result in low intensity impacts and not  
18 potentially significant. This conclusion was based on the assumption that visual impacts will be  
19 of low magnitude, due to either the screening of views by topography or the perceived  
20 attenuation of visual contrast and scale dominance due to distance beyond 5 miles. As  
21 described in Attachment R-1, low magnitude impacts will result in low resource change and low  
22 viewer response, and would therefore be of low intensity. Scenic resources within forested  
23 areas were considered out to a distance of 10 miles in order to properly consider visibility of the  
24 cleared ROW. These screening criteria and rationale for the thresholds applied to each are  
25 discussed below:

26 **Screening Criteria #1: Impacts to scenic resources located outside of the Project**  
27 **viewshed would be of low intensity, and less than significant.** The Project viewshed is  
28 defined as the portion of the landscape where the Project could theoretically be seen based on  
29 the lack of screening by “*viewshed limiting factors*” such as topography and vegetation. The  
30 viewshed is developed by modelling potential visibility based on the relationship between the  
31 height of physical features such as topography or vegetation, the height of Project components,  
32 and average eye height of the viewer. The resulting “seen area” or viewshed, represents the  
33 area where one or more Project features could potentially be seen, and is presented as a map  
34 where shaded areas indicate locations theoretically inside of the viewshed (i.e., Project features  
35 are assumed to be visible from that location).

36 The screening-level viewshed analysis relied on a “Basic Viewshed Model” that assessed  
37 potential visibility based on the relationship between existing topography and Project features.  
38 This model is considered the most conservative, as it does not take into account potential  
39 shielding of Project features by potentially ephemeral features, such as vegetation, or physical  
40 structures (i.e., buildings).

41 The limitation of this model is that a “positive” signal for visibility will be triggered in an identical  
42 way from the tip of a transmission tower located 5 miles away as it would from a full tower  
43 located 1 mile away. Though actual visibility of these features would be quite different, the  
44 viewshed model (and resulting viewshed map) does not provide a way to differentiate the two.  
45 The result is that potential visibility is over-represented in the viewshed map, as there is no way  
46 to determine what Project feature is triggering a “positive” signal for visibility.



1  
2 **Figure R-1. Lattice Structure Potential Visibility Comparison**

1 Because of the limited interpretation of visibility that can be obtained from a “positive” signal of  
2 visibility (i.e., within the viewshed), basic bare-earth viewshed models are of greatest utility in  
3 determining areas where the Project will not be visible (i.e., outside of the viewshed).  
4 Notwithstanding the need for ground-truthing of the models, the conservative nature of this  
5 model provides a reliable metric to determine locations on the landscape where Project features  
6 will not be visible.

7 The results of the basic bare-earth viewshed models are presented in Attachment R-6. These  
8 results were used to identify those resources where views of the Project will be shielded by  
9 topography. Resources identified as being outside the modelled viewshed were considered to  
10 have low magnitude impacts, resulting in both low resource change and viewer perception  
11 (Steps 2 and 3 of the impact analysis). As follows, impact intensity was classified as low (Step 4  
12 of the impact analysis), and impacts were considered less than significant (Step 4). Therefore,  
13 scenic resources found to be outside of the basic bare-earth viewshed were not analyzed using  
14 the detailed impact assessment approach.

15 **Screening Criteria #2: Impacts to resources located greater than 5 miles from the Project**  
16 **in a non-forested setting were assumed to be of low intensity, and less than significant:**

17 Although the “seen area” or viewshed, represents the area where one or more Project features  
18 could potentially be seen, it does not represent an exact measure of the visibility of these  
19 features from scenic resources, or the magnitude of impact that could result. In reality, the ability  
20 of a viewer to discern Project features depends on a variety of visibility factors, including (but  
21 not limited to) the potential visual contrast and scale dominance of the transmission towers or  
22 ROW against the backdrop of the landscape or horizon, existing lighting, the degree of  
23 atmospheric haze or other meteorological conditions, and viewer characteristics such as  
24 position, relative height, and distance (BLM 2013, Sullivan et al, 2014).

25 Though each of these factors has the potential to limit visibility of Project features, consideration  
26 of one primary visibility limiting factor, distance, is a common and accepted way to predict  
27 potential visibility (Sullivan et al. 2014, Jones and Jones 1979). The degree of perceived visual  
28 contrast and scale dominance of an object is influenced by its distance from the observer. As  
29 viewing distance increases, the Project appears smaller and less dominant. Likewise, as  
30 distance increases, the apparent contrast of color would decrease (BLM 1986).

31 For the purpose of this analysis, an impact is considered potentially significant only when judged  
32 to be of medium or high magnitude, such that it alters existing scenic quality and/or character  
33 (resource change), and/or is perceived by viewers. Screening criteria #2 considers the impact-  
34 reducing influence of distance by establishing a threshold at 5 miles, beyond which impact  
35 intensity is considered low. This threshold was established based on the results of Sullivan et al  
36 (2014), in which the authors conclude that 500-kV lattice tower facilities in non-forested  
37 landscapes would “strongly attract visual attention ... and their visual prominence would  
38 interfere noticeably with views of nearby landscape elements” at distances of up to 3 miles.  
39 Beyond that distance, transmission towers would not compete with major landscape elements,  
40 in other words would appear subordinate in the landscape (low impact magnitude per Step 2 of  
41 the impact assessment) (Sullivan et al. 2014).

42 IPC applied these results by assuming that low intensity impacts will not “strongly attract visual  
43 attention” or “noticeably interfere with views of nearby landscape elements”. IPC extended the 3  
44 mile threshold to 5 miles to account for potential site-specific factors, such as skylining, that may  
45 increase this threshold. As mentioned above, Figure R-3-1 illustrates these concepts by  
46 providing examples of how viewing distance influences the visibility of transmission facilities,  
47 and how visual contrast is affected by the backdrop. Structures located in front of landforms are  
48 likely to blend with the color and textures of that landform resulting in reduced contrast at a

1 shorter distance, while structures that are skylined create greater visual contrast against the  
2 horizon at greater distances.

3 **Screening Criteria #3: Impacts to resources located greater than 5 miles from the cleared**  
4 **ROW in forested areas were considered potentially significant, and were therefore**  
5 **analyzed in detail:** Unlike non-forested areas where visual contrast of the ROW may not be  
6 apparent, potential visual contrast of the cleared ROW is expected to persist for distances  
7 beyond 5 miles due to the potential strong visual contrast and discrete line that may be  
8 introduced by the cleared ROW as it passes through a forested landscape. (Jones and Jones  
9 1976). To address this, the visual impact assessment was completed for scenic resources within  
10 the 5.0 to 10.0-mile area around the Site Boundary in areas where the Proposed Route will be  
11 sited in forested areas.

12 To determine what resources will have views of the ROW, a top-of-canopy viewshed model was  
13 prepared to better understand the potential visibility of portions of the ROW that cross forested  
14 areas where discrete lines of the cleared ROW may be visible. The Proposed Route was  
15 considered forested between MP 70 to MP 99. The entire Morgan Lake Alternative was  
16 considered forested. No other Alternative Routes were considered forested, and therefore were  
17 not addressed in this analysis. Potential visibility was determined by modelling where the  
18 ground of the cleared ROW could be visible, with potential screening of topography and forest  
19 vegetation incorporated in the model. This model was prepared for portions of the ROW located  
20 in forested areas of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. Resources determined to have  
21 views of the ROW (within the top-of-canopy viewshed) were analyzed in detail.

22 In addition to assessing impacts to important scenic resources, as required under the applicable  
23 statutes and rules, the Project Order directs IPC to address scoping comments that ODOE  
24 received from the public. A summary of how IPC addressed scoping comments is provided  
25 below.

- 26 1. The visual impact assessment of Project facilities on scenic resources located within the  
27 analysis area are documented in Exhibit R and in Attachment R-3. IPC has not proposed  
28 to install lights on any of the transmission towers. Exterior lighting associated with the  
29 Project will only include limited lighting needed for safety and security purposes at the  
30 stations, and small overhead lighting at the communication stations.
- 31 2. The visibility of the stations and communication sites were considered in the visual  
32 impact assessment. Exhibit R provides information regarding visual impacts, including  
33 Project design and siting.
- 34 3. Visual impacts in the area of the NHOTIC ACEC were a major consideration of the siting  
35 study for the Project, as is documented in Exhibit B. Exhibit R includes information about  
36 mitigation applied to the Project to reduce visual impacts to the NHOTIC ACEC  
37 (considered an important scenic resource).
- 38 4. Because the Project is located more than 20 miles from the John Day River and will not  
39 be visible from the river, potential visual impacts to this resource are not addressed in  
40 Exhibit R.
- 41 5. Exhibit R does not specifically address any wilderness areas because there are no  
42 wilderness areas within the analysis area specified for Exhibit R. Roadless areas that  
43 are included within areas identified as important scenic resources are addressed in  
44 Exhibit R. Because no scenic resources were identified in applicable management plans,  
45 site-specific assessments are not provided in Exhibit R. The analysis of numerous  
46 viewpoints located along those scenic byways is presented in the Visual Resources

1 Report (Attachment R-1), which provided supporting information for the National  
2 Environmental Policy Act analysis.

3 Temporary, short-term, and long-term visual impacts from Project components are summarized  
4 below. Note that significant adverse visual impacts are not expected to result from substations,  
5 as no scenic resources are located within 5 miles of these features. Table R-2 summarizes  
6 impact assessment metrics for long-term impacts that will result from Project components  
7 associated with the Proposed Route. For each resource, a Map ID is provided, corresponding to  
8 the label used to identify the location of each resource in Attachment R-2 and Attachments R-  
9 6a, 6b, and 6c. Where consideration of impacts from the Project Alternatives are relevant, this  
10 discussion is provided in the narrative below.

1 **Table R-2. Visual Impact Assessment Results**

Scenic Resource by Jurisdiction (Map ID) <sup>1</sup>	Distance to Proposed Route	Map Sheet Reference (Attachment R-2)	KOP(s) <sup>2</sup>	Part 1: Baseline Characteristics			Part 2: Impact Assessment				Part 3: Significance Determination				
				Scenic Quality / Scenic Attractiveness Class	Landscape Character <sup>3</sup>	Observer Characteristics (Geometry/Exposure) <sup>4</sup>	Impact Duration <sup>5</sup>	Magnitude	Resource Change	Viewer Perception	Intensity Rating	Context <sup>6</sup>	Contribution of the Project to Impacts <sup>7</sup>	Significance Determination <sup>8</sup>	
<b>County – Union</b>															
Blue Mountain Forest Wayside (SR U1)	Crossed	1	4-5	B	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
<b>County – Baker</b>															
OR Highway 203 (SR B1)	3.3 miles	2	5-34; 5-35	C	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	CE	Less than Significant
OR Highway 86 (SR B2)	Crossed	2	5-61; 5-32	C	Nat App	T	LT	Med	Med	Low	Med	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
OR Highway 245 (SR B3)	7 miles	2	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
Interstate 84, Pleasant Valley-Durkee area (SR B4)	Crossed	2	5-26; 5-15	B	Cult	T	LT	High	High	Med	High	High	NP	PE	Less than Significant
Interstate 84, Huntington to Baker/Malheur County line (SR B5)	0.2 mile	2	5-34b	B	Cult	T	LT	High	High	Med	High	High	NP	PE	Less than Significant

Scenic Resource by Jurisdiction (Map ID) <sup>1</sup>	Distance to Proposed Route	Map Sheet Reference (Attachment R-2)	KOP(s) <sup>2</sup>	Part 1: Baseline Characteristics			Part 2: Impact Assessment				Part 3: Significance Determination			
				Scenic Quality / Scenic Attractiveness Class	Landscape Character <sup>3</sup>	Observer Characteristics (Geometry/Exposure) <sup>4</sup>	Impact Duration <sup>5</sup>	Magnitude	Resource Change	Viewer Perception	Intensity Rating	Context <sup>6</sup>	Contribution of the Project to Impacts <sup>7</sup>	Significance Determination <sup>8</sup>
<b>City of Pendleton</b>														
<b>State of Oregon: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department</b>														
Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor (SR U1)	Crossed	1	4-5	B	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
<b>Federal – BLM, Vale District, Baker Resource Area</b>														
Powder River Canyon – Keating (VRM B2)	5.7 miles	2	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
Burnt River Canyon (VRM B3)	Crossed	2	5-81	B	Nat App	T	LT	High	Med	Low	Med	NP	PE	Potentially Significant
Brownlee Reservoir West (VRM B7)	2.1 mile	2	5-59	B	Nat App	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Low	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel (SR B6)	0.9 mile	2	N/A	B	Nat App	T; S	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel (SR B6)	0.02 mile	2	5-25c; 5-25d; 5-25e	B	Cult	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Med	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant



Scenic Resource by Jurisdiction (Map ID) <sup>1</sup>	Distance to Proposed Route	Map Sheet Reference (Attachment R-2)	KOP(s) <sup>2</sup>	Part 1: Baseline Characteristics			Part 2: Impact Assessment				Part 3: Significance Determination			
				Scenic Quality / Scenic Attractiveness Class	Landscape Character <sup>3</sup>	Observer Characteristics (Geometry/Exposure) <sup>4</sup>	Impact Duration <sup>5</sup>	Magnitude	Resource Change	Viewer Perception	Intensity Rating	Context <sup>6</sup>	Contribution of the Project to Impacts <sup>7</sup>	Significance Determination <sup>8</sup>
Oregon Trail ACEC – White Swan Parcel (SR B6)	2.9 miles	2	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch 2 Parcel (SR B6)	1.1 mile	2	N/A	C	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	CE	Less than Significant
Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch 1 Parcel (SR B6)	0.1 mile	2	N/A	C	Cult	T	LT	Med	Med	Med	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel (SR B6)	1.2 mile	2	N/A	C	Cult	T	LT	Med	Med	Med	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
Powder River Canyon ACEC and WSR (SR B7)	1.4 mile	2	5-34; 5-35	B	Nat App	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Low	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
<b>Federal – BLM, Vale District, Malheur Resource Area</b>														
Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek parcel (VRM M1)	0.2	2	8-3	C	Hist	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Med	Med	NP	PE	Less than Significant

Scenic Resource by Jurisdiction (Map ID) <sup>1</sup>	Distance to Proposed Route	Map Sheet Reference (Attachment R-2)	KOP(s) <sup>2</sup>	Part 1: Baseline Characteristics			Part 2: Impact Assessment				Part 3: Significance Determination			
				Scenic Quality / Scenic Attractiveness Class	Landscape Character <sup>3</sup>	Observer Characteristics (Geometry/Exposure) <sup>4</sup>	Impact Duration <sup>5</sup>	Magnitude	Resource Change	Viewer Perception	Intensity Rating	Context <sup>6</sup>	Contribution of the Project to Impacts <sup>7</sup>	Significance Determination <sup>8</sup>
Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel (VRM M2)	0.5 mile	2	8-1; 8-24	C	Nat App	T; S	LT	Med	High	Low	High	NP	PE	Less than Significant
Sugarloaf Butte (VRM M3)	1.6 mile	2	N/A	C	Nat App	T; S	LT	High	High	Med	High	NP	PE	Less than Significant
Five Points Creek (WSR1)	2.0 miles	1	N/A	A	Nat App	T; S	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
Lower Owyhee River (VRM M5)	Crossed	3	8-52	A	Nat App	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Low	Med	P	CE	Potentially Significant
Succor Creek (VRM M8)	3.9 miles	3	N/A	C	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
<b>Federal – BLM, Owyhee Resource Area</b>														
Jump Creek Canyon and Jump Creek ACEC (VRM O1)	4.9 mile (in State of Oregon)	3	12-8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
<b>Federal – BLM, Boise District, Cascade Resource Area</b>														
Brownlee Reservoir Southeast (VRM C1)	0.6 mile	2	N/A	B	Nat App	T; S	LT	Med	Med	Low	Med	NP	CE	Less than Significant
Brownlee Reservoir Northeast (VRM C2)	6.0 miles	2	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>

Scenic Resource by Jurisdiction (Map ID) <sup>1</sup>	Distance to Proposed Route	Map Sheet Reference (Attachment R-2)	KOP(s) <sup>2</sup>	Part 1: Baseline Characteristics			Part 2: Impact Assessment				Part 3: Significance Determination			
				Scenic Quality / Scenic Attractiveness Class	Landscape Character <sup>3</sup>	Observer Characteristics (Geometry/Exposure) <sup>4</sup>	Impact Duration <sup>5</sup>	Magnitude	Resource Change	Viewer Perception	Intensity Rating	Context <sup>6</sup>	Contribution of the Project to Impacts <sup>7</sup>	Significance Determination <sup>8</sup>
<b>Federal – USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest</b>														
VQO 1	0.0 mile	1	N/A	B	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
VQO 2		1	4-4; 4-24;	B	Cult	T; S	LT	High	Low	Low	Low	NA	CE	Less than Significant
OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West (VQO 3)	4.4 miles	1	N/A	B	Nat App	T	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	N/A	Less than Significant
OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East (VQO 4)	1.4 miles	1	4-3	B	Nat App	T; S	LT	Low	Low	Low	Low	NA	PE	Less than Significant
Mt Emily (VQO 6)	5.2 miles	1	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
OR 237 Corridor West (VQO 7)	11.7 miles	2	N/A	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>
OR 203 Corridor – Catherine Creek (VQO 8)	8.0 miles	1	5-34; 5-35	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Less than Significant <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Map ID = The reference label used to indicate location of scenic resources on location and viewed maps presented in Attachments R-2 and R-6a, R-6b, and R-6c.

<sup>2</sup> KOP = Key Observation Point

<sup>3</sup> Landscape Character Type: Nat App = Naturally Appearing; Cult = Cultural; Hist = Historical

<sup>4</sup> Observer Characteristics: T= Transient; S = Stationary

<sup>5</sup> Duration: LT = Long-term; ST= Short-term

<sup>6</sup> Context: NP = Not Precluded; P = Precluded; NA = Not Analyzed; low intensity impact

<sup>7</sup> Contribution of the Project = Indicates if impacts are caused by the proposed facility (PE: Project Effects), or the combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions (CE = Combined Effects)

<sup>8</sup> S = Screened; Impacts are considered Less than Significant based on screening criteria applied to the analysis.

1 3.3.2.1 Union County

2 **Blue Mountain Forest Wayside**

3 The Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is described as an approximately 0.5-mile-wide corridor  
4 located along I-84, west of La Grande (Map ID: U1). The corridor was designated to preserve  
5 the scenic character of this portion of the Grande Ronde River and provide a rest area for  
6 travelers.

7 The Union County Land Use Plan (1979) identifies the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside  
8 (Wayside). The Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and Blue Mountain Forest Wayside  
9 are administered by the OPRD. These resources are coextensive, and as such, will be  
10 collectively referred to as the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor for the purposes of this  
11 analysis.

12 The Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor is located along segments of the Old Emigrant Hill  
13 Scenic Frontage Road in the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountain Corridor boundary includes  
14 approximately 990 acres within five separate parcels, all of which are within the scenic  
15 resources analysis area. In general, the parcels are relatively long, narrow, linear features.  
16 Visitors typically access the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor via one or more of three I-84  
17 interchanges.

18 From northwest to southeast, the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor begins in the vicinity of  
19 Deadman's Pass, as the route climbs Emigrant Hill into the Blue Mountains. The first corridor  
20 parcel spans a stretch of Old Emigrant Hill Road for approximately 0.5 mile near the headwaters  
21 of Mission and Cottonwood creeks. Approximately 2 miles farther east, the second Blue  
22 Mountain Corridor parcel follows I-84 and Old Emigrant Hill Road to the east and south for  
23 about 6.4 miles. This parcel ends just southeast of Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area and  
24 about 2 miles north of the small community of Meacham.

25 The third Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor parcel begins just south of Meacham and follows  
26 I-84 for 1.4 miles. It then angles south for approximately 3.6 miles along Old Emigrant Hill  
27 Scenic Frontage Road to Kamela, with approximately the last 0.5 mile in Union County.

28 The fourth Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor segment begins less than 1 mile from the end  
29 of the third parcel, about 0.7 mile southeast of Kamela, following Old Emigrant Hill Scenic  
30 Frontage Road and the Union Pacific Railroad for approximately 2 miles. This Blue Mountain  
31 Corridor parcel is located from 1 to 1.5 miles west of I-84 in Railroad Canyon.

32 The fifth parcel of the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor begins near Motanic and extends to  
33 the southeast and east for nearly 3 miles. The eastern end of this parcel is just on the east side  
34 of I-84 near Exit 248, about 11 miles northwest of La Grande. This parcel is also located within  
35 Railroad Canyon and follows the course of Dry Creek, Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road,  
36 and the Union Pacific Railroad. Most of this Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor parcel is  
37 roughly parallel to I-84 and is located about 0.5 mile to 1 mile southwest of the highway.

38 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Union County Land Use Plan (1979) identifies the  
39 Blue Mountain Forest Wayside (Wayside) within Union County as an important scenic resource  
40 that is within the analysis area. The Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and Blue  
41 Mountain Forest Wayside are administered by the OPRD. These resources are not mutually  
42 exclusive, and as such, will be collectively referred to as the Blue Mountain State Scenic  
43 Corridor. This impact assessment for these scenic resources is presented below under  
44 Section 3.4.2.4.

1 Union County (1984) supplemented its land use plan to provide additional information about  
2 Goal 5 resources. Section IX of this document addresses Outstanding Scenic Views and Sites  
3 (p. 44), indicating that the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is given special consideration by the  
4 Oregon Department of Transportation and that no conflicting uses are anticipated. Union County  
5 planning staff indicated there are no planned updates or amendments to the comprehensive  
6 plan at this time (Jenkins 2012).

7 Though no planning document has been prepared for this resource, the OPRD describes it as  
8 property providing the public with an opportunity to experience one of the few examples of  
9 mature evergreen forests along I-84.<sup>3</sup>

10 **Existing Conditions.** The Blue Mountain Corridor is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of  
11 the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. Existing topography is primarily rolling, punctuated by the  
12 straight to curvilinear lines created by steep drainages. Existing vegetation is dominated by  
13 ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine, and grand fir, and appears nearly contiguous  
14 along the edges of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

15 The Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road is characterized as a narrow, two-lane road that  
16 winds naturally along the upper portion of a steep valley wall. The roadway runs adjacent to a  
17 heavy-rail line to the south. Views to the southwest across the valley are primarily blocked by  
18 dense vegetation along the perimeter. Intermittent views across the valley are characterized by  
19 a mosaic of open meadows, irregularly shaped forest patches, and a network of forest roads.  
20 Views to the north/northwest of the Frontage Road are dominated by the steep slope of the  
21 valley wall. This steep viewing angle precludes views to the ridgeline along the majority of the  
22 corridor. One notable exception is located at the northern extent of parcel 4, where eastbound  
23 travelers experience temporary views of rock outcroppings along the ridgeline that extend briefly  
24 to the foreground-middleground distance zone. The eastern-most terminus of the scenic corridor  
25 crosses I-84. Primary viewer groups include roadway travelers along Old Emigrant Hill Scenic  
26 Frontage Road.

27 The landscape character of the Blue Mountain Corridor is largely natural appearing. Scenic  
28 attractiveness classifies as Class B (typical). Scenic Integrity was ranked as high.

29 **Project Location.** The Project will cross the fifth parcel of the scenic corridor between Project  
30 MP 94.6 and 94.8 near KOP 4-5 (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-1). A photograph of the crossing  
31 location and simulation is provided in Attachment R-4. Two towers will be sited outside the  
32 scenic corridor and support the line span across the resource. No towers will be placed within  
33 the scenic corridor.

34 The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 3.7 miles southeast of the Blue Mountain  
35 Corridor. Project components associated with this alternative route will not be visible from the  
36 Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor due to screening by forest. Therefore, potential  
37 visual impacts to the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Forest from the Morgan Lake  
38 Alternative are not discussed further in this Exhibit.

39 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
40 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
41 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
42 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
43 cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

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<sup>3</sup> See [http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp\\_parkPage&parkId=172](http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp_parkPage&parkId=172).

1 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

2 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation required; however, in forested sites such as this, IPC will  
3 manage vegetation within the ROW to maintain a maximum height of 20 feet in the area under  
4 the conductors (the wire zone) and 34 feet in the adjacent area (the border zone). This  
5 treatment will result in a somewhat U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW that will soften  
6 the transition from cleared ROW to standing forest.

## 7 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

8 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary impacts will result from construction related  
9 actions, including clearing of ROW and pulling and tensioning sites. Visual impacts will include  
10 an increase of construction-related vehicles and personnel. Such impacts will result in  
11 temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Because vegetation clearing within the ROW  
12 and pulling and tensioning sites will occur within forested areas, restoration will take more than  
13 10 years. Consequently, impacts resulting from vegetation clearing are discussed under long-  
14 term impacts.

### 15 Long-Term Impacts

- 16 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission towers and clearing  
17 of forest vegetation required in the ROW and pulling and tensioning sites, and therefore  
18 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 19 • Magnitude of Impact: The ROW, transmission towers, access roads and pulling and  
20 tensioning sites will be situated on the crest of the ridgeline to the north of the fifth parcel  
21 of the scenic corridor, outside of the scenic corridor boundary. Old Emigrant Hill Scenic  
22 Frontage Road will be used as an access road; however, no substantial improvements  
23 to this roadway will occur. Other access roads, including existing roads requiring  
24 improvement and new bladed roads, will be located on the northwest side of the  
25 Proposed Route. Pulling and tensioning sites will be located adjacent to the scenic  
26 corridor.

27 Due to the screening of forest vegetation, visibility of the towers from the Old Emigrant  
28 Hill Scenic Frontage Road near the northern and southern ends of parcel 4 will be  
29 limited to the tops of some towers. Views would be experienced at a distance of  
30 approximately 0.2 mile. The perimeter of the roadway within all five parcels will remain  
31 forested, which coupled with steep viewing angles from many locations along the  
32 roadway, will limit the portion of the towers visible. Visual contrast will be weak and the  
33 towers will appear subordinate where visible, since they will be partially screened.  
34 Impact magnitude will be low. Cleared areas associated with the ROW and pulling and  
35 tensioning sites will be screened. A simulation of the ROW where it crosses the Old  
36 Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road is provided in Attachment R-4, Figure R-4-1b.

- 37 • Viewer Perception: The steep angle of observation will preclude views of Project  
38 features from Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. The perimeter of the roadway will  
39 remain forested, thereby screening structures from view by roadway travelers. Roadway  
40 travelers approaching where the Project crosses the Frontage Road will experience  
41 views of the conductors spanning the road in the foreground. Viewer exposure will be  
42 brief and experienced both head-on and peripherally for all parcels. Therefore, viewer  
43 perception will be low.
- 44 • Resource Change: The cleared ROW will not be visible from roadway viewing platforms  
45 within any of the scenic corridor parcels due to steep viewing angles and tall, mature

1 vegetation bordering the roadway. Visual contrast of the conductors will be weak. The  
2 Landscape Character will remain primarily natural appearing. Scenic Attractiveness will  
3 remain Class B (Typical). Scenic Integrity will remain high. Valued landscape character  
4 appears unaltered. Deviations may be present, but they mimic the landscape character  
5 so completely that they are not evident. Therefore, resource change will be low.

### 6 **Significance Determination**

- 7 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
8 perception.
- 9 • Context: To date, no policies or ordinance provisions have been established by OPRD.  
10 Because no management direction has been established for this scenic resource, IPC  
11 has found the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for  
12 which it is recognized. Low intensity impacts are consistent with this planning goal.
- 13 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Low intensity  
14 impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not  
15 the result of other past or present actions.
- 16 • Conclusion: Impacts to the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and Blue  
17 Mountain Forest Wayside will be of low intensity and **less than significant**.

#### 18 **3.3.2.2 Baker County**

19 The Baker County Comprehensive Land Use Plan identifies segments of I-84, U.S. Highway 26,  
20 and OR 245, OR 203, and OR 86 within the analysis area as important scenic resources and  
21 values. Expected Project effects to these scenic resources are summarized below.

#### 22 **Oregon State Highway 203**

23 The segment of OR 203 recognized for scenic value extends for about 8 miles, from MP 22.9 (at  
24 the Baker/Union County line) to MP 31.09 (at Salt Creek, east of the junction with Sunnyslope  
25 Lane) (Map ID: SR B1). This segment of OR 203 generally travels in a southwest-northeast  
26 direction and is entirely within the analysis area. The Proposed Route does not cross OR 203  
27 and is located over 3 miles from the southern end of the scenic segment.

28 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** OR 203 is managed per the Baker County  
29 Comprehensive Plan (1993) as a scenic view or site and as a 2A resource pursuant to OAR  
30 660-10-000<sup>4</sup>. Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no  
31 conflicting uses for an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource,  
32 the county “must adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure  
33 preservation of the resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been  
34 established by Baker County with regard to the scenic segment of OR 203. Therefore, although  
35 recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been  
36 established for the resource.

37 Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources,  
38 which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region” (see  
39 Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)).

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<sup>4</sup> It appears that the reference to OAR 660-010-000 is in error and should instead be a reference to OAR 660-016-0000.

1 **Existing Conditions.** Surrounding terrain ranges from flat to moderately tall rolling hills in the  
2 foreground, middleground, and background. Dominant lines include flat, horizontal lines along  
3 the horizon and curved, undulating lines from the rolling hills. Vegetation is mostly low-lying  
4 shrubs and grasses that have no discernible line or shape. Vegetation becomes more evenly  
5 distributed in the middleground and foreground. Color complexity is limited to golden grasses  
6 and greens, blues, and grays of the sagebrush. The dominant textures from the vegetation are  
7 fine from grasses and coarse from the sagebrush in the foreground. Vegetation texture  
8 becomes smooth and fine in the middleground and foreground.

9 The Powder River is visible briefly where the highway crosses the river near KOP 5-35. Here, a  
10 linear band of riparian trees is apparent, primarily in the left side view south of the highway  
11 bridge. The strong, angular lines of the structures located near the river are apparent, but do not  
12 dominate the landscape. The landscape appears large-scale and expansive. Cultural  
13 modifications include a paved-surface road, native-surface two-track roads, several fence lines,  
14 transmission poles and conductors, and a few structures. Despite these human modifications,  
15 overall the landscape surrounding OR 203 has a natural-appearing character. Scenic quality of  
16 the existing landscape of the OR 203 is considered low (class C).

17 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups are primarily motorists traveling along OR  
18 203 traveling approximately 45 mile per hour. Viewers are characterized as transient, with  
19 exposure to the surrounding landscape experienced in motion.

20 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route, including towers, access roads, and temporary work  
21 areas, will be located 3.3 miles southeast of OR 203 at its closest point (Attachment R-3, Figure  
22 R-3-2).

23 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered at this site.

#### 24 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

25 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
26 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are each located greater than  
27 5 miles from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. This site is  
28 also located >10 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative, considered forested and therefore  
29 subject to a 10 mile radius analysis area. Because the other Alternative Routes are not forested,  
30 they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis  
31 presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

#### 32 Temporary and Short-term Impacts:

33 Temporary impacts will be associated with construction related actions, including clearing of  
34 ROW and pulling and tensioning sites, and will include increase of construction-related vehicles  
35 and personnel. Such impact will result in temporary, localized medium intensity impacts.

#### 36 Long-Term Impacts

- 37 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
38 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 39 • Magnitude of Impact: The weighted bare-earth viewshed indicates the potential visibility  
40 of transmission towers will be limited from all portions of the OR 203 resource, as the  
41 number towers visible at any time from the majority of the resource is low (Attachment  
42 R-6b). Rolling terrain in the foreground will screen views of the towers; however, the tops  
43 of a few towers could be visible against the skyline in the middleground, appearing as  
44 dark lines against the light sky. Viewshed-related impacts to OR 203 will be of low



1 magnitude, resulting from the overall low visibility and distance of the transmission  
2 towers from the scenic segment. The towers will introduce weak visual contrast and will  
3 be absorbed by the large scale of the landscape such that they will appear subordinate.  
4 Because access roads are located over 3 miles from this resource, they are not  
5 expected to be discernable due to low visual contrast.

- 6 • Viewer Perception: Views of motorists will be directed toward the Project when traveling  
7 southwest but will be facing the opposite direction when traveling northeast. Viewer  
8 duration will be episodic, and viewer perception will be low.
- 9 • Resource Change: Because of the low visual contrast of the transmission towers as  
10 viewed from OR 203, the adjacent scenery will not be noticeably altered. The landscape  
11 character and quality will be maintained and resource change will be low.

## 12 **Significance Determination.**

- 13 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
14 perception.
- 15 • Context: To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by  
16 Baker County with regard to the scenic segment of OR 203. Therefore, although  
17 recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction  
18 has been established for the resource.
- 19 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Though the  
20 landscape character and quality of the resource will be maintained. Low intensity  
21 impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not  
22 the result of other past or present actions.
- 23 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to OR 203 will be **less than significant**.

## 24 **Oregon Highway 86**

25 OR 86 (Map ID: SR B2) is a designated scenic corridor representing scenic views and sites  
26 considered indigenous to Baker County (Baker County Comprehensive Plan 2000). The  
27 designated scenic segment of OR 86 extends for approximately 36 miles from MP 4.81 (near  
28 Sunnyslope Lane) to MP 40.64 (Eagle Creek). The location of this resource is shown in  
29 Attachment R-2, indicated by a map ID of SR B2. A site-specific map is provided in Attachment  
30 R-3, Figure R-3-3. OR 86 is used as a primary travel corridor between Baker City and the towns  
31 of Richland and Keating. This road is also used by people touring on the scenic byway. This  
32 stretch of the highway experiences average daily traffic volume of approximately 930 vehicles  
33 (ODOT 2012).

34 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The county, in its application of the Goal 5  
35 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000. The  
36 designated scenic segment of OR 86 extends for approximately 36 miles from MP 4.81 (near  
37 Sunnyslope Lane) to MP 40.64 (Eagle Creek).

38 Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for  
39 an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must  
40 adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the  
41 resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker  
42 County with regard to the scenic segment of OR 86. Therefore, although recognized by Baker

1 County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the  
2 resource.

3 Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources,  
4 which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region” (see  
5 Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)).

6 **Existing Conditions.** OR 86 traverses through high desert, with flat to rolling terrain  
7 characterized by curved, undulating topography. When traveling eastbound on OR 86, the  
8 incline of the roadway as it leaves Baker Valley similarly acts as a “gateway,” providing roadway  
9 travelers the experience of leaving the more developed landscape as they travel toward the  
10 more naturally appearing landscape. When traveling westbound, viewer experience is similar in  
11 that roadway travelers descend from the high desert into the more developed areas of Baker  
12 Valley at the western most terminus of OR 86. The Blue Mountains to the west and Wallowa  
13 Mountains to the east provide distance enclosure to this view. Overall, the landscape  
14 surrounding OR 86 is natural appearing, as landscape development is limited along the scenic  
15 stretch of highway for the majority of its length. An existing 240-kV transmission line is visible to  
16 the north. Scenic quality of the OR 86 scenic corridor is considered low (Class C).

17 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups include roadway travelers commuting  
18 between Baker City and the towns of Richland and Keating or touring on the scenic byway.  
19 Viewers are characterized as transient, with exposure to the surrounding landscape  
20 experienced in motion.

21 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route crosses OR 86 less than 1 mile east of the western end  
22 of the scenic segment, between highway MP 5 and 6, near the western terminus at the entrance  
23 to the Baker Valley (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-3).

24 OR 86 is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW for the Morgan  
25 Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in  
26 this document. West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road  
27 Alternative 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this  
28 site, and are therefore also not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
29 these Alternative Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
30 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis below pertains to the Proposed Route.

31 **Mitigation Considered.** In evaluating various alternatives for Project siting, IPC concluded that  
32 potentially significant visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the NHOTIC could  
33 result. To address potential impacts, IPC analyzed three design options aimed at reducing  
34 adverse impact to less than significant: (1) applying a natina finish to the lattice structure; (2)  
35 using an H-frame structure with galvanized finish; or (3) using an H-frame structure with a natina  
36 finish. IPC incorporated Option 3 into its revised Project design as planning for the final  
37 indicative design for the Project progressed. This design consideration is relevant to OR 86 as  
38 the transmission structures considered are those that are visible from OR 86.

39 The final indicative design moved the Proposed Route to the east, outside of the active  
40 agricultural areas based on comments from the local government. To mitigate for potential  
41 visual impacts from this route to the NHOTIC ACEC, VRM II area, and NHOTIC recreation area,  
42 IPC proposes using low stature (100-129 feet) H-Frame structures. Because these transmission  
43 structures are visible from OR 86, this mitigation is considered in the impact assessment for  
44 OR 86.

45 OR 86 is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the  
46 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project

1 feature are not discussed any further in this document. West of Bombing Range Road  
2 Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative  
3 are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are therefore also not considered in this  
4 visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative Routes are not forested, they are  
5 not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

6 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

## 7 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

8 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Construction-related actions will be visible to the north,  
9 including pulling and tensioning sites and construction of new primitive roads and a small (<0.05  
10 mile) segment of new, bladed road. A new bladed road and pulling and tensioning site will be  
11 located to the south. Construction-related actions will be of high magnitude, resulting from the  
12 strong visual contrast in line and texture of these features and close proximity in which they are  
13 viewed. Viewers on OR 86 will experience construction-related impacts episodically as they  
14 pass through this localized impact area. Impacts will be temporary to short-term, lasting for the  
15 duration of construction and rehabilitation of the site (approximately 7 years for grassland and  
16 agriculture). Because short-term impacts are not considered significant, construction-related  
17 actions are not considered further in this analysis.

### 18 Long-term Impacts:

- 19 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission towers, and  
20 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 21 • Magnitude: The proposed 500-kV towers will appear large in scale and co-dominant  
22 within the landscape, including existing 230-kV H-frame transmission structures when  
23 viewed at close distances, thereby introducing moderate visual contrast. Impact  
24 magnitude will be medium.
- 25 • Viewer Perception: This medium magnitude impact will be visible for approximately 1  
26 mile when traveling in either direction on the highway. Views of the Project will be  
27 experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point and are episodic (experienced for  
28 less than 1 minute while traveling a speed of 45 miles per hour), thereby resulting in low  
29 viewer perception.
- 30 • Resource Change: Medium magnitude impacts will be manifest at the western terminus  
31 of the scenic segment, thereby aligning with the transition, or “gateway,” rather than  
32 fragmenting or bisecting the resource at its center. The Project will appear dominant and  
33 will lower the scenic quality component score for cultural modification. The Project will  
34 extend the cultural character of the landscape for 0.75 mile when heading eastbound.  
35 When heading westbound, travelers descending into Baker Valley will already be  
36 experiencing the more cultural/agricultural landscape character of the Baker Valley,  
37 therefore no change in the overall existing character is expected. Overall scenic quality  
38 will remain low (Class C), and the resource change will be medium

## 39 **Significance Determination.**

- 40 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be medium due to low viewer perception and  
41 medium resource change.
- 42 • Context: To date, no policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker  
43 County. Because no management direction has been established for this scenic

1 resource, IPC has found the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the  
2 scenic value for which it is recognized. Additionally, because the impact will be localized  
3 rather than regional in scale, the Project will be consistent with conservation of “the  
4 natural splendor of the region” (see Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)). Medium  
5 intensity impacts are consistent with this planning goal.

- 6 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Medium  
7 intensity impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and  
8 are not the result of other past or present actions.
- 9 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to OR 86 will be of medium intensity and **less than**  
10 **significant.**

### 11 **Oregon Highway 245**

12 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** OR 245 (map ID: SR B3) is a designated scenic  
13 corridor representing scenic views and sites considered indigenous to Baker County (Baker  
14 County Comprehensive Plan 2000). The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative  
15 Rule, identifies this resource as a 2A resource pursuant to OAR 660-10-000. The designated  
16 scenic segment of OR 245 that is applicable to the Project extends for approximately 37 miles,  
17 from the junction with OR 245 to the junction with U.S. Highway 26 near Unity. Approximately 4  
18 miles of this segment are within the analysis area.

19 Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for  
20 an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must  
21 adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the  
22 resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker  
23 County with regard to the scenic segment of OR 245. Therefore, although recognized by Baker  
24 County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the  
25 resource. Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic  
26 resources, which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the  
27 region” (see Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)).

28 **Screening:** The basic and weighted bare-earth viewshed analysis indicates views of the Project  
29 will be blocked by existing topography (Attachment R-6a, Attachment R-6b). This conclusion  
30 applies to the Proposed Route, Boardman Bombing Range Alternatives 1 and 2, the Morgan  
31 Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative.

32 **Conclusion:** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility, as indicated by  
33 the viewshed models, and the distance of the resource from the Proposed Route (approximately  
34 7 miles), IPC concludes that impacts to OR 245 will be **less than significant**. Based on these  
35 screening criteria, potential impacts to OR 245 are not discussed further in this Exhibit.

### 36 **Interstate 84, Pleasant Valley-Durkee Area (GIS ID No. SR B4)**

37 Interstate-84 between Pleasant Valley and Durkee is identified by Baker County as a scenic  
38 corridor extending for a distance of approximately 12 miles from MP 317.39 (at the Pleasant  
39 Valley Interchange) to MP 329.24 (1.8 mile southeast of the Durkee Interchange) (Map ID: SR  
40 B4).

41 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** I-84 between Pleasant Valley and Durkee is a  
42 designated scenic corridor representing scenic views and sites considered indigenous to Baker  
43 County (Baker County Comprehensive Plan 2000). The county, in its application of the Goal 5  
44 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000. The

1 designated scenic segment of I-84 extends for approximately MP 317.39 (at the Pleasant Valley  
2 Interchange) to MP 329.24 (1.8 mile southeast of the Durkee Interchange), a distance of about  
3 12 miles.

4 Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for  
5 an identified resource site, resulting in a "2A" designation of the resource, the county "must  
6 adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the  
7 resource." To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker  
8 County with regard to the scenic segment of I-84 between Pleasant Valley and  
9 Durkee. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific  
10 management direction has been established for the resource. Baker County has developed a  
11 generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to "promote land uses  
12 designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region" (see Baker County Comprehensive  
13 Plan (1993)).

14 **Existing Conditions.** Throughout this highway segment, landforms generally form narrow  
15 valleys with steep sidewalls transitioning to rolling terrain. Generally, surrounding topography  
16 creates some enclosure, limiting expansive views of the surrounding landscape. Old Highway  
17 30 parallels I-84 for most of the segment; the two roadways are never separated by more than  
18 approximately 0.5 mile. An active railroad line is similarly close for more than 10 miles of the  
19 highway segment; existing 69-kV and 138-kV transmission lines are typically within 0.5 mile and  
20 are a nearly continuous visual presence. Other developed land uses are noticeable in the  
21 Durkee area and at several scattered locations along I-84. The landscape character is  
22 considered cultural, as existing development and the adjacent steep to rolling terrain are both  
23 memorable aspects of the landscape. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for the I-84  
24 Pleasant Valley-Durkee corridor is considered medium (Class B).

25 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups include roadway travelers commuting  
26 between towns located along I-84, and those engaged in interstate travel. Viewers are  
27 characterized as transient, with exposure to the surrounding landscape experienced in motion.

28 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route roughly parallels the scenic segment of I-84 at a  
29 distance of approximately 1 mile (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-4). The Proposed Route will run  
30 north of I-84 from Project mile 191.9 to 165.0, where acute viewing angles associated with the  
31 steep topography immediately adjacent to I-84 to the northeast will inhibit direct views of the  
32 towers. The Proposed Route crosses I-84 at Project mile 166.0, where it veers south of I-84.

33 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
34 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
35 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Additionally, I-84,  
36 Pleasant Valley to Durkee, is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
37 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this  
38 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document. Because West of Bombing  
39 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
40 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
41 resulting from a cleared ROW.

42 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 43 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

44 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: A multi-use area will be located approximately 0.2 mile  
45 southwest of the I-84 overpass at Old Highway 30 and could be temporarily visible from I-84.  
46 Visual impacts resulting from this feature will be of medium magnitude and temporary, lasting

1 for the duration of project construction. Temporary impacts associated with construction related  
2 actions, including clearing of ROW and pulling and tensioning sites will include increase of  
3 construction-related vehicles and personnel. Such impact will result in temporary, localized  
4 medium intensity impacts. Short-term impact low intensity impacts may result from clearing of  
5 the ROW through grassland areas. Impacts from ROW clearing will persist until grassland areas  
6 are restored (estimated at approximately 7 years following construction).

#### 7 Long-term Impacts:

- 8 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission towers, and  
9 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 10 • Magnitude of Impact: Transmission towers associated with the Project will introduce high  
11 magnitude impacts for approximately 1 mile of the 12-mile scenic corridor from  
12 approximately Project mile 160 to 161. Outside of this segment, visual contrast will be  
13 weak, and impact magnitude will be low. Within the 1-mile segment near the crossing of  
14 I-84, the landscape character will appear more urban, and inconsistent with the  
15 remainder of the scenic highway segment due to the dominant appearance of the  
16 transmission towers. Outside of this 1-mile segment of I-84, visual contrast will primarily  
17 be low due to screening from surrounding topography and the steep viewing angle and  
18 peripheral view of the towers experienced by roadway travelers.

19 In addition to the towers several segments of new, graded access road will be located  
20 between the Proposed Route and I-84 within this segment of scenic highway. While  
21 visible, these roads will appear consistent with existing roads in the area and  
22 subordinate to the large 500-kV transmission towers situated within the Proposed Route.

- 23 • Viewer Perception: The Proposed Route will run north of I-84 from Project mile 157 to  
24 160, where acute viewing angles associated with the steep topography immediately  
25 adjacent to I-84 to the northeast will inhibit direct views of the towers. The Proposed  
26 Route crosses I-84 at Project mile 160.5, where it veers south of I-84. The transmission  
27 towers will be visible for approximately 1 mile near the Old Highway 30 overpass  
28 (Attachment R-6a). The structures will appear dominant in the landscape and introduce  
29 strong visual contrast. The structures will be viewed head-on by I-84 travelers traveling  
30 in either direction. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture of the towers will  
31 contrast against the steep valley walls and rolling terrain. Traveling south/southeast on I-  
32 84 past the overpass, the proposed 500-kV towers will be partially or fully screened by  
33 topography. Overall viewer perception will be medium.
- 34 • Resource Change: An overall, localized change in scenic quality will result from the  
35 increase in cultural modification to the landscape from the Proposed Route. Under  
36 operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will appear discordant with the existing  
37 landscape and promote strong disharmony where the Proposed Route crosses the  
38 scenic highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two points for  
39 Cultural Modification, and the scenic quality class will be changed from Class B to C in  
40 this localized area. Resource change will be high.

#### 41 **Significance Determination.**

- 42 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be high resulting from high resource change and  
43 medium viewer perception.
- 44 • Context: Because no management direction has been established for this scenic  
45 resource, IPC has found the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the

1 scenic value for which it is recognized. Because Project impacts are localized for a 1-  
2 mile stretch of the 12-mile corridor and the Project will not result in impacts to scenic  
3 resources at a regional scale, the Project is consistent with Baker County's policy to  
4 "conserve the natural splendor of the region."

- 5 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
6 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
7 influence of the Project and other past or present actions. As described above, due to  
8 past actions including construction of the interstate, transmission lines, and rural  
9 developments, the pre-Project landscape character is cultural. Although the Project will  
10 lower the scenic quality, it will not alter the character of the landscape from that currently  
11 influenced by past or present actions.
- 12 • Conclusion: Impacts to I-84 between Pleasant Valley and Durkee are considered **less**  
13 **than significant.**

### 14 ***Interstate 84, Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line***

15 I-84 between Huntington and the Baker/Malheur County Line is identified by Baker County as a  
16 scenic highway extends from MP 345.78 (at the Huntington Interchange) to MP 352.0 (at the  
17 Baker/Malheur County line), a distance of about 6 miles (Map ID: SR B5).

18 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Baker County Comprehensive Plan (Baker County  
19 2000) designates a scenic segment between Huntington and the Baker/Malheur County Line on  
20 I-84. This segment is recognized for providing "scenic views and sites considered indigenous to  
21 Baker County" (Baker County 2000). The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative  
22 Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000.

23 Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for  
24 an identified resource site, resulting in a "2A" designation of the resource, the county "must  
25 adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the  
26 resource." To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker  
27 County with regard to the scenic segment of I-84 between Huntington and the Baker/Malheur  
28 County Line. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific  
29 management direction has been established for the resource. Baker County has developed a  
30 generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to "promote land uses  
31 designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region" (see Baker County Comprehensive  
32 Plan (1993)).

33 **Existing Conditions.** Throughout this highway segment, landforms generally form narrow  
34 valleys with steep sidewalls transitioning to rolling terrain. Generally, surrounding topography  
35 creates some enclosure, limiting expansive views of the surrounding landscape. An existing  
36 138-kV transmission line crosses the scenic segment of I-84 approximately 1 mile north of  
37 where Durbin Creek Road crosses over I-84. An existing 69-kV transmission line is also present  
38 to the east in this area, such that both existing transmission lines are visible from the scenic  
39 segment of I-84 for approximately 1 mile. Scattered rural developments are also present  
40 throughout the landscape. Overall, the landscape character experienced from this segment of I-  
41 84 is cultural. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM  
42 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur  
43 County Line corridor is considered medium (Class B).

1 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are primarily interstate travelers driving at high  
2 speeds such that views are primarily focused in the direction of travel with limited views of the  
3 periphery. Passengers may be afforded an opportunity to experience views of landscape.

4 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route runs adjacent to the southwest of this entire scenic  
5 segment of I-84, at distances of approximately 0.2 to 0.5 mile (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-5).  
6 The bare-earth viewshed analysis indicates that the proposed transmission towers and  
7 conductors will potentially be visible from all locations along this segment of I-84 (Attachment R-  
8 6). Project facilities will generally be seen against a backdrop of low ridges west of the freeway.

9 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
10 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
11 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Additionally,  
12 Interstate 84, Huntington and the Baker/Malheur County Line, is located outside of the 10 mile  
13 viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake  
14 Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this  
15 document. Because West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road  
16 Alternative 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for  
17 potential visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

18 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

19 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered for this resource.

## 20 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

21 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: A multi-use area will be located 0.75 mile west of I-84 near  
22 Huntington; this facility will be located in a depression and will likely be screened from view by  
23 surrounding higher elevation areas, including I-84. Temporary impacts associated with  
24 construction related actions, including clearing of ROW and pulling and tensioning sites will  
25 include increase of construction-related vehicles and personnel. Such impact will result in  
26 temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Short-term impact low intensity impacts may  
27 result from clearing of the ROW through grassland areas. Impacts from ROW clearing will  
28 persist until grassland areas are restored (estimated at approximately 7 years following  
29 construction).

## 30 Long-Term Impacts:

- 31 • Duration: Long-term impacts will result from the construction and operation of the  
32 transmission towers along the Proposed Route, and new, bladed access roads located  
33 to the east, between I-84 and the Proposed Route.
- 34 • Magnitude of Impact: The transmission towers within the Proposed Route will introduce  
35 a high level of contrast due to their proximity and size, such that they will appear  
36 dominant in the landscape. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture of the  
37 towers will contrast against the steep valley walls and rolling terrain. The light, reflective  
38 color will also contrast against the browns, greens, tans, and grey of the vegetated  
39 hillsides and rock crops. Transmission towers will introduce a high magnitude impact.

40 Access roads will be located as close as 0.1 mile from I-84 and will appear as light-  
41 colored lines apparent across the landscape. While visible, these roads will appear  
42 subordinate to the large 500-kV transmission towers situated within the Proposed Route.



- 1 • Viewer Perception: The transmission line and towers will be visible to highway travelers  
2 in the direction of view as well as in the periphery, will be continuous, and will be viewed  
3 from an inferior vantage point. Therefore, viewer perception will be medium.
- 4 • Resource Change: The Proposed Route will affect the adjacent scenery of the scenic  
5 corridor such that there will be an overall change in scenic quality of the scenic highway.  
6 Under operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will appear discordant with the  
7 existing landscape and will promote strong disharmony as the Project parallels the  
8 scenic highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two points for  
9 Adjacent Scenery, and by three points for Cultural Modification. Consequently, the  
10 scenic quality class will be changed from Class B to C. The landscape character will be  
11 perceived as urban due to the dominant expression of transmission infrastructure.  
12 Resource change will be high.

### 13 **Significance Determination.**

- 14 • Impact Intensity: Overall impact intensity will be high based on medium viewer  
15 perception and high resource change.
- 16 • Context: Because no management direction has been established for this scenic  
17 resource, IPC has found the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the  
18 scenic value for which it is recognized. The Project will not result in impacts to scenic  
19 resources at a regional scale, and is consistent with Baker County's policy to "conserve  
20 the natural splendor of the region."
- 21 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
22 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
23 of other past or present actions.
- 24 • Conclusion: Impacts to I-84 between Huntington and the Baker/Malheur County Line are  
25 considered **less than significant**.

#### 26 **3.3.2.3 City of Pendleton**

27 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The City of Pendleton Comprehensive Plan (1990)  
28 identifies the Umatilla River and tributaries within the city as important scenic resources; these  
29 features are located outside of the analysis area. No specific management direction is provided  
30 in the plan.

31 **Screening.** Pendleton is located at the northern edge of the analysis area, as the distance  
32 between the Proposed Route and the Umatilla River is at least 15 miles. No visual impact  
33 analysis was conducted for this resource for the Proposed Route analyzed in this Exhibit.

34 Likewise, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road  
35 Alternative 2, Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater  
36 than 5 miles from the Umatilla River, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact  
37 analysis. Additionally, the Umatilla River, is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the  
38 cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore  
39 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document. Because West  
40 of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the  
41 Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
42 resulting from a cleared ROW.

1 3.3.2.4 Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

2 **Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor**

3 The analysis for the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor is presented in Section 3.4.2.1  
4 under Union County (Blue Mountain Forest Wayside).

5 Impacts to Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor are considered **less than significant**.

6 3.3.2.5 BLM, Baker Resource Area

7 **Powder River Canyon – Keating**

8 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Powder River Canyon (Map ID: VRM B2) area  
9 includes multiple parcels of BLM-administered land within the Powder River Canyon that are  
10 managed as VRM Class II, with a total area of approximately 5,500 acres. Per VRM Class II  
11 objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape  
12 character is retained (BLM 1986). The area also straddles OR 86 (the Baker-Copperfield  
13 Highway). The western end of this VRM polygon is approximately 11 miles east of I-84, 5.7  
14 miles east of the Proposed Route. The eastern end of this area is more than 10 miles from the  
15 Proposed Route.

16 **Screening.** The VRM Class II parcels cover the roadway corridor and adjacent terrain near the  
17 Powder River. As indicated by the basic viewshed model (Attachment R6-6a), views of the  
18 Project will be blocked from a large portion of the VRM Class II area due to the incised nature of  
19 the canyon. Visibility is further assumed limited due to the distance of the eastern part of the  
20 VRM II area from the Proposed Route.

21 **Conclusion.** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility, as indicated by  
22 the viewshed models, and the distance of the resource from the Proposed Route and Morgan  
23 Lake Alternative, IPC concludes that impacts to the Powder River Canyon will be **less than**  
24 **significant**. The Project will comply with VRM II management objectives, as the Proposed  
25 Route does not cross this resource.

26 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
27 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
28 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
29 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
30 cleared ROW.

31 **Burnt River Canyon**

32 Burnt River Canyon (Map ID: VRM B3) includes 10,700 acres of BLM-administered lands in the  
33 Burnt River Canyon area, approximately 2.6 miles west of the community of Durkee. The VRM  
34 Class II management area includes the Burnt River, the surrounding canyon walls, and some of  
35 the upland areas that sit above the canyon.

36 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Burnt River Canyon is managed to meet VRM Class II  
37 objectives by the BLM Vale District, Baker Resource Area (BLM 1986). Per VRM Class II  
38 objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape  
39 character is retained (BLM 1986).

40 **Existing Conditions.** In the eastern portion of the area, the rugged canyon walls rise steeply  
41 from the narrow valley floor, creating a v-shaped canyon that appears enclosed. Smaller side  
42 drainages and tributaries, also appearing v-shaped, create complex forms and lines that appear

1 steep, diagonal, and triangular. The landscape appears rugged due to the rough and varying  
2 textures of rock throughout the canyon. Further west, traveling up the canyon, the topography  
3 becomes less steep and appears moderately rugged and less enclosed. Vegetation is limited  
4 and appears primarily as scattered to stippled sagebrush. The Burnt River appears as a small  
5 winding channel of blue-green water with a smooth to rippled surface. The river and riparian  
6 vegetation produce some visual contrast and visual variety with the surrounding brown and grey  
7 canyon walls. Burnt River Canyon Road follows the Burnt River throughout canyon and appears  
8 as a smooth, grey, curved line meandering through the base of the canyon. Other human  
9 development within Burnt River Canyon includes scattered rural development and native  
10 surface and paved roads.

11 Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character. The scenic quality of the existing  
12 landscape for Burnt River Canyon is considered moderate (Class B).

13 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups primarily include local residents traveling  
14 along the Burnt River Road and individuals participating in dispersed recreation throughout  
15 Burnt River Canyon, although this type of activity is likely low. Viewers will primarily be transient,  
16 focusing in the direction of travel.

17 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route The Proposed Route will cross the Burnt River Canyon  
18 VRM Class II area in two locations between MP 170.1-171.5 (two towers) and 172.5-173.0 (one  
19 tower) (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-6).

20 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
21 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
22 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. This site is also  
23 located >10 miles from forested portions of the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake  
24 Alternative, and is therefore not analyzed for visual impacts from the cleared ROW. Similarly,  
25 because West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative  
26 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential  
27 visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

28 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route

## 29 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

### 30 Temporary and Short-Term Impacts:

31 Temporary impacts associated with construction related actions, including clearing of ROW and  
32 pulling and tensioning sites will include increase of construction-related vehicles and personnel.  
33 Such impact will result in temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Short-term impact low  
34 intensity impacts may result from clearing of the ROW through grassland areas. Impacts from  
35 ROW clearing will persist until grassland areas are restored (estimated at approximately 7 years  
36 following construction).

### 37 Long-Term Impacts:

- 38 • Duration: Impacts will primarily result from the proposed transmission towers and new  
39 and improved access roads, and therefore are considered long term.
- 40 • Magnitude of Impact: The Proposed Route will cross the Burnt River Canyon VRM Class  
41 II area in two locations between MP 170.1-171.5 (two towers) and 172.5-173.0 (one  
42 tower). Due to the steep, enclosed nature of the canyon and rugged terrain of VRM B3,  
43 visibility of the towers will primarily be limited to the eastern fifth of the resource. The  
44 Project views will be most visible where it crosses Burnt River Canyon Road, the primary

1 viewing platform in the area. The roadway will pass under the conductor between MP  
2 171.0 and 171.5. Towers 171/4 and 172/1, both lattice structures measuring 182.5 feet  
3 and 147.5 feet, respectively, will be visible on the ridgeline of the canyon. Where the  
4 towers are visible, they will produce high magnitude impacts resulting from up to strong  
5 contrast due to their size and proximity, geometric shape, smooth surface, and skylining.  
6 In these localized areas, the towers will appear inconsistent with the natural, rugged  
7 surroundings. New and improved access roads will be located along and near the  
8 Proposed Route in this area; however they are not expected to be visible from the  
9 roadway. Work areas and access roads may be visible from high elevation areas  
10 throughout the resource.

- 11 • Viewer Perception: High magnitude impacts will be of limited duration and episodic,  
12 primarily experienced from a moving vehicle. Viewer perception will be low.
- 13 • Resource Change: Where the Proposed Route crosses the Burnt River Canyon area,  
14 scenic quality will be reduced due to changes in value for cultural modification. Despite  
15 this localized reduction in scenic quality, the natural-appearing landscape character will  
16 be maintained for the majority of the VRM II area and overall scenic quality will remain  
17 moderate (Class B). Resource change will be medium.

## 18 Significance Determination

- 19 • Impact Intensity: Impacts will be of medium intensity, resulting from medium resource  
20 change and low viewer perception.
- 21 • Context: Visual impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II  
22 designation in the localized area at the northeast corner of the resource where the  
23 Proposed Route crosses the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area. Therefore, the location of  
24 the Proposed Route within the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area will preclude the ability  
25 of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in  
26 the applicable land management plan in that area. The Baker RMP (BLM 1989a) will be  
27 amended to change a portion of the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area from VRM Class II  
28 to VRM Class IV. Note that following this Plan amendment, this resource will no longer  
29 be considered a scenic resource, as ODOE does not consider VRM Class IV areas to be  
30 scenic resources.
- 31 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Medium  
32 intensity impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and  
33 are not the result of other past or present actions.
- 34 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to Burnt River Canyon VRM II area are considered  
35 **potentially significant**. It is anticipated that the BLM will amend the Baker RMP (BLM  
36 1989a) to change the designation in the Project area from VRM Class II to VRM Class IV  
37 and consequently the Project will be consistent with the management direction for the  
38 Burnt River Canyon, and Project impacts will be **less than significant**.

## 39 Brownlee Reservoir West

40 The Brownlee Reservoir West area (Map ID: VRM B7) includes four parcels of BLM-  
41 administered lands totaling over 4,200 acres located west of and directly adjacent to Brownlee  
42 Reservoir, northeast of Huntington in southeastern Baker County.

43 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The area managed per VRM Class II extends for more  
44 than 7 miles from north to south and is from about 1 to 3 miles in width (BLM 1989a). Per VRM

1 Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing  
2 landscape character is retained (BLM 1986).

3 **Existing Conditions.** The Snake River and Brownlee Reservoir and surrounding canyon are  
4 distinct natural features within the landscape. The uplands above the river are characterized by  
5 rolling terrain with undulating ridgelines and numerous small drainages that dissect the area.  
6 Views are primarily enclosed by the valley; however, on the highlands above the river, more  
7 expansive views of adjacent mountains are visible and the landscape appears large. Human  
8 development includes a bridge, paved and native surface roads, and the reservoir.

9 Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character, as both natural and human  
10 developments (primarily the reservoir) are expressed and exist in harmony. Scenic quality of the  
11 existing landscape for Brownlee Reservoir West is considered moderate (Class B).

12 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers primarily include recreators both on and off the  
13 water and are both transient and stationary.

14 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route will be located 2.1 miles from Brownlee Reservoir West  
15 at its closest point at the southern end of the resource. The Project will parallel an existing 138-  
16 kV transmission line in this area (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-7). Further north, the Proposed  
17 Route veers northwest, increasing its distance from the resource to beyond 10 miles.

18 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
19 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
20 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. This site is also  
21 located >10 miles from forested portions of the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake  
22 Alternative, and is therefore not analyzed for visual impacts from the cleared ROW. Similarly,  
23 because West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative  
24 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential  
25 visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

26 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered at this location.

## 27 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

### 28 Temporary and Short-Term Impacts:

29 Temporary impacts associated with construction related actions, including clearing of ROW and  
30 pulling and tensioning sites will include increase of construction-related vehicles and personnel.  
31 Such impact will result in temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Short-term impact low  
32 intensity impacts may result from clearing of the ROW through grassland areas. Impacts from  
33 ROW clearing will persist until grassland areas are restored (estimated at approximately 7 years  
34 following construction).

### 35 Long-Term Impacts

- 36 • Duration: Impacts will primarily result from transmission towers and are therefore  
37 considered long-term.
- 38 • Magnitude of Impact: Towers associated with the Proposed Route will only be visible  
39 from the higher elevations of Brownlee Reservoir West and will not be visible from the  
40 surface of the reservoir or along the shore. Where visible, visual impacts will be of  
41 medium magnitude, resulting from the partially skylined and consequent moderate  
42 contrast from the transmission towers. Towers will be visible for distances of 2 miles and  
43 beyond. In the northwest portion of the resource, the bare-earth viewshed indicates that

1 towers will be visible; however, they will be sited 4 miles or more from Brownlee  
2 Reservoir West, thereby resulting in weak visual contrast. The towers will appear  
3 subordinate at this location due to the large-scale landscape at this distance.

4 Access roads and other Project features will be greater than 2 miles from the resource  
5 and will appear consistent with the landscape, which includes numerous native surface  
6 roads.

- 7 • Viewer Perception: Viewers within Brownlee Reservoir West will primarily be engaging in  
8 reservoir-based recreation activities. As there is no visibility of the towers associated  
9 with the Proposed Route in the valley bottom, viewer perception will be low. Overall  
10 impacts will be of medium intensity, resulting from medium resource change and low  
11 viewer perception.
- 12 • Resource Change: The natural-appearing landscape character will be maintained, since  
13 the towers will introduce moderate contrast to a small portion of the resource such that  
14 the landscape will continue to predominantly express natural, not human, evolution. The  
15 adjacent scenery component score will be reduced; however, despite the small reduction  
16 in adjacent scenery, scenic quality will remain moderate (Class B) such that resource  
17 change will be medium. The resource change will result from the combined influence of  
18 the Project and existing 138-kV line, which collectively influence adjacent scenery of the  
19 resource.

## 20 **Significance Determination.**

- 21 • Impact Intensity: Impacts will be of medium intensity, resulting from low viewer  
22 perception and medium resource change.
- 23 • Context: Medium impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the  
24 scenic value for which it is protected in the Baker RMP (1989a). Visual values of  
25 Brownlee Reservoir West are managed per VRM Class II objectives. Because of the  
26 limited visibility of the Project from Brownlee Reservoir West, changes to the landscape  
27 within the boundary of the lands managed according to VRM Class II will be negligible.  
28 The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the scenic resource  
29 will be reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same. The Project will conform  
30 to VRM Class II objectives and consequently is consistent with BLM's management of  
31 visual values of this resource.
- 32 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
33 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
34 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including roads and an  
35 existing 138-kV line, which collectively influence adjacent scenery of the resource.
- 36 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to Brownlee Reservoir West will be **less than significant**.

## 37 **Oregon Trail ACEC**

38 The Oregon Trail ACEC (Map ID: SR B6) includes approximately 1,500 acres distributed among  
39 seven separate, widely scattered parcels located in Umatilla, Union, and Baker counties. One of  
40 the parcels, the Echo Meadows site, is located southwest of Stanfield in Umatilla County. The  
41 remaining six parcels range from a northerly location in the Blue Mountains near Meacham in  
42 Umatilla County to a southerly location near Weatherby in Baker County. The following parcels  
43 of the Oregon Trail ACEC are analyzed below, listed from north to south:

- 1 • Blue Mountain Parcel
- 2 • NHOTIC Parcel
- 3 • White Swan Parcel
- 4 • Straw Ranch Parcel 2
- 5 • Straw Ranch Parcel 1
- 6 • Powell Creek Parcel

7 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The lands in this ACEC are managed to preserve the  
8 historic resources and visual qualities of these areas. The Baker Resource Area RMP indicates  
9 that “[n]ew uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation  
10 will be excluded in a mile corridor” (BLM 1989a). These ACECs also include historic sites  
11 identified in the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan  
12 describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas  
13 where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which  
14 have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape  
15 encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual  
16 sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the  
17 historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

18 The individual parcels within the analysis area and the potential visual effects of the proposed  
19 transmission line on each parcel are described below, starting with the northern-most and  
20 proceeding south.

### 21 **Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel**

22 The Blue Mountain parcel (Map ID: SR-B6) is located in the Blue Mountains, on the northeast  
23 side of I-84 about 12 miles northwest of La Grande in Umatilla County. The parcel measures 80  
24 acres and abuts the Wallowa-Whitman NF. The parcel is accessed via Forest Road 308.

25 **Existing Conditions.** The resource is located on a forested ridge east of California Gulch. The  
26 terrain ranges from rolling mountains to highlands, resulting in angles and curved and  
27 converging lines. The terrain is densely covered with mature evergreens; colors are primarily  
28 dark greens, and textures are soft. Views are enclosed due to vegetation. The Oregon Trail runs  
29 through the resource. Human development is limited to forest roads. The landscape character is  
30 natural appearing. Scenic quality of the existing landscape is considered medium (Class B).

31 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreation facilities  
32 and are restricted to those traveling along Forest Road 308 and occasional visitors of the  
33 Oregon Trail. Viewers are considered transient to stationary.

34 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located 0.9 mile to the southwest of the Blue  
35 Mountain parcel at its closest point (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-8).

36 The Blue Mountain Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
37 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
38 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

39 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
40 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
41 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
42 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
43 cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

1 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered at this location.

2 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

3 Temporary and Short-Term Impacts:

4 Temporary impacts associated with construction related actions, including clearing of ROW and  
5 pulling and tensioning sites will include increase of construction-related vehicles and personnel.  
6 Such impact will result in temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Impacts from  
7 vegetation clearing will persist until forested areas are restored; consequently, these impacts  
8 are discussed under long-term impacts.

9 Long-Term Impacts:

- 10 • Magnitude: Existing coniferous vegetation on and around the Blue Mountain parcel will  
11 screen or block many of the potential outward views from this site. In addition, a ridge to  
12 the immediate west of the Blue Mountain parcel and coniferous trees on the west side of  
13 I-84 will partially or entirely screen potential views of the proposed transmission line. The  
14 cleared ROW will not be visible. The Project will introduce weak visual contrast to the  
15 landscape and appear subordinate. Consequently, impacts will be of low magnitude.
- 16 • Viewer Perception: Viewer perception will be low, as views of the Project will primarily be  
17 experienced from a neutral or superior vantage point and will be predominantly  
18 intermittent due to the vegetation that will block the towers from view throughout the  
19 ACEC.
- 20 • Resource Change: Due to limited visibility, there will be no change to the scenic quality  
21 component scores. The overall scenic quality will remain medium (Class B) and the  
22 natural appearing landscape will be maintained. Resource change will be low.

23 **Significance Determination**

- 24 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
25 perception.
- 26 • Context: Visual quality of the Blue Mountain parcel will be maintained and no new uses  
27 are proposed within the boundary of the Blue Mountain parcel that will reduce visual  
28 quality will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Consequently, the Project will  
29 be consistent with the management direction provided in BLM (1989b) and will not affect  
30 the ability of the resource to persist as designated or recognized in this management  
31 plan.
- 32 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The  
33 landscape character and quality of the resource will be maintained; however low  
34 intensity impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and  
35 are not the result of other past or present actions.
- 36 • Conclusion: Impacts to the Blue Mountain parcel will be **less than significant**.

37 **Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel**

38 The NHOTIC ACEC parcel is located on the north side of OR 86, approximately 4 miles  
39 northeast of Baker City (Map ID: SR-B6). The NHOTIC parcel is one of the largest of the  
40 Oregon Trail ACEC parcels, measuring 507 acres (BLM 1989b), and is characterized by high  
41 recreational use (BLM 2011b). Facilities at the site include the main NHOTIC building, with  
42 exhibit galleries, a theater and a gift shop; outdoor exhibits, including a pioneer wagon



1 encampment, a replica stamp mill, and an historic gold mine; picnic facilities; and 4 miles of  
2 interpretive trails, including a trail to a mile-long stretch of Oregon Trail ruts (BLM 1989b). BLM  
3 (2011b) reported over 66,000 visitors to the NHOTIC site in 2009.

4 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The NHOTIC parcel is managed per VRM Class II  
5 objectives, requiring that the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing  
6 landscape character is retained (BLM 1989b).

7 **Existing Conditions.** The landscape to the east and southeast of the NHOTIC parcel consists  
8 of the open terrain of the Virtue Flat area, with flat to gently rolling terrain in the foreground that  
9 subtly transitions to steeper terrain in the middleground. These areas have a relatively even  
10 cover of sagebrush and grassy vegetation. The view to the southeast is dominated by Big  
11 Lookout Mountain and similar mountainous terrain, which becomes the major focal point in the  
12 background of the view. Views to the northeast from the NHOTIC parcel include the rolling  
13 terrain of a small valley that transitions to a steeper, low-relief ridge in the middleground. Views  
14 to the west include the Elkhorn Mountains, a major landform focal to the view, and the  
15 agricultural development within the Baker Valley. Colors in the landscape primarily consist of  
16 varying shades of browns and tans in the valley (based on the time of year), and the gray/blue  
17 hues of the distant mountains. Images of existing conditions are provided in Attachment R-4.

18 Modifications to the natural landscape character in the foreground include portions of the  
19 NHOTIC trail system, several light fixtures in the parking area, and the Lode Mine building on  
20 the NHOTIC property. The NHOTIC Trail system includes a combination of difficulty levels:  
21 Level 1 (Easy; Barrier-free access), Level 2 (Moderate; Barrier-free access) and Level 3  
22 (Difficult). The paved surfaces of Level 1 and 2 Trails at the NHOTIC are visible in the  
23 foreground from the Visitor Center and Amphitheater. OR 86 is evident beyond the NHOTIC  
24 property, particularly from the trail system to the east. OR 86 is evident by its dark color and  
25 smooth texture relative to the surrounding landscape and by the consistent movement of  
26 automobiles.

27 An existing 230-kV transmission line is located to the west. This feature is increasingly visible as  
28 one approaches the western boundary of the NHOTIC parcel. Agricultural and residential  
29 development within the Baker Valley to the west is also visible from the NHOTIC parcel.

30 The landscape character is cultural. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for Oregon Trail  
31 ACEC NHOTIC parcel is considered medium (Class B).

32 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups include recreators and tourists visiting the  
33 recreational facilities at the ACEC. The NHOTIC is located on the top of Flagstaff Hill and has  
34 extensive background views to the west across Baker Valley to the Blue Mountains and to the  
35 southeast across Virtue Flat. A trail network within the NHOTIC parcel provides visitor access to  
36 areas within the ACEC. Viewer experience within the parcel varies. Panorama Point is a lookout  
37 established outside of the NHOTIC parcel but included as a recreation opportunity within the  
38 NHOTIC. This lookout directs view to the west across the valley. Viewers hiking along trails will  
39 experience views in various directions depending on their direction of travel, including views  
40 east toward Baker Valley and the Proposed Route. These views will be from a superior vantage  
41 point where the Proposed Route will be visible in the foreground or middleground distance zone,  
42 depending on location within the ACEC. Viewers could be both transient and stationary.

43 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located within a mile of the NHOTIC main building  
44 and within 0.02 mile of the western boundary of the NHOTIC parcel (Attachment R-3, Figure  
45 R-3-9). KOPs 5-25c, 5-25d, and 5-25e have views oriented toward the Project; simulated views  
46 from these locations are contained in Appendix R-4. Improvements to existing roads located

1 approximately 0.02 mile directly north and west of the western boundary of NHOTIC Parcel will  
2 be made, which will also be visible. A multi-use site is located approximately 3 miles southwest  
3 of the NHOTIC parcel. Because infrastructure related to Baker City and Interstate 84 are located  
4 between the NHOTIC and the multi-use site, this Project feature will not be discernable from the  
5 NHOTIC and is not analyzed further.

6 The NHOTIC Parcel is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of  
7 both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
8 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

9 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
10 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
11 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
12 these Alternative Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
13 resulting from a cleared ROW.

14 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

#### 15 **Mitigation Considered.**

16 In evaluating various alternatives for Project siting, IPC concluded that potentially significant  
17 visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the NHOTIC could result. To address  
18 potential impacts, IPC analyzed three design options aimed at reducing adverse impact to less  
19 than significant: (1) applying a natina finish to the lattice structure; (2) using an H-frame  
20 structure with galvanized finish; or (3) using an H-frame structure with a natina finish. IPC  
21 incorporated Option 3 into its revised Project design as planning for the final indicative design  
22 for the Project progressed. The final indicative layout sites the Proposed Route to the east of the  
23 active agriculture area, adjacent to the NHOTIC boundary. Because of the proximity of the  
24 Project to the NHOTIC, IPC further refined their mitigation and design strategy by proposing to  
25 use shorter stature H-Frame structures ranging in height from 100 feet to 129 feet for towers  
26 located directly to the north and west of the NHOTIC. The proposed finish is weathered steel.  
27 The analysis presented in this document addresses the Project taking into account this  
28 mitigation. Photosimulations of mitigated structures are provided in Attachment R-4.

#### 29 **Visual Impact Assessment**

30 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Construction-related actions will be visible to the west,  
31 including pulling and tensioning sites and construction of new primitive roads and a small (<0.05  
32 mile) segment of new, bladed road. An improved road and pulling and tensioning sites will be  
33 located to the west. Construction-related actions will be of high magnitude, resulting from the  
34 strong visual contrast in line and texture of these features and close proximity in which they are  
35 viewed. Additional visual contrast will result from the increase in construction vehicles and  
36 personnel and related increase in activity. Viewers situated within the NHOTIC parcel will  
37 experience construction-related impacts for a prolonged period from viewpoints, and transiently  
38 from trails. Impacts will be temporary to short-term, lasting for the duration of construction and  
39 rehabilitation of the site (approximately 7 years for grassland and agriculture). Because short-  
40 term impacts are not considered significant, construction-related actions are not considered  
41 further in this analysis.

#### 42 Long-Term Impacts:

- 43 • Magnitude of Impact: The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will  
44 be the primary source of visual contrast experienced from the NHOTIC parcel, primarily  
45 due to their scale and proximity. The Baker Valley and mountainous landscape beyond

1 will provide a backdrop for the Project and will appear co-dominant with the Proposed  
2 Route and other past human developments (including the existing 230-kV transmission  
3 line). The overall medium magnitude impact will vary depending on viewers' locations  
4 throughout the NHOTIC parcel. Viewers within the western portion of the ACEC (near  
5 Panorama Point [KOP 5-25c] and level 2 and 3 trails) will be within 0.02 mile of the  
6 Proposed Route, where the towers will introduce moderate contrast and appear co-  
7 dominant with OR 86 to the south and the existing 230-kV line and natural features of  
8 Baker Valley and the Blue Mountains to the west.

- 9 • Resource Change: The Project will introduce medium magnitude impacts to the entire  
10 ACEC. Because no portion of the Project will be located within the NHOTIC parcel, the  
11 changes to scenic quality within the parcel will result from impacts to the adjacent  
12 scenery of this resource. The Blue Mountains and Baker Valley situated to the west of  
13 the NHOTIC parcel will continue to enhance the visual quality of the parcel; however,  
14 due to the co-dominating 500-kV transmission lines that will be placed between the  
15 NHOTIC parcel and the Blue Mountains, this positive influence will be reduced. Despite  
16 the change to adjacent scenery, the scenic quality of the NHOTIC parcel of the Oregon  
17 Trail ACEC will remain at Class B. Resource change will be medium.
- 18 • Viewer Perception: Views of the Project will be experienced from an elevated vantage  
19 point, where views across the top of the transmission towers could be sustained. As  
20 recreational viewer experience the NHOTIC Parcel from various trails, viewpoints,  
21 interpretive sites, and the visitor center, views will be predominantly peripheral or  
22 intermittent. Because these amenities are distributed throughout the parcel, viewer  
23 exposure to the Project will be variable and medium at most. The number of towers  
24 visible will also vary depending on viewer position within the ACEC. Fewer towers will be  
25 visible from locations near the main NHOTIC building and Level 1 (Easy) trails, situated  
26 west of the Visitor Center (KOPs 5-25d and 5-25e) than from the Level 2 and 3 trails  
27 situated near the western boundary of the ACEC because of rolling terrain throughout  
28 the NHOTIC parcel. Viewer perception will be medium.

## 29 Significance Determination

- 30 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be medium, resulting from medium resource  
31 change and medium viewer perception.
- 32 • Context: The NHOTIC parcel was designated to preserve the unique historic resource  
33 and visual qualities (BLM 1989b). Because of this management direction the NHOTIC  
34 parcel is considered an important scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080. Medium  
35 intensity impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value  
36 for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). The Oregon Trail  
37 ACEC was designated to preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon Trail, and  
38 visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic  
39 resources within the geographic boundary of this parcel are maintained and no  
40 development occurs within a quarter mile of the Oregon Trail within the ACEC, the  
41 resource values for which the NHOTIC parcel was designated to protect will persist. It is  
42 also understood that, per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC  
43 serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be  
44 accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are  
45 considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1989a). To address this provision, IPC has  
46 included Project design measures to reduce the intensity of impacts to visual resources  
47 by using low stature H-frame structures ranging in height from 100 feet to 129 feet.

- 1 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
2 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
3 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, primarily the existing 230-kV  
4 line and OR 86. The reduction in scenic quality score results primarily from the reduction  
5 in value of the “Adjacent Scenery” key factor. This reduction will not alter the overall  
6 scenic quality of the NHOTIC parcel. Landscape character will remain “cultural,” and  
7 consistent with the influences of other past or present actions within and surrounding the  
8 NHOTIC parcel.
- 9 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, taking into  
10 account mitigation, will be **less than significant**.

### 11 **Oregon Trail ACEC – White Swan Parcel**

12 The White Swan parcel of the ACEC is located 5 to 6 miles southeast of NHOTIC and south of  
13 the Virtue Flat area in Baker County (Map ID: SR-B6). The parcel includes approximately 580 to  
14 600 acres extending for nearly 2 miles along White Swan Road (BLM 2011b). This parcel is  
15 approximately 2.9 miles northeast of the Proposed Route.

16 **Screening:** Based on the results of the basic viewshed model (Attachment R-6), the Project will  
17 not be visible from the White Swan Parcel. This conclusion also applies to the West of Bombing  
18 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, Morgan Lake  
19 Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative, and the cleared ROW of the Proposed Route  
20 and the Morgan Lake Alternative.

21 **Conclusion:** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility and distance  
22 from the Proposed Route, IPC concludes that impacts to the White Swan Parcel will be **less**  
23 **than significant**. Additionally, the Project will comply with VRM II management objectives, as  
24 the Proposed Route does not cross this resource.

### 25 **Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch 2 Parcel**

26 Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within the Baker  
27 Resource Management Area. The ACEC is located approximately 2 miles northeast of Pleasant  
28 Valley and measures approximately 230 to 240 acres (Map ID: SR-B6). The ACEC is not  
29 accessible from existing roads, nor is it crossed by existing transmission lines. There are no  
30 recreational facilities within the Straw Ranch Parcel 2.

31 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is managed per VRM Class  
32 II objectives, requiring that the change in landscape character should be low such that the  
33 existing landscape character is retained (BLM 1989a).

34 **Existing Conditions.** The natural landscape is characterized by flat to rolling terrain with some  
35 rock outcroppings, including some agricultural and grazing lands. The Blue Mountains are  
36 present to the west and Wallowa Mountains to the east. The landscape is undeveloped in this  
37 area, and the landscape character is natural appearing, despite existing gravel-surfaced roads  
38 and 69- and 138-kV transmission lines located approximately 1 mile to the southwest. Views to  
39 the southwest and south toward the transmission lines are primarily blocked by a ridgeline such  
40 that their visual prominence in the landscape is low. Scenic quality is considered low (Class C).

41 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are lacking due to the lack of recreational  
42 development and access within Straw Ranch Parcel 2 and will be limited to local residents and  
43 individuals using local roads in the area. The moderately sized hills in the area limit views from  
44 the ACEC to the foreground and middleground distance zones. Viewers are classified as  
45 primarily transient.

1 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located 1.1 miles to the south of Straw Ranch Parcel  
2 2 (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-10).

3 The Straw Ranch 2 Parcel is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
4 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
5 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

6 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
7 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
8 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
9 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
10 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
11 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

12 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

13 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

#### 14 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

15 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result from clearing of the  
16 ROW, and development of small segments of new primitive and bladed roads, and installation  
17 of Project facilities. Temporary construction-related actions will be of low-medium magnitude,  
18 resulting from the weak to moderate visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and  
19 related increase in activity. Low magnitude short-term impact will result from vegetation clearing  
20 in the ROW. Cleared areas are expected to create little to no visual contrast due to screening of  
21 the ground plain by existing topography, or distance. Impacts from ROW clearing are  
22 considered short-term, as restoration will take up to 10 years.

#### 23 Long-Term Impacts

- 24 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and  
25 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 26 • Magnitude of Impact: Potential views to the southwest and south towards the  
27 transmission towers located within the Proposed Route will be primarily blocked by a  
28 ridgeline approximately 0.4 mile southwest of the ACEC. Views to the west and  
29 northwest toward the Proposed Route will not be blocked; however, the Proposed Route  
30 will be located 4 miles or more from the ACEC. Generally, visibility of the Project will be  
31 higher from elevated areas and lower from the lower elevation valleys within the ACEC.  
32 Existing roads with potential viewers exist both in high and low elevation areas within the  
33 ACEC.

34 Where visible, the large, geometrical form and smooth texture of the transmission towers  
35 will contrast against the fine to medium rolling and rounded hills. The light, reflective  
36 color will also contrast against the light to medium brown vegetation and rock outcrops.  
37 However, because the towers will be primarily blocked (with only the tops of the towers  
38 visible), the structures are expected to contrast at a weak level against the existing  
39 landscape. Though unobstructed views of the towers will occur, the structures will be  
40 located at a distance of 4 miles or more. The distance of the towers from the resource  
41 will reduce visual contrast to a weak level. Overall magnitude of visual impacts will be  
42 low.

- 1 • Viewer Perception: Viewer perception will be low as views of the Project will primarily be  
2 intermittent due to visual obstructions. Views of the Project will be experienced from a  
3 neutral vantage point.
- 4 • Resource Change: Where the Proposed Route will be visible, it will generally follow the  
5 alignment of existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines and appear consistent with  
6 those structures. Views of the Project will primarily be experienced from a neutral  
7 vantage point and will be intermittent due to the visual obstructions. Therefore, the  
8 adjacent scenery will continue to enhance the overall scenic quality of Straw Ranch  
9 Parcel 2. The landscape will retain its natural-appearing landscape character, as  
10 structures associated with the existing and proposed transmission corridors will be  
11 subordinate to the surrounding large-scale landscape. Scenic quality will remain low  
12 (Class C). Resource change will be low.

### 13 **Significance Determination**

- 14 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
15 perception.
- 16 • Context: Overall, low intensity impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to  
17 provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the BLM Baker  
18 RMP (BLM 1989a). The ACEC was designated to preserve the unique historic resource,  
19 the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is  
20 understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of this ACEC are  
21 maintained, the resource values for which this ACEC was designated to protect will  
22 persist. Therefore, although low intensity impacts to visual resources within this ACEC  
23 will be affected, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the ACEC to provide the  
24 scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).
- 25 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
26 quality of the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 under operational conditions is the result of the  
27 combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions, primarily the  
28 existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines. These modifications in combination all  
29 appear subordinate to the natural-appearing landscape of the resource.
- 30 • Conclusion: Impacts to Straw Ranch Parcel 2 will be **less than significant**.

### 31 **Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch 1 Parcel (Hill Creek Road)**

32 The Straw Ranch Parcel 1 is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within the Baker  
33 Resource Management Area and is located about 2.2 miles southeast of Pleasant Valley on the  
34 north side of I-84 (Map ID: SR-B6). The parcel measures approximately 160 acres and has  
35 unimproved road access to the south end of the parcel (BLM 2011b). There are no recreation  
36 facilities within the Straw Ranch Parcel 1.

37 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The ACEC is managed per VRM Class II objectives,  
38 requiring that the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape  
39 character is retained (BLM 1989a).

40 **Existing Conditions.** The natural landscape is characterized by flat to rolling terrain with some  
41 rock outcroppings, including some agricultural and grazing lands. Vegetation typically consists  
42 of low grasses and sagebrush that appear green, grey, and brown. The Blue Mountains are  
43 present to the west and Wallowa Mountains to the east. Existing development visible from the  
44 Straw Ranch ACEC Parcel 1 includes I-84 immediately to the south, a gravel quarry to the

1 northwest, scattered residential and ranching development, gravel surface roads, and existing  
2 69-kV and 138-kV transmission lines that cross through the southern half of the ACEC parcel in  
3 an east to west direction. The natural landscape features are co-dominant with the  
4 development, and expansive views across the landscape in all directions exist providing some  
5 evidence of the historic landscape of the Oregon Trail. The landscape has a cultural landscape  
6 character. Scenic quality is considered low (Class C).

7 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreational  
8 development within the ACEC. Primary viewers are assumed to be local residents, driving  
9 through or near the ACEC, and occasional visitors to the Oregon Trail remnants. The  
10 moderately sized hills in the area limit views from the ACEC to the foreground and  
11 middleground distance zones. Viewers are considered transient.

12 **Project Location.** The Project will be located within the foreground distance zone. The  
13 Proposed Route will pass the Straw Ranch ACEC Parcel 1 approximately 0.1 mile to the north  
14 (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-11). New primitive and graded roads associated with the Proposed  
15 Route will also be present immediately north of and approximately 0.4 mile east of the ACEC.

16 The Straw Ranch 1 Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
17 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
18 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

19 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
20 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
21 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
22 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
23 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
24 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

25 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

26 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

### 27 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

28 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result from clearing of the  
29 ROW, and development of small segments of new primitive and bladed roads, and installation  
30 of Project facilities. Temporary construction-related actions will be of high magnitude, resulting  
31 from strong visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and related increase in  
32 activity. Medium magnitude short-term impact will result from vegetation clearing in the ROW.  
33 Cleared areas are expected to create little to no visual contrast due to screening of the ground  
34 plain by existing topography, or distance. Impacts from ROW clearing are considered short-term,  
35 as restoration will take up to 10 years.

### 36 Long-Term Impacts:

- 37
- 38 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and  
therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
  - 39 • Magnitude of Impact: The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will  
40 be the primary source of visual contrast experienced from the ACEC, primarily due to  
41 their size, proximity, and the number of towers that will be visible (Attachment R-6b). The  
42 large, geometrical form and smooth texture will contrast against the fine to medium  
43 rolling, rounded hills and sinuous drainages. The light, reflective color will also contrast  
44 against the light to medium brown vegetation and outcrops. The moderately rolling

1 topography behind the towers will provide some backdrop, although portions of some  
2 towers will still be skylined. The Project access roads, though visible, will appear  
3 consistent with the surrounding landscape due to the numerous gravel roads that  
4 already exist within and near the ACEC.

5 The Project will create moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape and will  
6 appear co-dominant with I-84 to the southwest and the existing transmission line  
7 crossing through the ACEC. This medium intensity impact will be experienced  
8 throughout the entire ACEC.

- 9 • Viewer Perception: Viewer perception will be medium, as views of the Project will be  
10 equally head-on and peripheral (depending on the viewer's location and viewing  
11 direction within the ACEC) and experienced generally from a neutral vantage point.
- 12 • Resource Change: The proposed towers will reduce the quality of the scenery  
13 immediately adjacent to the ACEC, but will be consistent with the existing landscape  
14 modification, including the transmission lines that cross the ACEC. Development and  
15 natural landscape features will remain co-dominant aspects of the landscape such that  
16 the cultural landscape character will be maintained and the existing scenic quality of the  
17 ACEC will not be altered. Overall resource change will be medium.

## 18 **Significance Determination**

- 19 • Impact Intensity: Medium intensity impacts will result from medium viewer perception  
20 and medium resource change.
- 21 • Context: Overall, medium intensity impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to  
22 provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the BLM Baker  
23 RMP (BLM 1989a). The ACEC was designated to preserve the unique historic resource,  
24 the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is  
25 understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of this ACEC are  
26 maintained, the resource values for which this ACEC was designated to protect will  
27 persist. Therefore, although medium intensity impacts to visual resources within this  
28 ACEC will be affected, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the ACEC to provide  
29 the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).
- 30 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
31 quality of Straw Ranch Parcel 1 under operational conditions is the result of the  
32 combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including I-84, a  
33 gravel quarry, scattered residential and ranching development, gravel surface roads, and  
34 existing 69-kV and 138-kV that collectively contribute to the cultural landscape character  
35 of the resource.
- 36 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 of the Oregon Trail ACEC will  
37 be **less than significant**.

## 38 **Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel**

39 The Powell Creek parcel (Map ID: SR B6) is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within  
40 the Baker Resource Management Area and is located slightly east of I-84 about 0.6 mile  
41 southeast of Dixie and 5 miles north of Lime. This parcel includes approximately 70 acres and  
42 has direct access via Chimney Creek Road (BLM 2011b). There are no recreation facilities  
43 within the Powell Creek parcel.



1 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Powell Creek parcel is managed per VRM Class II  
2 objectives, requiring that the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing  
3 landscape character is retained (BLM 1989a).

4 **Existing Conditions.** The Powell Creek parcel sits slightly above I-84 and the Burnt River,  
5 which are situated at the bottom of a sinuous valley with moderate to steep sidewalls. Colors  
6 are primarily medium to dark brown, tan, and gray. Vegetation is primarily low-growing  
7 sagebrush steppe on the highlands with some surrounding agricultural areas. Existing  
8 development includes I-84 and existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines located  
9 approximately 0.3 mile to the west of the Powell Creek parcel, and existing gravel-surfaced  
10 roads that travel through the parcel and along the western boundary. This existing development  
11 competes for visual attention with the natural features of the landscape and is co-dominant. The  
12 landscape has a cultural landscape character and provides some evidence of the historic  
13 landscape of the Oregon Trail. Lasting impressions of the landscape include both human  
14 development and natural features. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Oregon Trail  
15 ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel is considered low (Class C).

16 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreational  
17 development within the Powell Creek parcel. Visitors are assumed to be local residents driving  
18 through the area and occasional visitors of the Oregon Trail remnants. The moderately sized  
19 hills in the area limit views from the ACEC to the foreground and middleground distance zones.

20 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located approximately 1.2 miles from the Powell  
21 Creek parcel (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-12).

22 The Powell Creek Parcel is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
23 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
24 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

25 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
26 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
27 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
28 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
29 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
30 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

31 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

32 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

### 33 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

34 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result from clearing of the  
35 ROW and development of an improved roadway located southwest of the parcel. The roadway  
36 will become more apparent on the landscape as a result of this change, with horizontal and  
37 diagonal lines contrasting at a moderate level against the hillslope. An approximately 735-acre  
38 work area will be located to the southwest along Rye Valley Road and will introduce strong  
39 visual contrast during the temporary construction period.

40 Overall temporary construction-related actions will be of medium magnitude, resulting from the  
41 moderate visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel and related increase in activity.  
42 Construction of pulling and tensioning sites will be of medium to high magnitude to the  
43 southwest, as these areas are not blocked by topography

## 1 Long-Term Impacts:

- 2 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and  
3 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 4 • Magnitude of Impact: Under operational conditions, the skylined towers 186/2, 186/3,  
5 and 186/4 will appear prominent on the ridgeline, as these structures support the span of  
6 the conductor across Rye Valley Lane. Views of the Project will be equally head-on and  
7 peripheral, depending on the viewer's location and viewing direction from within the  
8 Powell Creek Parcel, and will be experienced from an inferior vantage point. The  
9 Proposed Route introduces a medium magnitude impact, as skylined structures will  
10 attract attention and appear co-dominant with existing development.
- 11 • Viewer Perception: Viewer perception will be medium. Views of the Project will be  
12 equally head-on and peripheral, depending on the viewer's location and viewing  
13 direction in the Powell Creek Parcel, and will be experienced from an inferior vantage  
14 point.
- 15 • Resource Change: The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will  
16 lower the quality of the Powell Creek Parcel's adjacent scenery. However, this change  
17 will only result in a small change to the scenic quality scoring and the overall scenic  
18 quality will not change. The cultural landscape character will be maintained. Therefore,  
19 resource change will be medium.

## 20 **Significance Determination**

- 21 • Impact Intensity: Overall impact intensity will be medium based on medium resource  
22 change and medium viewer perception.
- 23 • Context: The Powell Creek Parcel was designated to preserve the unique historic  
24 resource, the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore,  
25 although medium intensity impacts to visual resources within this Powell Creek Parcel  
26 will be affected, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the Powell Creek Parcel to  
27 provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM  
28 1989a).
- 29 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
30 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
31 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including I-84 located  
32 approximately 0.5 mile to the west, an existing 138-kV line located just west of I-84, and  
33 an existing 69-kV transmission line located just east of I-84.
- 34 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to the Powell Creek parcel will be **less than significant**.

## 35 **Powder River Canyon Wild and Scenic River and ACEC**

36 The Powder River flows through a rugged canyon with scenic geologic formations. Recreation  
37 opportunities include boating in the spring, fishing, and hunting, although access is limited (BLM  
38 1994) (Map ID: SR B7). The Powder River Canyon ACEC is considered an important recreation  
39 resource because of its designation, good opportunities for fishing and hunting, and  
40 irreplaceable high scenic quality of the river canyon.

41 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Powder River is designated as a scenic river for  
42 11.7 miles, covering 2,385 acres, from the Thief Valley Dam to Oregon Highway 203 within the  
43 BLM Vale District (BLM 1989a; BLM 1994). Scenery is identified as an Outstanding Remarkable

1 Value. Outstanding Remarkable Values of the WSR are managed per the Powder River Final  
2 Management Plan/Environmental Assessment (BLM 1994). The WSR segment is located within  
3 the Powder River Canyon ACEC. The ACEC measures approximately 5,880 acres. Off-road  
4 vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails.

5 **Existing Conditions.** The WSR segment of the Powder River flows through a rugged, incised  
6 canyon with steep walls, jagged outcrops, and geologic formations recognized for their  
7 outstanding scenic quality. The Powder River meanders through the bottom of the canyon in a  
8 sinuous pattern. Vegetation includes medium-height riparian vegetation at the valley floor.  
9 Colors include browns and black from basalt outcrops, and browns, tans, and greens from  
10 vegetation. Views from within the canyon are enclosed. The portion of the ACEC above the  
11 canyon appears flat to gently rolling with low-growing grass and shrub vegetation that stipples  
12 the landscape. Colors are generally muted tones of tans, greens, and greys. Human  
13 development includes dirt roads within the ACEC and an existing 230-kV transmission line  
14 visible to the. Wind turbines are visible in the distance outside of the ACEC boundary. Although  
15 there is existing development within and visible from the ACEC, the landscape character is  
16 naturally appearing. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Powder River Canyon  
17 ACEC is considered medium (Class B).

18 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the  
19 canyon and be engaged in hunting, fishing, or floating the river, although some off-highway  
20 vehicle (OHV) use may occur in the uplands. Viewers within the canyon are limited by difficult  
21 access.

22 **Project Location.** The Project is located approximately 1.4 miles from the upland border of the  
23 Powder River Canyon ACEC (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-13).

24 The Powder River Canyon ACEC and WSR is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of  
25 the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore  
26 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

27 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
28 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
29 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
30 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
31 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
32 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

33 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

34 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

### 35 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

36 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result from the development  
37 of small segments of improved roads, new primitive and bladed roads, and installation of Project  
38 facilities. Overall temporary construction-related actions will be of medium magnitude, resulting  
39 from the moderate visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and related increase  
40 in activity.

### 41 Long-Term Impacts:

- 42 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
43 will be long-term, extending for the life of the project.

- 1 • Magnitude of Impact: Viewshed modeling indicates that the Project will not be visible  
2 within the canyon; therefore, no impacts to the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR  
3 will result, and scenic values of that portion of the ACEC will be maintained (Attachment  
4 R-6a).

5 In the uplands, the proposed 500-kV towers will be visible at a minimum distance of  
6 approximately 1.4 miles. These towers will be placed parallel to the existing 230-kV  
7 transmission line and will be consistent with their form, line, color, and texture. Some  
8 towers will be skylined such that visual contrast will be moderate, and the towers will  
9 appear co-dominant with the existing transmission line. However, the majority of the  
10 views from the upland portion of the ACEC will be experienced at distances over 2 miles  
11 from the towers, where visual contrast will attenuate to a moderate to weak level. Overall  
12 magnitude of visual impacts is considered medium.

- 13 • Viewer Perception: Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the canyon  
14 where the Project will not be visible. Viewers could have views of the Proposed Route  
15 when accessing the river or driving roadway or OHVs; however, these views will be  
16 peripheral and intermittent and experienced from a neutral vantage point. Therefore,  
17 viewer perception will be low

- 18 • Resource Change: The Project will not affect the scenery ORV of the Powder River  
19 WSR. The Project will lower the contribution of adjacent scenery to scenic quality of the  
20 upland portion of the ACEC. However, adjacent scenery has a limited effect on the  
21 quality of the Powder River Canyon ACEC landscape, so this change will only result in a  
22 small change to the scenic quality score, and the overall scenic quality class will not  
23 change. Landscape will continue to appear primarily natural. Therefore, resource change  
24 will be medium.

## 25 Significance Determination

- 26 • Impact Intensity: Overall impact intensity will be medium based on low viewer perception  
27 and medium resource change.

- 28 • Context: The ACEC was designated to preserve scenic values of the Powder River  
29 Canyon. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic  
30 boundary of this ACEC are maintained, the resource values for which this ACEC was  
31 designated to protect will persist. Additionally, recreation activities will be focused near  
32 the bottom of the canyon where the Project will not be visible; therefore, visual impacts  
33 will not disrupt recreation activities for which the ACEC is also managed to protect. The  
34 Project will not impact the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR.

- 35 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
36 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
37 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including the existing 230-kV  
38 transmission line which both will appear subordinate to the natural appearing landscape  
39 character.

- 40 • Conclusion: Because the scenic quality of the ACEC and the WSR will be maintained in  
41 accordance with the resource designation and associated management objectives,  
42 medium intensity impacts will be **less than significant**.

1 3.3.2.6 *BLM, Malheur Resource Area*

2 **Birch Creek**

3 The Birch Creek ACEC (Map ID: VRM M1) includes 119 acres encompassing the Oregon  
4 National Historic Trail. It is located approximately 2 miles south of Farewell Bend, Oregon, west  
5 of I-84. This segment of the trail was historically used as a camping area on approach to the  
6 Snake River at Farewell Bend. Features at the site include a parking turnout, a wagon rut swale  
7 within a fenced enclosure, a short trail adjacent to the ruts, and an interpretive panel. The area  
8 around the ACEC is characterized by a mixture of privately owned rangeland and federal lands  
9 managed by the BLM. The ACEC parcel is bordered by private lands to the east, north, and  
10 west.

11 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The relevant and important values of the ACEC are  
12 historic and scenic. Per the SEORMP, the area will be managed as VRM Class II (BLM 2002).

13 **Existing Conditions.** The view to the west from the interpretive panel consists of gently rolling  
14 terrain in the foreground and middleground that subtly transitions to steeper terrain in the  
15 background. Alluvial fans and natural bowls are apparent in the background terrain. Colors in  
16 the landscape include light browns, tans, reds, grays, and blues. Lines in the landscape are  
17 undulating and horizontal with diagonal lines visible in the middleground and background. The  
18 dominant texture from the landform is smooth. Vegetation appears medium to coarse in the  
19 foreground to fine, uniform, and dotted in the foreground and middleground. Cultural  
20 modifications to the natural landscape consist of the Historic Oregon Trail, gravel-surfaced road,  
21 the interpretive site facilities, a residence, and a cell tower. An existing 138-kV line is located to  
22 the west; however, it is not visible from the interpretive area. The Birch Creek ACEC has a  
23 historic landscape character because of the historic Oregon Trail and relative lack of additional  
24 development. The overall scenic quality is considered low (Class C), due to the simplicity and  
25 uniformity of land form, colors and textures of the landscape.

26 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers include tourists and historic trail enthusiasts.  
27 Visitor numbers are limited due to remoteness and lack of recreational facilities. Viewers will  
28 concentrate at the interpretive panel (stationary) and along the Historic Oregon Trail (transient).

29 **Project Location.** The transmission line associated with the Proposed Route will be located 0.2  
30 mile northeast of the Birch Creek Parcel (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-14). The Proposed Route  
31 includes the rebuild of 1.1 miles of the existing Quarts to Weiser 138-kV transmission line and  
32 the siting of the Project transmission line within the existing ROW. Between MP 197.6 and MP  
33 198.8, the Proposed Route will be located in the existing IPC 138-kV transmission line ROW.  
34 The 138-kV transmission line will be rebuilt to the southwest of the Proposed Route in a new  
35 ROW.

36 The Birch Creek ACEC is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of  
37 both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
38 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

39 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
40 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
41 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
42 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
43 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
44 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

45 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

1 **Mitigation Considered.** In siting the Project at this location, IPC employed measures to reduce  
2 visibility from the ACEC parcel. To accomplish this goal, IPC sited the Project line as far north  
3 as feasible, and will use shorter stature H-frame structures on MP 198 and MP 199. The  
4 existing 138-kV line will be rebuilt to allow for siting of the proposed 500-kV line at this location.  
5 This structure type, combined with constructing towers at lower elevations than the ACEC, will  
6 maximize the proportion of the Project screened from view by existing topography.

## 7 **Visual Impact Assessment**

8 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result from the development  
9 of small segments of improved roads, new primitive and bladed roads, and installation of Project  
10 facilities. Overall temporary construction-related actions will be of high magnitude, resulting from  
11 the strong visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and related increase in  
12 activity. Short-term impacts will result in areas where vegetation clearing is required within the  
13 ROW (i.e., structure work areas). No pulling and tensioning sites will be visible from the Birch  
14 Creek ACEC, as they will be screened by topography.

## 15 Long-Term Impacts

- 16 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and  
17 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 18 • Magnitude of Impact: Towers located between MP 198 and MP 199 will use shorter  
19 stature H-frame structures ranging in height from 65 to 100 feet (see Figure R-3-14).  
20 This structure type, combined with constructing towers at lower elevations than the  
21 ACEC, will maximize the proportion of the Project screened from view by existing  
22 topography. Impacts are considered to be of low magnitude.
- 23 • Viewer Perception: Views from the interpretive panels and trail will primarily be directed  
24 to the northeast, north, and northwest toward the Proposed Route (head-on). Viewers  
25 walking along the trail will experience the landscape in its entirety, with 360-degree  
26 views extending across the basin. For these viewers, the Project will be experienced  
27 intermittently. Project features will be subordinate to the large scale and natural setting  
28 of the landscape. Therefore, viewer perception will be medium.
- 29 • Resource Change: Though visible, the transmission towers associated with the  
30 Proposed Route will not substantially lower the quality of the adjacent scenery outside  
31 the Birch Creek Parcel. The landscape character will remain historic due to the  
32 prominence of natural features in the viewshed. The overall scenic quality of the  
33 landscape will remain low (class C). Because the Project has been sited outside the  
34 Birch Creek Parcel, there will be no changes to the landscape within the boundary of the  
35 Birch Creek Parcel. The resource change will be medium.

## 36 **Significance Determination**

- 37 • Impact Intensity: Impacts will be of medium intensity based on medium levels of  
38 resource change and medium viewer perception.
- 39 • Context: The BLM maintains the visual values of lands they administer through their  
40 VRM System. Visual values of the Birch Creek Parcel are managed per VRM Class II  
41 objectives. Because the Project has been sited outside the Birch Creek Parcel, there will  
42 be no changes to the landscape within the boundary of the Birch Creek Parcel. The  
43 contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the Birch Creek Parcel  
44 will be slightly reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same. The Project will

1 conform to the VRM Class II objectives and consequently is consistent with BLM's  
2 management of the Birch Creek Parcel's visual qualities.

- 3 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Though  
4 evidence of cultural modification exists within the landscape, impacts disclosed in this  
5 assessment will primarily result from the Project and are not the result of other past or  
6 present actions.
- 7 • Conclusion: Because no specific management direction has been established for this  
8 scenic resource, and IPC's impacts are minimized, IPC has not found the Project to  
9 preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for which it is recognized. Visual  
10 impacts to the Birch Creek ACEC will be **less than significant**.

### 11 **Oregon Trail – Tub Mountain**

12 The Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel (Map ID: VRM M2) is a long,  
13 narrow geographic area located in northeastern Malheur County. The Tub Mountain Parcel  
14 includes approximately 5,900 acres of BLM-administered lands. The Tub Mountain parcel is  
15 situated between I-84 and U.S. Highway 26; the southern end of the Tub Mountain parcel is  
16 approximately 13 miles north of Vale and 9 miles east of the small community of Jamieson. The  
17 ACEC includes one interpretive site at Alkali Springs, which was the “nooning” spot for wagon  
18 trains leaving Vale (BLM 2002). The ACEC is remote and accessible only by local gravel roads.

19 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The relevant and important values of the ACEC are  
20 historic, cultural, and scenic. The scenic values of the Tub Mountain Parcel are associated with  
21 the integrity of the historical landscape. Because of this designation and management direction,  
22 scenery is considered a valued attribute of the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel. The  
23 ACEC is managed per VRM Class II objectives indicating the intent to “retain the existing  
24 character of the landscape” within the Tub Mountain Parcel. The level of change to the  
25 characteristic landscape should be low (BLM 1986).

26 **Existing Conditions.** The view to the northwest from the Tub Mountain Parcel consists of  
27 gently rolling terrain in the foreground and middleground that subtly transitions to steeper terrain  
28 in the background. Alluvial fans and natural bowls are apparent in the background terrain. The  
29 landscape is free of cultural modifications with the exception of a few gravel surfaced roads, the  
30 Alkali Springs interpretive site, and some evidence of grazing and OHV use. Old Oregon Trail  
31 Road travels north-south through the majority of the Tub Mountain Parcel and is a native-  
32 surfaced, two-track maintained by Malheur County that is roughly parallel to the Oregon Trail  
33 route. The landscape character is natural appearing. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for  
34 the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel is considered low (Class C).

35 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewer groups include local residents driving through or  
36 near the area and recreators such as OHV users or visitors to the Oregon Trail remnants and  
37 interpretive site. Viewers are limited by difficult access and lack of developed recreation  
38 facilities. Views within the Tub Mountain Parcel are enclosed and limited to the foreground and  
39 middleground from lower elevation spots; however, views experienced from higher elevations  
40 extend to the background distance zones throughout the Tub Mountain Parcel.

41 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route runs along the eastern and southern boundary of the  
42 ACEC at a distance of 0.5 mile at its closest point. The Proposed Route is approximately 1.5  
43 miles east of the Alkali Springs interpretive site (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-15).

1 The Tub Mountain parcel is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
2 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and is therefore impacts from this  
3 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

4 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
5 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
6 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
7 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
8 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
9 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

10 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

11 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation as considered for this resource.

## 12 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

13 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result primarily from the  
14 development of new bladed roads and installation of Project facilities. Overall temporary  
15 construction-related actions will be of medium magnitude, resulting from the medium visual  
16 contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and related increase in activity. Short-term  
17 impacts will result in areas where vegetation clearing is required within the ROW (i.e., structure  
18 work areas).

### 19 Long-Term Impacts:

- 20 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and  
21 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 22 • Magnitude of Impact: The transmission towers and conductors will be partially screened  
23 from view by rolling terrain in the foreground. New and improved access roads will be  
24 constructed along the Proposed Route. The transmission towers associated with the  
25 Proposed Route will be the primary source of visual contrast experienced from the  
26 ACEC, resulting in medium magnitude impacts due to their scale, form, and texture. The  
27 large, geometrical form and smooth texture will contrast against the fine to medium,  
28 rolling, rounded hills. The light, reflective color will also contrast against the light to  
29 medium brown vegetation and outcrops.
- 30 • Viewer Perception: Views of the Project will be experienced from a neutral vantage point  
31 and will primarily be peripheral and intermittent to viewers traveling along the along Old  
32 Oregon Trail Road or the Oregon Trail route due to topographic screening. Therefore,  
33 viewer perception will be low.
- 34 • Resource Change: Viewers from Alkali Springs (KOP 8-1) will have views of the  
35 transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route to the east that will be partially  
36 blocked by vegetation such that the Project will appear co-dominant with the landscape  
37 and produce moderate visual contrast. While traveling along Old Oregon Trail Road or  
38 the Oregon Trail route, the Proposed Route will be generally located to the east, and  
39 most towers will either not be visible or only the top portions will be visible. Some towers  
40 will be skylined and some backdropped depending on location within the Tub Mountain  
41 Parcel, introducing moderate to strong visual contrast for up to approximately 3 miles. As  
42 a result of the proposed 500-kV towers, the landscape character in the western portion  
43 of the ACEC will change from natural appearing to a cultural landscape. Although the  
44 landscape quality will remain low (Class C), the resource change will be high due to the



1 change in landscape character. Resource change will primarily result from operation of  
2 the Project; past and present actions do not contribute to change in landscape character.

### 3 **Significance Determination**

- 4 • Impact Intensity: Overall impacts will be of high intensity, resulting from high resource  
5 change and low viewer perception.
- 6 • Context: The Tub Mountain Parcel was designated to protect the Oregon Trail within a  
7 0.25-mile-wide corridor and maintain integrity of the historical landscape within this  
8 geographic area. The scenic values associated with the historical landscape (rolling hills  
9 covered with sagebrush, grasses, and dust) will remain relatively unchanged. Although  
10 views of the Project will be present, they will be intermittent and not in the primary  
11 viewing direction from the Oregon Trail. The Tub Mountain Parcel and scenic resource is  
12 managed per VRM Class II objectives. The Project was found to meet those objectives.  
13 Therefore, although high intensity impacts to visual resources within the Tub Mountain  
14 Parcel will result from the Project, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the ACEC  
15 to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM 2002).
- 16 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
17 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
18 of other past or present actions.
- 19 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel will be **less**  
20 **than significant**.

### 21 **Sugarloaf Butte**

22 Sugarloaf Butte (Map ID: VRM M3) includes approximately 400 acres of BLM-administered  
23 lands north of Bully Creek Reservoir. The southern edge of this parcel is approximately 2.2  
24 miles north of the reservoir and 12 miles northwest of Vale.

25 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Sugarloaf Butte is managed by the BLM Vale District to  
26 conform to VRM Class II objectives. Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape  
27 character should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the  
28 boundary of the VRM Class II management area.

29 **Existing Conditions.** Terrain consists of flat to rolling foothills dissected by numerous small  
30 drainages that create sloping soft, horizontal, and undulating lines. Colors are muted tones of  
31 gray, brown, and tan, and textures are smooth and uniform. Vegetation consists of low-growing  
32 grasses stippled with sagebrush that appear tan and green. The landscape appears vast and  
33 open with panoramic views. Human development is limited and primarily includes native surface  
34 roads. The landscape lacks distinct features and variety. The landscape character is naturally  
35 evolving, due to the very limited human intervention. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for  
36 VRM M3 is considered low. Viewers are limited and may include individuals traveling along the  
37 roads or participating in dispersed recreation.

38 **Project Location.** Transmission towers and new access roads associated with the Proposed  
39 Route will be located 1.6 miles south of Sugarloaf Butte (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-16).

40 Sugarloaf Butte is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the  
41 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project  
42 feature are not discussed any further in this document.

1 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
2 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
3 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
4 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
5 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
6 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

7 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

8 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

### 9 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

#### 10 Temporary and Short-term Impacts:

11 Temporary visual impacts will result primarily from the installation of Project facilities. Overall  
12 temporary construction-related actions will be of medium magnitude, resulting from the medium  
13 visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel, and related increase in activity. Short-  
14 term impacts will result in areas where vegetation clearing is required (i.e., structure work  
15 areas); however impact magnitude will be low due to shielding of the ground plane by existing  
16 topography.

#### 17 Long-Term Impacts

- 18 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
19 will be long-term, extending for the life of the project.
- 20 • Magnitude of Impact: The towers will be skylined, resulting in high magnitude impacts  
21 due to moderate to strong contrast and scale dominance when viewed from the north.  
22 Towers will appear as a sequential line of tall, smooth, triangular lattice shapes across  
23 the horizon.
- 24 • Viewer Perception: Viewers traveling along roads within Sugarloaf Butte will see the  
25 towers both head-on and peripherally from a neutral vantage point. Dispersed recreators  
26 may see the towers head-on or peripherally and for long and short durations, depending  
27 on the activity. Although viewer perception will be medium based on these criteria, actual  
28 viewer exposure is considered limited due to the remoteness of this resource.
- 29 • Resource Change: The Proposed Route will lower the contribution of adjacent scenery  
30 to the overall scenic quality of Sugarloaf Butte. However, adjacent scenery has a limited  
31 effect on the quality of Sugarloaf Butte's landscape, so this change will only result in a  
32 small change to the scenic quality scoring, and the overall scenic quality will not change.  
33 However, the naturally evolving landscape character will transition to a cultural  
34 landscape such that the resource change will be high. Due to the overall lack of  
35 development in the landscape, the Project is the primary contributor to this resource  
36 change.

#### 37 **Significance Determination**

- 38 • Impact Intensity: The intensity of the impact is considered high based on high resource  
39 change and medium viewer perception.
- 40 • Context: Visual values of the resource are managed per VRM Class II objectives.  
41 Because the Project has been sited outside the geographic area designated as VRM  
42 Class II, there will be no changes to the landscape within this designated boundary. The

1 contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the ACEC will be  
2 reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same.

- 3 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
4 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
5 of other past or present actions
- 6 • Conclusion: Because the Project is sited outside of lands managed per VRM Class II  
7 Objectives, the Project conforms to this management standard and consequently is  
8 consistent with BLM's management of the scenic resource's visual qualities. Impacts to  
9 scenic resources and values of Sugarloaf Butte will be **less than significant**.

### 10 ***Oregon Trail – Keeney Pass***

11 The Keeney Pass (VRM M4) area includes approximately 1,015 acres of BLM-administered  
12 lands southeast of Vale managed to per VRM Class II objectives. This area forms a long,  
13 narrow corridor extending for more than 6 miles in a generally northwest-southeast direction.  
14 Similar to the Tub Mountain area discussed above, the VRM M4 area corresponds to the  
15 Oregon Trail – Keeney Pass ACEC designation. The southern boundary of this linear ACEC is  
16 approximately 6.3 miles from the Proposed Route at its closest point.

17 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The area is managed per VRM Class II Objectives per  
18 the SEORMP (BLM 2002).

19 **Screening:** The basic bare-earth viewshed analysis indicates the Project will be visible from  
20 various locations within the ACEC. In these locations, the Project will be seen in the background  
21 at a viewing distance of more than 6 miles, and it will be seen against a backdrop of undulating  
22 terrain. With a distance of 6.1 miles from the Proposed Route and the landscape backdrop,  
23 contrast levels created by the Project at other locations in this area will be weak (where visible).

24 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
25 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
26 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
27 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
28 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
29 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. This site is not within the viewshed of forested areas of  
30 the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative; consequently, potential impacts from the  
31 cleared ROW are not analyzed.

32 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

33 **Conclusion:** Based on screening criteria provided in Section 3.3.2, visual impacts to this  
34 resource were considered **less than significant** and are not analyzed in detail. Further,  
35 because Project facilities do not cross the VRM Class II area, the Project will be in conformance  
36 with this land management standard.

### 37 ***Five Points Creek***

38 Five Points Creek encompasses 3,763 acres and begins approximately 1 mile northeast of  
39 Hilgard, Oregon. The creek receives light recreation use from hikers and hunters because of its  
40 high quality scenery and remote experience.

41 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Per USFS (1997), Five Points Creek (Map ID: WSR1)  
42 is recommended for inclusion in the WSR System, with a classification of "Wild." The ORVs for  
43 which this segment has been recognized include scenery.

1 **Existing Conditions.** Five Points Creek is characterized by elevated plateaus of dissected  
2 basalt and eroded canyons. The canyon is 500 to 800 feet deep with steep, rugged walls with  
3 prominent vertical and diagonal lines. Occasional outcrops and a variety of plant communities  
4 add variety to the landscape. The free-flowing creek and its tributaries add movement and  
5 additional scenic interest to the landscape. The area is primitive and undisturbed due to the lack  
6 of human development and low visitor use. Landscape character is naturally evolving, and  
7 scenic integrity is considered very high, as the landscape character is intact. Scenic  
8 attractiveness is considered Class A (Distinctive) due to the steep, incised canyon, variety of  
9 vegetation, free flowing river, and lack of human development features that together provide  
10 positive attributes of variety, unity, vividness, intactness, harmony, and balance that are unique  
11 to the area.

12 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** There is a network of hiking trails within the Five Points  
13 Creek canyon that is accessible from roads from the above plateau.

14 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route will be located 2.0 miles southwest of the Five Points  
15 Creek. The western terminus of the Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 2.1 miles  
16 from the Five Points Creek (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-17).

17 Five Points Creek is primarily located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared  
18 ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from  
19 this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

20 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
21 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
22 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
23 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
24 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
25 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

26 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

27 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered at this site.

28 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

29 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary and short-term impacts from construction and  
30 restoration will be of low magnitude due to distance and screening of activity by existing  
31 topography.

32 Long-Term Impacts:

- 33
- 34 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
will be long-term, extending for the life of the project
  - 35 • Magnitude of Impact: The entire river channel is outside of the modeled viewshed of  
36 both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative (Attachment R-6a); however,  
37 the towers and cleared ROW could be visible from the outer edges of the corridor in the  
38 southwestern portion of the corridor, at the top of the canyon. Five Points Creek was  
39 recognized to protect the outstanding scenery within the enclosed creek canyon.  
40 Because the Project will not be visible from within the canyon under the Proposed Route  
41 or Morgan Lake Alternative, the landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic quality  
42 of the WSR corridor of Five Points Creek will not change and the Project will have minor  
43 to no contributions on visual impacts to the resource.

- 1 • Viewer Perception: Viewers along the river will not have views of the Project. Portions of  
2 the Five Points Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor with Project views are on the top of  
3 the canyon where viewers will be scarce. Therefore viewer perception will be low.
- 4 • Resource Change: This segment of Five Points Creek was designated a WSR (wild) to  
5 protect the outstanding scenery within the enclosed creek canyon. Since the Project will  
6 not be visible from within the canyon, the landscape character, scenic integrity, and  
7 scenic quality of the wild corridor of Five Points Creek will not change, and the Project  
8 will have minor to no contributions on visual impacts to the resource. Therefore,  
9 resource change will be low.

## 10 **Significance Determination**

- 11 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
12 perception.
- 13 • Context: Low intensity impacts will not affect the scenery ORV for which the Five Points  
14 Creek Wild section of river should be managed to protect.
- 15 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: Since the  
16 Project will not be visible from within the canyon, the landscape character, scenic  
17 integrity, and scenic quality of the wild corridor of Five Points Creek will not change, and  
18 the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative will have minor to no contributions  
19 on visual impacts to the resource.
- 20 • Conclusion: Visual impacts under both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake  
21 Alternative will be of low magnitude, resulting in low resource change and low viewer  
22 perception. The ORV of scenery will not be impacted. Impact intensity will be low due to  
23 low resource change and low viewer perception. Therefore, impacts will be **less than**  
24 **significant**.

## 25 **Lower Owyhee River**

26 The Lower Owyhee River (Map ID: VRM M5) resource area is coincident with the Owyhee River  
27 below the Dam ACEC and SRMA, with the exception of the areas located to the north and west  
28 of the ACEC/SRMA. The VRM M5 area measures 11,291.17 acres.

29 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Lower Owyhee River is designated a VRM Class II  
30 area and per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such  
31 that the existing landscape character is retained within the boundary of the VRM management  
32 area (BLM 1986).

33 **Existing Conditions.** The landscape within the Lower Owyhee River area is characterized as  
34 an incised river valley, with dramatic, steep, undulating sidewalls, jagged rock outcroppings, and  
35 a meandering flat, narrow river. Dramatic landforms create irregular, rounded, angular, and  
36 flowing lines. Textures are primarily medium with some rough, patchy rock formations. Colors  
37 are rich and vibrant, consisting primarily of reds, browns, and greys of the rocks and blue water.  
38 Vegetation includes short sagebrush with patches of juniper and moderate to high green and  
39 grey riparian vegetation. The variety of color and texture and dramatic landforms that comprise  
40 this landscape create a memorable landscape that is rare within the region. Views from within  
41 the canyon are enclosed and limited due to the numerous river bends preventing extended  
42 views in any direction. Above the river, the landforms are more rounded with weakly enclosed to  
43 open ridges. Development is limited, consisting primarily of camp sites, OHV roads, one paved  
44 road along the river, and the two developed recreation sites. An existing 500-kV line crosses in

1 the southern portion of the VRM Class II area. The landscape has an overall natural-appearing  
2 landscape character.

3 A ridgeline at the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee River area provides a “gateway” to the  
4 resource. The Owyhee Siphon is visible as it crosses the ridgeline and descends toward the  
5 canyon bottom. This feature introduces strong contrast due to its linear form and bright reflective  
6 surface. Scenic quality of the existing landscape of Lower Owyhee River is considered high  
7 (Class A). An image of the existing landscape, as viewed from the interpretive panel of the  
8 Watchable Wildlife Area located in the northern portion of the resource, is provided in  
9 Attachment R-4, Figure R-4-3a.

10 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers within the Lower Owyhee River primarily include  
11 recreators that are hiking, driving, boating, camping, picnicking, or viewing scenery or wildlife  
12 within the canyon and will be both stationary and transient.

13 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route crosses the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee  
14 River area and will be visible from the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area and  
15 Owyhee Lake Road (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-18). A ridgeline at the northern portion of the  
16 Lower Owyhee River area provides a “gateway” to the resource. The Proposed Route is located  
17 on the northern side of this ridgeline; consequently, project visibility is limited to two towers  
18 located approximately 1.0 mile away.

19 The Lower Owyhee River VRM Class II area is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of  
20 the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore  
21 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

22 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
23 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
24 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
25 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
26 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
27 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

28 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

29 **Mitigation Considered.** In evaluating various alternatives for project siting, IPC concluded that  
30 potentially significant visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the Lower Owyhee  
31 River could result. To address potential impacts, IPC analyzed two mitigation options aimed at  
32 reducing adverse impacts to less than significant: (1) relocating the 175-foot tower to an  
33 alternate location (Option 1); and (2) reducing the height of the structure and moving it to an  
34 alternate location (Option 2). In preparing the final indicative design for this document, IPC  
35 moved the Proposed Route to the north to align with the existing utility corridor administered by  
36 the BLM (Figure R-3-18). Under this Project configuration, the need to mitigate potential  
37 impacts was alleviated. As discussed below, impacts under the Proposed Route considered in  
38 this document were determined to be less than significant, and therefore do not require either  
39 mitigation strategy.

## 1 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

2 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary and short-term impacts from construction and  
3 restoration will be of low magnitude due to distance and screening of activity by existing  
4 topography.

### 5 Long-Term Impacts:

6 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
7 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.

8 • Magnitude of Impact: The Proposed Route crosses the northern portion of the Lower  
9 Owyhee River area and will be visible from the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable  
10 Wildlife Area and Owyhee Lake Road. A ridgeline at the northern portion of the Lower  
11 Owyhee River area will screen Project features, with the exception of two towers visible  
12 to the north. Visual contrast will be weak, and structures will appear subordinate to the  
13 landscape. Views will also include the Owyhee Siphon, which currently creates strong  
14 visual contrast with the natural landscape due to its smooth texture and bright reflective  
15 surface. Impact magnitude will be medium, as the majority of Project features will be  
16 screened from view by existing topography.

17 • Viewer Perception: Views of the Project, as experienced from Owyhee Lake Road and  
18 Springs Canyon Road, will be predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous, and  
19 within the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 mile). However, this viewer  
20 exposure is limited to less than 5 percent of the resource. Overall views of the Project  
21 will be experienced from a neutral vantage point and will be episodic, as these brief  
22 views of the Project will only be experienced in this limited area. Viewer perception will  
23 be low.

### 24 • Resource Change:

25 Due to the enclosed nature of the canyon, visual impacts will likely be visible from less  
26 than 1 percent of the VRM M5 area, primarily where visitors exit the VRM M5 area.  
27 Because of the localized nature of visual impacts of the Project, scenic quality of the  
28 resource as a whole will remain high (Class A) despite a reduction in the score for  
29 cultural modification. Overall landscape character will remain natural appearing.

30 Project features will be visible from Owyhee Lake Road and Springs Canyon Road as  
31 they approach the Lower Owyhee River area from the north. Multiple transmission  
32 towers and conductors will be visible from within 0.5 mile. The structures will introduce  
33 strong visual contrast from these locations and be dominant features in the landscape.  
34 Overall scenic quality of the ACEC / SRMA is not expected to change as a result of the  
35 Project. The score for cultural modification will be reduced by two points in a very  
36 localized area to the north, corresponding to where the Project crosses the parcel. As  
37 stated above, this localized impact will not affect the majority of the ACEC, as views of  
38 the Project will be screened by rugged topography. Resource change will be medium.

## 39 **Significance Determination**

40 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be medium due to medium resource change and  
41 low viewer perception.

42 • Context: Visual impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II  
43 designation in the localized area at the northeast corner of the resource where the

1 Proposed Route crosses the Lower Owyhee River area. Therefore, the location of the  
2 Proposed Route within the Lower Owyhee River area will preclude the ability of the  
3 resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the  
4 applicable land management plan in that area. The SEORMP will be amended to  
5 change a portion of the Lower Owyhee River area from VRM Class II to VRM Class IV.

- 6 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The scenic  
7 quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
8 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, primarily the parking lot,  
9 roadway, and Owyhee Siphon.
- 10 • Conclusion: The medium intensity and localized impacts to the VRM M5 area are  
11 considered **potentially significant**. However, the BLM has amended the plan to change  
12 the designation in the Project area from VRM II to VRM IV, and consequently the Project  
13 is consistent with the management direction for the Lower Owyhee River, and Project  
14 impacts are less than significant. Succor Creek

15 Succor Creek (Map ID: VRM M8) includes 10,800 acres that include the highlands surrounding  
16 the Succor Creek State Natural Area. The VRM M8 area is located adjacent to Succor Creek  
17 Road, approximately 14 miles southwest of Homedale and 4 miles southwest of the Proposed  
18 Route.

19 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Succor Creek has been designated by the BLM as  
20 VRM Class II. The VRM Class II objectives are “to retain the existing character of the  
21 landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low” (BLM 2002).  
22 VRM Class II objectives pertain only to the geographic area designated as VRM Class II and do  
23 not apply to areas outside of that geographic boundary.

24 **Existing Conditions.** The Succor Creek landscape includes gentle to medium rolling hills with  
25 butte-like formations and some exposed rock outcroppings. Texture is primarily medium with  
26 some rough, jagged rock outcrops. The landforms are primarily exposed and appear light  
27 brown, tan, and grey. Vegetation is generally sparse and limited to sagebrush/steppe scattered  
28 throughout the landscape in green and grey tones. The landscape appears moderately  
29 enclosed due to the rolling topography, valley bottoms, and moderately steep surrounding  
30 hillsides as well as open areas with panoramic views. Human development is limited to dirt  
31 roads. The landscape character is natural appearing. Scenic quality of the existing landscape  
32 for VRM M8 is considered low (Class C).

33 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers will primarily be limited to local individuals  
34 driving along primitive roads and recreators accessing the Succor Creek State Natural Area and  
35 will therefore be transient.

36 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located approximately 4 miles southwest of the  
37 Succor Creek at its closest point.

38 Succor Creek is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the  
39 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project  
40 feature are not discussed any further in this document.

41 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
42 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
43 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
44 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and



1 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
2 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

3 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

4 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered for this resource.

#### 5 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

6 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: As demonstrated in the viewshed maps (Attachment R-6a),  
7 visibility of Project features and related construction activity will be limited. Consequently,  
8 temporary and short-term impacts from construction and restoration will be of low magnitude  
9 due to distance and screening of activity by existing topography.

#### 10 Long-Term Impacts:

- 11 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
12 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 13 • Magnitude of Impact: The modeled viewshed indicates that the Project will not be visible  
14 from the majority of the resource. Where visible, the proposed 500-kV towers will  
15 introduce weak contrast and appear subordinate to the larger landscape due to a  
16 distance of 4 miles or more. Therefore, impact magnitude will be low.
- 17 • Viewer Perception: Viewers will primarily be traveling along dirt roads, so views will be  
18 peripheral and episodic.; therefore, viewer perception will be low
- 19 • Resource Change: The modeled viewshed indicates that the Project will not be visible  
20 from the majority of the resource due to the rolling hills and buttes that compose the  
21 landscape. Where visible, visual impacts from the proposed 500-kV towers will be of low  
22 magnitude, resulting from weak visual contrast, and will appear subordinate to the larger  
23 landscape due to distance, which will not alter the scenery adjacent to the VRM M8  
24 resource. Therefore, the scenic quality scoring and overall scenic quality will not change.  
25 The natural-appearing landscape character will be maintained. Therefore, the resource  
26 change will be low.

#### 27 **Significance Determination**

- 28 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
29 perception.
- 30 • Context: The VRM Class II objectives are “to retain the existing character of the  
31 landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low” (BLM  
32 2002). Low intensity impacts will not alter the existing character of the landscape, and  
33 therefore will be consistent with VRM Class II objectives.
- 34 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
35 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
36 of other past or present actions
- 37 • Conclusion: Impacts to Succor Creek will **be less than significant.**

1 3.3.2.7 *BLM, Owyhee Resource Area*

2 ***Jump Creek Canyon and Jump Creek Canyon ACEC***

3 The Jump Creek Canyon area (Map ID: VRM O1) includes two parcels of BLM-administered  
4 lands located in western Owyhee County, Idaho.

5 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The majority of the VRM O1 area is managed as VRM  
6 Class II; however, a narrow band along Jump Creek is managed as VRM Class I. The latter  
7 area corresponds to the Jump Creek Canyon ACEC. The VRM area is located approximately 7  
8 miles southwest of Marsing, Idaho. The Proposed Route runs adjacent to the northern edge of  
9 the VRM O1 area, while the southern end of the area is approximately 4.9 miles from the  
10 Proposed Route (in the State of Oregon).

11 **Screening:** For the purpose of Exhibit R, potential impacts are only considered for the portion of  
12 the Project located within the State of Oregon. The ACEC is located in Idaho, over 5 miles east  
13 of the Oregon/Idaho border. At this distance, Project components are assumed not to produce  
14 sufficient visual contrast and scale dominance to be considered potentially significant.  
15 Additionally, because the Project does not cross the resource, it will comply with VRM Class I  
16 and Class II management objectives.

17 **Conclusion:** Impacts to Jump Creek Canyon and Jump Creek Canyon ACEC are considered  
18 **less than significant.**

19 3.3.2.8 *BLM, Cascade Resource Area*

20 ***Brownlee Reservoir Southeast***

21 The Brownlee Reservoir Southeast scenic resource ranges from 1 to 3 miles wide and extends  
22 approximately 14 miles in a north-south direction (Map ID: VRM C1). The nearest communities  
23 are Huntington in Oregon and Eaton in Idaho.

24 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Brownlee Reservoir Southeast area includes four  
25 parcels of BLM-administered lands located to the east of Brownlee Reservoir in Idaho that are  
26 managed as VRM Class II. The reservoir is managed by the Boise District to meet VRM Class II  
27 objectives (BLM 1999). Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should  
28 be low such that the existing landscape character is retained (BLM 1986).

29 **Existing Conditions.** Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is located on the east side of the Snake  
30 River and has a landscape similar to that described for Brownlee Reservoir West. The Snake  
31 River and Brownlee Reservoir and surrounding canyon are distinct natural features within the  
32 landscape. The reservoir appears as a smooth to rippled, reflective, flat surface that is blue-  
33 green in color. Narrow steep valley walls rise above the reservoir with angled to curved lines  
34 and brown and beige colors. Textures of the sidewalls include fine to medium sidewalls and  
35 rough rock outcroppings. Vegetation is primarily limited to low-growing sagebrush and grasses  
36 that appear patchy to stippled and gold, green, and grey in color. The uplands above the river  
37 are characterized by rolling terrain with undulating ridgelines and numerous small drainages that  
38 dissect the area. Views are primarily enclosed by the valley; however, on the highlands above  
39 the river, more expansive views of adjacent mountains are visible and the landscape appears  
40 large. Human development includes trails, native surface roads, and parallel 69- and 138-kV  
41 transmission lines. I-84 and scattered development is visible immediately across the reservoir  
42 southeast of the resource.

43 Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character, as both natural and human  
44 developments (primarily the reservoir) are expressed and exist in harmony. The existing

1 transmission lines only cross through a small portion of the resource at its southern end, such  
2 that the natural features are the dominant theme throughout. I-84, though audible, does not  
3 affect visual quality as views of the interstate and associated traffic are shielded by shallow,  
4 rolling topography and riparian vegetation. Scenic quality of the existing landscape for the VRM  
5 B3 is considered moderate (Class B).

6 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are both transient and stationary and include  
7 recreators both on and off the water.

8 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route will be located 0.6 mile from the Brownlee Reservoir  
9 Southeast, to the west across the reservoir, at its closest point at the southern end of the  
10 resource (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-20). Further north, the Proposed Route veers northwest,  
11 increasing its distance from the resource.

12 Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared  
13 ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from  
14 this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

15 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
16 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
17 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
18 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
19 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
20 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

21 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

## 22 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

23 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary visual impacts will result primarily from the  
24 installation of Project facilities. Overall temporary construction-related actions will be of medium  
25 magnitude, resulting from the medium visual contrast of construction vehicles and personnel,  
26 and related increase in activity. Short-term impacts will result from vegetation clearing will be of  
27 low magnitude, as views of the ground plane are generally shielded by topography and  
28 vegetation.

### 29 Long-Term Impacts:

- 30 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
31 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 32 • Magnitude of Impact: Towers associated with the Proposed Route will be highly visible  
33 from the southern portion of the resource where the Project runs behind the Farewell  
34 Bend State Recreation area and follows I-84. The transmission towers associated with  
35 the Proposed Route will be the primary source of visual contrast experienced from the  
36 Brownlee Reservoir Southeast area, primarily due to their size, proximity, and the  
37 number of towers that will be visible. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture will  
38 introduce moderate contrast against the fine to medium, rolling, rounded hills to the  
39 south. The light, reflective color will also contrast against the light to medium brown  
40 vegetation and outcrops. The scale of the structures will appear smaller between MP  
41 197.9 and MP 199.1, as H-frame structures in this segment will range in height from 65  
42 feet to 100 feet. Access roads along the ROW will be visible, but will appear consistent  
43 with the numerous native surface roads that existing in the surrounding area.

1 Views of transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route backdropped by light-  
2 colored terrain will be visible from the southern portion of the Brownlee Reservoir  
3 Southeast. From this area, the Brownlee Reservoir and development along its southern  
4 shore and I-84 will appear co-dominant with the Project, which will introduce a moderate  
5 level of contrast due to the relatively close distance of the backdropped transmission  
6 line. Views of the Project will be equally head-on or peripheral, depending on where the  
7 viewer is located within the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast, and experienced from both  
8 inferior and neutral vantage points. The Project features will also be visible from the  
9 higher elevations in the central portion of the resource; however, the Proposed Route  
10 will be approximately 5 miles away from this portion of the resource; consequently, the  
11 towers will largely blend with the landscape and result in weak visual contrast. Overall  
12 magnitude of visual impacts is considered medium.

- 13 • Viewer Perception: Viewers within the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast will primarily be  
14 engaging in reservoir-based recreation activities. As there is no visibility of the towers  
15 associated with the Proposed Route in the valley bottom, viewer perception will be low.
- 16 • Resource Change: The proposed 500-kV towers will reduce the adjacent scenery to the  
17 south of the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast; however, this reduction will be relatively  
18 small due to the hills that will backdrop the towers. Overall scenic quality will not change  
19 and the landscape character will retain its cultural character. Resource change will be  
20 medium.

## 21 **Significance Determination**

- 22 • Impact Intensity: Overall intensity of impacts will be medium based on low viewer  
23 perception and low resource change.
- 24 • Context: Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value  
25 for which it was designated or recognized in the Cascade RMP (1999). Because the  
26 Project has been sited outside of the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast, there will be no  
27 changes to the landscape within the boundary of the lands managed according to VRM  
28 Class II. The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the scenic  
29 resource will be reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same.
- 30 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The Project is  
31 one of many contributors to the scenic quality and character of the landscape and has a  
32 moderate contribution to the overall condition of the landscape.
- 33 • Conclusion: The Project will conform to VRM Class II objectives and consequently is  
34 consistent with BLM's management of the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast's visual  
35 qualities. Visual impacts on the VRM C1 scenic resource will be **less than significant**.

## 36 **Brownlee Reservoir Northeast**

37 The Brownlee Reservoir Northeast (VRM C2) includes three parcels of BLM-administered lands  
38 along the east side of Brownlee Reservoir.

39 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** Brownlee Reservoir Northeast is managed per VRM  
40 Class II objectives.

41 **Screening.** The Proposed Route is located between 6.0 and 9.4 miles east of this resource.  
42 The basic bare-earth analysis shows no potential Project visibility within the Brownlee Reservoir  
43 Northeast area (Attachment R-6a).

1 Brownlee Reservoir Northeast is located outside of the 10 mile viewshed buffer of the cleared  
2 ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from  
3 this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

4 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
5 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
6 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
7 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
8 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
9 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

10 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

11 **Conclusion.** Because of the low likelihood of visibility, IPC concludes that impacts to Brownlee  
12 Reservoir Northeast (VRM C2) will be **less than significant**. Additionally, the Project will  
13 comply with VRM II management objectives, as the Proposed Route does not cross this  
14 resource.

### 15 3.3.2.9 USFS, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

#### 16 VQO 1

17 The VQO 1 area is a linear corridor measuring approximately 185 acres. This area overlaps with  
18 a portion of the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside identified by Union County, and Blue Mountain  
19 State Scenic Corridor managed by OPRD; however, it includes some additional areas along the  
20 Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road that are not included within the Union County  
21 designation (Map ID: VQO 1).

22 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO  
23 Retention. The Retention VQO provides for management activities that are not visually evident.  
24 Under Retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently  
25 found in the characteristic landscape. "Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction,  
26 pattern, etc., should not be evident" (USFS 1974).

27 **Existing Conditions.** The Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road is characterized as a  
28 narrow, two-lane road that winds naturally along the upper portion of a steep valley wall. The  
29 roadway runs adjacent to a heavy-rail line to the south. Views to the southwest across the valley  
30 are primarily blocked by dense vegetation along the perimeter. Intermittent views across the  
31 valley are characterized by a mosaic of open meadows, irregularly shaped forest patches, and a  
32 network of forest roads. Views to the north/northwest of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage  
33 Road are dominated by the steep slope of the valley wall. This steep viewing angle precludes  
34 views to the ridgeline along the majority of the corridor. Existing vegetation is dominated by  
35 ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine, and grand fir and appears nearly contiguous  
36 along the edges of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

37 Landscape Character of VQO 1 is "natural appearing." Scenic Integrity was ranked as "high," as  
38 the valued landscape character appears unaltered. Scenic Attractiveness is Class B (Typical).  
39 Viewers are roadway travelers along the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

40 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers are roadway travelers along the Old Emigrant  
41 Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

42 **Project Location.** The Project, including access roads and pulling and tensioning sites, will be  
43 situated on the crest of the ridgeline to the northeast of the resource (Attachment R-3, Figure R-  
44 3-21). The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 5.6 miles southeast of VQO 1.

1 Project components associated with this alternative will not be detectable from VQO due to  
2 screening by vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not cross  
3 VQO 1, it will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for this  
4 area (USFS 1990a). Potential visual impacts of the Morgan Lake Alternative on VQO 1 is not  
5 discussed further in this document.

6 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
7 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
8 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
9 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
10 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
11 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

12 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

13 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation was considered; however, in forested sites such as this,  
14 IPC will manage vegetation within the ROW to maintain a maximum height of 20 feet in the area  
15 under the conductors (the wire zone) and 34 feet in the adjacent area (the border zone). This  
16 treatment will result in a somewhat U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW that will soften  
17 the transition from cleared ROW to standing forest.

### 18 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

19 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary impacts will result from construction related  
20 actions, including clearing of ROW and pulling and tensioning sites, and development of access  
21 roads. Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road will be used as an access road; however, no  
22 substantial improvements to this roadway will occur. Other access roads, including existing  
23 roads requiring improvement and new bladed roads, will be located on the northwest side of the  
24 Proposed Route. Visual impacts will include an increase of construction-related vehicles and  
25 personnel. Such impacts will result in temporary, localized medium intensity impacts. Because  
26 vegetation clearing within the ROW and pulling and tensioning sites will occur within forested  
27 areas, restoration will take more than 10 years. Consequently, impacts resulting from vegetation  
28 clearing are discussed under long-term impacts.

### 29 Long-Term Impacts:

- 30 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and ROW, and  
31 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 32 • Magnitude of Impact: The steep angle of observation will preclude views of Project  
33 features from Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. The perimeter of the roadway will  
34 remain forested, thereby screening structures from view by roadway travelers. Roadway  
35 travelers approaching where the Project crosses the frontage road will experience views  
36 of the conductors spanning the road in the foreground. Visual contrast of the conductors  
37 will be weak. Two pulling and tensioning sites will be located adjacent to the scenic  
38 corridor between Project MP 91.0- MP 91.9. The cleared ROW will not be visible from  
39 roadway viewing platforms within any of the scenic corridor parcels due to steep viewing  
40 angles and tall, mature vegetation bordering the roadway. Overall magnitude of impact  
41 will be low, as Project features will be primarily located outside of the viewshed of the  
42 Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.
- 43 • Viewer Perception: Steep slopes and tall, mature vegetation abut the road such that the  
44 viewing angle is severe, limiting the extent of views. Additionally, the Proposed Route is  
45 primarily sited on the northeast side of the ridgetop, predominantly outside of the

1 viewshed of the road. Viewer exposure will be brief and experienced both head-on and  
2 peripherally for all parcels. Therefore, viewer perception will be low.

- 3 • Resource Change: The landscape will remain primarily natural appearing. Scenic  
4 attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic integrity will remain high. Valued  
5 landscape character appears unaltered. Slight deviations may be present that are visible  
6 from Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. Therefore, resource change will be low.

## 7 **Significance Determination**

- 8 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
9 perception.
- 10 • Context: Impacts will be of low intensity and not visually evident; therefore VQO of  
11 retention will be achieved.
- 12 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
13 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
14 of other past or present actions
- 15 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to VQO 1 will be low intensity and **less than significant**.

16 Note that the Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 5.6 miles southeast of VQO 1.  
17 Project components associated with this alternative will not be detectable from VQO 1 due to  
18 screening by vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not cross  
19 VQO 1, it will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for this  
20 area (USFS 1990a). Potential visual impacts of the Morgan Lake Alternative on VQO 1 are not  
21 discussed further in this Exhibit.

## 22 **VQO 2**

23 The VQO 2 identifier applies to approximately 4,800 acres of the Wallowa-Whitman NF  
24 spanning I-84. The area is located in northwestern Union County, is approximately 8 miles long,  
25 and is typically 1 to 2 miles wide (Map ID: VQO 2). The USFS-operated Oregon Trail  
26 Interpretive Park (KOP 4-32) and Blue Mountain Crossing Sno-Park (KOP 4-4) recreation sites  
27 are located within VQO 2.

28 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** USFS Wallowa-Whitman NF VQO 2 is managed by the  
29 Wallowa-Whitman NF as VQO Retention. Per the VQO Retention designation, activities may  
30 only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently found in the characteristic landscape.  
31 “Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.”  
32 (USFS 1974). VQO 2 overlaps with the first parcel of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic  
33 Corridor and includes USFS-managed lands within the viewshed of Sensitivity Level 1 (highest  
34 concern for scenic quality) travel routes, including I-84, the railroad along Old Emigrant Hill  
35 Frontage Road, and the Oregon Trail Interpretive Park trail system, per the Wallowa-Whitman  
36 NF LRMP. Per the LRMP, “Sensitivity Level 1 indicates that landscapes adjacent to the travel  
37 route are managed in such a manner that management activities are not visually evident  
38 (Retention)” (USFS 1990a).

39 **Existing Conditions.** The existing topography varies from flat to rolling, with some steep slopes  
40 adjacent to creeks that dissect the surrounding terrain. Undulating mountains in the background  
41 distance zone add some height and size to the landscape and create a slightly enclosed  
42 landscape. Tall, coniferous trees cover the VQO consistently and add to the visual variety and  
43 scenic quality of the landscape and limit views to the foreground from most locations. Color

1 complexity comprises light and dark browns, dark greens and olives, and dark and light grays  
2 from the road. Human development in the landscape primarily includes transportation corridors,  
3 including I-84, existing transmission lines, and USFS-managed recreation sites. These  
4 developments introduce linear and geometrical features that are typically smooth in texture.

5 Landscape Character of VQO 2 is “cultural.” Scenic integrity is medium, as the valued  
6 landscape character appears slightly altered. Noticeable deviations remain visually subordinate  
7 to the landscape character. Scenic Attractiveness is Class B (Typical). Viewers include roadway  
8 travelers along I-84, Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road and recreators at the Blue  
9 Mountain Sno-Park and Oregon Trail Interpretive Park trail system.

10 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Viewers include roadway travelers along Old Emigrant  
11 Hill Scenic Frontage Road and recreators at the sno-park and Oregon Trail Interpretive Park.

12 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route will cross through VQO 2 in two locations between MP  
13 94.4 and MP 95.0, in the first parcel of the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor (Attachment  
14 R-3, Figure R-3-22). Towers 95/3 (165 feet height) and 95/4 (155 foot height) would be sited  
15 within the parcel.

16 The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 3.0 miles southeast of VQO 2. The ROW  
17 associated with this alternative will largely be undetectable from the VQO 2 area due to  
18 screening from vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not  
19 cross VQO 2, it will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for  
20 this area (USFS 1990a). Potential visual impacts resulting from the Morgan Lake Alternative on  
21 VQO 2 is not discussed further in this document.

22 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
23 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
24 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
25 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
26 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
27 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

28 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

29 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered; however, in forested sites such as this, IPC  
30 will manage vegetation within the ROW to maintain a maximum height of 20 feet in the area  
31 under the conductors (the wire zone) and 34 feet in the adjacent area (the border zone). This  
32 treatment will result in a somewhat U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW that will soften  
33 the transition from cleared ROW to standing forest.

34 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

35 Temporary and Short-term Impacts: Temporary impacts will result from construction related  
36 actions, including clearing of ROW and pulling and tensioning sites, and development of access  
37 roads. Access roads, including existing roads requiring improvement and new bladed roads, will  
38 be located on the northwest side of the Proposed Route. Visual impacts will include an increase  
39 of construction-related vehicles and personnel. Such impacts will result in temporary, localized  
40 medium intensity impacts. Because vegetation clearing within the ROW and pulling and  
41 tensioning sites will occur within forested areas, restoration will take more than 10 years.  
42 Consequently, impacts resulting from vegetation clearing are discussed under long-term  
43 impacts.



## 1 Long-Term Impacts:

- 2 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and ROW, and  
3 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 4 • Magnitude of Impact: The Project will be most visible along the western boundary of the  
5 VQO where both the towers and the cleared ROW will be visible. However, the viewer  
6 platforms within the VQO (sno-park, interpretive park trails, and I-84) are almost entirely  
7 out of the viewshed due to topographic or vegetative screening. Additional views of the  
8 Project will likely be visible from the higher elevation areas near the southern tip of the  
9 VQO. The cleared ROW will be the most visible, appearing as a wide, continuous line  
10 against the fairly continuous tree canopy. Steep observation angles and tall, mature  
11 trees located between I-84 and the Proposed Route will provide screening and prevent  
12 continuous views of the Project. Where detectable, impact magnitude will be high.
- 13 • Viewer Perception: Viewers traveling along I-84 will have intermittent, peripheral views of  
14 the Project while traveling at high speeds; therefore, viewer perception will be low.
- 15 • Resource Change: The landscape will retain its cultural character. Scenic attractiveness  
16 will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic integrity will remain medium as the transmission  
17 towers and ROW will be consistent with a cultural landscape character and the  
18 designated transmission corridor. Therefore, the resource change will be low.

## 19 **Significance Determination**

- 20 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer  
21 perception.
- 22 • Context: Impacts will be of low intensity and not visually evident; therefore VQO of  
23 Retention will be achieved.
- 24 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
25 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
26 of other past or present actions
- 27 • Conclusion: Visual impacts to VQO 2 will be low intensity and **less than significant**.

28 Note that the Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 0.7 mile southeast of VQO 2.  
29 Project components associated with this alternative will not be detectable from the VQO 2 area  
30 due to screening from vegetation and topography, and the siting of the Morgan Lake Alternative  
31 in non-forested areas. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not cross VQO 2, it will be in  
32 conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for this area (USFS 1990a).  
33 Potential visual impacts of the Morgan Lake Alternative on VQO 2 are not discussed further in  
34 this Exhibit.

## 35 **OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West**

36 OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West (Map ID: VQO 3) includes five parcels of NF lands within  
37 foreground viewing distance along the corridor of OR 244, also known as the Union-Hilgard  
38 Highway. OR 244 generally follows the Grande Ronde River in this area. These parcels are  
39 located west of the Red Bridge State Wayside, and include approximately 283 acres.

40 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO  
41 Retention. The Retention VQO provides for management activities that are not visually evident.  
42 Under Retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently

1 found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction,  
2 pattern, etc., should not be evident” (USFS 1974).

3 **Existing Conditions.** VQO 3 is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of the Blue Mountains  
4 Ecoregion. The landscape is common for the ecoregion and is characterized by a mostly wide,  
5 flat alluvial plain bordered by low, moderately steep ridges. The Grande Ronde River flows  
6 through the parcels and appears wide and meandering with a smooth to rippled texture and  
7 blue-green color. Gravel bars line the shoreline, appearing as coarse-textured, light-colored  
8 bands. The river valley terrain is steep to moderately steep, transitioning to rolling topography,  
9 dissected by numerous drainages that create v-shaped valleys with diagonal and directional  
10 lines. Colors are primarily browns and greys, with a hint of red. Tall, mature coniferous and  
11 deciduous trees are present throughout OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West. In the uplands,  
12 trees and shrubs line the drainages and are present in clumps along the hillsides. Human  
13 development primarily consists of scattered rural development, trails, and native surface and  
14 paved roads, including OR 244, which runs through three of the parcels and appears smooth,  
15 wide, flat, winding, and grey in color.

16 Landscape Character of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is natural appearing. Scenic  
17 integrity was classified as medium, as the valued landscape character appears unaltered.  
18 Scenic attractiveness is considered Class B (typical), resulting from the moderately steep  
19 terrain, evenly scattered to clumped mature vegetation, and large, winding river that introduce  
20 attributes of variety, harmony, and balance that are positive yet common for the area. Primary  
21 viewer groups include individuals traveling along OR 244.

22 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative are both located  
23 approximately 4.4 miles east of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West at its closest point  
24 (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-23). The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red  
25 Bridge West under either siting scenario.

26 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered; however, in forested sites such as this, IPC  
27 will manage vegetation within the ROW to maintain a maximum height of 20 feet in the area  
28 under the conductors (the wire zone) and 34 feet in the adjacent area (the border zone). This  
29 treatment will result in a somewhat U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW that will soften  
30 the transition from cleared ROW to standing forest.

### 31 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

#### 32 Temporary, Short-term, and Long-Term Impacts:

- 33 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and ROW, and  
34 therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 35 • Magnitude of Impact: Project components will result in no visual contrast against the  
36 landscape of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the  
37 Morgan Lake Alternative, and impact magnitude will be low.
- 38 • Viewer Perception: No visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic  
39 quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West will be evident under the Proposed Route  
40 or the Morgan Lake Alternative, and resource change will be low.
- 41 • Resource Change: Views of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West are experienced from  
42 OR 244. No Project components will cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West  
43 under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative; therefore, views of the OR  
44 244 corridor scenery will not be affected, and viewer perception will be low.

## 1 Significance Determination

- 2 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low based on low resource change and low  
3 viewer perception.
- 4 • Context: Therefore, no visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic  
5 quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West will be evident, and the Project will  
6 conform to VQO Retention management objectives.
- 7 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
8 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
9 of other past or present actions
- 10 • Conclusion: Impacts to OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West (VQO 3) will be **less than**  
11 **significant**.

### 12 **OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East**

13 OR 244 Corridor Red Bridge East encompasses three parcels of NF lands within the OR 244  
14 corridor (Map ID: VQO 4). These parcels total approximately 588 acres and are located to the  
15 east of the Red Bridge State Wayside. Bird Tracks Campground, operated by the USFS, is  
16 located within the OR 244 Corridor Red Bridge East resource.

17 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East (VQO 4) is  
18 managed by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest as VQO Retention. OR 244 is identified in  
19 the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP as a Sensitivity Level 1 (highest concern for scenic  
20 quality) travel route. Per the LRMP, “Sensitivity Level 1 normally indicates that landscapes  
21 adjacent to the travel route are managed in such a manner that management activities are not  
22 visually evident (Retention)”.

23 The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO Retention. The Retention VQO provides  
24 for management activities that are not visually evident. Under Retention, activities may only  
25 repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently found in the characteristic landscape.  
26 Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.”  
27 (USFS 1974).

28 **Existing Conditions.** OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is located in the Maritime-Influenced  
29 Zone of the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. The landscape is common for the ecoregion and is  
30 characterized by a mostly wide, flat alluvial plain bordered by low, moderately steep ridges. The  
31 Grande Ronde River flows through the parcels and appears wide and meandering with a  
32 smooth to rippled texture and blue-green color. Gravel bars line the shoreline, appearing as  
33 coarse-textured, light-colored bands. The river valley terrain is steep to moderately steep,  
34 transitioning to rolling topography, dissected by numerous drainages that create v-shaped  
35 valleys with diagonal and directional lines. Colors are primarily browns and greys, with a hint of  
36 red. Tall, mature coniferous and deciduous trees are present throughout the VQO. In the  
37 uplands, trees and shrubs line the drainages and are present in clumps along the hillsides.  
38 Human development includes campsites, bathrooms associated with Bird Tracks Campground,  
39 trails, and OR 244, which is the most apparent human development and appears smooth, wide,  
40 flat, winding, and grey in color.

41 Landscape character of OR 244 Corridor Red Bridge East is naturally appearing, as  
42 experienced from OR 244. Scenic integrity is moderate, as the valued landscape character  
43 appears unaltered. Scenic attractiveness was classified as Class B (typical), resulting from the  
44 moderately steep terrain, evenly scattered to clumped mature vegetation, and large, winding

1 river that introduce attributes of variety, harmony, and balance that are positive yet common for  
2 the area.

3 **Viewer Groups and Characteristics.** Primary viewer groups include individuals traveling along  
4 OR 244 or camping or picnicking. Views are experienced from either a stationary or moving  
5 vantage point.

6 **Project Location.** The Proposed Route is located approximately 1.4 miles east of OR 244  
7 Corridor – Red Bridge East at its closest point and will not cross through this resource  
8 (Attachment R-3, Figure R-3-24). The Morgan Lake Alternative is located 1.2 miles east and  
9 also does not cross this resource.

10 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
11 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
12 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
13 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
14 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
15 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

16 The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

17 **Mitigation Considered.** No mitigation considered; however, in forested sites such as this, IPC  
18 will manage vegetation within the ROW to maintain a maximum height of 20 feet in the area  
19 under the conductors (the wire zone) and 34 feet in the adjacent area (the border zone). This  
20 treatment will result in a somewhat U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW that will soften  
21 the transition from cleared ROW to standing forest.

## 22 **Visual Impact Assessment.**

### 23 Temporary, Short-term, and Long-Term Impacts:

- 24 • Duration: Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore  
25 will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.
- 26 • Magnitude of Impact: The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge  
27 East under either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, project  
28 components will result in no visual contrast against the landscape of this resource, and  
29 impact magnitude will be low under both routes.
- 30 • Viewer Perception: Views of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East are experienced from  
31 OR 244. No Project components will cross through this resource; therefore, views of the  
32 OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected and viewer perception will be low for both  
33 the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative.
- 34 • Resource Change: No visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic  
35 quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East will be evident, and the Project will  
36 conform to VQO Retention management objectives and the protection of Sensitivity  
37 Level 1 (highest concern for scenic quality) travel route (OR 244). Resource change will  
38 be low for both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative.

## 39 **Significance Determination**

- 40 • Impact Intensity: Impact intensity will be low for both the Proposed Route and the  
41 Morgan Lake Alternative due to low resource change and low viewer perception.

- 1 • Context: Because no project components will cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red  
2 Bridge East, views of the OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected and this scenic  
3 resource will remain intact such that it will continue to provide the scenic values to OR  
4 244 for which it was designated.
- 5 • Degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action: The impacts  
6 disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result  
7 of other past or present actions
- 8 • Conclusion: Visual impacts will be low intensity and **less than significant** for both the  
9 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative.

## 10 ***Mt. Emily***

11 Mt Emily includes approximately 1,060 acres around Mt. Emily that are classified as VQO  
12 Retention (Map ID: VQO 6). This parcel is located approximately 9 miles from the Proposed  
13 Route and includes the Grandview Picnic Area and Indian Trail Canyon.

14 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO  
15 Retention. The Retention VQO provides for management activities that are not visually evident.  
16 Under Retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently  
17 found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction,  
18 pattern, etc., should not be evident.” (USFS 1974).

19 **Screening.** The Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative are located approximately  
20 5.2 and 5.9 miles, respectively, from Mt. Emily. This area includes mature forest habitat and  
21 high-relief terrain, indicating that views outward toward the Proposed Route and the Morgan  
22 Lake Alternative will likely be screened in many locations. Bare-earth viewshed analysis  
23 indicates the transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will potentially be visible  
24 from the southern part of the VQO 6 area (Attachment R-6a); however, the ROW viewshed  
25 analysis indicates this Project feature will not be visible (Attachment R-6c).

26 The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 3.0 miles southeast of VQO 2. The ROW  
27 associated with this alternative will largely undetectable from the VQO 2 area due to screening  
28 from vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not cross VQO 2, it  
29 will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for this area (USFS  
30 1990a). Potential visual impacts resulting from the Morgan Lake Alternative on VQO 2 is not  
31 discussed further in this document.

32 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
33 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
34 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
35 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
36 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
37 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

38 **Conclusion.** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility and the distance  
39 from the Project, IPC concludes that visual impacts in VQO 6 will be **less than significant**.  
40 Additionally, the Project will comply with the Retention VQO, as the Proposed Route does not  
41 cross this resource.

## 1 **OR 237 Corridor West**

2 OR 237 Corridor West (Map ID: VQO 7) includes two parcels of NF lands within the foreground  
3 area along the OR 237 corridor west of North Powder and south of the Elkhorn Wildlife Area.  
4 The two parcels include approximately 336 acres and are classified as VQO Retention.

5 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO  
6 Retention. The Retention VQO provides for management activities that are not visually evident.  
7 Under Retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently  
8 found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction,  
9 pattern, etc., should not be evident.” (USFS 1974).

10 **Screening.** This area is located approximately 12 miles from the Proposed Route and is  
11 therefore outside of the analysis area. Consequently, no visual analysis was performed.

12 **Conclusion.** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility and the distance  
13 from the Project, IPC concludes that visual impacts in OR 237 Corridor West will be **less than**  
14 **significant**. Additionally, the Project will comply with the Retention VQO, as the Proposed  
15 Route does not cross this resource.

## 16 **OR 203 Corridor – Catherine Creek**

17 OR 203 Corridor – Catherine Creek (Map ID: VQO 8) includes approximately 590 acres of NF  
18 land in two parcels along OR 203 near Catherine Creek State Park. These lands are classified  
19 as VQO Retention and are approximately 8 miles east of the Proposed Route.

20 **Relevant Land Use Plan Designation.** The Wallowa-Whitman NF manages this area per VQO  
21 Retention. The Retention VQO provides for management activities that are not visually evident.  
22 Under Retention, activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture that are frequently  
23 found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction,  
24 pattern, etc., should not be evident.” (USFS 1974).

25 **Screening.** Bare-earth viewshed analysis indicates the Project will not be visible from this area  
26 (Attachment R-6a).

27 **Conclusion.** Because of the combination of both the low likelihood of visibility, and the distance  
28 from the Project, IPC concludes that visual impacts in OR 203 Corridor – Catherine Creek will  
29 be **less than significant**. Additionally, the Project will comply with the Retention VQO, as the  
30 Proposed Route does not cross this resource.

## 31 **3.3.3 Mitigation**

32 OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(D): The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or  
33 otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts.

### 34 **3.3.3.1 Project Design**

35 The use of certain design measures may reduce the potential visibility and visual impacts of  
36 transmission lines. Those measures typically include the type of structures used to support the  
37 transmission line; the types of materials used for the structures, conductors, and other  
38 hardware; and the color and texture of the surface finishes on these facilities. Similar measures  
39 are sometimes considered for station equipment, access roads, and other support facilities. The  
40 effectiveness of such measures depends on the environmental setting, particularly existing  
41 landscape features and their associated color and texture, backdropping, and relative scale of

1 other landscape features. The following general project design features aimed at reducing visual  
2 impacts were applied to the Project.

### 3 **Transmission Structure Design**

4 Exhibit B describes characteristics of the Project facilities, including the proposed transmission  
5 structures, conductors, stations, access roads, and other supporting facilities. IPC has followed  
6 standard utility practice in proposing to use lattice towers constructed of galvanized steel to  
7 support the 500-kV line. IPC has incorporated measures to reduce potential visual contrast of  
8 transmission facilities by using deglared galvanized steel, a finish treatment that provides a  
9 duller appearance than is typically associated with galvanized steel. The deglared steel is  
10 darker, less reflective, and better able to recede into the landscape when seen against a terrain  
11 backdrop. In addition, the conductors will have a non-specular finish that will reduce reflectivity  
12 and the potential for glare. To reduce visual impacts related to transmission structure design,  
13 IPC proposes that the Council include the following condition in the site certificate providing that  
14 IPC will use dull-galvanized steel and non-specular conductors:

15 **Scenic Resources Condition 1:** *During construction, the site certificate holder*  
16 *shall use dull-galvanized steel for lattice towers and non-specular conductors.*

### 17 **Vegetation Management**

18 IPC's draft Vegetation Management Plan (Exhibit P1, Attachment P1-4) describes vegetation  
19 management measures aimed at reducing visual impacts from the Project. These measures  
20 comply with applicable regulatory requirements (e.g., the North American Electrical Reliability  
21 Corporation, the Western Electricity Coordinating Council, and the U.S. Department of Labor,  
22 Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements). IPC will implement best  
23 management practices designed to limit the area of vegetation clearing and ground disturbance  
24 to that required to safely and efficiently install the Project facilities. In addition to such practices,  
25 IPC will employ specific measures to reduce visual impacts of the ROW in forested areas by  
26 "tapering" vegetation along the edge of the ROW. "Tapering" entails trimming vegetation to  
27 produce a more gradual change in vegetation height along ROW edges, thereby softening the  
28 transition from cleared ROW to standing forest. IPC will accomplish this by maintaining  
29 vegetation within the ROW at a maximum height of 20 feet in the wire zone (the area under the  
30 conductors and extending 10 feet outside the outermost conductors), and a maximum height of  
31 34 feet in the adjacent border zone area (approximately 87 feet on either side of the wire zone).  
32 This measure will result in a U-shaped vegetation profile within the ROW, rather than a distinct  
33 wall of vegetation at the edge of the ROW. To maintain the minimum required safety  
34 clearances, tree removal in hilly, forested areas will be limited in areas where mature trees will  
35 come within 50 feet of the conductors. Forested portions of the ROW located under high spans  
36 across canyons or ravines will be left intact, thereby reducing visual contrast of ROW clearing.

37 To ensure the protective measures set forth in the draft Vegetation Management Plan are  
38 incorporated into the final Vegetation Management Plan and to ensure compliance with the final  
39 Vegetation Management Plan, IPC proposes that the Council include the following condition in  
40 the site certificate providing for the same:

41 **Fish and Wildlife Condition 5:** *Prior to construction, the site certificate holder*  
42 *shall finalize, and submit to the department for its approval, a final Vegetation*  
43 *Management Plan. The protective measures described in the draft Vegetation*  
44 *Management Plan in ASC Exhibit P1, Attachment P1-4, shall be included as part*  
45 *of the final Vegetation Management Plan, unless otherwise approved by the*  
46 *department.*

1 ***Fish and Wildlife Condition 18:*** During construction, the site certificate holder  
2 shall conduct all work in compliance with the final Vegetation Management Plan  
3 referenced in Fish and Wildlife Condition 5.

4 ***Fish and Wildlife Condition 28:*** During operation, the site certificate holder  
5 shall conduct all work in compliance with the final Vegetation Management Plan  
6 referenced in Fish and Wildlife Condition 5.

### 7 3.3.3.2 Site-Specific Mitigation

8 As discussed above, in the absence of mitigation, the Project may cause significant adverse  
9 impacts to two important scenic resources within the analysis area: the Oregon Trail ACEC –  
10 NHOTIC Parcel and the Birch Creek ACEC. Based on this conclusion, IPC developed site-  
11 specific measures to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate these potentially significant impacts so  
12 that the Project can ultimately be constructed, operated, and maintained without a significant  
13 adverse impact.

## 14 **Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel**

### 15 **History of Siting and Mitigation Considerations**

16 In evaluating various alternatives for Project siting, IPC concluded that potentially significant  
17 visual impacts from facility structures located directly west of the NHOTIC (corresponding to the  
18 Flagstaff Alternative) could result. To address potential impacts, IPC analyzed three design  
19 options aimed at reducing adverse impact to less than significant: (1) applying a natina finish to  
20 the lattice structure; (2) using an H-frame structure with galvanized finish; or, (3) using an H-  
21 frame structure with a natina finish. These mitigation strategies were considered for six  
22 transmission tower structures located directly west and within 1,200 feet of the NHOTIC  
23 boundary. Because of the terrain backdrop, IPC selected the H-frame structure with the  
24 weathered steel surface treatment, as it was expected to reduce the visual contrast below that  
25 of the standard galvanized structures. The H-frame structure type was selected because these  
26 structure types can be designed with a lower overall height than either lattice towers or  
27 monopoles and can appear similar in character to the wood H-frame structures often used for  
28 transmission lines of 115-kV to 230-kV. H-frames also may appear to have a narrower profile,  
29 depending on the relationship of the viewer to the structure. The heights of the towers shown in  
30 the simulations prepared from KOP 25c were 145 feet for H-frame structures (as opposed to  
31 195 feet for lattice structures). Considering this mitigation, preliminary conclusions regarding  
32 visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II  
33 area assumed medium intensity impacts, resulting from both medium resource change and  
34 viewer perception. Medium intensity impacts were determined not to preclude the resource from  
35 providing the visual qualities that currently exist within the ACEC, or as influenced from the  
36 surrounding landscape. IPC concluded visual impacts, considering this mitigation and design,  
37 would be less than significant.

38 In preparation of final indicative layout for the Proposed Route, IPC explored additional Project  
39 mitigation and siting options near the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation  
40 site, and VRM II area to address concerns expressed by Baker County regarding construction  
41 and operation of the Project in active agricultural areas and visual impacts experienced from  
42 residential areas located to the south of the NHOTIC. The mitigation and siting options  
43 considered included the following: (1) combining the existing 230-kV line and the proposed  
44 Project's 500-kV line on a double circuit; and (2) considering the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative, re-  
45 routing the Project to the north of the Flagstaff Alternative and along the southern border of the  
46 Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area. Below, IPC  
47 discusses the double-circuit option and the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative.



## 1        **Double Circuit Option**

2        At the request of BLM and local government officials, IPC considered potentially locating the  
3        500-kV conductors on the same structures as the existing 230-kV line below the NHOTIC. This  
4        mitigation was considered for structures located directly west and within 1,200 feet of the  
5        NHOTIC boundary. The tower height used for the double-circuit option measured approximately  
6        178 feet. Though the double-circuit structure reduced the overall footprint of the existing and  
7        proposed transmission structures, it did not measurably reduce overall visual impacts  
8        experienced from the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM  
9        II area, as the greater height of the structures would increase visibility of the structures from  
10       areas within the resource. Moreover, IPC analyzed the simultaneous loss of the Project and the  
11       230-kV line and estimates the consideration of a simultaneous loss of both transmission circuits  
12       would result in a 175 MW reduction in the Project's capacity rating. This reduction undermines  
13       the Project objective of adding approximately 1,000 MW of capacity to the Idaho-Northwest  
14       transmission path. For these reasons, the double-circuit option was not carried forward for  
15       consideration.

## 16       **Proposed Route/Flagstaff Gulch Alternative**

17       The Proposed Route (also referred to as the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative) relocated the Project to  
18       the north, moving the Project outside of active agricultural areas to the south of the Oregon Trail  
19       ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area, thereby locating structures  
20       at the toe slope of the adjacent hillside. Though visual impacts were reduced for viewers from  
21       the south, the resulting alignment placed Project features approximately 0.1 mile closer to the  
22       Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area.

23       The original siting and design for the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative incorporated lattice structures.  
24       Preliminary review of lattice structures indicated potentially significant visual impacts to the  
25       Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area could result  
26       from the large scale of the structures and the visual clutter of the lattice structure when viewed  
27       at close proximity. In response, IPC considered mitigation options that would reduce impacts to  
28       less than significant to incorporate into the Project's final indicative design.

29       IPC engaged the BLM on June 24, 2016, to discuss general mitigation goals and options that  
30       could achieve those goals. Given the proximity of Project structures to the Oregon Trail ACEC –  
31       NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area (including the Panorama Point  
32       viewpoint), IPC's primary goal was to reduce visual clutter created by the lattice structure.  
33       Typically, when transmission towers are placed within a half mile or less from observer  
34       locations, the monopoles will occupy a smaller field of view than lattice thereby reducing overall  
35       contrast and scale dominance (BLM 2013). H-frame structures can achieve the same goal  
36       provided they are oriented parallel to the viewer such that the entirety of the structure does not  
37       occupy the field of view.

38       IPC considered the use of both mono-poles and H-frame structures for the Flagstaff Gulch  
39       Alternative. Mono-poles, though believed to have cleaner lines when viewed at close proximity,  
40       generally require a greater number of towers located closer together than H-frames or lattice  
41       towers. In this instance for the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative, mono-poles were dismissed due to  
42       the relatively tall height and broad diameter that would be required to support a 500-kV line. The  
43       large stature of these structures could result in greater overall contrast by increasing skylining.  
44       Additionally, it was concluded that monopoles could appear less harmonious with the more rural  
45       landscapes of the analysis area.

46       As noted, IPC also considered using the H-frame structure type to minimize visual clutter in the  
47       immediate foreground. Because the Flagstaff Gulch Alternative necessitated four dead-end

1 (DE) structures, IPC proposed to use all H-frame “family” tower structures, incorporating two-  
2 legged tangents and 3-legged dead-end structures. The H-frame “family” mitigation was applied  
3 to towers 145/5, 146/1 (DE), 146/2, 146/3 (DE), 146/4 (DE), 146/5, 147/1, 147/2 (DE), and 147/3.  
4 This approach allowed for the use of shorter-stature structures ranging in height from 100 feet to  
5 129 feet for towers located directly to the west of the NHOTIC. The proposed finish is weathered  
6 steel (or an equivalent coating). As demonstrated by the analysis, IPC concluded visual impacts  
7 to the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel, NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area from the  
8 Proposed Route (Flagstaff Gulch Alternative), as mitigated, will be less than significant.

9 To ensure no adverse visual impacts will occur to the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel,  
10 NHOTIC recreation site, and VRM II area, IPC proposes that the Council include the following  
11 condition in the site certificate incorporate the mitigation measures discussed herein:

12 **Scenic Resources Condition 2:** *During construction, to avoid significant*  
13 *adverse impacts to the scenic resources at the National Historic Oregon Trail*  
14 *Interpretative Center, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using*  
15 *tower structures that meet the following criteria between approximately Milepost*  
16 *145.1 and Milepost 146.6:*

- 17 a. H-frames;  
18 b. Tower height no greater than 130 feet; and  
19 c. Weathered steel (or an equivalent coating).

20 *Additionally, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using tower*  
21 *structures that meet the following criteria between approximately Milepost 146.6*  
22 *and Milepost 146.7:*

- 23 a. H-frames;  
24 b. Tower height no greater than 154 feet; and  
25 c. Weathered steel (or an equivalent coating).

## 26 **Birch Creek ACEC**

27 Preliminary impact assessments concluded the Project would result in less than significant  
28 visual impacts because the Proposed Route was sited outside of the VRM II area. Feedback  
29 from ODOE stated:

30 *the department disagrees with IPC’s determination of less than significant impact based*  
31 *solely on the proposed B2H facility being sited outside of the Birch Creek ACEC VRM*  
32 *Class II objective area. The department does not have adequate information to*  
33 *otherwise make a recommendation to Council regarding the significance of any impact*  
34 *to the scenic resources and values identified in the BLM’s management plan for the*  
35 *Birch Creek ACEC. The department requests that IPC consider potential mitigation*  
36 *measures such as alternative structure finishes (e.g., natina finish), and alternative*  
37 *structure types (e.g., H-frame), and then prepare visual simulations and re-conduct the*  
38 *impact assessment to scenic resources at Birch Creek ACEC to include such mitigation*  
39 *measures.*

40 In response, IPC explored the potential for H-frame structures with varying finishes to reduce  
41 visual impacts to less than significant, while addressing ODOEs concern that:

42 *the identified scenic resource value of Birch Creek ACEC goes beyond the boundaries*  
43 *of the ACEC itself, and incorporates the “landscape integrity” of the area, including the*  
44 *hills and views north of Farwell Bend and the Snake River.*

45 IPC concluded that the H-frame structures would not be sufficient to mitigate impacts, and that  
46 visual impacts to views to the north of the ACEC would remain. To address this concern, IPC

1 explored alternative routes south of the ACEC and further to the north, where siting of the  
2 Project at lower elevations would allow topographic features to screen views of the Project.

3 The Southern Route headed south just west of MP 195, at structure 196/1. The route was  
4 located on the west and south sides of a ridgeline; as a result, the structures were screened  
5 from view by this topographical feature. The Southern Route rejoined the Proposed Route south  
6 of MP 201.6. This siting scenario was successful in eliminating visual impacts to the Birch Creek  
7 ACEC, particularly by eliminating views of the structures to the north. However, the Southern  
8 Route presented an additional siting constraint in that it crossed lands identified as Sage  
9 Grouse Core Area (Category 1) and Core Area Exclusion.

10 To address this constraint, alternative routes located to the north of the Birch Creek ACEC were  
11 examined. The Northern Route proposal sought to eliminate views of transmission structures  
12 entirely by siting the Project in lower elevations to the north. This Route headed northeast from  
13 the Proposed Route at MP 197.3. After approximately 0.4 mile, the Route veered southeast to  
14 parallel the Proposed Route. The Northern Route reconnected with the Proposed Route at  
15 approximately MP 199.6. This Route was successful in screening Project features from view of  
16 the ACEC; however, it presented additional operational challenges in that it was sited within  
17 active agricultural areas and in close proximity to existing residents.

18 To address these constraints, IPC developed the Birch Creek North Route. The Birch Creek  
19 North Route, now incorporated into the Proposed Route analyzed in this document, includes the  
20 rebuild of 1.1 miles of the existing Quarts to Weiser 138-kV transmission line and the siting of  
21 the Project transmission line within the existing ROW. Between MP 197.6 and MP 198.8, the  
22 Proposed Route will be located in the existing IPC 138-kV transmission line ROW. The 138-kV  
23 transmission line will be rebuilt to the southwest of the Proposed Route in a new ROW. H-frame  
24 structures ranging in height from 65 to 100 feet will be used between MP 198 and MP 199. This  
25 structure type, combined with constructing towers at lower elevations than the ACEC, will  
26 maximize the proportion of the Project screened from view by existing topography. Though  
27 visible, the transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will not substantially lower  
28 the quality of the adjacent scenery outside the Birch Creek Parcel. As demonstrated by the  
29 analysis, IPC concludes that visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Parcel from  
30 the Proposed Route (Birch Creek North Route), as mitigated, will be less than significant. To  
31 ensure no adverse visual impacts will occur to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Parcel,  
32 IPC proposes that the Council include the following condition in the site certificate to incorporate  
33 the mitigation measures discussed herein:

34 **Scenic Resources Condition 3:** *During construction, to avoid significant adverse*  
35 *impacts to the scenic resources at the Birch Creek Area of Critical Environmental*  
36 *Concern, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using tower*  
37 *structures that meet the following criteria between approximately Milepost 199.1*  
38 *and Milepost 197.9:*

- 39 *a. H-frames; and*  
40 *b. Tower height no greater than 100 feet.*

### 41 3.3.3.3 Other Considerations – Owyhee River Crossing

42 In evaluating various alternatives for Project siting, IPC concluded that potentially significant  
43 visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the Lower Owyhee River could result. To  
44 address potential impacts, IPC analyzed two mitigation options aimed at reducing adverse  
45 impacts to less than significant: (1) relocating the 175-foot tower to an alternate location (Option  
46 1); and (2) reducing the height of the structure and moving it to an alternate location (Option 2).  
47 In preparing the final indicative design, IPC moved the Proposed Route to the north to align with

1 the existing utility corridor administered by the BLM (Figure R-3-18). Under this Project  
2 configuration, the need to mitigate potential impacts was alleviated. As discussed below,  
3 impacts under the Proposed Route considered in this document were determined to be less  
4 than significant, and therefore do not require either mitigation strategy.

5 The Proposed Route analyzed in this document includes a new location for crossing the  
6 Owyhee River. This Route was developed by the BLM to avoid crossing the Lower Owyhee  
7 River WSR Study Area. The new route also moved this portion of the Project into the BLM Vale  
8 District Utility Corridor. Under this Project configuration, two structures will be visible from the  
9 Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable WA interpretive site (KOP 8-52). These structures will be  
10 sited approximately 0.75 to 1.0 miles from the interpretive site and will appear subordinate to the  
11 surrounding landscape. Tower 250/4 does not exist under the New Owyhee River Crossing  
12 Route, nor would any towers be sited (or visible) where this tower is placed. This revised siting  
13 is sufficient to reduce impacts to the Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC/SRMA to less than  
14 significant. However, because the VRM Class II management area extends farther north than  
15 the ACEC/SRMA, and this area is still crossed by the Project, the New Owyhee River Crossing  
16 Route is not sufficient to bring the Project into conformance with Class II objectives of the VRM  
17 M5 area.

18 The BLM's land use planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-5 state, "an amendment shall be  
19 initiated by the need to consider a Proposed Action that may result in a change in the scope of  
20 resources uses or a change in the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan."  
21 Therefore, an RMP amendment to modify the Southeastern Oregon RMP regarding visual  
22 resources management in order to grant a ROW for the Proposed Route across BLM-  
23 administered lands managed under the Southeastern Oregon RMP will be necessary.  
24 Amending the RMP will result in changing the portion of VRM Class II lands crossed by the  
25 Proposed Route to VRM Class IV lands, which will allow major modification of the landscape  
26 character rather than requiring the landscape character to be retained. The change of current  
27 planning direction will be determined by the BLM as part of the National Environmental Policy  
28 Act process for this project, and IPC anticipates that the BLM will change the designation of the  
29 Lower Owyhee River area crossed by the Project from VRM Class II to VRM Class IV.

#### 30 **3.3.3.4 Design Option Considered but Dismissed**

31 Public comments requested information on the possibility of mitigating potential visual impacts  
32 by undergrounding the proposed transmission line, either as a standard approach or in select  
33 locations. Underground installation presents substantial challenges to Project design,  
34 construction, and maintenance discussed in detail in, Exhibit BB, and Attachment BB-3. Such  
35 systems also create reliability issues, as outage durations are typically longer and create needs  
36 for reactive power compensation. On a per-mile basis, underground installation is approximately  
37 12 to 17 times more expensive than is overhead installation. Based on these limitations, IPC  
38 does not consider underground installation to be a viable option for the Project.

#### 39 **3.3.4 Map of Scenic Resources**

40 OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(E): A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources  
41 described under (B).

42 An overview of scenic resources within the analysis area is shown in Attachment R-2 and more  
43 detailed maps are provided for each resource in the scenic impact summary sheets in  
44 Attachment R-3.

### 3.3.5 Monitoring Program

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(F): The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic resources.

The vegetation management measures discussed above will occur as a standard component of long-term Project maintenance activities and include ongoing monitoring to determine when vegetation treatment is needed at specific locations along the Project. Aside from changes to the surrounding vegetation, visual impacts typically do not change over time and monitoring will not result in a change to IPC operation and maintenance procedures. Accordingly, IPC does not propose any additional monitoring activities for visual impacts independent from monitoring associated with long-term Project maintenance activities.

## 4.0 IDAHO POWER'S PROPOSED SITE CERTIFICATE CONDITIONS

IPC proposes the following site certificate conditions to ensure compliance with the Scenic Resources Standard, among other EFSC standards:

### Prior to Construction

**Fish and Wildlife Condition 5:** *Prior to construction, the site certificate holder shall finalize, and submit to the department for its approval, a final Vegetation Management Plan. The protective measures described in the draft Vegetation Management Plan in ASC Exhibit P1, Attachment P1-4, shall be included as part of the final Vegetation Management Plan, unless otherwise approved by the department.*

### During Construction

**Scenic Resources Condition 1:** *During construction, the site certificate holder shall use dull-galvanized steel for lattice towers and non-specular conductors.*

**Scenic Resources Condition 2:** *During construction, to avoid significant adverse impacts to the scenic resources at the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretative Center, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using tower structures that meeting the following criteria between approximately Milepost 145.1 and Milepost 146.6:*

- a. H-frames;
- b. Tower height no greater than 130 feet; and
- c. Weathered steel (or an equivalent coating).

*Additionally, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using tower structures that meeting the following criteria between approximately Milepost 146.6 and Milepost 146.7:*

- a. H-frames;
- b. Tower height no greater than 154 feet; and
- c. Weathered steel (or an equivalent coating).

**Scenic Resources Condition 3:** *During construction, to avoid significant adverse impacts to the scenic resources at the Birch Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the site certificate holder shall construct the Project using tower structures that meeting the following criteria between approximately Milepost 199.1 and Milepost 197.9:*

- a. H-frames; and

1           **b. Tower height no greater than 100 feet.**

2           ***Fish and Wildlife Condition 18:*** During construction, the site certificate holder  
3           shall conduct all work in compliance with the final Vegetation Management Plan  
4           referenced in Fish and Wildlife Condition 5.

5           **During Operation**

6           ***Fish and Wildlife Condition 28:*** During operation, the site certificate holder  
7           shall conduct all work in compliance with the final Vegetation Management Plan  
8           referenced in Fish and Wildlife Condition 5.

9           **5.0 CONCLUSIONS**

10          Exhibit R demonstrates the design, construction, and operation of the Project—taking into  
11          account IPC’s proposed site-specific mitigation measures for the NHOTIC and Birch Creek  
12          ACECs—are not likely to result in significant adverse impact to scenic resources and values  
13          identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans, and  
14          federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area.

15          **6.0 COMPLIANCE CROSS-REFERENCES**

16          Table R-3 identifies the location within the ASC of the information responsive to the application  
17          submittal requirements OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r), the Scenic Resources Standard at OAR 345-  
18          022-0080, and the relevant Amended Project Order provisions.

19          **Table R-3. Compliance Requirements and Relevant Cross-References**

Requirement	Location
<b>OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)</b>	
(A) A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands within the analysis area.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.1
(B) Identification and description of the scenic resources identified as significant or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.1 and Attachment R-5
(C) A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the scenic resources identified in (B), including, but not limited to, impacts such as:	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.2
(i) Loss of vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of construction or operation; and	
(ii) Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.	
(D) The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.3
(E) A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources described under (B).	Exhibit R, Figure R-2-1 through Figure R-2-5
(F) The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic resources.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.5
<b>OAR 345-022-0080</b>	

Requirement	Location
(1) Except for facilities described in section (2), to issue a site certificate, the Council must find that the design, construction and operation of the facility, taking into account mitigation, are not likely to result in significant adverse impact to scenic resources and values identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area described in the project order.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.2
(2) The Council may issue a site certificate for a special criteria facility under OAR 345-015-0310 without making the findings described in section (1). However, the Council may apply the requirements of section (1) to impose conditions on a site certificate issued for such a facility.	Not applicable
<b>Amended Project Order Provisions</b>	
The application should include visual depictions (photo-simulations) of the project’s impact on scenic resources within the analysis area. It is recommended that visual simulations include depictions from select viewpoints in protected areas identified in Exhibit L that may be affected by the proposed facility. Photo-simulations and visual impacts assessments of permanent structures should include switching stations/substations, in addition to transmission lines, towers, and roads. For the purposes of Exhibit R, “local” land use plans include state, county, and city planning documents or inventories. The applicant shall also describe the measures it will take to minimize significant adverse impacts to important scenic resources identified by reviewing agencies.	Exhibit R, Attachment R-4 Section 3.4.2, and Section 3.4.3
If the applicant engages a multi-agency workgroup to inventory scenic resources or to assess visual impacts to scenic resources, incorporate into Exhibit R a description of the workgroup, its purpose, its membership, and any agreements made by the involved parties related to potential visual impacts of the proposed facility.	Exhibit R, Section 3.3.1

1 **7.0 RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS**

2 Table R-4 provides IPC’s responses to the public comments cited in the Amended Project  
3 Order.

4 **Table R-4. Public Comments**

Public Comments	Location
Commenters expressed concern about the visual impacts of towers and lights associated with the transmission line towers and related and supporting facilities. Exhibit R should address potential visual impacts of the proposed facility, and should discuss proposed mitigation measures (including the use of lattice versus monopole structures, co-location with existing lines, coating/painting options, placement of transmission towers below ridgelines, and a discussion about the use of underground installation in areas of high sensitivity).	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.2 and Section 3.4.3
Commenters expressed particular concern about avoiding visual impacts in the area of the National Oregon Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Baker County. Exhibit R should address this area specifically and discuss proposed alternative routes and mitigation measures to reduce visual impacts.	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.2 and Section 3.4.3

Commenters also expressed concern about visual impacts on the John Day River, wilderness and roadless areas, and designated scenic byways. Exhibit should include analysis of visual impacts and proposed mitigation measures for these areas, unless visual impacts to a particular area are already included in Exhibit L (Protected Areas).	Exhibit R, Section 3.4.2 and Attachment R-1
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**ATTACHMENT R-1**  
**VISUAL RESOURCES IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

Amended Project Order	First Amended Project Order, Regarding Statutes, Administrative Rules and Other Requirements Applicable to the Proposed Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line (December 22, 2014)
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EFSC or Council	Energy Facility Siting Council
IPC	Idaho Power Company
KOP	Key Observation Point
kV	kilovolt
OAR	Oregon Administrative Rules
ODOE	Oregon Department of Energy
Project	Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project
RAI	Request for Additional Information
SMS	Scenery Management System
VRI	Visual Resource Inventory
USFS	United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service



## 1 1.0 INTRODUCTION

2 This Attachment R-1 describes the scenic resources impact assessment methodology used by  
3 Idaho Power Company (IPC) to determine whether construction and/or operation of the  
4 Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (Project), after taking into account  
5 mitigation, may result in a “significant adverse impact” to scenic resources (Oregon  
6 Administrative Rules [OAR] 345-022-0080).

7 The methodology described in Attachment R-1 of this document was applied to the impact  
8 assessment and significance determination presented in Exhibits L, R, and T. This  
9 methodology, though rooted in impact assessment procedures established by the Bureau of  
10 Land Management (BLM) and United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS),  
11 addresses feedback from the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) received via Request for  
12 Additional Information (RAI) R-24, asking that the definition of “significance” provided in the  
13 Energy Facility Siting Council’s (EFSC or Council) rules at OAR 345-001-0010(53) be  
14 considered in the analysis. This RAI states:

15 *“The visual impact assessment in Exhibit R, and IPC’s conclusions whether the project*  
16 *will result in a significant visual impact is based entirely on impact assessment*  
17 *methodologies used by the BLM and USFS. Although EFSC rules do not mandate a*  
18 *particular visual assessment methodology (only that it be described in detail), the basis*  
19 *of the EFSC findings pertaining to IPC’s compliance with the Scenic Resource Standard*  
20 *(and the findings related to protected areas and recreation areas) is whether the facility*  
21 *will have a “significant adverse impact” after taking into account mitigation (see OAR*  
22 *345-022-0080).*

23 *Exhibit R (and its attachments) do not consider the definition of “significant” set forth in*  
24 *the Council’s rules at OAR 345-001-0010(53) when drawing its conclusions using the*  
25 *BLM/USFS methodologies. Provide an analysis of how the impact “rating” for each*  
26 *potentially affected scenic resource supports an affirmative Council finding on the Scenic*  
27 *Resource Standard (taking into account mitigation). That analysis should address and*  
28 *incorporate the EFSC definition of “significant” when drawing conclusions concerning*  
29 *visual impacts.”*

30 In response to this RAI, IPC refined the impact assessment approach to more explicitly address  
31 the Council’s definition of significance. IPC and its contractor met with ODOE on December 7,  
32 2016, to discuss the proposed framework for the revised methodology. ODOE reviewed the  
33 methodology and provided comment to IPC on January 15, 2016. The visual impact  
34 assessment methodology developed by IPC and described in Section 2.5 addresses those  
35 comments.

36 The visual impact assessment methodology provides background and context regarding the  
37 development of the methodology, and explains in detail each step of the methodology. This  
38 Attachment R-1 is organized as follows:

- 39 • Section 2.1 – Applicable EFSC standards and rules;
- 40 • Section 2.2 – IPC’s interpretation of a “significant” impact as defined in OAR 345-001-  
41 0010(53);
- 42 • Section 2.3 – A description of the analysis area pursuant to the Project Order;
- 43 • Section 2.4 – A description of resources considered in the analysis per OAR 345-022-  
44 0080;

- 1       • Section 2.5 – A detailed explanation of IPC’s methodology for establishing baseline
- 2       conditions, assessing visual impact, and determining whether an impact is “significant”;
- 3       and
- 4       • Section 2.6 – A brief summary of IPC’s visual impact assessment methodology.

## 2.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

### 2.1 Applicable Rules and Standards

The EFSC Scenic Resources Standard is set forth in OAR 345-022-0080:

*(1) Except for facilities described in section (2), to issue a site certificate, the Council must find that the design, construction and operation of the facility, taking into account mitigation, are not likely to result in significant adverse impacts to scenic resources and values identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area described in the project order.*

*(2) The Council may issue a site certificate for a special criteria facility under OAR 345-015-0310 without making the findings described in section (1). However, the Council may apply the requirements of section (1) to impose conditions on a site certificate issued for such a facility.*

In turn, OAR 345-001-0010(53) defines “significant” as:

*“having an important consequence, either alone or in combination with other factors, based upon the magnitude and likelihood of the impact on the affected human population or natural resources, or on the importance of the natural resource affected, considering the context of the action or impact, its intensity and the degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action. Nothing in this definition is intended to require a statistical analysis of magnitude or likelihood of a particular impact.”*

To demonstrate compliance with this standard, and in accordance with OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r), Exhibit R must include the following:

*An analysis of significant potential impacts of the proposed facility, if any, on scenic resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area, providing evidence to support a finding by the Council as required by OAR 345-022-0080, including:*

*(A) A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands within the analysis area.*

*(B) Identification and description of the scenic resources identified as significant or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important.*

*(C) A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the scenic resources identified in (B), including, but not limited to, impacts such as:*

*(i) Loss of vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of construction or operation; and*

*(ii) Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.*

*(D) The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts.*

*(E) A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources described under (B).*

1 (F) The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic  
2 resources.

3 Additionally, the Amended Project Order requires Exhibit R to include the following specific  
4 information:

5 *The application should include visual depictions (photo-simulations) of the project's*  
6 *impact on scenic resources within the analysis area, especially protected areas identified*  
7 *in Exhibit L. Photo-simulations and visual impacts assessments of permanent structures*  
8 *should include substations, in addition to transmission lines/towers, and roads. For the*  
9 *purposes of Exhibit R, "local" land use plans include state, county, and city planning*  
10 *documents or inventories. The applicant should also describe the measures it will take to*  
11 *minimize significant adverse impacts to important scenic resources identified by*  
12 *reviewing agencies (see Section VII of this order).*

13 *If the applicant engages a multi-agency workgroup to inventory scenic resources or to*  
14 *assess visual impacts to scenic resources, incorporate into Exhibit R a description of the*  
15 *workgroup, its purpose, its membership, and any agreements made by the involved*  
16 *parties related to potential visual impacts of the proposed facility.*

17 The scenic resources impact methodology described herein is also applied to visual values of  
18 protected areas and recreation opportunities to develop findings regarding the Project's  
19 compliance with the Protected Area Standard and Recreation Standard, respectively.

## 20 **2.2 Interpretation of "Significant"**

21 IPC incorporated the definition of "significant" per OAR 345-001-0010(53) as it pertains to  
22 scenic resources into the scenic resources assessment methodology by dividing the text of the  
23 definition into individual components, assigning specific indicators to address each component,  
24 and evaluating each indicator using specific criteria. Indicators and criteria are described in  
25 Table R-1-1, below.

26

1 **Table R-1-1. The Definition of Significance (per Council’s Rule OAR 345-001-**  
 2 **0005(53)) and Interpretation in Exhibit R)**

<b>Excerpt</b>	<b>Interpretation for Exhibit R</b>
“having an important consequence,”	An important consequence is considered a significant impact.
“either alone or in combination with other factors,”	Qualifying language suggests that an “important consequence” may be caused by the proposed development either alone or in combination with other past or present actions.
“based upon the magnitude and likelihood of the impact”	Magnitude represents the size and scale of the impact, and is measured in terms of visual contrast and scale dominance. Likelihood represents the probability of occurrence of an impact; for the purposes of Exhibit R, impacts analyzed were assumed to be likely to occur.
“on the affected human population”	The impact on the human population is measured in terms of the viewer’s perception of impacts to valued scenic attributes of the landscape.
“or [on the] natural resources”	The impact to the natural resource is measured in terms of the potential change in scenic quality and/or landscape character of the scenic resource,
“or on the importance of the natural resource affected”	The disjunction of the magnitude of the impact from the importance of the natural resource suggests that an impact to scenic values may not result in an “important consequence” if the scenic value affected is not considered important.
“Considering the context of the action or impact,”	The Council shall also consider the other “mitigating” (or “aggravating”) contextual factors, such as the extent to which impacts affect scenic values for which the resource was considered significant or important per OAR 345-022-0080;  or, for those resources (protected areas and recreation sites) not identified as significant or important per OAR 345-022-0080, the extent to which impacts to visual values are consistent with the standards and guidelines of relevant land management objectives.
“[the impact’s] intensity...”	The intensity of the impact considers how impacts would manifest on the landscape by assessing the combined effect of resource change and viewer perception.
“...and the degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action.”	Consider the extent to which adverse impacts are caused by the proposed facility, as opposed to other past or present actions. The contribution of this action to potential cumulative (additive) impacts should be disclosed.

## 2.3 Analysis Area

Pursuant to the Amended Project Order, the analysis area for Exhibit R includes the area within the Site Boundary, plus a 10-mile buffer surrounding the Site Boundary. In accordance with OAR 345-001-0010(55), the Site Boundary is defined as “the perimeter of the site of a proposed energy facility, its related or supporting facilities, all temporary laydown and staging areas, and all corridors and micrositing corridors proposed by the applicant.”

The Site Boundary for the Project includes the following related and supporting facilities in Oregon:

- The Proposed Route, consisting of 270.8 miles of new 500-kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line, removal of 12 miles of existing 69-kV transmission line, rebuilding of 0.9 mile of a 230-kV transmission line, and rebuilding of 1.1 miles of an existing 138-kV transmission line;
- Four alternatives that each could replace a portion of the Proposed Route, including the West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1 (3.7 miles), West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2 (3.7 miles), Morgan Lake Alternative (18.5 miles), and Double Mountain Alternative (7.4 miles);
- One proposed 20-acre station (Longhorn Station);
- Ten communication station sites of less than ¼-acre each and two alternative communication station sites;
- Permanent access roads for the Proposed Route, including 206.3 miles of new roads and 223.2 miles of existing roads requiring substantial modification, and for the Alternative Routes, including 30.2 miles of new roads and 22.7 miles of existing roads requiring substantial modification; and
- Thirty-one temporary multi-use areas and 299 pulling and tensioning sites of which four will have light-duty fly yards within the pulling and tensioning sites.

## 2.4 Resources Considered in the Analysis

Scenic resources considered in this analysis include those resources located within the analysis area identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans, and federal land management plans (OAR 345-022-0080). For each scenic resource, IPC identified the purpose of recognition or designation, relevant management standards and/or guidelines, and valued scenic attribute(s). Additionally, each scenic resource was described in terms of its geographic location and footprint (including size and configuration). Resources were classified as a point, area, and/or corridor based on the following definitions:<sup>1</sup>

- **Point:** Point-based resources include specific locations, such as designated vistas or interpretive signs, where the viewer experience is typically stationary and experienced from a single vantage point. Views from these locations may be directional (i.e., focal) or not (i.e., 360 degree panoramic).
- **Area:** Area-based resources include geographic areas where scenic values could be experienced from a variety of locations. Views from these locations are typically transient and experienced by viewers moving through the area (i.e., dispersed recreation). The

---

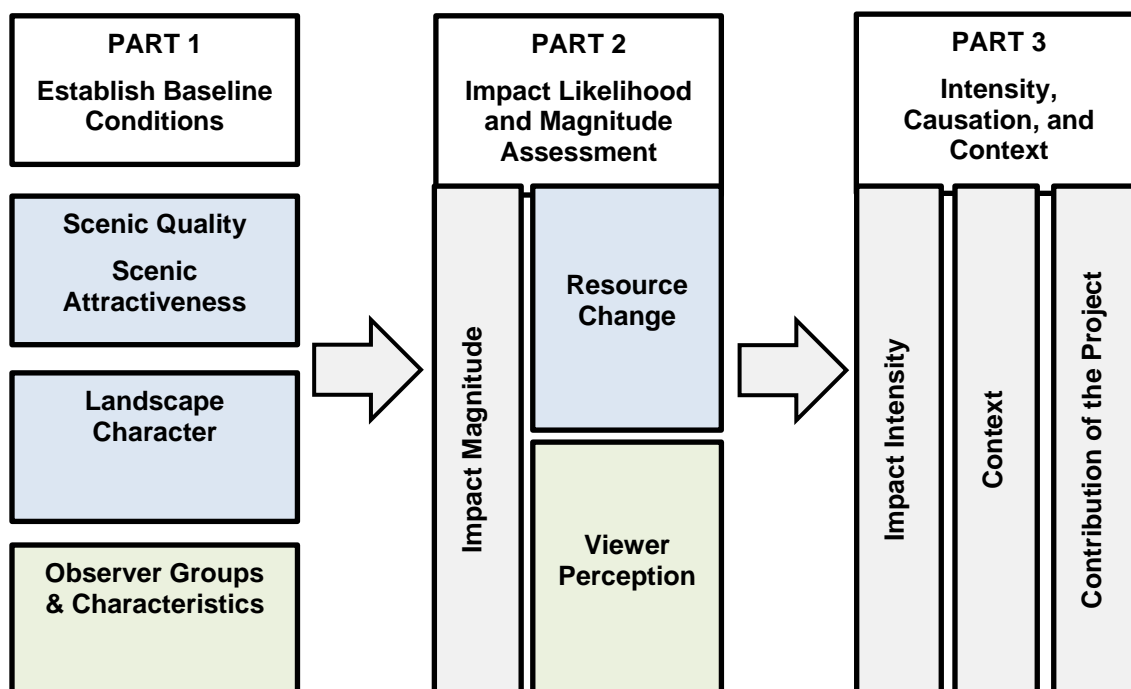
<sup>1</sup> Note that one or more of these categories may be applicable to a scenic resource; for example, an area-based resource may include one or more point-based resources within the boundary.

1 likelihood of viewers standing in the same spot during repeated visits is low. The degree  
 2 of variability of views experienced from area-based resources will depend on a variety of  
 3 landscape characteristics.

- 4 • **Corridor:** Corridors represent linear viewing experiences, in which scenic attributes are  
 5 experienced as a continuum. They may be focal (i.e., leading toward a noteworthy  
 6 natural feature; entrance way), and/or transient (i.e., passing through a landscape).

## 7 2.5 Visual Impact Assessment Procedure

8 The methods used to evaluate Project impacts on scenic resources, and to determine the  
 9 significance of Project impacts to scenic resources are described in a series of three parts,  
 10 below. These steps are illustrated in Figure R-1-1.



11 **Figure R-1-1. Visual Impact Assessment Methodology Flowchart**

12 The impact assessment considered potential impacts that could result from major Project  
 13 components, such as the transmission towers, conductors, cleared right-of-way, and access  
 14 roads, and also temporary support facilities that would be used during construction. IPC used  
 15 several sources of data to inform the analysis of potential impacts of the Project on scenic  
 16 resources, including Geographic Information System-based viewshed models, field visits, site-  
 17 specific analysis at Key Observations Points (KOPs), photosimulations, and review of Google  
 18 Earth imagery.

### 19 **PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions**

20 Baseline conditions were established by assessing indicators of *scenic quality/attractiveness*  
 21 and *landscape character* for each resource. The assessment was completed using a  
 22 combination of general observations made during field visits, baseline data collected at  
 23 representative KOPs, and review of landscape features relative to Project components using  
 24 Google Earth. These data were used to identify baseline landscape character and scenic quality  
 25 for each scenic resource. Viewer groups were also identified as part of establishing baseline

1 conditions. KOPs were identified through review of applicable land use and resource plans,  
2 consultation with agencies and organizations, and viewshed analysis. The KOPs used in the  
3 analysis are indicated on the maps included as Attachment R-2.

4 The analysis area includes scenic resources administered by the BLM and USFS. Both  
5 agencies have established baseline scenic resources inventory procedures:

- 6 • The BLM manages visual resources through the Visual Resource Management System  
7 (BLM 1986). Visual values are established through the visual resource inventory (VRI)  
8 process, which classifies scenery based on the assessment of three components: scenic  
9 quality, visual sensitivity, and distance.
- 10 • The USFS manages scenic resources through the Visual Management System  
11 established in The National Forest Management, Volume 2, Agricultural Handbook 462  
12 (1974) to inventory, classify, and manage lands for visual resource values. In 1995, the  
13 USFS visual resource management guidelines and monitoring techniques evolved into  
14 the Scenery Management System (SMS) as described in *Landscape Aesthetics: A  
15 Handbook for Scenic Management, Agricultural Handbook* (USFS 1995). The USFS  
16 describes baseline condition in a similar manner; however baseline components include  
17 measures of scenic attractiveness and integrity, landscape visibility (i.e., distance  
18 zones), and concern level (i.e., sensitivity).

19 Because analogous concepts to scenic quality are found in the USFS SMS as scenic  
20 attractiveness and in the BLM Visual Resource Management system as scenic quality, the  
21 approach and terminology used by these land management agencies was used to assess  
22 baseline conditions on lands administered by these agencies. In other words, the BLM system  
23 was used on BLM lands and USFS system was used on USFS lands. To address scenic  
24 resources on non-BLM or non-USFS lands, the method that most closely matched the prevailing  
25 geographic location and physiography of the resource were used according to the following  
26 conventions:

- 27 • BLM methods were applied to scenic resources in non-forested areas.
- 28 • USFS methods were applied to scenic resources in forested areas.

29 For both systems, the evaluation of scenic quality or attractiveness was typically applied to  
30 specific geographic areas referred to as Scenic Quality Rating Units (BLM) and Ecological Units  
31 (USFS). For the purpose of this analysis, the geographic areas considered were defined by the  
32 boundaries of scenic resources analyzed. The goal of the application of the BLM and USFS  
33 systems was to develop consistent baseline data for scenic quality for each resource that could  
34 be used to measure resource change in the impact determination.

### 35 **Scenic Quality / Attractiveness**

#### 36 *BLM Visual Resource Management System*

37 Baseline conditions on BLM-administered lands were established by measuring the scenic  
38 quality per BLM VRI procedures (BLM 1986). Scenic quality was quantified through the scoring  
39 of seven key factors: landform, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural  
40 modifications. Each key factor was scored based on guidelines described below (BLM 1986).  
41 Ranking is relative to other similar features within the physiographic province. Table R-1-2,  
42 below, lists the scoring criteria used to rank of each key factor (BLM 1986).



1 **Table R-1-2. Rating Criteria for Key Factors Used to Assess Scenic Quality per BLM Visual Resource Management**  
 2 **System**

Factor	Rating Criteria and Score		
Landform	<b>5</b> – High vertical relief as expressed in prominent rock cliffs, spires, or massive rock outcrops, or severe surface variation or highly eroded formations including major badlands or dune systems; or detailed features dominant and exceptionally striking and intriguing such as glaciers	<b>3</b> – Steep canyons, mesas, buttes, cinder cones, and drumlins; or interesting erosional patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features which are interesting though not dominant or exceptional.	<b>1</b> – Low, rolling hills, foothills, or flat valley bottoms; or few or no interesting landscape features.
Vegetation	<b>5</b> – A variety of vegetation types as expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns.	<b>3</b> – Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two major types.	<b>1</b> – Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation.
Water	<b>5</b> – Clear and clean appearing, still, or cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape.	<b>3</b> – Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape.	<b>0</b> – Absent, or present, but not noticeable.
Color	<b>5</b> – Rich color combinations, variety or vivid color, or pleasing contrasts in soils, rock, vegetation, water, or snow fields.	<b>3</b> – Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock, and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element.	<b>1</b> – Subtle color variations contrast or interest; generally mute tones.
Influence of Adjacent Scenery	<b>5</b> – Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality.	<b>3</b> – Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality.	<b>0</b> – Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality.
Scarcity	<b>5+</b> – One of a kind; or unusually memorable, or very rare within a region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing, etc.	<b>3</b> – Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region.	<b>1</b> – Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region.
Cultural Modification	<b>2</b> – Modifications add favorably to visual variety while promoting visual harmony.	<b>0</b> – Modifications add little or no visual variety to the area, and introduce no discordant elements.	<b>-4</b> – Modifications add variety but are very discordant and promote strong disharmony.

1 After the scenic quality evaluation was completed, scores for each key factor were totaled to  
2 derive an overall Scenic Quality Classification for the resource. Scenic quality was classified as  
3 Class A, B, or C, with Class A receiving a total score of 19 or more, Class B receiving a score  
4 from 12 to 18, and Class C scoring 11 or less. Landscapes ranked as Class A have the highest  
5 apparent scenic quality, while landscapes ranked as Class C have the lowest (BLM 1986).

### 6 *USFS Scenery Management System*

7 Baseline conditions for resources located on USFS-administered lands were described in terms  
8 of both "Scenic Attractiveness" and "Scenic Integrity."

9 Scenic attractiveness pertains to the "intrinsic scenic beauty of the project area," and is  
10 categorized as: Class A (Distinctive), B (Typical), or C (Indistinctive). The combination of valued  
11 landscape elements such as landform, water characteristics, vegetation, and cultural features,  
12 are used in determining the measure of Scenic Attractiveness.

- 13 • **Landform Patterns and Features:** Includes characteristic landforms, rock features, and  
14 their juxtaposition to one another.
- 15 • **Surface Water Characteristics:** The relative occurrence and distinguishing  
16 characteristics of rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands. Includes features such as  
17 waterfalls and coastal areas.
- 18 • **Vegetation Patterns:** Relative occurrence and distinguishing characteristics of potential  
19 vegetative communities and the patterns formed by them.
- 20 • **Land Use Patterns and Cultural Features:** Visible elements of historic and present  
21 land use that contribute to the image and sense of place.

22 Scenic integrity refers to the degree to which a landscape is free from visible disturbances that  
23 detract from the natural or socially valued appearance (i.e., valued landscape character). Scenic  
24 integrity is evaluated by measuring degree of alteration in line, form, color, texture from natural  
25 or naturally appearing landscape character by measuring changes in scale, intensity, and  
26 pattern against the attributes of that landscape character and is classified as follows (USFS  
27 1995):

- 28 • **Very High:** Valued existing or desired future landscape character is intact and complete  
29 with only minute, if any, deviations.
- 30 • **High:** Valued landscape character appears unaltered. Deviations may be present but  
31 they mimic the landscape character so completely that they are not evident.
- 32 • **Moderate:** Valued landscape character appears slightly altered. Noticeable deviations  
33 remain visually subordinate to the landscape character.
- 34 • **Low:** Valued landscape character appears moderately altered. Deviations begin to  
35 dominate the valued landscape character.
- 36 • **Very Low:** Valued landscape character appears heavily altered. Deviations strongly  
37 dominate the valued landscape character.
- 38 • **Unacceptably Low:** Landscapes appear extremely altered. Deviations extremely  
39 dominate the valued landscape character.

### 40 **Landscape Character**

41 Landscape character is a descriptive means to assess a landscape. Attributes of landform,  
42 vegetation, waterform, wildlife, spatial character, and cultural or historic features were described  
43 in terms of their relative dominance or prominence to the character and influence on the "sense  
44 of place" (USFS 1995). Character elements were described in terms of existing form, line, color,

1 and texture, with consideration of landscape factors (principles) such as contrast, sequence,  
2 axis, convergence, co-dominance, scale, and enframement (USFS 1995, BLM 1986). Because  
3 the BLM does not have a classification system for landscape character, landscape character for  
4 all resources was classified per the USFS system (1995), regardless of jurisdiction or  
5 physiography of the resource. Landscape character classes are described below:

- 6 • Naturally Evolving: Landscape character expresses the natural evolution of biophysical  
7 features and processes, with very limited human intervention.
- 8 • Natural Appearing: Landscape character expresses predominantly natural evolution, but  
9 also human intervention including cultural features and processes.
- 10 • Cultural: Landscape character expresses built structures and landscape features that  
11 display the dominant attitudes and beliefs of specific human cultures.
- 12 • Pastoral: Landscape character expresses dominant human created pastures,  
13 “meadows,” and associated structures, reflecting valued historic land uses and lifestyles.
- 14 • Agricultural: Landscape character expresses dominant human agricultural land uses  
15 producing food crops and domestic products.
- 16 • Historic: Landscape character expresses valued historic features that represent events  
17 and period of human activity in the landscape.
- 18 • Urban: landscape character expresses concentrations of human activity, primarily in the  
19 form of commercial, cultural, education, residential, transportation structures, and  
20 supporting infrastructure.

## 21 Viewer Groups and Characteristics

- 22 • Viewer groups associated with each resource were evaluated to understand certain  
23 characteristics that inform the extent to which potential changes in landscape character  
24 and quality would be perceived (perception of change). This assessment assumes a  
25 high sensitivity exists among all viewer groups based on the identification of the  
26 resource as important in a planning document. Therefore, this assessment instead  
27 focuses on understanding characteristics that describe the relationship of the observer to  
28 the potential impact, and the landscape context of that relationship. Viewer  
29 characteristics assessed included viewer location (distance), viewer geometry (superior,  
30 inferior, or at grade), and viewer duration or exposure (BLM 1986). The landscape  
31 context included consideration of landscape type – i.e., focal or panoramic. Observer  
32 characteristic are summarized below:
- 33 • **Viewer Location:** The degree of perceived visual contrast and scale dominance of an  
34 object is influenced by its distance from the observer. As viewing distance increases, the  
35 Project would appear smaller and less dominant. Likewise, as distance increases, the  
36 apparent contrast of color would decrease (BLM 1986)
- 37 • **Viewer Geometry:** Viewer geometry refers to the spatial relationship of the observer to  
38 the viewed object (i.e., the Project), including both the vertical and horizontal angles of  
39 view (BLM 2013). The vertical angle of view refers to the observer’s elevation relative to  
40 the viewed object. The horizontal angle of view refers to the compass direction of the  
41 view from the observer to the object. Visibility is typically greater for observers whose  
42 viewing angle is directed toward a Project feature than for those with a lateral view.
- 43 • **Viewer Duration / Exposure:** Viewer duration/exposure refers to the length of time  
44 Project features may be in view. This description would disclose whether expected  
45 viewer exposure was limited to a short duration or number of viewpoints or prolonged  
46 and/or experienced from multiple viewpoints.

## 1 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

2 The definition of “significant” per OAR 345-001-0010(53) and the interpretation for Exhibit R are  
3 described in Table R-1-1, above. IPC extrapolated indicators from the components of the  
4 definition of significant, which were used to evaluate Project impacts and assess the  
5 significance of the impacts. IPC’s approach uses a three-step process as described below.

### 6 Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration

7 First, IPC determined the type of Project-related actions that could affect the resource and the  
8 expected duration of potential impacts. Project-related actions that could affect scenic resources  
9 included construction and operation of Project facilities including permanent features  
10 (transmission towers, conductors, access roads, stations, communication stations) and  
11 temporary features (multi-use sites and pulling and tensioning sites). Other actions, such as  
12 revegetation or restoration that could be prolonged in time, but not permanent.

13 “Impact duration” was categorized as temporary, short-term, or long-term based on whether an  
14 impact would occur only during Project construction, or for up to 3 years (temporary), for less  
15 than 10 years (short-term), or for greater than ten year or for the life of the Project (long-term).  
16 This analysis assumes only those actions identified as long-term are considered potentially  
17 significant. Temporary or short –term impacts were dismissed because they would not  
18 permanently alter scenic quality or landscape character, or jeopardize the ability of the resource  
19 to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in relevant land use plans.  
20 The magnitude of temporary and short-term impacts is disclosed; however, potential impacts  
21 are not analyzed in detail.

22 The criteria used to evaluate the “impact duration” indicator are shown in Table R-1-3, below.

23 **Table R-1-3. Criteria Used to Determine Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria		
Impact Duration	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).

24

### 25 Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance

26 Per the Council’s rule OAR 345-001-0010(53), an important consequence is in part determined  
27 by the magnitude and likelihood of the impact. IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely”  
28 to occur. The “magnitude” of impacts was measured by assessing the level of visual contrast  
29 and scale dominance of Project components relative to the existing landscape. Visual contrast  
30 is described as the extent to which an object appears different from the surrounding visual  
31 environment. It is measured using the four basic design elements of form, line, color, and  
32 texture (BLM 1986). Primary sources of visual contrast for transmission towers typically include

1 form and line, based on the straight vertical lines of the structures relative to the flat, horizontal,  
2 or rolling lines of the horizon. This method assumes that visual contrast between the Project and  
3 the existing landscape character contributes to an adverse visual impact and it is not a measure  
4 of the Project's overall attractiveness (BLM 1986). Visual contrast rating criteria are described  
5 below:

- 6 • **None:** The element contrast is not visible or perceived.
- 7 • **Weak:** The element contrast can be seen but does not attract attention.
- 8 • **Moderate:** The element contrast begins to attract attention and begins to dominate the  
9 characteristic landscape.
- 10 • **Strong:** The element contrast demands attention, will not be overlooked, and is  
11 dominant in the landscape.

12 Visual contrast was determined by implementing the visual contrast rating at each relevant KOP  
13 (BLM 1986) remotely using Google Earth and supporting photography and photosimulations  
14 when available. The character, composition, and dimensions of the various structural  
15 components of the Project, as defined in Exhibit B, were used to determine the expected  
16 appearance of the Project from select resources. Realistic models of the Project structures  
17 (towers) and conductors were used to develop computer-generated photosimulations of the  
18 Project from selected KOPs representing visibility from these resources. The appearance of the  
19 Project at locations where photosimulations were not prepared was inferred based on visibility  
20 assessment, inferences provided by the simulations at other locations, and the graphical  
21 representations of the Project facilities in Exhibit B.

22 Several "environmental factors" were considered in the contrast rating process (BLM 1986):

- 23 • **Distance:** The contrast created by a project usually is less as viewing distance  
24 increases.
- 25 • **Relative Size or Scale:** The contrast created by a project is directly related to its size  
26 and scale as compared to the surroundings in which it is placed. Scale dominance refers  
27 to the scale of an object relative to the visible expanse of the landscape that forms its  
28 setting (BLM 1986). A dominant feature of a landscape tends to attract attention to it and  
29 becomes the focal point of the view. Where two or more features both attract attention  
30 and have generally equal visual influence over the landscape, they are considered co-  
31 dominant. An object or feature that is easily overlooked or absorbed by the surrounding  
32 landscape is considered subordinate.
- 33 • **Light Conditions:** The amount of contrast can be substantially affected by the light  
34 conditions. The direction and angle of lighting can affect color intensity, reflection,  
35 shadow, form, texture, and many other visual aspects of the landscape. The influence of  
36 lighting conditions is considered in the interpretation of visual simulations and expected  
37 visual contrast.
- 38 • **Spatial Relationships:** The spatial relationship within a landscape is a major factor in  
39 determining the degree of contrast.
- 40 • **Motion:** Movement, such as that from increased vehicles or personnel, can draw  
41 attention to or away from a project

42 A weighted viewshed model was used to support our understanding of the influence of scale (as  
43 determined by the number of transmission towers visible) and spatial relationship on the impact  
44 magnitude. The weighted viewshed model considered the contribution of each tower to potential  
45 visibility such that the resulting "positive" signature for visibility indicated the number of towers  
46 visible from each pixel (Attachment R-6b). Though this model provides a better indication of

1 potential visibility of transmission towers, it is also limited in that it does not provide information  
 2 on what Project features triggered the positive signature, or at what distance these features are  
 3 located. Consequently, the weighted bare-earth model is of greatest utility in determining  
 4 potentially visibility of a limited number of transmission towers.

5 IPC incorporated the contrast rating and environmental factors discussed above as criteria used  
 6 to evaluate the “impact magnitude” indicator are shown in Table R-1-4 below.

7 **Table R-1-4. Criteria Used to Determine Magnitude**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.

8 Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception

9 The determination of magnitude is used as the basis for evaluating the level of change to scenic  
 10 quality and landscape character of the resource (resource change) and how that change would  
 11 be perceived by viewers (viewer perception). Resource change and viewer perception were  
 12 evaluated to determine the intensity of the visual impact.

13 **Resource Change**

14 Per the Council’s rule OAR 345-001-0010(53), an important consequence is determined, in part,  
 15 by assessing the impact of the proposed action on the natural resource. The impact to the  
 16 natural resource was determined by measuring the change in baseline conditions of scenic  
 17 quality/attractiveness and landscape character likely to result based on the design, construction,  
 18 and operation of the Project. “Resource change” was considered low, medium, or high based  
 19 upon the geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts and the degree to which  
 20 those impacts alter scenic quality/attractiveness and/or character of the landscape (Table R-1-  
 21 4). A change in landscape character could result if Project features introduce character  
 22 attributes that deviate substantially from those present in the existing landscape such that the  
 23 resulting landscape assumes a new character type.

24 *BLM Visual Resource Management System*

25 For those resources for which baseline scenic quality was assessed using BLM VRI  
 26 assessment methodology (BLM 1986), change in scenic quality was determined by assessing  
 27 potential change in any of the key factors used to assess scenic quality. Whether a reduction in  
 28 score for any key factor used to assess scenic quality results in a change in scenic quality class  
 29 is dependent on the overall post-Project score of the key factors for scenic quality. Although  
 30 each key factor considered in the assessment of scenic quality has the potential to change  
 31 under post-Project conditions, the primary factors that tended to change based on post-Project  
 32 conditions were “Adjacent Scenery” and “Cultural Modification.” The level of change induced by  
 33 either of these key factors under post-Project conditions provides one metric of the overall  
 34 contribution of the Project to visual impacts.

35 As indicated in Table R-1-2, “Adjacent Scenery” considers the degree to which scenery *outside*  
 36 the resource being evaluated enhances the overall impression of the scenery of the resource.  
 37 The distance at which adjacent scenery will influence scenery within the rating unit typically

1 ranges from 0 to 5 miles, depending upon the characteristics of the topography, the vegetative  
2 cover, and other such factors (BLM 1986). This factor is generally applied to units that would  
3 normally rate very low in score, but the influence of the adjacent unit would enhance the visual  
4 quality and raise the score. Under post-Project conditions, the contribution of adjacent scenery  
5 to overall scenic quality may be reduced in situations where the Proposed Route is located  
6 within the middleground distance zone of the scenic resource.

7 “Cultural modification” to landform/water, vegetation, and from the Project facilities within the  
8 resource being evaluated could also lower scenic quality scores. As indicated in Table R-1-2,  
9 Cultural modification that detracts from scenic quality can be rated with a negative value,  
10 thereby lowering the overall scenic quality score.

### 11 *USFS Scenery Management System*

12 For those resources for which baseline scenic attractiveness was assessed using USFS SMS  
13 assessment methodology (USFS 1995), potential change in scenic attractiveness was assessed  
14 by considering change landscape attributes or cultural features that are expected to result from  
15 operation of the Project, and the extent to which those features could alter scenic attractiveness.  
16 The potential for reduction in scenic integrity was also considered in the assessment of the  
17 overall intactness of the landscape character.

18 For resources where there was a change in landscape character, scenic quality/attractiveness,  
19 or scenic integrity (resource change of medium or high) the Project’s overall contribution to that  
20 change was disclosed.

### 21 **Viewer Perception**

22 Per the Council’s rule OAR 345-001-0005(53), an important consequence is determined, in part,  
23 by the impact on the affected human population. The impact to the human population was  
24 interpreted as the extent to which an observer would perceive changes to valued landscape  
25 attributes. “Viewer perception” was ranked as low, medium, or high based on the location of the  
26 viewer relative to the medium to high magnitude impact (i.e., elevated, neutral, or inferior  
27 vantage point, and whether views are predominantly peripheral, or head-on) and the duration  
28 the impact would be viewed (episodic, intermittent, or continuous).

- 29 • **Angle of Observation:** The apparent size of a project is directly related to the angle  
30 between the viewer’s line-of-sight and the slope upon which the project is to take place.  
31 As this angle nears 90 degrees (vertical and horizontal), the maximum area is viewable.
- 32 • **Length of Time the Project Is In View:** If the viewer has only a brief glimpse of the  
33 project, the contrast may not be of great concern. If, however, the project is subject to  
34 view for a long period, as from an overlook, the contrast may be very significant.
- 35 • **Season of Use:** Contrast ratings should consider the physical conditions that exist  
36 during the heaviest or most critical visitor use season, such as snow cover and tree  
37 defoliation during the winter, leaf color in the fall, and lush vegetation and flowering in  
38 the spring.

39 The criteria used to evaluate two indicators of intensity (resource change and viewer perception)  
40 are shown in Table R-1-5 below.

1 **Table R-1-5. Criteria Used to Determine Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).

2 ***PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context***

3 Per the Council's rule OAR 345-001-0010(53), an important consequence also considers the  
4 "context of the action or impact, its intensity, and the degree to which the degree to which the  
5 possible impacts are caused by the proposed action." Drawing from impact determinations  
6 made in Part 2, significance criteria addressing each of these components was assessed as  
7 described below.

8 **Impact Intensity**

9 Impact intensity was determined by considering the level of resource change and how those  
10 visual impacts were perceived by viewers. As shown in Table R-1-6, impacts were considered  
11 to be of high intensity if the level of resource change was ranked as high, despite whether visual  
12 impacts were perceived by viewers. Resource change ranked as medium was considered to be  
13 of high intensity where viewer perception of impacts was considered high.



1 **Table R-1-6. Criteria Used to Determine Impact Intensity**

Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

2 Adverse impacts rated as **low intensity** were not considered to be potentially significant and  
3 were not considered further. As stated previously, only long-term impacts were considered to be  
4 potentially significant. Accordingly, only long-term impacts of medium or high intensity were  
5 considered to be potentially significant.

6 Degree to Which the Possible Impacts are Caused by the Proposed Action

7 The degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action is disclosed for  
8 resources determined to be adversely impacted by the Project. The contribution of the Project to  
9 adverse impacts is based on the level of resource change, taking into account baseline  
10 conditions (past or present actions) and direct and indirect impacts of the Project. Per the  
11 definition of “significant” in OAR 345-001-0010(53), an “important consequence” may occur  
12 either alone or in combination with other factors. Accordingly, the degree to which possible  
13 impacts may be caused by the Project are analyzed, however, this aspect of the significance  
14 criteria was not considered a discriminator of significance. Instead, it clarifies the potential role  
15 of the Project in altering baseline conditions by re-stating metrics used to determine resource  
16 change.

17 The degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action was classified as  
18 follows:

- 19 • Project Effects (P): The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the  
20 proposed facility, and are not the result of other past or present actions.
- 21 • Combined Effects (C): The scenic quality of the resource under post-project conditions is  
22 the result of the combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions.  
23 Additional narrative is provided for each resource, as applicable.

24 Context

25 For those impacts judged to be long-term and medium to high intensity, a determination of  
26 significance was made by considering the context of adverse impacts. The **context** of the  
27 impact considered the role of scenery as a valued attribute of the resource<sup>2</sup> and the extent to  
28 which expected impacts are consistent with the standards and guidelines of relevant land  
29 management objectives. As follows, a conclusion of “less than significant” impact could be  
30 reached if the valued attributes of the resource could persist despite a high intensity impact. If,  
31 because of high intensity impacts, the resource no longer provided the valued scenic attribute(s)  
32 for which it was deemed important, the impact was found to be “significant.”

33 Criteria used to evaluate context in order to come to an overall significance determination are  
34 described in Table R-1-7.

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<sup>2</sup> For Exhibit R, scenery is considered a valued attribute of all scenic resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans, and federal land management plans per OAR 345-022-0080.

1 **Table R-1-7. Criteria Used to Determine Context**

Indicator	Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; <b>or</b> , Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	<p><b>Persistence of Scenic Value is either:</b></p> <p><b>Not-Precluded</b> Impacts would not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; <b>or</b>,</p> <p><b>Precluded</b> Impacts would preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.</p>

2 As summarized in Table R-1-8 below, in order for an adverse visual impact to be potentially  
3 significant, it must affect a resource for which scenery is considered a valued attribute in such a  
4 manner that the valued scenic attribute no longer provides the scenic value for which it was  
5 designated or recognized.

6 **Table R-1-8. Criteria Used to Determine Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts**

	<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

7  
8 A conclusion of “less than significant” could be reached if the valued scenic attributes of the  
9 resource could persist. If, because of high intensity impacts, the protected area would no longer  
10 provide the valued scenic attribute(s) for which it was deemed important, the impact was found  
11 to be “potentially significant.”

12 **2.6 Summary**

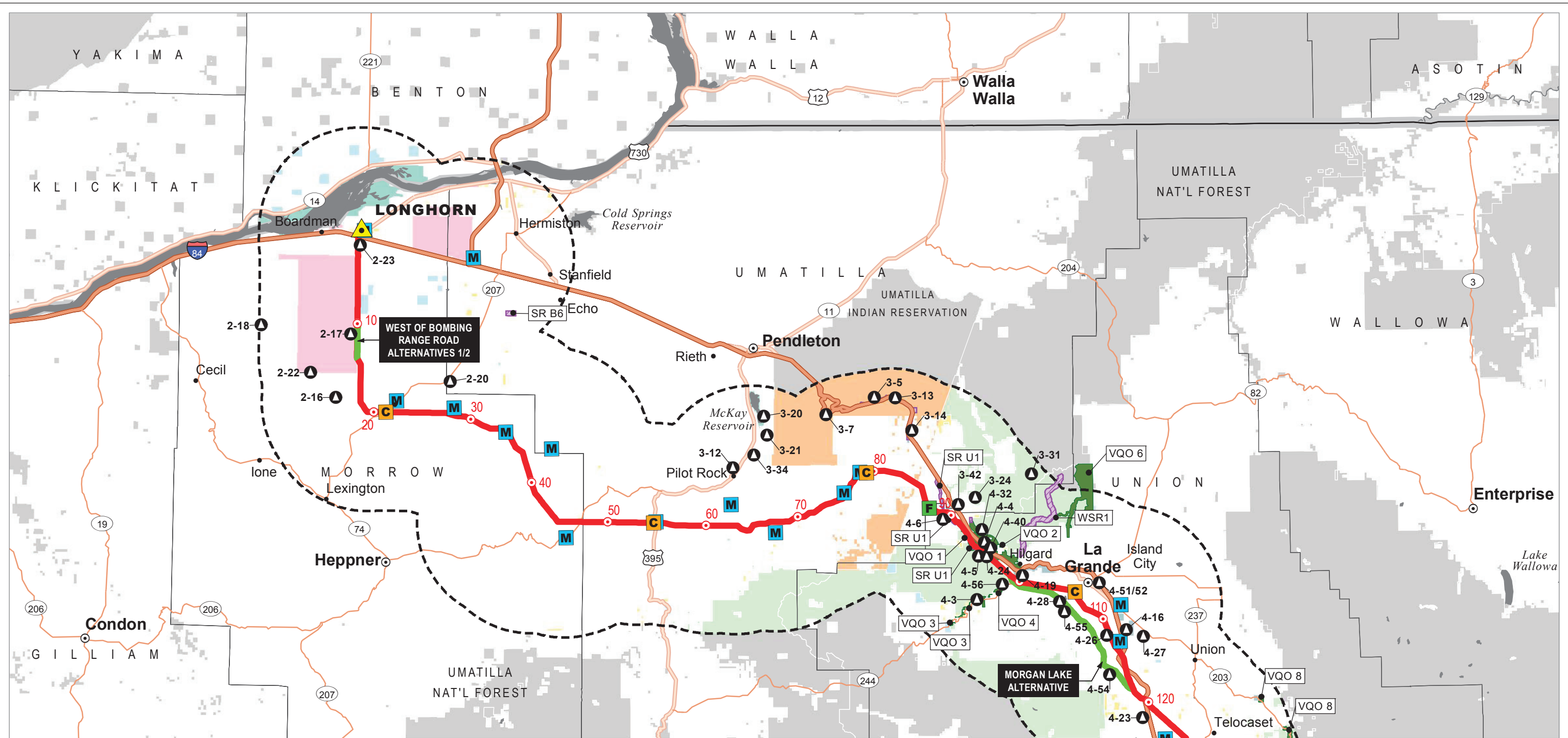
13 For each resource, IPC performed a three-part analysis: (1) establish baseline conditions; (2)  
14 assess potential impacts of the Project; and (3) determine potential significance of Project  
15 impacts. Consistent with OAR 345-001-0010(53), IPC’s determination of whether an impact may  
16 be significant was based on consideration of the “context of the action or impact, its intensity  
17 and the degree to which the possible impacts are caused by the proposed action.”

1 **3.0 REFERENCES**

- 2 BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 1986. Visual Resource Inventory. BLM Handbook H-8410-  
3 1. Accessed March 10, 2016. Available online at:  
4 [https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Media\\_Library\\_BLM\\_Policy\\_H-8410.pdf](https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Media_Library_BLM_Policy_H-8410.pdf)  
5 USFS (United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service). 1995. Landscape Aesthetics, a  
6 Handbook for Scenery Management. Agriculture Handbook Number 701.

**ATTACHMENT R-2**  
**MAP FIGURES**

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**Map Area**

0 10 Miles

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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June 2017

- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Scenic Features
    - Key Observation Points
    - Scenic Resources (polygon)
  - Visual Management Areas
    - USFS VQO Retention
  - Project Features
    - Proposed Route
- Land Status**
- Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile Marker
  - Communication Station
  - Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area
  - Station
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Bureau of Reclamation
- Indian Reservation**
- Indian Reservation
  - Military Reservation or Corps of Engineers
  - Other Federal
  - Private
  - State or Local
  - State or Local Parks and Recreation, Wildlife or Forest
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - U.S. Forest Service
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation**
- Other Features**
- Cities or Towns
    - County Seat
    - Other
  - Roads
    - Interstates
    - Highways
    - Major Roads

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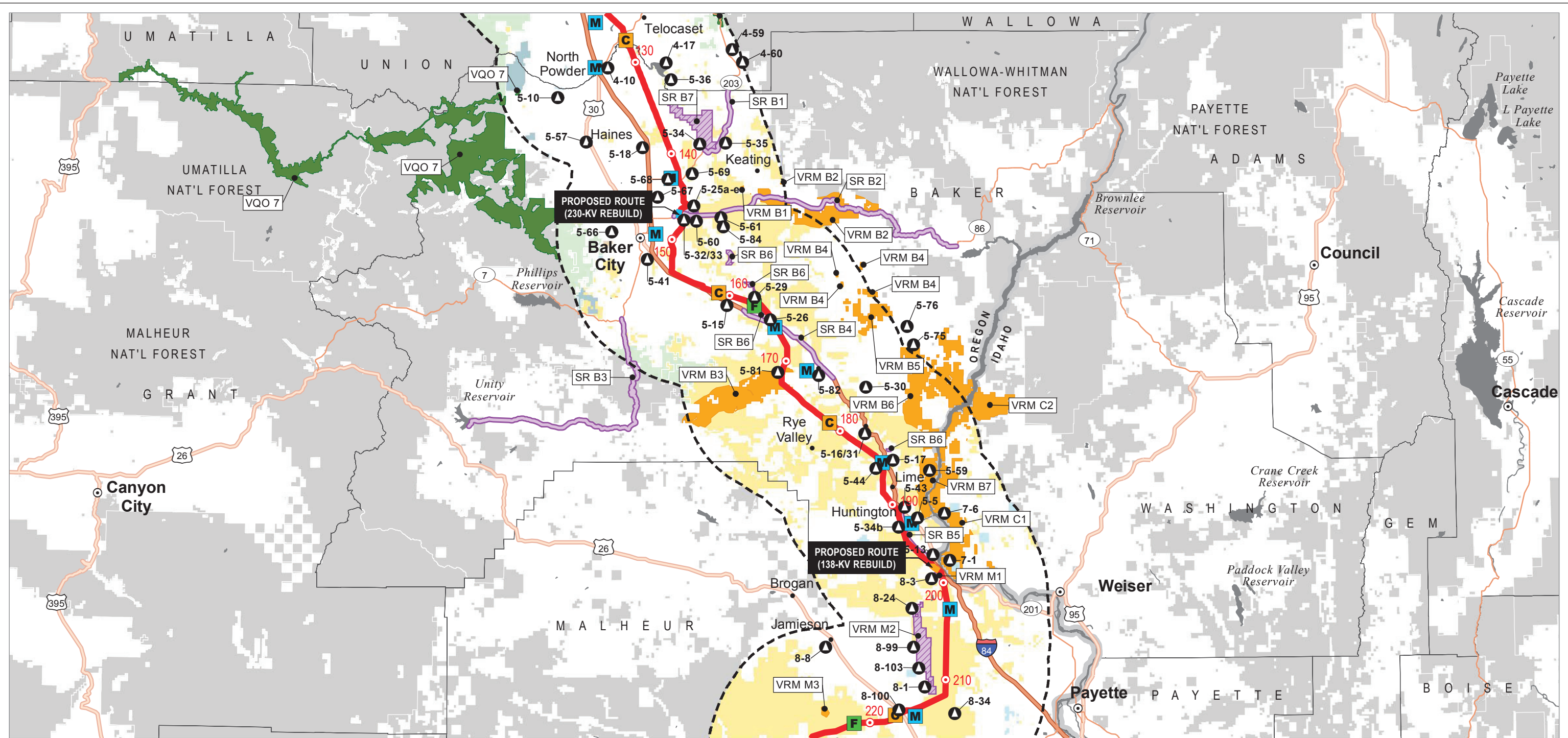
Boardman to Hemingway  
Transmission Line Project

**Attachment R-2  
Scenic Resources**

Proposed and Alternative Routes

Map 1





- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Scenic Features
    - Key Observation Points
    - Scenic Resources (line)
    - Scenic Resources (polygon)
  - Visual Management Areas
    - BLM VRM Class II
    - USFS VQO Retention

- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Proposed Route (138-kV Rebuild)
  - Proposed Route (230-kV Rebuild)
  - Ten-mile Marker
  - Communication Station
  - Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area

- Land Status**
- Bureau of Land Management
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - Indian Reservation
  - Military Reservation or Corps of Engineers
  - Other Federal
  - Private
  - State or Local
  - State or Local Parks and Recreation, Wildlife or Forest

- Other Features**
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - U.S. Forest Service
  - Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Cities or Towns
    - County Seat
    - Other

- Roads**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads

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Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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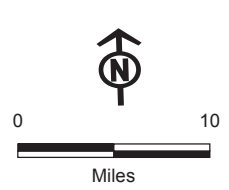
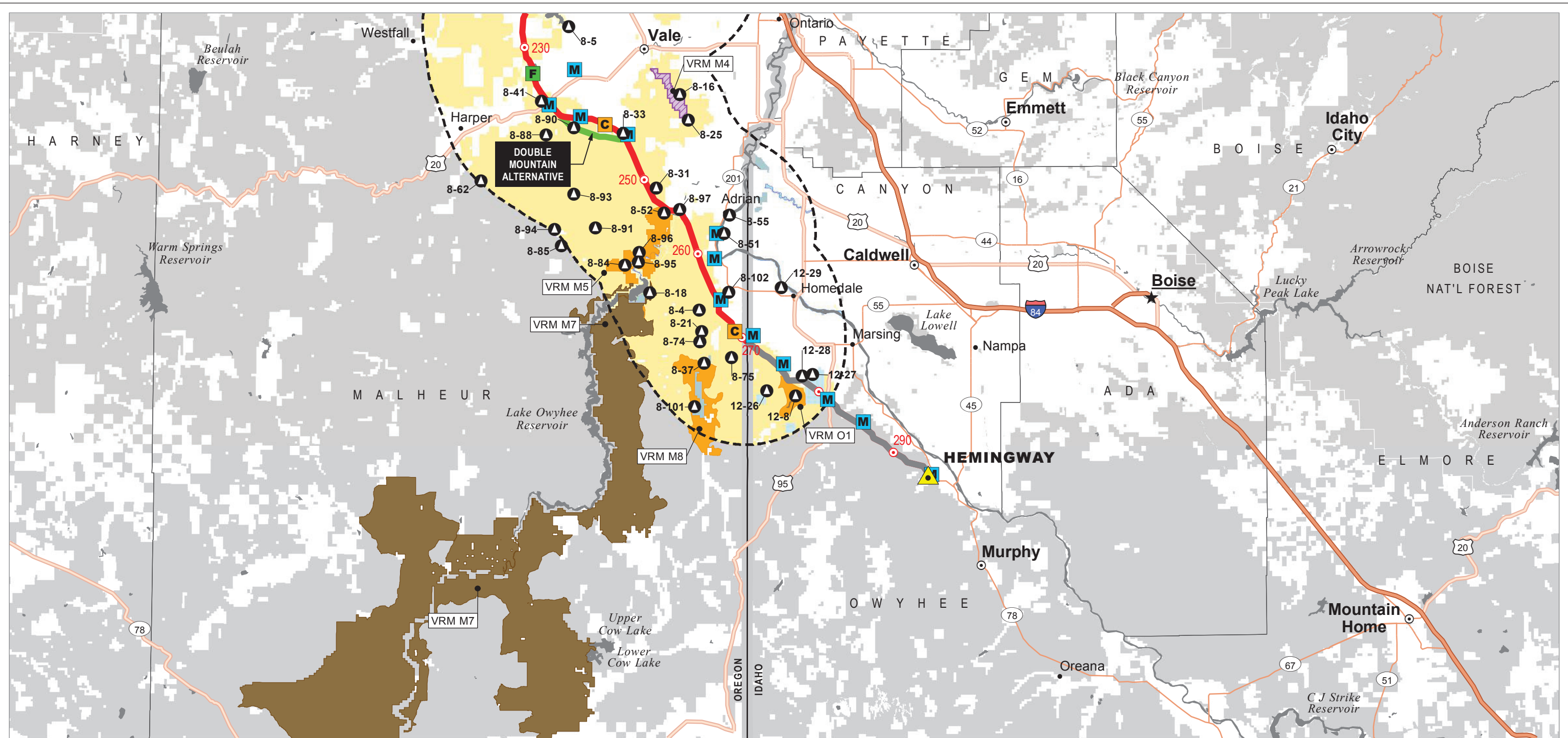
June 2017

**Attachment R-2**  
**Scenic Resources**

Proposed and Alternative Routes

Map 2





**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
- Scenic Features**
- Key Observation Points
- Scenic Resources (polygon)
- Visual Management Areas**
- BLM VRM Class I
- BLM VRM Class II

**Project Features**

- Proposed Route
- Alternative Route
- Proposed Route Not in Oregon
- Ten-mile Marker
- Communication Station
- Light-Duty Fly Yard
- Multi-Use Area

**Land Status**

- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Indian Reservation
- Military Reservation or Corps of Engineers
- Other Federal
- Private
- State or Local
- State or Local Parks and Recreation, Wildlife or Forest

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation

- Other Features**
- State Capital
  - County Seat
  - Other

- Roads**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads



Boardman to Hemingway  
Transmission Line Project

**Attachment R-2  
Scenic Resources**

Proposed and Alternative Routes

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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**ATTACHMENT R-3**  
**SCENIC RESOURCES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Amended Project Order	First Amended Project Order, Regarding Statutes, Administrative Rules and Other Requirements Applicable to the Proposed Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line (December 22, 2014)
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EFSC or Council	Energy Facility Siting Council
GIS	geographic information system
I-84	Interstate 84
IPC	Idaho Power Company
KOP	Key Observation Point
kV	kilovolt
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
MP	milepost
NHOTIC	National Historic Trail Interpretive Center
OAR	Oregon Administrative Rules
OPRD	Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
OR	Oregon Route
ORV	Outstandingly Remarkable Value
Project	Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROW	right-of-way
SEORMP	Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan
SMS	Scenery Management System
SR	Scenic Resource
VRI	Visual Resource Inventory
VRM	Visual Resource Management
VQO	Visual Quality Objective
USFS	United States Forest Service
WSR	Wild and Scenic River

1

## **VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

2 The following comprises the visual impact assessments for the Boardman to Hemingway  
3 Transmission Line Project (Project). Visual impact assessments were performed according to  
4 the visual impact methodology described in Attachment R-1.

## 1.0 BLUE MOUNTAIN FOREST WAYSIDE/BLUE MOUNTAIN FOREST STATE SCENIC CORRIDOR

**Resource:** Blue Mountain Forest Wayside/Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R, T

**Exhibit R Map ID:** Scenic Resource (SR) U1

**Relevant Plan:** Union County Comprehensive Plan (Union County 1984)

**Resource Type:** Linear Corridor

**Relevant Key Observation Points (KOP):** 4-5

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** The Union County (1979) Land Use Plan notes:

*“Several areas in the County have been considered by either State or Federal agencies for inclusion into their respective scenic programs. The only two areas actually designated are shown on the Plan Map as the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside and the Minam River, both designated by the Oregon Transportation Commission.”* (Appendix J, Scenic Areas [p. 99])

The Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is described as an approximately 0.5-mile-wide corridor located along Interstate 84 (I-84), west of La Grande. The corridor was designated to preserve the scenic character of this portion of the Grande Ronde River and provide a rest area for travelers.

Union County (1984) supplemented the land use plan to provide additional information about Goal 5 resources. Section IX of the supplement addresses Outstanding Scenic Views and Sites (p. 44), indicating that the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is given special consideration by the Oregon Department of Transportation and that no conflicting uses are anticipated. Union County planning staff indicated there are no planned updates or amendments to the Union County Comprehensive Plan at this time.

The Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and Blue Mountain Forest Wayside are administered by OPRD. These resources are partially coextensive, and as such, will be collectively referred to as the Blue Mountain Corridor.

Though no planning document has been prepared for this resource, OPRD describes it as property providing the public with an opportunity to experience one of the few examples of mature evergreen forests along I-84 (OSP 2016).

**Interpretation of Designation:** OPRD provided the following comment on draft Exhibit R, prepared by Idaho Power Company (IPC):

*“OPRD owns the property in Union County identified as the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside. The property is managed as a State Scenic Corridor providing the public with an opportunity to relax and enjoy one of the few examples of mature evergreen forests along I-84. Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor is composed of intermittent stands of old-growth ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine and grand fir and contains undisturbed examples of native plants and animals...All attempts to locate this project outside of the viewshed, or at the extreme edge of, allowing for no visibility should be made to ensure future generations can enjoy this unique area.”*(Alice Beals, OPRD, personal communication, October 8, 2012)

1 Based on the comment provided by OPRD, IPC interprets the scenic value of this resource to  
2 be the aesthetic quality of contiguous old growth within the Blue Mountain scenic corridor. The  
3 “natural appearing” character of the resource should be maintained as perceived from the Old  
4 Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road in the Blue Mountains.

5 **Resource Overview:** The Blue Mountain Corridor is located along segments of the Old  
6 Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road in the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountain Corridor  
7 boundary includes approximately 990 acres within five separate parcels, all of which are within  
8 the visual analysis area. In general, the parcels are relatively long, narrow, linear features.  
9 Visitors typically access the Blue Mountain Corridor via one or more of three I-84 interchanges.

10 From northwest to southeast, the Blue Mountain corridor begins in the vicinity of Deadman’s  
11 Pass, as the route climbs Emigrant Hill into the Blue Mountains. The first corridor parcel spans a  
12 stretch of Old Emigrant Hill Road for approximately 0.5 mile near the headwaters of Mission and  
13 Cottonwood creeks. Approximately 2 miles farther east, the second Blue Mountain Corridor  
14 parcel follows I-84 and Old Emigrant Hill Road to the east and south for about 6.4 miles. This  
15 parcel ends just southeast of Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area and about 2 miles north of  
16 the small community of Meacham.

17 The third Blue Mountain Corridor parcel begins just south of Meacham and follows I-84 for 1.4  
18 miles. It then angles south for approximately 3.6 miles along Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage  
19 Road to Kamela, with approximately the last 0.5 mile in Union County.

20 The fourth Blue Mountain Corridor segment begins less than 1 mile from the end of the third  
21 parcel, about 0.7 mile southeast of Kamela, following Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road  
22 and the Union Pacific Railroad for approximately 2 miles. This Blue Mountain Corridor parcel is  
23 located from 1 to 1.5 miles west of I-84 in Railroad Canyon.

24 The fifth parcel of the Blue Mountain Corridor begins near Motanic and extends to the southeast  
25 and east for nearly 3 miles. The eastern end of this parcel is just on the east side of I-84 near  
26 Exit 248, about 11 miles northwest of La Grande. This parcel is also located within Railroad  
27 Canyon and follows the course of Dry Creek, Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road, and the  
28 Union Pacific Railroad. Most of this Blue Mountain Corridor parcel is roughly parallel to I-84 and  
29 is located about 0.5 mile to 1 mile southwest of the highway.

30 The resource is considered viewer-based, with scenic value perceived by viewers as they travel  
31 along the corridor.

32 Per Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 345-022-0080, Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic  
33 Corridor is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

34 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor is being evaluated as a  
35 Protected Area.

36 Per OAR 345-022-0100, Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor is being evaluated as a  
37 Recreation Resource.

38 **Existing Conditions:** The Blue Mountain Corridor is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of  
39 the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. Existing topography is primarily rolling, punctuated by the  
40 straight to curvilinear lines created by steep drainages. Existing vegetation is dominated by  
41 ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine, and grand fir, and appears nearly contiguous  
42 along the edges of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

43 The Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road is characterized as a narrow, two-lane road that  
44 winds naturally along the upper portion of a steep valley wall. The roadway runs adjacent to a  
45 heavy-rail line to the south. Views to the southwest across the valley are primarily blocked by  
46 dense vegetation along the perimeter. Intermittent views across the valley are characterized by



1 a mosaic of open meadows, irregularly shaped forest patches, and a network of forest roads.  
2 Views to the north/northwest of the Frontage Road are dominated by the steep slope of the  
3 valley wall. This steep viewing angle precludes views to the ridgeline along the majority of the  
4 corridor. One notable exception is located at the northern extent of parcel 4, where eastbound  
5 travelers experience temporary views of rock outcroppings along the ridgeline that extend briefly  
6 to the foreground-midground distance zone. The eastern-most terminus of the scenic corridor  
7 crosses I-84.

8 **Landscape Character** is largely “natural appearing.”

9 **Scenic Attractiveness:** Class B, Typical.

10 **Scenic Integrity:** High - Valued landscape character appears unaltered. Deviations  
11 may be present but they mimic the landscape character so completely that they are not  
12 evident.

13 **Viewer Groups:** Roadway travelers along Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

## 14 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 15 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

16 The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 3.7 miles southeast of the Blue Mountain  
17 Corridor. Project components associated with this alternative route will not be visible from the  
18 Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor due to screening by forest. Therefore, potential  
19 visual impacts to the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Forest from the Morgan Lake  
20 Alternative are not discussed further in this Exhibit.

21 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
22 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
23 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
24 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
25 cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 26 **Proposed Route**

27 The Project will cross the fifth parcel of the scenic corridor between project mileposts (MP) 94.6  
28 and 94.8 near KOP 4-5 (Figure R-3-1). Two towers will be sited outside the scenic corridor and  
29 support the line span across the resource. No towers will be placed within the scenic corridor.  
30 The Project will be primarily visible from parcel 5 and 6.

31 The Project, including access roads and pulling and tensioning sites, will be situated on the  
32 crest of the ridgeline to the north of the sixth parcel of the scenic corridor, outside of the scenic  
33 corridor boundary. The steep angle of observation would preclude views of project features from  
34 Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. The perimeter of the roadway will remain forested,  
35 thereby screening structures from view by roadway travelers. Roadway travelers approaching  
36 where the Project crosses the Frontage Road will experience views of the conductors spanning  
37 the road in the foreground. Visual contrast of the conductors will be weak.

38 The tops of some towers may be visible from the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road near  
39 the northern and southern ends of parcel 5 at distances of approximately 0.2 miles. The  
40 perimeter of the roadway within all six parcels will remain forested, which coupled with steep  
41 viewing angles from many locations along the roadway, will limit the portion of the towers visible  
42 to the top. Visual contrast will be weak and the towers will appear subordinate where visible,  
43 since they will be partially screened. Viewer exposure will be brief and experienced both head-  
44 on and peripherally for all parcels. Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road will be used as an  
45 access road; however, no substantial improvements to this roadway will occur. Other access

1 roads, including existing roads requiring improvement and new bladed roads, will be located on  
 2 the northwest side of the Proposed Route. Pulling and tensioning sites will be located adjacent  
 3 to the scenic corridor.

4 The cleared right-of-way (ROW) will not be visible from roadway viewing platforms within any of  
 5 the scenic corridor parcels due to steep viewing angles and tall, mature vegetation bordering the  
 6 roadway. The Landscape Character will remain primarily natural appearing. Scenic  
 7 Attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic Integrity will remain high. Valued landscape  
 8 character appears unaltered. Deviations may be present, but they mimic the landscape  
 9 character so completely that they are not evident.

#### 10 **Likelihood of Impact**

11 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

#### 12 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> The towers located outside of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and the conductor spanning the resource will be visible from Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road for the life of the Project.			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Project features will be largely outside of the viewshed of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. Steep slopes and tall, mature vegetation abut the road such that the viewing angle is severe, limiting the extent of views. Additionally, the Proposed Route is primarily sited on the north side of the ridgetop, predominantly outside of the viewshed of the road. Where the Proposed Route crosses the corridor, the conductors will introduce weak visual contrast and will be subordinate to existing landscape features due to shielding by vegetation and topography. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness and/or character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The landscape will remain primarily natural appearing. Scenic attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic integrity will remain high. Valued landscape character appears unaltered. Deviations may be present, but they mimic the landscape character so completely that they are not evident. Therefore, resource change will be <u>low</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer exposure will be brief and experienced both head-on and peripherally for all parcels. Additionally, viewing angle will typically be severe such that drivers will not experience it. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 Impact intensity will be low due to low resource change and low viewer perception. Therefore,  
4 impacts will be less than significant and are not carried forward further in the analysis.

5 The Project will have low magnitude impacts as steep slopes and tall, mature vegetation will  
6 create severe viewing angles, limiting the extent of views, and no towers will be visible where  
7 the Proposed Route crosses the scenic corridor. The landscape will remain primarily natural  
8 appearing, scenic attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical), and scenic integrity will remain  
9 high such that resource change will be low. Viewer exposure will be brief and experienced both  
10 head-on and peripherally for all parcels. Viewing angle will typically be severe such that viewer  
11 perception will be low. Therefore, impact intensity will be low.

### 12 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

13 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
14 result of other past or present actions.

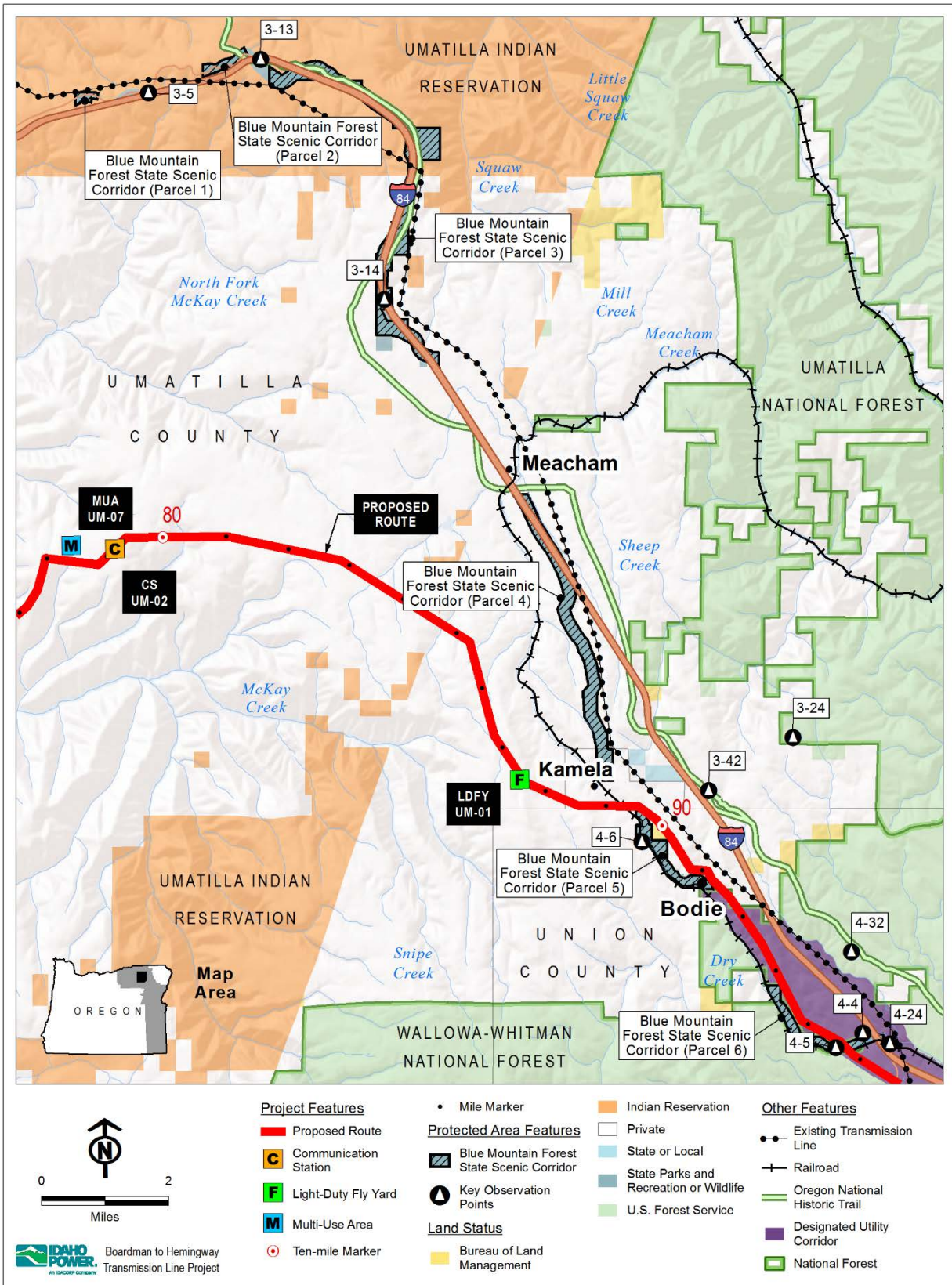
1 **Context**

2 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
3 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

4 **Summary and Conclusion**

5 The Project will result in long-term visual impacts at the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside/Blue  
6 Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor. However, impacts will be of low magnitude and viewer  
7 perception will be low. Impacts will be of low intensity and **less than significant**.





1  
2 **Figure R-3-1. Blue Mountain Forest Wayside/Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor**

## 2.0 OREGON ROUTE 203 (FROM MP 22.9 TO MP 31.09)

**Resource:** Oregon Route (OR) 203 (From MP 22.9 to MP 31.09)

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B1

**Relevant Plan:** Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)

**Resource Type:** Linear Corridor

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-34; 5-35

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Per the Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993):

“Scenic Views and Sites” are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation... The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000”.

**Interpretation of Designation:** Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker County with regard to the scenic segment OR 203. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the resource.

Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.” See Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993).

**Resource Overview:** The segment of OR 203 that is identified by Baker County as a scenic highway extends from MP 22.9 (Baker/Union County line) to MP 31.09 (Salt Creek, east of the junction with Sunnyslope Lane, a distance of about 8 miles. The scenic stretch of highway generally travels in a southwest-northeast direction.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, OR 203 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

OR 203 is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

OR 203 is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

**Existing Conditions:** Surrounding terrain ranges from flat to moderately tall rolling hills in the foreground, middleground, and background. Dominant lines include flat, horizontal lines along the horizon and curved, undulating lines from the rolling hills. Vegetation is mostly low-lying shrubs and grasses that have no discernible line or shape. Vegetation becomes more evenly distributed in the middleground and foreground. Color complexity is limited to golden grasses and greens, blues, and grays of the sagebrush. The dominant textures from the vegetation are fine from grasses and coarse from the sagebrush in the foreground. Vegetation texture becomes smooth and fine in the middleground and foreground. The Powder River is visible briefly where the highway crosses the river near KOP 5-35. Here, a linear band of riparian trees is apparent, primarily in the left side view south of the highway bridge. The strong, angular lines of the structures located near the river are apparent, but do not dominate the landscape. The

1 landscape appears large-scale and expansive. Cultural modifications include a paved-surface  
 2 road, native-surface two-track roads, several fence lines, transmission poles and conductors,  
 3 and a few structures. Despite these human modifications, overall the landscape surrounding OR  
 4 203 (SR B1) has a natural-appearing character. Because the resource is located on non-  
 5 forested lands, methods used to assess scenic quality are based on Bureau of Land  
 6 Management (BLM) methodology. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per  
 7 manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the OR 203 is  
 8 considered low (class C).

Oregon Route 203 Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	2	1	2	2	2	0	11 (C)

9  
 10 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups are primarily motorists traveling along OR 203 at high speeds.

## 11 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 12 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

13 OR 203 is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the  
 14 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project  
 15 feature are not discussed any further in this document.

16 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
 17 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
 18 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
 19 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
 20 cleared ROW. The analysis below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 21 **Proposed Route**

22 The Proposed Route, including both towers and access roads, will be located 3.3 miles  
 23 southeast of OR 203 at its closest point (Figure R-3-2). The bare-earth viewshed indicates  
 24 project visibility will be low from all portions of the OR 203 resource; only a few towers will be  
 25 visible at any time and no towers visible from the majority of the resource. Rolling terrain in the  
 26 foreground will screen views of the Project; however, the tops of a few towers could be visible  
 27 against the skyline in the middleground, appearing as dark lines against the light sky. Due to  
 28 overall low visibility, distance, and the large expansive scale of the landscape, the proposed  
 29 towers will introduce weak visual contrast and will be readily absorbed by the landscape such  
 30 that they will appear subordinate. Access roads will not be visible from the resource. Views of  
 31 motorists will be directed toward the Project when traveling southwest but will be facing the  
 32 opposite direction when traveling northeast. However, they will be traveling at high speeds;  
 33 when towers come into view, the duration of view will be brief. Since there will be low to no  
 34 visibility of the Project from OR 203, the adjacent scenery will not be noticeably altered;  
 35 therefore, the landscape will retain its natural-appearing character and scenic quality will not  
 36 change.

Oregon Route 203 Scenic Quality Rating: Project Conditions							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	2	1	2	2	2	0	11 (C)



1 **Likelihood of Impact**

2 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

4 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The bare-earth viewshed indicates that project visibility will be low from all portions of the OR 203 resource; only a few towers will be visible at any time and no towers will be visible from the majority of the resource. Additionally, the resource is 3.5 miles from the Proposed Route at its closest distance. Due to low visibility, distance, and the large expansive scale of the landscape, the proposed towers will introduce weak visual contrast and will appear subordinate. Access roads will not be visible from the resource. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> There will be low to no visibility of the Project from OR 203. Therefore, the adjacent scenery will not be noticeably altered. Subsequently, the landscape character and quality will be maintained, and the Project will have a minor contribution to visual impacts on the resource. Therefore, resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of motorists will be directed toward the Project when traveling southwest but will be facing the opposite direction when traveling northeast. However, motorists will be traveling at high speeds such that views will be brief or episodic. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will have low magnitude impacts due to low visibility. Adjacent scenery will not be  
 4 noticeably altered, and the landscape character and quality will be maintained such that the  
 5 resource change will be low. Views of motorists will be directed toward the Project when  
 6 traveling southwest but will be facing the opposite direction when traveling northeast. However,  
 7 viewers will be traveling at high speeds such that views will be brief or episodic. Therefore,  
 8 viewer perception will be low. Therefore, visual impacts will be of low intensity.

### 9 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

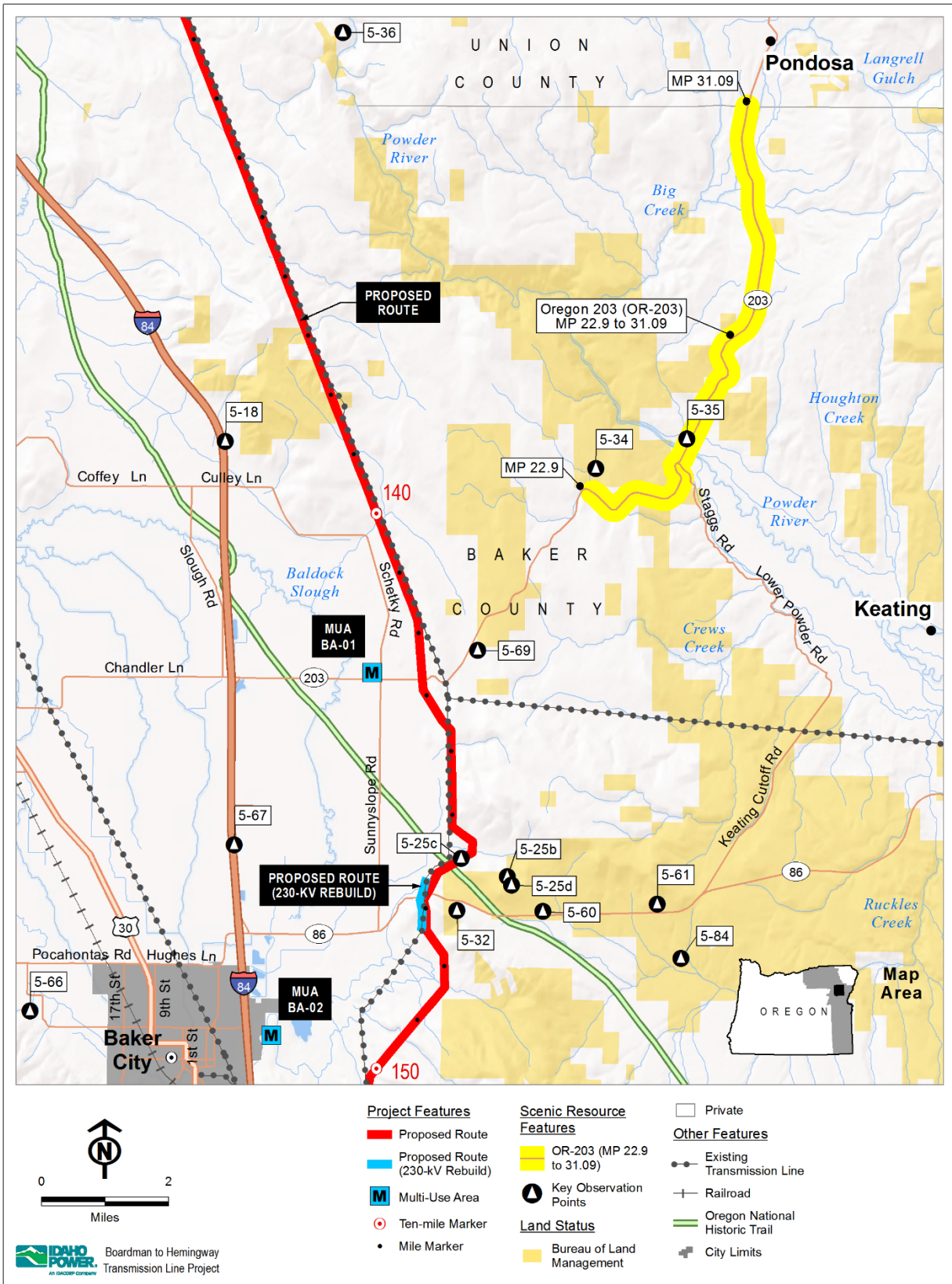
10 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
 11 influence of the Project and other past or present actions including a paved-surface road,  
 12 native-surface two-track roads, several fence lines, transmission poles and conductors, and a  
 13 few structures. All of these modifications, including the Project, appear subordinate to the  
 14 natural appearing landscape.

### 15 Context

16 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
 17 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

### 18 **Summary and Conclusion**

19 Visual impacts to the OR 203 scenic highway will be of low intensity, resulting from low resource  
 20 change and low viewer perception. Impacts will result from the combined influence of the  
 21 Project and other past or present actions. Because impacts are of low intensity, they are  
 22 considered **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-2. Oregon Route 203 (From MP 22.9 to MP 31.09)**

### 3.0 OREGON ROUTE 86 (MP 4.81 TO MP 40.64)

**Resource:** OR 86 (MP 4.81 to MP 40.64)

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B2

**Relevant Plan:** Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)

**Resource Type:** Linear Corridor

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-61, 5-32

#### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Per the Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993):

“Scenic Views and Sites” are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation... The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000”.

**Interpretation of Designation:** Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker County with regard to the scenic segment OR 86. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the resource.

Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.” See Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993).

**Resource Overview:** OR 86 is a designated scenic corridor representing scenic views and sites considered indigenous to Baker County (Baker County Comprehensive Plan 1993). The designated scenic segment of OR 86 extends for approximately 36 miles from MP 4.81 (near Sunnyslope Lane) to MP 40.64 (Eagle Creek). OR 86 is used as a primary travel corridor between Baker City and the towns of Richland and Keating. This road is also used by people touring on the scenic byway. This stretch of the highway experiences average daily traffic volume of approximately 930 vehicles (ODOT 2012).

Per OAR 345-022-0080, OR 86 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

OR 86 is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

OR 86 is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

**Existing Conditions:** OR 86 traverses through high desert, with flat to rolling terrain characterized by curved, undulating, and horizontal lines, and low-growing grasses and shrubs that appear stippled. Colors are muted tones of tans, browns, and grey-green. The landscape appears large with expansive views. The highway also travels through agricultural areas near Keating and at the western terminus, where the highway descends into the Baker Valley. Here, the landscape transforms from a natural-appearing landscape with minimal development to a more cultural and agricultural landscape from agricultural, residential, and industrial uses associated with Baker City and the valley. An existing 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line is

1 visible to the north. Vegetation consists of low-growing, bright green agricultural crops.  
 2 Residences and outbuildings are scattered throughout the area, and decorative mature trees  
 3 are clumped around residences. This decorative landscaping acts as a gateway between the  
 4 natural, indigenous landscape and the more developed landscape in the valley. When traveling  
 5 eastbound on OR 86, the incline of the roadway as it leaves Baker Valley similarly acts as a  
 6 “gateway”, providing roadway travelers the experience leaving the more developed landscape  
 7 as they travel toward the more naturally appearing landscape.

8 The Blue Mountains to the west and Wallowa Mountains to the east provide distance enclosure.

9 Overall, the landscape surrounding OR 86 is natural appearing, as landscape development is  
 10 limited along the scenic stretch of highway for the majority of its length. Because of its non-  
 11 forested setting and proximity to BLM-managed lands, this resource was evaluated using  
 12 methods adapted from the BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) system. Per BLM’s visual  
 13 resource inventory methods described in manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the  
 14 existing landscape for the OR 86 scenic corridor is considered low (class C).

Oregon Route 86 Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	2	0	2	3	2	0	11 (C)

15 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers will be transient and include motorists using OR 86 as a primary travel  
 16 corridor between Baker City and the towns of Richland and Keating as well as people touring on  
 17 the scenic byway.

## 18 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 19 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

20 OR 86 is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW for the Morgan  
 21 Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in  
 22 this document. West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road  
 23 Alternative 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this  
 24 site, and are therefore also not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
 25 these Alternative Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 26 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 27 **Proposed Route**

28 The Proposed Route will cross over the scenic segment of OR 86 near the western terminus at  
 29 the entrance to the Baker Valley (Figure R-3-3). This analysis assumes towers in the vicinity of  
 30 OR 86 will be H-frame structures with weathered steel finish. This structure type was  
 31 incorporated to mitigate potential effects to the Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental  
 32 Concern (ACEC) – National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center (NHOTIC) parcel. The  
 33 500-kV towers will appear large in scale when viewed at close distances, introducing strong  
 34 visual contrast and dominating the view. Though larger in scale, the structures will appear  
 35 consistent in form to the existing 230-kV towers visible in the foreground. At a distance of  
 36 approximately 1.25 miles, the tower type will revert to the standard lattice structure. The 138-kV  
 37 rebuild will be situated adjacent to OR 86, and will parallel the Proposed Route.



1 The proposed towers and 136-kV rebuild will be visible for approximately 1 mile when traveling  
 2 in either direction on the highway. Collectively, the structures will appear as a cluster of H-  
 3 frames positioned at the western terminus of the scenic stretch of highway. The structures will  
 4 be aligned with the “gateway” landscape attributes transitioning from the naturally appearing to  
 5 the cultural/agricultural landscape of the Baker Valley (or vice versa). OR 86 is located outside  
 6 of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore this Project feature is not  
 7 considered further. Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage  
 8 point and are episodic (experienced for less than 1 minute while traveling a speed of 45 miles  
 9 per hour). Therefore, although the Project will appear dominant and will lower the scenic quality  
 10 component score for cultural modification; however, it will retain its cultural appearance in this  
 11 portion of the resource. Scenic quality will remain low (class C).

**Oregon Route 86 Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project**

Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	2	0	2	3	2	-1	10 (C)

12 **Likelihood of Impact**

13 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

14 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Project components will result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape and in close proximity such that they will appear co-dominant against the existing landscape, including existing 240-kV H-Frame transmission towers. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>medium</u> .			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The towers will be visible for approximately 1 mile when traveling in either direction on the highway. Additionally, the Proposed Route will be positioned at the western terminus of the scenic stretch of highway, aligned with the transition, or “gateway” between the naturally appearing and the cultural/agricultural landscape of the Baker Valley. Therefore, although the Project will appear dominant and will lower the scenic quality component score for cultural modification, it will retain its cultural appearance in this portion of the resource. Scenic quality will remain low (class C). Therefore, the resource change will be <u>medium</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of the Project will be episodic and experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point. Viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will have medium magnitude impacts as travelers will pass directly underneath the  
 4 Proposed Route and have close up views of the 500-kV structures that will introduce strong  
 5 visual contrast and appear dominant. The towers will be visible for approximately 1 mile when  
 6 traveling in either direction on the highway and will be positioned at the western terminus of the  
 7 scenic stretch of highway. The cultural modification component score of scenic quality will be  
 8 reduced; however, the landscape character and scenic quality will be maintained such that  
 9 resource change will be medium. Views of the Project will be episodic and experienced from a  
 10 neutral or elevated vantage point; therefore, viewer perception will be low. Therefore, visual  
 11 impacts will be of medium intensity.

12 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

13 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
 14 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, such as the 138-kV, OR 86 and the  
 15 agricultural, residential, and industrial uses associated with Baker City and the valley.  
 16 Collectively, the 138-kV rebuild and the Proposed Project will result in medium intensity impacts.

17 **Context**

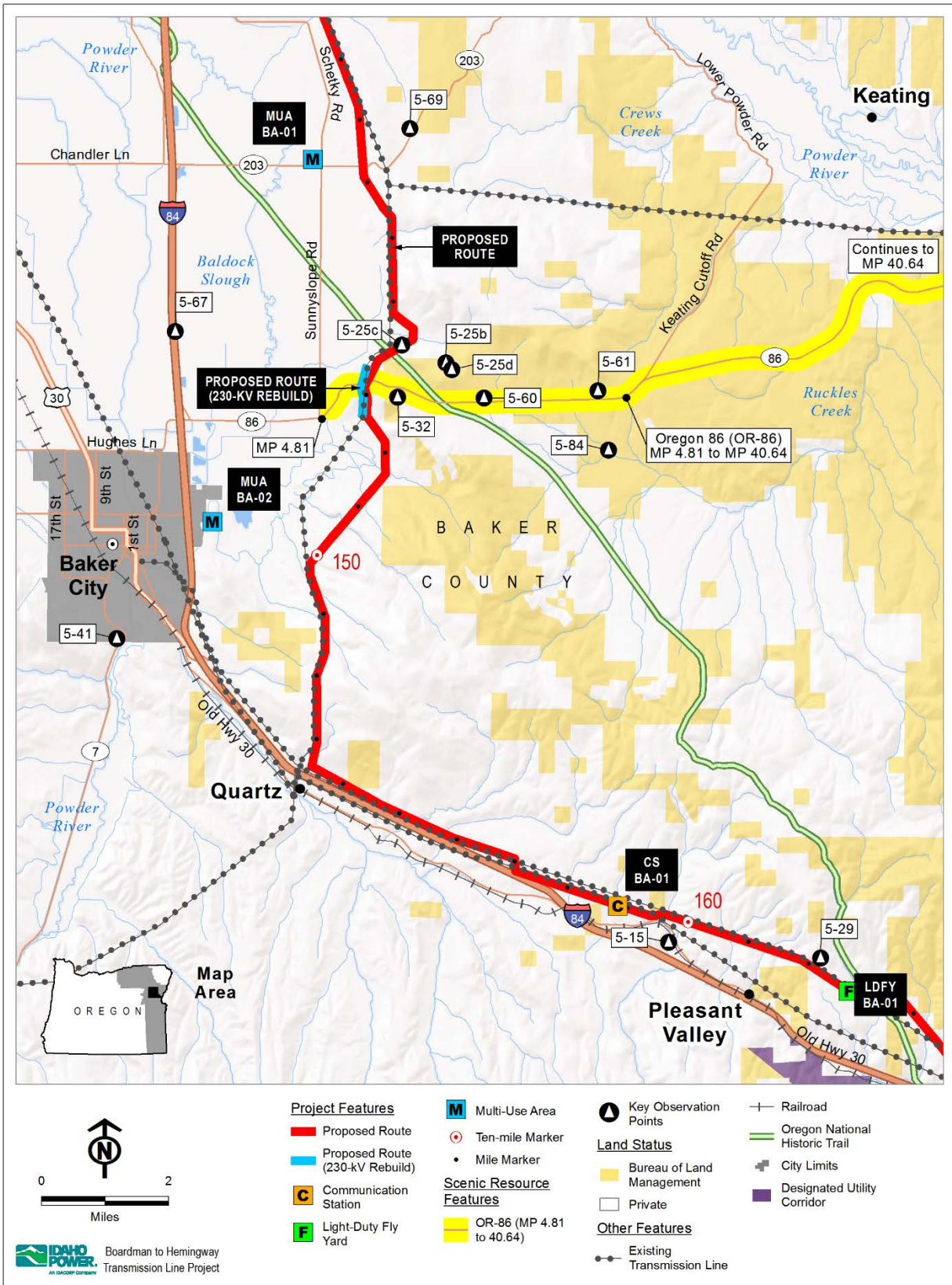
Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993) identifies this stretch of OR 86 as a scenic area; therefore, it is considered an important scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or, <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.

Indicator	Context Criteria
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>The Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993) identifies OR 86 as a scenic area “of particular significance”. Because IPC’s impacts are localized, and viewer perception was identified as low, IPC’s impacts are localized; IPC has not found the Project to preclude OR 86 from providing the scenic value for which it is recognized.</p> <p>No specific management direction has been established for this scenic resource; therefore IPC’s impacts are not inconsistent with management direction provided.</p>	

Significance Criteria		
	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
Less than Significant	Yes or No	Not Precluded
Potentially Significant	Yes	Precluded

## 1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to OR 86 will be of medium intensity, resulting from low viewer perception and  
3 medium resource change. Impacts will result from the combined influence of the Project and  
4 other past or present actions, notably the existing and rebuilt 138-kV transmission line. Since no  
5 specific management direction has been established for this scenic resource, and IPC’s impacts  
6 are localized, IPC has not found the Project to preclude the resource from providing the scenic  
7 value for which it is recognized. Visual impacts to OR 86 are **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-3. Oregon Route 86 (MP 4.81 to MP 40.64)**

## 4.0 INTERSTATE-84 PLEASANT VALLEY-DURKEE AREA

**Resource:** Interstate-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Area

**Relevant Plan:** Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B4

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Resource Type:** Linear Corridor

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-26; 5-15

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Per the Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993):

“Scenic Views and Sites” are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation... The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000.”<sup>1</sup>

**Interpretation of Designation:** Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker County with regard to the scenic segment of I-84 in the Pleasant Valley-Durkee area. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the resource.

Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.” See Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993).

**Resource Overview:** This segment of I-84 is identified by Baker County as a scenic corridor extending for a distance of approximately 12 miles from MP 317.39 (at the Pleasant Valley Interchange) to MP 329.24 (1.8 mile southeast of the Durkee Interchange). This area generally corresponds to Project milepost 157 to 171.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, I-84 Pleasant Valle-Durkee Area is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

I-84 Pleasant Valle-Durkee Area is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

I-84 Pleasant Valle-Durkee Area is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

**Existing Conditions:** Throughout this highway segment, landforms generally form narrow valleys with steep sidewalls transitioning to rolling terrain. Generally, surrounding topography creates some enclosure, limiting expansive views of the surrounding landscape. Colors in the area consist of light to medium tans and browns, with golden grasses and blue, green, and gray hues of sagebrush. Textures from vegetation and landform are mostly fine and smooth with dotted individual vertical trees scattered throughout the landscape. A dense, even carpet of

<sup>1</sup> It appears that the reference to OAR 660-010-000 is in error and should instead be a reference to OAR 660-016-0000.



1 sagebrush and grasses covers the landscape in the foreground and middleground. Existing  
 2 development has influenced the character of the landscape and appears somewhat discordant.  
 3 The freeway introduces moderate-strong contrast and often dominates the landscape. Old  
 4 Highway 30 parallels I-84 for most of the segment and is never more than about 0.5 mile  
 5 distant; a busy railroad line is similarly close for more than 10 miles of the highway segment;  
 6 existing 69-kV and 138-kV transmission lines are typically within 0.5 mile and are a nearly  
 7 continuous visual presence. Other developed land uses are noticeable in the Durkee area, and  
 8 at several scattered locations along I-84. The landscape character is considered cultural, as  
 9 existing development and the adjacent steep to rolling terrain are both memorable aspects of  
 10 the landscape. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM  
 11 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the I-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee corridor  
 12 is considered medium (class B).

<b>I-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-Project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	3	0	3	3	1	-1	12 (B)

13 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are primarily I-84 travelers driving at high speeds such that views are  
 14 primarily focused in the direction of travel with limited views of the periphery. Passengers may  
 15 be afforded the opportunity to experience views of landscape.

## 16 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 17 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

18 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
 19 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
 20 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Additionally, I-84,  
 21 Pleasant Valley to Durkee, is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
 22 of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this  
 23 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document. Because West of Bombing  
 24 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
 25 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 26 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 27 **Proposed Route**

28 The Proposed Route roughly parallels the scenic segment of I-84 at a distance of approximately  
 29 1.0 miles (Figure R-3-4). The Proposed Route will run north of I-84 from Project mile 191.9 to  
 30 165.0, where acute viewing angles associated with the steep topography immediately adjacent  
 31 to I-84 to the northeast will inhibit direct views of the towers. The Proposed Route crosses I-84  
 32 at Project mile 166.0, where it veers south of I-84. For approximately 1 mile near the Old  
 33 Highway 30 overpass, the proposed transmission line will become the dominant aspect of the  
 34 landscape, will be viewed head on by I-84 travelers traveling in either direction, and will  
 35 introduce strong visual contrast. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture of the towers  
 36 will contrast against the steep valley walls and rolling terrain. The light, reflective color will also  
 37 contrast against the browns, greens, tans, and grey of the vegetated hillsides and rock crops.  
 38 Traveling south/southeast on I-84 past the overpass, the proposed 500-kV towers will be  
 39 partially or fully screened by topography.

1 A multi-use area will be located approximately 0.2 mile southwest of the I-84 overpass at Old  
 2 Highway 30 and could be temporarily visible from I-84. Several segments of new, graded  
 3 access road will be located between the Proposed Route and I-84 within this segment of scenic  
 4 highway. While visible, these roads will appear consistent with existing roads in the area and  
 5 subordinate to the large 500-kV transmission towers situated within the Proposed Route.

6 The Project will introduce high magnitude impacts for approximately 1 mile of the 12-mile scenic  
 7 corridor. Outside of this segment, visual contrast will be weak, and impact magnitude will be  
 8 low. Within the 1-mile segment near the crossing of I-84, the landscape character will appear  
 9 more urban, and inconsistent with the remainder of the scenic highway segment due to the  
 10 dominant appearance of the transmission towers. Outside of this 1-mile segment of I-84, visual  
 11 contrast will primarily be low due to screening from surrounding topography and the steep  
 12 viewing angle and peripheral view of the towers experience by roadway travelers. The localized  
 13 impacts to scenic quality within the 1-mile segment of I-84 near Old Highway 30 would fragment  
 14 intact portions, thereby resulting in two smaller segments.

15 An overall change in scenic quality will result from the increase in cultural modification to the  
 16 landscape from the Project. Under operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will appear  
 17 discordant with the existing landscape and promote strong disharmony where the Proposed  
 18 Route crosses the scenic highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two  
 19 points for Cultural Modification, and the scenic quality class will be changed from class B to C.

<b>I-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Scenic Quality Rating: Post-Project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (1 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	3	0	3	3	1	-2	11

## 20 **Likelihood of Impact**

21 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

## 22 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The proposed 500-kV towers will introduce strong visual contrast and appear dominant in the landscape where the Proposed Route crosses I-84 near Project mile 160.5; therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>high</u> .			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The localized impacts to scenic quality within the 1-mile segment of I-84 near Old Highway 30 would fragment intact portions, thereby resulting in two smaller segments. An overall change in scenic quality will result from the increase in cultural modification to the landscape from the Proposed Route. Under operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will appear discordant with the existing landscape and promote strong disharmony where the Proposed Route crosses the scenic highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two points for Cultural Modification, and the scenic quality class will be changed from Class B to C. Therefore, the resource change will be <u>high</u> .			



Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers will primarily experience intermittent, peripheral views of the Proposed Route at high speeds while traveling along I-84; however, for approximately 1 mile, viewers will experience direct head-on views of the Project. Views will primarily be experienced from an inferior position. Viewer perception will be <u>medium</u> .			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

2

3 The Project will have long-term, high magnitude impacts that will result in high resource change  
 4 and medium viewer perception; consequently, there will be high intensity visual impacts to the I-  
 5 84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Area. These impacts will be concentrated near Project mile 160.5  
 6 where the Proposed Route crosses this scenic segment of I-84. The localized impacts to scenic  
 7 quality within the 1-mile segment of I-84 near Old Highway 30 would fragment intact portions,  
 8 thereby resulting in two smaller segments.

9 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

10 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 11 result of other past or present actions.

1 **Context**

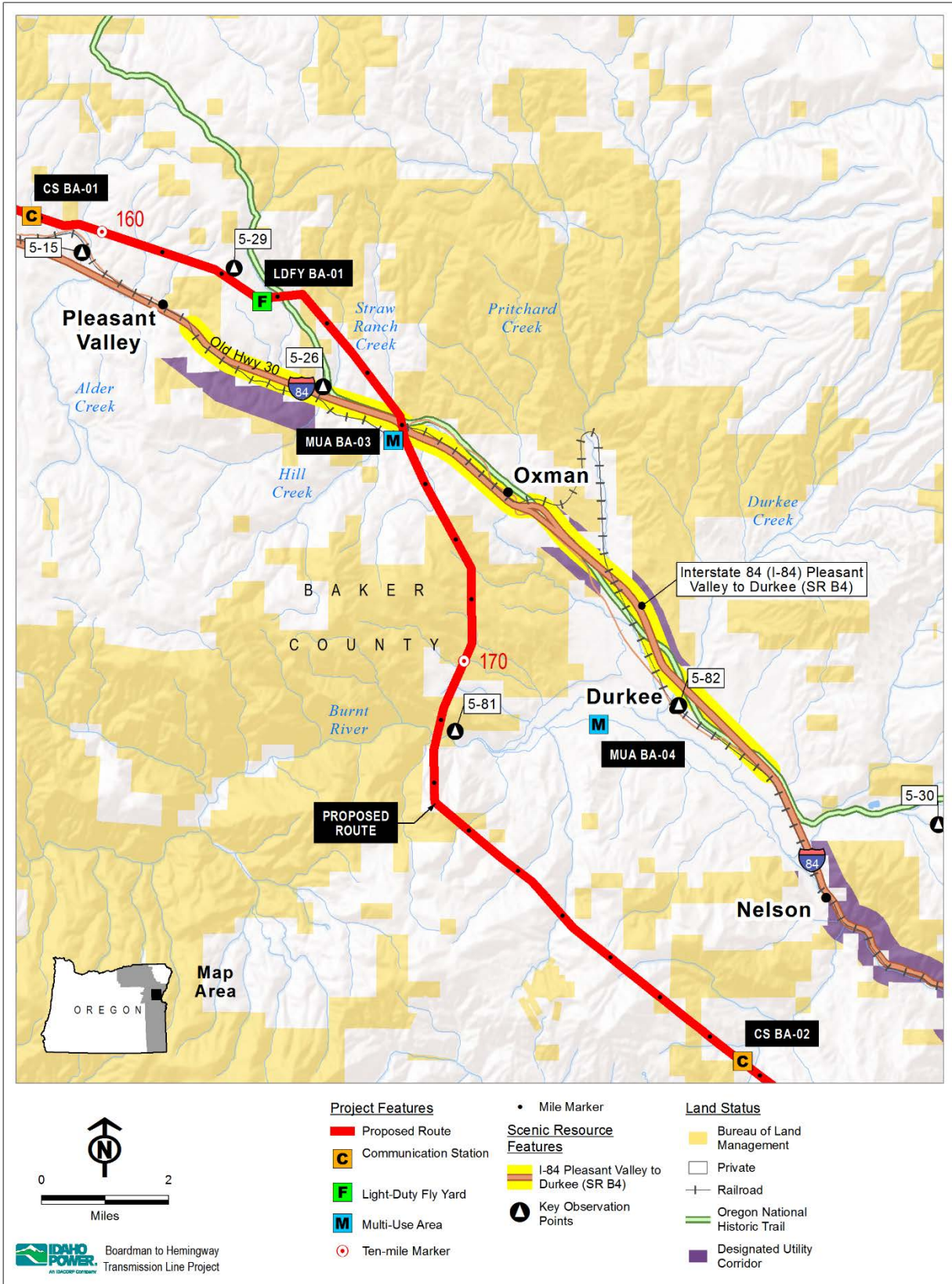
Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or,  Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993) identifies this segment of I-84 as a scenic area; therefore, it is considered an important scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The localized impacts to scenic quality within the 1-mile segment of I-84 near Old US 30 would fragment intact portions, thereby resulting in two smaller segments. The majority of these two individual segments will retain the same scenic quality and character that exists under current conditions. While the entire 12-mile segment will no longer provide continuous scenic views indigenous to Baker County the impacts associated with the Project are localized and generally consistent with the Baker County’s policy of preserving the natural splendor of the region. Since no specific management direction has been established for this scenic resource, and IPC’s impacts are localized, IPC has not found the Project to preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for which it is recognized.	

2 Since no management direction has been established for this scenic resource, IPC has found  
 3 the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for which it is  
 4 recognized. Because Project impacts are localized for a 1-mile stretch of the 12-mile corridor  
 5 and the Project will not result in impacts to scenic resources at a regional scale, the Project is  
 6 consistent with Baker County’s policy to “conserve the natural splendor of the region.”

	<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

7 **Summary and Conclusion**

8 Impacts to Interstate-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Area will be of high intensity, resulting from  
 9 high resource change and medium viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from the Project,  
 10 and not from other past or present actions. The Project will not preclude the ability of the  
 11 resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated, as impacts would be localized  
 12 and not affect scenic resources at a regional scale. Visual impacts will be **less than significant**.



1

2 **Figure R-3-4. Interstate-84 Pleasant Valley-Durkee Area**

## 5.0 INTERSTATE 84, HUNTINGTON TO BAKER/MALHEUR COUNTY LINE

**Resource:** Interstate 84, Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line

**Relevant Plan:** Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993)

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B5

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Resource Type:** Linear

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-34b

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Per the Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993):

“Scenic Views and Sites” are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation... The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000”<sup>2</sup>.

**Interpretation of Designation:** Pursuant to OAR 660-016-0005(2), if a county concludes that there are no conflicting uses for an identified resource site, resulting in a “2A” designation of the resource, the county “must adopt policies and ordinance provisions, as appropriate, which ensure preservation of the resource.” To date, no specific policies or ordinance provisions have been established by Baker County with regard to the scenic segment of I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line. Therefore, although recognized by Baker County as a scenic resource, no specific management direction has been established for the resource.

Baker County has developed a generic policy applicable to preservation of all scenic resources, which is to “promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.” See Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993).

Per OAR 345-022-0080, I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

**Resource Overview:** The southerly segment of I-84 that is identified by Baker County as a scenic highway extends from MP 345.78 (at the Huntington Interchange) to MP 352.0 (at the Baker/Malheur County line), a distance of about 6 miles. This generally corresponds to Project milepost 186.5 to 192.

**Existing Conditions:** Throughout this highway segment, landforms generally form narrow valleys with steep sidewalls transitioning to rolling terrain. Generally, surrounding topography creates some enclosure limiting expansive views of the surrounding landscape. Colors in the area consist of light to medium tans and browns, with golden grasses and blue, green, and gray hues of sagebrush. Textures from vegetation and land form are mostly fine and smooth with

<sup>2</sup> It appears that the reference to OAR 660-010-000 is in error and should instead be a reference to OAR 660-016-0000.

1 dotted individual vertical trees scattered throughout the landscape. A dense, even carpet of  
 2 sagebrush and grasses covers the landscape in the foreground and middleground. The freeway  
 3 introduces moderate to strong contrast and often dominates the landscape. An existing 138-kV  
 4 transmission line crosses the scenic segment of I-84 approximately 1 mile north of where Durbin  
 5 Creek Road crosses over I-84. An existing 69-kV transmission line is also present to the east in  
 6 this area, such that both existing transmission lines are visible from the scenic segment of I-84  
 7 for approximately one mile. Scattered rural developments are also present throughout the  
 8 landscape. Overall, the landscape character of the experienced from this segment of I-84 is  
 9 cultural. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986),  
 10 the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County  
 11 Line corridor is considered medium (class B).

<b>I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	3	0	3	3	1	-1	12 (B)

12 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are primarily interstate travelers driving at high speeds such that  
 13 views are primarily focused in the direction of travel with limited views of the periphery.  
 14 Passengers may be afforded an opportunity to experience views of landscape.

## 15 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 16 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

17 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
 18 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
 19 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Additionally, I-84,  
 20 Huntington and the Baker/Malheur County Line, is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed  
 21 buffer of the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and  
 22 therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.  
 23 Because West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road  
 24 Alternative 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for  
 25 potential visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to  
 26 the Proposed Route.

### 27 **Proposed Route**

28 The Proposed Route runs adjacent to the southwest of this entire scenic segment I-84, at  
 29 distances of approximately 0.2 to 0.5 mile (Figure R-3-5). The bare-earth viewshed analysis  
 30 indicates that the proposed transmission towers and conductors will potentially be visible from  
 31 all locations along this segment of I-84. In general, the Project facilities in this case will be seen  
 32 against a backdrop of low ridges just west of the freeway. A multi-use area will be located 0.75  
 33 mile west of I-84 near Huntington; this facility will be located in a depression and will likely be  
 34 screened from view by surrounding higher ground. A few new, bladed access roads will be  
 35 present to the east, between I-84 and the Proposed Route. These roads will be as close as 0.1  
 36 mile from I-84 and will appear as light-colored lines apparent across the landscape. While  
 37 visible, these roads will appear subordinate to the large 500-kV transmission towers situated  
 38 within the Proposed Route.



1 The transmission towers within the Proposed Route will introduce a high level of contrast due to  
 2 its proximity and size, such that it will appear dominant in the landscape. The transmission line  
 3 and towers will be visible to highway travelers in the direction of view as well as in the periphery,  
 4 will be continuous, and will be viewed from an inferior vantage point. The large, geometrical  
 5 form and smooth texture of the towers will contrast against the steep valley walls and rolling  
 6 terrain. The light, reflective color will also contrast against the browns, greens, tans, and grey of  
 7 the vegetated hillsides and rock crops. The Proposed Route will affect the adjacent scenery of  
 8 the scenic corridor such that there will be an overall change in scenic quality of the scenic  
 9 highway. Under operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will appear discordant with the  
 10 existing landscape and will promote strong disharmony as the Project parallels the scenic  
 11 highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two points for Adjacent  
 12 Scenery, and by three points for Cultural Modification. Consequently, the scenic quality class  
 13 will be changed from Class B to C. The landscape character will be perceived as urban due to  
 14 the dominant expression of transmission infrastructure.

I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	3	0	3	1	1	-4	7 (C)

15 **Likelihood of Impact**

16 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

17 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).

**Explanation:** Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The proposed 500-kV towers will introduce strong visual contrast and appear dominant in the landscape along the scenic segment of I-84 in the Huntington Area; therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>high</u> .			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Proposed Route will run adjacent to the entire scenic segment of I-84 in the Huntington Area, affecting the adjacent scenery of the corridor such that there will be an overall change in scenic quality. Under operational conditions, the large 500-kV towers will introduce strong visual contrast, and appear discordant with the existing landscape and promote strong disharmony as they parallel the scenic highway. Consequently, the scenic quality score will be reduced by two points for Adjacent Scenery, and by three points for cultural modification. The scenic quality class will be changed from Class B to C, and landscape character will be perceived as urban due to the dominant expression of transmission infrastructure. Therefore, the resource change will be <u>high</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> The transmission line and towers will be visible to highway travelers in the direction of view as well as in the periphery, will be continuous, and will be viewed from an inferior vantage point. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>medium</u> .			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will have long-term, high magnitude impacts. These high magnitude impacts will  
 4 persist for the entire segment of I-84 such that they will lower the scenic quality of the  
 5 landscape. Though past and present actions, including construction and operation of the  
 6 interstate, transmission lines, and rural developments are apparent, existing landscape  
 7 character is perceived as naturally appearing. Because of the large scale and close proximity of  
 8 the Project, existing landscape character will be changed to a more urban character type due to  
 9 the dominant expression of transmission infrastructure such that resource change will be high.  
 10 The transmission line and towers will be visible to highway travelers in the direction of view as  
 11 well as in the periphery, will be continuous, and will be viewed from an inferior vantage point  
 12 such that viewer perception will be medium. Consequently, there will be high intensity visual  
 13 impacts to I-84 Huntington to the Baker County/Malheur County Line.

14 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

15 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 16 result of other past or present actions.



1 **Context**

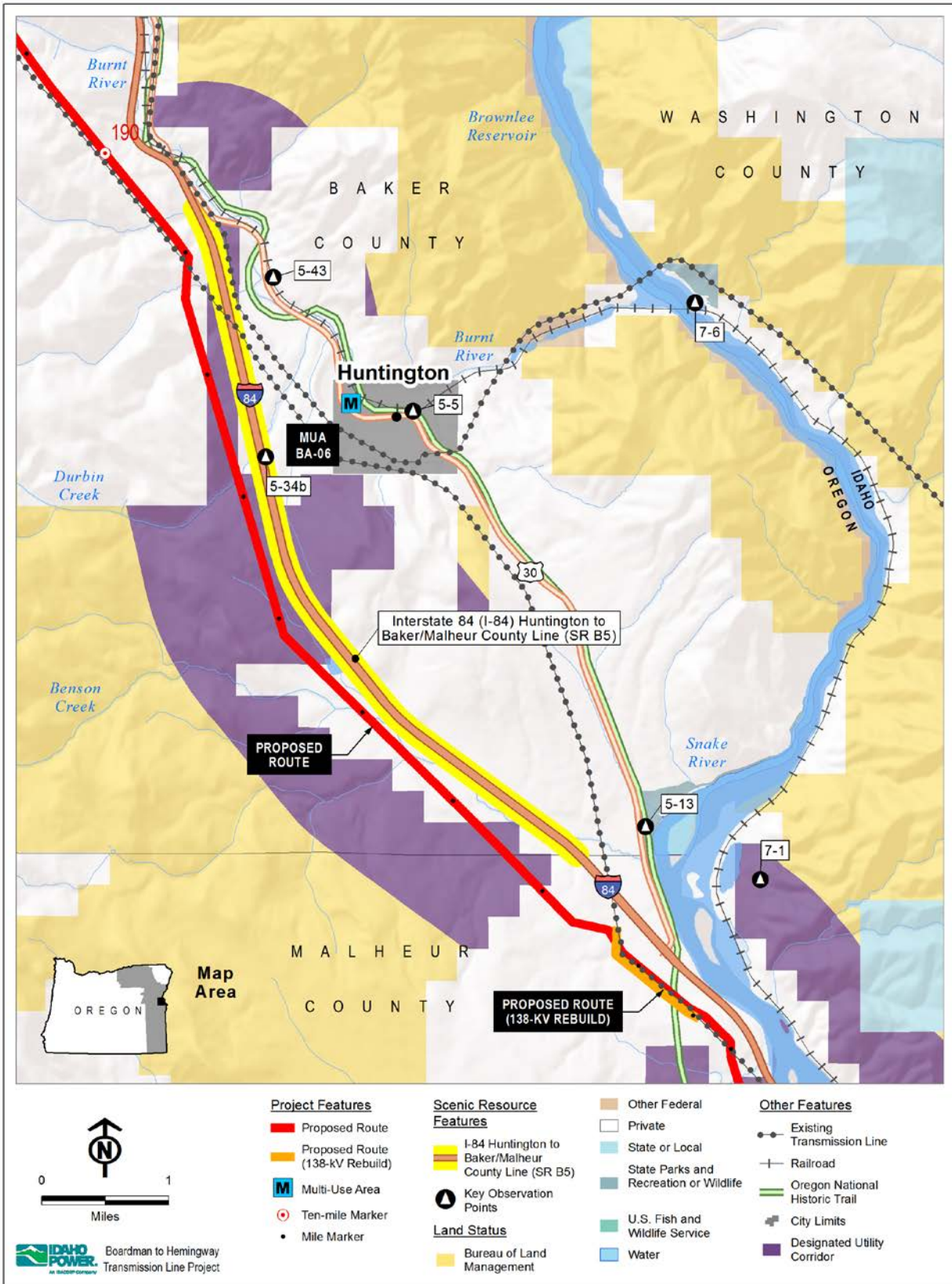
2 Since no management direction has been established for this scenic resource, IPC has found  
 3 the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for which it is  
 4 recognized. The Project will not result in impacts to scenic resources at a regional scale, and is  
 5 consistent with Baker County's policy to "conserve the natural splendor of the region."

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or,  Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Baker County Comprehensive Plan (1993) identifies this segment of I-84 as a "scenic view" or "site"; therefore, it is considered an important scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> Since no management direction has been established for this scenic resource, IPC has found the Project will not preclude the resource from providing the scenic value for which it is recognized. The Project will not result in impacts to scenic resources at a regional scale, and is consistent with Baker County's policy to "conserve the natural splendor of the region."	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

6 **Summary and Conclusion**

7 Visual impacts to the I-84 Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line will be of high intensity,  
 8 resulting from high resource change and medium viewer perception. Impacts will result solely  
 9 from the Project, and not from other past or present actions. The Project will not preclude the  
 10 ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated, as impacts would  
 11 be localized and not affect scenic resources at a regional scale. Visual impacts will be **less than**  
 12 **significant.**



1  
2 **Figure R-3-5. Interstate 84, Huntington to Baker/Malheur County Line**

## 6.0 BURNT RIVER CANYON

**Resource:** Burnt River Canyon

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM B3

**Relevant Plan:** Baker Resource Management Plan (RMP) (BLM 1989a)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-81

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Managed by the BLM Vale District to meet VRM Class II objectives (BLM 1989a).

**Interpretation of Designation:** Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained (BLM 1986).

**Resource Overview:** The Burnt River Canyon area includes 10,700 acres of BLM-administered lands in the Burnt River Canyon area that are managed to meet VRM Class II objectives by the BLM Vale District, Baker Resource Area. The eastern end of this area is located approximately 2.6 miles west of the community of Durkee.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, the Burnt River Canyon area is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

The Burnt River Canyon area is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

The Burnt River Canyon area is not considered an important Recreation Resource due to lack of identified recreation opportunities, and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

**Existing Conditions:** The Burnt River Canyon area includes the Burnt River, the surrounding canyon walls, and some of the upland areas that sit above the canyon. In the eastern portion of the area, the rugged canyon walls rise steeply from the narrow valley floor, creating a v-shaped canyon that appears enclosed. Smaller side drainage and tributaries, also appearing v-shaped, create complex forms and lines that appear steep, diagonal, and triangular. The landscape appears rugged due the rough and varying textures of rock throughout the canyon. Further west, traveling up the canyon, the topography becomes less steep and appears moderately rugged and less enclosed. Vegetation is limited and appears as scattered to stippled sagebrush. A small band of low-growing riparian vegetation lines the Burnt River along the base of the steep canyon walls. The Burnt River appears as a small winding channel of blue-green water with a smooth to rippled surface. The river and riparian vegetation produce some visual contrast and visual variety with the surrounding brown and grey canyon walls. Burnt River Canyon Road follows the Burnt River throughout the Burnt River Canyon area and appears as a smooth, grey, curved line meandering through the base of the canyon. Other human development within the Burnt River Canyon area includes scattered rural development and native surface and paved roads.

Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character. Since the resource is located on BLM-managed lands, methods used to assess scenic quality are based on BLM methodology. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Burnt River Canyon area is considered moderate (class B).

<b>Burnt River Canyon area Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
4	1	3	3	1	3	0	14 (B)

1 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups primarily include local residents traveling along the Burnt River  
 2 Road and individuals participating in dispersed recreation throughout the Burnt River Canyon  
 3 area, although this type of activity is likely low. Viewers will primarily be transient, focusing in the  
 4 direction of travel.

## 5 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 6 Alternatives Not Evaluated

7 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
 8 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
 9 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. This site is also  
 10 located greater than 10 miles from forested portions of the Proposed Route and the Morgan  
 11 Lake Alternative, and therefore not analyzed for visual impacts from the cleared ROW. Similarly,  
 12 because West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative  
 13 2, and the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential  
 14 visual impacts resulting from a cleared ROW.

### 15 Proposed Route

16 The Proposed Route will cross the Burnt River Canyon VRM Class II area in two locations  
 17 between MP 170.7-171.5 (two towers) and 172.5-173.0 (one tower) (Figure R-3-6). Due to the  
 18 steep, enclosed nature of the canyon and rugged terrain of the Burnt River Canyon area,  
 19 visibility of the towers will primarily be limited to the eastern fifth of the resource. The Project will  
 20 be most visible where it crosses Burnt River Canyon Road, the primary viewing platform in the  
 21 area. The roadway will pass under the conductor between MP 171.0 and 171.5. Tower 171/4  
 22 and 172/1, both lattice structures measuring 182.5 feet and 147.5 feet, respectively, will be  
 23 visible on the ridgeline of the canyon. Where the towers are visible, they have the potential to  
 24 produce up to strong contrast due to their size and proximity, geometric shape, and smooth  
 25 surface that will rise above the natural terrain, and likely be skylined, appearing inconsistent with  
 26 the natural, rugged surroundings. However, views will be of limited duration and episodic,  
 27 primarily experienced from a moving vehicle. Viewer geometry would be oblique due to the  
 28 steep slopes of canyon walls. New and improved access roads will be located along and near  
 29 the Proposed Route in this area; however they are not expected to be visible from the roadway.  
 30 Work areas and access roads may be visible from high elevation areas throughout the resource.

31 Where the Proposed Route crosses the Burnt River Canyon area, scenic quality will be reduced  
 32 due to changes in value for cultural modification. Despite this localized reduction in scenic  
 33 quality, the natural-appearing landscape character will be maintained for the majority of the  
 34 VRM II area and overall scenic quality will remain moderate (class B).

35 Although, the Project will not change the scenic quality of the resource as a whole, it will not be  
 36 in conformance with Class II objectives established for the Burnt River Canyon area. The BLM's  
 37 land use planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-5 state, "an amendment shall be initiated by the  
 38 need to consider a Proposed Action that may result in a change in the scope of resources uses

1 or a change in the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan.” Therefore, an RMP  
 2 amendment to modify the Baker RMP (BLM 1989a) regarding visual resources management in  
 3 order to grant a ROW for the Proposed Route across BLM-administered lands managed under  
 4 the Baker RMP (BLM 1989a) will be necessary. Amending the RMP will result in changing the  
 5 portion of VRM Class II lands crossed by the Proposed Route to VRM Class IV lands, which will  
 6 allow major modification of the landscape character rather than requiring the landscape  
 7 character to be retained. The change of current planning direction will be determined by the  
 8 BLM as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process for this project, and IPC  
 9 anticipates that the BLM will change the designation of the Burnt River Canyon area crossed by  
 10 the Project from VRM II to VRM IV.

Burnt River Canyon area Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
4	1	3	3	1	3	-2	12 (B)

11 **Likelihood of Impact**

12 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

13 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Magnitude		
<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Impact magnitude will be up to <u>high</u> within the eastern portion of the resource. Due to proximity, towers will introduce strong visual contrast and appear dominant where visible.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The score for the “cultural modification” key factor will be reduced as a result of localized changes in scenic quality where the Project crossing this resource. However, due to the enclosed nature of the landscape, these localized impacts will have a minor contribution to the overall scenic quality and landscape character of the resource. Scenic quality and character will not change; therefore, resource change will be <u>medium</u> . Since the landscape is natural appearing and the towers will be the only visible development rising above the skyline.			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views will be of limited duration and episodic, primarily experienced from a moving vehicle. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

Impact magnitude will be up to high within the eastern portion of the resource due to proximity of the towers and appear dominant where visible. The score for the “cultural” key factor will be lowered by 2 points as a result of the Project; however, scenic quality and character will remain the same and resource change will be medium. Views will be of limited duration and episodic, primarily experienced from a moving vehicle; therefore, viewer perception will be low. Therefore, impact intensity will be medium.

### Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the result of other past or present actions.

### Context

Visual impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II designation in the localized area at the northeast corner of the resource where the Proposed Route crosses the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area. Therefore, the location of the Proposed Route within the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan in that area. The Baker RMP (BLM 1989a) will be amended to change a portion of the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area to VRM Class II to VRM Class IV. Note that following this Plan amendment, this resource will no longer be considered a scenic resource, as Oregon Department of Energy does not consider VRM Class IV areas to be scenic resources.

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Burnt River Canyon VRM II is a scenic resource as defined in OAR 345-022-0080 and therefore by definition, scenery is considered a valued attribute of this resource.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or, <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.

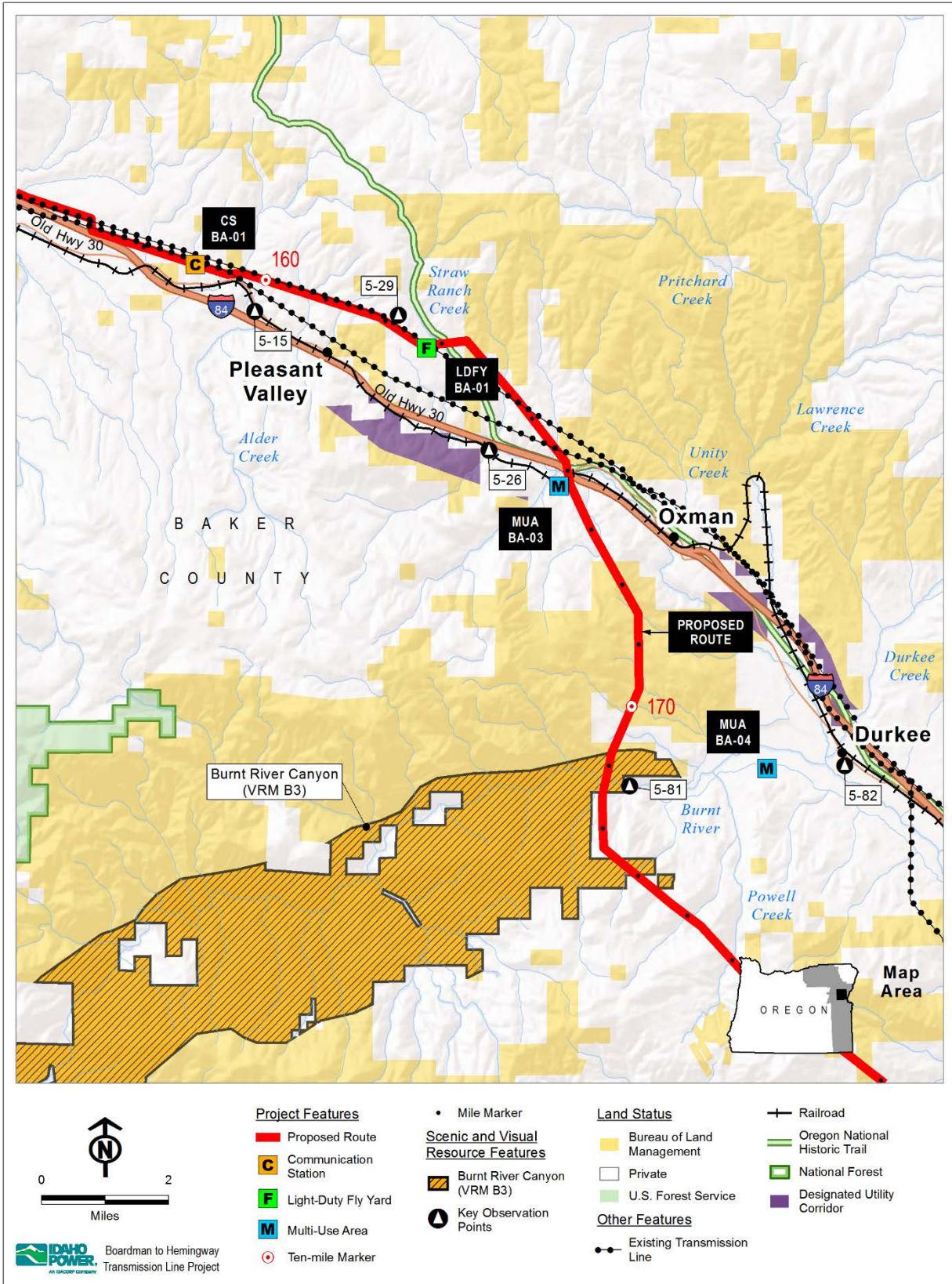
Indicator	Context Criteria
<p><b>Explanation:</b> Localized adverse impacts to the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area will result from strong visual contrast of project features against the existing landscape when viewed from viewer platforms along Burnt River Canyon, and higher elevation areas located in the eastern portion of the resource. Impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II designation in this localized area. The location of the Proposed Route within the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area, will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.</p>	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

## 1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area will be of medium intensity, resulting from  
3 medium resource change and low viewer perception. Visual impacts will solely result from the  
4 Project, and not from other past or present actions. Impacts will preclude existing landscape  
5 character in a localized portion of the resource, and would not be consistent with VRM Class II  
6 Objectives (BLM 1686). Should the BLM amend the Baker RMP (BLM 1989a) to manage this  
7 localized area as VRM Class IV, this localized area would not be considered an important  
8 scenic resource, as only Class I and II areas are considered significant or important scenic  
9 resources. If the BLM does not amend the designation for Burnt River Canyon VRM II, the  
10 Project should be sited outside of the VRM Class II area to be considered less than significant.  
11 As proposed, visual impacts to the Burnt River Canyon VRM II area are considered **potentially**  
12 **significant.**





1

2 **Figure R-3-6. Burnt River Canyon**

## 1 **7.0 BROWNLEE RESERVOIR WEST**

2 **Resource:** Brownlee Reservoir West

3 **Relevant Exhibit:** R

4 **Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM B7

5 **Relevant Plan:** Baker RMP (BLM 1989a)

6 **Resource Type:** Area

7 **Relevant KOP(s):** 5-59

### 8 **PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions**

9 **Designation:** Managed by the BLM Vale District to meet VRM Class II objectives (BLM 1989a).

10 **Interpretation of Designation:** Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character  
11 should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained (BLM 1986).

12 **Resource Overview:** The Brownlee Reservoir West area (VRM B7) includes four parcels of  
13 BLM-administered lands totaling over 4,200 acres located west of and directly adjacent to  
14 Brownlee Reservoir, northeast of Huntington in southeastern Baker County. This area of VRM  
15 Class II lands extends for more than 7 miles from north to south and is from about 1 to 3 miles  
16 in width.

17 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Brownlee Reservoir West (VRM B7) is being evaluated as a Scenic  
18 Resource.

19 The Brownlee Reservoir West is not one of the 16 categories of protected areas listed in OAR  
20 345-022-0040(1), and therefore is not being evaluated as a Protected Area.

21 The Brownlee Reservoir West is not considered a recreation opportunity per OAR 345-022-  
22 0100. The Brownlee Reservoir is being evaluated as a Recreation Resource as part of the  
23 water-based recreation for Farewell Bend State Recreation Area.

24 **Existing Conditions:** Brownlee Reservoir West is located in the Continental Zone Foothills of  
25 the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. The Snake River and Brownlee Reservoir and surrounding  
26 canyon are distinct natural features within the Brownlee Reservoir West landscape. The  
27 reservoir appears as a smooth to rippled, reflective, flat surface that is blue-green in color.  
28 Narrow, steep valley walls rise above the reservoir with angled to curved lines and brown and  
29 beige colors. Textures of the sidewalls include fine to medium sidewalls and rough rock  
30 outcroppings. Vegetation is primarily limited to low-growing sagebrush and grasses that appear  
31 patchy to stippled and gold, green, and grey in color. The uplands above the river are  
32 characterized by rolling terrain with undulating ridgelines and numerous small drainages that  
33 dissect the area. Views are primarily enclosed by the valley; however, on the highlands above  
34 the river, more expansive views of adjacent mountains are visible and the landscape appears  
35 large. Human development includes a bridge, paved and native surface roads, and the  
36 reservoir.

37 Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character, as both natural and human  
38 developments (primarily the reservoir) are expressed and exist in harmony. Since the resource  
39 is located on BLM-managed lands, methods used to assess scenic quality are based on BLM  
40 methodology. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM  
41 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Brownlee Reservoir West is  
42 considered moderate (class B).

<b>Brownlee Reservoir West Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	3	2	2	2	0	13 (B)

1 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers primarily include recreators both on and off the water, and are both  
2 transient and stationary.

### 3 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

#### 4 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

5 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
6 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
7 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. This site is also  
8 located more than 10 miles from forested portions of the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore  
9 not analyzed for visual impacts from the cleared ROW. Similarly, because West of Bombing  
10 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
11 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
12 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

#### 13 **Proposed Route**

14 The Proposed Route will be located approximately 2.0 miles from Brownlee Reservoir West at  
15 its closest point at the southern end of the resource. The Project will parallel to an existing 138-  
16 kV transmission line in this area. Further north, the Proposed Route veers northwest, increasing  
17 its distance from the resource to beyond 10 miles (Figure R-3-7). Towers associated with the  
18 Proposed Route will only be visible from the higher elevations of Brownlee Reservoir West and  
19 will not be visible from the surface of the reservoir or along the shore. Visible towers could be  
20 partially skylined and introduce up to moderate contrast from distances greater than 2 miles. In  
21 the northwest portion of the resource, the bare-earth viewshed indicates that towers will be  
22 visible; however, distances will be 4 miles or more, visual contrast will be weak, and the towers  
23 will appear subordinate to the large-scale landscape at this distance. Access roads and other  
24 project features will be greater than 2 miles from the resource and will appear consistent with  
25 the landscape, which includes numerous native surface roads. The natural-appearing landscape  
26 character will be maintained, since the towers will introduce moderate contrast to a small portion  
27 of the resource such that the landscape will continue to predominantly express natural, not  
28 human, evolution. This site is also located more than 10 miles from forested portions of the  
29 Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore is not analyzed for visual impacts from the cleared  
30 ROW. The adjacent scenery component score will be reduced; however, despite the small  
31 reduction in adjacent scenery, scenic quality will remain moderate (class B).

<b>Brownlee Reservoir West Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	3	2	1	2	0	12 (B)

1 **Likelihood of Impact**

2 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

4 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Visible towers could be partially skylined and introduce up to moderate contrast from distances greater than 2 miles. They will appear co-dominant with the large-scale landscape, and impact magnitude will be <u>medium</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The adjacent scenery component score will be reduced; however, despite the small reduction in adjacent scenery, moderate (class B) scenic quality and the natural appearing landscape character will be retained such that resource change will be <u>medium</u> . The Project will not be the sole contributor to this resource change, as it will be sited next to an existing 138-kV line and collectively influence adjacent scenery of the resource.			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers within Brownlee Reservoir West will primarily be engaging in reservoir-based recreation activities. As there is no visibility of the towers associated with the Proposed Route in the valley bottom, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			



1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 Impact magnitude will be medium; towers could be visible from greater than 2 miles and will be  
 4 partially skylined. The adjacent scenery factor score will be reduced; however, scenic quality  
 5 and landscape character will not change, so resource change will be medium. Viewers within  
 6 Brownlee Reservoir West will primarily be engaging in reservoir-based recreation activities  
 7 where there will be no visibility of the Project such that viewer perception will be low. Therefore,  
 8 long-term visual impacts will be of medium intensity.

9 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

10 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
 11 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including roads and an existing 138-  
 12 kV line, which collectively influence adjacent scenery of the resource.

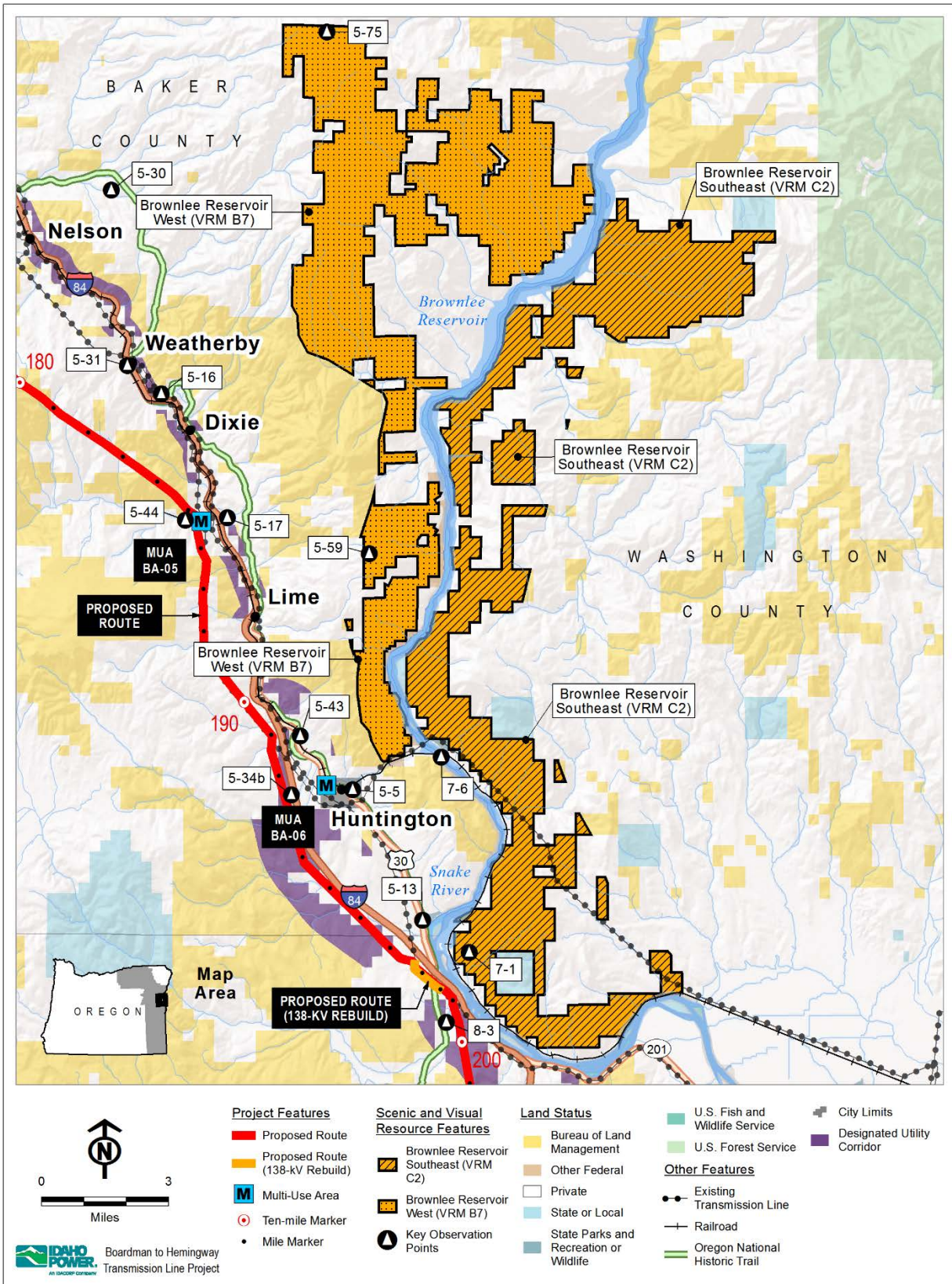
13 **Context**

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Brownlee Reservoir West is a scenic resource as defined in OAR 345-022-0080 and therefore by definition, scenery is considered a valued attribute of this resource.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.

Indicator	Context Criteria
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The BLM maintains the visual values of lands they administer through their VRM System. Visual values of Brownlee Reservoir West are managed per VRM Class II objectives. Because of the limited visibility of the Project from Brownlee Reservoir West, changes to the landscape within the boundary of the lands managed according to VRM Class II will be negligible. The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the scenic resource will be reduced; however the scenic class will remain the same. The Project will conform to VRM Class II objectives and consequently is consistent with BLM's management of Brownlee Reservoir West's visual qualities.</p>	

## 1 Summary and Conclusion

- 2 Visual impacts on the Brownlee Reservoir West scenic resource will be medium intensity and  
3 characterized by low viewer perception. Impacts will result from the combined influence of the  
4 Project with other past or present actions that collectively influence the scenery quality of the  
5 resource. The resulting medium intensity impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to  
6 provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the Baker RMP (BLM  
7 1989a). Visual impacts to Brownlee Reservoir Southeast will be **less than significant**.



1

2 **Figure R-3-7. Brownlee Reservoir Brownlee Reservoir West**



## 8.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC) – BLUE MOUNTAIN PARCEL

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR6

**Relevant Plan:** Baker RMP (BLM 1989a); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Per the Baker RMP (BLM 1989a), new uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation are excluded in a 0.5-mile corridor, and rights-of-way should avoid the Oregon Trail. This management provision applies only to BLM-administered lands. Off-road vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails. The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

**Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality of the Blue Mountain Parcel should be maintained. Any new uses proposed within the boundary of the Blue Mountain Parcel that will reduce visual quality will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

**Resource Overview:** This ACEC parcel of 80 acres is located in the Blue Mountains, on the northeast side of I-84 about 12 miles northwest of La Grande in Umatilla County. The Blue Mountain parcel abuts the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and is accessed via Forest Road 308.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel (SR6) is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel is being evaluated as a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel is not considered an important Recreation Opportunity.

**Existing Conditions:** The resource is located on a mostly forested ridge east of California Gulch. The terrain ranges from rolling mountains to highlands, resulting in angles and curved and converging lines. The terrain is densely covered with mature evergreens; colors are primarily dark greens and textures are soft. Views are enclosed due to vegetation. The Oregon

- 1 Trail runs through the resource. Human development is limited to forest roads. The landscape  
 2 character is natural appearing. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual  
 3 H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Oregon Trail ACEC –  
 4 Blue Mountain Parcel is considered medium (class B) as shown below:

<b>Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	4	0	3	2	3	1	16 (B)

- 5 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreation facilities and are restricted to  
 6 those traveling along Forest Road 308 and occasional visitors of the Oregon Trail.

## 7 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 8 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

- 9 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
 10 Morgan Lake Alternative, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
 11 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
 12 these Alternative Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 13 resulting from a cleared ROW. The Blue Mountain Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile  
 14 viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from  
 15 this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document. The analysis presented  
 16 below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 17 **Proposed Route**

- 18 The Proposed Route is located 0.9 miles to the southwest of this ACEC parcel at its closest  
 19 point (Figure R-3-8). Existing coniferous vegetation on and around the ACEC parcel will screen  
 20 or block many of the potential outward views from this site. In addition, a ridge to the immediate  
 21 west of the ACEC parcel and coniferous trees on the west side of I-84 will partially or entirely  
 22 screen potential views of the proposed transmission line. Due to limited visibility, there will be no  
 23 change to the scenic quality component scores. The overall scenic quality will remain medium  
 24 (class B) and the natural appearing landscape will be maintained.

- 25 The Blue Mountain Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
 26 of the Proposed Route, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any  
 27 further in this document.

<b>Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	4	0	3	2	3	1	16 (B)

### 28 **Likelihood of Impact**

- 29 IPC considered all identified impacts to be "likely" to occur.

1 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of the Project will introduce weak visual contrast to the landscape. The dense vegetation will entirely or partially obstruct views of some towers. Where only the top portion of a tower is visible, the scale will appear subordinate against the existing landscape. The cleared ROW will not be visible, due to the dense coverage of mature trees within the Blue Mountain Parcel. Therefore, the magnitude of impacts will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will introduce weak visual contrast to some outer edges of the Blue Mountain Parcel, but will be completely screened from view from the majority of the Blue Mountain Parcel. Consequently, there will be no change to the scenic quality component scores. The overall scenic quality will remain medium (class B) and the natural-appearing landscape will be maintained. Therefore, resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer perception will be <u>low</u> . Views of the Project will primarily be experienced from a neutral or superior vantage point and will be predominantly intermittent due to the vegetation that will block the towers from view throughout the Blue Mountain Parcel.			

2 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**3 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

1 The Project will introduce weak visual contrast to some outer edges of the Blue Mountain Parcel  
2 and will be completely screened from view from the majority of the Blue Mountain Parcel.  
3 Consequently, there will be low magnitude impacts and no change to the scenic quality  
4 component scores. The overall scenic quality will remain medium (class B), and the natural  
5 appearing landscape will be maintained such that the resource change is low. Views of the  
6 Project will be predominantly intermittent due to the vegetation that will block the towers from  
7 view throughout the Blue Mountain Parcel and views will primarily be experienced from a neutral  
8 or superior vantage point such that viewer perception is low. Therefore, impact intensity will be  
9 low.

10 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

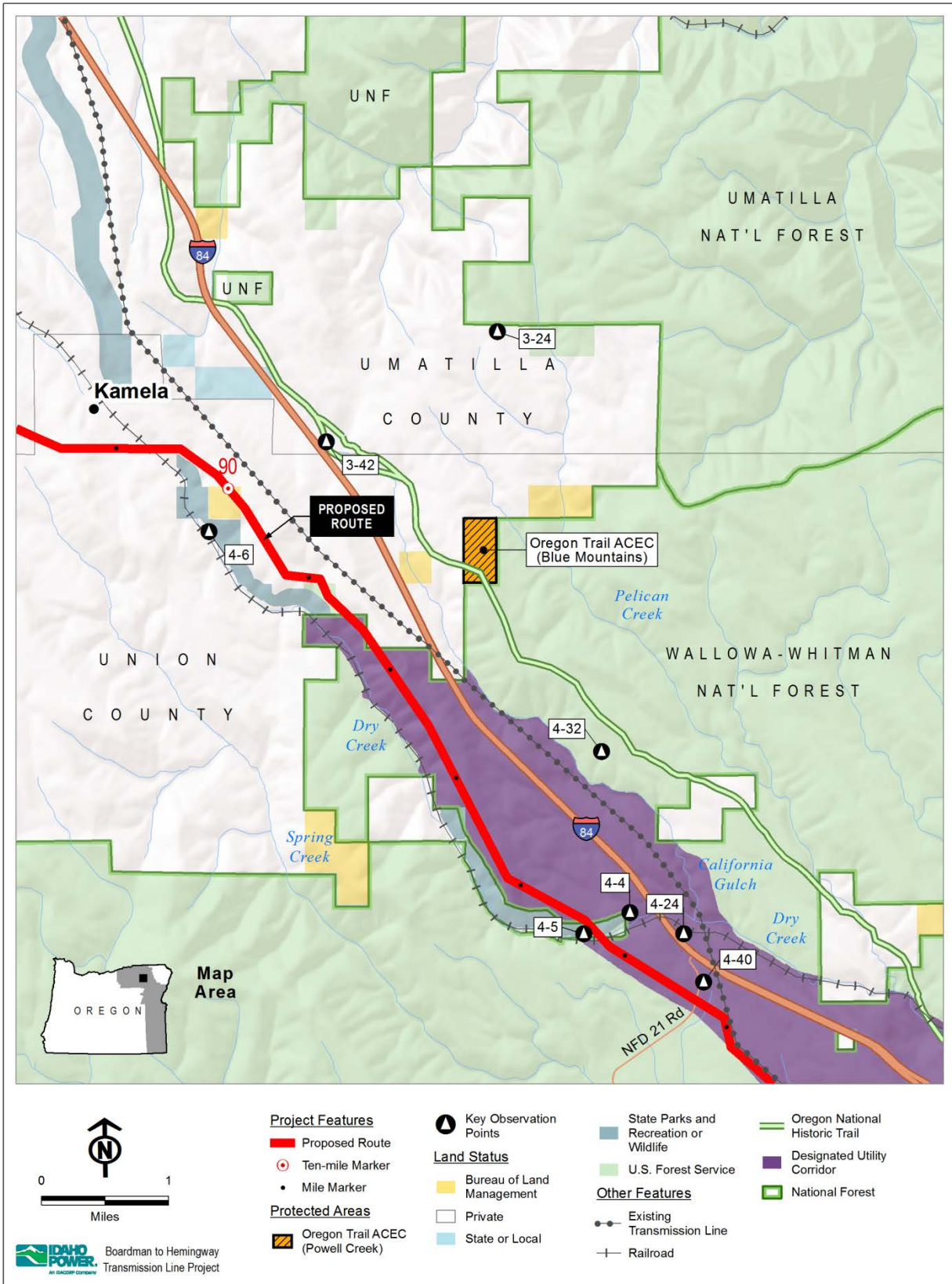
11 The low intensity impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and  
12 are not the result of other past or present actions.

13 **Context**

14 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
15 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

16 **Summary and Conclusion**

17 Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Blue Mountain Parcel will be of low intensity,  
18 resulting from low resource change and low viewer perception. Impacts will be caused by the  
19 proposed facility, and are not the result of other past or present actions. Because impacts are of  
20 low intensity, they are considered **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-8. Oregon Trail Area of Environmental Concern – Blue Mountain Parcel**

## 9.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN – NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER PARCEL

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R, T

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B6

**Relevant Plan:** Baker RMP (BLM 1989a); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area-based resource. Views will be experienced from a variety of locations within the NHOTIC Parcel. Landscape setting will vary based on location within the resource.

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-25c; 5-25d; 5-25e. Note that KOP 5-25c is located outside of the NHOTIC Parcel.

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** The relevant and important values of the ACEC are historic and scenic. Per the Baker RMP (BLM 1989a),

“Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. A management plan for preservation, public information and interpretation will be implemented. New uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded in a ½ mile corridor. No campgrounds will be developed within ¼ mile of the Oregon Trail in the ACEC. Rights-of-way will avoid the Oregon Trail. The ACEC is managed as VRM Class II.”

The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

#### Interpretation of Designation:

Oregon Trail ACEC –NHOTIC Parcel: Visual quality of the NHOTIC Parcel should be maintained. Any new uses proposed within the boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel that will reduce visual quality will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

VRM Class II: Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel.



1 This portion of the Oregon Trail is not considered to be free of “contemporary intrusions” due to  
2 the presence of the NHOTIC, OR 86, managed agriculture areas, and the built environment of  
3 Baker City.

4 **Resource Overview:** The NHOTIC ACEC parcel is located on the north side of Oregon (OR)  
5 86, approximately 4 miles northeast of Baker City. The NHOTIC is one of the largest of the  
6 ACEC parcels, measuring 507 acres (BLM 1989a), and is characterized by high recreational  
7 use (BLM 2011). Facilities at the site include the main NHOTIC building, with exhibit galleries, a  
8 theater and a gift shop; outdoor exhibits, including a pioneer wagon encampment, a replica  
9 stamp mill and an historic gold mine; picnic facilities; and 4 miles of interpretive trails, including  
10 a trail to a mile-long stretch of Oregon Trail ruts (BLM 2016). BLM (2011) reported over 66,000  
11 visitors to the NHOTIC site in 2009. The NHOTIC Trail system includes a combination of  
12 difficulty levels: Level 1 (Easy; Barrier-free access), Level 2 (Moderate; Barrier-free access) and  
13 Level 3 (Difficult). The paved surfaces of Level 1 and 2 Trails at the NHOTIC are visible in the  
14 foreground from the Visitor Center and Amphitheater. The relevant and important values of the  
15 NHOTIC Parcel are historic and scenic.

16 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC –NHOTIC Parcel (SR B6) is being evaluated as a  
17 Scenic Resource.

18 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel is being evaluated as a  
19 Protected Area.

20 The NHOTIC, the Oregon Trail, and other trails within the ACEC are considered recreation  
21 opportunities. Per OAR 345-022-0100, Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel (SR B6) is being  
22 evaluated as a Recreation Resource. KOP 5-25c is located a Panorama Point, which is outside  
23 of the NHOTIC Parcel. Visual impacts to this location are analyzed per OAR 345-022-0100.

24 **Existing Conditions:** The NHOTIC is located in the Continental Zone Foothills of the Blue  
25 Mountains Ecoregion. This area is situated in the rain shadow of the Cascade Range and Blue  
26 Mountains and is defined by wide ranges of temperature, high evapotranspiration, and early  
27 season moisture stress. This temperature regime results in a wide distribution of desert shrubs  
28 varying by soil depth, texture, and elevation. The landscape to the east and southeast consists  
29 of the open terrain of the Virtue Flat area, with flat to gently rolling terrain in the foreground that  
30 subtly transitions to steeper terrain in the middleground. These areas have a relatively even  
31 cover of sagebrush and grassy vegetation. The view to the southeast is dominated by Big  
32 Lookout Mountain and similar mountainous terrain, which becomes the major focal point in the  
33 background of the view. Views to the northeast from the NHOTIC include the rolling terrain of a  
34 small valley that transitions to a steeper, low-relief ridge in the middleground. Views to the west  
35 include the Elkhorn Mountains, a major landform focal to the view, and the agricultural  
36 development within the Baker Valley. Colors in the landscape primarily consist of varying  
37 shades of browns and tans in the valley (based on the time of year), and the gray/blue hues of  
38 the distant mountains.

39 Modifications to the natural landscape character in the foreground include portions of the paved  
40 NHOTIC trail system, several light fixtures in the parking area, and the Lode Mine building on  
41 the NHOTIC property. Oregon Route (OR) 86 is evident beyond the NHOTIC property,  
42 particularly from the trail system to the east. OR 86 is evident by its dark color and smooth  
43 texture relative to the surrounding landscape, and also the consistent movement of automobiles.

44 An existing 230-kV transmission line is located to the west. This feature is increasingly visible as  
45 one approaches the western boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel. Agricultural and residential  
46 development within the Baker Valley to the west is also visible from the NHOTIC Parcel.



1 The landscape character is “cultural.” Because of its location on BLM-administered lands, this  
 2 resource was evaluated using methods adapted from the BLM VRM system. Per manual H-  
 3 8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for Oregon Trail ACEC  
 4 NHOTIC parcel is considered medium (class B) as shown below:

Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (1 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	5	3	0	13 (B)

5  
 6 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups include recreators and tourists visiting the recreational facilities  
 7 at the NHOTIC Parcel. The NHOTIC is located on the top of Flagstaff Hill and has extensive  
 8 background views to the west across Baker Valley to the Blue Mountains and to the southeast  
 9 across Virtue Flat. A trail network within the NHOTIC Parcel provides visitor access to areas  
 10 within the NHOTIC Parcel. Viewer experience within the NHOTIC Parcel varies. Panorama  
 11 Point is a lookout established outside of the NHOTIC Parcel, but included as a recreation  
 12 opportunity within the NHOTIC. This lookout directs view to the west across the valley.

13 Viewers hiking along trails will experience views in various directions depending on their  
 14 direction of travel, including views east toward Baker Valley and the Proposed Route. These  
 15 views will be from a superior vantage point where the Proposed Route will be visible in the  
 16 foreground or middleground distance zone, depending on location within the NHOTIC Parcel.  
 17 Viewers could be both transient and stationary.

## 18 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 19 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

20 The NHOTIC Parcel is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
 21 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
 22 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

23 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
 24 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
 25 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because these Alternative  
 26 Routes are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts resulting from a  
 27 cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 28 **Proposed Route**

29 The Proposed Route is located within a mile of the NHOTIC main building and within 0.02 miles  
 30 of the western boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel (Figure R-3-9). KOPs 5-25c, 5-25d, and 5-25e  
 31 have views oriented toward the Project; simulated views from these locations are contained in  
 32 Attachment R-4. Note that KOP 5-25c is located outside of the NHOTIC Parcel. Improvements  
 33 to existing roads located approximately .02 miles directly north and west of the western  
 34 boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel will be made, which will also be visible.

35 In evaluating various alternatives for project siting, IPC concluded that potentially significant  
 36 visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the NHOTIC could result. To address  
 37 potential impacts, IPC analyzed 3 design options aimed at reducing adverse impact to less than  
 38 significant: (1) applying a natina finish to the lattice structure; (2) using an H-frame structure with

1 galvanized finish; or, (3) using an H-frame structure with a natina finish. IPC incorporated Option  
2 3 into its revised Project design as planning for the final indicative design for the Project  
3 progressed. The final indicative layout sites the Proposed Route to the east of the active  
4 agriculture area, adjacent to the NHOTIC boundary. Because of the proximity of the Project to  
5 the NHOTIC, IPC further refined their mitigation and design strategy by proposing to use shorter  
6 stature H-Frame structures ranging in height from 100 feet to 129 feet for towers located directly  
7 to the north and west of the NHOTIC. The proposed finish is weathered steel. The analysis  
8 presented in this application for site certificate addresses the Project taking into account this  
9 mitigation.

10 The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will be the primary source of  
11 visual contrast experienced from the NHOTIC Parcel, primarily due to their scale and proximity.  
12 The Baker Valley and mountainous landscape beyond will provide a backdrop for the Project  
13 and will appear co-dominant with the Proposed Route and other past human developments,  
14 including the existing 230-kV H-frame transmission structures.

15 The large, geometrical form and smooth texture will contrast against the fine to medium, rolling,  
16 rounded hills, steep rugged mountains in the background, and wide, low, flat valley in the  
17 foreground. The perceived visual contrast and dominance of the Project will vary depending on  
18 viewers' locations throughout the NHOTIC Parcel. Viewers within the western portion of the  
19 NHOTIC Parcel (near Panorama Point [KOP 5-25c] and level 2 and 3 trails) will be within 0.1  
20 miles of the Proposed Route. When viewed at this distance, transmission towers will introduce  
21 moderate contrast and appear co-dominant with and the existing 230-kV H-frame transmission  
22 structures and the natural features of Baker Valley and the Blue Mountains to the west. Views of  
23 the Project will be experienced from an elevated vantage point, with viewers gaze directed  
24 outward over the proposed towers. As viewers move throughout the NHOTIC Parcel using the  
25 various trails, viewpoints, interpretation sites, and visitor center, views will be predominantly  
26 peripheral or intermittent. Because of the distance of the visitor center from the Project, visual  
27 contrast will be reduced to a weak level, as towers will appear subordinate to the surrounding  
28 landscape. Because these amenities are distributed throughout the NHOTIC Parcel, viewer  
29 exposure to the Project will be variable. The number of towers visible will also vary depending  
30 on viewer position within the NHOTIC Parcel. Fewer towers will be visible from locations near  
31 the main NHOTIC building and level 1 trails situated west of the visitors center (KOP 5-25d; 5-  
32 25e) than from the level 2 and 3 trails situated near the western boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel  
33 because of rolling terrain throughout the NHOTIC Parcel. The forested portion of the cleared  
34 ROW is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW.

35 The Project will affect the adjacent scenery of the NHOTIC Parcel. The Blue Mountains and  
36 Baker Valley situated to the west of the NHOTIC Parcel will continue to enhance the visual  
37 quality of the NHOTIC Parcel; however, this positive influence will be reduced somewhat by the  
38 presence of the Project. Despite the change to adjacent scenery, the scenic quality of the  
39 NHOTIC parcel of the Oregon Trail ACEC will remain at class B. The change in landscape  
40 character will be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the boundary  
41 of the NHOTIC Parcel. The Project will conform to VRM Class II objectives as the proposed  
42 action occurs outside this management area.

Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (1 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	4	3	0	12 (B)

1 **Likelihood of Impact**

2 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

3 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<p><b>Explanation:</b> Viewers within the NHOTIC Parcel will experience low to medium magnitude impacts depending on their location within the NHOTIC Parcel. Viewers within the western portion of the NHOTIC Parcel (Panorama Point [KOP 5-25c] and level 2 and 3 trails) will be within 0.1 miles of the Proposed Route, where the towers will introduce moderate contrast and appear co-dominant with SR 86 to the south, existing 230-kV H-frame transmission structures, and the natural features of Baker Valley and the Blue Mountains to the west. Therefore, the magnitude of impacts will be medium from these locations. Magnitude of impacts experienced from level 1 trails (KOP 5-25e) and the main NHOTIC building (KOP 5-25d) will be low. In summary, the highest magnitude of impacts experienced within the NHOTIC Parcel will be <u>medium</u>.</p>			

2

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The Project will introduce weak to moderate contrast to the entire NHOTIC Parcel. Because no portion of the Project will be located within the NHOTIC Parcel, the changes to scenic quality will be related to impacts to the adjacent scenery of the landscape. The tall, large Blue Mountains and wide, expansive Baker Valley will continue to enhance the visual quality of the NHOTIC Parcel; however, this positive influence will be reduced slightly as a result of the proposed 500-kV towers located in the valley. Despite the change to adjacent scenery, the scenic quality of the NHOTIC parcel of the Oregon Trail ACEC will remain at class B. The Project will be one of several developments contributing to the overall landscape character and quality. Resource change will be <u>medium</u>.</p>			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of the Project will be experienced from an elevated vantage point, where views across the top of transmission towers could be sustained. As viewers move throughout the NHOTIC Parcel using the various trails, viewpoints, interpretation sites, and visitor center views will be predominantly peripheral or intermittent. Because these amenities are distributed throughout the NHOTIC Parcel, viewer exposure to the Project will be variable and <u>medium</u> at most.			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project, as mitigated to include H-frame structures, will result in medium intensity impacts to  
 4 visual qualities of the Oregon Trail ACEC - NHOTIC Parcel. Impacts will slightly reduce the  
 5 scenery adjacent to the NHOTIC Parcel but will not alter the overall scenic quality of the  
 6 NHOTIC Parcel. The existing landscape character will be retained within the boundary of the  
 7 NHOTIC Parcel and resource change will be low. Because views of the Project will be  
 8 experienced from an elevated vantage point, and will be predominantly peripheral or  
 9 intermittent, viewer perception will be medium. Taking into account mitigation, visual impacts to  
 10 the Oregon Trail ACEC - NHOTIC Parcel will be of medium intensity.

11 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

12 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
 13 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including OR 86, the existing 230-kV

1 H-frame transmission structures, and the agricultural and residential development within the  
2 Baker Valley that collectively influence adjacent scenery of the resource.

### 3 **Context**

4 The NHOTIC Parcel was designated preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon Trail,  
5 and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic  
6 resources within the geographic boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel are maintained, the resource  
7 values for which this parcel was designated to protect will persist. As such, although medium  
8 intensity impacts to visual resources within this parcel will occur, these impacts will not preclude  
9 the ability of the NHOTIC Parcel to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the  
10 BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). Additionally, IPC is incorporating mitigation measures as part of  
11 the design to reduce the intensity of impacts.

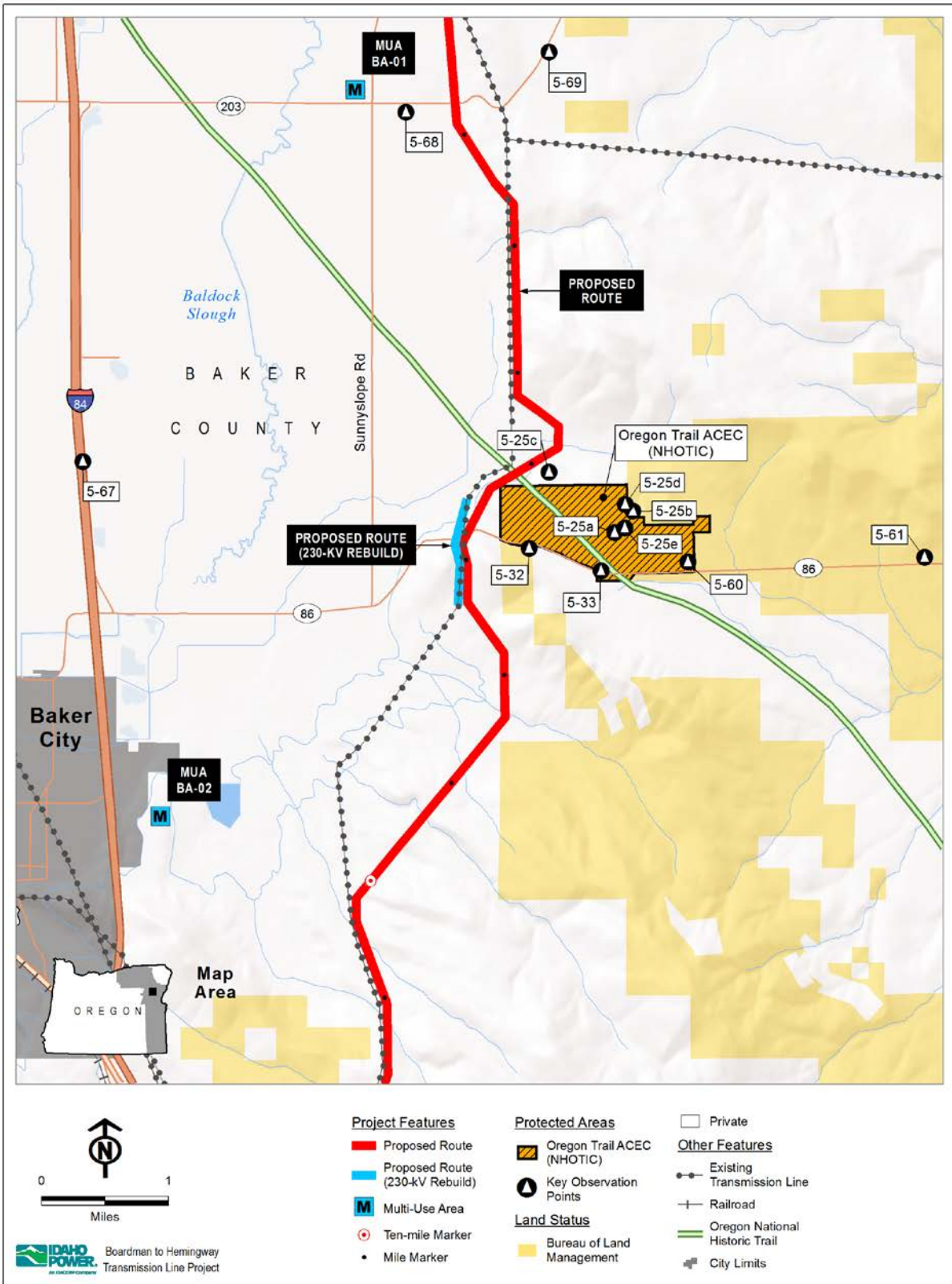
Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> <i>Oregon Trail</i> Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. Because of this management direction the NHOTIC ACEC is an <u>important</u> scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The NHOTIC Parcel was designated preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of the NHOTIC Parcel are maintained and no development occurs within ¼ mile of the Oregon Trail within the ACEC, the resource values for which this parcel was designated to protect will persist. As such, although medium intensity impacts to visual resources within this parcel will occur, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the NHOTIC Parcel to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). It is also understood that, per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). To address this provision, IPC has included project design measures to reduce the intensity of impacts to visual resources by using low stature H-frame structures ranging in height from 100 feet to 129 feet.	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – NHOTIC Parcel will be medium intensity, resulting  
3 from both medium resource change and viewer perception. Impacts will result from the  
4 combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions. Medium intensity impacts  
5 will not preclude the NHOTIC Parcel from providing the visual qualities that exist within the  
6 ACEC, or as influenced from the surrounding landscape. Visual impacts to the NHOTIC Parcel  
7 will be **less than significant**.





1  
2 **Figure R-3-9. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern – National Historic**  
3 **Oregon Trail Interpretive Center Parcel**



## 10.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN – STRAW RANCH PARCEL 2

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 2

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B6

**Relevant Plan:** Baker Resource Management Plan (BLM 1989a); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area-based

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Purpose of Designation:** Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. A management plan for preservation, public information, and interpretation will be implemented. New uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the trail. No campgrounds will be developed within 0.25 mile of the Oregon Trail in the ACEC. Rights-of-way will avoid the Oregon Trail.

The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

**Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality of the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 should be maintained. Any new uses proposed within the boundary of the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 that will reduce visual quality will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse visual impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

This portion of the Oregon Trail is not considered to be free of “contemporary intrusions” due to the presence existing gravel-surfaced roads and 69- and 138-kV transmission lines located approximately 1 mile to the southwest.

**Resource Overview:** Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within the Baker Resource Management Area. The Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is located approximately 2 miles northeast of Pleasant Valley and measures approximately 230 to 240 acres. The Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is not accessible from existing roads, nor is it crossed by existing transmission lines. There are no recreational facilities within the Straw Ranch Parcel 2.

Per 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 2 (SR B6) is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

1 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 2 (SR B6) is being  
2 evaluated as a Protected Area.

3 Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is not considered an important Recreation Opportunity, and is not  
4 evaluated per OAR 345-022-0010.

5 **Existing Conditions:** The natural landscape is characterized by flat to rolling terrain with some  
6 rock outcroppings, including some agricultural and grazing lands. Vegetation generally consists  
7 of low grasses and sagebrush that appear green, grey, and brown. The Blue Mountains are  
8 present to the west and Wallowa Mountains to the east. The landscape is undeveloped in this  
9 area, and the landscape character is natural appearing, despite existing gravel-surfaced roads  
10 and 69- and 138-kV transmission lines located approximately 1 mile to the southwest. Views to  
11 the southwest and south toward the transmission lines are primarily blocked by a ridgeline such  
12 that their visual prominence in the landscape is low. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory  
13 methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the  
14 Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is considered low (class C) as shown below:

Oregon Trail ACEC - Straw Ranch Parcel 2 Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	2	2	0	8 (C)

15

16 **Viewers:** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreational development and access within the  
17 ACEC parcel, and be limited to local residents and individuals using local roads in the area. The  
18 moderately sized hills in the area limit views from the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 to the foreground  
19 and middleground distance zones.

## 20 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 21 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

22 Straw Ranch Parcel 2 is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
23 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
24 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

25 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
26 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
27 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because Boardman Bombing  
28 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
29 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
30 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 31 **Proposed Route**

32 The Proposed Route is located 1.1 miles to the south of Straw Ranch Parcel 2 (Figure R-3-10).  
33 Potential views to the southwest and south towards the transmission towers located within the  
34 Proposed Route will be primarily blocked by a ridgeline approximately 0.4 mile southwest of the  
35 Straw Ranch Parcel 2. Views to the west and northwest toward the Proposed Route will not be  
36 blocked; however, the Proposed Route will be located 4 miles or more from the Straw Ranch  
37 Parcel 2. Generally, visibility of the Project will be higher from elevated areas and lower from the  
38 lower elevation valleys within the Straw Ranch Parcel 2. Existing roads with potential viewers  
39 exist both in high and low elevation areas within the Straw Ranch Parcel 2. The Straw Ranch 2

1 Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of the Proposed  
2 Route.

3 Where visible, the large, geometrical form and smooth texture of the transmission towers will  
4 contrast against the fine to medium rolling and rounded hills. The light, reflective color will also  
5 contrast against the light to medium brown vegetation and rock outcrops. However, because the  
6 towers will be primarily blocked (with only the tops of the towers visible), the structures are  
7 expected to contrast at a weak level against the existing landscape. Though unobstructed views  
8 of the towers will occur, the structures will be located at a distance of 4 miles or more. The  
9 distance of the towers from the resource will reduce visual contrast to a weak level.

10 Where the Proposed Route will be visible, it will generally follow the alignment of existing 69-  
11 and 138-kV transmission lines and appear consistent with those structures. Views of the Project  
12 will primarily be experienced from a neutral vantage point and will be intermittent due to the  
13 visual obstructions. Therefore, the adjacent scenery will continue to enhance the overall scenic  
14 quality of Straw Ranch Parcel 2. The landscape will retain its natural-appearing landscape  
15 character, as structures associated with the existing and proposed transmission corridors will be  
16 subordinate to the surrounding large-scale landscape. Scenic quality will remain low (class C).

Oregon Trail ACEC - Straw Ranch Parcel 2 Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	2	2	0	8 (C)

### 17 Likelihood of Impact

18 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

### 19 MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
Impact Duration	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).

**Explanation:** Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> At distances of 2 miles or less, the towers will be primarily blocked, with only the tops of the towers visible, resulting in weak visual contrast. At distances of 4 miles or more, there are unobstructed views of the towers, but visual contrast will also be weak due to distance. The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will appear consistent with the existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines and generally subordinate to the large-scale landscape. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

2

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
Resource Change	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality/attractiveness and/or character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality; however, it will not reduce the quality/attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality/attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Adjacent scenery will continue to enhance the overall scenic quality of Straw Ranch Parcel 2. The landscape will retain its natural-appearing landscape character, as structures associated with the existing and proposed transmission corridors will appear weak and generally subordinate to the surrounding large-scale landscape. Scenic quality will remain low (Class C). Therefore, resource change will be <u>low</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer perception will be <u>low</u> as views of the Project will primarily be intermittent due to visual obstructions. Views of the Project will be experienced from a neutral vantage point.			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<b>LOW</b>	Low	Medium	High
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Low	Medium	High
<b>HIGH</b>	Low	High	High

3

4 The Project will result in low magnitude impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 primarily due to  
5 topographic screening and distance. The landscape will retain its natural-appearing landscape  
6 character, and scenic quality will remain low (Class C), such that the resource change is low.  
7 Views of the Project will primarily be intermittent due to visual obstructions and will be  
8 experienced from a neutral vantage point; therefore, viewer perception will also be low.  
9 Therefore, visual impacts will be of low intensity.

### 10 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

11 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
12 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, existing 69- and 138-kV transmission  
13 lines. These modifications all appear subordinate to the natural appearing landscape of the  
14 resource.

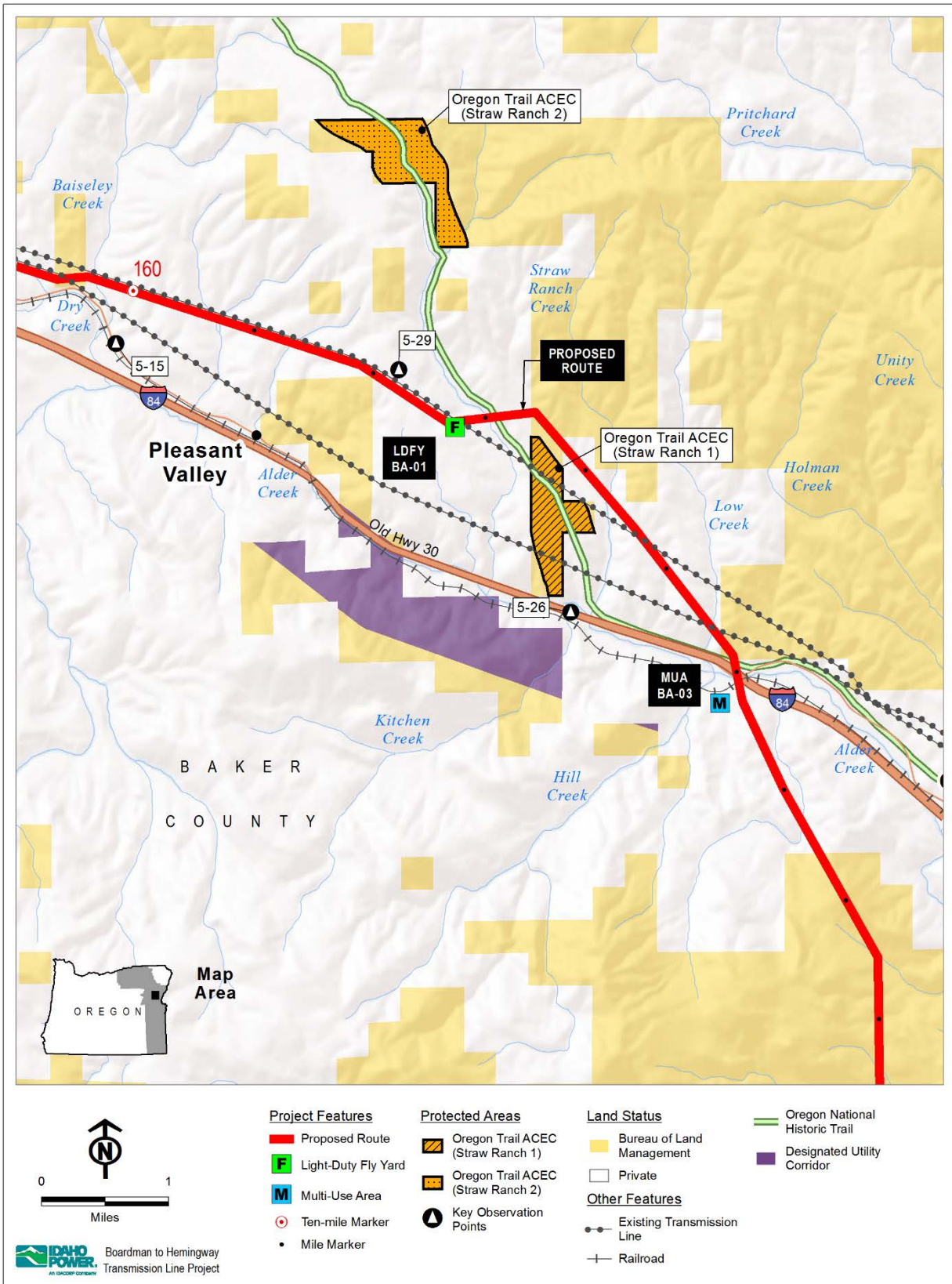
### 15 Context

16 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
17 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 2 of the Oregon Trail ACEC will be of low intensity,  
3 resulting from both low resource change and low viewer perception. Impacts will result from the  
4 combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The Project will not  
5 preclude the ability of Straw Ranch Parcel 2 to provide the scenic value for which it was  
6 designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). Visual impacts to Straw Ranch Parcel 2 of the  
7 Oregon Trail ACEC will be **less than significant**.





1  
2 **Figure R-3-10. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern – Straw Ranch Parcel 2**

## 11.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC) – STRAW RANCH PARCEL 1

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 1

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B6

**Relevant Plan:** Baker Resource Management Plan (BLM 1989a); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area-based

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. A management plan for preservation, public information, and interpretation will be implemented. New uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded within a 0.5 mile of the trail. No campgrounds will be developed within 0.25 mile of the Oregon Trail in the ACEC. Rights-of-way will avoid the Oregon Trail (BLM 1989a).

The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

**Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality of the ACEC should be maintained. Any new uses proposed within the boundary of the ACEC that would reduce visual quality would be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse visual impacts from the Project be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

This portion of the Oregon Trail is not considered to be free of “contemporary intrusions” due to the presence of I-84, a gravel quarry, scattered residential and ranching development, gravel surface roads, and existing 69-kV and 138-kV transmission lines.

**Resource Overview:** The Straw Ranch Parcel 1 is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within the Baker Resource Management Area and is located about 2.2 miles southeast of Pleasant Valley on the north side of I-84. The parcel measures approximately 160 acres and has unimproved road access to the south end of the parcel (BLM 2011). There are no recreation facilities within the Straw Ranch Parcel 1.

Per 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 1 (SR B6) is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 1 (SR B6) is being evaluated as a Protected Area.



1 Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Ranch Parcel 1 is not considered an important Recreation  
2 Opportunity and is not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0100.

3 **Existing Conditions:** The natural landscape is characterized by flat to rolling terrain with some  
4 rock outcroppings, including some agricultural and grazing lands. Vegetation typically consists  
5 of low grasses and sagebrush that appear green, grey, and brown. The Blue Mountains are  
6 present to the west and Wallowa Mountains to the east. Existing development visible from the  
7 Straw Ranch ACEC Parcel 1 includes I-84 immediately to the south, a gravel quarry to the  
8 northwest, scattered residential and ranching development, gravel surface roads, and existing  
9 69-kV and 138-kV transmission lines that cross through the southern half of the ACEC parcel in  
10 an east to west direction. The natural landscape features are co-dominant with the  
11 development, and expansive views across the landscape in all directions exist providing some  
12 evidence of the historic landscape of the Oregon Trail. The landscape has a cultural landscape  
13 character. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM  
14 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 is considered  
15 low (class C) as shown below:

Oregon Trail ACEC - Straw Ranch Parcel 1 Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	3	2	-2	7 (C)

16 **Viewers:** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreational development within the Straw  
17 Ranch Parcel 1. Primary viewers are assumed to be local residents, driving through or near the  
18 Straw Ranch Parcel 1, and occasional visitors to the Oregon Trail remnants. The moderately  
19 sized hills in the area limit views from the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 to the foreground and  
20 middleground distance zones.

## 21 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 22 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

23 Straw Ranch Parcel 1 is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
24 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
25 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

26 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
27 Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
28 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
29 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
30 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
31 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
32 Route.

### 33 **Proposed Route**

34 The Project will be located within the foreground distance zone. The Proposed Route will pass  
35 the Straw Ranch ACEC Parcel 1 approximately 0.1 mile to the north (Figure R-3-11). New  
36 primitive and graded roads associated with the Proposed Route will also be present immediately  
37 north of and approximately 0.4 mile east of the Straw Ranch Parcel 1. The transmission towers  
38 associated with the Proposed Route will be the primary source of visual contrast experienced

1 from the Straw Ranch Parcel 1, primarily due to their size, proximity, and the number of towers  
 2 that will be visible. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture will contrast against the fine  
 3 to medium rolling, rounded hills and sinuous drainages. The light, reflective color will also  
 4 contrast against the light to medium brown vegetation and outcrops. The moderately rolling  
 5 topography behind the towers will provide some backdrop, although portions of some towers will  
 6 still be skylined. The Project access roads, though visible, will appear consistent with the  
 7 surrounding landscape due to the numerous gravel roads that already exist within and near the  
 8 Straw Ranch Parcel 1.

9 The Project will create moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape and will appear  
 10 co-dominant with I-84 to the southwest and the existing transmission line crossing through the  
 11 Straw Ranch Parcel 1. Due to the proximity, moderate visual contrast from the Proposed Route  
 12 will be experienced throughout the entire Straw Ranch Parcel 1. Views of the Project will be  
 13 equally head-on and peripheral depending on the viewer's location and viewing direction within  
 14 the Straw Ranch Parcel 1. Views will be experienced generally from a neutral vantage point.  
 15 The proposed towers will reduce the quality of the scenery immediately adjacent to the Straw  
 16 Ranch Parcel 1, but will be consistent with the existing landscape modification, including the  
 17 transmission lines that cross the Straw Ranch Parcel 1. Development and natural landscape  
 18 features will remain co-dominant aspects of the landscape such that the cultural landscape  
 19 character will be maintained and the existing scenic quality of the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 will not  
 20 be altered. The forested portion of the cleared ROW will be located outside of the 10-mile  
 21 viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW; therefore, this project feature was not considered this  
 22 analysis.

<b>Oregon Trail ACEC - Straw Ranch Parcel 1 Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	1	2	-2	5 (C)

### 23 **Likelihood of Impact**

24 IPC considered all identified impacts to be "likely" to occur.

### 25 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).

**Explanation:** Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Considerable development exists within and near the Straw Ranch Parcel 1, including I-84 located immediately south, and existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines that cross the Straw Ranch Parcel 1. Although the Project will be in close proximity to the Straw Ranch Parcel 1, it will appear co-dominant and create moderate visual contrast to the cultural landscape. Impact magnitude will be <u>medium</u> .			

2

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
Resource Change	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will lower the quality of the Straw Ranch Parcel 1's adjacent scenery. However this change will only result in a small reduction in scenic quality score, and the scenic quality class will not change. The cultural landscape character will be maintained. Therefore, resource change will be <u>medium</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer perception will be <u>medium</u> , as views of the Project will be equally head-on and peripheral (depending on the viewer’s location and viewing direction within the Straw Ranch Parcel 1) and experienced generally from a neutral vantage point.			

1

**PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2

**Impact Intensity**

3

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<b>LOW</b>	Low	Medium	High
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Low	Medium	High
<b>HIGH</b>	Low	High	High

4

The Project will result in medium intensity visual impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 of the Oregon Trail ACEC. The landscape in and around Straw Ranch Parcel 1 has been modified by previous actions that are visible throughout the entire Straw Ranch Parcel 1, including an adjacent interstate highway and two existing transmission lines running through the parcel. The quality and character of the landscape within the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 will not be altered by the Project, where both the development and natural landscape features will be prevalent such that the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 will continue to provide some evidence of the historic landscape of the Oregon Trail. Views of the Project will be equally head-on and peripheral depending on the viewer’s location and viewing direction within the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 and will be experienced generally from a neutral vantage point.

5

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14

**Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

15

The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including I-84, a gravel quarry, scattered residential and ranching development, gravel surface roads, and existing 69-kV and 138-kV that collectively contribute to the cultural landscape character of the resource.

16

17

18

19

1 **Context**

2 Visual impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 will not preclude its ability to provide the scenic  
3 value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. Because of this management direction the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 ACEC is an <u>important</u> scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Straw Ranch Parcel 1 was designated to preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 are maintained, the resource values for which the Oregon Trail ACEC – Straw Creek Parcel 1 was designated to protect would persist. Therefore, although medium intensity impacts to visual resources within Straw Ranch Parcel 1 will be affected, these impacts will not preclude the ability of Straw Ranch Parcel 1 to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).	

4

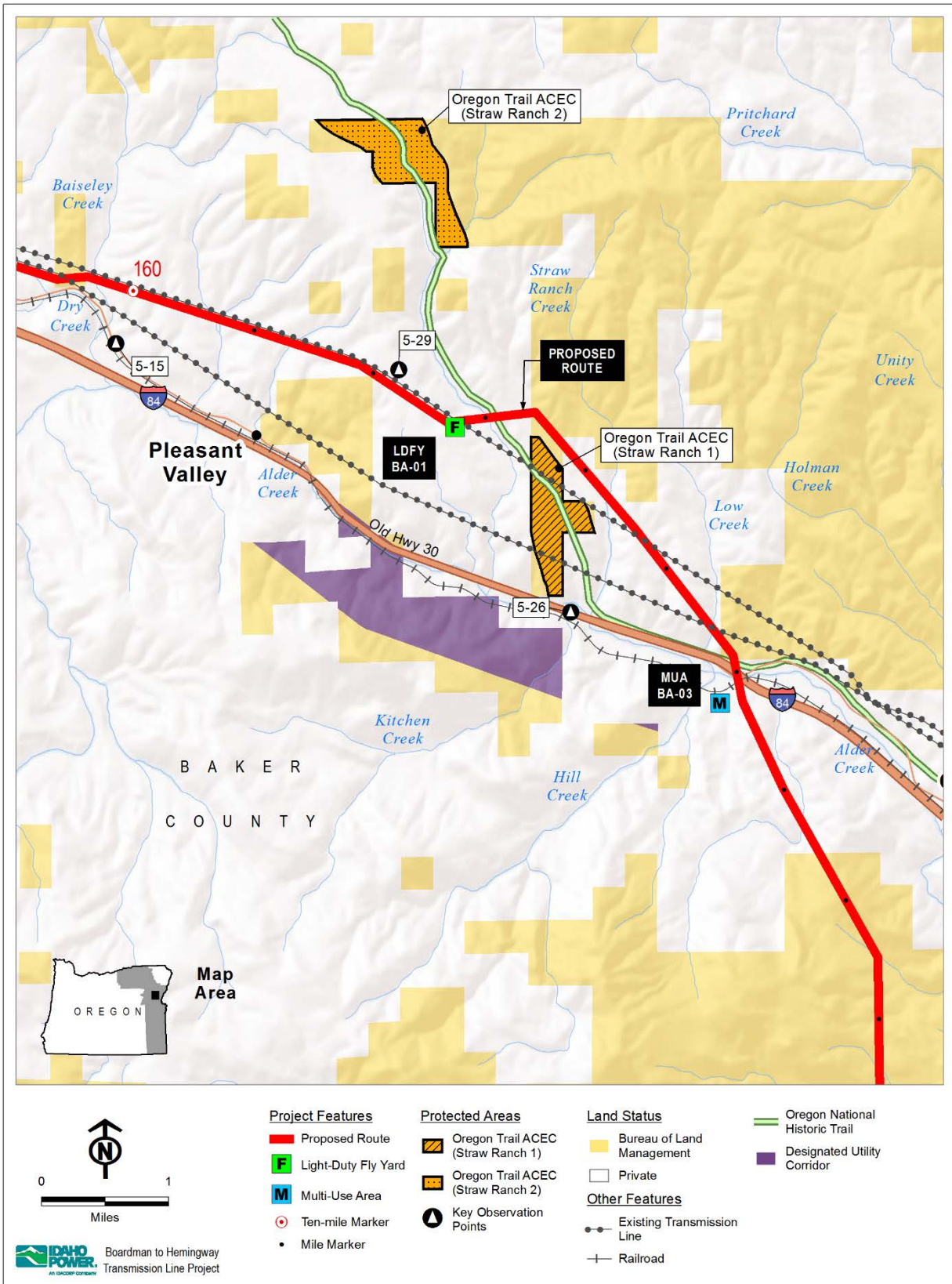
	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

5

6 **Summary and Conclusion**

7 Visual impacts to the Straw Ranch Parcel 1 of the Oregon Trail ACEC will be of medium  
8 intensity, resulting from both medium resource change and medium viewer perception. Impacts  
9 will result from the combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The  
10 Project will not preclude the ability of Straw Ranch Parcel 1 to provide the scenic value for which  
11 it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). Visual impacts to Straw Ranch Parcel 1  
12 of the Oregon Trail ACEC will be **less than significant**.





1  
2 **Figure R-3-11. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern – Straw Ranch Parcel 1**

## 12.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN – POWELL CREEK PARCEL

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B6

**Relevant Plan:** Baker RMP (BLM 1989a); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area-based

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. A management plan for preservation, public information, and interpretation will be implemented. New uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded in within 0.5 mile of the trail. No campgrounds will be developed within 0.25 mile of the Oregon Trail in the ACEC. Rights-of-way will avoid the Oregon Trail.

The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

**Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality of the Powell Creek Parcel should be maintained. Any new uses proposed within the boundary of the Powell Creek Parcel that will reduce visual quality will be excluded within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse visual impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

This portion of the Oregon Trail is not considered to be free of “contemporary intrusions” due to the presence of I-84, existing 69- and 138- kV transmission, and existing gravel-surfaced roads that travel through the Powell Creek Parcel and along the western boundary.

**Resource Overview:** The Powell Creek parcel is one of the seven Oregon Trail ACEC parcels within the Baker Resource Management Area and is located slightly east of I-84 about 0.6 mile southeast of Dixie and 5 miles north of Lime. This parcel includes approximately 70 acres and has direct access via Chimney Creek Road (BLM 2011). There are no recreation facilities within the Powell Creek parcel.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel (SR B6) is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

1 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel (SR B6) is being evaluated  
2 as a Protected Area.

3 The Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel is not considered an important Recreation  
4 Opportunity and is not evaluated per OAR-022-0100.

5 **Existing Conditions:** The Powell Creek Parcel sits slightly above I-84 and the Burnt River,  
6 which are situated at the bottom of a sinuous valley with moderate to steep sidewalls. Colors  
7 are primarily medium to dark brown, tan, and gray. Vegetation is primarily low-growing  
8 sagebrush steppe on the highlands with some surrounding agricultural areas. Existing  
9 development includes I-84 and existing 69- and 138-kV transmission lines located  
10 approximately 0.3 mile to the west of the Powell Creek Parcel, and existing gravel-surfaced  
11 roads that travel through the Powell Creek Parcel and along the western boundary. This existing  
12 development competes for visual attention with the natural features of the landscape and is co-  
13 dominant. The landscape has a cultural landscape character and provides some evidence of the  
14 historic landscape of the Oregon Trail. Lasting impressions of the landscape include both  
15 human development and natural features. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods  
16 per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Oregon  
17 Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel is considered low (class C) as shown below:

Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	1	2	1	8 (C)

18  
19 **Viewers:** Viewers are limited due to the lack of recreational development within the Powell  
20 Creek Parcel parcel. Visitors are assumed to be local residents driving through the area and  
21 occasional visitors of the Oregon Trail remnants. The moderately sized hills in the area limit  
22 views from the Powell Creek Parcel to the foreground and middleground distance zones.

## 23 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 24 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

25 The Powell Creek Parcel is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
26 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
27 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

28 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
29 Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
30 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
31 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
32 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
33 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
34 Route.

### 35 **Proposed Route**

36 The Proposed Route will be located approximately 1.2 miles to the south the Powell Creek  
37 Parcel parcel (Figure R-3-12). The 500-kV line will traverse the west side of the ridgeline;  
38 however views of these towers will be largely shielded by topography located between the  
39 ACEC parcel and the Proposed Route. Moderate improvements will be made to an existing



1 road located to the southwest of the parcel, across I-84. The roadway will become more  
 2 apparent on the landscape as a result of this change, with horizontal and diagonal lines  
 3 contrasting at a moderate level against the hillslope. An approximately 735 acre work area will  
 4 be located to the southwest along Rye Valley Road, and will introduce strong visual contrast  
 5 during the temporary construction period.

6 Under operational conditions, the skylined towers 186/2, 186/3, and 186/4 will be appear  
 7 prominent on the ridgeline, as these structures support the span of the conductor across Rye  
 8 Valley Lane. Views of the Project will be equally head-on and peripheral, depending on the  
 9 viewer's location and viewing direction from within the Powell Creek Parcel, and will be  
 10 experienced from an inferior vantage point. The Proposed Route will introduce moderate visual  
 11 contrast throughout the Powell Creek Parcel, and will appear codominant. Overall, the  
 12 landscape will retain its cultural landscape character such that human development and natural  
 13 features will be co-dominant, and some evidence of the historic Oregon Trail landscape will  
 14 remain. The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will reduce the adjacent  
 15 scenery to the west. The scenic quality of the Powell Creek Parcel will remain low (class C).

16 The Powell Creek Parcel is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW  
 17 of the Proposed Route, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any  
 18 further in this document.

Oregon Trail ACEC – Powell Creek Parcel Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
1	1	0	2	0	2	1	7 (C)

## 19 Likelihood of Impact

20 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

## 21 MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Considerable development exists near the Powell Creek Parcel, including I-84 located approximately 0.5 mile to the west, an existing 138-kV line located just west of I-84, and an existing 69-kV transmission line located just east of I-84. The Proposed Route introduces a <u>medium</u> magnitude impact, as skylined structures will attract attention and appear co-dominant with existing development.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will lower the quality of the Powell Creek Parcel's adjacent scenery. However, this change will only result in a small change to the scenic quality scoring and the overall scenic quality will not change. The cultural landscape character will be maintained. Therefore, resource change will be <u>medium</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer perception will be <u>medium</u> . Views of the Project will be equally head-on and peripheral, depending on the viewer's location and viewing direction in the Powell Creek Parcel, and will be experienced from an inferior vantage point.			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will result in medium magnitude visual impacts to the Powell Creek parcel of the  
4 Oregon Trail ACEC. However, the landscape in and around the Powell Creek Parcel parcel has  
5 been modified by previous actions that are visible throughout the entire Powell Creek Parcel.  
6 The extent to which this human development is visible from the Powell Creek Parcel and its  
7 overall dominance in the landscape will not increase and the landscape character and scenic  
8 quality of the Powell Creek Parcel will not change, therefore resource change will be medium.  
9 Views of the Project will be equally head-on and peripheral, depending on the viewer's location  
10 and viewing direction in the Powell Creek Parcel, and will be experienced from an inferior  
11 vantage point such that viewer perception will be medium. Therefore, impact intensity will be  
12 medium.

### 13 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

14 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
15 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including I-84 located approximately  
16 0.5 mile to the west, an existing 138-kV line located just west of I-84, and an existing 69-kV  
17 transmission line located just east of I-84.

1 **Context**

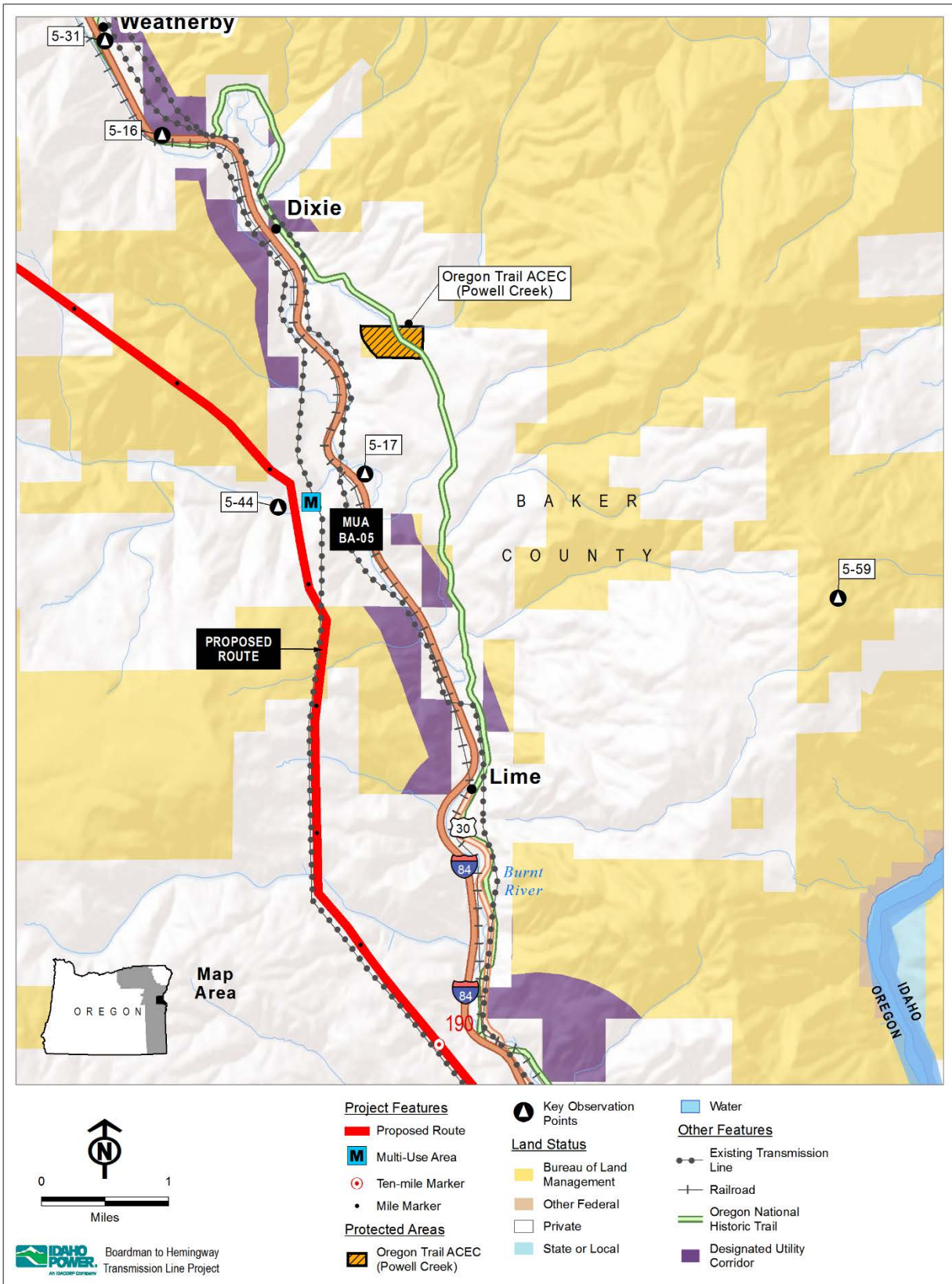
2 The Powell Creek Parcel was designated to preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon  
3 Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, although medium intensity  
4 impacts to visual resources within this Powell Creek Parcel will be affected, these impacts will  
5 not preclude the ability of the Powell Creek Parcel to provide the scenic value for which it was  
6 designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an Powell Creek Parcel to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. Because of this management direction, the Powell Creek Parcel is an <u>important</u> scenic resource per OAR 345-022-0080.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Powell Creek Parcel was designated to preserve the unique historic resource, the Oregon Trail, and visual qualities within this geographic area. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of this Powell Creek Parcel are maintained, the resource values for which this Powell Creek Parcel was designated to protect will persist. Although the Project will result in medium intensity impacts to visual resources within this Powell Creek Parcel, these impacts will not preclude the ability of the Powell Creek Parcel to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a).	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

7 **Summary and Conclusion**

8 Visual impacts to the Powell Creek Parcel will be of medium intensity, resulting from both  
9 medium resource change and viewer perception. Impacts will result from the combined  
10 influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The Project will not preclude the  
11 ability of the Powell Creek Parcel to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the  
12 BLM Baker RMP (BLM 1989a). Visual impacts to the Powell Creek Parcel will be **less than**  
13 **significant.**



1  
2 **Figure R-3-12. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern – Powell Creek Parcel**



## 13.0 POWDER RIVER CANYON AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN; WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

**Resource:** Powder River Canyon ACEC; Wild and Scenic River (WSR)

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R, T

**Exhibit R Map ID:** SR B7

**Relevant Plan:** Baker Resource Management Plan (BLM 1989a)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 5-34; 5-35

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** The Powder River ACEC is managed to protect raptor habitat, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources and to maintain scenic qualities while allowing for compatible recreation uses (BLM 1989a). The Powder River is designated as a scenic river for 11.7 miles, covering 2,385 acres, from the Thief Valley Dam to Oregon Highway 203 within the BLM Vale District (BLM 1989a; National Wild and Scenic River System 2015). Scenery is identified as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value (ORV).

**Interpretation of Designation:** Scenery is identified as an important and relevant value of the Powder River Canyon ACEC for which it should be managed to protect. Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse visual impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

Section 10(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act states:

“Each component of the national wild and scenic rivers system shall be administered in such manner as to protect and enhance the values which caused it to be included in said system without, insofar as is consistent therewith, limiting other uses that do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of these values. In such administration primary emphasis shall be given to protecting its esthetic, scenic, historic, archaeological, and scientific”

**Resource Overview:** The Powder River flows through a rugged canyon with scenic geologic formations. Recreation opportunities include boating in the spring, fishing, and hunting, although access is limited (National Wild and Scenic River System 2015). The WSR segment is located within the Powder River Canyon ACEC. The Powder River Canyon ACEC measures approximately 5,880 acres Off-road vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails. The Powder River Canyon ACEC is considered an important recreation resource because of its designation, good opportunities for fishing and hunting, and irreplaceable high scenic quality of the river canyon.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, Powder River Canyon ACEC; WSR, and SR B7 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, Powder River Canyon ACEC and WSR are being evaluated as a Protected Area.

1 Per OAR 345-022-0100, Powder River Canyon ACEC; WSR is being evaluated as a Recreation  
2 Resource.

3 **Existing Conditions:** The 11.7 miles of the WSR segment of the Powder River flows through a  
4 rugged, incised canyon with steep walls, jagged outcrops, and geologic formations recognized  
5 for their outstanding scenic quality. The Powder River meanders through the bottom of the  
6 canyon in a sinuous pattern. Vegetation includes medium-height riparian vegetation at the valley  
7 floor. Colors include browns and black from basalt outcrops, and browns, tans, and greens from  
8 vegetation. Views from within the canyon are enclosed. The portion of the Powder River Canyon  
9 ACEC above the canyon appear flat to gently rolling with low-growing grass and shrub  
10 vegetation that stipples the landscape. Colors are generally muted tones of tans, greens, and  
11 greys. Human development includes dirt roads within the Powder River Canyon ACEC and an  
12 existing 230-kV transmission line visible to the west. Wind turbines are visible in the distance  
13 outside of the Powder River Canyon ACEC boundary. Although there is existing development  
14 within and visible from the Powder River Canyon ACEC, the landscape character is naturally  
15 appearing. Using the BLM's visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM  
16 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for the Powder River Canyon ACEC is  
17 considered medium (class B) as shown below:

<b>Powder River Canyon ACEC Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
4	3	3	3	1	4	0	18 (B)

18 **Viewers:** Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the canyon and be engaged in  
19 hunting, fishing, or floating the river although some off-highway vehicle use may occur in the  
20 uplands. Viewers within the canyon are limited by difficult access.

## 21 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 22 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

23 The Powder River ACEC and WSR is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake  
24 Alternative and outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore  
25 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

26 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
27 Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
28 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
29 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
30 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
31 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
32 Route.

### 33 **Proposed Route**

34 Viewshed modeling indicates that the Project will not be visible within the canyon; therefore, no  
35 impacts to the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR will result, and scenic values of that  
36 portion of the Powder River Canyon ACEC will be maintained.

37 In the uplands, the proposed 500-kV towers will be visible at a minimum distance of  
38 approximately 1.4 miles (Figure R-3-13). These towers will be placed parallel to the existing

1 230-kV transmission line and will be consistent with their form, line, color, and texture. Some  
 2 towers will be skylined such that visual contrast will be moderate, and the towers will appear co-  
 3 dominant with the existing transmission line. However, the majority of the views from the upland  
 4 portion of the Powder River Canyon ACEC will be experienced at distances over 2 miles from  
 5 the towers, where visual contrast will attenuate to a moderate to weak level.

6 Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the canyon where the Project will not be  
 7 visible. Viewers could have views of the Proposed Route when accessing the river or driving  
 8 roadway or off-highway vehicles; however, these views will be peripheral and intermittent. The  
 9 Project will lower the quality of the Powder River Canyon ACEC's adjacent scenery. However,  
 10 adjacent scenery has a limited effect on the quality of the Powder River Canyon ACEC  
 11 landscape or the Powder River scenery ORV. The reduction in the value for the "adjacent  
 12 scenery" key factor will only result in a small change to the scenic quality score, and the overall  
 13 scenic quality class will not change. Landscape will continue to appear primarily natural.

14 The Powder River Canyon ACEC and WSR is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of  
 15 the cleared ROW of the Proposed Route, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not  
 16 discussed any further in this document.

Powder River Canyon ACEC Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
4	3	3	3	0	4	0	17 (B)

### 17 Likelihood of Impact

18 IPC considered all identified impacts to be "likely" to occur.

### 19 MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The river channel and adjacent steep canyon walls of the Powder River canyon will be located outside of the Project viewshed. In the uplands, the proposed 500-kV towers could be visible for distances as close as approximately 1.6 miles. These towers will be placed parallel to the existing 230-kV transmission line and will be consistent with their form, line, color, and texture. Some towers will be skylined such that visual contrast will be moderate, and the towers will appear co-dominant with the existing transmission line. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>medium</u> .			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not affect the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR. The Project will lower the contribution of adjacent scenery to scenic quality of the upland portion of the Powder River Canyon ACEC. However, adjacent scenery has a limited effect on the quality of the Powder River Canyon ACEC landscape, so this change will only result in a small change to the scenic quality score, and the overall scenic quality class will not change. Landscape will continue to appear primarily natural. Therefore, resource change will be <u>medium</u> .			

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the canyon where the Project will not be visible. Viewers could have views of the Proposed Route when accessing the river or driving roadway or off-highway vehicles; however, these views will be peripheral and intermittent and experienced from a neutral vantage point. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Proposed Route will have medium magnitude impacts associated with 500-kV towers at  
4 distances of 1.6 miles or more. These medium magnitude impacts will be limited to the uplands  
5 and not affect the scenery within the canyon itself. The Proposed Route will lower the quality of  
6 the Powder River Canyon ACEC's adjacent scenery in upland portions of the resource;  
7 however, the overall scenic quality and landscape character will not change, and resource  
8 change will be medium. Viewers will primarily be located near the bottom of the canyon where  
9 the Project will not be visible, so viewer perception will be low. Therefore, visual impacts will be  
10 medium intensity.

### 11 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

12 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
13 influence of the Project and other past or present actions, including the existing 230-kV  
14 transmission line which both will appear subordinate to the natural appearing landscape  
15 character.

1 **Context**

2 The Project will not impact the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR. The scenic quality of  
3 the Powder River Canyon ACEC and the WSR will be maintained in accordance with the  
4 resource designation and associated management objectives.

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Powder River Canyon ACEC is managed to protect raptor habitat, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources and to maintain scenic qualities while allowing for compatible recreation uses (BLM 1989a). Therefore, scenery is considered a valued attribute to the Powder River Canyon ACEC.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or, <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Powder River Canyon ACEC was designated to preserve scenic values of the Powder River Canyon. Therefore, it is understood that if the scenic resources within the geographic boundary of the Powder River Canyon ACEC are maintained, the resource values for which the Powder River Canyon ACEC was designated to protect will persist. Additionally, recreation activities will be focused near the bottom of the canyon where the Project will not be visible; therefore, visual impacts will not disrupt recreation activities for which the Powder River Canyon ACEC is also managed to protect.  The Project will not impact the scenery ORV of the Powder River WSR.	

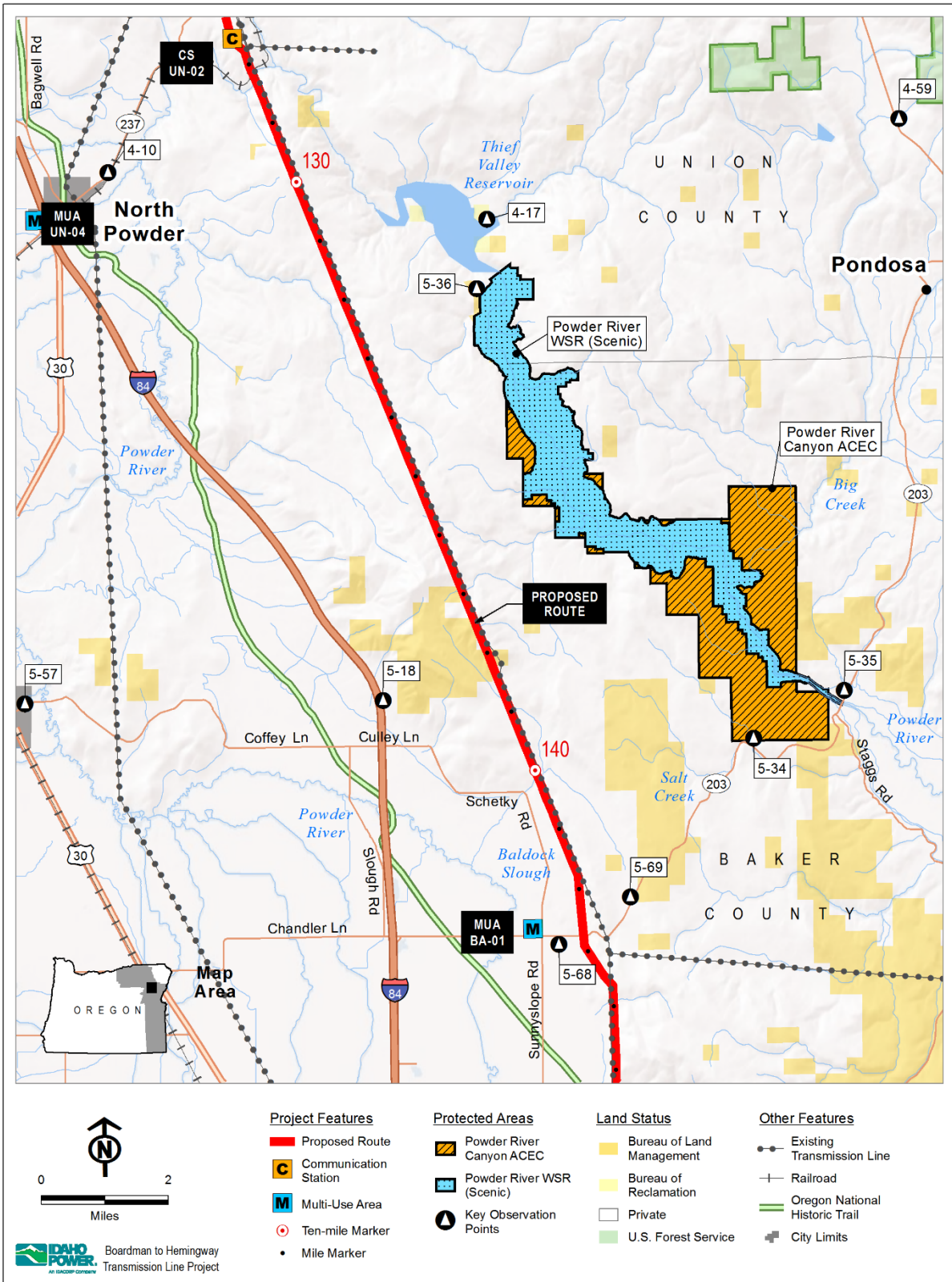
5

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

6

7 **Summary and Conclusion**

8 Visual impacts to the Powder River Canyon ACEC will be of medium intensity, resulting from  
9 medium resource change and low viewer perception. Impacts will result from the combined  
10 influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The Project will not preclude the  
11 scenic value (scenery ORV) for which the Powder River Canyon ACEC was designated.  
12 Impacts to the Powder River Canyon ACEC will be **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-13. Powder River Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern and Wild and Scenic River**  
3

## 14.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN / SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA – BIRCH CREEK PARCEL

**Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC / Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) – Birch Creek parcel

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R, T

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM M1

**Relevant Plan:** Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP) (BLM 2002); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 8-3

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** The relevant and important values of the Birch Creek Parcel are historic and scenic. Per the SEORMP,

“The scenic value of this ACEC is associated with the historical landscape integrity of the area. The rolling hills and view to the north of Farewell Bend and the Snake River have not changed since the emigrants passed through this country and contribute to the overall scenic value...the area will be managed as VRM Class II”. (BLM 2002).

The Birch Creek Parcel is also designated as an SRMA, which is managed for public education and enjoyment of the Oregon Trail and its setting and follows the direction indicated for the Birch Creek Parcel (BLM 2002).

The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

**Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality within the Birch Creek Parcel should be protected. Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the VRM Class II boundary (BLM 1986). Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future management actions and land use proposals are considered near an ACEC (BLM 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse impacts from the proposed action be identified, IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

The Birch Creek parcel is considered to “have few contemporary intrusions”, and therefore characterized by a high degree of visual sensitivity.

**Resource Overview:** The Birch Creek Parcel includes 119 acres encompassing the Oregon National Historic Trail. It is located approximately 2 miles south of Farewell Bend, an important landmark of the National Historic Oregon Trail that was recognized by the emigrants due to its unique shape. This segment of the trail was historically used as a camping area on approach to

1 the Snake River at Farewell Bend. Features at the site include a parking turnout, a wagon rut  
 2 swale within a fenced enclosure, a short trail adjacent to the ruts, and interpretive panels (BLM  
 3 2002). The area around the Birch Creek Parcel is characterized by a mixture of privately owned  
 4 rangeland and federal lands managed by the BLM. The Birch Creek Parcel is bordered by  
 5 private lands to the east, north, and west.

6 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Parcel is being evaluated as a  
 7 Protected Area.

8 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Parcel is being evaluated as a  
 9 Scenic Resource.

10 Per OAR 345-022-0100, Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Parcel is being evaluated as a  
 11 Recreation Resource.

12 **Existing Conditions:** The Birch Creek Parcel is located within the Unwooded Alkaline Foothills  
 13 portion of the Snake River Plain Ecoregion. The view to the west from the interpretive panel  
 14 consists of gently rolling terrain in the foreground and middleground that subtly transitions to  
 15 steeper terrain in the background. Alluvial fans and natural bowls are apparent in the  
 16 background terrain. Colors in the landscape include light browns, tans, reds, grays, and blues.  
 17 Lines in the landscape are undulating and horizontal with diagonal lines visible in the  
 18 middleground and background. The dominant texture from the landform is smooth. Vegetation  
 19 appears medium to coarse in the foreground and to fine, uniform, and dotted in the  
 20 middleground. Cultural modifications to the natural landscape consist of the Historic Oregon  
 21 Trail, gravel-surfaced road, the interpretive site facilities, and a residence. The Birch Creek  
 22 Parcel has a historic landscape character because of the Historic Oregon Trail and relative lack  
 23 of additional development. The overall scenic quality is considered low (class C), due to the  
 24 simplicity and uniformity of land form, colors and textures of the landscape.

Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	3	2	1	11 (C)

25 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers include tourists and historic trail enthusiasts. Visitor numbers are  
 26 limited due to remoteness and lack of recreational facilities. Viewers will concentrate at the  
 27 interpretive panel (stationary) and along the Historic Oregon Trail (transient).

## 28 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 29 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

30 The Birch Creek Parcel is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
 31 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
 32 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

33 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
 34 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
 35 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
 36 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
 37 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 38 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.



## 1 **Proposed Route**

2 The transmission line associated with the Proposed Route will be located 0.21 mile northeast of  
 3 the Birch Creek Parcel. The Route includes the rebuild of 1.1 miles of the existing Quarts to  
 4 Weiser 138-kV transmission line and the siting of the Project transmission line within the  
 5 existing ROW. Between MP 197.6 and MP 198.8, the Proposed Route will be located in the  
 6 existing IPC 138-kV transmission line ROW. The 138-kV transmission line will be rebuilt to the  
 7 southwest of the Proposed Route in a new ROW. In siting the Project at this location, IPC  
 8 employed measures to reduce visibility from the ACEC parcel. To accomplish this goal, IPC  
 9 sited the Project line as far north as feasible, without encroaching on active agricultural areas.  
 10 Towers located between MP 198 and MP 199 will use shorter stature H-frame structures  
 11 ranging in height from 65 to 100 feet (Figure R-3-14). This structure type, combined with  
 12 constructing towers at lower elevations than the ACEC, will maximize the proportion of the  
 13 Project screened from view by existing topography.

14 The structures will appear sequential as they traverse the landscape in a northwest-southeast  
 15 direction. Views of the towers will primarily be head-on and experienced by both stationary and  
 16 transient viewers. The structures will result in weak visual contrast and appear subordinate to  
 17 the landscape. Though visible, the transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will  
 18 not substantially lower the quality of the adjacent scenery outside the Birch Creek Parcel. The  
 19 landscape character will remain historic due to the prominence of natural features in the  
 20 viewshed. The overall scenic quality of the landscape will remain low (class C). Because the  
 21 Project has been sited outside the Birch Creek Parcel, there will be no changes to the  
 22 landscape within the boundary of the Birch Creek Parcel. The Birch Creek ACEC is located  
 23 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of the Proposed Route, and  
 24 therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

25 The Project will conform to VRM Class II objectives within the Birch Creek Parcel, and therefore  
 26 consistent with BLM's VRM direction to protect visual values within the Birch Creek Parcel.

<b>Oregon Trail ACEC – Birch Creek Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	2	2	1	10 (C)

## 27 **Likelihood of Impact**

28 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Magnitude		
<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Towers located between MP 198 and MP 199 will use shorter stature H-frame structures ranging in height from 65 to 100 feet. This structure type, combined with constructing towers at lower elevations than the ACEC, will maximize the proportion of the Project screened from view by existing topography. One tower located to the southeast of the ACEC will be skylined. Collectively, impacts are considered to be of <u>med</u> magnitude.			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Though visible, the transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will not substantially lower the quality of the adjacent scenery outside the Birch Creek Parcel. The landscape character will remain historic due to the prominence of natural features in the viewshed. Views to the north toward Farewell Bend and the Snake River will be maintained. The overall scenic quality of the landscape will remain low (class C). The resource change will be <u>medium</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views from the interpretive panels and trail will primarily be directed to the northeast, north, and northwest toward the Proposed Route (head-on). Viewers walking along the trail will experience the landscape in its entirety, with 360 degree views extending across the basin. For these viewers, the Project will be experienced intermittently. Project features will be subordinate to the large scale and natural setting of the landscape. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>medium</u> .			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will result in long-term, medium magnitude impacts from the operation of lower  
 4 stature H-frame towers sited in close proximity to the Birch Creek Parcel and associated viewer  
 5 platforms. This tower type and configuration will not substantially lower the quality of the  
 6 adjacent scenery. The resource change will be medium due to the small change in value of  
 7 adjacent scenery; however, landscape character will remain. Views from within the ACEC will  
 8 be variable such that viewer perception of medium magnitude impacts will be medium. Visual  
 9 impacts will be of medium intensity.

10 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

11 Though evidence of cultural modification exists within the landscape, impacts disclosed in this  
 12 assessment will primarily result from the Project, and are not the result of other past or present  
 13 actions.

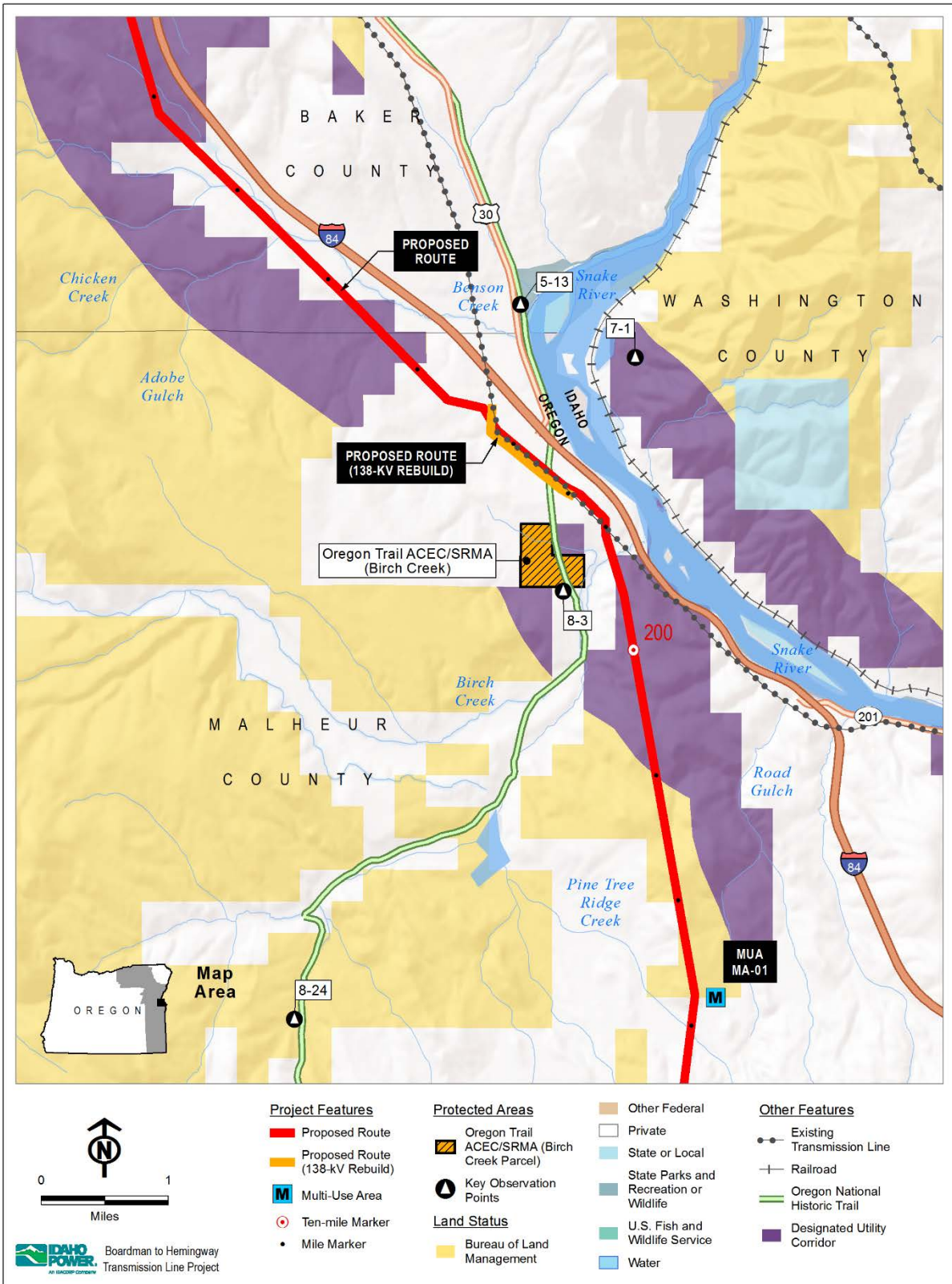
14 **Context**

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Scenery is considered a valued attribute to the Birch Creek Parcel as it is managed per the SEORMP (BLM 2002) to preserve the unique visual qualities of the area.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The BLM maintains the visual values of lands they administer through their VRM System. Visual values of the Birch Creek Parcel are managed per VRM Class II objectives. Additional goals to preserve “the rolling hills and view to the north of Farewell Bend and the Snake River” are also implied in the SEORMP (BLM 2002). The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the Birch Creek Parcel will be reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same. The Project will conform to the VRM Class II objectives and consequently is consistent with BLM’s management of the Birch Creek Parcel’s visual qualities.	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

## 1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Birch Creek ACEC will be of medium intensity, resulting from medium  
3 viewer perception and medium resource change. Though evidence of cultural modification  
4 exists within the landscape, impacts disclosed in this assessment will primarily result from the  
5 Project. Because views to the north toward Farewell Bend and the Snake River are preserved  
6 under the Project, as mitigated, IPC has not found the Project to preclude the resource from  
7 providing the scenic value for which it is recognized. Visual impacts to the Birch Creek ACEC  
8 will be **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-14. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern / Special Recreation**  
3 **Management Area – Birch Creek Parcel**

1 **15.0 OREGON TRAIL AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL**  
2 **CONCERN – TUB MOUNTAIN PARCEL AND OREGON TRAIL**  
3 **SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA – TUB MOUNTAIN**  
4 **PARCEL**

5 **Resource:** Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel and Oregon Trail SRMA – Tub Mountain  
6 Parcel

7 **Relevant Exhibit:** L, R, T

8 **Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM M2

9 **Relevant Plan:** SEORMP (BLM 2002); National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan (BLM  
10 1989b)

11 **Resource Type:** Area

12 **Relevant KOP(s):** 8-1; 8-24

13 **PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions**

14 **Designation:** The relevant and important values of the Oregon Trail ACEC are historic, cultural,  
15 and scenic. Per the SEORMP,

16 “Management decisions provide for Oregon Trail protection within a 0.25-mile wide  
17 corridor...The scenic values of this ACEC are associated with the integrity of the  
18 historical landscape. The rolling hills, covered with sagebrush, grasses, and dust, remain  
19 relatively unchanged since the emigrants passed through this country and contribute to  
20 the overall scenic value... Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict  
21 with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated ... the ACEC will be VRM  
22 Class II” (BLM 2002).

23 The ACEC is also designated as an SRMA, which is managed for public education and  
24 enjoyment of the Oregon Trail and its setting and follows the direction indicated for the ACEC  
25 (BLM 2002).

26 The Oregon Trail is also managed per the National Historic Oregon Trail Management Plan  
27 (BLM 1989b). This plan describes the varied landscape settings of the Oregon Trail, ranging  
28 from natural to those areas where man-made intrusions dominate, further stating that “locations  
29 on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples  
30 of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high  
31 degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for  
32 protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.”

33 **Interpretation of Designation:** Visual quality within the ACEC should be protected. Any new  
34 uses proposed within the boundary of the ACEC that could impact visual values should be  
35 excluded within 0.25 mile of the Oregon Trail and only have a minimal impact to visual quality of  
36 the ACEC. Per BLM Guidance Manual 1613, the designation as an ACEC serves as a reminder  
37 that significant value(s) or resource(s) exist which must be accommodated when future  
38 management actions and land use proposals are considered near or within an ACEC (BLM  
39 1988). Consequently, should potentially adverse impacts from the proposed action be identified,  
40 IPC should mitigate those impacts to the extent feasible.

41 The objective of VRM Class II is to “retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of  
42 change to the characteristic landscape should be low” (BLM 1986). This management objective

1 applies to lands within the ACEC managed per VRM Class II objectives. Conformance is not  
2 considered for project features outside of the ACEC.

3 The Tub Mountain parcel is considered to “have few contemporary intrusions”, and therefore is  
4 characterized by a high degree of visual sensitivity.

5 **Resource Overview:** The Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel is a  
6 long, narrow geographic area located in northeastern Malheur County. The ACEC includes  
7 approximately 5,900 acres of BLM-administered lands. The Tub Mountain parcel is situated  
8 between I-84 and U.S. Highway 26; the southern end of the Tub Mountain parcel is  
9 approximately 13 miles north of Vale and 9 miles east of the small community of Jamieson. The  
10 ACEC includes one interpretive site at Alkali Springs, which was the “nooning” spot for wagon  
11 trains leaving Vale (BLM 2002). The ACEC is remote and accessible only by local gravel roads.

12 Per OAR 345-022-0040, Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel is being evaluated as a  
13 Protected Area.

14 Per OAR 345-022-0080, VRM M2 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

15 Per OAR 345-022-0100, Oregon Trail SRMA – Tub Mountain Parcel is being evaluated as a  
16 Recreation Resource.

17 **Existing Conditions:** The Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel is  
18 located within the Unwooded Alkaline Foothills portion of the Snake River Plain Ecoregion. The  
19 view to the northwest consists of gently rolling terrain in the foreground and middleground that  
20 subtly transitions to steeper terrain in the background. Alluvial fans and natural bowls are  
21 apparent in the background terrain. Colors in the landscape are limited to light browns, tans,  
22 grays, and blues. Lines in the landscape are primarily undulating and horizontal, with diagonal  
23 lines visible in the middleground and background. The dominant texture of landforms is smooth.  
24 Texture of existing vegetation appears medium to coarse in the immediate foreground, and fine,  
25 uniform, and dotted in the middleground. The landscape is free of cultural modifications with the  
26 exception of a few gravel surfaced roads, the Alkali Springs interpretive site, and some evidence  
27 of grazing and off-highway vehicle use. Old Oregon Trail Road travels north-south through the  
28 majority of the ACEC and is a native-surfaced, two-track maintained by Malheur County that is  
29 roughly parallel to the Oregon Trail route. The landscape character is natural appearing. Using  
30 the BLM’s visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic  
31 quality of the existing landscape for the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel is  
32 considered low (class C) as shown below:

Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	0	2	2	2	0	10 (C)

33 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups include local residents driving through or near the area and  
34 recreators such as off-highway vehicle users or visitors to the Oregon Trail remnants and  
35 interpretive site. Viewers are limited by difficult access and lack of developed recreation  
36 facilities. Views within the ACEC are enclosed and limited to the foreground and middleground  
37 from lower elevation spots; however, views experienced from higher elevations extend to the  
38 background distance zones throughout the ACEC.

## 1 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 2 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

3 The Tub Mountain Parcel is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
4 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
5 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

6 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
7 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
8 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
9 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
10 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
11 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 12 **Proposed Route**

13 The Proposed Route runs along the eastern and southern boundary of the ACEC at a distance  
14 of 0.5 mile at its closest point (Figure R-3-15). The Proposed Route is approximately 1.5 mile  
15 east of the Alkali Springs interpretive site. The transmission towers and conductors will be  
16 partially screened from view by rolling terrain in the foreground. New and improved access  
17 roads will be constructed along the Proposed Route. The transmission towers associated with  
18 the Proposed Route will be the primary source of visual contrast experienced from the ACEC,  
19 primarily due to their size, form, and texture. The large, geometrical form and smooth texture will  
20 contrast against the fine to medium, rolling, rounded hills. The light, reflective color will also  
21 contrast against the light to medium brown vegetation and outcrops.

22 Viewers from Alkali Springs (KOP 8-1) will have views of the transmission towers associated  
23 with the Proposed Route to the east that will be partially blocked by vegetation such that the  
24 Project will appear co-dominant with the landscape and produce moderate visual contrast.  
25 While traveling along Old Oregon Trail Road or the Oregon Trail route, the Proposed Route will  
26 be generally located to the east, and most towers will either not be visible or only the top  
27 portions will be visible. Some towers will be skylined and some backdropped depending on  
28 location within the ACEC, introducing moderate to strong visual contrast for up to approximately  
29 3 miles. Views of the Project will primarily be experienced from a neutral vantage point and will  
30 be peripheral and intermittent due to topographic screening for viewers traveling along the Old  
31 Oregon Trail Road or the Oregon Trail route. The Tub Mountain parcel is located outside of the  
32 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of the Proposed Route, and therefore impacts from  
33 this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

34 As a result of the proposed 500-kV towers, the landscape character in the western portion of the  
35 ACEC will change from natural appearing to a cultural landscape. The scenic quality of the  
36 landscape will not change. No project development will occur within the boundary of the ACEC;  
37 therefore, the Project will conform to VRM Class II management objectives.

Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	0	2	1	2	0	9 (C)



1 **Likelihood of Impact**

2 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

3 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

4 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts to the ACEC and scenic resource will be of <u>medium</u> magnitude. Views of the towers associated with the Proposed Route to the east of this resource will be partially blocked by rolling terrain such that the Project will appear co-dominant with the landscape and produce moderate visual contrast.			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> As a result of the proposed 500-kV towers, the landscape character in the western portion of the ACEC will change from natural appearing to a cultural landscape. Although the landscape quality will remain the same as Class C (low), the resource change will be <u>high</u> due to the change in landscape character. Resource change will primarily result from operation of the Project; past and present actions do not contribute to change in landscape character.			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of the Project will be experienced from a neutral vantage point and will primarily be peripheral and intermittent to viewers traveling along the along Old Oregon Trail Road or the Oregon Trail route due to topographic screening. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 Towers associated with the Proposed Route will be located within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail  
 4 ACEC– Tub Mountain Parcel (Protect Area) and VRM M2 (Scenic Resource). The structures  
 5 will be partially blocked from viewing locations within the ACEC, resulting in medium magnitude  
 6 impacts. Resource change will be high due to the shift in landscape character from natural  
 7 appearing to cultural. The scenic quality will remain class C. Views of the Project will primarily  
 8 be experienced from a neutral vantage point and will be peripheral and intermittent due to  
 9 topographic screening. Viewer perception will be low. Impact intensity will be high.

10 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

11 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 12 result of other past or present actions.

13 **Context**

14 Although the Project will result in high intensity impacts to the ACEC, views of Project features  
 15 will be intermittent and not focal to the viewing direction experienced from the Oregon Trail. The  
 16 ACEC is managed per VRM Class II objectives, and the Project was found to be in conformance  
 17 with those objectives.

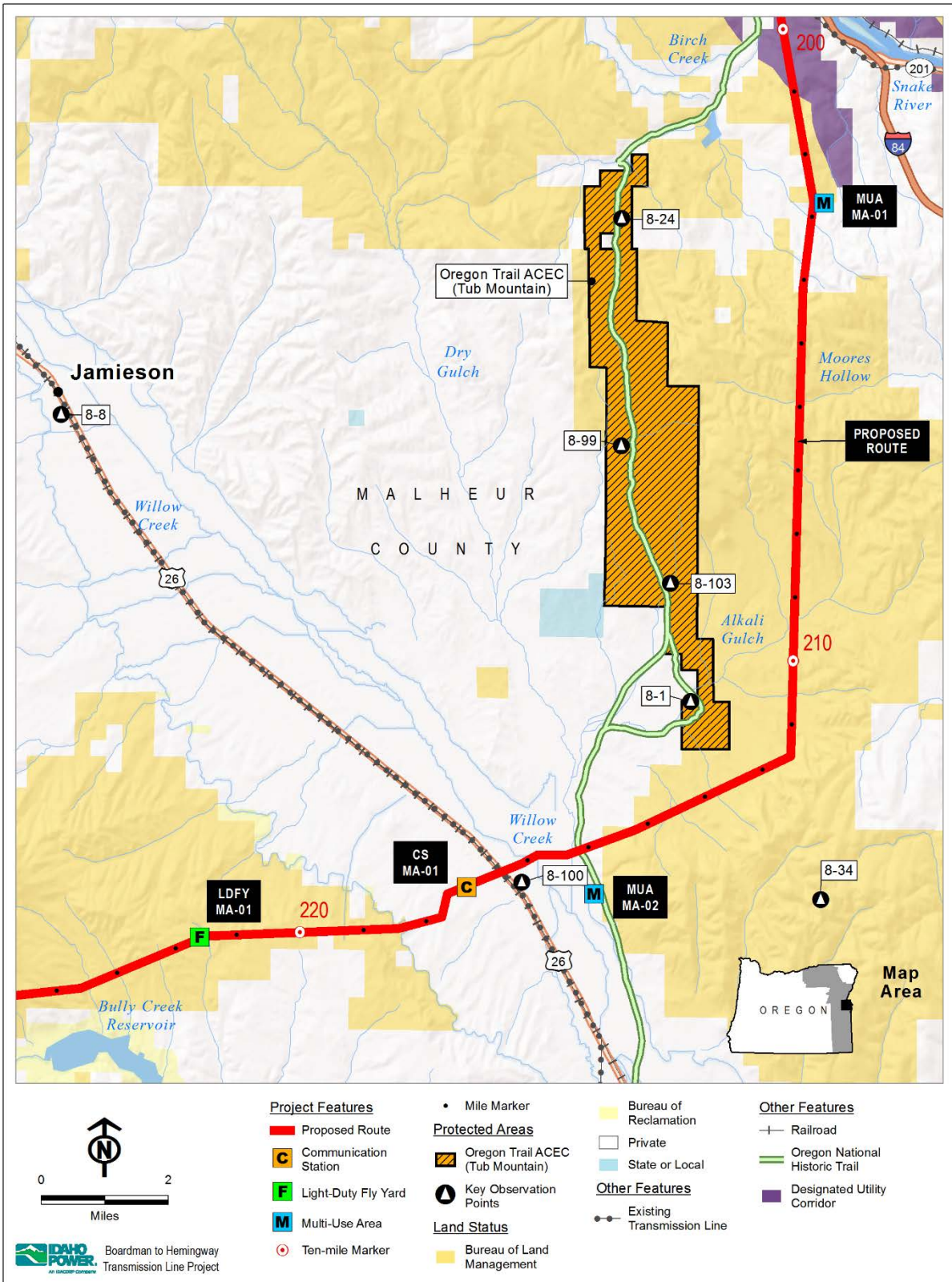
Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or,
	Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The relevant and important values of the ACEC are historic, cultural, and scenic. The scenic values of this ACEC are associated with the integrity of the historical landscape. Because of this designation and management direction, scenery is considered a <u>valued attribute</u> of the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel.</p> <p>The ACEC is managed per VRM Class II objectives indicating the intent to “retain the existing character of the landscape” within the ACEC. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low” (BLM 1986).</p>	

Indicator	Context Criteria
<p><b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b></p>	<p>Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.</p>
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The ACEC was designated to protect the Oregon Trail within a 0.25-mile-wide corridor and maintain integrity of the historical landscape within this geographic area. The scenic values associated with the historical landscape (rolling hills covered with sagebrush, grasses, and dust) will remain relatively unchanged. Although views of the Project will be present, they will be intermittent and not in the primary viewing direction from the Oregon Trail. The ACEC and scenic resource is managed per VRM Class II objectives. The Project was found to meet those objectives. Therefore, although high intensity impacts to visual resources within this ACEC will result from the Project, these impacts will <u>not preclude</u> the ability of the ACEC to provide the scenic value for which it was designated in the BLM SEORMP (2002).</p>	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<p><b>Less than Significant</b></p>	<p>Yes or No</p>	<p>Not Precluded</p>
<p><b>Potentially Significant</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Precluded</p>

1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain Parcel will be of high intensity,  
 3 resulting from high resource change and low viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from  
 4 the Project, and are not the effects of other past or present actions. The Project will not preclude  
 5 the ACEC from providing the scenic value for which it was designated, as integrity of the historic  
 6 landscape as perceived by viewers traveling along the along Old Oregon Trail Road or the  
 7 Oregon Trail route will be maintained. Visual impacts to the Oregon Trail ACEC – Tub Mountain  
 8 Parcel **will be less than significant.**



1  
 2 **Figure R-3-15. Oregon Trail Area of Critical Environmental Concern / Special Recreation**  
 3 **Management Area – Tub Mountain Parcel**

## 1 16.0 SUGARLOAF BUTTE

2 **Resource:** Sugarloaf Butte

3 **Relevant Exhibit:** R

4 **Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM M3

5 **Relevant Plan:** Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (BLM 2002)

6 **Resource Type:** Area

7 **Relevant KOP(s):** None

### 8 **PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions**

9 **Designation:** Sugarloaf Butte is managed by the BLM Vale District to conform to VRM Class II  
10 objectives.

11 **Interpretation of Designation:** Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character  
12 should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the boundary of the  
13 Sugarloaf Butte area.

14 **Resource Overview:** The Sugarloaf Butte area includes approximately 400 acres of BLM-  
15 administered lands north of Bully Creek Reservoir that are managed to meet VRM Class II  
16 objectives. The southern edge of this parcel is approximately 2.2 miles north of the reservoir  
17 and 12 miles northwest of Vale.

18 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Sugarloaf Butte is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

19 Sugarloaf Butte is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

20 Sugarloaf Butte is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per  
21 OAR 345-022-0100.

22 **Existing Conditions:** Terrain consists of flat to rolling foothills dissected by numerous small  
23 drainages that create sloping soft, horizontal, and undulating lines. Colors are muted tones of  
24 gray, brown, and tan, and textures are smooth and uniform. Vegetation consists of low-growing  
25 grasses stippled with sagebrush that appear tan and green. The landscape appears vast and  
26 open with panoramic views. Human development is limited and primarily includes native surface  
27 roads. The landscape lacks distinct features and variety. The landscape character is naturally  
28 evolving, due to the very limited human intervention. Because of its location within BLM-  
29 managed lands, this resource was evaluated using methods adapted from the BLM VRM  
30 system. Per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for  
31 Sugarloaf Butte is considered low (class C) as shown below:

Sugar Loaf Butte Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	1	1	1	0	6 (C)

32 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are limited and may include individuals traveling along the roads or  
33 participating in dispersed recreation.

## 1 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 2 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

3 Sugarloaf Butte is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and outside of  
4 the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this Project feature  
5 are not discussed any further in this document.

6 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
7 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
8 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
9 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
10 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
11 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 12 **Proposed Route**

13 Transmission towers and new access roads associated with the Proposed Route will be located  
14 1.6 miles south of Sugarloaf Butte (Figure R-3-16). The towers will be skylined and will be the  
15 primary source of visual impacts to the resource, introducing moderate to strong contrast and  
16 potentially dominating the landscape to the south. Towers will appear as a sequential line of tall,  
17 smooth, triangular lattice shapes across the horizon. The Proposed Route will lower the  
18 contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of Sugarloaf Butte. However, this  
19 reduction will only trigger a small change to the scenic quality score, and the overall scenic  
20 quality will not change. However, the naturally evolving landscape character will transition to a  
21 cultural landscape. Viewers traveling along roads within Sugarloaf Butte will see the towers both  
22 head-on and peripherally from a neutral vantage point. Dispersed recreators may see the  
23 towers head-on or peripherally and for long and short durations, depending on the activity.

24 Sugarloaf Butte is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of the  
25 Proposed Route and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in  
26 this document.

Sugar Loaf Butte Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	1	0	1	0	5 (C)

### 27 **Likelihood of Impact**

28 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.



1 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The towers will be skylined and will be the primary source of visual impacts to the resource, introducing moderate to strong contrast and potentially dominating the landscape to the south such that impact magnitude will be <u>high</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will lower the quality of Sugarloaf Butte’s adjacent scenery. However, adjacent scenery has a limited effect on the quality of Sugarloaf Butte’s landscape, so this change will only result in a small change to the scenic quality scoring, and the overall scenic quality will not change. However, the naturally evolving landscape character will transition to a cultural landscape such that the resource change will be <u>high</u> . Due to the overall lack of development in the landscape, the Project is the primary contributor to this resource change.			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers traveling along roads within Sugarloaf Butte will see the towers both head-on and peripherally from a neutral vantage point. Dispersed recreators may see the towers head-on or peripherally and for long and short durations, depending on the activity. Although viewer perception will be medium based on these criteria, actual viewer exposure is considered limited due to the remoteness of this resource.			



1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**

2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will result in long-term, high-magnitude impacts from the operation of large 500-kV  
 4 towers sited approximately 1.6 miles from Sugarloaf Butte. The resource change will be high  
 5 due to the change in landscape character from a naturally evolving to a cultural landscape. No  
 6 other past or present actions will contribute to this change. Viewers will see the towers both  
 7 head-on and peripherally, for long and short durations, from a neutral vantage point such that  
 8 viewer perception will be medium. However, actual viewer exposure is considered limited due to  
 9 the remoteness of this resource. Visual impacts will be of high intensity.

10 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

11 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 12 result of other past or present actions.

13 **Context**

14 Because the Project has been sited outside the geographic area designated as VRM Class II,  
 15 there will be no changes to the landscape within this designated boundary. The Project will  
 16 conform to the VRM Class II objectives; consequently, it is consistent with BLM's management  
 17 of the scenic resource's visual qualities.

18 **Step 5. Significance Determination**

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or,
	Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The BLM manages scenery as VRM Class II, which is interpreted to mean that scenery is a valued attribute of the resource worth protecting.	

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	<p>Persistence of Scenic Value is either:</p> <p><b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,</p> <p><b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.</p>
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The BLM maintains the visual values of lands they administer through their VRM System. Visual values of the resource are managed per VRM Class II objectives. Because the Project has been sited outside the geographic area designated as VRM Class II, there will be no changes to the landscape within this designated boundary. The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of the ACEC will be reduced; however, the scenic class will remain the same. The Project will conform to the VRM Class II objectives; consequently, it is consistent with BLM's management of the scenic resource's visual qualities.</p>	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

## 1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to Sugarloaf Butte will be of high intensity, resulting from high resource change  
 3 and medium viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from the Project, and will not be the  
 4 result of other past or present actions. Impacts will not preclude existing landscape character,  
 5 and therefore, would not be consistent with VRM Class II Objectives (BLM 1986). Visual  
 6 impacts to Sugarloaf Butte will be **less than significant**.



## 17.0 FIVE POINTS CREEK (DESIGNATED WILD)

**Resource:** Five Points Creek (Designated Wild)

**Relevant Exhibit:** L, R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** WSR 1

**Relevant Plan:** U.S. Forest Service (USFS) WSR Study Report and Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (1997); USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Management Plan (1990)

**Resource Type:** Linear Corridor

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

Note that visual impacts resulting from the Project under the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative are analyzed collectively, as impacts are considered similar under both siting scenarios.

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** Wild river areas are defined by the Wild & Scenic River Act (1986) as:

“Those river or sections of river that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, and watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America”

ORVs are: scenery, fisheries, and wildlife.

**Interpretation of Designation:** Scenery is identified as an ORV for which the Five Points Creek Wild section of river should be managed to protect.

Section 10(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act states:

“Each component of the national wild and scenic rivers system shall be administered in such manner as to protect and enhance the values which caused it to be included in said system without, insofar as is consistent therewith, limiting other uses that do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of these values. In such administration primary emphasis shall be given to protecting its esthetic, scenic, historic, archaeological, and scientific”

**Resource Overview:** Five Points Creek is designated as a wild river. The designated corridor encompasses 3,763 acres and begins approximately 1 mile northeast of Hilgard, Oregon. The creek receives light recreation use from hikers and hunters and has high quality scenery and remote experience. There is a network of hiking trails within the Five Points Creek canyon that is accessible from roads from the above plateau.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, Five Points Creek is being evaluated as a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, Five Points Creek is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, Five Points Creek is not considered an important Recreation Opportunity as recreation was not identified as an ORV.

**Existing Conditions:** The Five Points Creek Wild River is characterized by elevated plateaus of dissected basalt and eroded canyons. The canyon is 500 to 800 feet deep with steep, rugged walls with prominent vertical and diagonal lines. Occasional outcrops and a variety of plant communities all add variety to the landscape. The free-flowing creek and its tributaries add movement and additional scenic interest to the landscape. The area is primitive and undisturbed due to the lack of human development and low visitor use. This resource is located within the

1 USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest; therefore, assessments of landscape character and  
2 quality were made using USFS methodology.

3 **Landscape character** of the Five Point Creek wild river corridor is naturally evolving.

4  
5 **Scenic integrity is very high** – Desired landscape character is visually intact and  
6 complete, with only minute deviations. Valued existing or desired future landscape  
7 character is intact and complete with only minute deviations, if any.

8  
9 **Scenic attractiveness is Class A, Distinctive**, resulting from steep, incised canyon,  
10 variety of vegetation, free flowing river, and lack of human development features that  
11 together provide positive attributes of variety, unity, vividness, intactness, harmony, and  
12 balance that are unique to the area.  
13

## 14 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 15 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

16 Five Points Creek is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and outside  
17 of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this Project  
18 feature are not discussed any further in this document.

19 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
20 Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
21 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
22 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
23 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
24 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
25 Route.

### 26 **Proposed Route**

27 The Proposed Route will be located 2.0 miles southwest of the Five Points Creek corridor  
28 designated as wild. The western terminus of the Morgan Lake Alternative is located  
29 approximately 2.1 miles from the Five Points Creek (Figure R-3-17). The entire river channel is  
30 outside of the modeled viewshed of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative;  
31 however, the towers and cleared ROW could be visible from the outer edges of the corridor in  
32 the southwestern portion of the corridor, at the top of the canyon. The wild corridor of Five  
33 Points Creek was designated to protect the outstanding scenery within the enclosed creek  
34 canyon. Five Points Creek is primarily located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the  
35 cleared ROW of the Proposed Route, and therefore impacts from this Project feature are not  
36 considered for this resource.

37 Because the Project will not be visible from within the canyon under the Proposed Route or  
38 Morgan Lake Alternative, the landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic quality of the  
39 WSR corridor of Five Points Creek will not change and the Project will have minor to no  
40 contributions on visual impacts to the resource. Viewers along the river will not have views of  
41 the Project. Portions of the Five Points Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor with Project views  
42 are on the top of the canyon where viewers will be scarce.

### 43 **Likelihood of Impact**

44 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The entire Five Points Creek WSR channel is located outside of the modeled viewshed. The towers and cleared ROW could be visible from the outer edges of the corridor in the southwestern portion of the corridor, at the top of the canyon. Visual contrast will be none to weak, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.

**Explanation:** This segment of Five Points Creek was designated a WSR (wild) to protect the outstanding scenery within the enclosed creek canyon. Since the Project will not be visible from within the canyon, the landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic quality of the wild corridor of Five Points Creek will not change, and the Project will have minor to no contributions on visual impacts to the resource. Therefore, resource change will be low.

<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
--------------------------	--	--	--

**Explanation:** Viewers along the river will not have views of the Project. Portions of the Five Points Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor with Project views are on the top of the canyon where viewers will be scarce. Therefore viewer perception will be low.

1 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**  
 2 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will have low magnitude impacts since the Project will not be visible from within the  
 4 canyon. Landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic quality of the wild corridor of Five  
 5 Points Creek will not change and the Project will have minor to no contributions on visual  
 6 impacts to the resource and low resource change. Scenery ORVs will not be impacted. Viewers  
 7 along the river will not have views of the Project. Portions of the Five Points Creek WSR corridor  
 8 with Project views are on the top of the canyon, where viewers will be scarce; viewer perception  
 9 will be low. Therefore, visual impacts will be of low intensity.

10 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

11 The low intensity impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and  
 12 are not the result of other past or present actions.

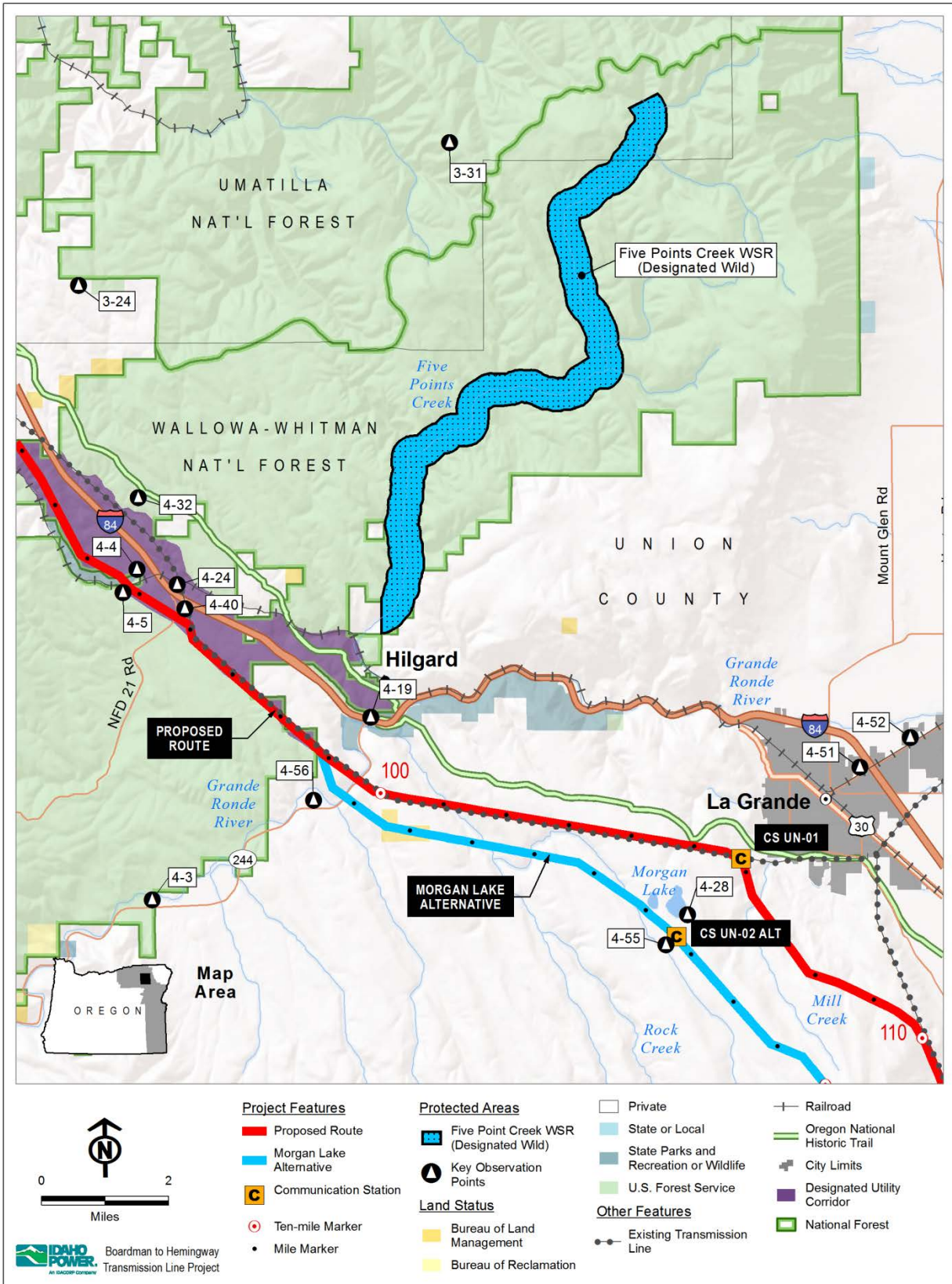
1 **Context**

2 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
3 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

4 **Summary and Conclusion**

5 Visual impacts to the Five Points WSR will be of low intensity, resulting from both low resource  
6 change and viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from the proposed facility, and not the  
7 other past or present actions. Visual impacts to the Five Points Creek WSR, under both the  
8 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, will be low intensity and **less than**  
9 **significant.**





1  
2 **Figure R-3-17. Five Points Creek Wild and Scenic River**

## 18.0 LOWER OWYHEE RIVER VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CLASS II AREA

**Resource:** Lower Owyhee River

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM M5

**Relevant Plan:** Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (BLM 2002)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 8-52

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** The Lower Owyhee River is designated a VRM Class II area. The area is managed for visual resources per VRM Class II objectives, and the ACEC is closed to locatable minerals within the foreground (BLM 2002).

**Interpretation of Designation:** Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained within the boundary of the VRM management area (BLM 1986).

**Resource Overview:** The Lower Owyhee River area includes all of the Owyhee River below the Dam ACEC / SRMA with a few additional areas, for a total area of 11,291.17 acres.

Dominant scenic attributes of the Lower Owyhee River area include the Owyhee River, narrow canyon bottom, and rugged canyon slopes and walls, all of which contribute to the high quality scenery of the area. A paved two-lane asphalt road runs through the ACEC, paralleling the river. There are two recreation sites within the Lower Owyhee River area: Snively Hot Springs and the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area interpretive site. The area receives some of the highest recreational use within the Southeastern Oregon planning area.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, the Lower Owyhee River is not being evaluated as a Protected Area. However, the Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC is being evaluated as Protected Area.

Per 345-022-0080, the Lower Owyhee River is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, the Lower Owyhee River is not being evaluated as a Recreation Resource. However, the Owyhee River Below the Dam SRMA is being evaluated as a Recreation Resource.

**Existing Conditions:** The landscape within the Lower Owyhee River area is characterized as an incised river valley, with dramatic, steep, undulating sidewalls, jagged rock outcroppings, and a meandering flat, narrow river. Dramatic landforms create irregular, rounded, angular, and flowing lines. Textures are primarily medium with some rough, patchy rock formations. Colors are rich and vibrant, consisting primarily of reds, browns, and greys of the rocks and blue water. Vegetation includes short sagebrush with patches of juniper and moderate to high green and grey riparian vegetation. The variety of color and texture and dramatic landforms that comprise this landscape create a memorable landscape that is rare within the region. Views from within the canyon are enclosed and limited due to the numerous river bends preventing extended views in any direction. Above the river, the landforms are more rounded with weakly enclosed to open ridges. Development is limited, consisting primarily of camp sites, off-highway vehicle roads, one paved road along the river, and the two developed recreation sites. The landscape has an overall natural-appearing landscape character.

1 In the north portion of the Lower Owyhee River area, the Owyhee Siphon is visible as it crosses  
 2 the ridgeline and descends toward the canyon bottom. This feature introduces strong contrast  
 3 due to its linear form and bright reflective surface. Because of its location within BLM-  
 4 administered lands, this resource was evaluated using methods adapted from the BLM VRM  
 5 system. Per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape of the  
 6 Lower Owyhee River is considered high (class A) as shown below:

Lower Owyhee River Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
5	4	4	5	1	4	0	23 (A)

7  
 8 **Viewers:** Viewers within the Lower Owyhee River area are primarily recreators that are hiking,  
 9 driving, boating, camping, picnicking, or viewing scenery or wildlife within the canyon and will be  
 10 both stationary and transient.

## 11 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 12 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

13 The Lower Owyhee River is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and  
 14 outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
 15 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

16 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
 17 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
 18 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
 19 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
 20 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 21 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 22 **Proposed Route**

23 In evaluating various alternatives for Project siting, IPC concluded that potentially significant  
 24 visual impacts from facility structures in the vicinity of the Lower Owyhee River could result. To  
 25 address potential impacts, IPC analyzed two mitigation options aimed at reducing adverse  
 26 impacts to less than significant: (1) relocating the 175-foot tower to an alternate location (Option  
 27 1); and (2) reducing the height of the structure and moving it to an alternate location (Option 2).  
 28 In preparing the final indicative design for this application for site certificate, IPC moved the  
 29 Proposed Route to the north to align with the existing utility corridor administered by the BLM  
 30 (Figure R-3-18). Under this Project configuration, the need to mitigate potential impacts was  
 31 alleviated. Although two structures would be visible from the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable  
 32 Wildlife Area interpretive site (KOP 8-52), these structures would be sited approximately 0.75-  
 33 1.0 miles from the interpretive site. The geometrical form and smooth texture of the towers will  
 34 introduce weak contrast against the surrounding steep to rolling hills and valley walls, brown to  
 35 red color, and rough texture of the rock at this distance. Because of the steep Canyon walls and  
 36 enclosed landscape character at the interpretive site, towers will appear subordinate. Further,  
 37 viewers at the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area interpretive site (KOP 8-52) will  
 38 primarily be facing west, with the Proposed Route behind them.

1 Due to the enclosed nature of the canyon, visual impacts will likely be visible from less than 1  
 2 percent of the Lower Owyhee River area, primarily where visitors exit the Lower Owyhee River  
 3 area. Because of the localized nature of visual impacts of the Project, scenic quality of the  
 4 resource as a whole will remain high (Class A) despite a reduction in the score for cultural  
 5 modification. Overall landscape character will remain natural appearing.

6 Project features will be visible from Owyhee Lake Road and Springs Canyon Road as they  
 7 approach the Lower Owyhee River area from the north. Multiple transmission towers and  
 8 conductors will be visible from within 0.5 miles. The structures will introduce strong visual  
 9 contrast from these locations and be dominant features in the landscape.

10 Overall scenic quality of the ACEC / SRMA is not expected to change as a result of the Project.  
 11 The score for cultural modification will be reduced by two points in a very localized area to the  
 12 north, corresponding to where the Project crosses the parcel. As stated above, this localized  
 13 impact will not affect the majority of the ACEC, as views of the Project will be screened by  
 14 rugged topography.

15 Although, the Project will not change the scenic quality of the resource as a whole, it will not be  
 16 in conformance with Class II objectives established for the Lower Owyhee River area because  
 17 the Proposed Route crosses areas managed as VRM II. The BLM's land use planning  
 18 regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-5 state, "an amendment shall be initiated by the need to consider  
 19 a Proposed Action that may result in a change in the scope of resources uses or a change in  
 20 the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan." Therefore, an RMP amendment to  
 21 modify the Southeastern Oregon RMP regarding visual resources management in order to grant  
 22 a ROW for the Proposed Route across BLM-administered lands managed under the  
 23 Southeastern Oregon RMP will be necessary. Amending the RMP will result in changing the  
 24 portion of VRM Class II lands crossed by the Proposed Route to VRM Class IV lands, which will  
 25 allow major modification of the landscape character rather than requiring the landscape  
 26 character to be retained. The change of current planning direction will be determined by the  
 27 BLM as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process for this project, and IPC  
 28 anticipates that the BLM will change the designation of the Lower Owyhee River area crossed  
 29 by the Project from VRM II to VRM IV.

30 The Lower Owyhee River VRM Class II area is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of  
 31 the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore  
 32 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

<b>Lower Owyhee River Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (1 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
5	4	4	5	1	4	-2	21 (A)

### 33 **Likelihood of Impact**

34 IPC considered all identified impacts to be "likely" to occur.

1 **MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT – IMPACT DURATION**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The Proposed Route crosses the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee River area and will be visible from the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area (KOP 8-52) and Owyhee Lake Road. A ridgeline at the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee River area will screen Project features, with the exception of two towers visible to the north. Visual contrast will be weak, and structures will appear subordinate to the landscape. Views will also include the Owyhee Siphon, which currently creates strong contrast with the natural landscape due to its smooth texture and bright reflective surface.</p> <p>Project features will also be visible from Owyhee Lake Road and Springs Canyon Road they approach the Lower Owyhee River area from the north. Multiple transmission towers and conductors will be visible from within 0.5 mile. The structures will introduce strong visual contrast from these locations and be dominant features in the landscape.</p> <p>Impact magnitude will be <u>medium</u>, as the majority of project features will be screen from view by existing topography.</p>			



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
Resource Change	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality/attractiveness and/or character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality/attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality/attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<p><b>Explanation:</b> The Project will reduce the score for cultural modification by up to 2 points. However, other attributes of scenic quality will not be reduced; consequently, the negative contribution of cultural modification from the Project within the Lower Owyhee River area will not lower the overall scenic quality of the resource. The scenic quality will remain high (Class A) and the landscape character will remain natural appearing. Resource change will be <u>medium</u>.</p>			
Viewer Perception	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<p><b>Explanation:</b> Views of the Project, as experience from Owyhee Lake Road and Springs Canyon Road will be predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous, and within the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles). However, this viewer exposure is limited to less than 5 percent of the resource. Overall views of the Project will be experienced from a neutral vantage point and episodic, as these brief views of the Project will only be experienced in this limited area. Viewer perception will be <u>low</u>.</p>			

## PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

The Proposed Route crosses the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee River area and will be visible from the Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area and Owyhee Lake Road. A ridgeline at the northern portion of the Lower Owyhee River area provides a “gateway” to the resource. The Proposed Route is located on the northern side of this ridgeline; consequently, project visibility is limited to two towers located approximately 1.0 mile away. From localized areas within the northern portion of the ACEC/SRMA towers will introduce weak contrast and, appear subordinate. Multiple transmission towers and conductors will also be visible from Owyhee Lake and from Springs Canyon Road as it approaches the Lower Owyhee River area from the north. These structures will introduce strong visual contrast and appear as dominant features in the landscape. Collectively, impact magnitude will be medium.

The Project will reduce the score for cultural modification; however, overall scenic quality and landscape character will not change; resource change will be medium. Because areas of strong visual contrast are localized, viewer perception is considered low. Overall visual impact intensity will be medium.

### Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined influence of the Project and other past or present actions, primarily the Owyhee Siphon.

### Context

Visual impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II designation in the localized area at the northeast corner of the resource where the Proposed Route crosses the Lower Owyhee River area. Therefore, the location of the Proposed Route within the Lower Owyhee River area will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan in that area. The SEORMP will be amended to change a portion of the Lower Owyhee River area to VRM Class II to VRM Class IV.

Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Lower Owyhee River area was designated as a VRM Class II area, indicating a level of protection that will retain existing landscape character within the boundary of the VRM management area (BLM 1986). The Oregon Department of Energy considers lands managed as VRM Class II as important scenic resources.	

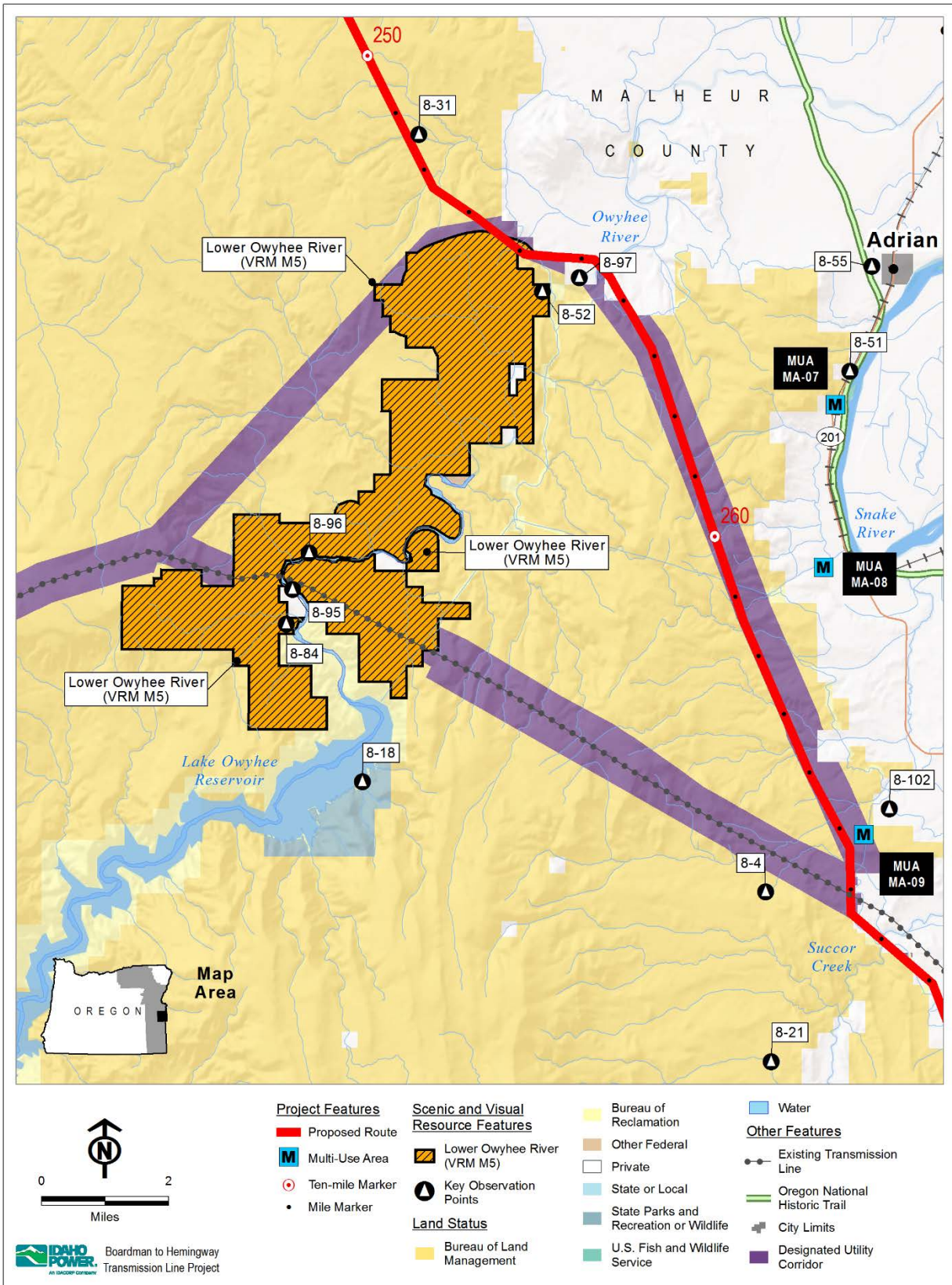
Indicator	Context Criteria
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either: <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or, <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> Localized adverse impacts to the Lower Owyhee River area will result from strong visual contrast of project features against the existing landscape when viewed from viewer platforms in the north portion of the Project along Owyhee Lake and Springs Canyon Road. Impacts will not be consistent with the purpose of the VRM Class II designation in this localized area. The location of the Proposed Route within the Lower Owyhee River area, will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.	

	Scenery as a Valued Attribute	Persistence of Scenic Value
<b>Less than Significant</b>	Yes or No	Not Precluded
<b>Potentially Significant</b>	Yes	Precluded

1 **Summary and Conclusion**

2 Visual impacts to the Lower Owyhee River area will be of medium intensity, resulting from  
 3 medium resource change and low viewer perception. Such medium intensity and localized  
 4 impacts would result from the combined influence of the Project and other past or present  
 5 actions. Impacts will preclude existing landscape character in a localized portion of the  
 6 resource, and would not be consistent with VRM Class II Objectives (BLM 1986). Should the  
 7 BLM amend the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (BLM 2002) to manage this  
 8 localized area as VRM Class IV, this localized area would not be considered an important  
 9 scenic resource, as only Class I and II areas are considered significant or important scenic  
 10 resources. In the alternative, if the BLM does not amend the designation for Lower Owyhee  
 11 River, the Project may be sited outside of the VRM Class II area to be considered less than  
 12 significant. Visual impacts to the Lower Owyhee River area are considered **potentially**  
 13 **significant.**





1

2 **Figure R-3-18. Lower Owyhee River Visual Resource Management Class II Area**

## 1 **19.0 BROWNLEE RESERVOIR SOUTHEAST**

2 **Resource:** Brownlee Reservoir Southeast

3 **Relevant Exhibit:** R

4 **Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM C1

5 **Relevant Plan:** Cascade RMP (BLM 1987)

6 **Resource Type:** Area

7 **Relevant KOP(s):** None

### 8 **PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions**

9 **Designation:** Managed by the BLM Boise District to meet VRM Class II objectives (Cascade  
10 RMP, BLM 1987).

11 **Interpretation of Designation:** Per VRM Class II objectives, the change in landscape character  
12 should be low such that the existing landscape character is retained (BLM 1986).

13 **Resource Overview:** The Brownlee Reservoir Southeast area includes four parcels of BLM-  
14 administered lands located to the east of Brownlee Reservoir in Idaho that are managed as  
15 VRM Class II. This area ranges from 1 to 3 miles wide and extends approximately 14 miles in a  
16 north-south direction. The nearest communities are Huntington in Oregon and Eaton in Idaho.

17 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is being evaluated as a Scenic  
18 Resource.

19 The Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is not one of the 16 categories of protected areas listed in  
20 OAR 345-022-0040(1), and therefore is not being evaluated as a Protected Area.

21 The Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is not considered a recreation opportunity per OAR 345-  
22 022-0100. The Brownlee Reservoir is being evaluated as a Recreation Resource as part of the  
23 water-based recreation for Farewell Bend State Recreation Area.

24 **Existing Conditions:** Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is located on the east side of the Snake  
25 River and has a landscape similar to the Brownlee Reservoir West. The Snake River and  
26 Brownlee Reservoir and surrounding canyon are distinct natural features within the Brownlee  
27 Reservoir Southeast landscape. The reservoir appears as a smooth to rippled, reflective, flat  
28 surface that is blue-green in color. Narrow steep valley walls rise above the reservoir with  
29 angled to curved lines and brown and beige colors. Textures of the sidewalls include fine to  
30 medium sidewalls and rough rock outcroppings. Vegetation is primarily limited to low growing  
31 sagebrush and grasses that appear patchy to stippled and gold, green, and grey in color. The  
32 uplands above the river are characterized by rolling terrain with undulating ridgelines and  
33 numerous small drainages that dissect the area. Views are primarily enclosed by the valley;  
34 however, on the highlands above the river, more expansive views of adjacent mountains are  
35 visible and the landscape appears large. Human development includes trails, native surface  
36 roads, and parallel 69- and 138-kV transmission lines. I-84 and scattered development are  
37 visible immediately across the reservoir southeast of the resource.

38 Overall, the landscape has a natural-appearing character, as both natural and human  
39 developments (primarily the reservoir) are expressed and exist in harmony, and the existing  
40 transmission lines only cross through a small portion of the resource at its southern end such  
41 that the natural features are the dominant theme throughout. I-84, though audible, does not  
42 affect visual quality as views of the interstate and associated traffic are shielded by shallow,

1 rolling topography and riparian vegetation. Because the resource is located on BLM-managed  
 2 lands, methods used to assess scenic quality are based on BLM methodology. Using the BLM's  
 3 visual resource inventory methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the  
 4 existing landscape for the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is considered moderate (class B).

<b>Brownlee Reservoir Southeast Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	3	2	2	2	-1	13 (B)

5 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are both transient and stationary and include recreators both on and  
 6 off the water.

## 7 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 8 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

9 Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative  
 10 and outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this  
 11 Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

12 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
 13 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
 14 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
 15 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
 16 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
 17 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 18 **Proposed Route**

19 The Proposed Route will be located 0.6 mile from Brownlee Reservoir Southeast, to the west  
 20 across the reservoir, at its closest point at the southern end of the resource. Further north, the  
 21 Proposed Route veers northwest, increasing its distance from the resource (Figure R-3-19).  
 22 Towers associated with the Proposed Route will be highly visible from the southern portion of  
 23 the resource where the Project runs behind the Farewell Bend State Recreation area and  
 24 follows I-84. The transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route will be the primary  
 25 source of visual contrast experienced from the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast area, primarily  
 26 due to their size, proximity, and the number of towers that will be visible. The large, geometrical  
 27 form and smooth texture will introduce moderate contrast against the fine to medium, rolling,  
 28 rounded hills to the south. The light, reflective color will also contrast against the light to medium  
 29 brown vegetation and outcrops. The scale of the structures will appear smaller between MP  
 30 197.9 and MP 199.1, as H-frame structures in this segment will range in height from 65 feet to  
 31 100 feet. Access roads along the ROW will be visible, but will appear consistent with the  
 32 numerous native surface roads existing in the surrounding area.

33 Views of transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route backdropped by light-colored  
 34 terrain will be visible from the southern portion of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast. From this  
 35 area, the Brownlee Reservoir and development along its southern shore and I-84 will appear co-  
 36 dominant with the Project, which will introduce a moderate level of contrast due to the relatively  
 37 close distance of the backdropped transmission line. Views of the Project will be equally head-  
 38 on or peripheral, depending on where the viewer is located within Brownlee Reservoir

1 Southeast, and experienced from both inferior and neutral vantage points. The Project features  
 2 will also be visible from the higher elevations in the central portion of the resource; however, the  
 3 Proposed Route will be approximately 5 miles away from this portion of the resource;  
 4 consequently, the towers will largely blend with the landscape and result in weak visual  
 5 contrast. Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the  
 6 cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore  
 7 impacts from this Project feature are not considered further.

8 The proposed 500-kV towers will reduce the adjacent scenery to the south of Brownlee  
 9 Reservoir Southeast; however, this reduction will be relatively small due to the hills that will  
 10 backdrop the towers such that overall scenic quality will not change and the landscape  
 11 character will retain its overall natural appearing character within the resource boundary.  
 12 Because the Project is sited outside of lands managed per VRM Class II Objectives, the Project  
 13 conforms to this management standard and consequently is consistent with BLM's management  
 14 of the resource's visual qualities.

Brownlee Reservoir Southeast Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
3	1	3	2	1	2	0	12 (B)

15

### 16 **Likelihood of Impact**

17 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

### 18 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).

**Explanation:** Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be long-term, extending for the life of the Project.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of transmission towers associated with the Proposed Route backdropped by light-colored terrain will be visible from the southern portion of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast at distances as close as 0.75 mile. From these viewing areas, the Brownlee Reservoir and development along its southern shore and I-84 will appear co-dominant with the Project, which will introduce a moderate level of contrast due to the relatively close distance of the backdropped transmission line. Due to moderate contrast and the co-dominance of other landscape elements, magnitude will be <u>medium</u> .			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The proposed 500-kV towers will reduce the adjacent scenery to the south of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast; however, this reduction will be relatively small due to the hills that will backdrop the towers. Overall scenic quality will not change and the landscape character will retain its overall naturally appearing character within the resource boundary such that the resource change will be <u>medium</u> . The Project is one of many contributors to the scenic quality and character of the landscape and has a moderate contribution to the overall condition of the landscape.			



Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers within Brownlee Reservoir Southeast will primarily be engaging in reservoir-based recreation activities. As there is no visibility of the towers associated with the Proposed Route in the valley bottom, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

### 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

#### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 Impact magnitude will be medium; towers that could be visible from distances as close as 0.75  
4 mile that will introduce moderate contrast and appear co-dominant with existing landscape  
5 features. The adjacent scenery factor score will be reduced; however, scenic quality and  
6 landscape character will not change, so resource change will be medium. Viewers within VRM  
7 C1 will primarily be engaging in reservoir-based recreation activities where there will be no  
8 visibility of the Project such that viewer perception will be low. Therefore, long-term visual  
9 impacts will be of medium intensity.

#### 10 Degree to Which the Possible Impacts are Caused by the Proposed Action

11 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
12 influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The medium resource change will  
13 result from the combined influence of the Project and existing trails, native surface roads,  
14 existing transmission lines, I-84, and scattered development, which collectively influence  
15 adjacent scenery of the resource.

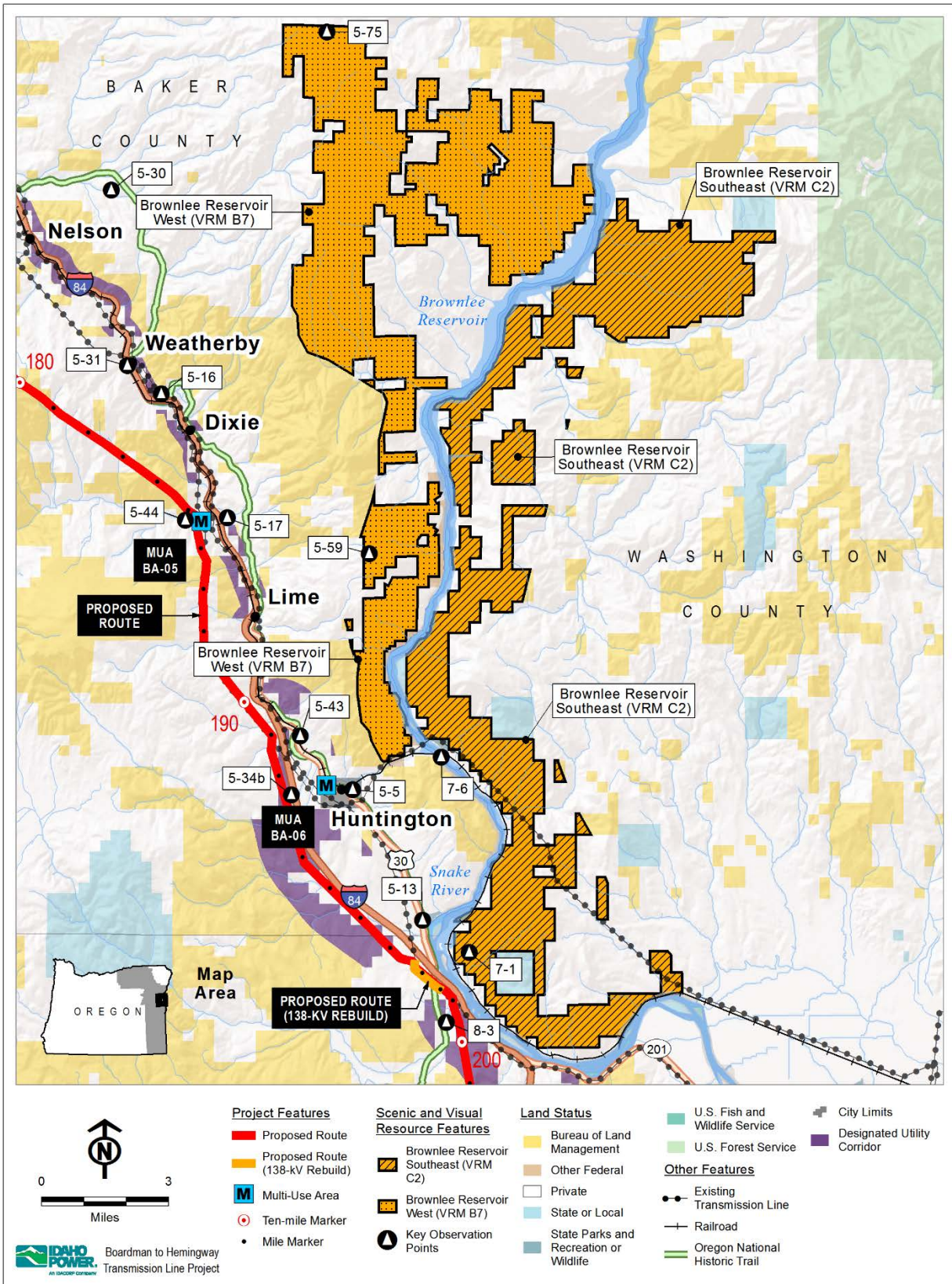
## 1 **Context**

2 Because the Project is sited outside of lands managed per VRM Class II Objectives, the Project  
 3 conforms to this management standard and consequently is consistent with BLM's management  
 4 of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast's visual qualities.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Context Criteria</b>
<b>Scenery as a Valued Attribute</b>	Scenery is a valued attribute of the resource, either as a perceived amenity (i.e., recreation setting) or as defined in OAR 345-022-0080; or, Scenery is not a valued attribute of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> Brownlee Reservoir Southeast is a scenic resource as defined in OAR 345-022-0080 and therefore by definition, scenery is considered a valued attribute of this resource.	
<b>Persistence of Scenic Value</b>	Persistence of Scenic Value is either:  <b>Not-Precluded.</b> Impacts will not preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan; or,  <b>Precluded.</b> Impacts will preclude the ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in the applicable land management plan.
<b>Explanation:</b> The BLM maintains the visual values of lands they administer through their VRM System. Visual values of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast are managed per VRM Class II objectives. Because of the limited visibility of the Project from Brownlee Reservoir Southeast, changes to the landscape within the boundary of the lands managed according to VRM Class II will be minimized. The contribution of adjacent scenery to the overall scenic quality of this scenic resource will be reduced; however the scenic quality class will remain the same. The Project will conform to VRM Class II objectives and consequently is consistent with BLM's management of Brownlee Reservoir Southeast's visual qualities.	

## 5 **Summary and Conclusion**

6 Visual impacts on the Brownlee Reservoir Southeast scenic resource will be medium intensity,  
 7 resulting from medium resource change and low viewer perception. Impacts will result from the  
 8 combined influence of the Project with other past or present actions that collectively influence  
 9 the scenery quality of the resource. The resulting medium intensity impacts will not preclude the  
 10 ability of the resource to provide the scenic value for which it was designated or recognized in  
 11 the Cascade RMP (BLM 1987). Visual impacts to Brownlee Reservoir Southeast will be **less**  
 12 **than significant.**



1  
2 **Figure R-3-19. Brownlee Reservoir Southeast**



## 20.0 OREGON ROUTE 244 CORRIDOR – RED BRIDGE EAST

**Resource:** OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge East

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** Visual Quality Objective (VQO) 4

**Relevant Plan:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) (2002)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 4-3

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge East (VQO 4) is managed by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest as VQO Retention. OR 244 is identified in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP as a Sensitivity Level 1 travel route. The “Sensitivity Level” is a measure of peoples concern for the scenic quality of the National Forests. Three sensitivity levels are considered: Level 1 (highest sensitivity), Level 2 (Average Sensitivity), and Level 3 (Lowest Sensitivity) (USFS 1990). Per the LRMP,

“Sensitivity Level 1 normally indicates that landscapes adjacent to the travel route are managed in such a manner that management activities are not visually evident (Retention)”.

**Interpretation of Designation:** OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is managed as VQO Retention to protect the viewshed of OR 244 viewshed. Changes to the landscape within OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East should not be evident from OR 244. Landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic attractiveness within the OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East area should not change. The resource being analyzed for visual impacts is the area managed as retention, herein referred to as the OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East area, and not OR 244.

**Resource Overview:** VQO – OR 244 Corridor Red Bridge East encompasses three parcels of national forest lands managed as VQO Retention within the OR 244 corridor. These parcels total approximately 588 acres and are located to the east of the Red Bridge State Wayside. Bird Tracks Campground, operated by the USFS, is located within OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge East is not considered a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge East is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge East is not considered a Recreation Resource.

**Existing Conditions:** OR 244 Corridor Red Bridge East is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. The landscape is common for the ecoregion and is characterized by a mostly wide, flat alluvial plain bordered by low, moderately steep ridges. The Grande Ronde River flows through the parcels and appears wide and meandering with a smooth to rippled texture and blue-green color. Gravel bars line the shoreline, appearing as coarse-textured, light-colored bands. The river valley terrain is steep to moderately steep, transitioning to rolling topography, dissected by numerous drainages that create v-shaped valleys with diagonal and directional lines. Colors are primarily browns and greys, with a hint of

1 red. Tall, mature coniferous and deciduous trees are present throughout the VQO. In the  
2 uplands, trees and shrubs line the drainages and are present in clumps along the hillsides.  
3 Human development includes campsites, bathrooms associated with Bird Tracks Campground,  
4 trails, and OR 244, which is the most apparent human development and appears smooth, wide,  
5 flat, winding, and grey in color.

6 **Landscape Character** of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is naturally appearing, as  
7 experienced from OR 244.

8 **Scenic integrity is moderate** - valued landscape character appears unaltered and  
9 deviations may be moderate, but they mimic the landscape character so completely that  
10 they are not evident.

11 **Scenic attractiveness is Class B, Typical**, resulting from the moderately steep terrain,  
12 evenly scattered to clumped mature vegetation, and large, winding river that introduce  
13 attributes of variety, harmony, and balance that are positive yet common for the area.

14 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups will be stationary or transient and would include individuals  
15 traveling along OR 244 or camping or picnicking.

## 16 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 17 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

18 OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake  
19 Alternative and outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore  
20 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

21 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
22 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
23 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
24 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
25 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
26 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 27 **Proposed Route**

28 The Proposed Route is located approximately 1.4 miles east of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge  
29 East at its closest point and will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East. The  
30 Morgan Lake Alternative is located 1.2 miles east, and also does not cross this resource (Figure  
31 R-3-20). OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of  
32 the cleared ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, no  
33 visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor –  
34 Red Bridge East will be evident, and the Project will conform to VQO Retention management  
35 objectives and the protection of Sensitivity Level 1 travel route (OR 244) under both the  
36 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative.

### 37 **Likelihood of Impact**

38 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East under either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, project components will result in no visual contrast against the landscape of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East, and impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East under either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, no visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East will be evident and resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East are experienced from OR 244. No project components will cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East under either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative; therefore, views of the OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected and viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East is managed as VQO Retention to protect the viewshed of  
 4 the OR 244 corridor, which is identified as a Sensitivity Level 1 travel route. The Project, under  
 5 both the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative, will not cross through OR 244  
 6 Corridor – Red Bridge East; therefore, project components will result in no visual contrast  
 7 against the landscape of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East, and visual changes to landscape  
 8 character, scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East will not be  
 9 evident. Therefore, impact magnitude and resource change will be low. Views of OR 244  
 10 Corridor – Red Bridge East are experienced from OR 244; since no project components under  
 11 either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative will cross through OR 244 Corridor –  
 12 Red Bridge East, views of the OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected and viewer  
 13 perception will be low. Impact intensity will be low under both siting alternatives.

### 14 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

15 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 16 result of other past or present actions.

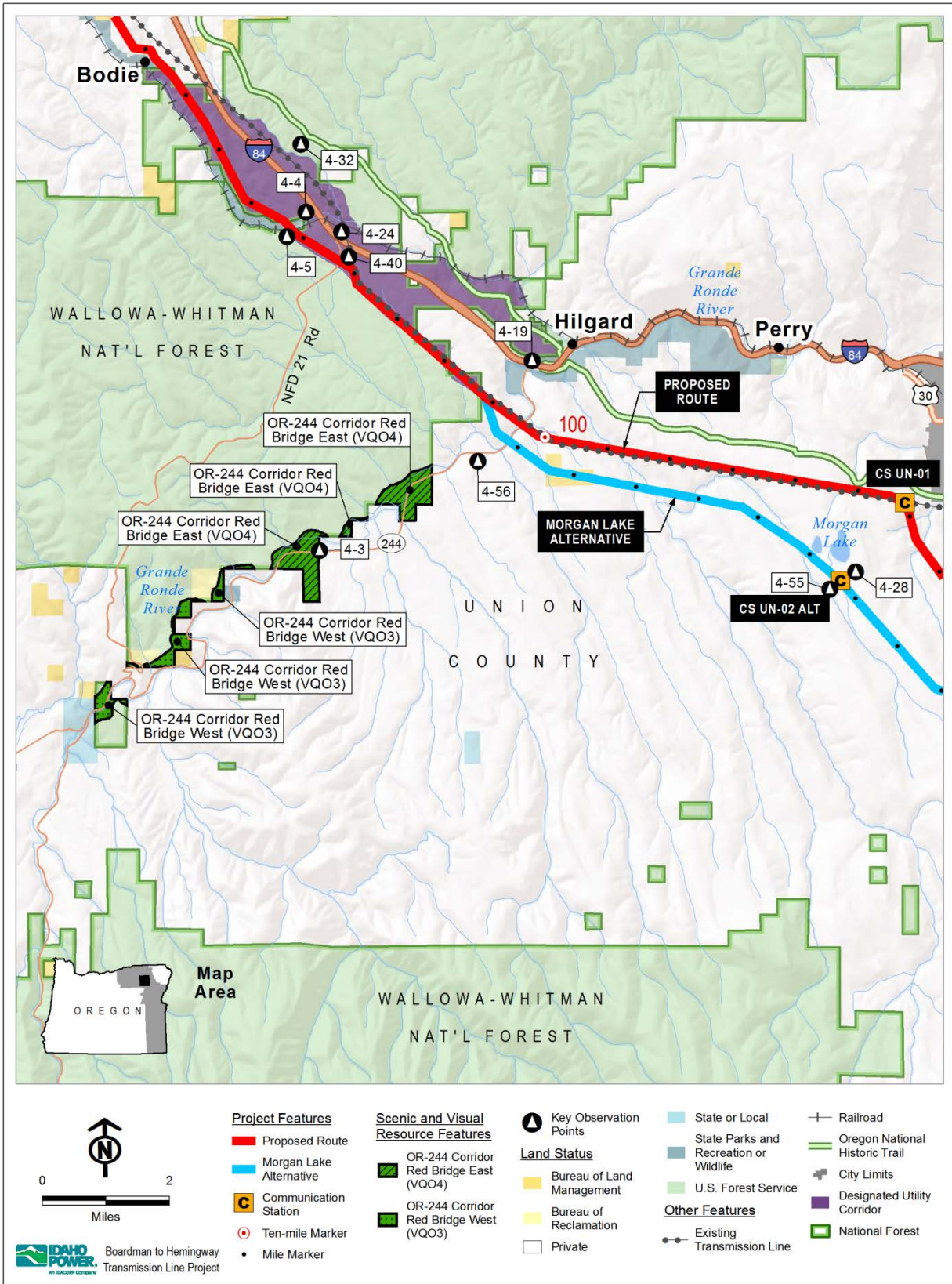
### 17 Context

18 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
 19 alternate will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant. OR 244 Corridor –  
 20 Red Bridge East will remain intact such that it will continue to provide the scenic values to OR  
 21 244 for which it was designated under either the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake  
 22 Alternative.

### 23 Summary and Conclusion

24 Visual impacts to OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East, under either the Proposed Route or the  
 25 Morgan Lake Alternative, will be of low intensity, resulting from both low resource change and  
 26 low viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from the Project, and not from other past or  
 27 present actions. Because impacts are of low intensity, they are considered **less than**  
 28 **significant**.





1  
2 **Figure R-3-20. Oregon Route 244 Corridor – Red Bridge East**

## 21.0 OREGON ROUTE 244 CORRIDOR – RED BRIDGE WEST

**Resource:** OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge West

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VQO 3

**Relevant Plan:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (2002)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge West (VQO 3) is managed by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest as VQO Retention. OR 244 is identified in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP as a Sensitivity Level 1 travel route. The “Sensitivity Level” is a measure of peoples concern for the scenic quality of the National Forests. Three sensitivity levels are considered: Level 1 (highest sensitivity), Level 2 (Average Sensitivity), and Level 3 (Lowest Sensitivity) (USFS 1990). Per the LRMP,

“Sensitivity Level 1 normally indicates that landscapes adjacent to the travel route are managed in such a manner that management activities are not visually evident (Retention)”.

**Interpretation of Designation:** OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is managed as VQO Retention to protect the viewshed of OR 244. Changes to the landscape within OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West should not be evident; landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic attractiveness within the OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West area should not change. The resource being analyzed for visual impacts is the area managed as Retention, herein referred to as OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West area, and not OR 244.

**Resource Overview:** The OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West area includes five parcels of national forest lands within foreground viewing distance along the corridor of OR 244, also known as the Union-Hilgard Highway. OR 244 generally follows the Grande Ronde River in this area. These parcels are located west of the Red Bridge State Wayside, include approximately 283 acres, and are classified as VQO Retention.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge West is not considered a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge West is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, OR 244 Corridor - Red Bridge West is not considered a Recreation Resource.

**Existing Conditions:** OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. The landscape is common for the ecoregion and is characterized by a mostly wide, flat alluvial plain bordered by low, moderately steep ridges. The Grande Ronde River flows through the parcels and appears wide and meandering with a smooth to rippled texture and blue-green color. Gravel bars line the shoreline, appearing as coarse-textured, light-colored bands. The river valley terrain is steep to moderately steep, transitioning to rolling topography, dissected by numerous drainages that create v-shaped

1 valleys with diagonal and directional lines. Colors are primarily browns and greys, with a hint of  
2 red. Tall, mature coniferous and deciduous trees are present throughout the VQO. In the  
3 uplands, trees and shrubs line the drainages and are present in clumps along the hillsides.  
4 Human development primarily consists of scattered rural development, trails, and native surface  
5 and paved roads, including OR 244, which runs through three of the parcels and appears  
6 smooth, wide, flat, winding, and grey in color.

7 **Landscape Character** of the OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is “natural appearing.”

8 **Scenic integrity is medium** - valued landscape character appears unaltered and  
9 deviations may be moderate, but they mimic the landscape character so completely that  
10 they are not evident.

11 **Scenic attractiveness is Class B, Typical**, resulting from the moderately steep terrain,  
12 evenly scattered to clumped mature vegetation, and large, winding river that introduce  
13 attributes of variety, harmony, and balance that are positive yet common for the area.

14 **Viewer Groups:** Viewer groups include individuals traveling along OR 244.

## 15 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 16 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

17 OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake  
18 Alternative and outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore  
19 impacts from this Project feature are not discussed any further in this document.

20 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
21 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
22 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
23 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
24 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
25 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 26 **Proposed Route**

27 The Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative are both located approximately 4.4 miles  
28 east of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West at its closest point (Figure R-3-21). The Project will  
29 not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under either siting scenario. The Morgan  
30 Lake Alternative is located 1.2 miles east, and also does not cross this resource. OR 244  
31 Corridor – Red Bridge West is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared  
32 ROW of both the Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, no visual  
33 changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red  
34 Bridge West will be evident, and the Project will conform to VQO Retention management  
35 objectives.

### 36 **Likelihood of Impact**

37 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.



1 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, project components will result in no visual contrast against the landscape of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West, and impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative. Therefore, no visual changes to landscape character, scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West will be evident, and resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/ middleground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Views of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West are experienced from OR 244. No project components will cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative; therefore, views of the OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected, and viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West is managed as VQO Retention to protect the viewshed of  
 4 the OR 244 corridor, which is identified as a Sensitivity Level 1 travel route. The Project will not  
 5 cross through OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan  
 6 Lake Alternative; therefore, project components will result in no visual contrast against the  
 7 landscape of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West. Visual changes to landscape character,  
 8 scenic integrity, or scenic quality of OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West will not be evident;  
 9 therefore, impact magnitude and resource change will be low. Views of OR 244 Corridor – Red  
 10 Bridge West are experienced from OR 244; since no project components will cross through OR  
 11 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative,  
 12 views of the OR 244 corridor scenery will not be affected and viewer perception will be low.  
 13 Impact intensity will be low.

### 14 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

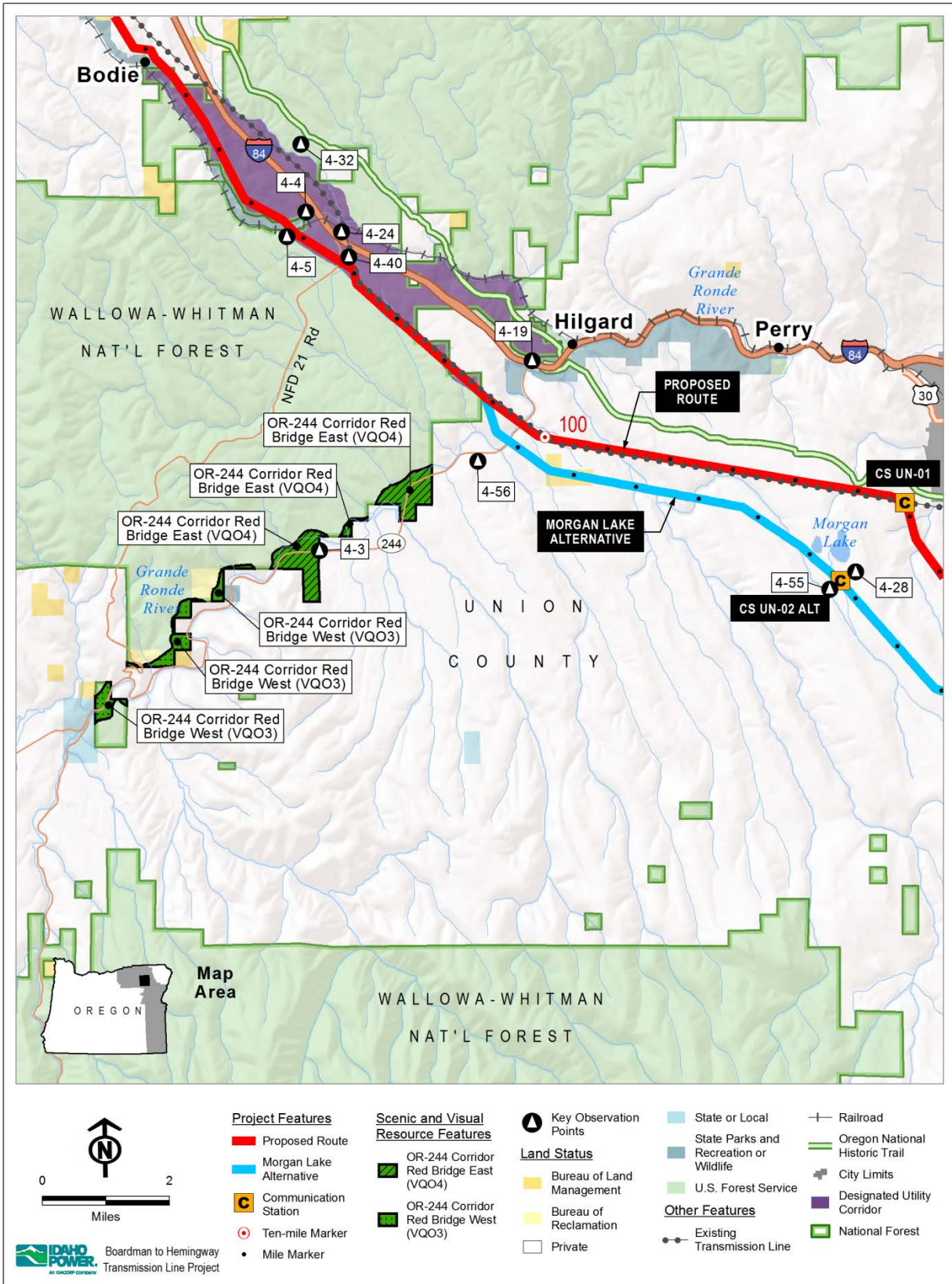
15 The Project, under the Proposed Route or the Morgan Lake Alternative, will not affect the OR  
 16 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West scenic resource.

### 17 Context

18 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
 19 alternate will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant. However, OR 244  
 20 Corridor – Red Bridge West will remain intact such that it will continue to provide the scenic  
 21 values to OR 244 for which it was designated.

### 22 **Summary and Conclusion**

23 Visual impacts to OR 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West under the Proposed Route or the Morgan  
 24 Lake Alternative will be of low intensity, resulting from both low resource change and low viewer  
 25 perception. Because impacts are of low intensity, they are considered **less than significant**.



1

2 Figure R-3-21. Oregon Route 244 Corridor – Red Bridge West

## 1 22.0 SUCCOR CREEK AREA

2 **Resource:** Succor Creek area

3 **Relevant Exhibit:** R

4 **Exhibit R Map ID:** VRM M8

5 **Relevant Plan:** Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (BLM 2002)

6 **Resource Type:** Area

7 **Relevant KOP(s):** None

### 8 PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

9 **Designation:** The Succor Creek Succor Creek area has been designated by the BLM as VRM  
10 Class II. The VRM Class II objectives are “to retain the existing character of the landscape. The  
11 level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low” (BLM 2002).

12 **Interpretation of Designation:** BLM VRM Class II objectives to retain the existing character of  
13 the landscape pertain to the geographic area bounded designated as VRM Class II and do not  
14 apply to areas outside of that geographic boundary.

15 **Resource Overview:** The Succor Creek area resource area includes 10,800 acres that include  
16 the highlands surrounding the Succor Creek State Natural Area (SNA). The Succor Creek area  
17 is located adjacent to Succor Creek Road, approximately 14 miles southwest of Homedale and  
18 4 miles southwest of the Proposed Route.

19 Per OAR 345-022-0080, Succor Creek is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

20 Succor Creek is not considered a Protected Area and not evaluated per OAR 345-022-0040.

21 Succor Creek is not considered an important Recreation Resource, and not evaluated per OAR  
22 345-022-0100.

23 **Existing Conditions:** The Succor Creek area landscape includes gentle to medium rolling hills  
24 with butte-like formations and some exposed rock outcroppings. Texture is primarily medium  
25 with some rough, jagged rock outcrops. The landforms are primarily exposed and appear light  
26 brown, tan, and grey. Vegetation is generally sparse and limited to sagebrush/steppe scattered  
27 throughout the landscape in green and grey tones. The landscape appears moderately  
28 enclosed due to the rolling topography, valley bottoms, and moderately steep surrounding  
29 hillsides as well as open areas with panoramic views. Human development is limited to dirt  
30 roads. The landscape character is natural appearing. Using the BLM’s visual resource inventory  
31 methods per manual H-8410-1 (BLM 1986), the scenic quality of the existing landscape for  
32 Succor Creek area is considered low (class C) as shown below:

Succor Creek area Scenic Quality Rating: Pre-project							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	2	1	0	8 (C)

33

34 **Viewers:** Viewers will primarily be limited to local individuals driving along primitive roads, and  
35 recreators accessing the Succor Creek SNA, and will therefore be transient.



## 1 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 2 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

3 Succor Creek is located greater than 5 miles from the Morgan Lake Alternative and outside of  
4 the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW, and therefore impacts from this Project feature  
5 are not discussed any further in this document.

6 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
7 the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles from this site, and are  
8 therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because West of Bombing  
9 Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and the Double  
10 Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual impacts  
11 resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed Route.

### 12 **Proposed Route**

13 The Succor Creek area will be approximately 4 miles southwest of the Proposed Route at its  
14 closest point (Figure R-3-22). Viewers will primarily be traveling along dirt roads, so views will  
15 be peripheral and episodic. The modeled viewshed indicates that the Project will not be visible  
16 from the majority of the resource due to the rolling hills and buttes that compose the landscape.  
17 Where visible, the proposed 500- kV towers will introduce weak contrast and appear  
18 subordinate to the larger landscape due to distance, which will not alter the scenery adjacent to  
19 the Succor Creek area resource. Therefore, the scenic quality scoring and overall scenic quality  
20 will not change. The natural-appearing landscape character will be maintained.

21 Succor Creek is located outside of the 10-mile viewshed buffer of the cleared ROW of both the  
22 Proposed Route and the Morgan Lake Alternative, and therefore impacts from this Project  
23 feature are not discussed any further in this document.

<b>Succor Creek Succor Creek area Scenic Quality Rating: Post-project</b>							
Landform (1 to 5)	Vegetation (0 to 5)	Water (0 to 5)	Color (1 to 5)	Adjacent Scenery (0 to 5)	Scarcity (1 to 5+)	Cultural Modification (-4 to 2)	Total Score
2	1	0	2	2	1	0	8 (C)

### 24 **Likelihood of Impact**

25 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

2 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> The modeled viewshed indicates that the Project will not be visible from the majority of the resource. Where visible, the proposed 500-kV towers will introduce weak contrast and appear subordinate to the larger landscape due to a distance of 4 miles or more. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The Project will not alter the scenic quality scoring, and similarly, the overall scenic quality will not change. The landscape will maintain its natural-appearing character. Therefore, the resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers will primarily be traveling along dirt roads, and views will be peripheral and episodic; therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

2 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**3 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High



1 The Project will have low magnitude visual impacts on the Succor Creek area that will not alter  
2 the scenic quality or landscape character such that resource change will be low. Viewers will  
3 primarily be traveling along dirt roads, and views will be peripheral and episodic such that  
4 viewer perception will be low. Therefore, impact intensity will be low.

5 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

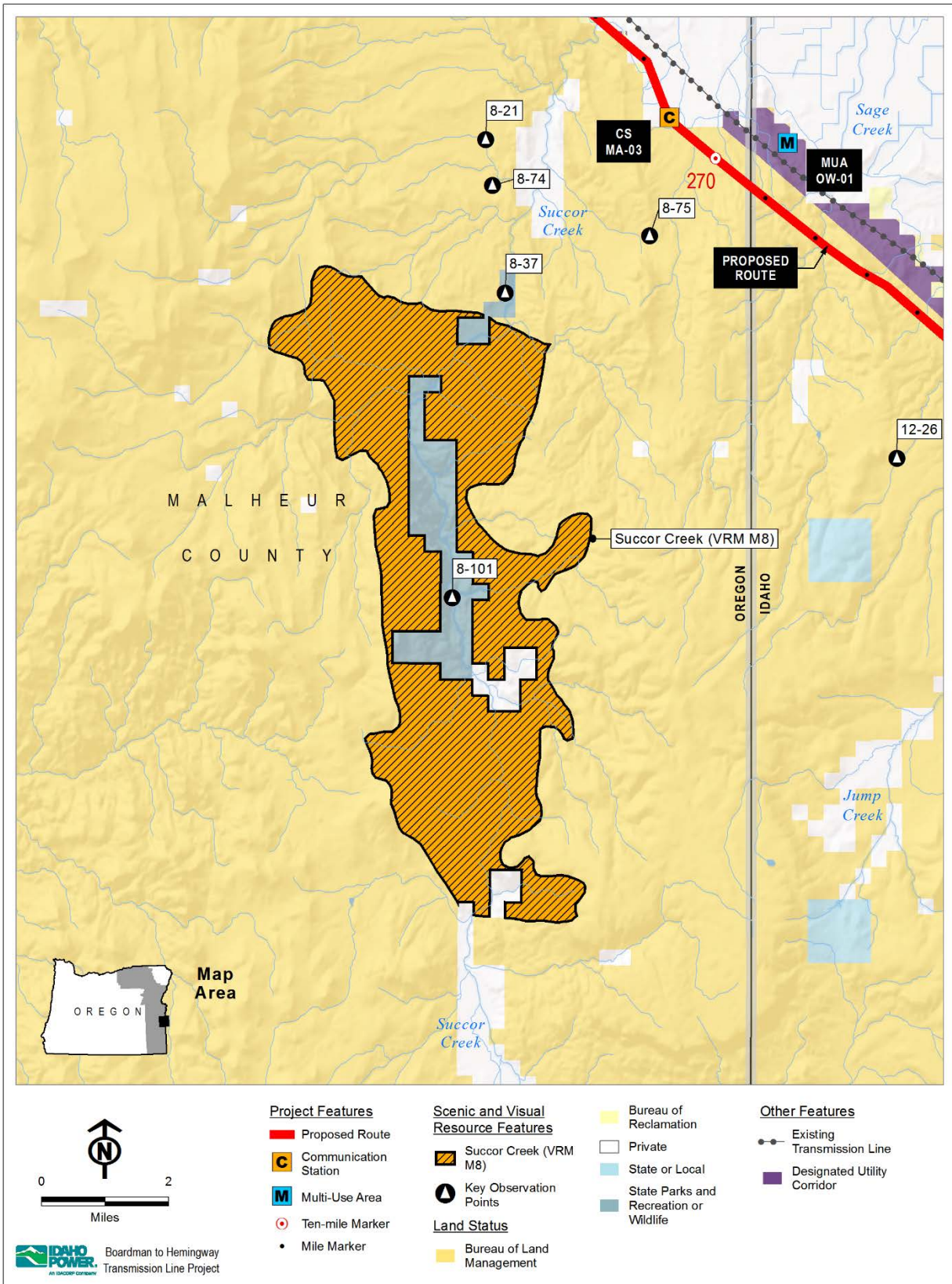
6 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
7 result of other past or present actions.

8 **Context**

9 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
10 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant. However, the Project  
11 will conform to VRM Class II objectives for the Succor Creek area.

12 **Summary and Conclusion**

13 Visual impacts to the Succor Creek area will be of low intensity, resulting from both low resource  
14 change and viewer perception. Impacts will result solely from the Project, and will not be the  
15 result of other past or present actions. Because impact are low intensity, they are considered  
16 **less than significant.**



1  
2 **Figure R-3-22. Succor Creek Area**

## 23.0 U.S. FOREST SERVICE WALLOWA-WHITMAN NATIONAL FOREST VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVE 1

**Resource:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (NF) VQO 1

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VQO 1

**Relevant Plan:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP (2002)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** None

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman NF VQO 1 is managed by the Wallowa-Whitman NF as VQO Retention.

**Interpretation of Designation:** VQO 1 is located on USFS-managed lands positioned between the first and second parcels of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor, which are managed by OPRD. VQO 1 encompasses USFS lands on either side of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road and, combined with the first and second parcels of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor, helps form a continuous corridor along Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. VQO 1 preserves the viewshed of Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road on USFS-managed lands from visually evident changes to the landscape.

**Resource Overview:** The VQO 1 area is a linear corridor that includes approximately 185 acres of Wallowa-Whitman NF lands managed as VQO Retention. This area overlaps with a portion of the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside identified by Union County and includes some additional areas along the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road that are not included within the Union County designation.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, VQO 1 is not considered a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, VQO 1 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, VQO 1 is not considered a Recreation Resource.

**Existing Conditions:** VQO 1 is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. Existing topography is primarily rolling, punctuated by the straight to curvilinear lines created by steep drainages. Existing vegetation is dominated by ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine, and grand fir and appears nearly contiguous along the edges of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road.

The Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road is characterized as a narrow, two-lane road that winds naturally along the upper portion of a steep valley wall. The roadway runs adjacent to a heavy-rail line to the south. Views to the southwest across the valley are primarily blocked by dense vegetation along the perimeter. Intermittent views across the valley are characterized by a mosaic of open meadows, irregularly shaped forest patches, and a network of forest roads. Views to the north/northwest of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road are dominated by the steep slope of the valley wall. This steep viewing angle precludes views to the ridgeline along the majority of the corridor.

1           **Landscape Character** of VQO 1 is “natural appearing.”

2           **Scenic Integrity is high** - valued landscape character appears unaltered. Deviations  
3           may be present but they mimic the landscape character so completely that they are not  
4           evident.

5           **Scenic Attractiveness is class B, Typical**

6           **Viewer Groups:** Viewers are roadway travelers along the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage  
7           Road.

## 8           **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 9           **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

10          The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 5.6 miles southeast of VQO 1. Project  
11          components associated with this alternative will not be detectable from VQO 1 due to screening  
12          by vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not cross VQO 1, it  
13          will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for this area (USFS  
14          2002). Potential visual impacts of the Morgan Lake Alternative on VQO 1 is not discussed further  
15          in this document.

16          West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
17          Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
18          from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
19          West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
20          the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
21          impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
22          Route.

### 23          **Proposed Route**

24          Project components associated with the Proposed Route, including access roads and pulling  
25          and tensioning sites, will be situated on the crest of the ridgeline to the northeast of the VQO  
26          (Figure R-3-23). The steep angle of observation will preclude views of Project features from Old  
27          Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. The perimeter of the roadway will remain forested, thereby  
28          screening structures from view by roadway travelers. Roadway travelers approaching where the  
29          Project crosses the frontage road will experience views of the conductors spanning the road in  
30          the foreground. Visual contrast of the conductors will be weak. Old Emigrant Hill Scenic  
31          Frontage Road will be used as an access road; however, no substantial improvements to this  
32          roadway will occur. Other access roads, including existing roads requiring improvement and  
33          new bladed roads, will be located on the northwest side of the Proposed Route. Two pulling and  
34          tensioning sites will be located adjacent to the scenic corridor between Project MP 91.0 to MP  
35          91.9. The cleared ROW will not be visible from roadway viewing platforms within any of the  
36          scenic corridor parcels due to steep viewing angles and tall, mature vegetation bordering the  
37          roadway.

38                 **Landscape Character** will remain primarily “natural appearing.”

39                 **Scenic Integrity** will remain high. Valued landscape character appears unaltered.  
40                 Deviations may be present, but they mimic the landscape character so completely that  
41                 they are not evident.

42                 **Scenic Attractiveness** will remain class B (Typical).

1 **Likelihood of Impact**

2 IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

3 **Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to 10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

4 **Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and Project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and Project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> Project features will be largely outside of the viewshed of the Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. Steep slopes and tall, mature vegetation about the road such that the viewing angle is severe, limiting the extent of views. Additionally, the Proposed Route is primarily sited on the northeast side of the ridgetop, predominantly outside of the viewshed of the road. Therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>low</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The landscape will remain primarily natural appearing. Scenic attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic integrity will remain high. Valued landscape character appears unaltered. Slight deviations may be present that are visible from Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage Road. Therefore, resource change will be <u>low</u> .			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewer exposure will be brief and experienced both head-on and peripherally for all parcels. Additionally, viewing angle will typically be severe such that drivers will not experience it. Therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			



## 1 PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context

### 2 Impact Intensity

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

3 The Project will have low magnitude impacts, as steep slopes and tall, mature vegetation will  
 4 create severe viewing angles, limiting the extent of views. The landscape will remain primarily  
 5 natural appearing, scenic attractiveness will remain class B (Typical), and scenic integrity will  
 6 remain high such that resource change will be low. Viewer exposure will be brief and  
 7 experienced both head-on and peripherally for all parcels. Viewing angle will typically be severe  
 8 such that viewer perception will be low. Visual impacts to VQO 1 will be low intensity.

### 9 Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project

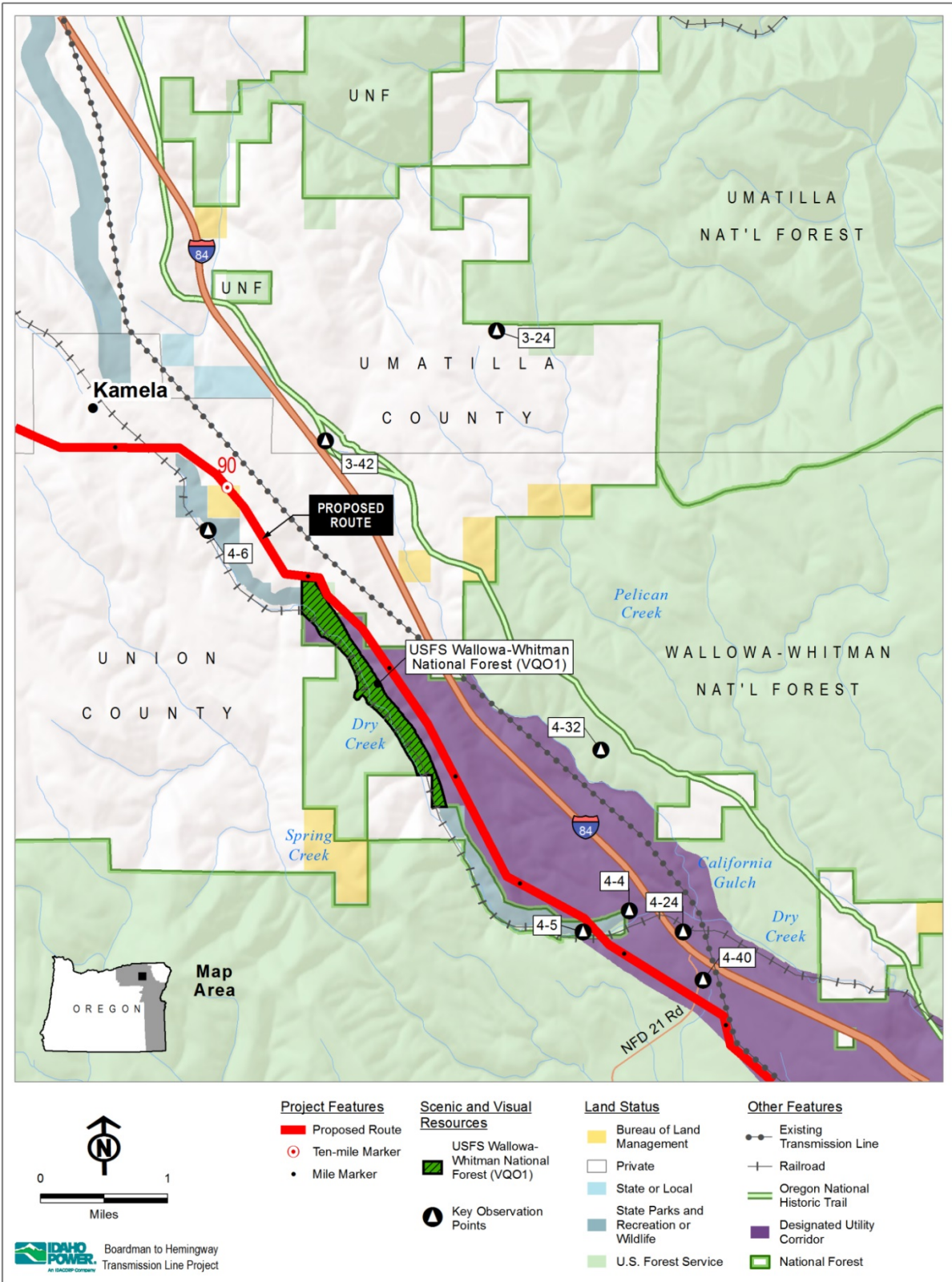
10 The impacts disclosed in this assessment are caused by the proposed facility, and are not the  
 11 result of other past or present actions.

### 12 Context

13 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
 14 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant.

### 15 **Summary and Conclusion**

16 Impacts to the VQO 1 scenic resource area will be of low intensity, resulting from both low  
 17 resource change and viewer perception. Impacts will result from the proposed facility and are  
 18 not the result of other past or present actions. Because impacts are of low intensity, they are  
 19 considered **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-23. U.S. Forest Service Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Visual Quality**  
3 **Objective 1**



## 24.0 U.S. FOREST SERVICE WALLOWA-WHITMAN NATIONAL FOREST – INTERSTATE 84 TRAVEL CORRIDOR VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVE 2

**Resource:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman NF – I-84 Travel Corridor VQO 2

**Relevant Exhibit:** R

**Exhibit R Map ID:** VQO 2

**Relevant Plan:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP (2002)

**Resource Type:** Area

**Relevant KOP(s):** 4-4; 4-24

### PART 1: Establish Baseline Conditions

**Designation:** USFS Wallowa-Whitman NF VQO 2 is managed by the Wallowa-Whitman NF as VQO Retention. Per the VQO Retention, management activities should not be evident. VQO 2 overlaps with the first parcel of the Blue Mountain Forest State Scenic Corridor and includes USFS-managed lands within the viewshed of Sensitivity Level 1 travel routes, including I-84, the railroad along Old Emigrant Hill Frontage Road, and the Oregon Trail Interpretive Park trail system, per the Wallowa-Whitman NF LRMP. The “Sensitivity Level” is a measure of peoples concern for the scenic quality of the National Forests. Three sensitivity levels are considered: Level 1 (highest sensitivity), Level 2 (Average Sensitivity), and Level 3 (Lowest Sensitivity) (USFS 1990). Per the LRMP,

“Sensitivity Level 1 normally indicates that landscapes adjacent to the travel route are managed in such a manner that management activities are not visually evident (Retention)”.

**Interpretation of Designation:** Activities should not result in visually evident changes to lands within the VQO boundary in order to preserve views experienced from I-84 within the Wallowa-Whitman NF and other Sensitivity Level 1 travel routes within the forest.

**Resource Overview:** The VQO 2 identifier applies to approximately 4,800 acres of the Wallowa-Whitman NF spanning I-84. The area is located in northwestern Union County, is approximately 8 miles long, and is typically 1 to 2 miles wide. The USFS-operated Oregon Trail Interpretive Park (KOP 4-32) and Blue Mountain Crossing Sno-Park (KOP 4-4) recreation sites are located within VQO 2.

Per OAR 345-022-0040, VQO 2 is not considered a Protected Area.

Per OAR 345-022-0080, VQO 2 is being evaluated as a Scenic Resource.

Per OAR 345-022-0100, VQO 2 is not considered a Recreation Resource.

**Existing Conditions:** VQO 2 is located in the Maritime-Influenced Zone of the Blue Mountains Ecoregion. The existing topography varies from flat to rolling, with some steep slopes adjacent to creeks that dissect the surrounding terrain. Undulating mountains in the background distance zone add some height and size to the landscape and create a slightly enclosed landscape. This portion of the Blue Mountains ecoregion directly intercepts marine weather systems moving east through the Columbia River Gorge and has ashy soils that retain sufficient moisture to support forest cover at lower elevations than other locations in the Blue Mountains. Tall, coniferous trees cover the VQO consistently and add to the visual variety and scenic quality of the landscape and limit views to the foreground from most locations. Color complexity

1 comprises light and dark browns, dark greens and olives, and dark and light grays from the  
2 road. Textures are smooth from the road surface to fine and medium from the grasses and  
3 coarse and rough from the conifer vegetation. Human development in the landscape primarily  
4 includes transportation corridors, including I-84, existing transmission lines, and USFS-  
5 managed recreation sites. These developments introduce linear and geometrical features that  
6 are typically smooth in texture. Because of its location within USFS-administered lands, this  
7 resource was evaluated using methods adapted from the USFS Scenery Management System  
8 (USFS 1995).

9 **Landscape Character** of VQO 2 is “cultural.”

10 **Scenic Integrity is medium** - Valued landscape character appears slightly altered.  
11 Noticeable deviations remain visually subordinate to the landscape character.

12 **Scenic Attractiveness** is class B, Typical.

13 **Viewer Groups:** Viewers include roadway travelers along Old Emigrant Hill Scenic Frontage  
14 Road and recreators at the sno-park and Oregon Trail Interpretive Park.

## 15 **PART 2: Impact Likelihood and Magnitude Assessment**

### 16 **Alternatives Not Evaluated**

17 The Morgan Lake Alternative is located approximately 3.0 miles southeast of VQO 2. The ROW  
18 associated with this alternative will be largely undetectable from the VQO 2 area due to  
19 screening from vegetation and topography. Because the Morgan Lake Alternative does not  
20 cross VQO 2, it will be in conformance with applicable management standards of “retention” for  
21 this area (USFS 2002). Potential visual impacts resulting from the Morgan Lake Alternative on  
22 VQO 2 is not discussed further in this document.

23 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2,  
24 Morgan Lake Alternate, and the Double Mountain Alternative are located greater than 5 miles  
25 from this site, and are therefore not considered in this visual impact analysis. Likewise, because  
26 West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 1, West of Bombing Range Road Alternative 2, and  
27 the Double Mountain Alternative are not forested, they are not analyzed for potential visual  
28 impacts resulting from a cleared ROW. The analysis presented below pertains to the Proposed  
29 Route.

### 30 **Proposed Route**

31 The Proposed Route will cross through VQO 2 in two locations between MP 94.4 and MP 95.0,  
32 in the first parcel of the Blue Mountain State Scenic Corridor (Figure R-3-24). Towers 95/3  
33 (165-foot height) and 95/4 (155-foot height) would be sited within the parcel. The Project will be  
34 most visible along the western boundary of the VQO where both the towers and the cleared  
35 ROW will be visible. However, the viewer platforms within the VQO (sno-park, interpretive park,  
36 and I-84) are almost entirely out of the viewshed due to topographic or vegetative screening.  
37 Additional views will likely be visible from the higher elevation areas near the southern portion of  
38 the VQO. Steep observation angles and tall, mature trees located between I-84 and the  
39 Proposed Route will provide screening and prevent continuous views of the Project, located  
40 approximately 0.2 mile south.

41 **Landscape Character** will remain “cultural.”

42 **Scenic Integrity** will remain medium. Valued landscape character (cultured) will be  
43 maintained.

1           **Scenic Attractiveness** will remain class B (Typical) since Project visibility will be limited  
2           from viewer platforms.

### 3    Likelihood of Impact

4    IPC considered all identified impacts to be “likely” to occur.

### 5    Magnitude of Impact – Impact Duration

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Impact Duration		
<b>Impact Duration</b>	<b>Temporary.</b> Impacts would last for up to 3 years, (construction periods only and recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in agricultural areas).	<b>Short-term.</b> Impacts would 3 to10 years (recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in grasslands and herbaceous wetlands).	<b>Long-term.</b> Impacts would extend for greater than 10 years, or for the life of the Project (permanent Project facilities, recovery and revegetation of temporary impacts in shrubland and forest lands).
<b>Explanation:</b> Impacts will be primarily associated with the transmission line and towers, and therefore will be <u>long-term</u> , extending for the life of the Project.			

### 6    Magnitude of Impact – Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance		
<b>Visual Contrast and Scale Dominance</b>	<b>Low.</b> Project components result in weak to no visual contrast against the existing landscape, and Project-related impacts are subordinate.	<b>Medium.</b> Project components result in moderate visual contrast against the existing landscape, and Project-related impacts are co-dominant.	<b>High.</b> Project components result in strong visual contrast against the existing landscape, and Project-related impacts are dominant.
<b>Explanation:</b> From the I-84 viewing platforms, the cleared ROW and towers will introduce strong visual contrast and may appear dominant near Project MP 94.4 and MP 95.0; therefore, impact magnitude will be <u>high</u> .			

1 **Magnitude of Impact – Resource Change and Viewer Perception**

Indicator	Criteria used to Determine Resource Change		
<b>Resource Change</b>	<b>Low.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts is limited to a discrete portion of the resource such that scenic quality or attractiveness, and character of the resource will not change.	<b>Medium.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the value of one or more key factor used to rank scenic quality or attractiveness; however, it will not reduce the scenic quality or scenic attractiveness class or change the overall landscape character of the resource.	<b>High.</b> The geographic extent of medium to high magnitude impacts will lower the scenic quality or attractiveness class and will alter landscape character of the resource.
<b>Explanation:</b> The landscape will retain its cultural character. Scenic attractiveness will remain Class B (Typical). Scenic integrity will remain medium as the transmission towers and ROW will be consistent with a cultural landscape character and the designated transmission corridor. Therefore, the resource change will be low.			
<b>Viewer Perception</b>	<b>Low.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or elevated vantage point, and are predominantly peripheral, intermittent, or episodic; OR, the Project is located primarily in the background distance zone (5-15 miles).	<b>Medium.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are equally head-on and peripheral, equally continuous and intermittent; OR, the Project is located primarily in the foreground/midground distance zone (0.5-5 miles).	<b>High.</b> Views of the Project are experienced from a neutral or inferior vantage point, and are predominantly head-on, predominantly continuous; OR, the Project is located primarily in the immediate foreground distance zone (up to 0.5 miles).
<b>Explanation:</b> Viewers traveling along I-84 will have intermittent, peripheral views of the Project while traveling at high speeds; Project therefore, viewer perception will be <u>low</u> .			

2 **PART 3: Consideration of Intensity, Causation, and Context**3 **Impact Intensity**

Intensity Rating			
Viewer Perception	Resource Change		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
LOW	Low	Medium	High
MEDIUM	Low	Medium	High
HIGH	Low	High	High

1 The Project will have high magnitude impacts near Project MP 94.4 and MP 95.0, primarily from  
2 the cleared ROW. However, the landscape character, scenic integrity, and scenic attractiveness  
3 of the overall VQO area will remain the same such that the resource change will be low.  
4 Viewers traveling along I-84 will have intermittent, peripheral views of the Project while traveling  
5 at high speeds; therefore, viewer perception will be low. Impact intensity will be low.

6 **Degree to Which Impacts are Caused by the Project**

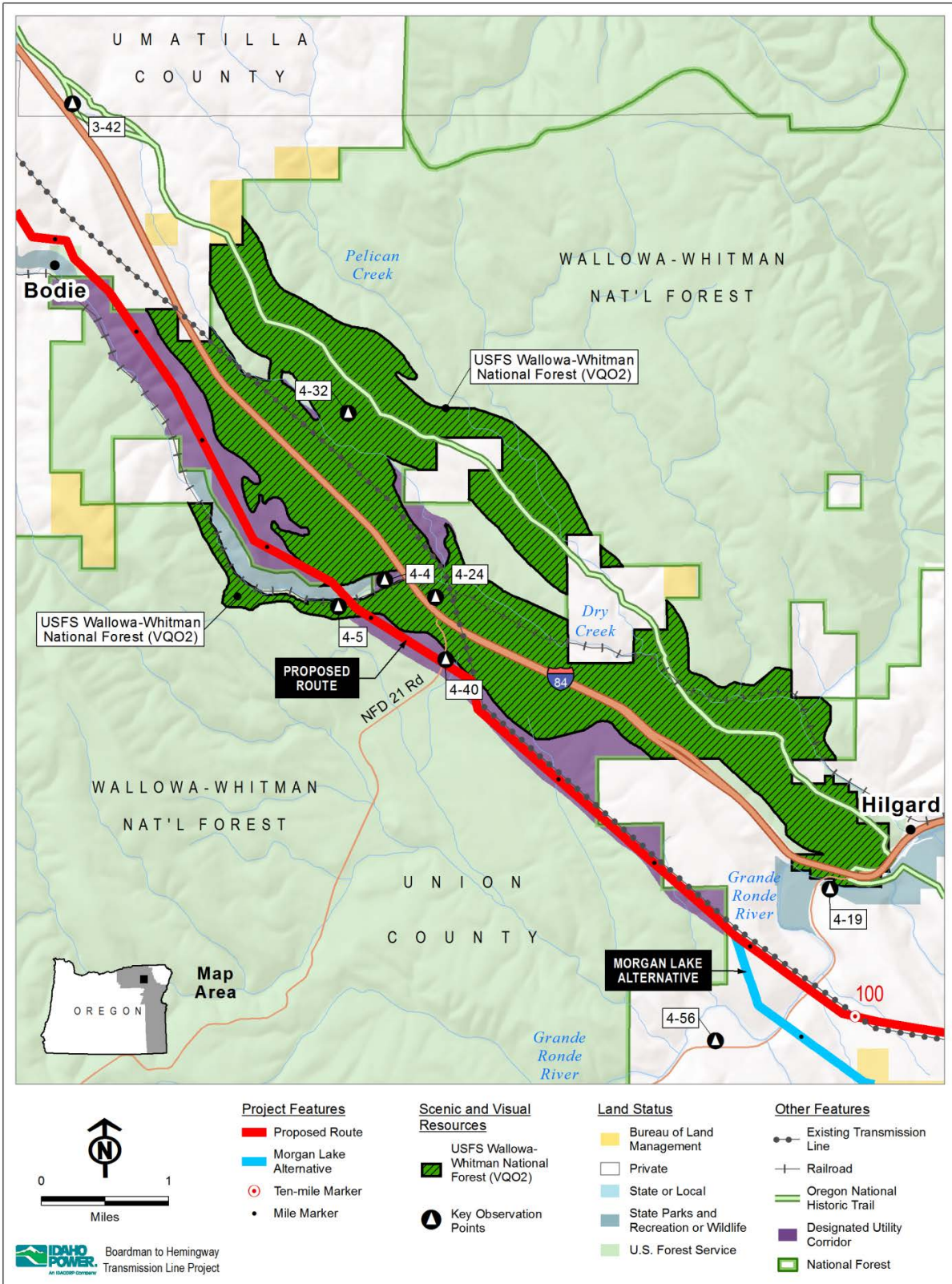
7 The scenic quality of the resource under operational conditions is the result of the combined  
8 influence of the Project and other past or present actions. The landscape has a cultural  
9 character due to the past actions including I-84, other transmission lines, and USFS developed  
10 recreation sites. The Project is consistent with this landscape character type.

11 **Context**

12 According to the visual impact methodology, an evaluation of context is not required as the  
13 Project will have low intensity impacts, and therefore, less than significant. Additionally, the area  
14 is a designated transmission corridor, and the Project will be consistent with that designation.

15 **Summary and Conclusion**

16 Impacts to the VQO 2 scenic resource area will be of low intensity, resulting from both low  
17 resource change and viewer perception. Impacts will result from the proposed facility and are  
18 not the result of other past or present actions. Because impacts are of low intensity, they are  
19 considered **less than significant**.



1  
2 **Figure R-3-24. U.S. Forest Service Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Visual Quality**  
3 **Objective 2**



1 **25.0 REFERENCES**

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28 [http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp\\_parkPage&parkId=172](http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp_parkPage&parkId=172)

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34 Scenery management.

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- 1 USFS. 2002. Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.
- 2 Wild & Scenic River Act. 1986. Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271-1287. October 2, 1986.






**ATTACHMENT R-4  
PHOTOSIMULATIONS**

---





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Proposed Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 3:38 PM  
 Date of photograph: 10.12.2011  
 Weather condition: Sunny  
 Viewing direction: Northeast  
 Latitude: 45°22'26.36"N  
 Longitude: 118°18'53.52"W

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Existing Conditions  
Key Observation Point 4-5**

Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 July 2013

**Figure: R-4-1**








Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Proposed Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 3:38 PM  
 Date of photograph: 10.12.2011  
 Weather condition: Sunny  
 Viewing direction: Northeast  
 Latitude: 45°22'26.36"N  
 Longitude: 118°18'53.52"W  
 Nearest tower in view: 0.14 mi  
 Structure Type/ Material: Lattice/ Galvanized Steel

**Photographic Simulation of  
Proposed Alignment  
Key Observation Point 4-5**




Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 July 2013

**Figure: R-4-2**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 1:29 PM  
 Date of photograph: 3.24.2011  
 Weather condition: Partly Cloudy  
 Viewing direction: West  
 Latitude: 44°49'11.139"N  
 Longitude: 117°44'24.517"W  
 Nearest tower in view: 0.45 mi

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Existing Conditions  
Key Observation Point 5-25C**



Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 January 2013

**Figure: R-4-3**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photography:	1:29 PM
Date of photography:	24 March 2011
Weather conditions:	Clear, Few Clouds
Viewing direction:	West
Latitude:	44°49'11.12"N
Longitude:	117°44'24.46"W
Nearest structure in view:	0.14 miles
Structure Type/Material:	H-Frames Weathered steel

The above photograph is intended to be viewed at approximately 18 inches from the viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper. The photograph below is the full sized wide angle view of the above photograph area outlined in yellow.



**Key Observation Point 5-25C  
Photographic Simulation of  
Flagstaff Hill Alternative  
FASC Route**




Boardman to Hemingway  
500-kV Transmission Project  
Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
November 2016

**Figure: R-4-4**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 2:25 PM  
 Date of photograph: 3.24.2011  
 Weather condition: Partly Cloudy  
 Viewing direction: Northwest  
 Latitude: 44°48'53.843"N  
 Longitude: 117°43'43.826"W  
 Nearest tower in view: 0.91 mi

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Existing Conditions  
 Key Observation Point 5-25D**

Photo Point 008

Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 December 2012

**Figure: R-4-5**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 2:25 PM  
 Date of photograph: 3.24.2011  
 Weather condition: Partly Cloudy  
 Viewing direction: Northwest  
 Latitude: 44°48'53.843"N  
 Longitude: 117°43'43.826"W  
 Nearest tower in view: 0.72 mi  
 Structure Type/ Material: H-Frames, Corten Steel and Lattice structures

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Photographic Simulation of  
 Flagstaff Hill Alternative  
 Key Observation Point 5-25D  
 FASC Route**




Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 November 2016

**Figure: R-4-6**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 11:10 AM  
 Date of photograph: 6.20.2013  
 Weather condition: Mostly Cloudy  
 Viewing direction: East-Northeast  
 Latitude: 44°48'42.29"N  
 Longitude: 117°45'26.19"W

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Existing Conditions  
Key Observation Point 5-91**



Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 July 2013

**Figure: R-4-7**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photography:	11:10 AM
Date of photography:	20 June 2013
Weather conditions:	Mostly Cloudy
Viewing direction:	East-Northeast
Latitude:	44°48'42.29"N
Longitude:	117°45'26.19"W
Nearest structure in view:	0.15 miles
Structure Type/Material:	H-Frames, Corten Steel and Lattice Structures

The above photograph is intended to be viewed at approximately 18 inches from the viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper. The photograph below is the full sized wide angle view of the above photograph area outlined in yellow.

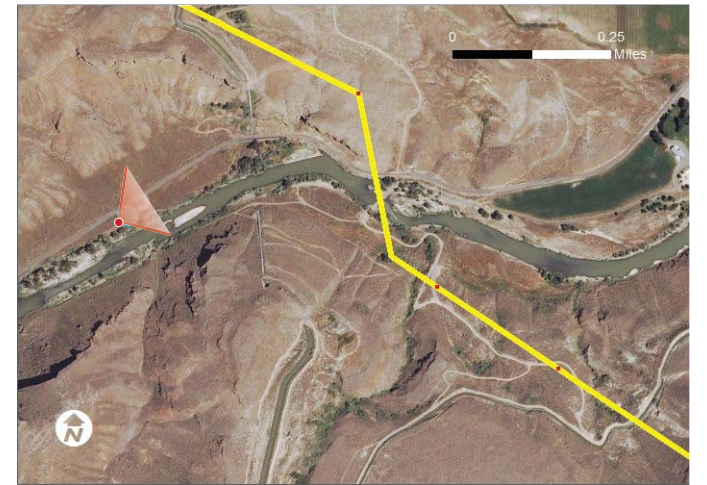


**Key Observation Point 5-91  
Photographic Simulation of  
Proposed Alignment  
FASC Route**




Boardman to Hemingway  
500-kV Transmission Project  
Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
December 2016

**Figure: R-4-8**





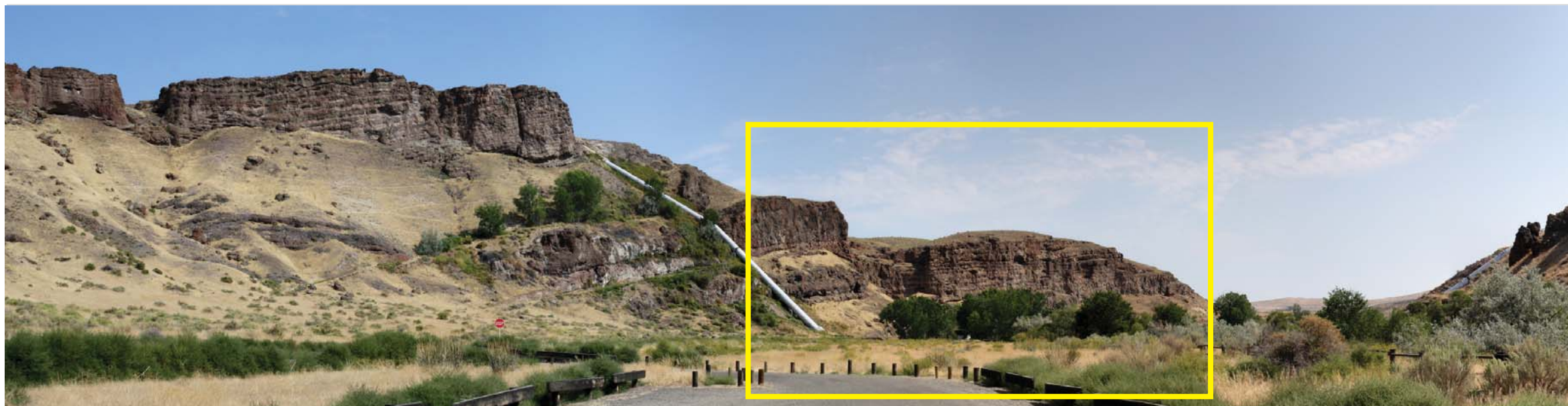
**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure  
Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 10:59 AM  
 Date of photograph: 9.13.2011  
 Weather condition: Mostly Sunny  
 Viewing direction: Northeast  
 Latitude: 43°44'12.62"N  
 Longitude: 117°11'1.67"W

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper: The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.

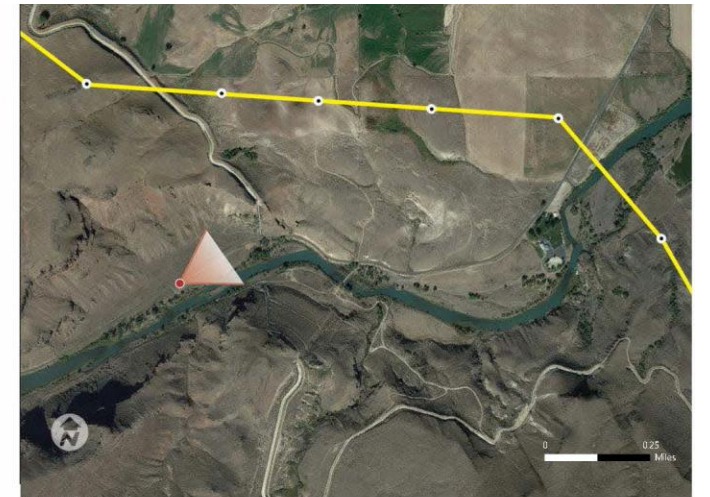


**Existing Conditions  
Key Observation Point 8-52**

Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 January 2013

**Figure: R-4-9**





**Legend**

-  Key Observation Point  
Cone of Vision
-  Alternative Right-of-Way
-  Proposed Structure Locations

**Photograph Information**

Time of photograph: 10:59 AM  
 Date of photograph: 9.13.2011  
 Weather condition: Mostly Sunny  
 Viewing direction: Northeast  
 Latitude: 43°44'12.62"N  
 Longitude: 117°11'1.67"W  
 Nearest tower in view: 0.46 mi  
 Structure Type/ Material: H-Frames, Corten Steel and Lattice structures

Above photograph is intended to be viewed 18 inches from viewer's eyes when printed on 11x17 paper. The photograph below has been cropped to show a wide angle of view with the above photograph's area shown in yellow.



**Photographic Simulation of Proposed Alignment  
Key Observation Point 8-52  
FASC Route**

Boardman to Hemingway  
 500-kV Transmission Project  
 Idaho, Oregon, Washington  
 November 2016

**Figure: R-4-10**



**ATTACHMENT R-5  
EXCERPTS FROM MANAGEMENT PLANS**

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## Contents

- 1.0 Inventory of Management Plans
- 2.0 Excerpts of Management Plans
  - 2.1 County Comprehensive Plans
    - 2.1.1 Union County Land Use Plan Excerpts
    - 2.1.2 Baker County Comprehensive Plan and Inventory Report Excerpts
  - 2.2 City Comprehensive Plans
    - 2.2.1 City of Pendleton Comprehensive Plan Excerpts
  - 2.3 Federal Management Plans
    - 2.3.1 BLM Vale District, Baker Resource Management Plan (1989) Excerpts
    - 2.3.2 BLM Vale District, Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (2002) Excerpts
    - 2.3.3 South Fork Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment (1992)
    - 2.3.4 Powder River Final Management Plan / Environmental Assessment (1994) Excerpts
    - 2.3.5 BLM Boise District, Owyhee Resource Management Plan (1999) Excerpts
    - 2.3.6 BLM Boise District, Cascade Resource Management Plan (1987) Excerpts
    - 2.3.7 USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1990) Excerpts
    - 2.3.8 BOR Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan (1994) Excerpts

## 1.0 Inventory of Management Plans

The following table provides a listing of all local, state, tribal and federal management plans that were considered in identifying important scenic resources, and indicates whether a copy of excerpted content from each management plan has been included.

This attachment does not include copies of excerpts from numerous plans that were reviewed because those plans do not identify important scenic resources within the analysis area. Plans that were reviewed but for which excerpts are not included fall within three general categories: 1) the plan does not include any discussion of scenic resources or values; 2) the plan discusses scenic values but does not identify specific scenic resources; or 3) the plan identifies specific scenic resources that are not located within the Project analysis area. Additional discussion about each plan is found in Section 3 of Exhibit R.

<b>Management Plan</b>	<b>Copy Included (y/n)</b>
<b>Local Land Use Plans</b>	
<b>County Comprehensive Plans</b>	
Morrow County Comprehensive Plan	No
Gilliam County Comprehensive Plan	No
Umatilla County Comprehensive Plan	No
Union County Land Use Plan	Yes
Baker County Comprehensive Plan and Inventory Report	Yes
Malheur County Comprehensive Plan	No
Owyhee County Comprehensive Plan	No
Canyon County Comprehensive Plan	No
Washington County Comprehensive Plan	No
Klickitat County Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Master Plan	No
Benton County Comprehensive Plan	No
<b>City Comprehensive Plans</b>	
City of Boardman Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Irrigon Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Ione Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Umatilla Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Hermiston Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Stanfield Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Pilot Rock Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Pendleton Comprehensive Plan	Yes
City of La Grande Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Island City Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Union Land Use Plan	No
City of North Powder Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Haines Comprehensive Land Use Plan	No
City of Baker City Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Huntington Comprehensive Land Use Plan	No
City of Vale Comprehensive Plan	No
City of Adrian Comprehensive Plan	No
<b>State Management Plans</b>	
Columbia Basin Wildlife Areas Management Plan	No
Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area Management Plan	No



<b>Management Plan</b>	<b>Copy Included (y/n)</b>
Elkhorn Wildlife Area Management Plan	No
State Scenic Byway Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan</li> <li>• Journey Through Time State Scenic Byway Management Plan</li> <li>• Blue Mountain National Scenic Byway Interpretive Management Plan</li> <li>• Elkhorn Drive National Forest Scenic Byway Visitor Services and management Plan</li> </ul>	No
<b>Tribal Management Plans</b>	
Comprehensive Plan for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)	No
<b>Federal Management Plans</b>	
BLM Vale District, Baker Resource Management Plan (1989)	Yes
BLM Vale District, Oregon National Historic Trail Management Plan (1989)	Yes
BLM South Fork Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment (1992)	Yes
BLM Powder River Final Management Plan / Environmental Assessment (1994)	Yes
BLM Vale District, Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (2002)	Yes
BLM Boise District, Owyhee Resource Management Plan (1999)	Yes
BLM Boise District, Cascade Resource Management Plan (1987)	Yes
BLM Spokane Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (1987)	No
USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1990)	Yes
USFS Umatilla National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1990)	No
DOD Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) for the Naval Weapons Training Facility, Boardman (2010)	No
BOR Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan (1994)	Yes
Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (2007)	No

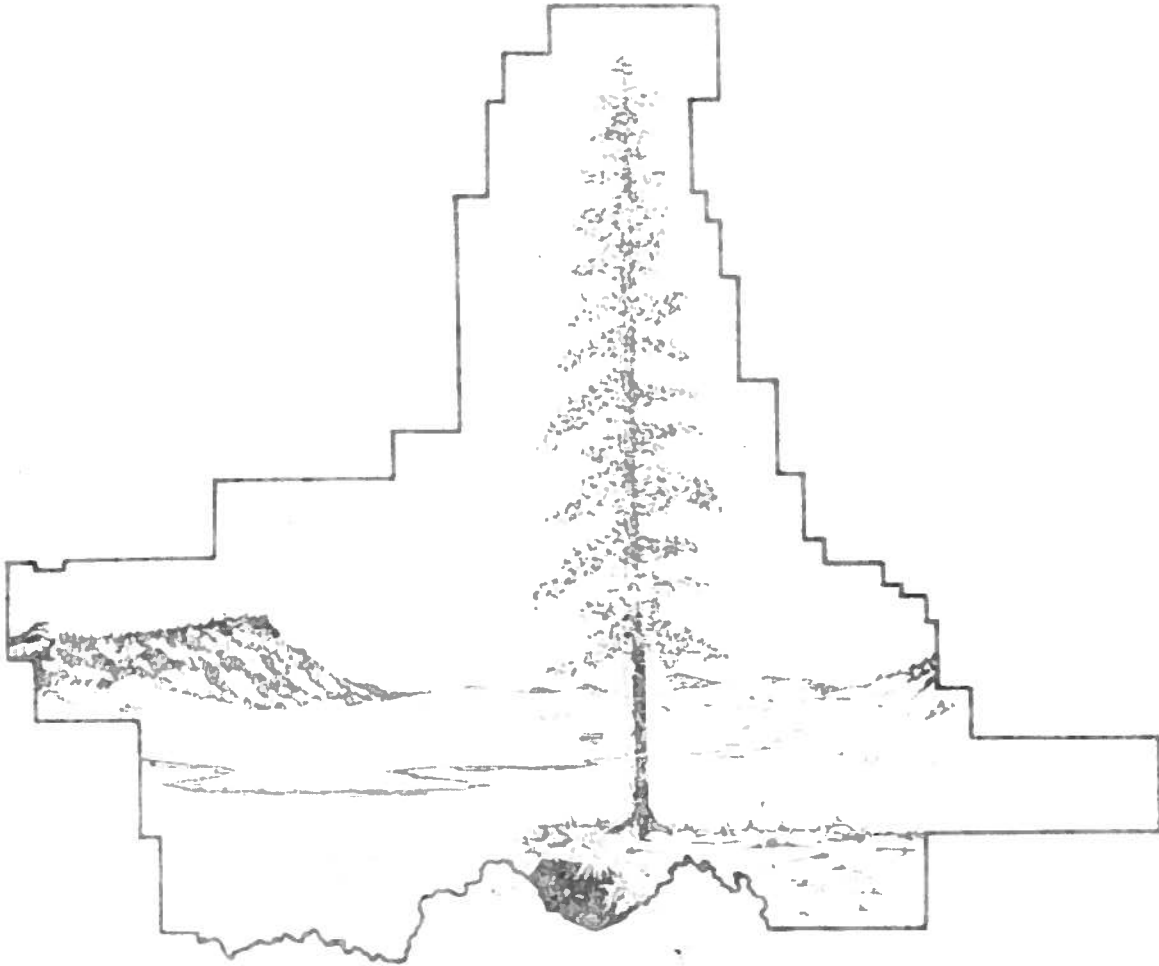
## **2.0 Excerpts of Management Plans**

### **2.1 County Comprehensive Plans**

#### **2.1.1 *Union County Land Use Plan Excerpts***

# LAND USE PLAN UNION COUNTY, OREGON

APRIL, 1979



Assistance provided by Local Advisory Committees including the Cities of Cove, Elgin, Imbler, Island City, La Grande, North Powder, Summerville and Union.

**Prepared by Lynn D. Steiger and Associates, Incorporated**

The preparation of this report was financed in part through an Oregon State Land Conservation and Development Commission planning assistance grant, in part by the Blue Mountain Intergovernmental Council, and in part by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 as amended.

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## LAND USE PLAN

The Plan maps of the County and of each respective planning region are included in this section, in addition to preface, interpretation, Plan policy and Plan recommendation subsections. Respective City Plan maps and urban growth boundaries are located in Appendix B.

The Preface outlines those findings which serve as the basis of the Plan Recommendations.

The Plan Interpretation defines what is meant by each Plan classification, and provides a more detailed description than can be interpreted from the Plan map itself.

The Plan maps depict the various plan classifications. Boundary delineations are general locations, and are subject to governing body determination of specific alignment and slight interpretative adjustments, provided the intent of the boundary is not altered. The Plan map and the Plan policies together comprise the legally-binding portion of the Plan.

Plan policies are statements intended to supplement the Plan map, and to be used as guidelines by both private and public sectors in interpreting the Plan and for other land use planning decisions. Again, such policy statements have the same level of legality or importance as the Plan map itself. Any planning decisions knowingly made contrary to the policies should be supported with findings justifying such actions. Policies may serve as the basis of appealing a planning decision.

Plan recommendations are recommendatory rather than statutory, and are intended as suggested measures to assist in implementation of the Plan.

PREFACE. The following comments have been included to acquaint the reader with some of the findings and deductions upon which the Plan recommendations have been developed that:

1. One of the primary concerns in Plan development was that agricultural and forest lands are being diminished.
2. The economic base of Union County will continue to be primarily agriculture, forestry, recreation and related industries.
3. Conservation of water quality and quantity is of prime importance to the future development of Union County.
4. Buffer or transitional uses need to be encouraged to assure compatibility of uses.



5. Productive capability of agricultural and forest lands is of utmost importance to the County.
6. The natural beauty of Union County is worthy of preservation and should be preserved consistent with the stated purposes of this Plan.
7. The potential for recreation development in Union County is great.
8. Development of non-farm residences in rural areas has increased expenditures for a wide variety of public services (roads, schools, fire protection, etc.), other expenses (postal, phone, electricity, etc.) and diminishes open space values.
9. Outlying non-farm residences have resulted in large quantities of gasoline being consumed (energy use), in addition to increased service and related costs. Increased commuting has also increased traffic hazards and demand for additional road improvements. The County's capability for making such improvements has diminished, however, because of decreased revenues and increased costs.
10. Enrollment in the Imbler School District has been increasing at an unanticipated rate. (See Appendix D) Recently expanded capacity has been exhausted by the 14% per year increase. The Elgin School District is near capacity and any substantial influx of students there will likely result in overcrowding and create a need for expansion. Enrollment in the La Grande District has been dropping over the last few years, and in Cove, North Powder, and Union pupil counts have remained nearly constant.
11. Location of the many new non-farm residences in farm areas has interfered with normal farming practices, such as spraying, burning, etc.; and has increased noxious weeds, road maintenance costs, and fire hazards, and adversely affected both irrigation and domestic water supplies, disrupted life styles, and, in general has not been a desirable use of the land.
12. Although the Plan reduces the acreage classified for 10-acre minimum lot size, areas indicated for smaller, "rural residential" acreages have been provided in locations adjacent or in close proximity to cities. This has intended to accommodate demands for rural living at the least public cost.

9. That forest or grazing lands may include parks, natural preserves, archeological, geological, biological or botanical sites; habitat for threatened or endangered species or other uses of a significant nature, providing such land is not removed from commercial timber production or grazing until the economic consequences of such have been determined.
10. That non-forest related development in and around timbered areas will not limit timber production, harvest, haul out, slash disposal, road construction, scarification, fertilization, pest or disease control or other timber management operations.

## ***Protect our County's aggregate and other resources***

### V. Resources

#### A. State Planning Goal

To conserve open space and protect natural, cultural, historical and scenic resources.

#### B. Plan Policies

1. That soils characteristics, crop productivity, grazing, wildlife habitat, economics, and other similar values will be taken into account in determining whether land should be maintained in an undeveloped state or converted to urban uses.
2. That the following concerns will be taken into account in protecting area visual attractiveness:
  - a. Maintaining vegetative cover wherever practical.
  - b. Using vegetation or other site obscuring methods of screening unsightly uses.
  - c. Minimizing number and size of signs.
  - d. Siting developments to be compatible with surrounding area uses, and to recognize the natural characteristics of the location.

3. That potential geothermal, hydroelectric and irrigation resources will be protected from encroachments which may limit development of those resources at some future time.
4. That the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's Management Plan, and the Oregon Forest Practices Act will be used as guides to manage and protect natural resources.
5. That parks, golf courses, campgrounds and similar public and private open space facilities will be developed where demand exists and where natural resources are not unduly diminished or damaged.
6. That development will maintain or enhance attractiveness of the area and not degrade resources.
7. That sites or structures that have local, regional, statewide, or national historical or cultural significance will be protected to the extent practical.
8. That quarried mineral and aggregate resources will have the higher use priority where their removal is compatible with present uses, and that incompatible uses will be discouraged from encroaching upon these resources.
9. That river gravel will not be removed from active streams or rivers except for flood hazard reduction.
10. That Union County will oppose inclusion of any river or stream in the County into the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Program unless studies of such show favorable benefits to the County.
11. That when economically practical the lands surrounding the wildlife management areas should be managed so as not to interfere or create conflict with the management activities.
12. That ecological and scientific natural areas such as the Hot Lake and Ladd Marsh vicinities will be protected for their resource importance, and be utilized for those purposes which best recognize their unique values.

- E. That an official copy of the Plan be filed with the County Recorder and similar copies be available for review in the Planning Department and with each City Recorder.

III. Agriculture Land. It is recommended:

- A. That the amount of land designated for 10-acre Agriculture Zoning be minimized, and that 40-acre (or larger) zoning be adopted for areas designated on Plan maps for timber/grazing and agriculture/timber/grazing.
- B. That zoning ordinance changes be made to provide rural living opportunities primarily in close proximity to urban areas without diminishing productive agriculture lands, and providing a transition between urban and intensive agricultural uses.
- C. That zoning revisions be made to address the need to provide the same protection to highly productive timber and grazing areas as is afforded productive agricultural lands, e.g., the EA zoning could be expanded to EA/ETG (Exclusive Timber/Grazing).

IV. Forest Land. It is recommended:

- A. That the County work with the US Forest Service, State Forestry Department, Extension Service and private industry to insure revegetation of those lands capable of producing commercial timber, including those marginal agricultural lands no longer intensively farmed.
- B. That the County assemble and maintain updated inventory information related to timber productivity, harvest, etc.
- C. That permanent residential development be prohibited in Plan designated timberlands where there is virtually no fire protection or where residential development might likely increase fire hazards to timberlands.
- D. That additional public land withdrawals for wilderness preservation be limited to those lands that have minimal economic value to county communities and that a full economic analysis be made as a part of any future wilderness proposal.

V. Open Spaces, Scenic and Historical Areas, and Natural Resources.

It is recommended:

- A. That the County continue to encourage the study of geothermal, solar, wind, hydroelectric and groundwater resources.
- B. That ordinance provisions be developed according to Federal laws of Historic Preservation to insure recognition and protection of historical and cultural locations and structures, and protection of significant views and sites.
- C. That a program be pursued to provide tax incentives or other means of preserving historical and cultural sites and structures.
- D. That additional research be undertaken to determine specific location of aggregate and that mapping be prepared to indicate where silt and/or gravel buildup may likely need to be removed as a road hazard reduction measure.
- E. That zoning provisions be developed for both removal and processing of mineral and aggregate resources, and that the County develop standards for reclamation of such sites after their use.

VI. Air, Water and Land Resource Quality. It is recommended:

- A. That Union County's first priority for use of water resources be domestic and the production of food, fiber, and energy. Other multi-uses would be a second priority.
- B. That ordinances be developed to require that public hearings be held when considering uses which may adversely affect resource quality and to insure revegetation of land where land alterations have removed existing vegetation.
- C. That all units of local government work closely with the Bureau of Reclamation and related agencies in their water monitoring programs.
- D. That the County consider developing carrying capacities for resources and include such provisions in zoning and/or subdivision regulations.

VII. Areas Subject to Natural Hazards and Disasters.

It is recommended:

- A. That known levels of flooding be documented and/or monumented.

## APPENDIX J

### Scenic Areas

Several areas in the County have been considered by either State or Federal agencies for inclusion into their respective scenic programs. The only two areas actually designated are shown on the Plan Map as the Blue Mountain Forest Wayside and the Minam River, both designated by the Oregon Transportation Commission.

The Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is a corridor of land approximately one-half mile wide west of La Grande, along Interstate 80N. The purpose of this corridor is to preserve the scenic character of this portion of the Grande Ronde River and provide a rest area for travelers.

The entire Minam River from Minam Lake downstream a distance of approximately 45 miles to its confluence with the Wallowa River is included in the Oregon Scenic Waterways System. Under Oregon Transportation Commission "Scenic Waterways Rules and Regulations", the river is divided into two classifications. The segment of the river from Minam Lake downstream approximately 37 miles to the river's intersection with the Willamette Base Line is administered as a Natural River Area. This classification recognizes and provides for the preservation of the unroaded condition and the natural, wild and primitive conditions of the river and the adjacent lands within one-fourth mile of the bank.

The segment of the river from the Willamette Base Line downstream to its confluence with the Wallowa River is administered as an Accessible Natural River Area; providing for the maintenance of the essentially primitive scenic character of the area and existing road, but restricting future road extension or improvement.

Various segments of the Grande Ronde River within the County are still under study by the Oregon Department of Transportation to identify which portions, if any, might also have potential for inclusion into the Oregon Scenic Waterways System.

Separate from the Oregon Scenic Waterways Act, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 provides for the establishment of a federal policy protecting the free-flowing nature of rivers and their wild, scenic and recreational values. The Grande Ronde River from its confluence with the Snake River to the junction with the Wallowa River and the entire Minam River are presently under study for possible inclusion into this program.



LAND USE PLAN SUPPLEMENT

GOAL 5 RESOURCES

Prepared to meet  
the LCDC GOAL 5 Administrative Rule  
Adopted Since Original 1979 Plan  
Submittal by Union County  
JUNE 1984

June 13, 1984

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in the County's computer and at ENSC.

Due to the large lot sizes in the County no conflicts with resource utilization is anticipated, therefore the County has not pursued or adopted solar easement provision to its Zoning Ordinance. (2A)

June 13, 1994

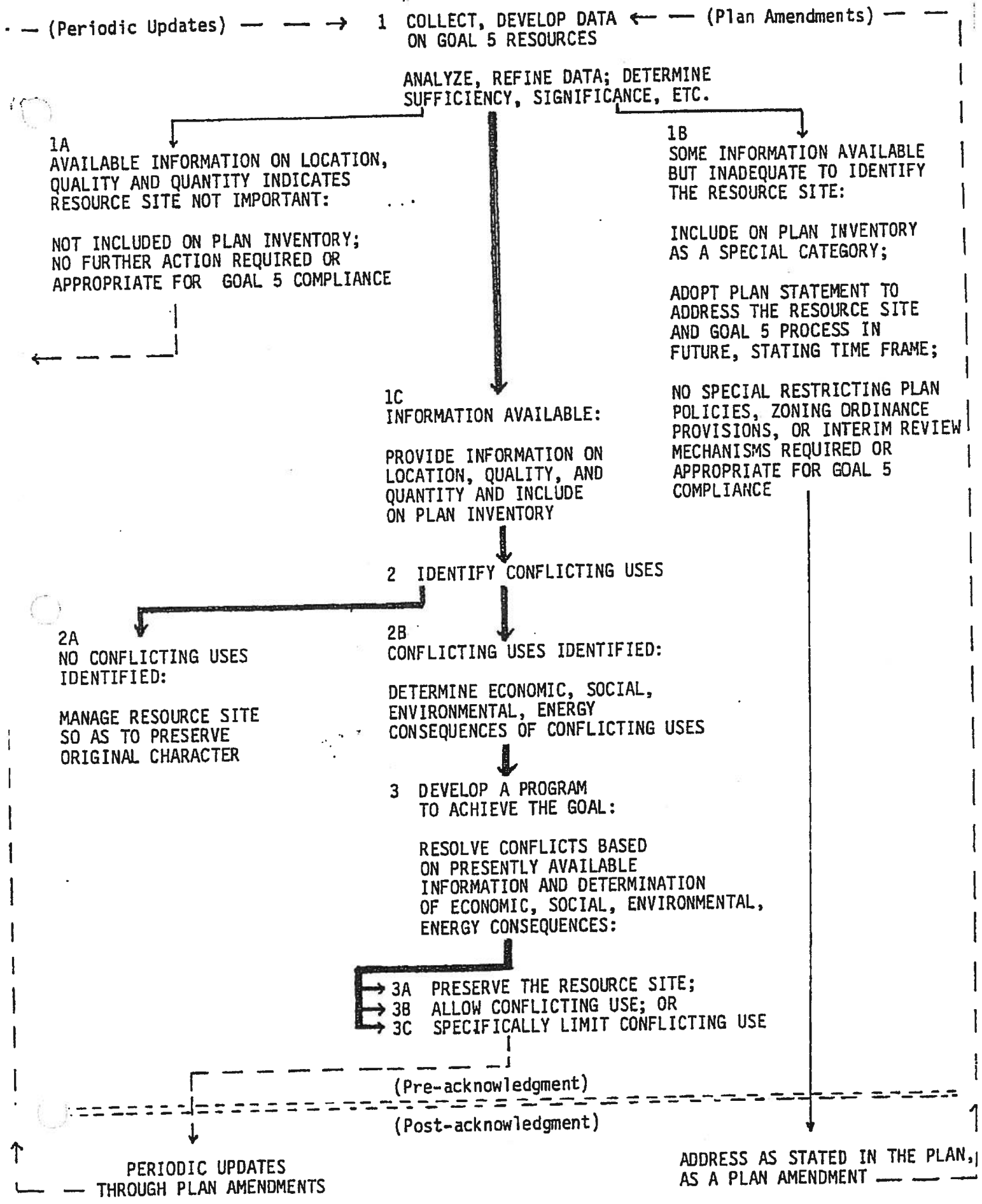
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## IX. OUTSTANDING SCENIC VIEWS AND SITES

Outstanding scenic views and sites are indigenous to Union County. Two specific sites are given special consideration by the Oregon Department of Transportation and are described on page 99 of the Land Use Plan - April 1979. The Blue Mountain Forest Wayside is adjacent to I-84 and in state ownership. The majority of the Minam River drainage is in federal ownership and protected under the Oregon Scenic Waterways Program. Therefore no conflicting uses are anticipated. (2A)

June 13, 1984

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**2.1.2 Baker County Comprehensive Plan and Inventory Report Excerpts**



1993

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UNIVERSITY OF  
JUL 26 1993  
OREGON LIBRARY

**BAKER COUNTY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**1993**

**BAKER COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

**ORDINANCE 83-2**

Originally Adopted  
March 9, 1983

Amended by Ordinances:

84-1, 85-1, 85-2, 85-7  
85-8, 85-10, 86-1, 86-2  
88-1, 89-1 and 89-2

Acknowledged: April 24, 1986

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V. OPEN SPACE, SCENIC AND HISTORIC AREAS, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.

A. Findings: Based upon the referenced documents and/or knowledgeable resource people, the County governing body finds that:

1. Some of the resources identified by this goal have been inventoried and analyzed according to the Goal 5 Administrative Rule (ORS 660-16-000). However it is recognized by the County that in some instances a more detailed and conclusive inventory must be done. Such an inventory shall be provided at periodic updates to this Plan.
2. Conflicting or potentially conflicting uses of land exist in the County, sometimes involving the resources of this goal one with another; sometimes involving Goal 5 resources with land uses addressed by other goals.
3. Economic diversification and improvement in the County will require the development and utilization of all natural resources.
4. Coordination, cooperation, and development of natural resources, properly executed, will have acceptable environmental consequences.
5. "Land needed or desirable for open space" includes agricultural and forest lands (public and private); public parks and campgrounds; lakes, streams and reservoirs; and other special purpose lands such as wilderness areas, recreation areas and wildlife areas.

Open space, as such, is not a significant issue or problem in Baker County. By staff computation, Baker County residents have in excess of 100 acres of open space per capita. Open space shall be addressed and accommodated by the application of the related aspects of other land use goals: agricultural and forest lands; air, land and water resources quality; and recreational needs.

6. "MINERAL AND AGGREGATE RESOURCES" include any naturally occurring inorganic mineral of economic quality and quantity, including such minerals of organic derivation.
  - a. Maps prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) displayed public/private ownership patterns including mineral resource ownership are used in the Baker County Planning Office to

PROPOSED NATURAL AREA PROTECTIVE MEASURE

The definition of a natural area, according to Goal V:

"Natural area--includes land and water that has substantially retained its natural character and land and water that, although altered in in character, is important as habitats for plant, animal or marine life, for the study of its natural historical, scientific or paleontological features, or for the appreciation of its natural features." (Goal 5, LCDC Statewide Goals and Guidelines)

Sites which are designated as natural areas in Baker County require special attention especially if they are not duplicated by sites on federal land which include similar natural area resources. Natural area preservation depends on the voluntary cooperation of landowners, but also involves the efforts of conservation interests and the control of County government. Opportunities for outright purchase, conservation easements, purchase of development rights and other agreements between landowners and conservation groups are frequently lost. The County's role in protecting natural area resources is to ensure that such opportunities are not lost through a lack of communication. A landowner whose land includes a significant natural area will be required to notify the County 30 days in advance of a change in land use which may affect the quality of the resource. A state agency, either the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and/or the State Natural Heritage Advisory Council, along with the general public, will then be notified by the County of a hearing to be held regarding the proposed change. If, during the hearing, it is determined by the County that the integrity of the significant resource is indeed threatened, the County must reach a decision whether to allow, allow with conditions, or disallow the proposed change based on clear and objective criteria to be found in the Zoning Ordinance.

10. "Scenic Views and Sites" are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation and mapped on Plate 10 in the The Technical Information and Inventory Data for Land Use Planning in Baker County. The County in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000.

who can photograph or in other ways record the resource before its destruction or modification, thereby maintaining a more complete record of the County's historical and cultural diversity. The local review board may find the resource of enough significance to warrant a public hearing.

15. "Potential and approved Oregon recreation trails" have not been inventoried in Baker County other than the TransAmerica Bikeway as mapped on Plate 3 in the Technical Information and Inventory Data for Land Use Planning in Baker County. It is a 2A resource (OAR 660-16-000).
16. "Potential and approved federal wild and scenic waterways and state scenic waterways" have not been identified or inventoried in Baker County.

B. Conclusions and Policies: Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources: The County Governing body declares that a program for conserving and protecting the resources of this land use goal shall include:

1. The appropriate planning and regulation of land for compatible primary uses. For purposes of ORS 496.012, "primary uses" are those uses permitted outright under the local Zoning Ordinance.
2. The use of land exchanges, fee acquisition of land, conservation easements or tax incentives where appropriate and necessary to conserve and protect a natural resource.
3. The support of air, land and water quality laws where appropriate and necessary to protect a natural resource.
4. The protection of potential sites for energy production, reservoirs, mineral resources and other particular resource sites against irreversible loss.
5. The implementation of policy to expand existing commercial gravel pits in preference to creating new gravel pits.
6. Mining upon patented mining claims within the Mineral Extraction Zone shall be an outright use.
7. Mining of previously mined land within the Sumpter Valley Overlay Zone shall be an outright use.

8. Gravel pits inventoried as valuable resources within a residential zone shall be protected by the application of a Surface Mining Zone (SMZ).
9. The County continues to commend the voluntary spirit of resource conservation and protection practiced by County landowners. The notification policy and public hearing process are intended to provide notice to the public sector of a pending action affecting a cultural, historic or natural resource. The County shall require the preservation of a resource when it is found to be in the public's best interest to do so.
10. The County will encourage training for its Planning Commission and staff in historic and cultural preservation.
11. The County shall encourage and support the coordination of Museum Commissions, Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Historical Societies, Libraries, Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Historic Baker City, Inc., local governments and the media regarding the preservation of our community's natural heritage.
12. Natural Areas designated as 2A sites are to be protected to ensure the preservation of the resource site.
13. Natural Areas identified as 3C sites shall be reviewed against criteria found in the Zoning Ordinance to allow conflicting uses but in a limited way so as to protect the resource site to some desired extent.
14. Customary resource uses (i.e., grazing and tillage practices) are not considered to be conflicts requiring regulation in Baker County's program to achieve Natural Area protection.
15. The County shall encourage, as appropriate, the signing of properties to recognize Natural Areas that are significant and for which protection is either totally or partially required.
16. The County shall develop programs appropriate to protect identified significant wildlife habitat, after considering the economic, social, environmental and energy consequences of conflicts between wildlife habitat and other uses of these areas.

- 17a. Irrigated agricultural land shall not be identified on "Elk Winter Habitat Protection" program maps.
- 17b. The County believes that wildlife management activities for existing elk herds should be planned for higher elevation, nonirrigated pastureland and timber grazing lands.
18. The County, in coordination with ODFW shall, based on the best information presently available from agencies, landowners and concerned citizens, identify areas suitable for elk winter habitat, consistently with Policy 17A, on its Elk Winter Habitat Goal 5 Protection Program Maps. The County hereby commits itself to conducting such a review for each area of elk winter habitat in the County, with such review and revision process to include public hearings and work sessions before the Planning Commission and County Court, involving affected landowners, citizens and agencies. Said initial review shall be completed within one year of acknowledgment of the County's Comprehensive Plan, and shall result in a complete and accurate set of program maps for elk habitat protection for the County Plan which shall be the basis of further program decisions.
19. The County believes that where, due to unique topography and existing development of irrigated agriculture, there is not enough dry pastureland and timbered grazing land at suitable elevations to provide adequate winter habitat for existing elk herds (e.g., at the base of the Elkhorn Mountains in Baker Valley), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife either should institute a program of winter feeding stations for elk, located in the dry pastureland or timbered grazing areas, so as to prevent elk from descending onto and causing damage to the irrigated agricultural lands, or should use less intrusive management techniques, or should reduce its elk management objectives for those areas. The management technique chosen should be the least intrusive technique on uses allowed by the primary zone.
20. Where a program of feeding stations for elk and other big game animals is adopted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the County will cooperate with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife by allowing public and private feeding station use as conditional uses subject to approval criteria in its zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, which include imposing such conditions that

neighboring property will be adequately protected from big game damage through purchase, easement, diversionary fencing, or other suitable means. However, the County will resist ODFW's use of the successful operation of such feeding stations as a basis for increasing its big game management objectives for the area.

21. The County believes that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife should do its utmost to mitigate and to compensate landowners and operators for big game damage to private property in Baker County, with highest priority given to those properties adjacent to, or in the migratory pathway of, big game moving to and from winter feeding stations. Owners and operators of private land suffering big game damage are identified as beneficiaries of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's statutory obligation under ORS 496.012 to be responsive to primary uses of the land.
22. Residential density shall be limited in identified antelope habitat and deer and elk winter habitat to levels which do not conflict with continued use of these areas as antelope habitat or deer or elk winter habitat, through the use of minimum lot sizes and conditional use standards for residences in the resource zoning districts of the Zoning Ordinance.
23. At least every five years the County will conduct a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of these implementation measures in preventing conflicts between big game habitat and other uses of identified significant big game habitat, and will adopt, based upon recommendations of the Wildlife Advisory Committee and findings and conclusions of the County Planning Commission and County Court, any adjustments necessary to ensure the protection of significant big game habitat based on the requirements of Goal 5 and OAR 660, Division 16.
- 23a. Any repeal of the adopted 1985 Elk Winter Habitat Protection Program Maps or inventory maps of Elk Winter Habitat will become effective only upon the adoption of new maps consistent with the post acknowledgment Plan Amendment procedures of ORS 197.610 and OAR 660, Division 18.
24. Baker County encourages the future participation of landowners in both the Riparian Land Tax Incentive Program and the Fish Enhancement Property Tax Rebate Program, which offer tax advantages as well as protection for natural resources.



25. Baker County's adoption and implementation of a Flood Plain Ordinance will provide further protection to riparian areas since construction in flood prone areas will be regulated.
26. For new construction of dwellings, agricultural buildings, commercial structures and new roads accessory to such development, the County will impose setbacks adequate to protect and preserve riparian values.
27. Baker County recognizes the roles played by various state and federal agencies in the protection of our natural resources, including riparian areas, including but not limited to the Division of State Lands, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Forest Protection Act, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.
28. Those resources collectively known as scenic views and sights are identified, after review, as not in known conflict with other land uses and as having no impact areas. The County will promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.
29. Water areas, wetlands, watershed and groundwater resources are often described as the limiting factor in the development of productivity in our region. For this reason, water resources shall receive protection from competing uses through the Goal 5 process.
30. Conversion of industrially-zoned aggregate and mineral sites to new industrial uses shall only be allowed if the aggregate and mineral resource is not jeopardized.
31. When DLCD has returned the Elk Winter Habitat Protection Program Maps to the County, as part of the acknowledgment agreement the County will delete the designation of potential big game wildlife management areas/feeding sites from those maps.

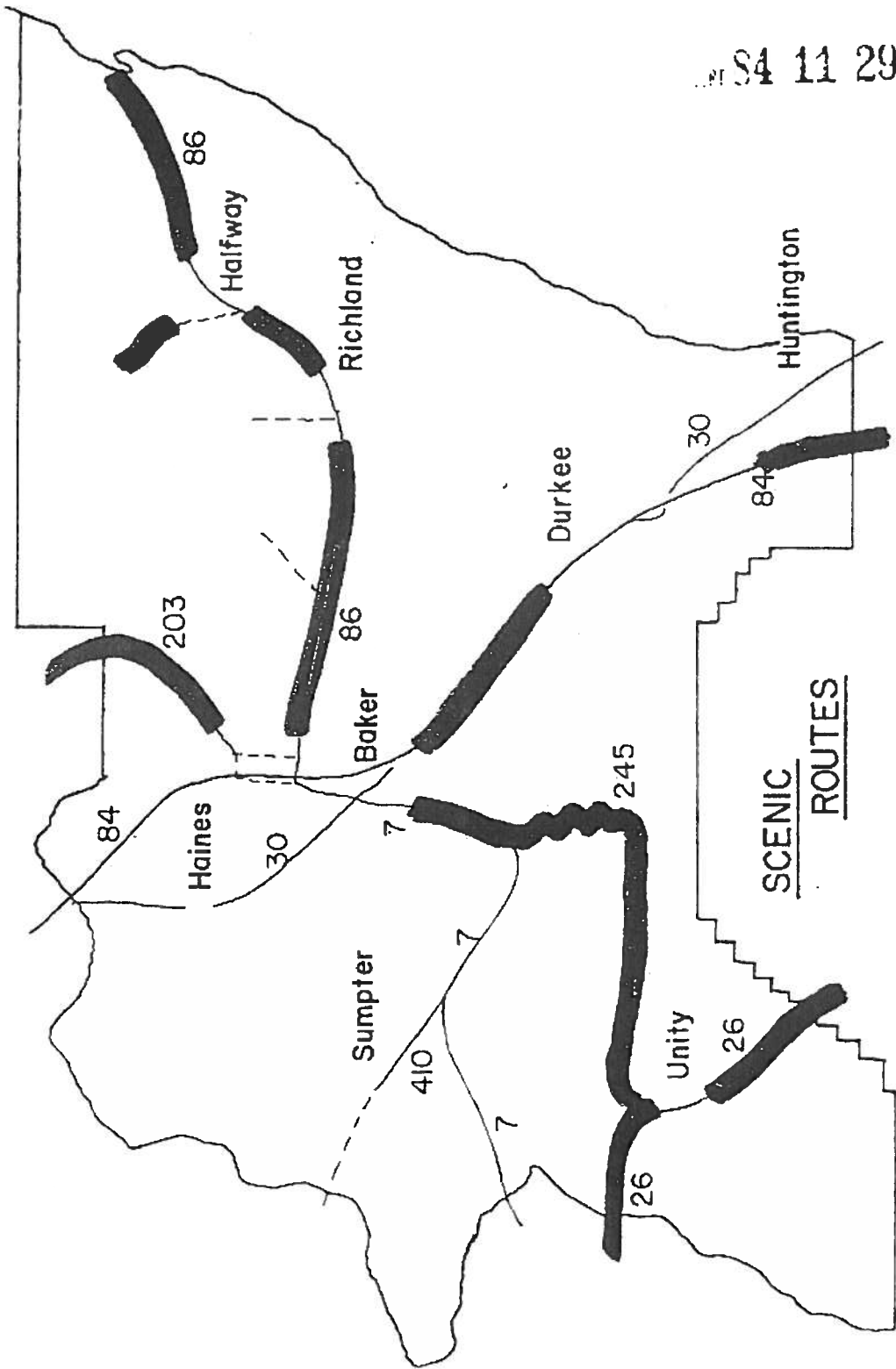


Plate 10

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR BAKER COUNTY

Entered

July 5 2000  
County Court Journal  
By Julia Woods County Clerk  
Charlotte Beck Deputy

IN THE MATTER OF )  
)  
AN ORDINANCE RE-ADOPTING THE )  
BAKER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE )  
LANDUSE PLAN AND DECLARING )  
AN EMERGENCY )

Ordinance No. 2000-04  
Re-Adopting Ord. 83-02

WHEREAS, The Baker County Planning Department has been working for the last three years to codify and re-format the Baker County Comprehensive Landuse Plan in order to make the Plan easier to review and understand and to make future amendments and updates easier to incorporate into the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Baker County Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding the proposed Comprehensive Landuse Plan amendment on April 27th, 2000; and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing the Baker County Planning Commission recommended the Baker County Board of Commissioners approve the proposed amendment to the Baker County Comprehensive Landuse Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Baker County Board of Commissioners held public hearings on May 3rd and May 17th, 2000, and June 7th, 2000 to consider the adoption of the Comprehensive Landuse Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS, the Baker County Board of Commissioners adopted the Comprehensive Landuse Plan amendment proposed in Planning Department file PA-00-01 at the June 7th, 2000 public hearing, subject to modification to remove the sections under Goal 8 regarding destination resorts until such time that the LUBA remand concerning destination resort siting has been resolved; and

WHEREAS, the Baker County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to read and consider the adoption of this Ordinance on July 5th, 2000 in accordance with the procedures in ORS 203.045(4).

NOW THEREFORE, THE BAKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Baker County Board of Commissioners re-adopts the Baker County Comprehensive Landuse Plan as codified and re-formatted and attached hereto.

Section 2. The amendments are incorporated and may, in some cases, replace existing Plan text. Provisions adopted under this Ordinance have precedence over earlier versions of the Plan text.

Section 3. This Ordinance may be cited as the "Baker County Comprehensive Landuse Plan" or "Ordinance 2000-04."

Section 4. This Ordinance is necessary for the health, safety and welfare of the people of Baker County. An emergency is declared to avoid any conflicts with earlier versions of the Plan or the administration thereof, and this Ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

DONE AND DATED July 5, 2000.

**BAKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

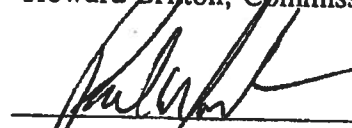
Brian Cole, Chair

AYE

NAY

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Howard Britton, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul York, Commissioner

**GOAL V  
OPEN SPACES, SCENIC AND HISTORIC AREAS  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**OPEN SPACES, SCENIC AND HISTORIC AREAS AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**GOAL:** To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.

**I. OPEN SPACES AND SCENIC AREAS**

**A. State Highway Scenic Routes**

The Oregon State Highway Division has the responsibility for designating scenic areas along State Highways. The designated scenic areas in the County are as follows: (See Plate # 10 of Appendix I)

1. Route U.S. 26 - Highway 5
  - a. From milepoint 199.61 (Baker/Grant County Line) To milepoint 210.60 (Junction Baker/Unity Highway).
  - b. From milepoint 213.11 (.09 miles SE of Unity) To milepoint 222.91 (Baker/Malheur County Line)
2. Route Oregon #245 - Highway 13
  - a. From milepoint 2.46 (Unity Lake Park Entrance) To milepoint 37.03 (Jct. Whitney Highway)
3. Route I-80N - Highway 6
  - a. From milepoint 317.39 (Pleasant Valley Interchange) To milepoint 329.24 (1.81 miles SE Durkee Interchange)
  - b. From milepoint 345.78 (Huntington Interchange) To milepoint 352.00 (Baker/Malheur County Line)
4. Route Oregon #86 - Highway #12
  - a. From milepoint 4.81 (.28 miles E of Sunnyslope Lane) To milepoint 40.64 (Eagle Creek)
  - b. From milepoint 43.03 (.76 miles E of Richland) To milepoint 53.05 (.19 miles E Sage Road)

- c. From milepoint 55.03 (Clear Creek) To milepoint 70.64 (Homestead Road)
- 5. Route Oregon 203 - Highway 340
  - a. From milepoint 22.90 (Baker/Union County Line) To milepoint 31.09 (Salt Creek)
- 6. Route Halfway-Cornucopia - Highway 413
  - a. From milepoint .41 (Cornucopia) To milepoint 5.70 (Pine Creek)

**B. Goal V Open Spaces and Scenic Areas Findings**

- 1. Land needed or desirable for open space" includes agricultural and forest lands (public and private); public parks and campgrounds; lakes, streams and reservoirs; and other special purpose lands such as wilderness areas, recreation areas and wildlife areas.
- 2. "Scenic Views and Sites" are a resource indigenous to Baker County. Of particular significance are those scenic areas identified by the Oregon Department of Transportation and mapped on Plate 10 of Appendix I. The county, in its application of the Goal 5 Administrative Rule, identifies these as 2A resources pursuant to OAR 660-10-000.
- 3. "Potential and approved Oregon recreation trails" have not been inventoried in Baker County other than the TransAmerica Bikeway as mapped on Plate 3 of Appendix I. It is a 2A resource (OAR 660-16-000).
- 4. "Potential and approved federal wild and scenic waterways and state scenic waterways" have not been identified or inventoried in Baker County.

**C. Goal V Open Spaces and Scenic Areas Policies**

- 1. Open space, as such, is not a significant issue or problem in Baker County. By staff computation, Baker County residents have in excess of 100 acres of open space per capita. Open space shall be addressed and accommodated by the application of the related aspects of other land use goals: agricultural and forest lands; air, land and water resources quality; and recreational needs.
- 2. Those resources collectively known as scenic views and sights are identified, after review, as not in known conflict with other land uses and as having no impact areas.



The County will promote land uses designed to conserve the natural splendor of the region.

**D. Sources of Information**

1. Oregon State Highway Division, R.P. Mathew, Outdoor Advertising Supervisor

**II. WILD AND SCENIC WATERWAYS; RECREATION TRAILS**

**A. Potential and Approved Wild and Scenic Waterways**

There are no federal or state approved Wild and Scenic Waterways in the County. At this writing, there are no suggested potential Wild and Scenic Waterways in the County.

**B. Potential and Approved Oregon Recreation Trails**

See Plate #4 of Appendix I for TransAmerica Bikeway. A feasibility study is being conducted by the National Park Service for the Desert National Scenic Trail Project. At this time, it does not appear that the proposed Desert Trail will cross any portion of Baker County.

**C. Sources of Information**

1. U.S. Department of the Interior; Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
2. Oregon State Department of Transportation, Parks and Recreation Branch
3. Oregon Natural Heritage Program, April 1978, Baker County Data Summary

## **2.2 City Comprehensive Plans**

### **2.2.1 City of Pendleton Comprehensive Plan Excerpts**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
CITY OF PENDLETON

CITY COUNCIL

Joe McLaughlin  
Mayor

John Brenne

Jim Eardley

Steve Fairley

Betty McAuslan

Craig McNaught

Larry O'Rourke

Robert Ramig

Nancy Rees

PENDLETON PLANNING COMMISSION

Gary Burnett, Chairman

Dave Thompson, Vice Chairman

Jerry Imsland

Dennis McFarland

Bill Griffith

Ellyn Weeks

Alan Wilcox

CITY STAFF

Jon S. Nelson, City Manager  
Rudy M. Murgo, City Attorney  
Mike Hyde, Director Planning & Building  
Marge James, Planning Commission Secretary  
Denton Sprague, Draftsman

ADOPTED: January 27, 1983  
EFFECTIVE: February 26, 1983  
UPDATED: May 1, 1990

ORDINANCE NO. 3442

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 1990 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF PENDLETON, REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 3249 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

CITY OF PENDLETON ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Plan Adopted. The following documents; copies of which are on file and available for review at the office of the Director of Planning and Building, are hereby adopted as the 1990 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pendleton, Oregon:

- A. Part I, Technical Information and Findings;
- B. Part II, Needs, Objectives, Policies and Programs;
- C. Part III, Bibliography;
- D. Maps I-VI:
  - I. Land Use Plan
  - II. Special Use Areas
  - III. Waterway Use Plan
  - IV. Joint Management Areas
  - V. Manufactured Housing Subdistricts

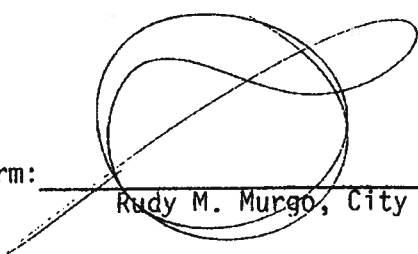
SECTION 2. Former Plan Repealed. Ordinance No. 3249, which adopted the 1983 Comprehensive Plan, is hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. Emergency Clause. Inasmuch as it is necessary to comply with a deadline established by the Department of Land Conservation and Development, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Council and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED by the vote of the Council Members present and approved by the Mayor this 1st day of May, 1990.

APPROVED:   
Mayor

ATTEST:   
City Recorder

Approved as to form:   
Rudy M. Murgu, City Attorney

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supporting documents. The plans, supporting documents and implementation ordinances shall be filed in a public office or other place easily accessible to the public. The plans shall be the basis for specific implementation measures. These measures shall be consistent with and adequate to carry out the plans. Each plan and related implementation measure shall be coordinated with the plans of effected governmental units.

Exceptions:

When, during the application of the statewide goals to plans, it appears that it is not possible to apply the appropriate goal to specific properties or situations, then each proposed exception to a goal shall be set forth during the plan preparation phases and also specifically noted in the notices of public hearing. The notices of hearing shall summarize the issues in an understandable and meaningful manner.

3. Agricultural Lands.

To preserve and maintain agricultural lands.

Agriculture lands shall be preserved and maintained for farm use, consistent with existing and future needs for agricultural products, forest and open space. These lands shall be inventoried and preserved by adopting exclusive farm use zones pursuant to ORS Chapter 215. Such minimum lot sizes as are utilized for any farm use zones shall be appropriate for the continuation of the existing commercial agricultural enterprise within the area.

4. Forest Lands.

To conserve forest lands for forest uses.

Forest land shall be retained for the production of wood fiber and other forest uses. Lands suitable for forest uses shall be inventoried and designated as forest lands. Existing forest land uses shall be protected unless proposed changes are in conformance with the comprehensive plan.

5. Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources.

To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.

Programs shall be provided that will: (1) ensure open space, (2) protect scenic and historic areas and natural resources for future generations, and (3) promote healthy and visually attractive environments in harmony with the natural landscape character.

6. Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality.

To maintain and improve the quality of the air, water, and land resources of the state.

All waste and process discharges from future development, when combined with discharges from existing developments shall not threaten to violate, or violate applicable state or federal environmental quality statutes, rules, and standards. With respect to the air, water, and land resources of the applicable air sheds and river basins described or included in state environmental quality statutes, rules, standards, and implementation plan, such discharges shall not

"open space"; however, it will be needed for the future growth of the community's residential, commercial and industrial uses (see Map 17).

It should be noted that approximately 2.7% of the land inside the city has steep topographical constraints which preclude development and thus will be always open space (See Map 12).

c. Scenic Areas

The City of Pendleton developed in a part of the Umatilla River Valley and has grown onto the adjacent hillsides and into the tributaries' valleys.

Vehicle traffic can approach Pendleton from the north, south, east and west from the surrounding higher plains; thus, the vast natural and agricultural open space is intercepted with an urban community which appears from the outside as an "oasis in the desert."

Conversely, looking outward from the city vistas of the surrounding hillsides, the Blue Mountains to the southeast and the wheatfields to the northwest dominate the community. Careful development in the past has provided housing and development which has maximized the opportunity for the citizens to enjoy such beauty.

The most significant scenic area inside the city limits is the Umatilla River and its tributaries, which are interspersed throughout. These waterways provide the community with a scenic area that contains trees, vegetation, animal habitats and aquatic life. As previously noted, these areas should be protected from incompatible encroachment.

1. Conflicting Uses

The Umatilla River and its tributaries are the most significant scenic area in the city, with water running almost all year (low water in late summer/fall). Any urban use that intrudes into the existing vegetation/trees, requires the removal of landscaping or causes alteration to the banks of levee, may conflict with scenic beauty of the waterway. Like previously cited instances, without a specific land use/development it is impossible to determine the extent of conflict, if any.

2. Consequences

If all the urban uses are allowed unrestricted; a negative social impact would occur at every point where a development removes the natural vegetation with no consideration of the scenic value, with loss of public access and proper integration of man and nature. An environmental loss may occur due to interruptions of the former continuous natural beauty, and economic reduction is possible from the destruction of an attractive area to almost a "water line" imagery.

If all urban use is prohibited, the economic/social environmental/energy consequences would be similar to that as outlined in both the wildlife and fish habitat analysis; i.e. unmarketable land, circuitous traffic movements, blight, etc.

### 3. Management Controls

The management controls (Federal Flood Insurance, Corps of Engineers, and Division of State Lands regulations/permits) outlined in Section A.4.e.3. of this Chapter are applicable to this section as well.

To insure the compatibility of any urban development along the river and its tributaries and to protect, provide accessibility, enhance the scenic values of the waterways, the city needs to have a permit process to review all development within a specific distance of the floodway.

### 2. Man-Made

Opposite of the open spaces that have been created by nature is the land that has been developed as open space as a result of specific urban uses, needs and/or desires of an area's citizenry. Such examples include: School sites, parks and recreation areas, airport facilities and irrigation/flood control areas.

#### a. School Sites

The City of Pendleton is part of State School District 16R. Dispersed within the city limits, there are six elementary schools, one junior high school, and one senior high school. These schools combined occupy 93.18 acres of land which contain the educational buildings, parking areas and open spaces for landscaping and outdoor physical activities. Of the 93 acres of school property, approximately 68 acres are open space: i.e. void of buildings.

Currently, the State Board of Education sets standards for land area required vs. the facility's enrollment capacity which guarantees preserved open space.

#### 1. Conflicting Uses

A public school facility encompasses a large piece of property. Educational facilities are compatible with residential and commercial uses provided there is easy street accessibility, safety for walking students and appropriately designed recreation activities.

Presently, a school can be located in any commercial or residential zoned area by conditional use permit to insure a site's compatibility with surrounding uses, accessibility, pedestrian safety, bus loading/unloading safety, etc. Conflicting uses would be recognized during this review process and measures taken to reduce or eliminate the conflict.

#### 2. Management Controls

The school district currently does not have a Master School Plan which would indicate the approximate location of future facilities/open space needed for the city's future growth. Such a plan needs to be completed to the benefit of both agencies and the taxpayer.

The City needs to continue its requirement for a conditional use permit for all educational facilities (public or private) to assure compatibility of location and student safety and restricting their location to residential and commercially zoned areas.

## **2.3 Federal Management Plans**

### **2.3.1 *BLM Vale District, Baker Resource Management Plan (1989) Excerpts***



**U.S. Department of the interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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Vale, Oregon 97918

Baker Resource Area  
1550 Dewey  
Baker, Oregon 97814

July 1989



## **Record of Decision**

# **Plan**

### **Summary (RPS)**





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## Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

### Management Direction

Nine areas totalling 38,988 acres are designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. A management plan will be prepared for each ACEC which will provide a comprehensive management prescription. Portions of the nationally designated Grande Ronde Wild and Scenic River and Powder Wild and Scenic River are within the boundaries of the Grande Ronde ACEC and Powder River Canyon ACEC, respectively.

**Joseph Creek ONA/ACEC:** Public lands on Joseph Creek (3,360 acres), between Tamarack and Cottonwood Creeks are designated and will be managed as an Outstanding Natural Area/ACEC primarily to protect the natural riparian plant communities of Joseph Creek; and to protect wildlife habitat, high scenic qualities, and outstanding geologic system values for educational and recreational purposes. Natural riparian and upland vegetation in the canyon will be maintained. Cooperation with the Washington Department of Wildlife will continue to maintain and improve wildlife habitat in the Chief Joseph Wildlife Management Area. Wildlife habitat will be managed for deer, elk, bighorn sheep, eagles and other raptors. Aquatic habitat for anadromous fish will be maintained in a natural condition. Recreational use would be limited to fishing, hiking, and observational activities along Joseph Creek. Camping locations will be restricted to protect riparian habitat. Land immediately adjacent to Joseph Creek will be closed to off-road vehicle use (150 acres); remaining lands will be limited to designated roads for off-road vehicle use. A "no surface occupancy" restriction for all gas exploration and development will be applied. Timber harvest will be excluded on 80 acres. Livestock grazing will be restricted through fencing and seasons of use. Adjacent or private lands on Joseph Creek may be acquired to benefit natural riparian and wildlife values.

**Grande Ronde ACEC:** Public lands on the Grande Ronde River (9,715 acres) in Oregon and Washington, and on the Snake River in Washington, are designated and will be managed as an ACEC. Within the ACEC, approximately 2,570 acres of BLM lands are tentatively included within the boundaries of the Grande Ronde Wild and Scenic River. Final boundaries will be developed as part of the Congressionally required river management plan, which will be completed by 1992. The ACEC is managed to promote protection of the area's unique natural, scenic, geologic, ecologic, and cultural resource values; and to protect wildlife habitat and enhance recreation opportunities. Geologic system values of the Goose-necks National Natural Landmark will be protected.

The visual resource will be protected within the viewshed corridor along the rivers; only those uses compatible with maintaining visual resource classifications will be allowed. Habitat for bald eagles, raptors, game and non-game species, and anadromous fish will be maintained or improved in cooperation with federal and state agencies. An ACEC management plan will be developed to protect natural, scenic, cultural and recreational values. Adjacent lands or inholdings may be acquired to enhance wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and recreational opportunities. A "no surface occupancy" restriction will be applied to oil and gas exploration or development. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Commercial timber harvest will be restricted to prescriptions that protect or enhance natural, visual, and cultural values.

**Keating Riparian RNA/ACEC:** BLM lands on Balm, Clover, and Sawmill Creeks (2,173 acres), in the Keating Valley area, are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to protect riparian values and wildlife habitat. To protect and maintain natural riparian ecologic systems for research and educational purposes, a combination of 80 acres of Balm, Clover and Sawmill Creeks within the ACEC will be managed as a Research Natural Area (RNA). Livestock grazing, commercial timber harvest, and camping will be excluded in the RNA. Recreational use in the RNA will be limited to observational activities. A withdrawal from mineral entry will be pursued on 185 acres to protect the RNA. Commercial timber harvest will be restricted in the ACEC to prescriptions that protect or enhance riparian and wildlife values. Riparian habitat and potential Columbian sharp-tailed grouse reintroduction habitat in the ACEC will be maintained or improved through restrictions on livestock grazing (seasons of use, numbers, or fencing). Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails.

**Powder River Canyon ACEC:** Public lands in the Powder River Canyon (5,880 acres), between Thief Valley Reservoir and Highway 203 in the Keating Valley, are designated and will be managed as an ACEC. Within the ACEC, 2,385 acres of BLM land are included in the Powder Wild and Scenic River. The ACEC will be managed to protect raptor habitat, wildlife habitat, cultural resources and to maintain scenic qualities while allowing for compatible recreational uses. Forage and habitat needs for big game, bald eagles, golden eagles and other raptors will be maintained or improved. Incompatible uses, including new road development, within the canyon and adjacent upland will be excluded to protect natural and cultural values. Riparian conditions will be maintained or improved by restricting livestock grazing through seasons of use, numbers, or fencing. A "no surface occupancy" restriction will be applied to mineral leasing and development. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Adjacent lands or inholdings may be acquired to protect identified values.

**Unity Reservoir Bald Eagle Nest Habitat ACEC:** BLM lands on the North Fork of the Burnt River (360 acres), a potential bald eagle nest area, will be managed to protect habitat consistent with the Endangered Species Act and Pacific States Bald Eagle Management Plan. To protect the bald eagle habitat, 200 acres of the area is designated and will be managed as an ACEC. The remaining 160 acres are under a Bureau of Reclamation project withdrawal for Unity Reservoir, and will also be managed to protect bald eagle habitat. Firewood cutting, commercial timber harvest, and major development actions will be excluded. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails and seasonal road closure restrictions will be applied. No new roads will be developed. Seasonal restrictions will be applied to oil and gas exploration and development.

**Hunt Mountain ACEC:** BLM lands on Hunt Mountain (2,230 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to protect and maintain habitat for mountain goats and big game, and to protect habitat for sensitive plant species identified by the Oregon National Heritage Program. Livestock grazing will continue to be excluded. Timber harvest will be restricted to prescriptions that protect wildlife and sensitive plant habitat. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails.

**Oregon Trail ACEC:** Seven parcels of public lands with remnants of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1,495 acres) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to preserve the unique historic resource and visual qualities of these areas. A management plan for preservation, public information and interpretation will be implemented. New uses incompatible with maintaining visual qualities or providing public interpretation will be excluded in a 1/2 mile corridor. No campgrounds will be developed within 1/4 mile of the Oregon Trail in the ACEC. Rights-of-way will avoid the Oregon Trail. Commercial timber harvest is excluded on 5 acres and restricted on 75 acres. Livestock grazing will be excluded on 770 acres. No new road access will be developed. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails. No surface occupancy restrictions will be applied to oil and gas leases and development, no mineral material development will be allowed. A withdrawal from mineral entry under the mining laws will be sought for 721.81 acres of public land for Trail sites at Flagstaff Hill, Straw Ranch, and Echo Meadows. Adjacent lands, or lands in the Oregon Trail geographic unit, may be acquired to protect intact segments of the Oregon National Historic Trail; these lands would be incorporated into the ACEC, and the same special management prescriptions or restrictions will be applied.

**Sheep Mountain ACEC:** BLM lands in the Sheep Mountain area (5,398 acres between Pine Creek and Brownlee Reservoir), including a portion of the Sheep Mountain WSA, are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to protect outstanding scenic qualities, and maintain or improve wildlife and crucial bald eagle winter habitat. Commercial timber harvest will be excluded on 200 acres. Seasonal restrictions for oil and gas exploration and development will be applied. Adjacent lands or inholdings may be acquired to benefit bald eagle habitat. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails.

**Homestead ACEC:** BLM lands on the Snake River Breaks near Homestead (8,537 acres between Pine Creek and Nelson Creek) are designated and will be managed as an ACEC to protect outstanding scenic qualities, and wildlife, bald eagle and sensitive plant habitat. The area will be managed to meet forage and habitat requirements for game and non-game species, as recommended by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Seasonal restrictions will be applied to oil and gas exploration and development. Off-road vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Commercial timber harvest will be excluded on 600 acres.

Evaluate areas identified in the draft Baker RMP/EIS as needing study for special management, to determine if they meet the criteria for ACEC designation.

### Implementation

Management plans for the Grande Ronde ACEC, Joseph Creek ONA/ACEC, and Powder River ACEC will be prepared within four years of completion of the RMP/ROD. Continue implementing management prescriptions and actions for the Oregon Trail ACEC, as addressed in the existing Vale District Oregon National Historic Trail Management Plan.

### Monitoring

ACECs will be monitored for changes in the condition of special resource values to determine if the protection management objectives are being met. Specific monitoring studies and schedules will be developed through the management plans. An interim monitoring program using photo documentation points and biannual examination of each ACEC will be implemented to provide protection against incompatible, inadvertent or unauthorized resource uses within the ACECs.

Management plans will be evaluated every five years to determine if objectives are being met; and will be updated if needed.

Interim protection measures and monitoring schedules would be implemented for study areas that meet ACEC criteria, until formal designation can be addressed.

### support

Management activity plans for each ACEC will be developed in cooperation with public interest groups, resource users, state and federal agencies and organizations, and tribal entities.

Ongoing evaluations and identification of new proposed special management areas will be conducted in cooperation with state and federal agencies and natural heritage programs. Areas with the potential to fill needs for Research Natural Areas, as identified and prioritized in statewide natural heritage programs, would be inventoried and evaluated for special management.

Fire management support will be needed for management of natural fire in meeting resource objectives. Acquisition of legal access to public land will be needed for administrative purposes in wildlife habitat management, and for recreation public access.

Cooperation with state wildlife management agencies and the U.S. Forest Service will be required for plan development, resource protection, implementation of habitat and riparian improvement projects, and habitat and ecosystem monitoring.

### Priority

1. Protect and monitor resources in the nine designated ACECs. Provide interim protection for these resources, until management plans are completed.

A. Monitor, maintain or improve riparian habitat, habitats for federally-listed threatened or endangered species, federal listing candidate species, and National Register District and Oregon Trail properties in ACECs designated for the protection of these values.

B. Monitor, maintain or improve wildlife and fisheries habitat, and sensitive habitat for state threatened or endangered species, in areas designated for the protection of these values.

C. Provide protection of the natural character of BLM segments of Joseph Creek and the Grande Ronde River in Washington pending determination of suitability for National Wild and Scenic River status.

D. Protect the natural character of the BLM segments of the Snake River which have been determined suitable for National Wild and Scenic River designation.

2. Continue implementation of management actions for the Oregon Trail ACEC.

3. Prepare and implement a management plan for the Joseph Creek ONA/ACEC and Grande Ronde ACEC with emphasis on natural riparian and geologic systems and scenic values, recreation, cultural resources, wildlife habitat, and forest management. Determine the suitability of BLM segments of the Grande Ronde River in Washington, and Joseph Creek, for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

4. Prepare and implement a management plan for the Powder River ACEC, emphasizing raptor, fisheries, game and nongame habitat, cultural resources and recreation.

5. Prepare and implement a management plan for the Keating Riparian RNA/ACEC as part of a larger coordinated activity plan for the Keating Valley.

Pursue the proposed withdrawal from mineral entry under the 1872 mining laws on specific lands identified within the Keating Riparian RNA/ACEC.

6. Implement special management actions for the Unity Reservoir Bald Eagle Habitat ACEC in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Reclamation.

7. Prepare a management plan for the Hunt Mountain ACEC.

8. Prepare management plans for the Sheep Mountain ACEC, and Homestead ACEC.

## Visual Resources

Visual resources in the planning area have been classified according to BLM's visual resource management criteria. These criteria include scenic quality, visual sensitivity and viewing distance, and have resulted in four Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications which are shown on Map 5 and listed in Table 10. Each classification defines management objectives and the degree of visual change that will be acceptable within a landscape.

### Visual Resource Management (VRM)

1. Class I-Primarily for ACECs, ONAs, and Wild & Scenic Rivers.

No projects will be allowed within these areas.

2. Class II-Primarily for areas of high scenic quality.

Any project work within a Class II area cannot be visible to a casual visitor from any travel route.

3. Class III-Primarily for areas considered important from an aesthetic view point. Not necessarily outstanding scenery.

Project work can be seen within a Class III area from travel routes. However, projects cannot be a focal point on the landscape.

4. Class IV-Primarily for general scenic landscapes throughout much of BLM.

Project work within a Class IV area can be a focal point on the landscape to the casual visitor.

5. Class V-Primarily for sites requiring reclamation (landfills, timber cuts, mining operational, etc.).

Although no VRM Class I Areas were identified from previous inventories, lands in the McGraw Creek Wilderness Area are managed as VRM Class I lands. Lands within river corridors on the Grande Ronde and Powder Wild and Scenic Rivers will be inventoried and classified appropriately for the protection of high scenic values.

Before the BLM initiates or permits any major surface disturbing activities on public land, an analysis will be completed to determine adverse effects on visual qualities. Activities that will result in significant, long term adverse effects in areas of high visual quality such as the Burnt River, Powder River or Snake River (canyons) shown on Map 5 will not be permitted.



Activities within other areas of high visual quality that may be seen might be permitted if they do not attract attention or leave long term visual changes on the land. Activities in other areas may change the landscape but will be designed to minimize any adverse effect on visual quality.

**Table 1 O-Visual Resource Management Class Inventory**

Class	Acreage	Percent of Planning Area
I	0	0
II	151,711	35
III	75,156	17
IV	202,887	48
Total	429,754	100

### Wilderness Resources

The Bureau's Interim Management Policy for Wilderness Study Areas will continue to guide management in the three WSAs in the planning area: the McGraw Creek WSA, Homestead WSA, and Sheep Mountain WSA. The possibility that these areas may be designated as wilderness will be recognized in all affected land and resource use decisions.

In 1984, 968 acres of the McGraw Creek WSA were designated as Wilderness Area. The McGraw Creek Wilderness Area is presently managed by the U.S. Forest Service under cooperative agreement.

### Paleontological Resources

Paleontological localities will be protected through review of all surface disturbing proposals. Collecting of important vertebrate fossils will be allowed subject to existing restrictions and permitting requirements. Commercial or hobby collection of common fossils will be allowed subject to existing federal regulations.

A regional data review and evaluation of the importance of known paleontological resources will be completed. Inventories for paleontological resources will be conducted in connection with individual project proposals. Important paleontological localities will be patrolled periodically to detect unauthorized uses or determine threats to the resource. Evaluation and protection of paleontological resources will be accomplished through coordination with professional paleontologists and the Oregon State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. Volunteers may be used to assist in monitoring and inventories.

Localities containing vertebrate fossils, and paleontological resources which may provide important scientific information, will receive priority for protection and evaluation; in comparison to common invertebrate or common plant fossil localities which are not ordinarily the focus of protection measures.

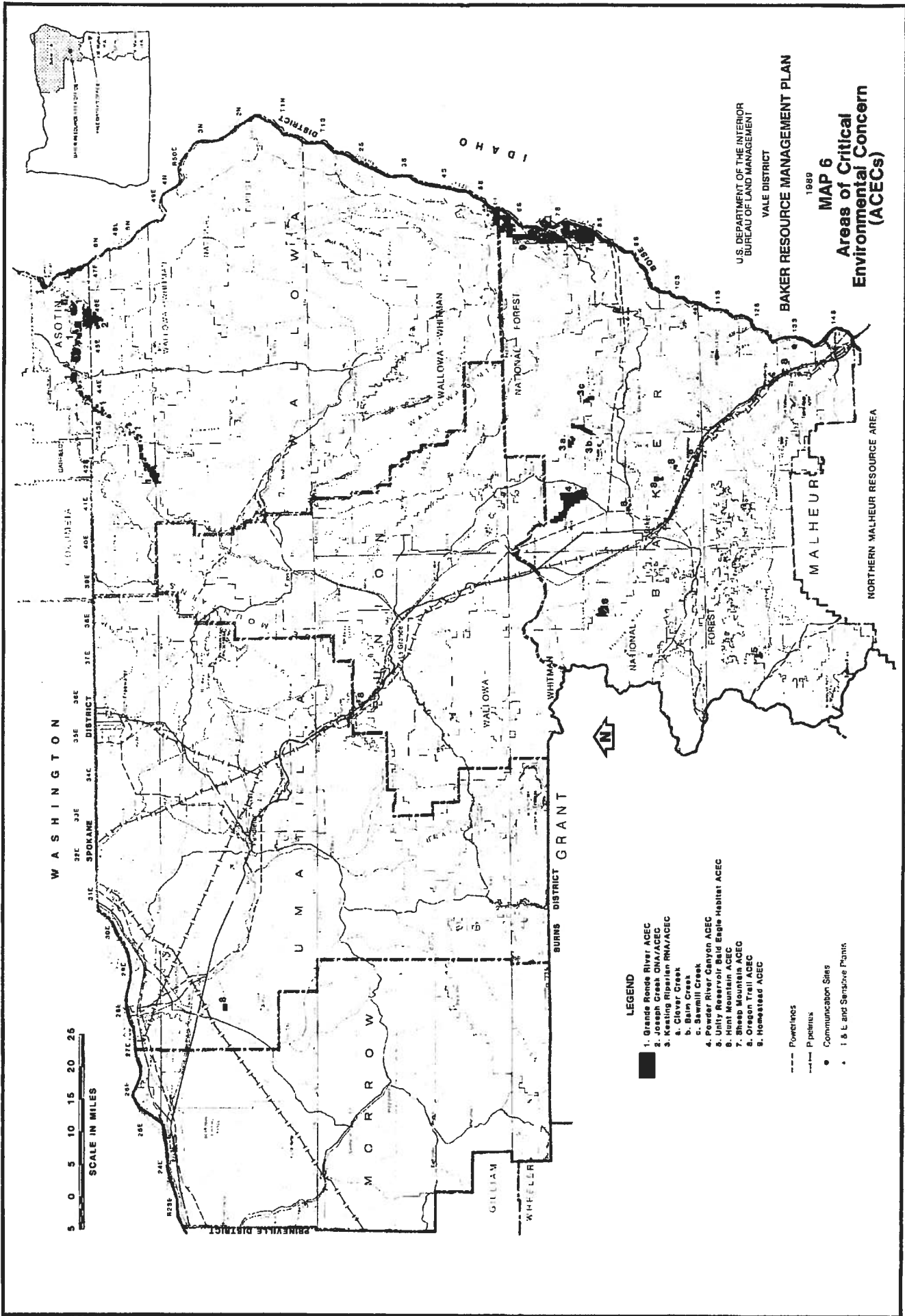
### Grasshopper Control

Cooperation with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will continue in the control of outbreaks of grasshoppers on public lands in the planning area. Site specific environmental analyses will be prepared when needed to identify and evaluate impacts not adequately considered in broader environmental documents, including district-wide environmental assessments and the Rangeland Grasshopper Cooperative Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (1987).

### Noxious Weed Control

Infestations of noxious weeds are known to occur on some public lands in the planning area (refer to Figures 2 and 3). The most common noxious weeds are diffuse, spotted and Russian knapweed, yellow starthistle, Canadian thistle, whitetop and yellow leafy spurge. Control methods will be proposed and subject to site specific environmental analyses consistent with the Record of Decision on BLM's Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program EIS and EIS Supplement. Control methods will not be considered unless the weeds are confined to public lands or control efforts are coordinated with owners of adjoining infested non-public lands. Proper grazing management will be emphasized after control to minimize possible reinfestation. Coordination and cooperation with county weed control officers will continue on a regular basis.





1989  
**MAP 6**  
**Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 VALE DISTRICT

**BAKER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

NORTHERN MALHEUR RESOURCE AREA

**LEGEND**

1. Grande Ronde River ACEC
2. Joseph Creek ONA/ACEC
3. Keating Riparian RMA/ACEC
  - a. Clover Creek
  - b. Balm Creek
  - c. Sawmill Creek
4. Powder River Canyon ACEC
5. Unity Reservoir Bald Eagle Habitat ACEC
6. Hunt Mountain ACEC
7. Sheep Mountain ACEC
8. Oregon Trail ACEC
9. Homestead ACEC

- Powerlines
- Pipelines
- Communication Sites
- I & L and Sensitive Points



**2.3.2 BLM Vale District, Oregon National Historic Trail Management Plan (1989)**



OREGON NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL  
MANAGEMENT PLAN

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Vale District  
Oregon



OREGON NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL  
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Oregon

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Vale District

Prepared by: Mary Oman  
Archaeologist, Baker Resource Area, July 28 1989

Recommended by: Jack D. Albright  
Area Manager, Baker Resource Area, 7-28 1989

Recommended by: R. H. H.  
Area Manager, Malheur Resource Area, 7/31 1989

Approved by: William C. Cochins  
District Manager, Vale District, 7/31 1989



## Landscape and Visual Resource

The Oregon Trail between the Snake River and the Columbia River crosses a variety of settings characterized by modest to dramatic changes in landform, texture, color, water and vegetation. Views from the Trail vary from low rolling hills to steep mountain terrain punctuated by valleys, basins, and narrow creek canyons. The Trail passes through environments characteristic of the transition from the arid sagebrush-bunchgrass plains of the Intermontane West, to the upland river valleys, forested mountains and great rivers that heralded the pioneers' approach to western Oregon. These environments are typical of those encountered by the emigrants over the Trail between South Pass, Wyoming, and the Columbia River.

Today, the route also passes through communities, transportation corridors, and rangelands. Rapid transitions occur from areas dominated by man-made intrusions, to areas with little or no intrusions where the natural environment has a relatively high degree of integrity. In the context of these natural and cultural landscapes, the physical evidence of the Oregon Trail is a unique, historic feature.

The evidence of wagon ruts in a natural environmental setting represents the Oregon Trail landscape as it was experienced by pioneers, and is today associated with the era of emigration and settlement of the American West. Locations on the Oregon Trail which have few contemporary intrusions are particularly notable examples of that landscape encountered by emigrants. These areas should be considered to have a high degree of visual sensitivity; and the foreground and middleground should be managed for protection of the historic landscape as a contributing feature of the Oregon Trail.

Most of the Oregon Trail on BLM land is found in rolling hills covered by sagebrush and grass, with occasional junipers and only a few distinctive features such as rugged rock outcrops. The texture of typical vegetation ranges from smooth grasslands to coarser sagebrush and uneven juniper on hillsides. Spring and early summer provides colorful contrasts with greening slopes and isolated riparian pockets. Adjacent hillsides display spring flowers of many hues. In late summer and fall, however, valley and hillside grasses turn to yellow and tan, flowering forbs retreat, stream flows are greatly reduced, and color contrasts largely disappear.

Current visual resource designations for lands in the management area do not address the high sensitivity and historical associations of the Oregon Trail landscape. Since under the existing classification system the landscapes do not generally possess high scenic values independent of the historic context, BLM lands along the Oregon Trail are presently identified for management as visual resource class III and IV (refer to Appendix E for a description of management objectives by VRM class)).

**2.3.3 BLM Vale District, Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (2002)  
Excerpts**



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

Vale Field Office  
100 Oregon Street  
Vale, Oregon 97918

September 2002



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# Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision



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JRA: The Bretz landslide area and Buckskin Communication Site area will be closed to motorized use except by authorization. OHV use in the Saddle Butte Lava Flow will be limited to designated routes. For the area within the Owyhee NWSR corridor designated as limited to designated routes, the Owyhee Springs area will be extended 1 mile west, and the Three Forks area will be extended about 2 miles northeast. The limited to designated routes designation of Willow Creek WSA will be extended about 6 miles northwest. Certain additional portions of the Campbell, Jackie's Butte Summer, Eiquren, Louse Canyon Community and Star Valley Community grazing allotments will be designated as limited to existing routes.

## Visual Resources

**Objective:** *Manage public land actions and activities in a manner to be consistent with visual resource management (VRM) class objectives.*

**Rationale:** Section 102(8) of FLPMA declares that public land will be managed to protect the quality of scenic values and, where appropriate, to preserve and protect certain public land in its natural condition. NEPA, section 101(b), requires Federal agencies to "assure for all Americans... esthetically pleasing surroundings." Section 102 of NEPA requires agencies to "utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will ensure the integrated use of ... Environmental Design Acts in the planning and decision making" process. Guidelines for the identification of VRM classes on public land are contained in "BLM Manual Handbook 8410-1," Visual Resource Inventory. The establishment of VRM classes on public land is based on an evaluation of the landscapes scenic qualities, public sensitivity toward certain areas (such as certain special management areas, travel corridors and landscape settings), and the location of affected land from primary travel corridors (distance zoning).

**Monitoring:** Use the visual contrast rating system, described in BLM Manual 8400, where appropriate, when assessing proposals for projects on public land. Periodically assess, and as needed revise and implement, measures of visual mitigation/rehabilitation activities conducted for surface disturbing activities (also see Appendix W).

**Table 12.—Visual Resource Management classes of public land (acres) <sup>1</sup> (PSEORMP Table 3-11)**

Resource Area	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
<b>Malheur Resource Area</b>	309,796	144,403	199,078	1,365,457
<b>Jordan Resource Area</b>	998,501	72,823	440,579	1,104,052

<sup>1</sup> Includes FERC acres. The figures in this table represent public lands in the planning area that have been inventoried and given a VRM classification. Changes in acreage figures between the Draft and Final SEORMP are based on updated GIS information and reflect the best available data.



**Management Actions:** Public lands within the planning area will be managed as depicted on Map VRM. Table 12 shows VRM classifications. Visual resources in ACEC's will be managed as displayed in Table 13. WSA's, managed in accordance with current policy, will be managed under VRM Class I, subject to any change to current policy. Upon congressional designation of wilderness, any area congressionally released from further wilderness consideration will be managed under VRM Class II, unless inventory shows it to be Class I. Management of the Main, West Little, and North Fork Owyhee NWSR's and administratively suitable study rivers with a tentative wild classification will be managed as VRM Class I. The corridor of the South Fork Indian Creek study river in MRA will be managed as VRM Class II. Manage as VRM Class III, when needed, those administrative sites, recreation sites, and other specific sites requiring developed support facilities to meet public health and safety requirements or to enhance approved resource based recreation use opportunities.

## **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

**Objective:** *Designate areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC's)/research natural areas (RNA's) where relevance and importance criteria are met and special management attention is required to protect the values identified.*

**Rationale:** Section 202(c)(3) of FLPMA mandates that priority be given to the designation and protection of ACEC's. These areas are defined in section 103(a) as areas where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important values, resources, systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. Further guidance and evaluation criteria are found at 43 CFR Part 1610.7-2.

**Monitoring:** ACEC's will be assessed on a periodic schedule in order to evaluate maintenance and enhancement of relevant and important values and to evaluate effectiveness of management in maintaining those values. Monitoring may include collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. Appendix W contains additional monitoring guidelines.

**Description of management directives:** ACEC's will be designated and managed as outlined in Table 13. The section following the table describes each ACEC and its management. The descriptions are organized by resource area. Maps ACEC-M and ACEC-J show all ACEC's.

**Management common to all ACEC's:** The areas described below will be managed to maintain or enhance their relevant and important values. Management actions will be evaluated for their effects in maintaining or enhancing the ACEC values. These actions may include forest management practices; livestock grazing management (including timing and intensity of grazing); construction of range, wildlife, and recreation projects; prescribed burning; western juniper control practices and other vegetation treatments; management of recreational activities and wild horses; and animal damage control practices. Acquisition of subsurface minerals and private land inholdings through willing seller(s) will be pursued, if applicable, to protect relevant and important values or to improve manageability. Any land acquired from private parties or relinquished by the BOR adjacent to the ACEC may become part of the ACEC if relevant and important values are present, and will be managed following special management described below. For development of locatable minerals, any surface-disturbing actions beyond casual exploration will require a plan of operations if an area is designated as an ACEC. Opportunities to manipulate vegetation will be limited, particularly in ACEC/RNA's, whose purpose is to maintain and promote natural values and processes. Following wildfires, ACEC/RNA's will be allowed to revegetate naturally. Small areas may be seeded with native species, if the relevant and important values of the ACEC/RNA will be enhanced. Nonnative species will not be used in an ACEC/RNA for vegetation rehabilitation. Noxious weeds will be aggressively controlled using integrated weed management methods.

**Table 13.—Specific management for ACEC's/RNA's<sup>1</sup> (PSEORMP Table 3-12)**

	ACEC . acres	Rights- of-way	Off- highway vehicles	Visual resource manage- ment	Plant collecting	Road mainten- ance	Leasable minerals	Locatable minerals	Salable minerals
<b>Malheur Resource Area</b>									
Black Canyon ACEC/RNA	2,644	AV	L	II/III <sup>2</sup>	L	L	O	O	C
Castle Rock ACEC <sup>3</sup>	22,799	AV	L	II	L	O	NSO	W/O <sup>4</sup>	C/O <sup>5</sup>
Coal Mine Basin ACEC/RNA	755	AV	L	II	L	L	NSO	W	C
Dry Creek Gorge ACEC <sup>3</sup>	16,082	AV	L	II	O	L	NSO	W	C
Hammond Hill Sand Hills ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	3,712	AV	L	III	L	L	O	W	C
Honeycombs ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	15,847	AV	L	I	L	L	NSO	W	C
Lake Ridge ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	3,825	AV	L	II	L	L	OWS	O	C
Leslie Gulch ACEC <sup>3</sup>	11,673	E <sup>6</sup>	L	I/II <sup>7</sup>	L	L	NSO	W <sup>8</sup>	C
Mahogany Ridge ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	682	AV	L	II	L	L	NSO	W	C
North Fork Malheur River ACEC <sup>3</sup>	1,810	E	L	I	L	L	NSO	W	C
North Ridge Bully Creek ACEC/RNA	1,569	AV	L	III	L	L	OWS	O	C

Table 13.—Specific management for ACEC's/RNA's<sup>1</sup> (continued)

	ACEC acres	Rights- of-way	Off- highway vehicles	Visual resource manage- ment	Plant collecting	Road mainten- ance	Leasable minerals	Locatable minerals	Saleable minerals
Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC- Keency Pass Segment	3,154	AV	L	II/III <sup>9</sup>	L	L	NSO	W/O <sup>10</sup>	C/O <sup>11</sup>
Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC- Tub Mountain Segment	5,902	AV	L	II	L	L	NSO	W/O <sup>10</sup>	C/O <sup>11</sup>
Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC- Birch Creek Segment	119	AV	L	II	O	O	NSO	W	C
Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC <sup>3</sup>	11,239	AV	L	II	L	O	NSO/O <sup>12</sup>	W/O <sup>13</sup>	C/O <sup>14</sup>
Owyhee Views ACEC <sup>3</sup>	52,506	AV	C/L <sup>15</sup>	I	L	L	NSO	W	C
South Alkali Sand Hills ACEC	3,520	AV	L	III	L	L	NSO	W	C
South Bull Canyon ACEC/RNA	792	AV	L	III	L	L	O	O	C
South Ridge Bully Creek ACEC/RNA	620	AV	L	III	L	L	OWS	O	C
Spring Mountain ACEC/RNA	1,002	AV	C	III	L	NA	O	O	C
Stockade Mountain ACEC/RNA	1,767	AV	L	III	L	L	O	W	C

**Table 13.—Specific management for ACEC's/RNA's<sup>1</sup> (continued)**

	ACEC acres	Rights- of-way	Off- highway vehicles	Visual resource manage- ment	Plant collecting	Road mainten- ance	Leasable minerals	Locatable minerals	Saleable minerals
<b>Jordan Resource Area</b>									
Dry Creek Bench ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	1,616	AV	L	II	L	L	O	O	C
Jordan Craters ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	31,370	E	L	I	L	L	NSO	O	C
Little Whitehorse Creek Exclosure ACEC/RNA <sup>1</sup>	58	E	C	II	L	NA	NSO	W	C
Mendi Gore Playa ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	148	AV	L	II	L	L	NSO	O	C
Palomino Playa ACEC/RNA	642	AV	L	II	L	L	NSO	O	C
Saddle Butte ACEC <sup>3</sup>	7,056	AV	L	II	L	L	O	O	C
Toppin Creek Butte ACEC/RNA <sup>3</sup>	3,996	AV	L	II	L	L	O	O	C

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations:

AV = avoidance area: granting rights-of-way (surface, subsurface, aerial) within the area should be avoided, but rights-of-way may be granted if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated.

C = closed to mineral material removal, and/or OHV use.

E = exclusion area: rights-of-way would not be granted within the area.

L = limited: limitations applicable to OHV use, plant collection, and road maintenance.

OHV use: use would be limited to designated routes. Plant collecting: plant materials, including common species, may be collected by permit only. Road maintenance: maintenance would be limited to the existing roadway; shoulder, barrow/ditch construction would be limited to only that necessary to ensure public safety and serviceability of the road.

NL = not available for mineral leases.

NSO = no surface occupancy. Open to mineral leasing subject to NSO stipulations.

O = open. The activity is allowed in the area. NEPA compliance and clearances for cultural resources and threatened and endangered species required for some activities. Mineral activity is subject to standard stipulations (where appropriate), NEPA compliance, and application of site-specific controls.

OHV = off-highway vehicles.

OVS = open with special stipulations. Open to mineral leasing activities subject to controlled surface use, seasonal timing restrictions, and/or restricted or no uses in avoidance areas (such as riparian areas, live water, areas with special wildlife or plant features, or sensitive viewsheds).

VRM = visual resource management. VRM classes are defined in Appendix H.

W = withdrawal. Areas recommended (to the Secretary of the Interior) for withdrawal from operation of the mining laws (locatable mineral entry).

<sup>2</sup> II/III = Class II in area inventoried as VRM II; VRM III on remainder.

<sup>3</sup> All or a portion of this ACEC falls within an additional or proposed SMA that currently may have restricted management for activities such as OHV, VRM, or mineral management. This

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**Table 13.—Specific management for ACEC's/RNA's<sup>1</sup> (continued)**


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ACEC must meet the minimum management requirements for the SMA (such as WSA, NWSR). Management prescriptions associated with the relevant and important values of the ACEC.

<sup>1</sup> W/O = Withdrawal on 3,280 acres; open on remainder.

<sup>2</sup> C/O = Closed on 3,280 acres; open on remainder.

<sup>3</sup> E = Valid existing right-of-way would remain in effect.

<sup>4</sup> I/II = Areas outside vehicular corridor VRM I; VRM II on remainder.

<sup>5</sup> W = Withdrawal process completed September, 1999 (see text).

<sup>6</sup> II/III = VRM II within corridor; VRM III on remainder.

<sup>7</sup> W/O = Withdrawal within corridor; open on remainder.

<sup>8</sup> C/O = Closed within corridor; open on remainder.

<sup>9</sup> NSO/O = No-surface-occupancy stipulation applies within viewshed; open on remainder.

<sup>10</sup> W/O = Withdrawal within viewshed; open on remainder.

<sup>11</sup> C/O = Closed within viewshed; open on remainder.

<sup>12</sup> C/L = Closed west of reservoir as depicted on OHV maps; limited on remainder.

such as biological control, site-specific spraying, and grubbing by hand, consistent with protection and enhancement of relevant and important values. Where management for a designated ACEC limits motorized and mechanical vehicles to designated roads and trails, the use of these vehicles off designated trails to maintain existing improvements and for livestock handling may be allowed within the ACEC after a case-by-case assessment and determination of need.

Management prescriptions were developed independently of WSA and NWSR considerations. However, IMPLWR will be followed until Congress designates these areas as wilderness or releases them from further wilderness consideration. If the WSA is not Congressionally designated as wilderness, the prescriptions for each designated ACEC will be followed.

### **Malheur Resource Area**

#### ***Black Canyon ACEC/RNA***

**Description and values:** The 2,644 acre Black Canyon ACEC/RNA, located north of the Malheur River above Jonesboro, Oregon, occupies the drainage of Black Canyon, a steep south-facing canyon that drains the uplands directly above the mainstem of the Malheur River. The drainage consists of an intermittent to perennial stream flowing just enough to develop riparian vegetation in the steep canyon. The uplands surrounding the drainage are sparsely vegetated due to the shallow soils and dry south-facing aspect.

The relevant and important values of the ACEC/RNA are the following vegetation cells identified by the ONHP: stiff sagebrush/Sandberg bluegrass, western juniper/big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass, riparian community dominated by coyote willow with Pacific willow, and first to third order stream system in sagebrush zone.

A main east-west road traverses the north end of the ACEC/RNA, and a trail goes to Willow Spring. The ACEC/RNA includes a portion of one livestock grazing allotment.

The ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, moderate potential for the occurrence of both uranium and geothermal resources, and a low potential for the occurrence of all other leasable and locatable minerals. There is no BLM record that mining claims were ever located within the boundaries of the ACEC/RNA, and no demonstrated interest in either precious metals/mercury or uranium; consequently, the potential for development is low. Although the ACEC/RNA is within an area of high heat flow, an absence of nearby hot springs and an apparent lack of shallow (<3,000 feet deep) thermal waters indicate a low potential for development of geothermal resources.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. The ACEC/RNA will be VRM Class II and III as identified during the VRM inventory for visual resources in the planning area. Plant collecting will require a permit. The area will be open to leasable and locatable minerals activities and closed to saleable minerals development. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, existing livestock use will be adjusted using a variety of methods including fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be



Several dirt roads through the area are maintained by the BLM as needed. The ACEC/RNA includes a portion of one livestock grazing allotment.

The ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, a moderate potential for the occurrence of uranium, oil and gas and geothermal resource, but a low potential for the occurrence of all other locatable and leasable minerals.

At present, there are 15 mining claims located in the ACEC/RNA, mainly for gold associated with hot springs. Consequently, there is a high potential for the development of this commodity. As there is no significant domestic uranium industry, and no apparent interest in the commodity, the potential for development is low. Although the ACEC/RNA is within an area of high heat flow, a lack of nearby hot springs and apparent absence of shallow (<3,000 feet deep) sources or thermal water indicate a low potential for development of geothermal resources. Likewise, a lack of nearby oil and gas occurrences and an absence of current production indicate a low potential for oil and gas development.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Plant collecting will require a permit. VRM will be Class III. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. The area will be withdrawn from locatable minerals activities, closed to saleable minerals development, and remain open to leasable minerals activities. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Existing livestock use will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods, including but not limited to fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management actions have partially served to help protect values of the area, the proposed management for minerals, visual resources, OHV, livestock, rights-of-way, and other surface-disturbing activities will provide a more appropriate degree of management and protection for the relevant and important values.

#### ***Honeycombs ACEC/RNA***

**Description and values:** The 15,847-acre Honeycombs ACEC/RNA is located on the east edge of Owyhee Reservoir about 20 miles south of Vale. The ACEC/RNA has high scenic values derived from the unusual geologic structure and colorful desert soils of volcanic origin. Special status plant species and the presence of California bighorn sheep contribute to the value of the area as an ACEC/RNA.

The relevant and important values for the ACEC/RNA include scenery, geologic formations, bighorn sheep and habitat, four special status plant species (sterile milkvetch, Ertter's senecio, grimy ivesia, and Owyhee clover), and big sagebrush/needleandthread grass on cinders plant community which meets a vegetation cell need identified by Oregon Natural Heritage Program (ONHP).

A portion of the Honeycombs WSA (3-77A) comprises 100 percent of the existing ACEC/RNA and 99 percent of the potential addition. This WSA has been recommended suitable by BLM for wilderness designation and is currently managed in accordance with BLM's IMPLWR. Under this direction, surface-disturbing activities requiring reclamation are generally pre-

cluded from a WSA until Congress makes a decision on wilderness designation. The Honeycombs WSA is a component of the existing Owyhee River Complex SRMA.

The ACEC/RNA is located within one livestock grazing allotment. A north-south dirt road is near the eastern boundary and is maintained by BLM for high-clearance and 4-wheel drive vehicles. The Three Fingers HMA for wild horses is also located within and surrounding this ACEC/RNA.

The ACEC/RNA has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, a moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas and geothermal resources, and a low to moderate potential for the occurrence of uranium. It has a low potential for the occurrence of all other locatable and leasable minerals. While there are no mining claims currently located in the ACEC/RNA, there has been past interest, especially between 1989 and 1993, largely in the eastern portion of the ACEC/RNA; consequently, it has a moderate potential for the development of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits. Although the ACEC/RNA is located within an area of high heat, a lack of nearby hot springs and apparent absence of shallow (<3,000 feet deep) sources of thermal water indicate a low potential for the development of geothermal resources. Likewise, a lack of nearby oil and gas occurrences and an absence of production within the planning unit indicate a low potential for oil and gas development. While there is a possibility of mineable quantities of uranium, a lack of interest in this commodity and an absence of a significant domestic uranium industry indicate a low potential for development of this commodity.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHVs will be limited to designated roads and trails. Plant collecting will require a permit. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. Development of leasable minerals will be subject to the NSO stipulation. The area will be under VRM Class I. The ACEC/RNA will be withdrawn from locatable mineral activities and closed to saleable minerals development. BOR land relinquished between the reservoir and ACEC/RNA boundaries will become part of the ACEC/RNA. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any changes in grazing use, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and permitted if the values will be maintained or enhanced. Existing livestock use will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods including fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for their impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** Although existing management actions have partially protected values, the increase in size of the ACEC/RNA and proposed management within the extended area for minerals, livestock, and other surface-disturbing activities will fully protect the existing area and additional representations of the relevant and important values. The area's soils are highly fragile, being quickly and permanently disturbed by minimal surface activities. Proposed management will adequately protect this resource. Other management as proposed will protect all the valued resources.

### ***Lake Ridge ACEC/RNA***

**Description and values:** The 3,825-acre Lake Ridge ACEC/RNA is located southeast of Juntura, Oregon, along Tim's Peak road on a broad plateau dissected by steep canyons, with Tim's Peak rising to the north. A naturally occurring waterhole provides a perennial source of water. The ACEC/RNA is dominated by low sagebrush plant communities with both low sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass and low sagebrush/Idaho fescue present.

The relevant and important values identified in this ACEC/RNA are the low sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass community and low sagebrush/Idaho fescue community vegetation cells identified by ONHP. Sage grouse, which frequent the area, and several leks have also been identified as a relevant and important value.

Portions of two WSA's are located within the ACEC/RNA. Gold Creek (3-33) and Camp Creek (3-31) WSA's are recommended by BLM as suitable for wilderness designation. The WSA's are currently managed in accordance with BLM's IMPLWR. Under this direction, surface-disturbing activities requiring reclamation are generally precluded until Congress makes a decision on wilderness designation.

The ACEC/RNA includes a portion of one livestock grazing allotment.

The ACEC/RNA has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, moderate potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources, a low to moderate potential for the occurrence of uranium, and a low potential for the occurrence of all other leasable and locatable minerals. There is no record with the BLM that mining claims have ever been located within the boundaries of the ACEC/RNA, and no demonstrated interest in precious metals/mercury or uranium deposits; consequently, the potential for development is low. While the ACEC/RNA is located within an area of high heat flow, an absence of nearby hot springs and an apparent lack of shallow (<3,000 feet deep) indicate a low potential for the development of geothermal resources.

***Specific management:*** Right-of-ways will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Plant collecting will require a permit. The entire area will be under VRM Class II. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. Leasable minerals activities will be open with special stipulations subject to seasonal/timing restrictions, restricted or no uses in avoidance areas for sage grouse. The area will be open for locatable minerals activities and closed for saleable minerals development. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Existing livestock use will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods, including but not limited to fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

***Rationale:*** While existing management actions have partially served to protect values of the area, the proposed management for minerals, VRM, livestock, rights-of-way, and other surface-disturbing activities will more adequately protect the relevant and important values on the critical portions of the area. More stringent management for visual resources and limiting leasable minerals and saleable minerals activities will provide additional protection of the valued resources in this area.

### ***Leslie Gulch ACEC***

***Description and values:*** The 11,673-acre Leslie Gulch ACEC is located near the southeastern part of Owyhee Reservoir. The diverse vegetation and highly scenic area is an attractive destination for visitors seeking a variety of wildland experiences.

Relevant and important values include high scenic values associated with the colorful ash talus cliff, bighorn sheep and habitat, and five special status plant species, which include

Packard's mentzelia, grimy ivesia, sterile milkvetch, Ertter's senecio, and Owyhee clover. A detailed management plan was written for the area and signed in 1995.

Portions of three WSA's are located within and comprise approximately 92 percent of the existing ACEC. Portions of the Upper Leslie Gulch WSA (3-74), Honeycombs WSA (3-77A), and Slocum Creek WSA (3-75) located within the ACEC have been recommended as suitable for wilderness designation by BLM. The WSA's are currently managed in accordance with BLM's IMPLWR. Under this direction, surface-disturbing activities requiring reclamation in WSA's are generally precluded until Congress makes a decision on wilderness designation. Leslie Gulch ACEC was withdrawn from mineral entry by Public Land Order 7412 (*Federal Register*, Vol. 64, No.184, September 23, 1999) with the withdrawal effective as of September 23, 1999.

**Specific management:** All management as identified and prescribed in the Leslie Gulch Management Plan (1995) will be retained. Management as described in the plan includes, but is not limited to, the following actions. Rights-of-way will not be granted. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. The ACEC will be under VRM Class II, except the areas outside the vehicular corridor will be under VRM Class I. Plant collecting will require a permit. Road maintenance will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety. The area will be limited or closed to all mineral activity, including mineral leasing (under NSO stipulations), mineral material sale, and locatable mineral exploration and development. The area will be closed to livestock grazing. Proposed projects in the area, particularly recreational development, will follow management plan guidance.

**Rationale:** Because of the recent date of the management plan, which provides protection for the relevant and important values, no further management changes will be proposed for this ACEC except that the VRM Class I will contribute to providing maximum protection for the relevant and important values.

#### ***Mahogany Ridge ACEC/RNA***

**Description and values:** The 682-acre Mahogany Ridge ACEC/RNA is located on the northern and northeastern slope of Mahogany Mountain west of U.S. Highway 95 and north of Jordan Valley, Oregon. The ACEC/RNA includes undisturbed stands of mountain mahogany trees on parcels of the northern and western slopes of Mahogany Ridge. It fills a vegetation cell need for mountain mahogany-sagebrush and mountain mahogany-Oregon grape complex identified by ONHP and includes a higher-elevation mountain big sagebrush-mountain mahogany/slender wheatgrass-bluebunch wheatgrass community.

The relevant and important values in the ACEC/RNA include habitat for the broad-tailed hummingbird and other neotropical migratory birds, a special status plant species (Owyhee clover), and the mountain mahogany-big sagebrush vegetation communities identified by ONHP.

A portion of the Upper Leslie Gulch WSA (3-74) is within the ACEC/RNA. This WSA has been recommended suitable by BLM for wilderness designation and is currently managed in accordance with BLM's IMPLWR. Under this direction, surface-disturbing activities requiring reclamation are generally precluded until Congress makes a decision on wilderness designation.

The ACEC/RNA is located within one livestock grazing allotment.

The ACEC/RNA has a moderate to high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, moderate potential for the occurrence of uranium, oil and gas and geothermal resources, and a low potential for the occurrence of all other locatable and leasable minerals. No mining claims are currently located within the ACEC/RNA; however, there has been a substantial amount of past interest, largely between

The ACEC/RNA has a moderate potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources, a low to moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas, and a low potential for the occurrence of locatable and all other leasable minerals. There is no record with BLM that mining claims have ever been located within the borders of the ACEC/RNA, and no apparent interest in mineral development in the immediate area; consequently, the ACEC/RNA has a low potential for mineral development.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. Plant collecting will require a permit. The ACEC/RNA will be VRM Class III. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. Leasable minerals activities will be open with special stipulations subject to seasonal/timing restrictions, restricted or no uses in avoidance areas for sage grouse. Locatable minerals activities will be open, but the area will be closed for saleable minerals development. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Existing livestock use will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods, including but not limited to fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management has partially served to protect values of the area, the proposed management for minerals, livestock, rights-of-way, and other surface-disturbing activities will more adequately protect the relevant and important values. The increased acreage and other associated management provide protection of a more complete representation of the valued resources in this area.

#### ***Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC-Keeney Pass Segment***

**Description and Values:** The 3,154-acre Keeney Pass segment of the Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC is located approximately 6 miles south of Vale on Lytle Boulevard. The Oregon Trail was the principal travel corridor for America's westward migration and expansion during the 19th century and became the most famous of western trails used by explorers, fur traders, missionaries, emigrants, and gold seekers. The trail was the primary route from Fort Boise to Vale. The scenic values of this ACEC are associated with the historical landscape integrity of the area. The rolling hills, covered with sagebrush, grasses and dust, have changed little since the emigrants passed through this country and contribute to the overall scenic and recreational value.

The relevant and important values identified in this ACEC are historic; scenic; and a special status plant species, Cronquist's stickseed.

Lytle Boulevard, a two-lane asphalt county road, parallels and in some places overlies the Oregon Trail into Vale. It is the main road for traffic traveling south to Nyssa and Adrian in Oregon, Homedale in Idaho, and to U.S. Highway 95. At BLM's Keeney Pass Interpretive Site, interpretive panels and a foot trail accommodate visitors along the Oregon Trail. The segment at Keeney Pass covers a total of 1 mile of intermittent ruts, 100 feet to 0.5-mile long. These ruts are all that remain of the original route crossing 8 miles on BLM land in Malheur County.

Currently, the 1989 "Oregon National Historic Trail Management Plan" prescribed a sequence of long- and short-term management actions for the protection, preservation, interpretation and public recreation use of the Oregon National Historic Trail. On November 10, 1978,

Congress designated the Oregon Trail as a National Historic Trail by an amendment (Public Law 95-625) to the "National Trails System Act" (Public Law 90-543). The Act, which directs the Secretary of Interior to administer the Oregon National Historic Trail, identifies and protects the Oregon Trail, along with its historic remnants and artifacts, for public use and enjoyment. The National Park Service (NPS) has the responsibility to administer the Oregon National Historic Trail, providing oversight and assistance to other Federal agencies. Direct management of the Oregon Trail rests within the individual Federal agency having jurisdiction over the land including sites and segments. These Federal agencies are responsible for providing NPS with an opportunity to review management actions for the Oregon Trail. The Oregon Trail is an identified SRMA. Management decisions provide for Oregon Trail protection within a 0.5-mile wide corridor and informational signing. The 1981 NPS Oregon Trail management plan provides general guidance for the future protection, development, interpretation and management by lead agencies having direct management responsibility for the Oregon Trail. The NPS plan recommends specific protection and interpretation for Keeney Pass in the Vale District.

The Oregon Trail in the vicinity of Keeney Pass, which includes a four-mile route of the Oregon Trail with intermittent wagon ruts, is a historic district enrolled in 1979 on the National Register of Historic Places as the Oregon Trail Historic District (Lytle Pass Area). A 0.5-mile wide corridor has been established to avoid and minimize surface disturbances along the Oregon Trail.

A portion of one grazing allotment lies within this segment of the ACEC. One livestock watering reservoir is located outside the corridor and is presently dry. Numerous projects are scattered throughout this segment of the Oregon Trail, including cattleguards, barbed wire/steel posts fences, livestock watering troughs, pipelines, waterwells, fiber optic cable line, crested wheatgrass seedings, and 2-track and 4-wheel drive routes.

This segment of the ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of uranium, and geothermal resources, a predominately moderate potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas and a low potential for all other leasable and locatable minerals. No mining claims are currently located within this segment, but interest was especially high between 1988 and 1992 when most of the segment was covered with mining claims; consequently, the potential for development of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits is moderate. As this segment of the ACEC is located within and immediately adjacent to the Vale Known Geothermic Resource Area (KGRA), which has had recent interest in geothermal energy, the potential for development of this commodity is high. While mineable quantities of uranium may occur in the area, a lack of demonstrated interest in the commodity and an absence of a significant domestic uranium industry indicate a low potential for development. Although traces of hydrocarbons have been reported in the vicinity of the ACEC, an absence of demonstrated interest in the commodity and a lack of production in the planning area indicate a low potential for the development of petroleum products. An existing minerals pit is located outside the viewshed at Keeney Pass.

**Specific management:** Existing designated multipurpose utility corridors will continue to be available for use. The ONHTMP covers the management within the 1,032-acre corridor. The plan dictates that the protective corridor will be VRM Class II, and where existing intrusions make Class II management impractical, managed as Class III; the location of range improvements will be planned so that the historic landscape of the Oregon Trail is not diminished; and off-road motorized vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails within the protective corridor. The plan also states nonmotorized trekking on trail remnants will be generally permitted under stipulated conditions; new rangeland facilities will be designed and



placed to be visually unobtrusive within the protective corridor; minerals leases within the protective corridor will be issued with NSO stipulations. Under the plan, the corridor will be closed to saleable minerals developments; heavy equipment use for wildfire suppression activities will be avoided on and within 200 feet of trail remnants; rangeland drills will not be used within 200 feet of trail remnants; and revegetation using native plant species by aerial broadcast will be the preferred post-fire rehabilitation method within the protective corridor; livestock use will continue based on existing grazing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Management outside the 1,032 acres will include OHV use limited to designated roads and trails, open to minerals activities outside the viewshed, and under VRM Class III.

**Rationale:** While existing management has partially served to protect values of the area, the additional acreage and the proposed management for minerals, rights-of-way, plant collecting, OHV, and livestock will more adequately protect the relevant and important values.

### ***Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC—Tub Mountain Segment***

**Description and values:** The 5,902-acre Tub Mountain segment of the Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC is located about 6 miles northeast of Vale, Oregon, off Highway 20 and 5th Avenue East, and follows the county road from Alkali Spring to Lone Willow Spring. The Oregon Trail was the principal travel corridor for America's westward migration and expansion during the 19th century and became the most famous of western trails used by explorers, fur traders, missionaries, emigrants and gold seekers. Charcoal samples obtained from a hearth excavated in 1993 yielded radiocarbon dates of AD 1680–1760 and 1800–1940. The segment from Alkali Spring to Lone Willow Spring consists of low rolling hills and highly eroded drainages covered with sagebrush and bunchgrasses. This route was the primary route of travel from Vale to Farewell Bend. Management decisions provide for Oregon Trail protection within a 0.25-mile wide corridor and informational signing for the Tub Mountain segment of the Oregon Trail. The BLM maintains one interpretive site at Alkali Spring which was the "nooning" spot for wagon trains leaving Vale.

The relevant and important values are historic, cultural, and scenic. The scenic values of this ACEC are associated with the integrity of the historical landscape. The rolling hills, covered with sagebrush, grasses, and dust, remain relatively unchanged since the emigrants passed through this country and contribute to the overall scenic value.

The ACEC segment is bisected by a county road maintained and bladed by Malheur County, and there are several 2-track and 4-wheel drive routes, numerous barbed wire/steel post fences, livestock watering troughs, water wells, corrals, and reservoirs.

This segment of the ACEC includes portions of one grazing allotment.

This segment of the ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, and uranium, a moderate to high potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources, a low to moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas, and a low potential for the occurrence of all other locatable and leasable minerals. No mining claims are currently located within the boundaries of this segment. Interest was high between 1986 and 1993 and several mining claims were located, mainly in the eastern portion of the segment, indicating a high potential for the development of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits. Mineable quantities of uranium may occur within the ACEC and surrounding area, but a lack of demonstrated interest and an absence of a significant domestic uranium industry indicate a low potential for development. Likewise, an absence of nearby sources of oil and gas and a lack of production indicate a low potential for the development of petroleum products.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated; OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails; and the ACEC will be VRM Class II. Plant collecting will require a permit. Road maintenance will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety. Locatable minerals will be withdrawn within the viewshed or 0.5-mile either side of the Oregon Trail. Minerals materials development will be allowed only outside of the viewshed, and leasable minerals activities will be subject to the NSO stipulation. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Livestock use may be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management actions have partially served to help protect values of the area, the additional acreage and proposed management for minerals, OHV, plant collecting, and livestock will more adequately protect the relevant and important values.

### ***Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC–Birch Creek Segment***

**Description and values:** The 119-acre Birch Creek segment of the Oregon National Historic Trail ACEC is located about 2 miles south of Farewell Bend, Oregon, west of Interstate 84. The Oregon Trail was the principal travel corridor for America’s westward migration and expansion during the 19th century and became the most famous of western trails used by explorers, fur traders, missionaries, emigrants and gold seekers. The segment at Birch Creek was a camping area before coming to the Snake River at Farewell Bend. A wagon rut swale is still discernible where the trail crossed the hills on public land. The scenic value of this ACEC is associated with the historical landscape integrity of the area. The rolling hills and view to the north of Farewell Bend and the Snake River have not changed since the emigrants passed through this country and contribute to the overall scenic value. The BLM maintains an interpretive site with a fenced enclosure around the ruts, interpretive panels, a foot trail adjacent to the ruts, and parking turnout.

The relevant and important values are historic and scenic.

The ACEC is bisected by a county-maintained gravel road, has a reservoir, and rights-of-way for access to private land. Accessibility from Interstate 84 at Farewell Bend increases the attractiveness of this recreation site for the public, and the existing gravel road allows visits by large groups in buses as well as 2-wheel drive vehicles. This segment of the ACEC includes a portion of one livestock grazing allotment.

This segment of the ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, moderate to high potential for the occurrence of uranium, moderate potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources, and a low potential for all other locatable and leasable minerals. No mining claims are located within the boundaries of this segment, and very little interest has been expressed in the immediate vicinity. However, a substantial amount of interest has been expressed to the south, both in the mid-to late-1980’s and currently; consequently, this segment has a high potential for the development of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits. Mineable quantities of uranium may occur in the area, but an apparent lack of interest in the commodity and an absence of a significant domestic uranium industry indicate a low potential for the development of uranium. The area is within a zone of high heat flow and within 3 miles of a thermal spring; consequently, the potential for the development of low-temperature, direct heat use of geothermal resources is moderate.

**Specific management:** Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use in the area will be limited to designated roads and trails, and the area will be VRM Class II. The area will remain open to current road maintenance activities, and will also be open to plant collecting. The ACEC will be withdrawn from locatable minerals activities and closed to saleable minerals development. Leasable minerals activity will be subject to the NSO stipulation. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, existing livestock use will be adjusted using a variety of methods including fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management actions have partially served to protect values of the area, the proposed management for minerals, visual resources, livestock, rights-of-way and other surface-disturbing activities will more adequately protect the relevant and important values.

#### ***Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC***

**Description and values:** The 11,239-acre ACEC includes public land of the Owyhee River canyon and its associated viewshed located just north of the Owyhee Dam. The ACEC includes the viewshed of BLM-administered land from near the dam to downstream approximately 13 road miles to near the siphon site. This corridor contains the controlled flowing Owyhee River with its associated predominately narrow canyon bottom and picturesque canyon slopes and walls. Paralleling the river, a two-lane asphalt county road bisects the ACEC. This is the main road that recreating visitors use to get to the area, which includes the popular Owyhee Reservoir. BLM's Snively Hot Springs and the interpretive site of the existing Lower Owyhee Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area currently have limited recreation support facilities to accommodate visitors within the corridor. The river corridor receives some of the highest recreational use in the planning area and is being designated in this plan as a SRMA. The BOR's approved Owyhee Reservoir RMP (April 1994) emphasizes cooperative efforts with BLM for the protection of important resource values and enhancement of recreation opportunities and uses within the river canyon. The BLM adheres to conditions of a national agreement in the management of FERC-administered land located within the ACEC.

The relevant and important values of the ACEC include high scenic values of diverse landscape elements in a substantially natural setting, a special status plant species (Mulford's milkvetch), the rare presence of a black cottonwood gallery in a riverine system, and the combined wildlife values of diverse habitat types supporting a large number of wildlife species and an important migratory corridor for neotropical birds.

Other developments within the ACEC include several bladed dirt roads leading mostly out of the river canyon bottom from the county asphalt road, and several indiscriminate short two-track primitive vehicle routes on the canyon bottom along the river. There is evidence of past minerals material extraction along the river's floodplain. There are two communication relay sites, and a high voltage power line crosses the canyon corridor. The southeast portion of the ACEC has telephone, power line, road and irrigation water tunnel rights-of-way associated with the BOR's Owyhee Irrigation Project. Portions of four livestock management allotments are within the potential ACEC.

Controlled releases from Owyhee Dam have variable effects on the riparian ecosystem along the river corridor. Based on evaluations of the river corridor, those segments of the river within the potential ACEC, with adjacent BLM-administered land, have been determined eligible and suitable for possible inclusion in NWSR System.

The ACEC has a moderate to high potential for the discovery of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits and geothermal resources, and a moderate potential for the occurrence of uranium and oil and gas. It has a low potential for all other leasable and locatable minerals.

While there are no current mining claims located within the ACEC, the surrounding area, especially the Grassy Mountain area, located some 3 miles to the northwest, has been the focus of intensive exploration in recent years, mainly for hot springs gold, largely between 1986 and 1994; consequently, it has a moderate to high potential for development of hot springs and epithermal gold/silver/mercury deposits. Although there has been little interest in geothermal resources in the ACEC, the presence of two hot springs indicate moderate to high potential for the development of low temperature, direct-use geothermal resources. Mineable quantities of uranium may occur within the boundaries of the ACEC; however, a lack of interest in the commodity and an absence of a significant domestic industry suggests a low potential for development of uranium. Likewise, a lack of known occurrences and an absence of production indicate a low potential for the development of oil and gas resources.

**Specific management:** New rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with the identified relevant and important resource values and adverse impacts could be mitigated. Existing rights-of-way will not be affected. Provisions will be included to enable the performance of operations and issuance of rights-of-way needed to adequately manage and maintain existing authorized facilities and the BOR's Owyhee Irrigation Project. Motorized vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails; some existing trails will be closed, and their location will be on file in the Vale District Office. The area will be VRM Class II. Plant collecting will require a permit. The area will be open to road maintenance. Leasable minerals activities will be subject to the NSO stipulation within a defined foreground viewshed, while the remaining area will be open with standard stipulations. The foreground viewshed will also be withdrawn from locatable minerals activities, with the remainder of the area open. The ACEC will be open to saleable minerals development, but with such activities within the defined foreground restricted to those past extraction sites and to the extent needed to allow for their rehabilitation. Proposed recreation site improvements or developments will be allowable where resource protection, public safety, health, and/or enhanced recreation experience will be provided while maintaining or enhancing relevant and important ACEC values. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if the values will be maintained or enhanced. Grazing will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods, including but not limited to fencing, reduction in numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management has partially served to help protect values of the area, the management for minerals, proposed rights-of-way, OHV, livestock operations, and other surface-disturbing activities will provide a more appropriate degree of management of, and protection for, the relevant and important values.

#### ***Owyhee Views ACEC***

**Description and values:** The Owyhee Views ACEC includes 52,506 acres of public land adjacent to BOR's 53-mile long Owyhee Reservoir and certain land adjacent to the lower most portion of the congressionally designated Owyhee NWSR. The ACEC consists of the landscape as observed from the reservoir and certain maintained roads in the area. Nearby ACEC's (Leslie Gulch, Honeycombs, Dry Creek Gorge and Owyhee River Below the Dam) and the existing Owyhee Wild and Scenic River management area are not included in this ACEC. The highly picturesque landscape is rugged and largely dissected with ridges and

steep slopes, vertical canyon walls and isolated, towering buttes of the Owyhee River canyonlands. Multiple deep-cut and highly scenic side canyons are cut by ephemeral drainages which extend to the reservoir.

The relevant and important values of the ACEC include the high scenic properties associated with the area's virtually unaltered landscape, special status bighorn sheep and habitat, and special status plant species (sterile milkvetch, Ertter's senecio, and Owyhee clover). Another special status plant species (Cusick's chaenactis) is suspected to grow in the area. The visual sensitivity of the area is elevated due to the current level and expected future increases of recreation use, both on the reservoir and within the ACEC.

Portions of two WSA's are located within the ACEC. Dry Creek Buttes (3-56) and Wild Horse Basin (3-77B), are recommended by BLM not to be congressionally designated as wilderness.

The BOR manages Owyhee Reservoir and its associated threaded corridor of acquired private and withdrawn public land that encompass the reservoir. Following 4 years of extensive public involvement, the BOR approved its "Owyhee Reservoir RMP/EIS" in 1994. The agency established a citizen's task force to assist in development of the "Owyhee Reservoir RMP/EIS." Proposals for management of the RMP/EIS reflect the task force's recommendation that the reservoir's setting should remain in a substantially unaltered, natural state. As the largest reservoir in Oregon, the absence of substantial development within its highly scenic and visually sensitive canyon setting remains an attractive attribute for recreation users. There is an increasing trend of dispersed recreation use within the ACEC. Activities include hiking, big and small game hunting, backpacking, photography, wildlife and potential wild horse observation, and geologic and general sightseeing.

The ACEC includes portions of eight livestock grazing allotments, and a portion of the Three Fingers Wild Horse HMA is within the area.

The ACEC has a moderate to high potential for the occurrence, and development, of precious metals (particularly hot springs related gold deposits). Interest was especially high between 1986 and 1992, with most of the exploration occurring within the Dry Creek Buttes WSA. Mining claims were also located in other portions of the ACEC, mainly within the Wild Horse Basin, Blue Canyon and Owyhee Breaks WSA's. Presently, two picture jasper operations are the only minerals development activities occurring within the ACEC.

***Specific management:*** New rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with the identified relevant and important values and impacts could be mitigated. Existing rights-of-way will not be affected. An OHV closed area will be located in the southwest portion of the ACEC, and the OHV use within the remainder of the area will be limited to designated roads and trails. The area will be VRM Class I. Plant collecting will require a permit. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. Leasable minerals activities will be subject to NSO stipulations. The area will be closed to saleable minerals development and withdrawn from locatable minerals activities. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved AMP's. Any changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if the values will be maintained or enhanced. Where adverse impacts are identified, existing livestock use will be adjusted using a variety of methods, including but not limited to, fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** The protection and opportunities for enhancement of a significant portion of the area's important and relevant values will be fully realized by maintaining the existing landscape in a virtually unaltered state and with VRM Class I management.

#### ***South Alkali Sand Hills ACEC***

**Description and values:** The 3,520-acre South Alkali Sand Hills ACEC is located northeast of Vale, northwest of Ontario, Oregon, and west of Henry Gulch, and encompasses several ridges and drainages within the low, hilly country. The potential ACEC was selected to represent prime habitat and critical populations for two special status plant species, Mulford's milkvetch and Cronquist's stickseed, which are found on sandy soils in small, localized areas within a portion of the Vale District near the town of Vale. The area represents the greatest concentration known for both species growing together on a global basis.

The relevant and important values of the ACEC are the two special status plant species and their habitat.

Two dirt roads run along the two main ridges of the ACEC. A portion of one livestock grazing allotment occurs within the ACEC.

The ACEC has a high potential for the occurrence of hot springs and epithermal-related gold/silver/mercury deposits, uranium and geothermal resources, a moderate potential for the occurrence of oil and gas, and a low potential for the occurrence of all other leasable and locatable minerals. There is no record with BLM that mining claims were ever located within the boundaries of the ACEC and no demonstrated interest in either hot springs precious metals or uranium; consequently, the potential for development is low. The ACEC is within 2 miles of the Vale KGRA, which has had recent interest in geothermal development; consequently, the potential for development is high. Although traces of oil have been reported from the ACEC, a lack of demonstrated interest in the commodity, as well as a lack of current production, indicate a low potential for the development of petroleum products.

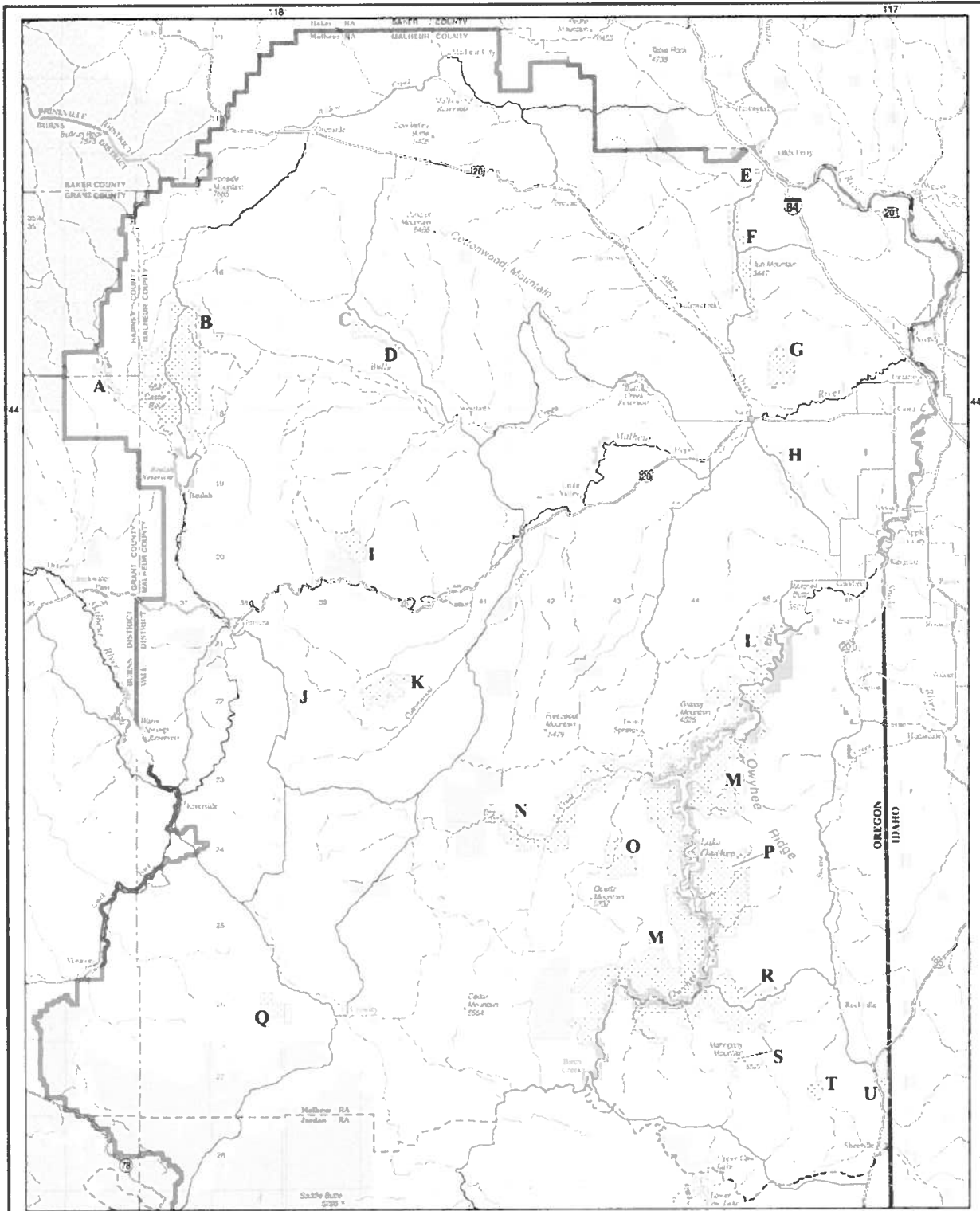
**Specific management:** Management will remain as described in the "South Alkali Management Plan" (1995). Rights-of-way will be granted only if there is minimal conflict with identified resource values and impacts can be mitigated. OHV use will be limited to designated roads and trails. The ACEC will be VRM Class III. Plant collecting will require a permit. Road maintenance will be limited to the existing roadway, and shoulder/barrow ditch construction will be limited to that necessary to control runoff, minimize soil erosion, and ensure public safety and serviceability of the road. Leasable minerals activities will be subject to the NSO stipulation. The area will be withdrawn from locatable minerals activities and closed to saleable minerals development. Livestock use will continue based on existing permit stipulations and approved management plans. Any proposed changes in grazing, including time and intensity of use, will be evaluated for impacts on the relevant and important values and will be permitted if values will be maintained or enhanced. Existing livestock use will be adjusted where adverse impacts are identified using a variety of methods, including but not limited to fencing, reduction in livestock numbers, and changes in grazing season. Proposed projects in the area will be evaluated for impacts and permitted where relevant and important values will be maintained or enhanced.

**Rationale:** While existing management has partially served to protect values of the area, the proposed management for minerals, VRM, livestock, rights-of-way, and other surface-disturbing activities will more adequately protect the relevant and important values.

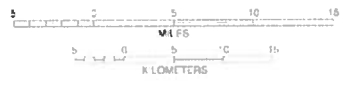
#### ***South Bull Canyon ACEC/RNA***

**Description and values:** The 792-acre South Bull Canyon ACEC/RNA is located south of the Malheur River approximately 6 miles to the southeast of Juntura, Oregon, along the road





**LEGEND**



— Southeastern Oregon RMP Planning Area Boundary

▨ Area of Critical Environmental Concern/ Research Natural Area

**Malheur Resource Area ACECs/RNAs**

- A - North Fork Malheur River ACEC
- B - Castle Rock ACEC
- C - North Ridge Bully Creek ACEC/RNA
- D - South Ridge Bully Creek ACEC/RNA
- E - Oregon Trail - Birch Creek ACEC
- F - Oregon Trail - Top Mountain ACEC/RNA
- G - South A Kall Sand Hills ACEC
- H - Oregon Trail - Keeney Pass ACEC
- I - Black Canyon ACEC/RNA
- J - South Bul Canyon ACEC/RNA
- K - Lake Ridge ACEC/RNA
- L - Owyhee River Below the Dam ACEC
- M - Owyhee Views ACEC
- N - Dry Creek Gorge ACEC
- O - Hammond Hill Sand Hills ACEC/RNA
- P - Honeycombs ACEC/RNA
- Q - Stockade Mountain ACEC/RNA
- R - Leslie Gulch ACEC
- S - Mahogany Ridge ACEC/RNA
- T - Spring Mountain ACEC/RNA
- U - Coal Mine Basin ACEC/RNA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Bureau of Land Management  
**VALE DISTRICT**  
Malheur Resource Area Portion  
2002



**SOUTHEASTERN OREGON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy or completeness of these data or its application to other uses. Original data were compiled from various sources. This effort was a result of the BLM's 2002 Resource Plan. The product was developed through a process and may be updated without restriction.

**Map ACEC-M: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern / Research Natural Areas**



**2.3.4 South Fork Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment (1992)**



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

Vale District Office  
100 Oregon Street  
Vale, Oregon 97918

August 1992



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# South Fork of the Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

**BLM-OR-PT-92-28-1792**



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Vale District Office  
100 Oregon Street  
Vale, Oregon 97918

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1613

Dear Public Land User:

Enclosed for your information is the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) final decision for the South Fork of the Walla Walla River Area of Environmental Concern (ACEC) and the accompanying management plan.

The decision is to designate 1256.69 acres of BLM administered lands along the South Fork of the Walla Walla River as an ACEC.

Thanks to all of you who commented and participated in the plan amendment and development of the management plan for the area. Most comments BLM received were in support of the designation and protection of the resources. Some citizens indicated a concern for the long term decision to locate and focus all types of access on the north side of the river. Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) representatives expressed concern to perpetuate their access on to the U.S. Forest Service trails. Many comments indicated a strong need for an organized enforcement program. Both Umatilla County and Boise Cascade requested some minor changes in the boundary of the ACEC. Both have been made and are reflected on the map. Neither change had an impact to the management of ACEC values.

BLM will be developing site specific plans and designs to facilitate construction of management facilities. We look forward to continued public participation and support. Thank you for your involvement in our efforts.

Sincerely yours,

James E. May  
District Manager

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

Vale District Office  
100 Oregon Street  
Vale, Oregon 97918

Baker Resource Area Office  
P.O. Box 987  
Baker City, Oregon 97814

# **South Fork of the Walla Walla River Area Plan Amendment**

**July 1992**



# **RECORD OF DECISION:**

It is the decision of the Bureau of Land Management to adopt and implement the preferred alternative described in the Environmental Assessment for the South Fork of the Walla Walla River Area of Critical Environmental Concern dated February 1992. This decision would incorporate the management actions described under that alternative.

## ***RATIONALE:***

The decision designates the Bureau of Land Management administered lands in the South Fork of the Walla Walla River as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The purpose is to recognize the relevance and importance of the fisheries, wildlife, riparian, and scenic values found within the area. Furthermore, there is a need to provide protection and management for these values because the area is heavily used by recreationists resulting in sustained severe impacts to the riparian areas and hillsides.

In addition to providing management direction for protection of the ACEC values, the proposed designation and preferred alternative will amend the 1989 Baker Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) as follows:

### **Oil and Gas Leasing and Mineral Management**

- Changes the management decision in the Baker Resource Area Management Plan Record of Decision from:
  - All new oil and gas leases subject to standard protective stipulations plus a winter season restrictive stipulation on (119.98) acres; -

to:

  - All new oil and gas leases subject to standard protective stipulations plus a special "no surface occupancy" stipulation for all public land within the ACEC boundary, presently about 1,256.69 acres, plus an additional 302 acres of private surface with Federal Minerals Estate.

- Prohibit development of mineral material resources within the ACEC boundary unless needed on an "emergency basis" to protect ACEC values. This area has no known potential for the occurrence of locatable mineral resources, therefore, withdrawal from mineral entry under the U.S. mining laws, as amended, is not proposed.

### **Forest and Woodland Management**

- Reduces harvest on 120 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) timber lands from approximately 15% to approximately 1% to facilitate management for ACEC values.

## **Grazing Management**

- Grazing leases will no longer be issued on BLM lands within the ACEC boundary.

## **District Manager**

### **Findings and Recommendation:**

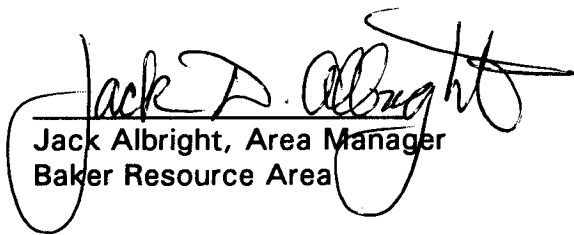
There were no protests filed with the Director of the BLM and no inconsistencies with State or Local plans, programs or policies identified by the Governor of Oregon.

We recommend adoption of the preferred alternative of the Plan Amendment Environmental Assessment, for the South Fork of the Walla Walla River ACEC of February 1992 which is to designate 1256.69 acres as an ACEC.

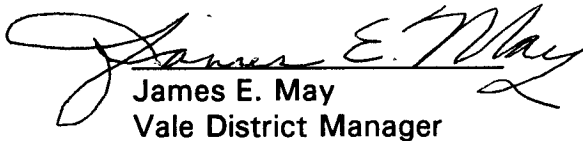
**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:**

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment and all other information available to me as summarized above, it is the determination of the Bureau that neither of the alternatives constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is unnecessary and will not be prepared. In addition, the amendment to the Baker Resource Area Resource Management Plan does not affect the entire resource area and does not substantially affect other resource programs to the extent that the resource area would initiate an Environmental Impact Statement.

Recommended to the State Director:

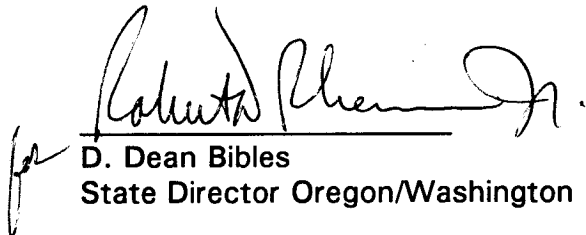
  
Jack Albright, Area Manager  
Baker Resource Area

7-14-92  
Date

  
James E. May  
Vale District Manager

7-14-92  
Date

I approve the decision for the South Fork of the Walla Walla River Area of Critical Environmental Concern and Finding of No Significant Impact. This document meets the requirement for agency decision making as provided in 40 CFR 1505.

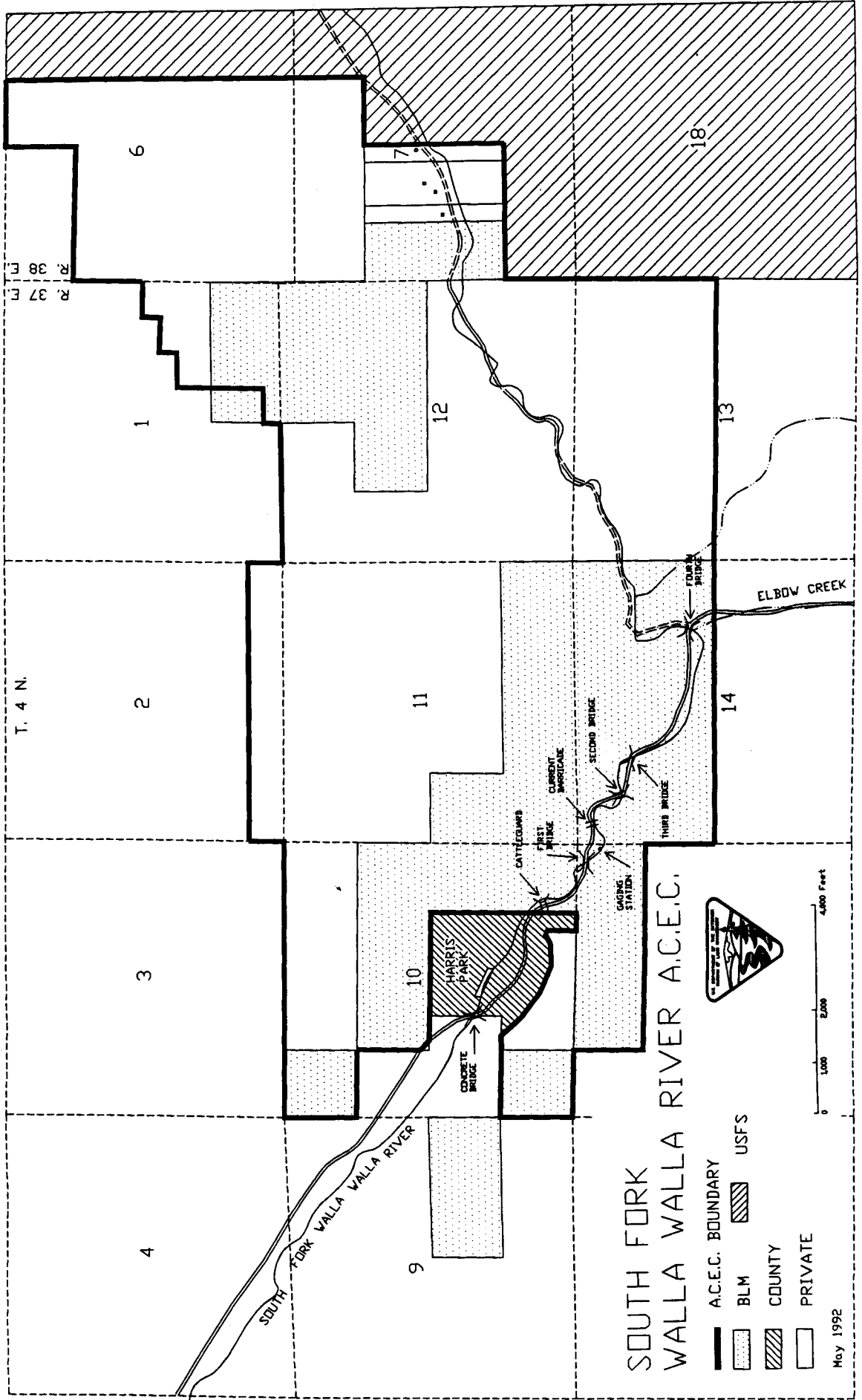
  
D. Dean Bibles  
State Director Oregon/Washington

7/20/92  
Date

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



# **SOUTH FORK OF WALLA WALLA RIVER ACEC DESIGNATION, MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT EA #035-1-04**

## ***INTRODUCTION***

The purpose of this document is to amend the Baker Resource Management Plan (RMP) to include the designation of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

On the lands managed by BLM, the riparian community, fisheries habitat and water quality of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River are threatened by continued indiscriminate recreational use of street vehicles and off-highway vehicles (OHV's). Off-highway vehicles (OHV's) are motorized track or wheeled vehicles designed for cross-country travel over any type of terrain. For the purpose of this document they are specifically motorcycles, ATV's and snowmobiles. The goal of this designation is to provide necessary special management direction to protect and enhance the relevant and important values of the riparian ecosystem, fisheries habitat and scenic values while still allowing for some recreational use.

These lands are located on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River in Umatilla County, Oregon in the western foothills of the Blue Mountains, Township 4N., Range 37E., Willamette Meridian. The site is situated in a relatively narrow canyon bottom extending up both hillsides to the north and south of the river. The wooded river edge supports the majority of recreational activity in the area. This area also serves as a gateway for limited access to a Forest Service OHV use area.

The site is situated close to a number of urban areas. Milton-Freewater, OR is approximately 12 miles to the northwest, Walla Walla, WA is 20 miles north and Pendleton, OR is 46 miles southwest. This is the closest recreational area in the Blue Mountains for Milton-Freewater, Walla Walla, and the Tri-Cities. The proximity of the area to population centers leads to intensified recreational use, particularly during summer months. Study observations in the early 1980's demonstrated that during the peak use period 57% of the visitation is by Washington residents, 40% by Oregonians, and 3% from other states and Canadian provinces.

This portion of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River Canyon is environmentally sensitive for a number of reasons. Virtually all the area's use occurs in the riparian zone, which is a fragile and complex ecosystem with a distinct vegetative structure and corresponding microclimate. In addition, the size of the riparian zone has already been reduced by road development up the

canyon bottom.

The effects of recreational overcrowding are evident in the canyon. The area displays excessive litter, high levels of noise, soil compaction and defoliation from extensive vehicle parking. The BLM lands were designated to a "limited" off-road-vehicles class in 1980 which restricted all vehicles to identified routes and trails. However, there was little or no enforcement of this designation, and use increased extensively in recent years with stretches of riparian areas, wet bogs and meadows sustaining severe damage from vehicles. The construction of the four log stringer bridges by Boise Cascade (as part of the right-of-way agreement) in 1979 further facilitated this use by improving access particularly to BLM administered lands. When Boise Cascade's right-of-way was renewed, they became responsible for bridge repair only if they were to haul logs. In February of 1991, BLM attempted to repair the two lower log stringer bridges. The decking was in need of repair to provide for public safety. The first bridge decking was replaced. BLM crews found the second bridge's main support stringers to have dry rot. The required repairs to the second bridge exceeded the BLM's 1991 funds for repair. BLM engineers indicated similar disrepair on the third and fourth bridges as well. A barricade was placed below the second bridge restricting further access by street legal vehicles. OHV's, mountain bikes, equestrians and hikers were still permitted access.

From February to September, 1991, BLM staff observed a remarkable recovery of riparian vegetation in many of the previously used "parking areas" as well as bogs and meadows. There continues to be a problem with OHV's, creating new trails up hillsides and at the bench above Elbow Creek intersection with the South Fork of the Walla Walla River and in some other areas.

Based on the recovery of the riparian vegetation and the need to provide special management for the protection of the ACEC values, this designation and management plan recommends continued restriction of street legal vehicles beyond the current barricade location and strict enforcement of the "limited" classification for OHV use to existing designated routes.

## ***SETTING***

The proposed ACEC is located on the west flank of the Blue Mountain uplift. The South Fork of the Walla Walla River has eroded a steep and narrow canyon in Columbia River basalt flows. Basaltic outcrops are evident throughout. The topography is steep, adjacent to the relatively flat river bottom. The north and south slopes are dissected by several small drainages running perpendicular to the river.

Soils of this area are mainly coarse silt loams formed from windblown silt and weathered basalt. Soil depth varies from 2-6 feet on north exposures, to less than 18 inches on south slopes.

The South Fork of the Walla Walla River is a tributary of the Walla Walla River which flows into the Columbia River. The South Fork of the Walla Walla River, fed by snowpack from the Blue Mountains and numerous springs, experiences seasonal flow fluctuations. There is a U.S.G.S. stream gauging station located one mile downstream from Elbow Creek. Information has been recorded at this station for 53 years. Records demonstrate that for the 53-year period, the average discharge was 177 cubic feet per second, equaling 128,200 acre-feet per year. Stream flow will generally peak early in April during the spring runoff and reach a low in September.



Extremes for the river were recorded during winter months when conditions ranged from droughts to heavy runoff from precipitation and melting snow. The maximum discharge was recorded on January 29, 1965, at 2,530 cubic feet per second. The minimum discharge was 72 cubic feet per second recorded on February 14, 1932. Generally, water quality is good with the stream running cool and clear most of the year. However, turbidity increases during spring run-off and heavy precipitation events.

The climate of this area typifies that of the western flank of the Blue Mountains. It is a relatively dry area with most of the precipitation occurring during fall and spring when storms are most frequent. Prevailing winds over the area are out of the west and southwest most of the year and from the west and northwest during winter months. Snow during winter months will range from a few inches along the stream bottom to a few feet on the higher hillsides. The study area ranges from 2,000 feet elevation at the river to over 3,700 feet at the canyon rim. The frost-free period ranges from approximately 61 days at the higher elevations to nearly 150 days on the stream floodplain. Temperatures can often exceed 90 degrees during summer months. Zero degree temperatures or less can occur during winter months. Annual precipitation in the South Fork of the Walla Walla River Canyon will generally range between 20 and 30 inches.

This area comprises a unique assemblage rarely found in the Pacific Northwest of many small plant communities of both a dryland and wetland nature. These communities are a result of the wide variety of exposures, slopes, moisture regimes and soil conditions found in the ACEC. Their uniqueness and vulnerability are in part due to the fact that they exist within a relatively small area. Even with incomplete inventories to date, at least 300 distinct plant species have been found in these communities within the river corridor.

Dryland communities are represented on open south-facing hillsides and are made up of native bunchgrasses and annual grasses, forbs and scattered shrub pockets. Dry cliff communities are composed primarily of forbs with scattered grasses and an occasional patch of fern. Many forest and woodland communities are found within the area, ranging from drier, more rocky environments supporting maple, ninebark and snowberry to a more mesic forest of Douglas fir and grand fir. Other conifer species include ponderosa pine and Englemann spruce, with a small population of Pacific yew in the area.

Within the riparian zone, a complex mixture of wetland communities contribute significantly to the area's uniqueness. Bogs and seeps support a wide variety of mosses, ferns, lichens, sedges and rushes in a fragile environment that is highly susceptible to mechanical damage and soil compaction caused by trampling and vehicles. Water drips from unique grottos where ferns and lichens grow in the protected north facing cliffs. Springs and tributary streams are dominated by wild rose, elderberry, chokecherry, snowberry and water birch.

Another species of interest, western paper birch, is a component of a small, moist community within the riparian zone. A rich diversity of forbs, grasses, rushes and sedges are associated with the riparian zone. This area in total represents the most complex assemblage of plant communities and individual species found on BLM lands in the Vale District.

The South Fork of the Walla Walla River Canyon habitat type can support a rich variety of land animals, the majority of which are dependent upon the riparian area. The canyon has some unique winter range qualities. During severe winter months, when snow is deep in the higher terrain, deer and elk migrate into the area to obtain needed forage. The open south slopes are favored foraging sites for these ungulates during this time of stress. Millions of wintering lady bug beetles are a unique feature of the area. They congregate on riparian foliage, particularly

on the trunks of rough-barked Douglas fir trees. These beetles begin congregating in the canyon in late October and will reside there until late April or early May. They are a service to local agriculturists by eating destructive aphids and are of economic importance for that reason. The stream itself supports a healthy population of rainbow and bull trout which thrive on aquatic insects. The South Fork of the Walla Walla River is also an anadromous fishery with a noteworthy summer steelhead run.

## ***RELEVANT AND IMPORTANT VALUES***

### **Scenic Values**

The South Fork Walla Walla River ACEC contains exceptional scenery in a variety of landforms, vegetation, water, and color with few cultural modifications to the landscape. The rating of the visual resource factors resulted in "A" scenic quality, the highest rating category containing outstanding visual resource characteristics. The outstanding characteristics include: high vertical relief as expressed in prominent cliffs; a variety of vegetative types expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns, clear; clean cascading water and rich color combinations. The ACEC is a component of a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II area, resulting in stipulations on resource activities within the boundaries of the ACEC.

### **Fisheries Values**

Bull trout, a Category II Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act, and the anadromous steelhead trout, spawn and rear within the proposed ACEC boundary. The margined sculpin, a non-game fish which is on the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) sensitive species list due to its limited distribution, resides there also.

The bull trout population is abundant in the South Fork of the Walla Walla River. BLM policy stipulates that candidate species will be given special management considerations and be included as priority species in land use plans. Bull trout need cold, clean water to survive and reproduce. Management actions resulting in lower water quality would reduce their population. Human activities have already reduced or eliminated bull trout populations in the majority of their historic habitat throughout the West.

Columbia River Basin runs of anadromous salmon and steelhead have been similarly impacted by human activities. This stream currently supports a steelhead run and it formerly supported a spring chinook salmon run. That run may be reestablished in this reach in the future by fisheries managers. Protection and enhancement of anadromous fisheries in the Columbia River basin, which includes the South Fork of the Walla Walla River, is an objective of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act. It is also consistent with the policies of the BLM and many other agencies and groups.

The BLM reach of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River has regionally and nationally significant fishery values. Safeguarding these values will help maintain the biodiversity of the region and the nation.

## Riparian Values

The east-west orientation of the river, the latitude, the "V" shaped canyon and the climatic conditions create the unique riparian habitat that is found along the South Fork of the Walla Walla River. The riparian habitat consists of three separate but interrelated plant communities. The sheer rock faces and outcroppings with their seeps and springs create a moist micro-habitat for mosses and ferns. The springs create bogs and marshy areas along the toe of the slopes providing habitat for sedges, rushes and grasses. Along the river's edges a highly diverse and well developed shrub and tree community exists. Species found along the river are ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, grand fir, white fir, alder, willow, paper birch, water birch, Pacific yew, black cottonwood, mockorange, ninebark, serviceberry, western mugwort, red-osier dogwood, elderberry and snowberry. Western paper birch, *Betula papyrifera* var. *commutata*, has not been previously reported for Oregon, although it is found in southeastern Washington. This is of regional importance due to its uniqueness.

## OTHER IMPORTANT VALUES

### Wildlife Values

The area is within a critical winter range for about 1,100 Rocky Mountain elk. The dense undergrowth in the riparian area provides habitat for white-tailed deer and ruffed grouse. Mule deer are found in the upland habitats. Black bear are found throughout the area. The area has been identified as suitable Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep habitat. No wild sheep occur here currently, however the area has been identified as a reintroduction site by the ODFW. The rim rock habitat also provides habitat for cougar and bobcats.

Because of the diverse and well developed riparian habitat, and the adjacent uplands, a rich variety of non-game wildlife species can be found here such as shrews, bats, ground squirrels, warblers, wrens, goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, wood peckers, purple finches, water dipper, mergansers, rubber boa, rattlesnake, Pacific tree frogs, newts and salamanders. Wolverine, marten and peregrine falcons are known to occur in the immediate vicinity of the ACEC. The corridor area is also a major wintering area for ladybug beetles.

The drainage serves as a major migration corridor for many wildlife species linking upper and lower elevational habitats.

### Forest and Woodland Values

The Baker Resource Area Operations Inventory indicates 246 BLM commercial forest acres within the proposed ACEC area. Douglas fir is the major forest type on 211 acres while ponderosa pine predominates on 35 acres.

These are typical northeast Oregon forest stands with Douglas fir/mixed conifers occupying the cool moist sites, and ponderosa pine on the dry south facing slopes. The Douglas fir ranges from 75 to 185 years in age with an area-wide average of about 130. The ponderosa pine averages about 110 years of age. Total standing coniferous volume in the area is approximately 4 million board feet. Timber stands currently appear to be healthy and vigorous.

Because the commercial forestland is similar to that found throughout the Blue Mountains, and because management for timber is physically limited (steep topography and lack of access), the forested area adjacent to the South Fork of the Walla Walla River is currently neither important or relevant to the regional timber harvest.

However, these stands are relevant and important components of other resource values. They contribute to the aesthetics of the area, help stabilize soils on steep slopes, serve to moderate temperatures in the canyon, provide habitat for wildlife, and regulate stream flows.

## **Special Status Species**

### ***Plants***

There are no Federally listed plant species known to exist in this area. However, the western paper birch (*Betula papyrifera var. commutata*) and Pacific yew communities that are found in the bottom of the narrow canyon area represent species not common to this region.

Several of the species, ie. mountain lady-slipper, clustered lady-slipper and western paper birch, are species of interest and concern in Oregon to the Oregon State Natural Heritage Program. Clustered lady-slipper (*Cypripedium fasciculatum*) is recognized as a BLM sensitive species and is suspected to occur here.

This area needs to be thoroughly inventoried and a total species list and plant communities descriptions completed.

### ***Animals***

Bull trout have been designated as a Category II Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act. Category II Candidate Species designation are for those species for which U.S. Fish and Wildlife service has information to indicate that listing is possibly appropriate.

The margined sculpin, a non-game fish on the ODFW sensitive species list due to its limited distribution also is found here.

## **Cultural Resources**

A reconnaissance of lands along the South Fork of the Walla Walla River resulted in the identification of one historic site and one prehistoric property. Lands on the river may include traditional use locations of continuing importance to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

The relevance and importance of cultural resource values of the area cannot be defined until further investigations are undertaken. The river and its adjacent uplands have the potential to contain cultural resource properties; however, a systematic inventory of undisturbed lands would require subsurface investigations.

A free-standing, native cobblestone chimney is all that remains of a dwelling once situated at the river's edge downstream from the confluence of Elbow Creek. No historic archaeological or other structural remains were observed in association with the stone chimney. The dwelling was probably erected and occupied sometime during the period 1920-1940. The historic site is not known to have been associated with important local or regional events or persons, and is not considered a property of historic significance. An attractive and quaint feature, the stone chimney has some potential for interpretation if stabilized. Presently the hearth of the chimney is used by recreationists for building campfires and burning trash.

A prehistoric cultural resource is located within the boundaries of the proposed ACEC. The resource has been severely impacted by recreational use including off-road vehicle use, campfire construction, and erosion exacerbated by vehicle abuse. Subsurface testing is needed to evaluate the potential of the property to yield important information. The site will be protected, but unevaluated until further investigations are conducted.

According to historic records, the drainage of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River was an important resource locality for the Native American inhabitants of the region. The river was identified for the perpetuation of traditional uses by present and future generations of Native Americans. Such historic use areas are important for maintaining traditional lifeways, and are identified among the rights reserved by the Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Cayuse tribes under the 1855 treaty which ceded these lands to the federal government.

## **Water Quality**

Although, "water quality" does not meet any of the specific criteria of relevance and importance for ACEC designation, it is an important characteristic due to the habitat requirements for fisheries. At the present time, the quality of the water in the South Fork of the Walla Walla River is considered good based on the occurrence of bull trout and on visual observations.

The city of Milton-Freewater has an historic water right on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River, however, the intake point is downstream from the proposed ACEC boundary area.

## ***FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS***

### **Lands and Realty Management**

#### ***Land Ownership***

The ACEC encompasses 3,385.65 acres of land as shown on the attached map. Land ownership within the ACEC is shown in the following table. The ACEC boundaries are based on resource values and do not take into account land ownership. However, ACEC actions only apply to public lands.

Bureau of Land Management	1,256.69
Umatilla County	0.00
Private	1,827.18
Private with Federal Minerals	<u>301.78</u>
Total	3,385.65

### ***RMP Direction***

The lands in the ACEC are located within the Baker RMP's land tenure adjustment Retention/Acquisition Zone. As such, management direction is to retain BLM lands in public ownership and to emphasize acquisitions through donation, exchange or purchase to increase public land holdings in the area. The Baker RMP identifies ACEC's as avoidance areas for the issuance of new Right-of-Way authorizations.

The Baker RMP also includes direction that lands acquired within special management areas (including ACEC's) will be managed in conformance with established guidelines for those areas.

### ***Access***

Physical and legal access to both the ACEC area and BLM lands is provided by Umatilla County Road number 600. As a result, adequate access for both administrative and public use exists.

### ***Existing Rights-of-Way***

A road right-of-way, (OR 16303), exists on the main road through the ACEC. This right-of-way was granted to Boise Cascade Corporation in 1978 to construct a road, with four bridges, to facilitate log hauling from company lands on Blalock Mountain. This right-of-way gives Boise Cascade a non-exclusive right to use the road for log hauling. The grant contains special stipulations designed to reduce conflicts with recreational use. Boise Cascade is responsible for maintenance of the road and bridges during periods they use the road for log hauling. Boise has no immediate plans for logging their lands on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River.

A trail right-of-way, ORE 017223, exists along the river through the ACEC. This right-of-way (44L.D.513) was acquired by the U.S. Forest Service in 1947 for a trail to provide access to the Umatilla National Forest. When originally constructed the trailhead was in the vicinity of Harris Park and traversed the entire length of BLM land. The road construction in 1978 destroyed some of the trail and the remaining sections between Harris Park and Elbow Creek have received limited use.

The road from Elbow Creek on up the South Fork of the Walla Walla River was used for access to private land and US Forest Service land until February, 1991 when the bridges were closed. This was considered "casual use" and did not require a right-of-way.

A stream gauging station is located within the ACEC and is operated by the U.S.G.S.

The SE¼SE¼ of section 1 is withdrawn as a public water reserve. The withdrawal segregates the lands from the public land laws and non-metalliferous mining activities. The original purpose of a public water reserve was to cover public lands containing

springs and waterholes needed or used by the public for watering purposes. As a part of the Bureau-wide review process, the withdrawal was recommended for revocation.

## **Oil and Gas Leasing and Minerals Management**

The area is classified as being prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources. There is no known potential for the occurrence of any other locatable or leasable mineral resources. The Columbia River basalt often is a good source for aggregate (crushed rock source).

The Federal mineral estate is open for location under the U.S. Mining Laws, as amended. No mining claims have been located within or near this area.

The older rocks which occur under the Tertiary age Columbia River basalts have low to moderate potential for oil and gas. The sedimentary beds which occur between some of the Columbia River basalt flows have low to moderate potential for natural gas. At the present time, no commercial quantities of oil or natural gas have been discovered in any of these formations.

The Federal mineral estate in the vicinity of the proposed ACEC has been leased for oil and gas in the past. The most recent oil and gas lease, OR 43138, was terminated on January 1, 1991. This lease was authorized subject to standard stipulations. Standard stipulations are described on page 31 of the Baker Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (ROD).

When the oil and gas decisions in the ROD are implemented, there will be an additional special stipulation attached to any future leases for (119.98) acres of public land within the proposed ACEC. This will be a seasonal restriction on drilling operations during the period November 1 to April 15 due to critical elk and deer winter habitat. The following legal descriptions describe the lands which will be subject to the seasonal restriction:

T. 4 N., R. 37 E., WM

Sec. 10: Lot 4, NWNW, & SENW 119.98

Total acres within proposed ACEC with  
a seasonal stipulation. 119.98

## **Grazing Management**

The BLM land along the South Fork of the Walla Walla River has been subjected to both sheep and cattle grazing for many years. Because of past heavy use by livestock, the side slopes outside of the riparian zone, are still dominated by annual plant species, ie. cheatgrass, rattlesnake brome, etc. For an idea of what most of the riparian zone must have looked like at one time, one needs only to drive up the North Fork of the Walla Walla River. That portion of the South Fork which is not now being heavily impacted primarily by recreational uses has healed very nicely as most of the component plant species that make up good condition sites are present.



Prior to 1971, BLM issued a grazing lease to Harris Pine Mills, owners of most of the adjacent private lands. In 1971, the lease was transferred to Frazier Cattle Company of Walla Walla, Washington and it remained with them until 1984. In 1984, Harris Pine Mills sold their holdings in this area to Boise Cascade Corporation. Boise Cascade did not renew a grazing lease with Frazier Cattle Company, so Frazier dropped their BLM lease. Boise Cascade began leasing their property north of the river to Norman Kelly for grazing cattle.

The Boise Cascade property lying south of the river is under a grazing lease to Jim West of Lone, Oregon. This lease is for early spring use by sheep going to the U.S. Forest Service sheep allotment lying to the south and east of the BLM land.

The only livestock use on BLM land would be by stray livestock drifting down to the canyon bottom and the very limited use made by sheep during trailing. The U.S. Forest Service property just upstream from the BLM is not part of any grazing allotment. It is however, subject to some livestock use by straying animals.

## **Recreation Management**

A study done in 1981 revealed weekend visitor use alone to be approximately 7,000 visitors per year. The average weekend visitor use was approximately 135 visitors per weekend. The peak weekends were: Opening day of fishing - approximately 700 visitors, Memorial Day - approximately 600 visitors and July 4th - approximately 800 visitors. Visitor use in the last 10 years has increased but we have no current data. Visitor uses include; off-highway vehicle use, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, and sight-seeing.

The area has historically been used for a variety of off-highway-vehicle organized events including motorcycles and four-wheel drives. All these activities have taken place in trespass because no use permits have been issued. Little to no enforcement has occurred. These events have resulted in extensive damage to upland and riparian vegetation.

Prior to the bridges being closed, the primary staging area for off-highway-vehicle use was upriver from the fourth bridge. Since the bridges have been closed staging has occurred at the stream gauging station. Concentrated use at this site has resulted in the need for a developed staging area/trailhead facility.

The BLM lands have been closed to overnight camping since 1981. However, throughout the years, BLM lands have experienced everything from long staying overnight camping to occupancy trespass. This has somewhat been reduced since the bridges have been closed. Enforcement by BLM of this trespass problem as well as the vehicle trespass problem has been virtually non-existent. Some help in this area has been provided through earlier agreements with the Umatilla County Sheriff Department and Oregon State Police. However, this is no longer in effect due to lack of funding.

Indiscriminate use of firearms over the past few years has resulted in numerous complaints. The safety of visitors in the canyon corridor necessitates some type of firearm restrictions.

Virtually all the area's recreation use occurs in the sensitive riparian zone. In addition, the size of the riparian zone has been reduced through road improvements.

The effects of recreational use and overcrowding are evident throughout the canyon bottom. The area has suffered from excessive litter, high levels of noise, soil compaction and defoliation from extensive vehicle parking and OHV use, during the high use season (April through September).

The Forest Service, Walla Walla Ranger District, of the Umatilla National Forest, developed a trail system for motorized use, under a trail easement, that provides access to an off-road-vehicle area up river within the Umatilla National Forest. The trail is also used by hikers and horseback riders, sometimes resulting in conflicts between users.

## **Scenic Values Management**

The South Fork of the Walla Walla River ACEC is within a VRM Class II area. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominate natural features of the characteristic landscape.

## **Fisheries Management**

Fish species currently present are steelhead, bull trout, margined sculpin and stocked rainbow trout. Spring chinook salmon were present until the 1950's. ODFW plans are to reintroduce spring chinook salmon possibly within the next five years. The river is currently being stocked with about 8,000 rainbow trout annually. They plan to stock about 100,000 steelhead smolts in the next several years.

No precise condition or trend data is available due to a lack of studies. It is unknown which human disturbances and/or natural conditions are the key limiting factors at present. Still, it is apparent that fishery habitat has been adversely impacted by human activities. Streambanks have been altered, and sediment input to the stream has increased. In-stream woody debris, which serves as fish cover, is not as common as it should be. The habitat condition is below it's potential. However, the stream is clear and cold and the fishery is healthy according to ODFW fish census data. The habitat could be improved with proper management.

In the past, unmanaged visitor use has caused a human waste and litter problem resulting in damage to fishery habitat. The vehicle use leading up the canyon caused water quality and stream stability problems in several locations. Off-road vehicle travel and concentrated recreational use has resulted in bank damage and/or sediment transport into the river. Livestock have occasionally caused similar erosion problems.

Because of limited street vehicle access during 1991, due to the condition of the bridges, there was less recreation use pressure in the upstream corridor. There was less pressure by fishermen on the fishery resource as well as less human waste and litter.

## **Riparian Management**

Existing and increased human use (associated with the road up the middle of the canyon and off-road parking) conflicts with maintaining and enhancing the riparian vegetation of the area. For example soil compaction from vehicle parking will restrict expansion of riparian plant species and very little resprouting will occur on the paper birch and other riparian species. Most trees are old. There should be more young plants in the community to allow for replacement. Uncompacted soil would encourage the growth of more young plants in the community.

Because street vehicles have been excluded from much of the riparian corridor this past year, there has been a noticeable increase in ground cover as well as expansion of riparian vegetation.

## **Wildlife Management**

The ODFW has identified the South Fork of the Walla Walla River as a potential release site for the reintroduction of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep. The Umatilla National Forest has a domestic sheep allotment above the BLM lands. Due to the possible disease transmission between domestic and wild sheep, ODFW is reluctant to proceed with the bighorn sheep transplant.

The canyon is used heavily by elk hunters. Most hunting occurs upriver from BLM lands. However, the BLM lands are used extensively for passage up the canyon. In years prior to the road closure camping in the riparian area was a frequent occurrence during hunting season. Since the road closure, camping occurred most often upriver from BLM lands and in Harris Park.

## **Forest and Woodland Management**

The Baker RMP identifies 126 acres of commercial forestland in the drainage as economically nonoperable, meaning timber values are far less than costs of harvest. This area has been removed from the allowable harvest base acreage. The remaining 120 acres (including 40 acres of recently acquired timberland) are generally located on, or immediately adjacent, to the canyon floor. These acres are included in the allowable harvest base acreage. However, the RMP further states that timber harvest in the Blue Mountain Geographic Unit will be restricted to maintain watershed, wildlife, and recreation values. Throughout the entire unit, this will reduce the available harvest by an average of approximately 15%. Depending on the specific site, limitations on timber harvest could range from nearly complete to almost none. Because of other significant resources on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River, current restrictions on timber management reduce the total amount of forest products available for harvest by approximately 85%.

## **Special Status Species Management**

### ***Plants***

The existing plant communities and crystal clear stream make the area very unique and attractive. Members of the Oregon Natural Heritage Program and the Nature Conservancy evaluated the lands proposed for ACEC designation on October 9, 1992. A letter received from them indicated their support of the area's designation as an ACEC. They also support the recommendations to exclude livestock grazing and the proposal to acquire additional lands into public ownership within the ACEC boundaries.

They recognized the area as containing a "high" quality example of a paper birch riparian community". They said, "This natural community is very rare in Oregon." They also identified another distinct natural community, the grand fir - Douglas fir/snowberry type. They considered the potential of the area for a Research Natural Area, however stated, "with the realization that recreation use will continue to be popular in the area, we feel at this time, RNA designation is not prudent." They further stated, "overall, the river corridor is in remarkable condition and represents an outstanding opportunity to protect a watershed that has numerous, unique natural values."

The species of *Cypripedium* (lady's slipper) listed earlier are very showy and beautiful plants. This fact makes them, as well as other showy species, highly susceptible to collection by the public especially for the horticultural trade. They also do not survive transplanting well.

Known populations of BLM sensitive species would be protected from disturbance or degradation.

### ***Animals***

Bull trout have been designated as a Category II Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act. Category II Candidate Species designation are for those species for which U.S. Fish and Wildlife service has information to indicate that listing is possibly appropriate. Additional information is being collected. No site specific population information is available.

The margined sculpin, a non-game fish which is on the ODFW sensitive species list due to its limited distribution also is found here. No site specific information has been collected on this species.

With the current USFS designation of a watershed emphasis for their lands above the BLM stretch and the BLM closure of the bridges, threats to the fisheries habitat have been diminished. However, water purity and temperature will still need to be monitored.

## **Cultural Resource Management**

Known cultural resources will be protected from disturbance or degradation, pending evaluation of a property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. High volumes of concentrated visitor use, and continued unauthorized uses, indicate a need for

increased attention to patrol. Monitoring for cultural resources is also needed. Any ground disturbing actions, or management actions which have the potential for concentrating recreation visitor or vehicle use, will require further cultural resource investigations, evaluations of property significance, and monitoring.

## **Water Quality Management**

The Umatilla National Forest Plan designates the headwaters of the South Fork of the Walla Walla River for limited timber harvesting in favor of water quality and scenic values.

The Director of Public Works, for the City of Milton-Freewater indicated the city has an old water right on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River but has not activated (used) the right for several years. The point of intake for the city is downstream from the ACEC area. If the city does activate its water right, the BLM could expect changes in required water quality management.

Water quality will be affected by road and parking area construction needed for recreational development. The current location of roads, fords, recreational facilities, existing use areas and off-road vehicle use areas may be affecting water quality. There is a lack of water quality baseline data.

## **Fire Management**

There is a greater probability of fires occurring because of heavy public use of the area. There is currently no guidance for wildfire containment, fire salvage or fire rehabilitation for the proposed ACEC area should a wildfire occur.

Reintroduction of prescribed fire may be necessary to restore, maintain, or enhance the vegetation communities.

# ***MANAGEMENT ACTIONS***

## **Lands and Realty Management**

- Seek to acquire unimproved private lands within the ACEC to enhance and/or protect natural values and further management objectives. Acquire from willing owners through purchase, exchange or donation. Acquire conservation easements to prevent incompatible use or development of private land when fee title acquisition is not possible. Acquire private land with improvements (buildings, etc.) only when they pose a specific and significant threat to the management objectives of the ACEC.

Acquisition priorities are:

1. Tracts that front the South Fork of the Walla Walla River.
  2. Forested tracts.
  3. Rangeland tracts.
- Right-of-way grants and renewals shall be limited to the area necessary for operation and maintenance, will consider the protection of public safety and ensure any use authorized

shall be consistent with the ACEC values as designated.

## **Oil and Gas Leasing and Mineral Management**

- Change the management decision in the Baker Resource Area Management Plan Record of Decision from:
  - All new oil and gas leases subject to standard protective stipulations plus a winter season restrictive stipulation on 119.98 acres; -

to:

- All new oil and gas leases subject to standard protective stipulations plus a special "no surface occupancy" stipulation for all public land within the ACEC boundary presently about 1,256.69 acres, plus an additional 302 acres of private surface with Federal Minerals Estate.
- Prohibit development of mineral material resources within the ACEC boundary, unless needed on an "emergency basis," to protect ACEC values. This area has no known potential for the occurrence of locatable mineral resources therefore withdrawal from mineral entry under the U.S. Mining laws, as amended, is not proposed.

## **Grazing Management**

- Grazing leases will no longer be issued on BLM lands within the ACEC.
- Livestock trailing permits will be considered as long as the trailing period is less than 1 day.

## **Recreation Management**

- Do not maintain or repair Bridges #2, #3, #4 on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River.
- Maintain the first bridge for public and all vehicle use.
- No camping will be permitted on BLM lands, until such time we can provide for it, so its consistent with ACEC management.
- From the road intersection with the western BLM boundary (at the cattleguard) to the gate/barricade, develop intensive recreational facilities such as parking areas, restrooms and trailhead/staging area and information center about the ACEC. These developments should occur within the currently disturbed areas. They should have minimal impacts to the existing riparian vegetation.
- From the gate/barricade to the intersection of the eastern/north eastern BLM boundary and the road, permit limited recreational facilities, (restrooms and trails), while emphasizing protection of the ACEC values.
- Close the river corridor from the cattleguard to the gate/barricade to discharge of firearms.
- Establish law enforcement program to enforce the ORV designation, camping and shooting prohibition. This law enforcement effort would be in cooperation with the Umatilla County Sheriff, Oregon State Police and Umatilla National Forest.
- Establish a facilities maintenance program in cooperation with Umatilla County Parks Commission, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Umatilla National Forest.

### **- Short Term**

- Remove the 4th bridge.
- Construct a gate/barricade to facilitate this limited access between the stream gauging station and Bridge #2.
- Continue to allow OHV's, equestrians, mountain bikes and hikers to use the remaining bridges until their removal.
- Work with the Umatilla National Forest to amend right-of-way ORE 017223 and to repair and/or modify the trail on the North side of the river to provide access for OHV's, equestrians, mountain bikes and hikers.
- Upon completion of the preceding action, remove bridges #2 and #3.
- Monitor remaining bridges safety and structural integrity annually until removed.



- **Long-term** (After all bridges and have been removed.)

- Provide access to OHV's, equestrians, mountain bikes and hikers on the trail on the north side of the river and on the existing road where its on the north side of the river.
- Construct a gate on the Elbow Creek road before it intersects the South Fork of the Walla Walla River road to limit access.
- Permit rehabilitation of the old road surface if necessary.

## **Scenic Values Management**

- Ensure that all resource activities meet the requirements of a VRM Class II area.
- Each field management action should be proceeded by a VRM contrast rating inventory to assist in determining layout and design. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

## **Fisheries Management**

- Public informational signs, brochures, and articles concerning the values of the ACEC and the needs for special management will be used where appropriate to help ensure that public use is consistent with the values of the ACEC.
- Increase large woody debris and instream diversity as identified by the baseline data.
- Hazardous tree removal will be coordinated with fishery biologists to provide instream habitat diversity where needed.
- Work with private landowners and United States Forest Service (USFS) upstream to encourage the protection of the fishery habitat. It is important that the overall management of the watershed places a high priority on maintenance or even improvement of the fishery habitat that exists there.
- Collect baseline data on condition and trend of fishery habitat.
- Examine past use of the Salmon-Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) and coordinate with the ODFW as to its future use.

## **Riparian Management**

- Inventory existing species, conditions and characteristics of the riparian plant community.
- Prohibit indiscriminate cutting of live shrubs or trees within the riparian zone.

- From the road intersection with the western BLM boundary (at the cattleguard) to the gate/barricade, minimize disturbance of the natural environment by focusing human use away from existing pockets of well established riparian vegetation in good condition. This will be done by designating parking and trails in established use areas and through the use of barricade signs and other public information as necessary.
- From the gate/barricade on upriver, maintain or enhance riparian vegetation by providing for control of recreation use through enforcement of the OHV designation, and establishment of barricades, signs and public information.

## **Wildlife Management**

- Limit OHV traffic beyond the gate/barricade during severe winters, as determined necessary in cooperation with ODFW (between December 15 and March 15) to relieve stress on wintering elk.
- Collect baseline data on wildlife species and habitats of the area.
- If involved parties agree to transplant Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, then BLM will allow transplant and provide habitat where available on public lands.

## **Fire Management**

- In case of wildfire use "light hand on the land" only techniques which utilize hand lines, burn outs and air tankers.
- No tractors will be authorized until the Area Manager or designated representative approves.
- No fire salvage will occur unless it meets the goal of ACEC management.
- After a fire authorize immediate rehabilitation methods such as contour falling. Allow native plants to re-establish the sites.
- Study the fire history of the area and apply to the management of the ACEC values through prescribed fire if necessary.
- Any prescribed fire in the area will comply with State smoke management requirements.

## **Forest and Woodland Management**

- Continue to exclude timber harvest on 126 acres of BLM lands except permit silvicultural practices on this area which are intended to enhance forest values for other resources and safety. Examples of these types of operations could include non-commercial stocking control to improve tree vigor or remove undesirable species, or prescribed burning to reduce forest fuels and prevent destructive wildfires.
- Permit limited commercial harvest on the remaining 120 acres when such operations are compatible with maintaining ACEC values. This would amount to recovering the value,

as sawlogs or firewood, of trees which need to be removed to preserve the ACEC experience or provide for visitor safety. Available harvest in the area would be reduced by 99%, but yearly timber removal of approximately 2 Mbf (equivalent to about 4 cords) would be permitted.

- Artificially reforest with either commercial or non-commercial tree species and riparian shrubs to maintain ACEC values.
- If snags or green cull trees, which are important for wildlife, also pose a hazard for human use, consider removing the tree tops (by blasting or cutting) to reduce weight and wind resistance.
- Close the area to fuelwood cutting except where prescribed for hazard tree removal.
- Forest management activities on any future acquisitions of forestland would be governed by the above guidelines. Commercial activities would either be excluded or limited depending on location and accessibility of the tract.

## **Special Status Species**

### ***Plants***

- Discourage collection of wildflowers in the area by building public awareness through signing, brochures, public contacts, etc.
- Initiate a special botanical study of the area to ensure a complete inventory of species present. Determine if special status plants are present, as well as acquiring baseline data on any special status plants.
- Complete a management plan for special status plants if necessary.
- Establish a monitoring system to measure deviations from baseline data.

### ***Animals***

- Work with ODFW to collect baseline data on bull trout and margined sculpins.
- Maintain quality of habitat for margined sculpin and bulltrout in cooperation with ODFW and Umatilla National Forest.
- Monitor water temperature through use of USGS gauging station information.

## **Cultural Resource Management**

- Evaluate the prehistoric property prior to development of projects or recreation management prescriptions for the ACEC area. When evaluation is completed, a specific use allocation will be made by amendment to the ACEC management plan.
- Exclude vehicle use and surface disturbing actions from a one acre area by installing

physical barriers (gate and fence) to protect the prehistoric property.

- Cultural inventories will be implemented immediately upon identification of appreciable improvement in ground surface visibility at locations within the ACEC. Newly acquired lands will be systematically inventoried and evaluated for cultural resource within one year or as soon as possible following the land acquisitions. If important cultural resources are found as a result of further investigations of Bureau lands, or upon acquired lands, the ACEC management plan shall be amended to incorporate management actions needed for the protection and preservation of such properties.
- The historic Elbow Creek stone chimney/hearth may be stabilized, interpreted, or adapted for recreation use.
- Cooperate with public interest groups and residents to implement a plan for preservation and adaptive use of the stone chimney.
- Complete cultural resource inventories of the area prior to development of recreation management plans or projects.
- Evaluate all ground disturbing projects for potential impacts to cultural resources.
- Archaeological monitoring of projects is required until more comprehensive studies are completed.
- Coordinate with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to develop management objectives for cultural resources within the ACEC.

## **Water Quality Management**

- Establish appropriate baseline inventory on water quality data as recommended by the District Hydrologist.
- Recreational developments design and construction must maintain water quality standards.

## ***MONITORING NEEDS***

### **Recreation Management**

- Establish recreation monitoring program to include visitor use, facility and maintenance surveys.
- Monitor the 4 bridges for structural integrity annually until they are removed.

### **Fisheries Management**

- Fisheries condition and trend will be monitored by the BLM at several sites. The studies will be located so as to be representative of both the stream and human disturbances to it. The studies will be reread as necessary, but at least as often as every 5 years.

- Fish census data will continue to be collected by ODFW biologists as needed.
- A limiting factor analysis will be performed to determine if any special management action would be warranted in the future.

### **Riparian Management**

- Monitor riparian community health and regeneration.

### **Wildlife Management**

- Monitor for abundance and species diversity every five years.

### **Special Status Species Management**

#### ***Plants***

- Establish and implement a schedule of periodic monitoring of special status plant species to evaluate trend and develop management prescriptions as necessary.

#### ***Animals***

- Establish baseline information in BLM files from ODFW data on condition and trend of bull trout, steelhead and margined sculpin.
- Conduct fisheries habitat monitoring within the area.
- Participate in the recovery plans for salmon in the South Fork of the Walla Walla River with ODFW if appropriate.
- Monitor water temperature.

### **Cultural Resources Management**

- Monitor the known prehistoric property bi-annually for changes in condition and to protect against unauthorized uses. The monitoring schedule may be revised, upon completion of site evaluations. Monitor field condition changes that may expose archaeological resources.
- Monitoring shall include annual inspection to determine if visibility changes are occurring (through visitor use or natural processes) which would permit further examinations for cultural material.

## ***PERSONS CONSULTED***

Individuals, agencies and groups consulted include:

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Umatilla National Forest
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- East Side Rod and Gun Club
- Harris Park staff
- Umatilla County Parks Commission
- Umatilla County Commissioners
- Boise Cascade Corporation
- Off Road Vehicle groups
- Private landowners between BLM lands and USFS lands on the South Fork of the Walla Walla River.
- Oregon Natural Heritage Foundation

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**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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**2.3.5 *Powder River Final Management Plan / Environmental Assessment (1994)  
Excerpts***



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April, 1994



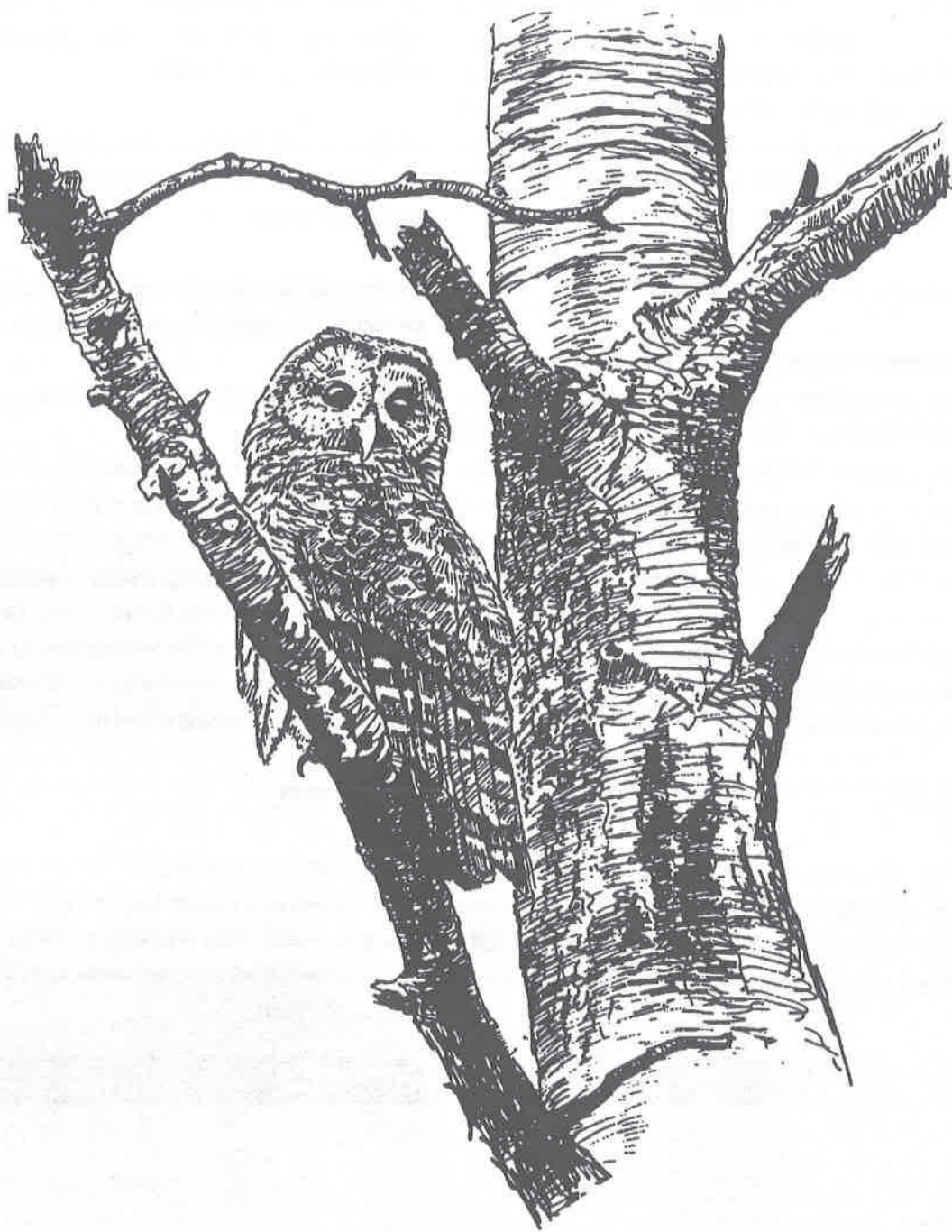
# POWDER RIVER

FINAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT





# CHAPTER 2 - EXISTING SITUATION



# OUTSTANDING REMARKABLE VALUES (ORVs)

## SCENIC

### CRITERIA FOR OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE RATING

The landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features and/or attractions. When analyzing scenic values, additional factors such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over the majority of the river or river segment.

### EVALUATION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

The designated river corridor for the Powder River contains a diversity of landform and vegetation that captures the attention of the viewer. The Powder River flows through a steep-walled canyon 500 feet in depth in some locations, giving one a remote and primitive feeling. The canyon is semidesert, with the Powder River providing a riparian contrast.

The hillsides are bunch grass and sage, with a few Ponderosa pines along the river that add a very interesting diversity of vegetation to the canyon.

### CONCLUSION

The Powder River corridor possesses much diversity in vegetation and topographic land forms. This preliminary finding agrees with the Congressional Record regarding the outstandingly remarkable scenic value of the Powder River.

## RECREATIONAL

### CRITERIA FOR OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE RATING

Recreational opportunities are, or have the potential to be, unique enough to attract visitors from outside of the geographic region. Visitors would be willing to travel a long distance to use the river resource for recreational purposes. River-related opportunities could include, but not limited to, sight-seeing, wildlife observation, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating.

Interpretive opportunities may be exceptional and attract or have the potential to attract visitors from outside the geographic region.

The river may provide or have the potential to provide settings for national or regional usage or competitive events.

### EVALUATION OF PRESENT SITUATION

The Powder River corridor provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The primary recreation activities within this segment of the Powder River are fishing, upland game and big game hunting, geologic, zoologic, scenic sight-seeing and minimal river floating. Only during the Spring runoff period is the Powder River floated by kayaks. Pursuit of this recreational opportunity is extremely limited and should only be attempted by the more skilled floater.

### CONCLUSION

The quality and diversity of recreational opportunities available along the Powder River corridor makes it a popular area year round. This preliminary finding agrees with the Congressional Record of recreation being an outstandingly remarkable value.



**2.3.6 BLM Boise District, Owyhee Resource Management Plan (1999) Excerpts**

# OWYHEE

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP)

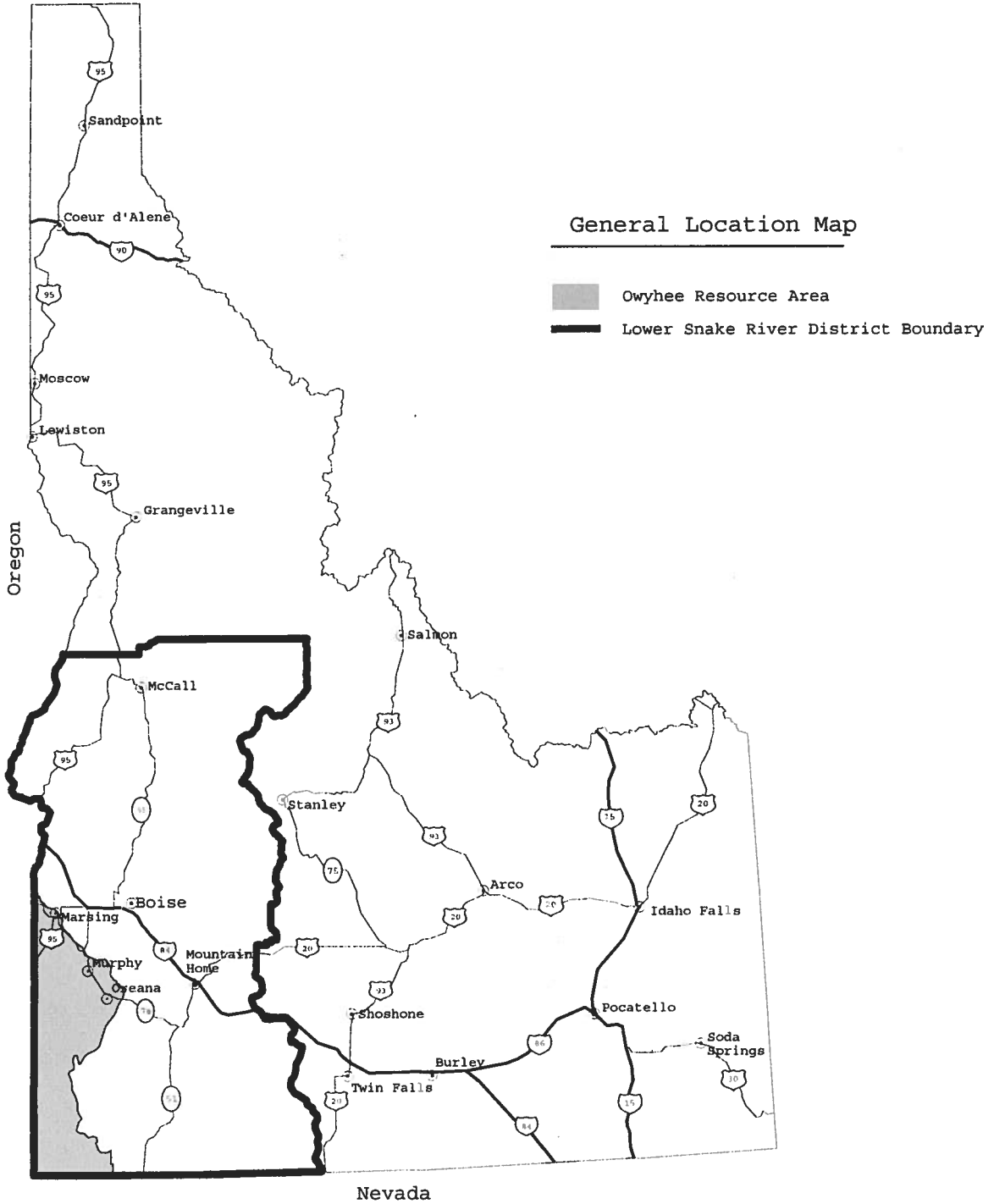
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December 30, 1999



U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management  
Lower Snake River District • Boise Field Office







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## **Owyhee Resource Management Plan Objectives, Management Actions and Allocations**

### **Visual Resources**

#### **Objective:**

**VISL 1:** Manage public lands for visual resource values under Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications.

**Rationale:** The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA; P.L. 94-579), Section 102(8), declares as policy that public lands will be managed to "... protect the quality of the scenic values... that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition." The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; P.L. 9-190), Section 101(b), requires federal agencies to "... assure for all Americans... esthetically pleasing surroundings." Section 102 of NEPA requires agencies to "...utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will ensure the integrated use of ... Environmental Design Acts in the planning and decision making..." process. Guidelines for the identification of VRM classes on public lands is contained in BLM Manual Handbook 8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory. The establishment of VRM areas is based upon an evaluation of the landscapes' scenic qualities, public sensitivity toward certain areas (such as special recreation designations or wilderness), and the location of affected lands from major travel corridors (distance zoning).

#### **Monitoring:**

- In VRM Class I and Class II areas, on-site visual quality control inspections will occur at the time of project construction, reconstruction, and maintenance.
- In VRM Class III and IV areas, ongoing quality control inspections of ORA project work in general will be done, however, attendance at specific project sites during construction, reconstruction, and maintenance will not be required.

#### **Management Actions and Allocations:**

1. Classify and manage public lands under the following VRM classifications:

Class I areas:	71,332 acres
Class II areas:	242,150 acres
Class II-IMP areas:	123,496 acres
Class III areas:	144,785 acres
Class IV areas:	738,228 acres

See Map VISL-1.

See Appendix VISL-1 for classification and objectives.

### **Cultural Resources**

#### **Objective:**

**CULT 1:** Protect known cultural resource values from loss until their significance is determined.

**Rationale:** The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 identifies federal agency responsibilities to preserve prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Cultural resource sites are deteriorating from the effects of vandalism and neglect.



## **Owyhee Resource Management Plan Objectives, Management Actions and Allocations**

### **Monitoring:**

- Monitor cultural resource sites to determine site condition and mitigation needs.

### **Management Actions and Allocations:**

1. Monitor a minimum of 15 cultural resource sites each year to determine site condition and provide information for developing management actions.
2. Mitigate the negative impacts to significant cultural resource sites known to be suffering the effects of agents of deterioration.
3. Develop management strategies to ensure preservation of cultural resource values within specific areas known to contain concentrations of unique or significant cultural resource sites.

### **Objective:**

**CULT 2:** Provide special management emphasis for the protection and conservation of significant cultural resource sites and values.

**Rationale:** The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 provides for the protection of cultural resource values on land managed by federal agencies and identifies federal agency responsibilities to preserve prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

### **Monitoring:**

- According to schedule outlined in the Oregon Trail Management Plan and the Birds of Prey Cultural Resource Management Plan.
- Make three site visits per year to ensure Silver City homeowner compliance with Owyhee County Historic Preservation Committee recommendations.

### **Management Actions and Allocations:**

1. Protect the integrity of those portions of the 80 mile Oregon Trail and associated cultural resource sites on public land. See Map CULT-1.
2. Manage the existing Silver City, DeLamar and Guffey Butte/Black Butte Historic Districts in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. See Map CULT-1.
3. Manage the existing Guffey Butte/Black Butte Archaeological District ACEC to protect cultural resource values. See Table ACEC-1 and Map CULT-1.
4. Identify, evaluate, and nominate sites/areas that qualify to the National Register of Historic Places and prepare Cultural Resource Management Plans for those sites.



## **Owyhee Resource Management Plan Objectives, Management Actions and Allocations**

2. Increase law enforcement actions and public education to reduce the amount of illegal disposal of hazardous materials on public lands.
3. Implement remediation/removal actions for hazardous materials incidents on public lands in a timely and efficient manner.
4. Actively pursue having the polluter pay for hazardous material incidents and cost reimbursement for actions taken by the BLM when a responsible party is identified.

### **Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

#### **Objective:**

**ACEC 1:** Retain existing and designate new areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) where relevance and importance criteria are met and where special management is needed to protect the values identified.

**Rationale:** Section 202 (c)(3) of FLPMA mandates that priority be given to the designation and protection of areas of critical environmental concern. Further guidance and evaluation criteria are found at 43 CFR Part 1610.7-2.

#### **Monitoring:**

- Relevant and important values of each designated ACEC would be monitored on a regular schedule to evaluate the effectiveness of management in maintaining those values.

#### **Management Actions and Allocations:**

1. Designate the following as areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs): See Map ACEC-1.
  - Guffey Butte/Black Butte Archaeological District (7,750 acres).
  - Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area (141,796 acres).
  - Boulder Creek Outstanding Natural Area (6,978 acres).
  - North Fork Juniper Woodland Outstanding Natural Area (4,204 acres).
  - Cinnabar Mountain Research Natural Area (277 acres).
  - Coal Mine Basin Research Natural Area (1,604 acres).
  - Jump Creek Canyon (612 acres).
  - McBride Creek Research Natural Area (261 acres).
  - Pleasant Valley Table Research Natural Area (1,467 acres).
  - Sommercamp Butte Research Natural Area (440 acres).
  - Squaw Creek Research Natural Area (150 acres).
  - The Badlands Research Natural Area (1833 acres).

The total acreage of the 12 designated areas is 167,372 acres.



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## **Owyhee Resource Management Plan Objectives, Management Actions and Allocations**

2. Designate The Tules as a Research Natural Area (114 acres). The Tules is within the boundary of the Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area ACEC.
3. Manage designated ACECs with the special management actions identified in Table ACEC-1.
4. Complete exclosure fencing of Squaw Creek RNA/ACEC and a segment of McBride Creek RNA/ACEC within two years.



## Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

ACECs are defined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) as areas within the public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards. Areas designated as Research Natural Areas (RNAs) and Outstanding Natural Areas (ONAs) are also designated as ACECs.

### **Guffey Butte/Black Butte Archaeological District ( 7,750 acres)**

The Guffey Butte/Black Butte Archaeological District was first designated as an ACEC on March 30, 1983 in the Kuna Management Framework Plan. The boundary encompasses 32,228 acres (26,714 public land acres) along 33 miles on both the north and south sides of the Snake River Canyon and corresponds with the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area boundary established in 1971. This area is within the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area established in 1993 by Public Law 103-64. About 7,750 acres of the Guffey Butte/Black Butte ACEC are within the Owyhee Resource Area. The remainder of the ACEC is located in the Bruneau Resource Area.

The Guffey Butte/Black Butte Archaeological District has long been known to be an area of intense prehistoric occupation. Its significance was recognized by its placement on the National Register of Historic Places in February, 1979. The 114 sites which comprise the district include a wide diversity of historic and prehistoric sites. The historic sites include Swan Falls Dam, Guffey townsite and railroad bridge, and the Halverson Bar mining settlement. A portion of the Oregon Trail also passes through the area. The prehistoric sites include a spectacular rock art site known as the Wees Bar petroglyph field and Shellbach Cave, the first scientifically excavated site in Idaho.

### **Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area ( 141,796 acres)**

The Owyhee River Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area was first designated as an ACEC on March 30, 1983 in the Bruneau and Owyhee Management Framework Plans. The boundaries of that ACEC encompassed 180,000 acres along the Owyhee River and in the Battle Creek-Deep Creek-East Fork Owyhee River and the South Fork Owyhee River areas; 129,763 acres in the Owyhee Resource Area with the remainder in the Bruneau Resource Area. The ACEC was designated to protect and enhance habitat for bighorn sheep, to maintain or improve the habitat to at least a good range condition class, and to protect and maintain the scenic and natural values present in the area. Habitat evaluation has resulted in identification of an additional 12,033 acres of suitable bighorn sheep habitat for a total of 141,796 acres in the Owyhee Resource Area. The ACEC is located within the following six Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) of the Owyhee Resource Area: Owyhee River Canyon, Little Owyhee River, Owyhee River-Deep Creek, South Fork Owyhee River, Yatahoney Creek, and Juniper Creek. All six of these areas have been recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The Tules area, which encompasses 114 acres, is within the southeast portion of the Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area ACEC (see description below). The Tules is designated as an RNA only since it is encompassed by the much larger ACEC.

California bighorn sheep, a BLM sensitive species which formerly occupied this region, were reintroduced into this area during the 1960's. It is estimated that about 500-700 bighorns occupy this area at the present time and it is anticipated that the populations will continue to expand into adjacent habitat in Nevada. The bighorns have already extended their range into the adjacent habitat in Oregon. In addition to bighorn sheep, the area also contains a diversity of other special status animal species including wintering bald eagles, ferruginous hawks, sage grouse, redband trout and several species of bats and neotropical



## Appendix ACEC-1 Area of Critical Environmental Concern

migratory birds. The ACEC also contains crucial deer winter habitat, as well as habitat for pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, river otter, beaver, chukar, and a diversity of waterfowl, raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibian species typically associated with riparian, canyon and shrub steppe habitats. The area contains numerous rugged, deep canyons which have exceptionally high scenic quality, and the Owyhee River, a popular early spring whitewater boating river. This river segment has been recommended suitable as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. It has also been designated as a Stream Segment of Concern (SSOC).

### **Boulder Creek (6,978 acres)**

Boulder Creek is comprised of a deep, winding canyon which cuts through a basalt and rhyolite tableland. A 10,741 acre area was recognized as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) in the 1981 Owyhee MFP based on high scenic values and multiple natural resource values. Interdisciplinary analysis concluded that 6,978 public land acres meet the ACEC criteria. This area is designated an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA/ACEC).

The dominant plant communities represented in the area include western juniper-Idaho fescue (*Juniperus occidentalis-Festuca idahoensis*) and western juniper-low sagebrush (*Artemisia arbuscula*), in addition to the riparian shrub component. The area also contains a number of special status animal species including redband trout, sage grouse and several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds as well as other wildlife including elk, mule deer, mountain lion, pronghorn antelope, river otter, beaver, chukar partridge, and a diversity of waterfowl, raptors, mammals and other nongame species.

### **Cinnabar Mountain (277 acres)**

Cinnabar Mountain, on the eastern edge of the Owyhee Mountains and at an elevation of 7,000 feet, contains excellent examples of reasonably undisturbed high elevation mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) communities. It also includes a low sagebrush-bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*) community on a windswept portion of Hayden Peak. Extensive historical as well as current use of the Owyhee Mountains has resulted in few such communities in excellent condition. Therefore, Cinnabar Mountain serves as a valuable rangeland reference area. Because of its elevation, Cinnabar Mountain also has high scenic values. A number of special status animal species are known or expected to occur in the area including sage grouse, one or more species of bats and neotropical migratory birds and a diversity of other wildlife species including elk, mule deer, mountain lion, several species of raptors and other nongame animals. Cinnabar Mountain is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC).

### **Coal Mine Basin (1,604 acres)**

The extensive and colorful ash beds present in Coal Mine Basin contain a diverse assemblage of plant communities, three BLM special status plant species, a large diversity of special status and other animal species, scenic values, and fossils of both vertebrates and plants. Smooth stickleaf (*Mentzelia mollis*), Packard's lomatium (*Lomatium packardiae*), and Malheur yellow phacelia (*Phacelia lutea* var. *calva*), are narrow endemic BLM sensitive plant species present at several locations within the area. Other special status plants such as Owyhee clover (*Trifolium owyheense*) and biennial princesplume (*Stanleya confertiflora*), grow in similar habitats but have not yet been found in this area. Plant communities include Wyoming sagebrush-bluebunch wheatgrass (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *wyomingensis*), mountain mahogany-Idaho fescue, Wyoming sagebrush-Idaho fescue, Great Basin wildrye (*Elymus cinereus*), needle-and-thread grass (*Stipa comata*), and low sage-Idaho fescue. Fossils of roots, leaves, fish, Oreodonts, and horses may





be found throughout the area. The layering and color variation of the ash flows combined with their topographic relief create a rugged and highly scenic landscape. Among the special status animal species known or very likely to occur are sage grouse, pygmy rabbit, and several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds as well as mule deer, pronghorn antelope, chukar, gray partridge, and a diversity of raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. This area is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC). Seven hundred fifty-five acres (755) adjacent to this area were addressed by the Vale District, Oregon BLM for designation as an RNA/ACEC in the October 1998 Draft Southeast Oregon RMP/EIS. If designated in Oregon, the two adjoining areas would have the same name and be referred to collectively as the Coal Mine Basin RNA/ACEC.

#### **Jump Creek Canyon (612 acres)**

Jump Creek Canyon contains excellent examples of several different undisturbed riparian communities along its perennial stream, a diversity of special status animal and other wildlife species, pockets of excellent condition Wyoming sagebrush-bluebunch wheatgrass, and high scenic values. Riparian communities include syringa-red-osier dogwood (*Philadelphus lewisii* - *Cornus stolonifera*), water birch-syringa (*Betula occidentalis*), and a water birch gallery forest. Special status animal species include redband trout which occur throughout the length of the creek, several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds that are known or expected to occur within riparian and canyon habitats bordering the creek and adjacent sagebrush steppe uplands, and the Mojave black-collared lizard which occurs in outcrops near the lower end of the canyon. Mule deer, mountain lion, various raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish also occur within this unique area. The presence of numerous waterfalls, springs, pools, and steep canyon walls have created a unique and highly scenic environment. A small portion of the area is currently designated as a recreation site, and the remainder is within the Jump Creek SRMA. Jump Creek is designated as a Stream Segment of Concern (SSOC).

#### **McBride Creek (261 acres)**

McBride Creek provides habitat for four BLM sensitive species, including smooth stickleaf, barren milkvetch (*Astragalus sterilis*), Cusick's false yarrow (*Chaenactis cusickii*), and Malheur yellow phacelia. All four are limited in distribution to volcanic ash flows on or near the Idaho-Oregon border. The area is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC).

#### **North Fork Juniper Woodland (4,204 acres)**

This area includes the North Fork Owyhee River Canyon and several tributary drainages which shed water from rhyolitic rock outcrop uplands at 5,000 to 5,800 feet elevation. This area was designated as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) in the 1981 Owyhee MFP. The area was also evaluated on the basis of "illustrative character, condition, diversity, rarity, and value for science and education" and, in 1987, the National Park Service recommended that the area be designated the North Fork Owyhee River National Natural Landmark (NNL) as the best example of a "montane western juniper woodland subtheme" in the Columbia Plateau Natural Region.

This area is dominated by a canopy of old-growth and mature stands of western juniper, with an upland understory of Idaho fescue intermingled with low sagebrush. Willow (*Salix*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), dogwood, alder (*Alnus* spp.), currant (*Ribes* spp.), wild rose (*Rosa woodsii*), sedges (*Carex* spp.) and grasses are dominant along the perennial and intermittent stream channels in the canyon bottoms. The area supports a number of special status animal species including redband trout and several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds as well as other wildlife including elk, mule deer, mountain lion, river



otter, beaver and a diversity of waterfowl, raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians typically associated with western juniper, riparian and shrub steppe habitats. This segment of the North Fork Owyhee River has been recommended suitable as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. The area is also within the North Fork Owyhee River WSA which has been recommended suitable for wilderness designation. This area is designated an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA/ACEC).

#### **Pleasant Valley Table (1,467 acres)**

Present within Pleasant Valley Table are excellent examples of Owyhee sagebrush-Sandberg bluegrass (*Artemisia papposa-Poa secunda*) and low sagebrush-Idaho fescue community types. The area has remained relatively undisturbed due to its rocky terrain. Owyhee sagebrush was at one time listed as a special status plant species in Idaho, but it has since been removed from that list. Although it is still a regional endemic, it is more common than previously believed. However, extensive and good condition communities dominated by this species are rare. Pleasant Valley Table also contains a rare community type occupied by silver sagebrush (*Artemisia cana*) and Idaho fescue. A number of special status animal species including sage grouse and several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds are known or expected to occur within the area as well as other wildlife including elk, mule deer, mountain lion, and a diversity of raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians typically associated with sagebrush steppe habitats. The entire area is within the North Fork Owyhee River WSA which has been recommended suitable for wilderness designation. This area is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC).

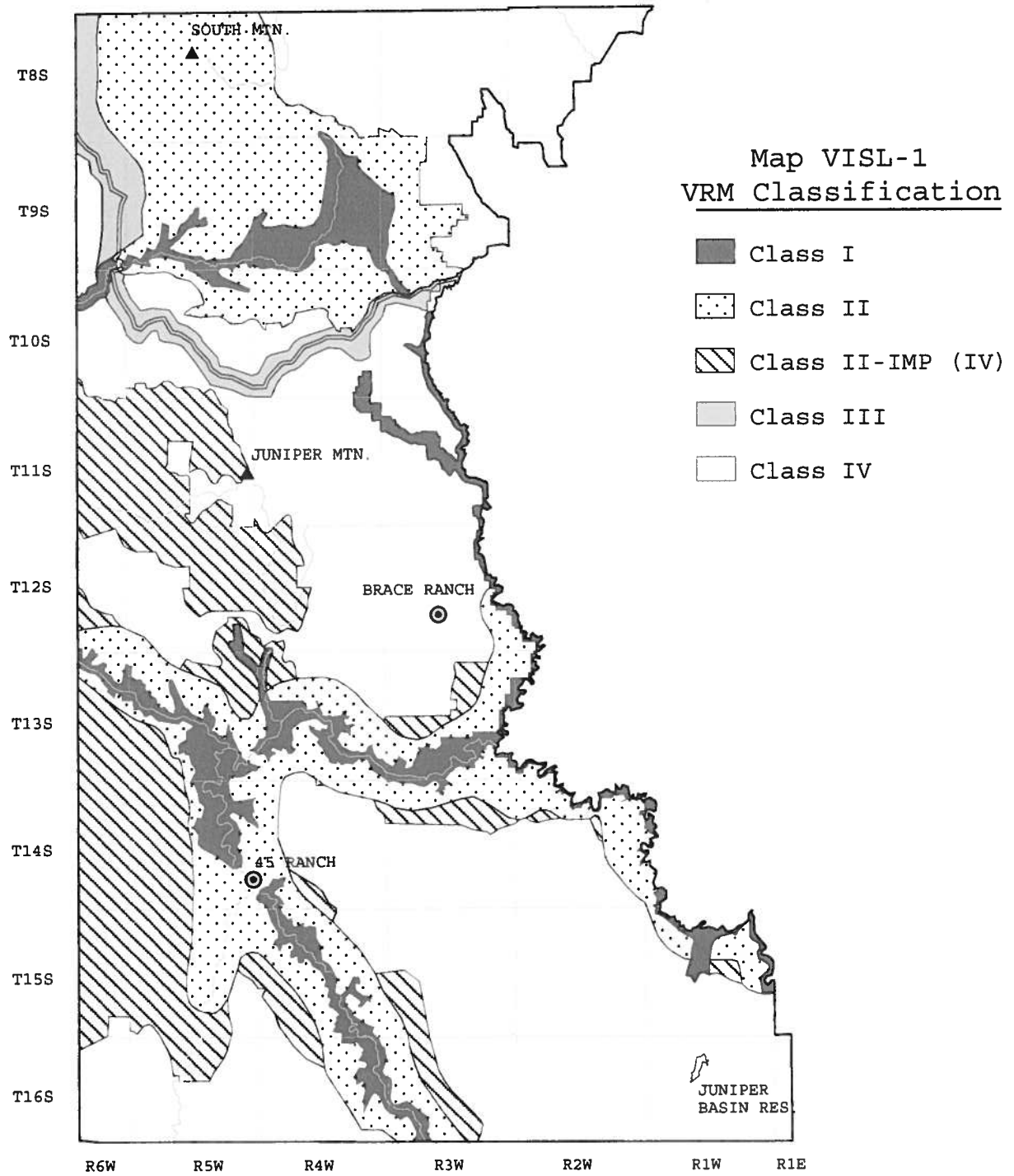
#### **Sommercamp Butte (440 acres)**

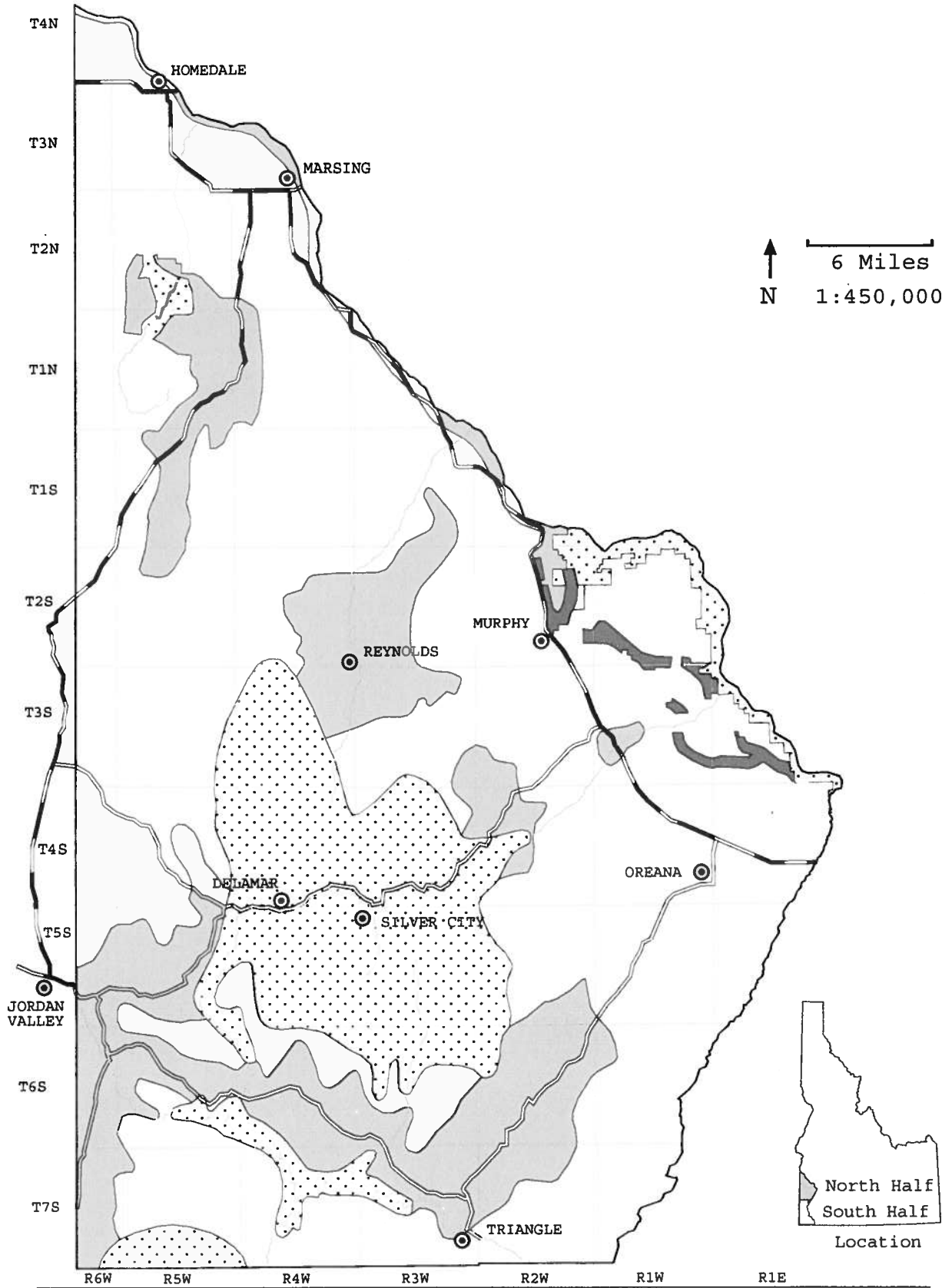
This area is noteworthy for its extensive, good ecological condition mountain mahogany-bluebunch wheatgrass community type. The rimrock butte top supports a mountain mahogany-gland ocean-spray (*Holodiscus dumosus*) community type. Mountain mahogany communities are currently poorly represented in special management areas within the Owyhee Uplands ecological region. The Sommercamp Butte area ranges in elevation from 6,000 to 6,360 feet. Because of its elevation, Sommercamp Butte also has relatively high scenic values. It is bordered to the north and east by State of Idaho land. Special status animal species known or expected to occur in the area include sage grouse, numerous neotropical migratory birds, bats, and a diversity of other wildlife including elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and a variety of raptors and other nongame species. Sommercamp Butte is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC).

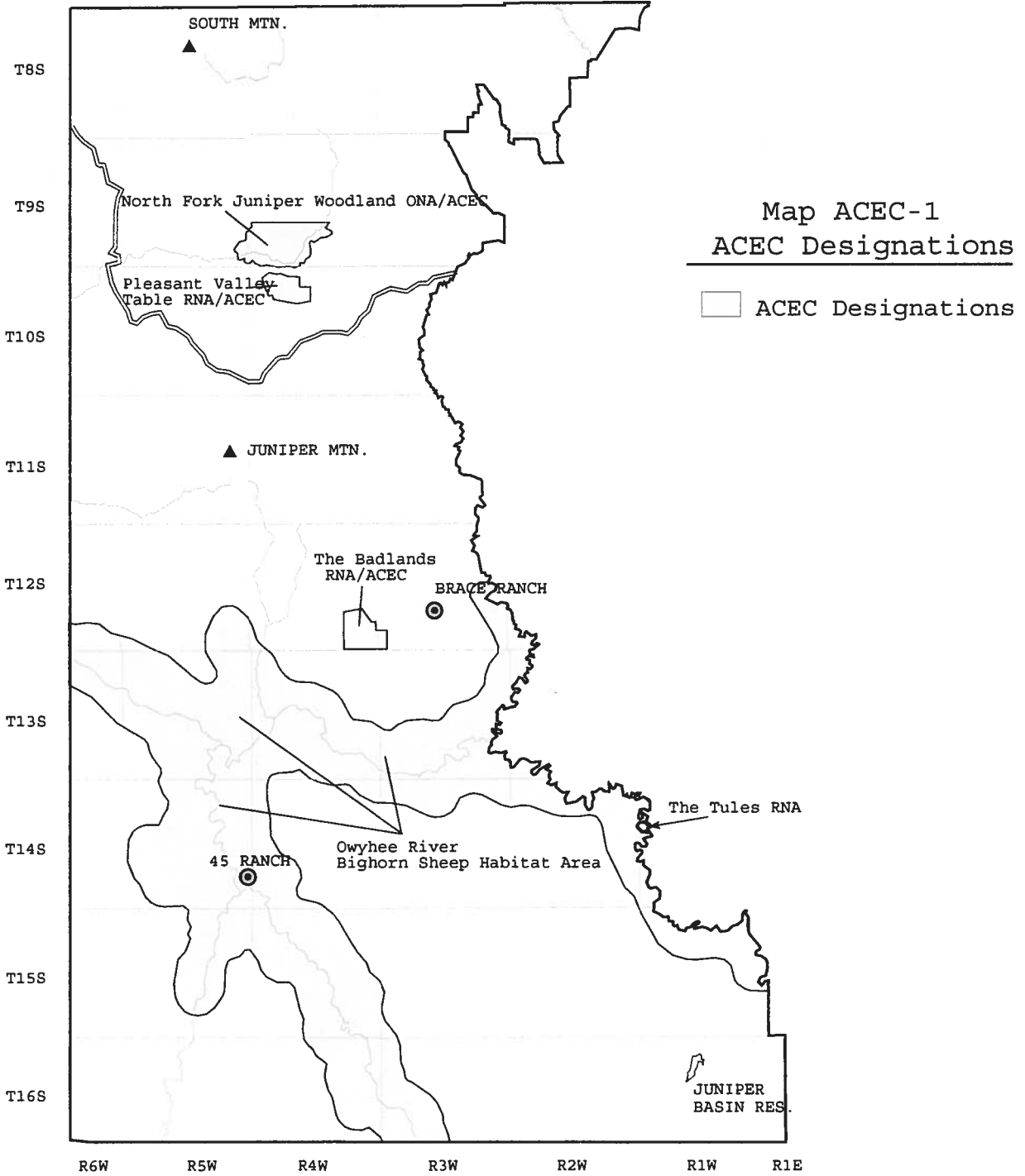
#### **Squaw Creek (150 acres)**

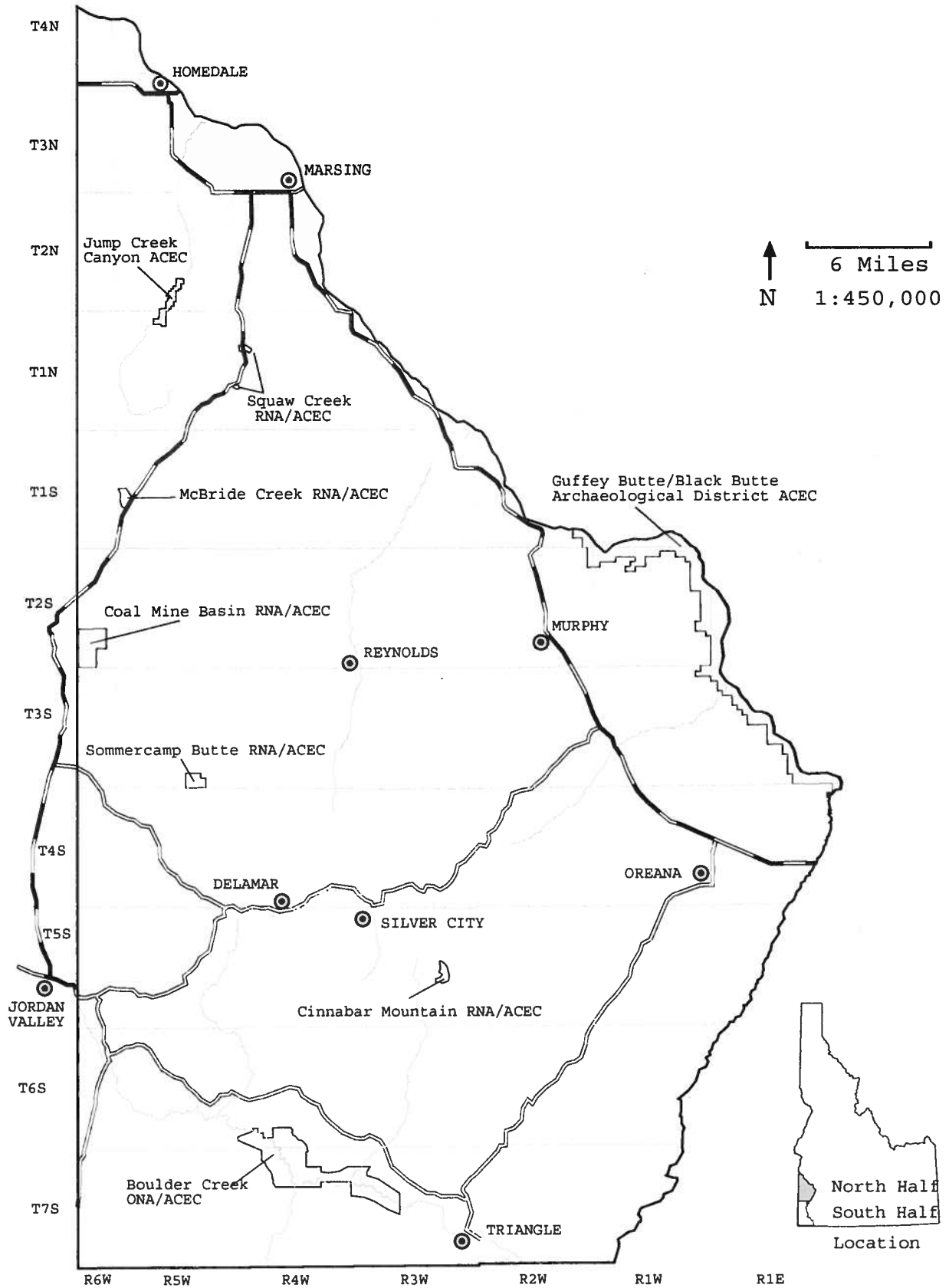
Two of the three physically separated portions of Squaw Creek are represented by excellent condition, low elevation Wyoming sagebrush-bluebunch wheatgrass communities. The northeast segment is within the Hardtrigger Wild Horse Herd Management Area. Both of the northern segments have been partially protected from livestock grazing by a lack of water, topography, and the presence of an old road-cut on all but one side. The third parcel to the south burned in 1989, and is now a bluebunch wheatgrass community, with Wyoming sagebrush beginning to return. It is also in excellent condition due to nearly complete isolation from grazing for many years. All areas contain an extensive microbiotic soil crust, resulting in little exposed soil. Squaw Creek is particularly valuable as a rangeland reference area, since so few low elevation bunchgrass communities in excellent condition remain. Special status animal species known or likely to occur in this area include sage grouse, California bighorn sheep, and several species of bats and neotropical migratory birds as well as other wildlife including mule deer, chukar, gray partridge, and a diversity of raptors and other nongame birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. This area is designated a Research Natural Area (RNA/ACEC).











**2.3.7 BLM Boise District, Cascade Resource Management Plan (1987) Excerpts**

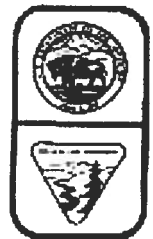


# C A S C A D E

## Proposed Resource Management Plan

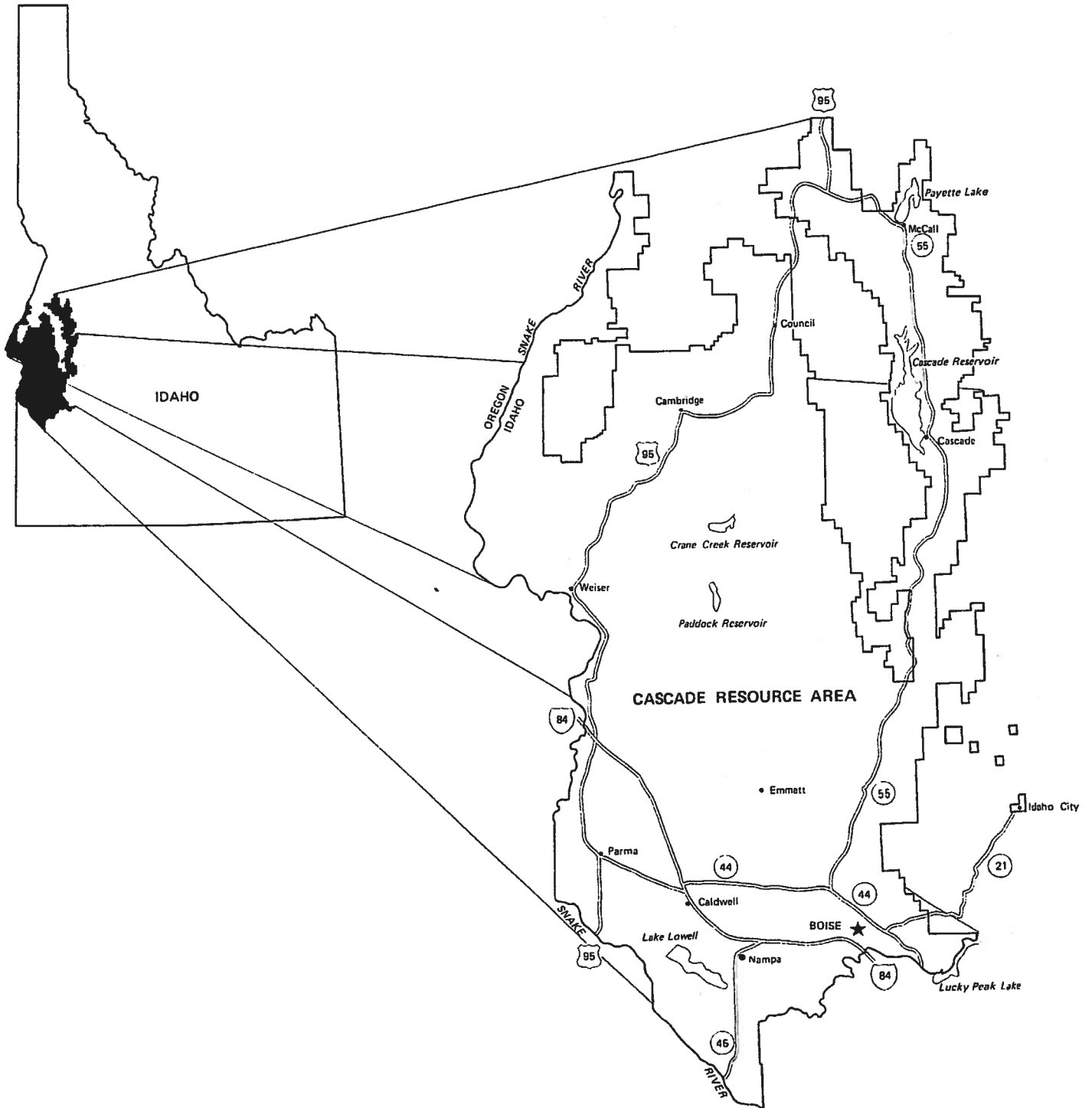
and

## Final Environmental Impact Statement



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**  
Boise District, Idaho  
August 1987

MAP 1



GENERAL LOCATION MAP

PART I

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## Selection of Preferred Alternative

Designation of these open play areas helps to divert this use from other more fragile areas and provide the opportunity to concentrate facilities to accommodate use.

The areas identified as closed to off-road vehicle use are those with candidate or sensitive plant species, proposed/existing developed recreation sites, and a motorcycle park buffer zone.

### Developed Site

Twenty-one areas have been identified for various levels of recreation management. Facilities will be managed/developed at 16 specific sites within these areas (campgrounds, boat launch, trails, high ORV use areas).

### Rationale

The plan identifies the need for designated sites primarily to accommodate increased demand on the important river systems (Weiser, Snake and Payette Rivers).

Because of the public land pattern in the Cascade Resource Area, most of the important recreation areas are located fairly close to population areas on lands administered by other state and federal agencies.

The recreationalist can utilize developed facilities provided by private enterprise, state parks or National Forest recreation sites while recreating on the adjacent public lands.

### VRM

Visual resource classes in the resource area will be managed as follows: 81,000 acres as Class II; 383,466 acres as Class III; 23,000 acres as Class IV.

### Rationale

The visual resource management system will be used to identify management proposals that may impact aesthetic values. The degree of alterations to the natural landscape would be guided by the criteria for the visual resource management classes in BLM Manual 8400.

### Wilderness

The Box Creek WSA (111-91A) was not analyzed for wilderness in this document.

### Rationale

The original wilderness inventory identified Box Creek as a wilderness study area because of its proximity to a National Forest roadless area. A separate EIS for areas less than 5,000 acres will evaluate this area for further wilderness consideration.

Designate and manage 21 areas as follows:

Sites	Special Management Areas		Minerals (acres)			ROW 1/			ORV (acres) 2/		
			Locat-ables	Lease-ables	No Surf	O	Surf	Sub.	O	L	C
			With-drawal	Clo-sed							
1. Cascade Uplands <u>3/</u>	ERMA	334,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	241,498	88,039	5
2. Weiser River	Boat Launch	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
3. Clay Peak	Cycle Park	948	0	0	948	0	948	0	436	0	512
4. Oxbow Brownlee	SRMA	40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39,779	0
5. Steck	Campground <u>5/</u>	11	0	0	11	11	11	0	0	0	11
6. Weiser Dunes	Play Area	200	0	0	0	0	200	0	200	0	0
7. Snake River	Boat Launch	10	0	0	10	10	10	0	0	10	0
8. Payette River Corridor <u>6/</u>	SRMA/WSR (2,600/8 mi)	19,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,984	0
9. North Fork	Campground <u>5/</u>	10	0	0	10	10	10	0	0	0	10
10. Garden Valley	Boat Launch	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
11. South Fork	Campground <u>5/</u>	3	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	3
12. Chief Parrish	Picnic Site	2	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	2
13. Boise Front <u>7/</u>	SRMA/ACEC	12,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,995	0
14. Hulls Gulch	Interpret. Trail	5	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	5
15. Treasure Valley <u>8/</u>	ERMA	72,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68,780	0
16. Little Gem	Cycle Park	3,000	0	0	0	0	3,000 <u>9/</u>	0	2,100	900	0
17. Dewey	Play Area	30	0	0	0	0	30	0	30	0	0
18. Parma	Play Area	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	0
19. Pickles Butte	Play Area	180	0	0	0	0	180	0	180	0	0
20. Paddock Reservoir <u>5/</u>	Campground	5	0	0	5	5	5	0	0	0	5
21. Birds of Prey	Natural Area	640	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	640	0

1/ 0 = Overhead; Surf = Surface; Sub = Subsurface.2/ 0 = Open; L = Limited; C = Closed.3/ Specific constraints covered under Weiser River, Clay Peak and Paddock Reservoir.4/ Specific constraints covered under Steck, Weiser Dunes and Snake River.5/ Exclude or limit livestock grazing.6/ Specific constraints covered under North Fork, Garden Valley, South Fork and Chief Parrish.7/ Specific constraints covered under Hulls Gulch.8/ Specific constraints covered under Little Gem, Dewey, Parma and Pickles Butte.9/ Except for electrical transmission towers in existing right-of-way.

Proposed Resource Management Plan

Projects: Water and/or sanitary facilities - 8, launch ramp - 1, access - 8

Activity Plans: RAMPs for Oxbow-Brownlee, Boise Front and Payette River Corridor.

Cultural Resources

Objectives

Protect, through special designation and management, areas with significant cultural values.

Actions

Nominate eight sites to the National Register of Historic Places and manage as shown below.

Surface and subsurface ROWs will be routed to avoid cultural sites.

Sites	NR 1/ Acres	Minerals (acres)			ROW			ORV Use		
		Locatables		Leaseables	Avoidance (acres) 5/			ORV Use (acres) 3/		
		Withdrawal	Closed	No Surf	O	S	Sub	O	L	C
1. Placerville Townsite	8 4/	8	0	8	0	8	8	0	8	0
2. Grays Creek	40	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	40	0
3. Indian Creek	20	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	20	0
4. Milk Creek	20	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	20	0
5. Cabin Creek	20	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	20	0
6. Quartzburg	386	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	386	0
7. Centerville	516	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	516	0
8. Pioneerville	581	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	581	0
9. Mineral	429	2/	0	2/	0	2/	2/	0	429	0

1/ National Register of Historic Places.

2/ Acreage to be determined by National Register nomination process.

3/ O = Open, L = Limited, C = Closed.

4/ National Register of Historic Places (existing).

5/ O = Overhead; S = Surface; Sub = Subsurface.

Projects: 5 mi. fencing

Activity Plans: CRMP (9)

Forest Resources

Objectives

Manage 26,663 acres of suitable commercial forest land for timber management and harvest.

Allow firewood harvesting (commercial and noncommercial) on forest lands.

Manage 5,232 acres of forest lands under CFL set asides. This includes 5,139 acres for TPCC withdrawal, 70 acres for seed withdrawal, and 23 acres for campground withdrawal.

Provide an annual harvest of approximately 1.7 MMBF.

Obtain access to suitable commercial forest lands through acquisition when necessary for program management.

Actions

Projects: Build 68 mi. of forest access road (3.4 miles annually)  
 Acquire access on one to two areas

Activity Plans: Timber Management Plans

Special Considerations

Harvesting of suitable commercial forest land will generally be through selective cutting practices. Any clearcutting will be limited to a size of 40 acres or less. Timber harvest would occur on approximately 150-700 acres annually.

Mineral Resources

Objectives

Make 456,281 acres (94% of area) available for locatable exploration and development and 456,289 acres (94% of area) for leaseable mineral exploration and development.

Continue making available saleable minerals from three material sale sites and 16 free-use sites as needed.

Actions

Leaseables (acres)			Locatables (acres)		Saleables (acres)	
Open	Closed	No Surface Occ.	Open	Withdrawn	Available	Unavailable
456,289	31,177	3,549	456,281	31,185	95	0

**AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**

This plan recommends ACEC designation for three areas which met the criteria (of relevance and importance) to be considered for ACEC designations (Boise Front Area; Columbian Sharp-tail Grouse Habitat Area; and the Black Canyon Long-billed Curlew Management Area). The ACECs are shown on Map 2-3. The following summarizes the description and special requirements for the three ACECs recommended in the RMP. Additional information are available at the Boise District Office, BLM.



## Proposed Resource Management Plan

Name: Boise Front Area of Critical Environmental Concern

### Purpose

The purpose for designating 12,000 acres of the Boise Front as an ACEC is to focus attention and identify management direction on this important natural resource. Management objectives are to protect and enhance the watershed resource, quality of wildlife habitat, variety of recreation opportunities, and scenic values.

### Site Description

The Boise Front ACEC would encompass 12,000 acres in the hills and mountains lying immediately north and east of Boise, Idaho. The 12,000 acres are situated in a land ownership pattern with adjacent Forest Service, Idaho Fish and Game, State Department of Public Lands, and private lands. Elevations range from 3,200 feet at Lucky Peak reservoir to 5,680 feet near Lucky Peak. Topography is generally steep. A major portion of the land area contains slopes of 20 to 60 percent.

Soils in the area are formed in deeply weathered granite of the Idaho Batholith and are highly erosive and easily disturbed when dry or saturated.

Present vegetation includes cheatgrass and other annuals at the lower elevations, sagebrush and bitterbrush at mid elevations, and scattered stands of Douglas fir and ponderosa pine at higher elevations. Five major drainages usually provide streamflows throughout the year. Other stream courses are generally dry during the summer months with spring snowmelt and rainstorms contributing to seasonal streamflows. The major drainages and many smaller ones support riparian vegetation. Livestock use includes approximately 325 cattle in a rest/rotation grazing system managed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Several bands of sheep trail across the area in spring and fall.

In 1959 after a fire eliminated much of the vegetative cover, two separate storms caused serious flooding and sediment damage to the northeast portion of the City of Boise. Following a costly cleanup, extensive watershed rehabilitation work was done by several agencies in a joint effort to stabilize the vulnerable resource. The terraces constructed as part of that effort are still visible from the City of Boise and vicinity as a reminder of the areas sensitivity to disturbance and forces of nature.

### Resource Values

The Boise Front functions as an important ground water recharge area. Snow melt and rain waters enter the soil and percolate down through the granitic soils, faults and fractures and eventually create groundwater reservoirs. These subsurface reservoirs release water at numerous springs and support the perennial streams and riparian vegetation. Much of the subsurface flows accumulate in groundwater reservoirs which are available for Boise Valley users. The City of Boise is a major user of this groundwater and operates several groundwater wells for municipal use including geothermal heating.

The Boise Front is a crucial winter range for approximately 4,000 mule deer. The Highland Valley and Shaw Mountain roads are currently closed to vehicles from December 15 to April 1 to protect this herd. Upland game birds (quail, dove, chukar and Gray partridge), numerous small mammals, reptiles and non game birds are also found in the area. Two candidate (Federal Category II) plants, Aaseae's onion (Allium aaseae) and Mulford milkvetch (Astragalus mulfordea) have been identified in the area.

Recreation use on the Boise Front includes ORV activities, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and interpretive uses along the Halls Gulch National Recreation Trail.

The Boise Front is a scenic backdrop for the City of Boise and surrounding area. Although there are several powerlines traversing the area, they are generally not noticeable from a distance. More noticeable are the roads and trails, many of which have been established through unrestricted ORV use. It is currently managed as a Class II visual resource.

#### Cause for Concern

The combination of steep slopes and highly erodible granitic soils make the area extremely sensitive to changes in the vegetative community through surface disturbing activities. Disturbance of the vegetative community can lead to rill and gully erosion which are now evident on the Boise Front. Much of the serious rill and gully erosion has been attributed to disturbance caused by off road vehicle use. This erosion can reduce the function and value of the area as a watershed and groundwater recharge area. Springs and riparian vegetation may also be reduced. The current erosion problems are increasing and the ability of the area to fully function in its capacity as a watershed is threatened.

Surface disturbing activities which can lead to undesirable vegetative changes and erosion include unrestricted motorized and nonmotorized vehicle use, road construction and maintenance, mineral extraction, certain rights-of-way, fire occurrence, and suppression activities.

The scars from severe erosion can also reduce the attractiveness of the area as a scenic backdrop for viewers from the Boise vicinity and can reduce the quality of recreation activities.

Vehicle use and human disturbance during the winter months can reduce the effectiveness of winter habitat for deer populations by adding stress during a critical time.

#### Management Guidelines

##### Resource Use Limitations

The following resource use limitations will apply to the Boise Front ACEC to protect resource values:

1. Motorized and nonmotorized vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails.

## Proposed Resource Management Plan

2. The Highland Valley and Shaw Mountain roads will be closed to motorized and nonmotorized vehicle use from December 15 to April 1.
3. The upper portion of the 8th Street Road will be closed to 4-wheeled vehicles during the wet winter months.
4. The area will be managed to conform to Class II Visual Resource Management Guidelines.
5. All lands within the ACEC will be retained in Federal ownership.

### Management Emphasis

The following activities will receive management emphasis to further protect resource values:

1. Closure and rehabilitation of certain roads and trails.
2. Maintenance and reconstruction of existing roads and trails.
3. Restriction of future rights-of-way to insure minimal erosion and visual intrusion.
4. Full fire suppression.
5. Rehabilitation of burned areas.
6. Installation of water control structures to reduce erosion where needed.

Name: Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Area of Critical Environmental Concern

### Purpose

The purpose for designating 4,200 acres as an ACEC is to intensify habitat management for one of the last remaining populations of Columbian sharp-tailed grouse in western Idaho. The basic management objectives will be to improve, protect and enhance the quality of the habitat for this sensitive species.

### Site Description

This ACEC would be located approximately 16 miles north of Weiser, Idaho on the south side of Hitt Mountain with USFS land, State land and private lands on the north, east and south.

It is bordered on the west by Mann Creek while Sage Creek and Deer Creek transect the area.

Topography is mostly rolling hills with some steep slopes adjacent to Mann and Sage Creeks. Elevation varies from 3,200 feet to 4,000 feet. Soils

are mixed and it is not uncommon to find pockets of loamy soil interspersed in shallow rocky soils.

The area presents a mosaic of vegetation types corresponding to the various soils. Vegetation associations include big sagebrush/grasses and mountain shrub patches with aspen, serviceberry, chokecherry, bittercherry and snowbrush shrubs, riparian zones with willow, rose and hawthorne shrubs with the northern areas of ponderosa pine with some Douglas-fir.

#### Resource Values

In addition to Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus), the area contains important spring, fall and summer habitat for mule deer which are common in the area. Concentrations of migrating mule deer use the area during the spring and fall. It is also important spring and fall elk range. The area has a rich diversity of wildlife. It supports a variety of mammals from coyotes to deer mice. Approximately 180 different species of birds have been observed on the area.

#### Causes for Concern

Columbian sharp-tailed grouse were once abundant and widespread throughout the northwest. This species has disappeared from most of its former range and it is now extinct in California, Oregon and Nevada and reduced to remnant populations over the remainder of its range.

Currently, remaining populations in Idaho are small and disjunct. In western Idaho, populations are extremely rare and are limited to Washington and Adams Counties. The largest known population in western Idaho is found in the vicinity of this ACEC. There are four known dancing grounds in the area and the fluctuating population numbers approximately 200 birds.

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse has been designated as a "Species of Special Concern" by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and as a "Sensitive Species" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM policy is to maintain or increase current population levels of sensitive species through habitat protection and enhancement.

#### Management Guidelines

##### Resource Use Limitations

1. Motorized vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails.
2. Livestock grazing will be adjusted to allow the range to reach and maintain optimal habitat condition.
3. Surface occupancy for all oil and gas, and geothermal leases will be determined on a site specific basis.
4. Seasonal occupancy stipulations will be applied on all oil and gas and geothermal leases.

## Proposed Resource Management Plan

5. Rights-of-ways construction activities for transmission lines, pipelines and other major projects will not be allowed during the nesting and brood-rearing periods.
6. No permanent new roads will be allowed in the area.
7. All lands within the ACEC will be retained in Federal ownership.

### Management Emphasis

1. Develop a fully comprehensive habitat management plan for the area.
2. Fire rehabilitation and vegetative manipulation will be conducted with native species emphasized.
3. Maintenance of the bordering fences to manage livestock movement will be conducted annually.
4. Pursue acquisition of key habitat areas on State and private lands.
5. Place high fire suppression priority on the area.

Name: Long-Billed Curlew Habitat Area of Critical Environmental Concern

### Purpose

The purpose for designating approximately 61,000 acres as an ACEC is to identify the area as crucial nesting habitat for Long-billed Curlew (Numenius americanus), a federally protected migratory species. The main management objective will be to maintain nesting habitat for the 1,000 curlew pairs that nest and raise their young in the area.

### Site Description

The area is a low, rolling upland lying between the Boise, Payette and Snake River valleys. The area is characterized by choppy rolling topography which supports a semi-desert type vegetative community. Average rainfall is approximately 11 inches per year with most of the moisture falling from November to June.

The native habitat has been highly modified over the years. Historically, the area was a sagebrush/bunchgrass vegetation community. Livestock grazing, frequent wildfire and the invasion of exotic annual grasses have largely eliminated the shrubs and reduced perennial grasses.

In general, there are four cover types: 1) annual rangeland, 2) sagebrush, 3) crested wheatgrass, and 4) irrigated agriculture. The annual rangeland type is the key habitat for nesting curlews.

This will include allowing vertebrate paleontologic specimen collecting through a permit procedure and reviewing all EA's and CER's to determine if actions impact paleontologic resources. A bibliographic research will be made to help in determining the importance of the various paleontologic sites within the resource area.

#### Visual Resource Management

The visual or scenic values of the public lands will be considered whenever any physical actions are proposed on BLM lands. The degree of alterations to the natural landscape will be guided by the criteria established for the four Visual Resource Management Classes as outlined in BLM 8400. VRM Classes will be managed as shown on Map 3-8.

#### Forest Management

The public lands in the district containing commercial timber or other forest products such as firewood, posts and poles, and Christmas trees will be considered for harvest except where expressly closed by law or regulation. Some areas may also be subject to special restrictions to protect resources. Harvesting methods utilizing clearcutting will be limited to a size of 40 acres or less and will be blended into the surrounding landscape.

Management guidelines for wildlife will be as follows:

No timber harvest access will be allowed prior to July 1 in elk calving areas.

All roads will be rehabilitated by outsloping, waterbarring, or seeding.

Roads will be closed in crucial wildlife areas.

Undergrowth will be left as intact as possible.

Stringers of trees of sufficient size and thickness to be used as sight barriers between cutting areas will be determined on a site specific basis.

The need to eliminate livestock grazing on cut areas for up to 3 years to allow shrub enhancement will be determined on a site specific basis.

Adequate hiding and thermal cover along major roads will be provided.

Maintain snag trees in timbered areas to the greatest extent practical to provide habitat for cavity nesting birds and other snag dependent species.

#### Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) are established through the planning process as provided in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act for "... areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to

## Proposed Resource Management Plan

important historic, cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards." Management will be tailored to the specific needs of each ACEC.

### Coordination With Other Agencies, State and Local Governments, and Indian Tribes

BLM will coordinate its review of detailed management plans (activity) and individual projects prepared in conjunction with the RMP to ensure consistency with officially adopted and approved plans, policies, and programs of other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes. Cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding will be developed, as necessary, to promote close cooperation between BLM and other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes.

### Weeds (Control of Noxious)

BLM districts will work with respective County governments to monitor the location and spread of noxious weeds and to maintain up-to-date inventory records. BLM will control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands where possible, where economically feasible, and to the extent that funds are prioritized for that purpose.

Noxious weed control will be conducted in accordance with integrated weed management guidelines and design features identified in the Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program Final Environmental Impact Statement of December, 1985. The Idaho State Director issued a Record of Decision on April 7, 1986 for this program.

### Public Utilities

Generally, public lands may be considered for the installation of public utilities, except where expressly closed by law or regulation. Project approval will be subject to preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. BLM will work closely with the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, other state and federal agencies, local governments, utility companies, and other interested parties to determine appropriate locations and environmental safeguards for public utilities involving public lands.

### Economic and Social Considerations

BLM will ensure that any management action undertaken in connection with this plan is cost-effective and takes into account local social and economic factors. Cost-effectiveness may be determined by any method deemed appropriate by the Bureau for the specific management action involved.

### Detailed Management (Activity) Plans

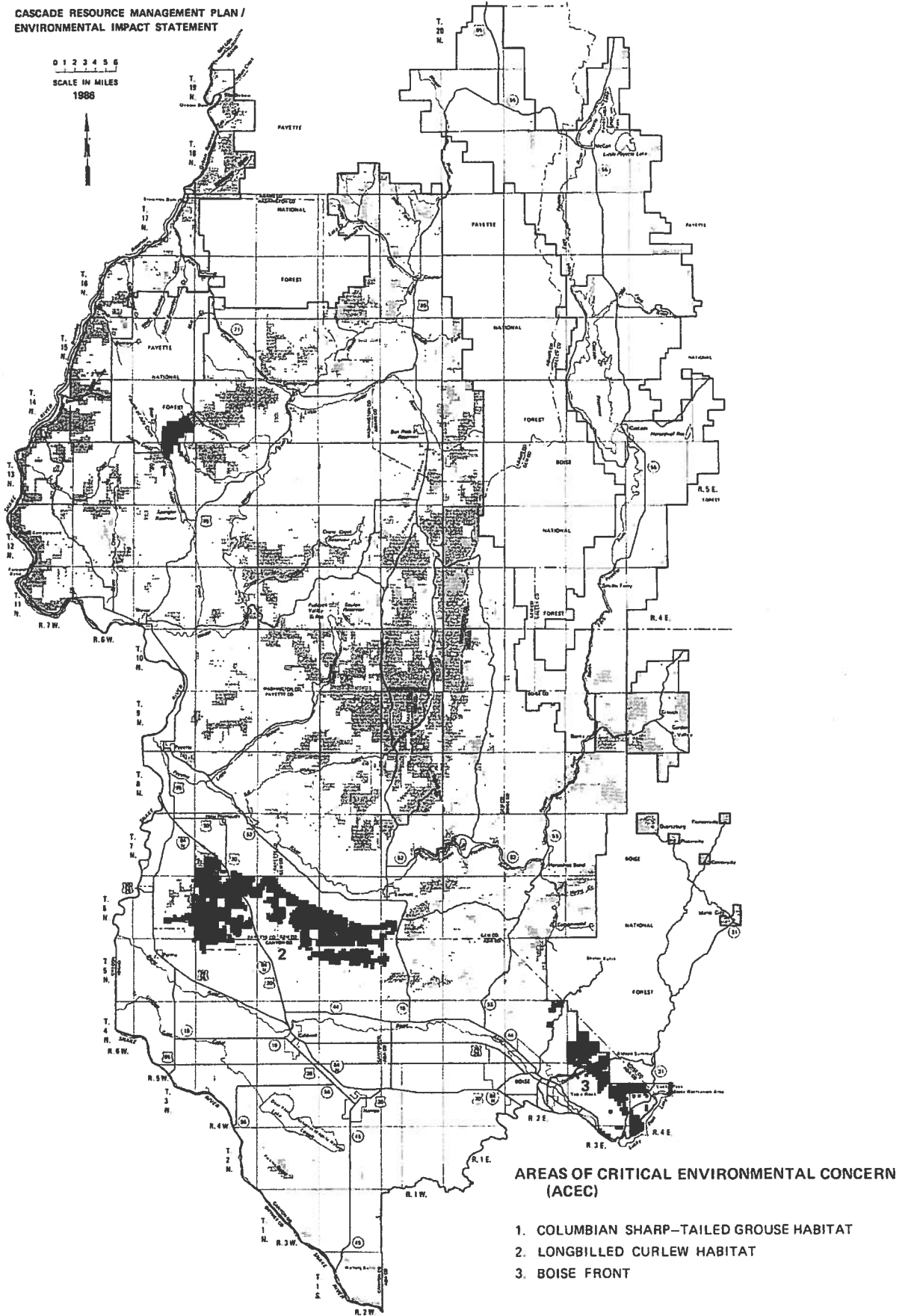
The RMP provides general guidance for the resource area. More detailed management plans, called activity plans, will be prepared to deal with areas where a greater level of detail is required. Activity plans will indicate





MAP 2-3

CASCADE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN / ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



**2.3.8 USFS Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1990) Excerpts**

*Strows  
Baker RD*

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific  
Northwest  
Region

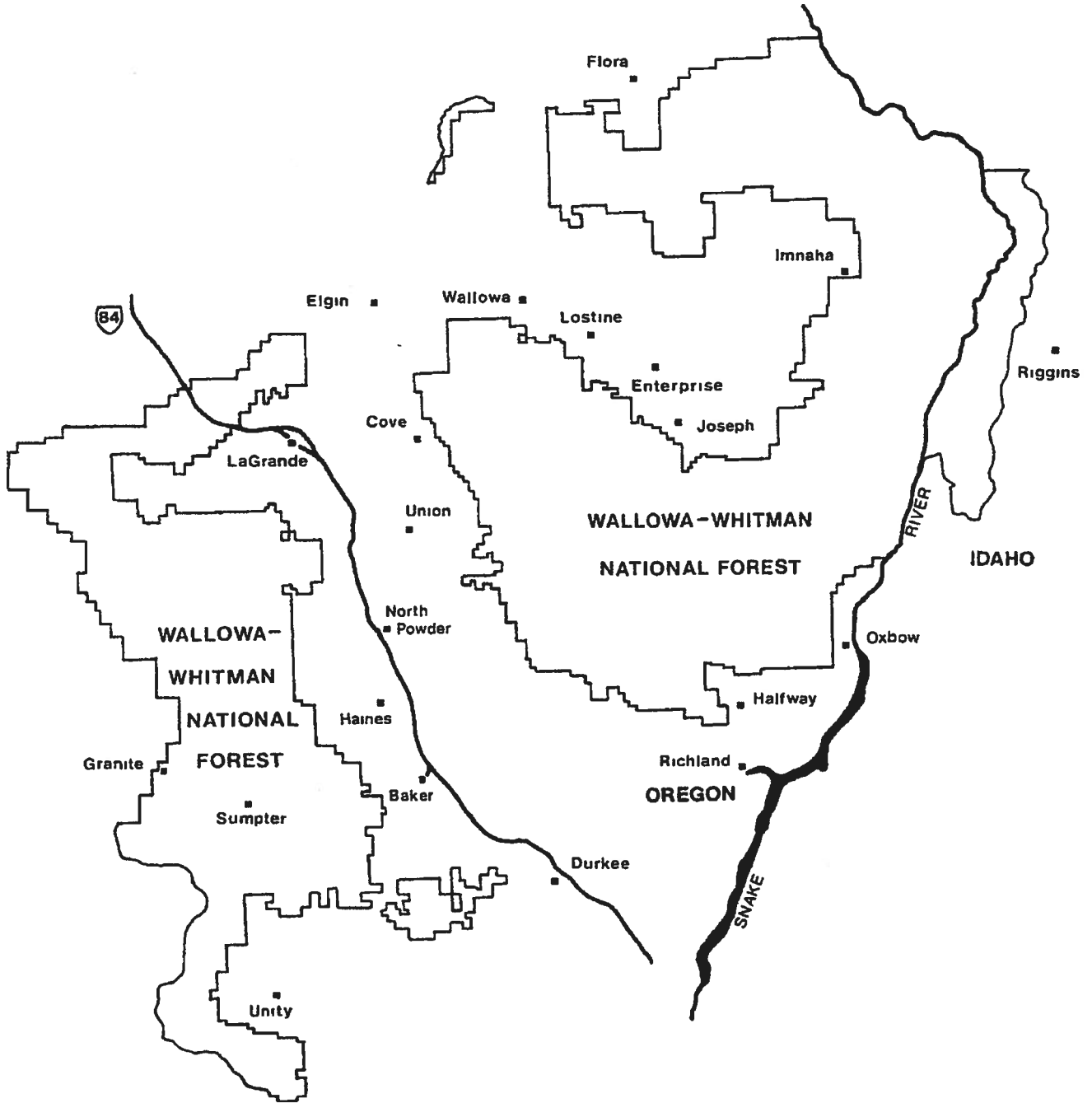
1990



# Land and Resource Management Plan

## Wallowa-Whitman National Forest





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## Chapter 2

The Eagle Cap Wilderness was created in 1940. Subsequent legislation added to the original acreage in 1972 and most recently in 1984. The Hells Canyon Wilderness was established by the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area legislation. An addition was made in 1984. The Monument Rock and the North Fork John Day Wildernesses were established in 1984. The majority of each of these areas lies on the adjacent Malheur and Umatilla National Forests which have primary responsibility for their planning.

With the 1984 wilderness additions, virtually all of the primitive and about 40 percent of the semiprimitive acres on the Forest have been designated wilderness. If present trends continue, the primitive and the semiprimitive acreage outside wilderness will continue to shrink and those seeking the recreational experiences these areas provide will find them in short supply. Primitive wilderness recreation will also reach capacity sometime around the fourth decade of plan implementation. The Forest has no land fitting the category of trailless wilderness, though there are opportunities for off-trail recreation in the Eagle Cap Wilderness.

Due to its relatively low level of use, there are few conflicts between public use and maintenance of wilderness character. Some areas around lakes in the Eagle Cap Wilderness do receive intense use during July and August; popular hunting areas are heavily used during October and November.

### **Landscape Appearance**

Much of the 2.3 million acre National Forest retains a near-natural appearance when viewed by the casual observer from its many broad valley viewsheds. The past management practices causing the most disturbance include the clearcutting of dead and dying lodgepole pine. Activities which resulted in modification to the landscape include roads, clearcuts and other harvests, utility corridors, mining dredge tailings, other mining operations, numerous rock quarries, and water impoundments. To date, approximately 132,000 acres have been physically altered. The timber harvest program can be expected to maintain or increase the incidence of clearcuts. This is the result of clearcut harvest systems and other harvest systems such as shelterwoods which remove the overwood some ten years after the shelterwood harvest. Likewise, utility corridors, mine tailings, and quarries will be long-term modifications.

Rural	4	Site heavily modified. Some facilities designed strictly for comfort and convenience of users. Luxury facilities not provided. Facility design may incorporate synthetic materials. Extensive use of artificial surfacing of roads and trails. Vehicular traffic control usually obvious. Primary access usually over paved roads. Development density 3-5 family units per acre. Plant materials usually native. Interpretive services often formal or structured.
Urban	5	High degree of site modification. Facilities mostly designed for comfort and convenience of users and usually include flush toilets; may include showers, bathhouses, laundry facilities, and electrical hookups. Synthetic materials commonly used. Formal walks or surfaced trails. Regimentation of users is obvious. Access usually by high-speed highways. Development density 5 or more family units per acre. Plant materials may be foreign to the environment. Formal interpretive services usually available. Designs formalized and architecture may be contemporary. Mowed lawns and clipped shrubs not unusual.

- 
- 13 **Outfitters and Guide.** Outfitter guide activities may be considered within any management area, although outfitter camps will not be located within research natural areas.
  - 14 **Special Areas.** Protect special places on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest; e.g., dispersed recreation sites, water features, rock or unique landform features, areas of unique vegetation, historic sites, or other places which are special to Forest users commensurate with other Forest management objectives.
  - 15 **Road, Trail, and Area Closures.** Road, trail, and area closures and off-road vehicle use will be in accordance with the Forest Travel Management Plan and 36 CFR 295. This plan will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary, considering management needs and public desires.

## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

### Goal

To manage all National Forest lands to obtain the highest possible visual quality, commensurate with other appropriate public uses, costs and benefits.

### Standards and Guidelines

- 1 **VQO's.** Meet visual quality objectives through management techniques described in National Forest Landscape Management, Volumes 1 and 2, and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Visual Management Plan - Desired Visual Model (maps showing visual objectives are available at the Forest Headquarters in Baker). See also maps of Level I and Level II viewsheds in the FEIS.

- 2 **Retention Foreground.** In retention foregrounds the area regenerated per decade should not exceed 7 percent\* or be less than 3 percent\* of the suitable forest land within the viewshed. Maximum seen area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 10 percent\* within any viewshed. Limit regeneration unit size to that which meets retention and desired character including consideration of future entries and regrowth. The approximate range of sizes necessary to accomplish this is 1/2 to 2 acres in the immediate foreground (less than 500 feet) and 3 to 5 acres in the foreground greater than 500 feet from the road or trail. Units against road or trail edges should be shelterwoods or selection cuts rather than clearcuts. Target tree size is 36 inches where biologically feasible.
  
- 3 **Partial Retention Foreground and Retention Middleground.** In partial retention foreground and retention middleground, the area regenerated per decade should not exceed 9 percent\* or be less than 5 percent\* of the suitable forest land within any viewshed. The maximum seen area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 14 percent\* of any viewshed. Limit regeneration unit size to that which meets partial retention and desired character including consideration of future entries and regrowth. The approximate range of sizes necessary to accomplish this is 1/2 to 2 acres in the immediate foreground (less than 500 feet) and 3 to 5 acres in the foreground greater than 500 feet from the road or trail. Target size tree in foreground is 26 inches, where biologically feasible.

**FIGURE 4-2**  
**VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVES**

		Sensitivity Level						
		fg1	mg1	bg1	fg2	mg2	bg2	3
Variety Class	class A	R	R	R	PR	PR	PR	PR
	class B	R	PR	PR	PR	M	M	M <sup>1/</sup>
								MM
class C	PR	PR	M	M	M	MM	MM	

1/ If a 3B area is adjacent to RETENTION or PARTIAL RETENTION visual quality objective, select the MODIFICATION visual quality objective. If adjacent to MODIFICATION or MAXIMUM MODIFICATION objective areas, select MAXIMUM MODIFICATION.

\* Applies to regeneration harvest. Not applicable to intermediate cuts, overstory removals, or individual tree selection harvest.

- 4 **Partial Retention Middleground.** In partial retention middlegrounds, the area regenerated per decade should range between 8 and 10 percent\*. Limit maximum regeneration unit size to 10 acres. Maximum area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 20 percent\*
5. **Created Openings.** Consider a created opening is to no longer be an opening, visually, when trees reach 20 feet in height. Rotation periods will be sufficient to grow large tree character in viewshed foregrounds
- 6 **Resolving Conflicts.** Where conflicts develop between visual quality objectives and timber or range management objectives, these conflicts will be resolved in favor of meeting the visual objectives. Where conflicts occur between old-growth objectives and visual objectives, old-growth will have priority.
7. **Viewshed Plans.** Plans will be prepared for all Level I viewsheds that will refine boundaries, establish project design criteria, identify opportunities for scenic enhancement, and set entry priorities and timing

## **WILDLIFE**

### **Goal**

To provide habitat for viable populations of all existing native and desired nonnative vertebrate wildlife species and to maintain or enhance the overall quality of wildlife habitat across the Forest

### **Standards and Guidelines**

1. **Riparian.** Manage riparian habitat consistent with Forest Service Manuals 2500 and 2600. Where natural stream characteristics permit, the management (as described in Managing Riparian Ecosystem (Zones) for Fish and Wildlife in Eastern Oregon and Eastern Washington 1/) will provide for 60-100 percent shade on live streams, 80 percent or more of the total lineal distance of streambank in a stable condition, limiting fine inorganic sediment covering stream substrate to 15 percent, and 80 percent or more of the potential grass-forb, shrub and tree cover.
2. Give preferential consideration to resources such as fish, certain wildlife and vegetation, and water which are dependent upon riparian areas over other resources in actions within or affecting riparian areas
3. Where timber is managed in riparian areas, and in other parts of the SMU directly affecting riparian conditions, harvest will generally be by selection or by group selection techniques. These areas will normally require a longer timber stand rotation than is used on areas managed more intensely for timber. In situations where even-aged silviculture will better meet riparian area objectives, its application is acceptable (Also see direction under Watershed Standards and Guidelines)

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1/ Riparian habitat subcommittee of the Oregon/Washington Interagency Committee. Managing Riparian Ecosystems (Zones) for Fish and Wildlife in Eastern Oregon and Washington, March 1979

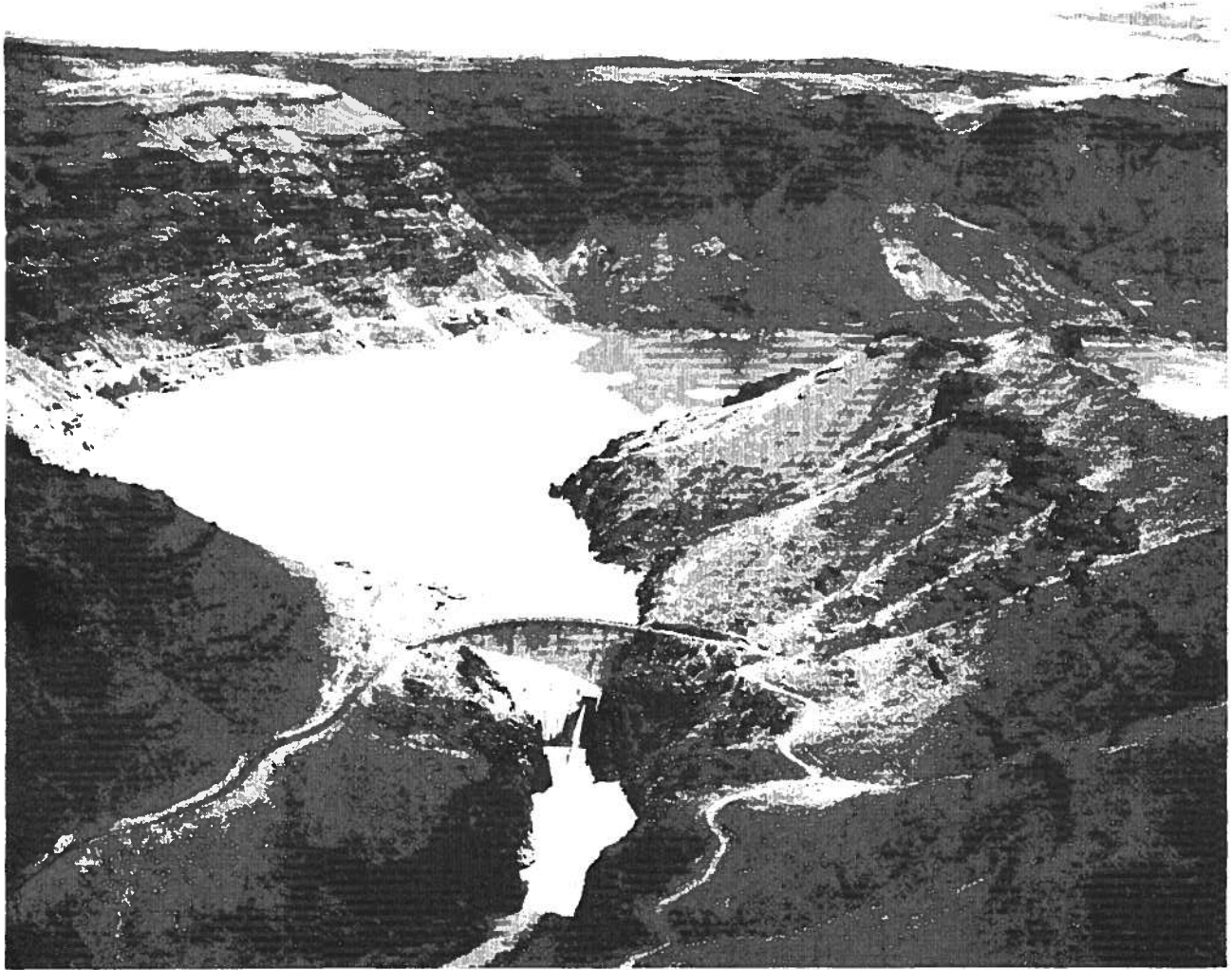
\* Applies to regeneration harvest. Not applicable to intermediate cuts, overstory removals, or individual tree selection harvest

**2.3.9 BOR Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan (1994) Excerpts**





# Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan



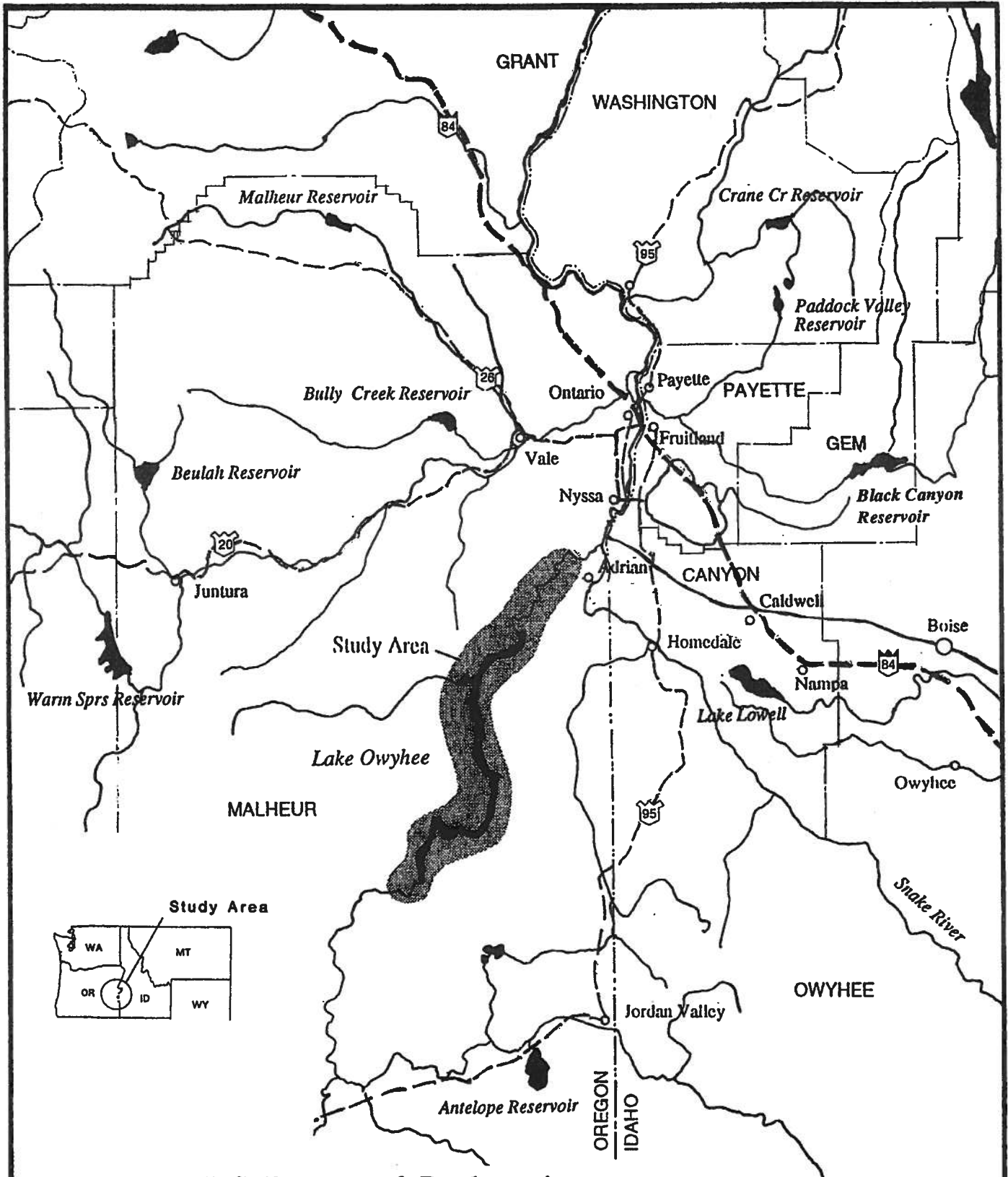
Bureau of Reclamation  
Pacific Northwest Region  
Central Snake Projects Office  
Boise, Idaho

April 1994

# **Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan**

**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Pacific Northwest Region  
Central Snake Projects Office**

**April 1994**



U. S. Bureau of Reclamation  
**OWYHEE RESERVOIR RMP**

**VICINITY MAP**



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and Grassy Mountain formations have yielded fossils from the Pliocene/Miocene Epoch including invertebrates, fish, and plant materials, and small mammals from the Grassy Mountain formation. The Deer Butte formation yields materials from the Blancan/Hemphillian land mammal age, and Grassy Mountain from the Hemphillian/Clarendonian age. The Owyhee Basalt also provide Barstovian age large mammal fossils.

No systematic survey of paleontological resources has been completed at Owyhee Reservoir. However, Thiessen indicates that all of the formations discussed above are exposed at or near the reservoir. In addition, Quaternary-age colluvium and alluvium, locally exposed on the shoreline, may contain fossil materials in lenses of fine-grained sediment. One paleontological locality (Owyhee Canal, BLM 22-45-2, UO2408) has been recorded on Reclamation lands below the dam. This yielded merychippus (horse) and oreodont remains from a vitric tuff interbed in the Owyhee Basalt formation (Rimal and Schaller, 1981). Also, Reclamation personnel have observed two unrecorded fossil flora deposits on the shoreline, one located on either side of the reservoir in the Pelican Point vicinity. They are exposed only at low water and are bedded in a grey, hard, shale-like rock.

## 2.4 VISUAL RESOURCES

The Study Area contains rugged and spectacular scenery characterized by steep rocky slopes, deep ravines, tall buttes, and fragmented canyons broken into spires and intricately eroded walls. The soils range in color from light brown to bright orange-brown. The varied nature of the landscape is further enhanced by a vegetative mosaic of open sagebrush, bunchgrass and riparian plant communities.

Although some roads, ways and trails, campsites, and other man-made developments are present, the overall visual quality of the area is very high. The area generally depicts a natural high desert wilderness setting highly suitable for primitive and unconfined wilderness recreation. The visual resource is considered an outstandingly remarkable and very pleasing resource by most observers.

Elevations in the Study Area range from about 2,300 feet along the lower Owyhee River to isolated peaks above 5,000 feet adjacent to Owyhee Reservoir. In general, elevations increase toward the west and south to the Mahogany and Spring Mountain areas. South of Mahogany Mountain, the elevation declines near Jordan Valley.

The BLM has classified the area as a Class II Visual Resource Management (VRM) Area. This classification requires that management activities be designed and located to blend into the natural landscape and not to be visually apparent to the casual visitor. According to BLM guidelines, the following actions should be discouraged within Class II areas: new roads and support needs (stockpiles and quarries); utility roads (power, gas, water, telephone); off-road vehicle use; and mining. Structures are to incorporate the lines, colors, and materials of the natural landscape. Required roads are to be concealed by vegetation, follow natural landforms, and be seeded as soon as possible following any construction. The BLM expects to administer lands adjacent to the Study Area to perpetuate landscape conditions as they currently exist.



## Lower Owyhee River

The lower Owyhee River meanders through a canyon of striking visual quality comprised of steep mountains, cliffs, and gently sloping hillsides. The canyon features good quality riparian (streamside) habitats that support a wide range of plant and animal species. Upland habitats adjacent to the river are sagebrush dominated communities at the foot of sheer basaltic cliffs. These cliffs are dissected by numerous side canyons that lead to extensive higher elevation uplands beyond.

The canyon floor is characterized by a riparian corridor that follows the river. The riverbanks are predominantly well vegetated and stable, providing a sharp contrast to the surrounding arid and stark landscape. Uplands immediately above the river are typical of the arid sagebrush /grassland communities found throughout the region. Bends in the river are around flat alluvial terraces that immediately rise to the cliffs of the canyon walls.

The river is paralleled by Lake Owyhee Road, the primary access road leading to Owyhee Dam and Reservoir. Malheur County and the State of Oregon are currently evaluating whether Lake Owyhee Road should be designated a State Scenic By-Way.



*Photo 2-9: Aerial View of the Lower Owyhee River.  
The lower Owyhee River meanders through steep canyons and rugged terrain.*

The northern boundary of the Study Area includes a partial view of the Owyhee Siphon. The siphon is an unpainted steel, cylindrical pipe (about 4 feet in diameter) that extends east-west under Lake Owyhee Road. The siphon transfers North Canal irrigation water across the lower Owyhee River canyon.

Visual impacts from dispersed recreational use, especially dispersed vehicle use, are readily apparent. Localized impacts in the form of braided, unauthorized "two-track" secondary roads are common; and damage due to wet season use is particularly evident. The use of four rock and gravel borrow sites within the floodplain (two on BLM lands and two on Reclamation lands) has adversely impacted the canyon's visual quality and infringed on sensitive riparian resources.

Increased beaver activity is becoming a significant factor in local tree damage and mortality. Several large cottonwoods near the Siphon Site have been lost as well as many others throughout the canyon area.

Past livestock operations have damaged streamside and upland vegetation. Long-term recovery is expected since most livestock grazing now occurs at higher elevations cut off from the river by rimrock or fences. Most livestock use is currently not within the canyon's viewshed (BLM, 1992).

There are numerous turnouts on Lake Owyhee Road which provide excellent opportunities for viewing the river's riparian habitat, wildlife, and surrounding landscape. Overall, the area's streambanks are well vegetated, a good riparian overstory is present, and very little streambank erosion or undercutting has occurred. Algae and turbidity problems due to poor instream flows during the nonirrigation season continue to affect the river's aesthetic appeal.

Private land holdings in the river corridor form a contrasting mosaic of farms and pastures, interspersed with idle or dryland areas. Large "shelterwood" trees grow near the various farmsteads.

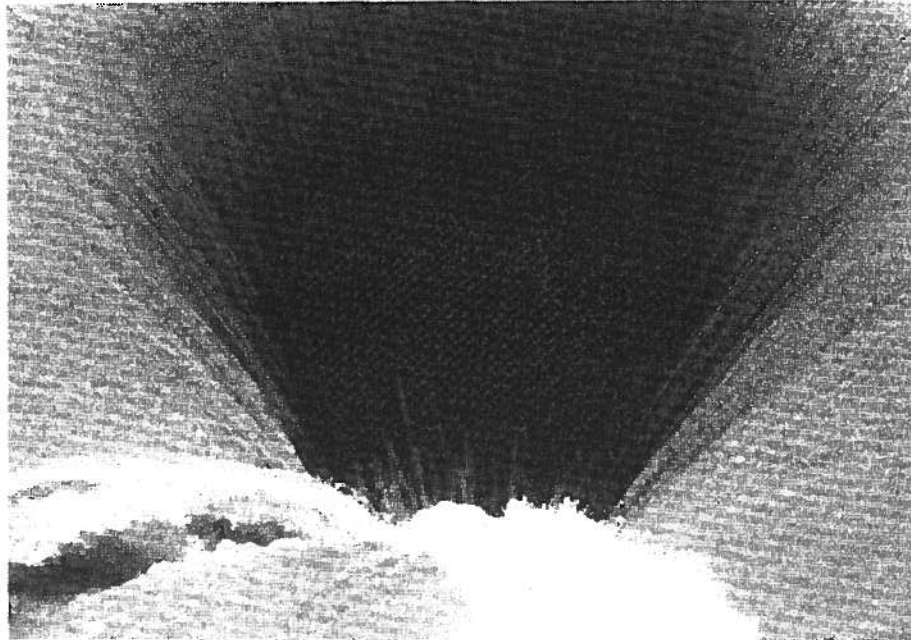
Near Owyhee Dam the landscape includes steep canyons, agricultural fields, and gently sloping open hillsides. At Owyhee Dam, the canyon becomes very narrow, and includes dramatic rock outcroppings. Lake Owyhee Road climbs steeply along the eastern side of the canyon up to the crest of Owyhee Dam.

Owyhee Dam is an immense and impressive structure, creating a dramatic division between the river and Owyhee Reservoir. The dam is a concrete-arch structure which, at the time of construction, was the highest dam in the world. The dam rises 417 feet and is 623 feet across. A road along the top of the dam provides pedestrians an excellent view of the reservoir and the river canyon below.

### **Owyhee Reservoir**

Southeast of the dam, the "glory hole" spillway is controlled by a floating ring gate. During spill events, the "glory hole" provides a fascinating sight and sound for visitors. Many people visit the reservoir when the spillway is in operation to see and experience the huge whirlpool created by the spillway. A concrete walkway and high chain link fence extends out to an observation point almost directly above the glory hole. Visitors can stand above the huge intake pipe and feel the power of rushing water.

The Owyhee Reservoir viewshed consists largely of very steep, rugged terrain and open water. Broken plateaus, barren rocky ridges, cliffs, deep gulches and ravines dissect the stark landscape. Over time, erosion has left the hard basalt, rhyolitic rock, and



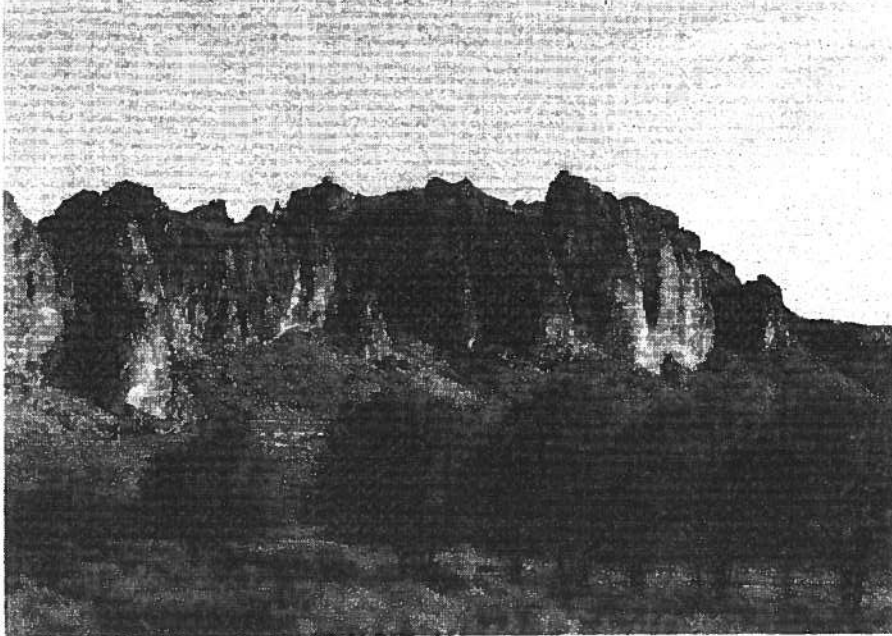
*Photo 2-10: The "Glory Hole."  
During spill events, the "glory hole" provides a fascinating sight and sound for visitors.*

consolidated ash flows as colorful cliffs, spires, pinnacles and similar formations. Colorful rock outcrops and rimrock areas are prevalent throughout the reservoir area.

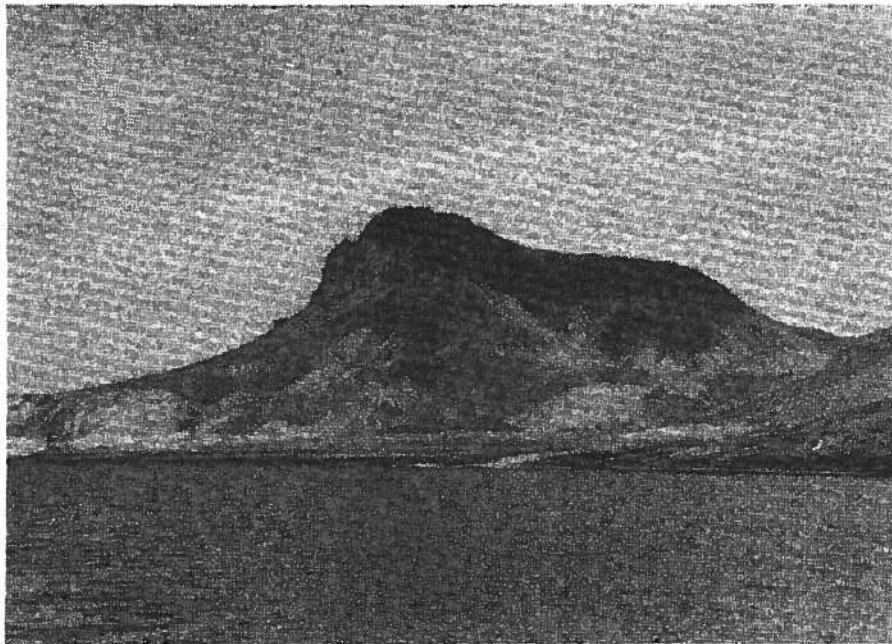
The highest concentration of pinnacles and rock outcrops occur on the east side of the reservoir between the Honeycombs and Leslie Gulch. Some of the most outstanding visual features include the Honeycombs, Leslie Gulch, Painted Canyon, Three Fingers Gulch, and Carlton Canyon.

A number of peaks and buttes are visually dominant from the water. These include Burnt Mountain, Nanny's Nipple, Saddle Butte, North Table Mountain, The Honeycombs, and Diamond and Red Buttes. There are also numerous canyons and gulches that extend away from the reservoir which provide a dramatic sense of depth and immense scale to the rugged topography.

One particularly outstanding visual resource is the Honeycombs located immediately east of Bensley Flat. The Honeycombs escarpment rises about 1,100 feet above Bensley Flat to produce one of the major scenic attractions on the reservoir. The Honeycombs geologic complex is a spectacular area of rugged canyons formed by the erosion of volcanic tuff. The cliffs and spires are due to the great thickness and uniformity of the volcanic tuff and its relative resistance to weathering. Multi-colored ridges, hills, pinnacles, and steep-walled canyons are intersected by intermittent streams and drainages. A number of rock faces are riddled by spherical cavities of various sizes, giving them a "honeycomb" or sponge-like appearance. Often these cavities widen to form caves and shelves which are overhung by fragile stone lips with smooth contours. Rock outcrops, rims, and pinnacles similar to those in the Honeycombs can also be found to the south in Painted and Carlton Canyons.



***Photo 2-11: The Honeycombs.***  
*The Honeycombs rise 1,100 feet above Bensley Flat to produce one of the major scenic attractions on the reservoir.*



***Photo 2-12: Nanny's Nipple.***  
*Nanny's Nipple (4,053 ft.), south of the Dry Creek Arm, is a prominent visual element within the Study Area.*

Further south the reservoir turns west. The profile of the surrounding viewscape becomes wider and less dramatic as the landscape changes from high mountains and steep canyons to rolling hills and more gentle slopes. Due to the low water elevation in recent years, wide expanses of flat open land were exposed.

Because of its remote location, there are very few signs of human use and development in the reservoir area. The most visually apparent uses include: cabins; a primitive airstrip at Pelican Point; a small resort; a camping and day use area at Lake Owyhee State Park; and four boat ramps with nearby parking. Except for the Leslie Gulch boat ramp, shoreline development is limited to the north half of the reservoir.

In an average water year, reservoir drawdowns average about 33 feet by late summer/early fall to meet project irrigation needs. At lower water elevations, extensive mud flats and bare earth are exposed particularly at the upper (south) end of the reservoir and in the Dry Creek Arm. During years of persistent drought (such as from 1986-1992), exposed bottom sediments below the high water line become heavily invaded by cockleburs and other noxious weeds and annuals.

A persistent high water line surrounds the reservoir. In some areas, the exposed soils and rock substrate below the high water line are lighter in color due to the settling of sediments previously suspended in the water column. Successive drops in reservoir levels produces a "staircase" effect in steep areas that contain significant amounts of gravel and loose rock.



*Photo 2-13: View Southeast from Deadman Gulch toward Carlton Canyon. Successive drops in reservoir levels produce a "staircase" effect in steep areas.*



*Photo 2-14: Aerial View of the Upper Owyhee Reservoir Area.  
The landscape in the upper reservoir area changes to rolling hills and more gentle slopes.*

### **Upper Owyhee River**

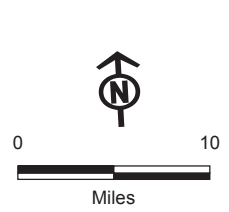
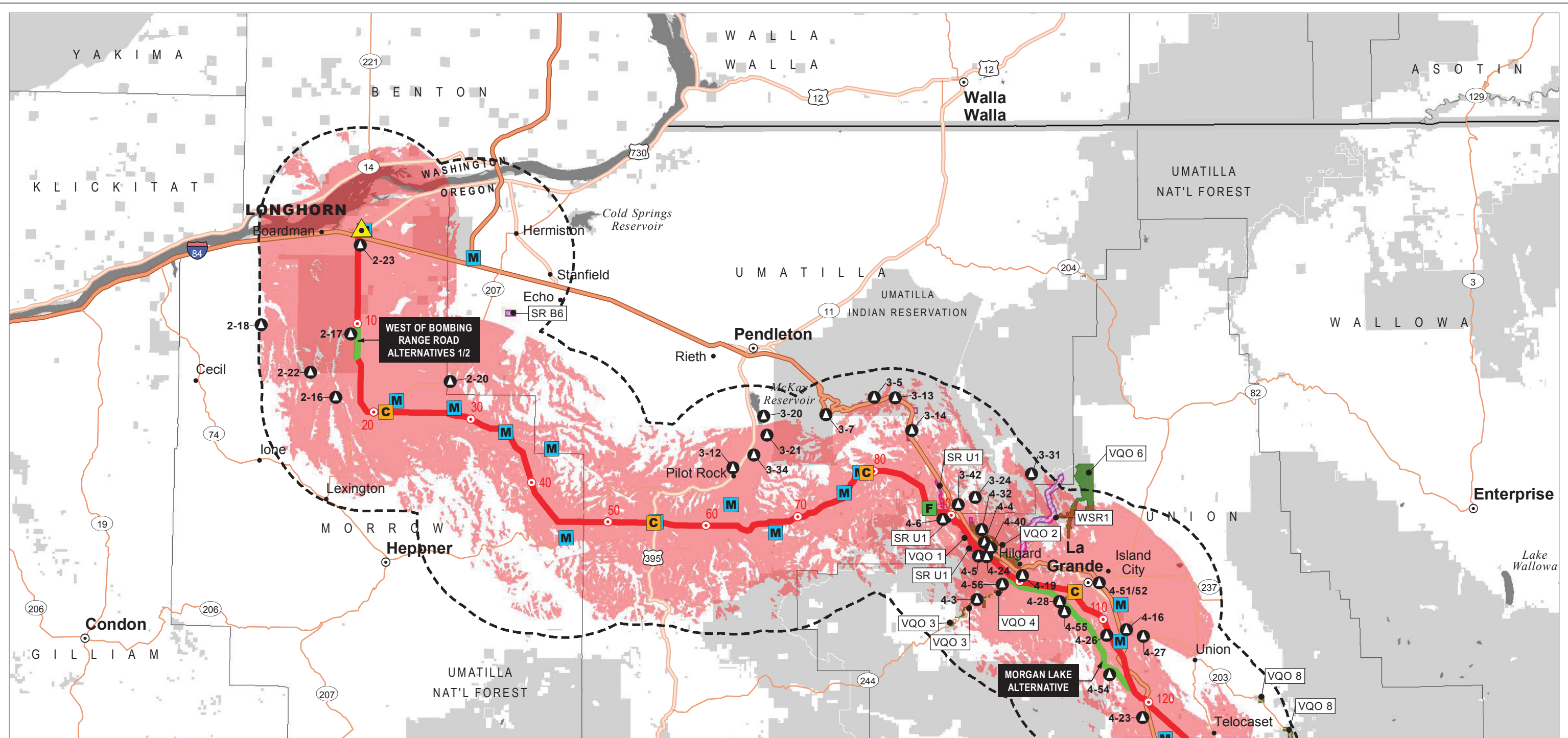
The upper Owyhee River reach extends from Birch Creek north to the reservoir and is included in the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River system. The viewshed consists largely of gently sloping hillsides with talus and bands of rimrock on many of the steeper slopes, isolated cliffs, and buttes. This portion of the Study Area is generally not as dramatic as the reservoir and lower Owyhee River areas.

The landscape along the river is relatively flat and supports a rich, well vegetated riparian area. At Birch Creek, the abandoned pastures and Morrison Ranch complex operated by the BLM is harmonious with the surrounding setting. Along both sides of the river are unmaintained primitive roads which lead to Birch Creek. These roads are a visual intrusion within the wild and scenic river corridor.

**ATTACHMENT R-6**  
**VIEWSHED MAPS (Map Set 6a, 6b, and 6c)**

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Map Area

- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Viewshed (Proposed Route Only)
    - Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles
    - Not Visible
  - Scenic Features
    - Key Observation Points
    - Scenic Resources (polygon)

- Visual Management Areas**
- USFS VQO Retention
- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile Marker
  - Communication Station
  - Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area

- Land Status**
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Private
- Other Features**
- Cities or Towns
    - County Seat
    - Other

- Roads**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads



Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

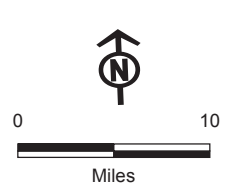
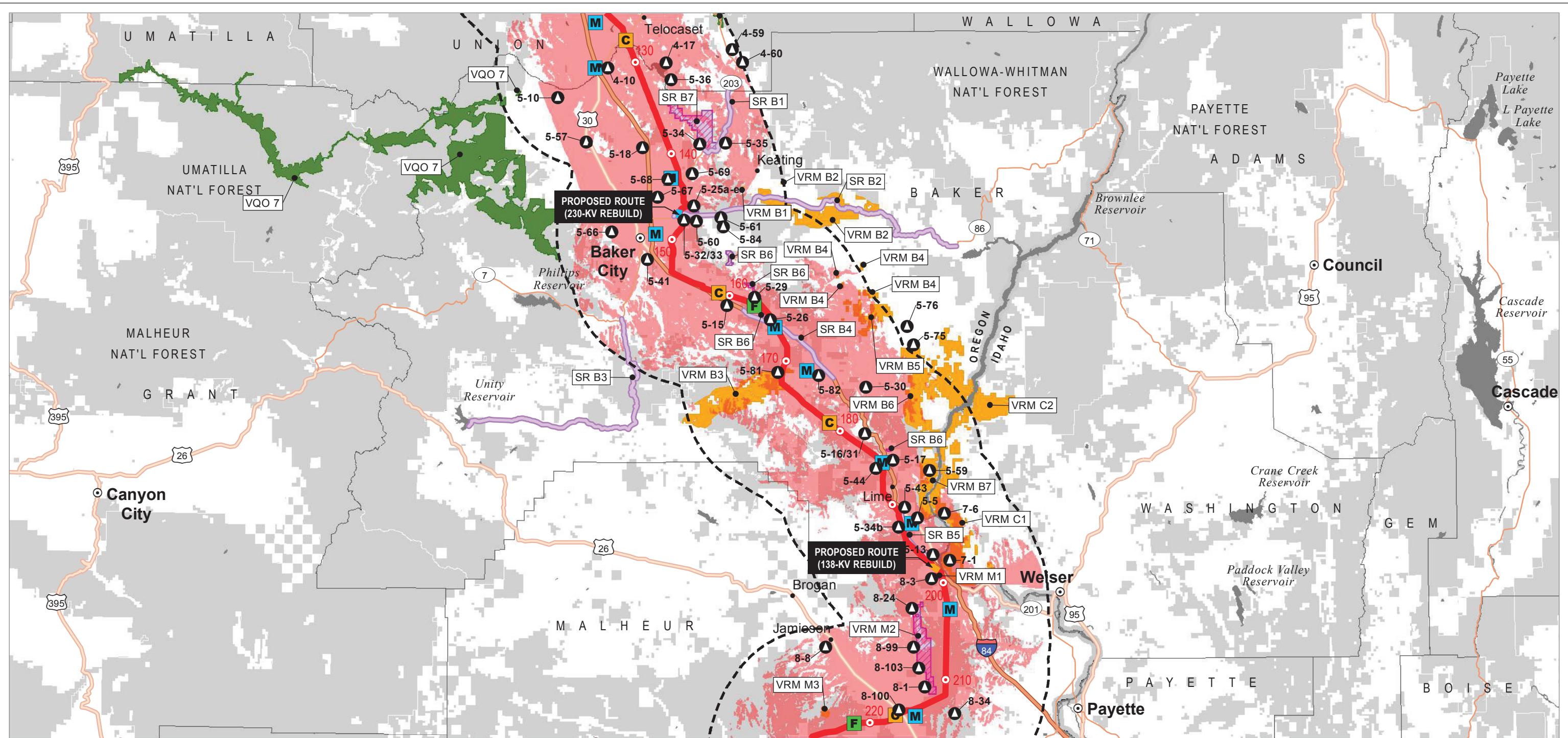
**Attachment R-6a Scenic Resources**

Viewshed Proposed Route

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)

**Viewshed (Proposed Route Only)**

Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles  
 Not Visible

**Scenic Features**

Key Observation Points  
 Scenic Resources (line)

Scenic Resources (polygon)

Visual Management Areas  
 BLM VRM Class II  
 USFS VQO Retention

**Project Features**

Proposed Route  
 Proposed Route (138-kV Rebuild)  
 Proposed Route (230-kV Rebuild)  
 Ten-mile Marker

Communication Station

Light-Duty Fly Yard  
 Multi-Use Area

**Land Status**

Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation  
 Private

**Other Features**

Cities or Towns  
 County Seat  
 Other  
 Roads  
 Interstates  
 Highways  
 Major Roads



Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

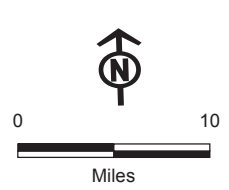
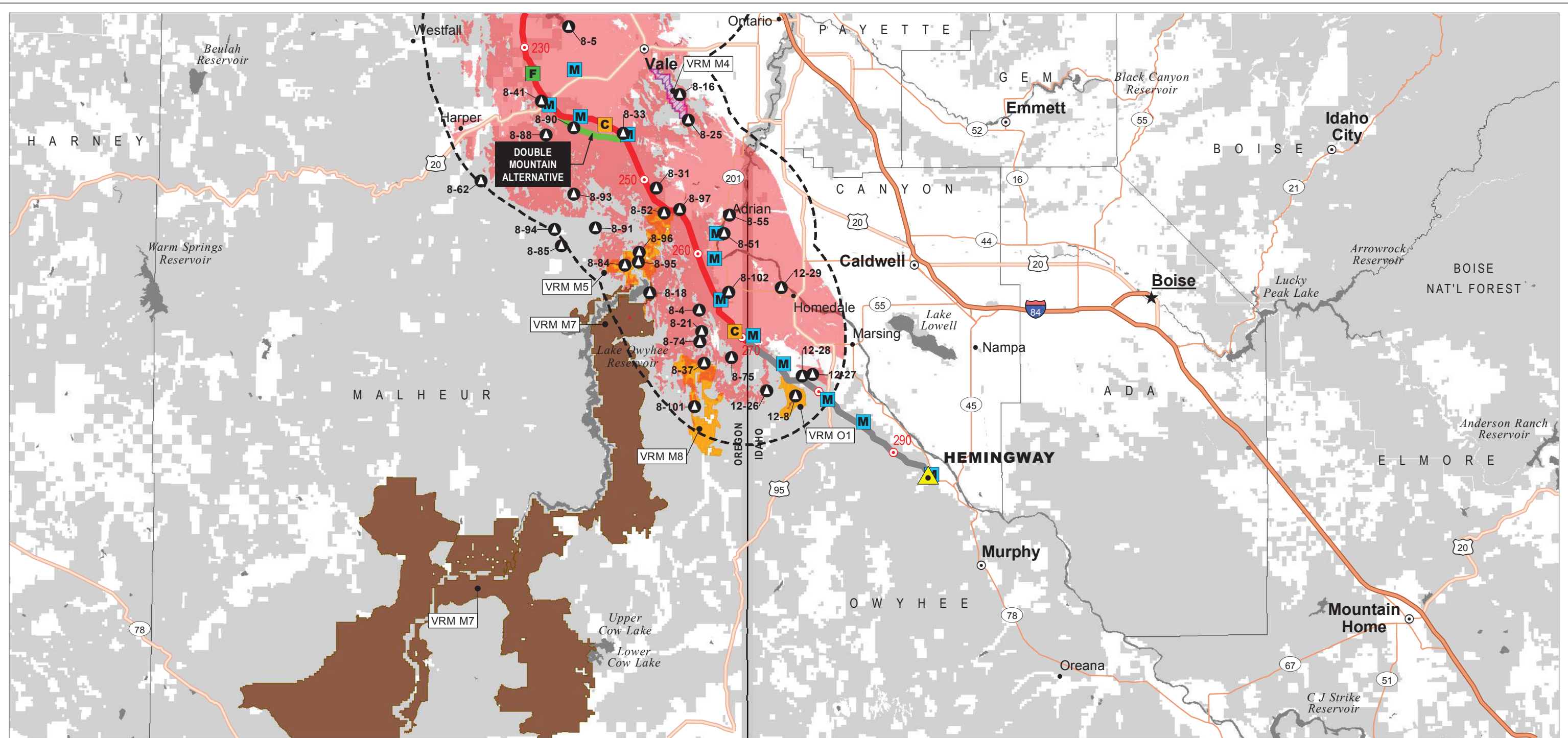
**Attachment R-6a Scenic Resources**

Viewshed Proposed Route

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
- Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles
- Not Visible
- Scenic Features**
- Key Observation Points
- Scenic Resources (polygon)

**Visual Management Areas**

- BLM VRM Class I
- BLM VRM Class II

**Project Features**

- Proposed Route
- Alternative Route
- Proposed Route Not In Oregon
- Ten-mile Marker
- Communication Station
- Light-Duty Fly Yard

**Multi-Use Area**

- Multi-Use Area
- Station

**Land Status**

- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
- Private

**Other Features**

- Cities or Towns**
- State Capital
- County Seat
- Other
- Roads**
- Interstates
- Highways
- Major Roads



Boardman to Hemingway  
Transmission Line Project

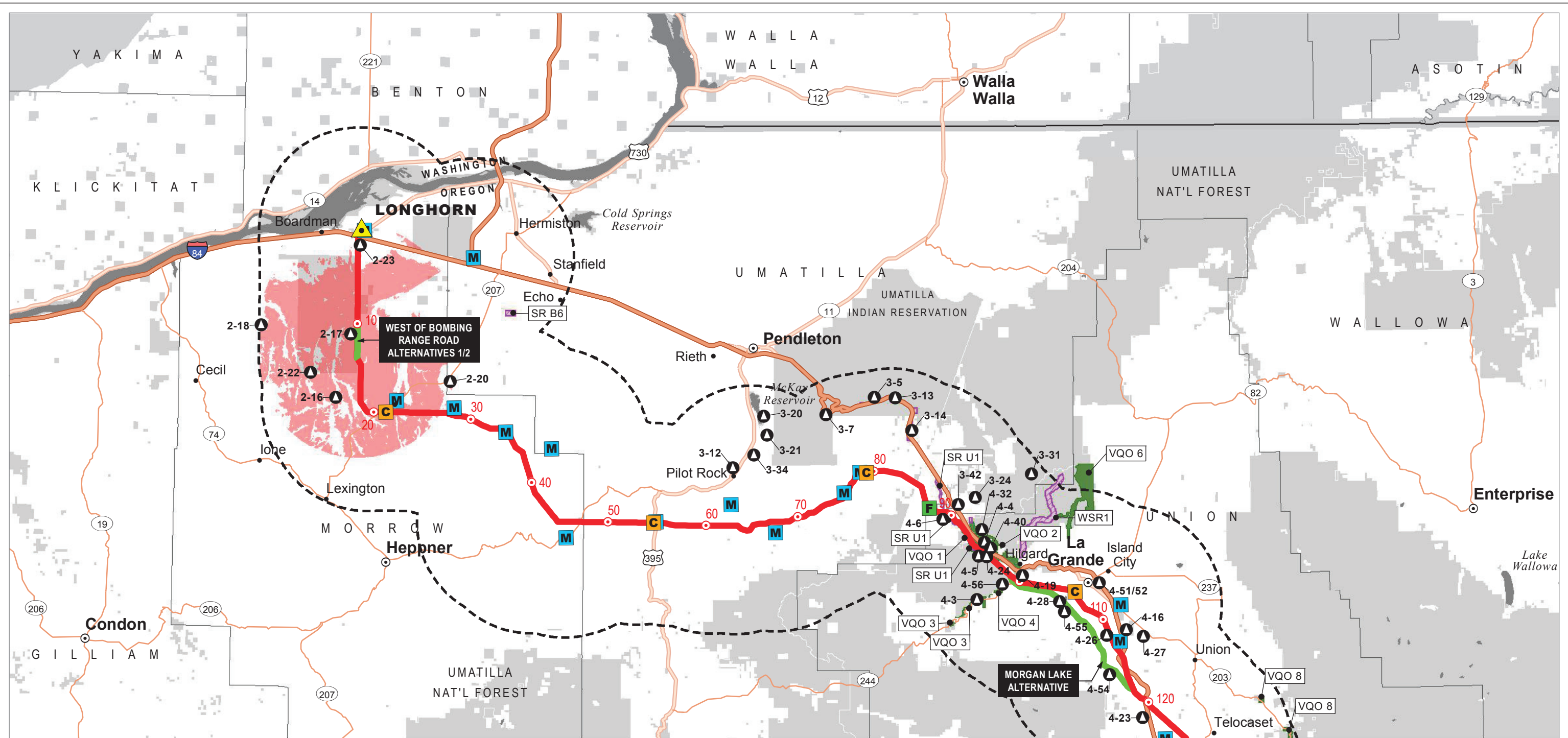
**Attachment R-6a  
Scenic Resources**

Viewshed  
Proposed Route

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Viewshed (West of Bombing Range Road Alternatives Only)
  - Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible
  - Scenic Features
  - Key Observation Points

- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile Marker
  - Communication Station
  - Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area

- Land Status**
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Private
- Other Features**
- Cities or Towns
  - County Seat
  - Other

- Roads**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads

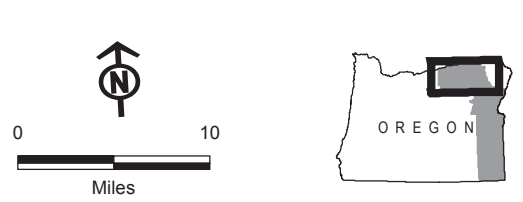
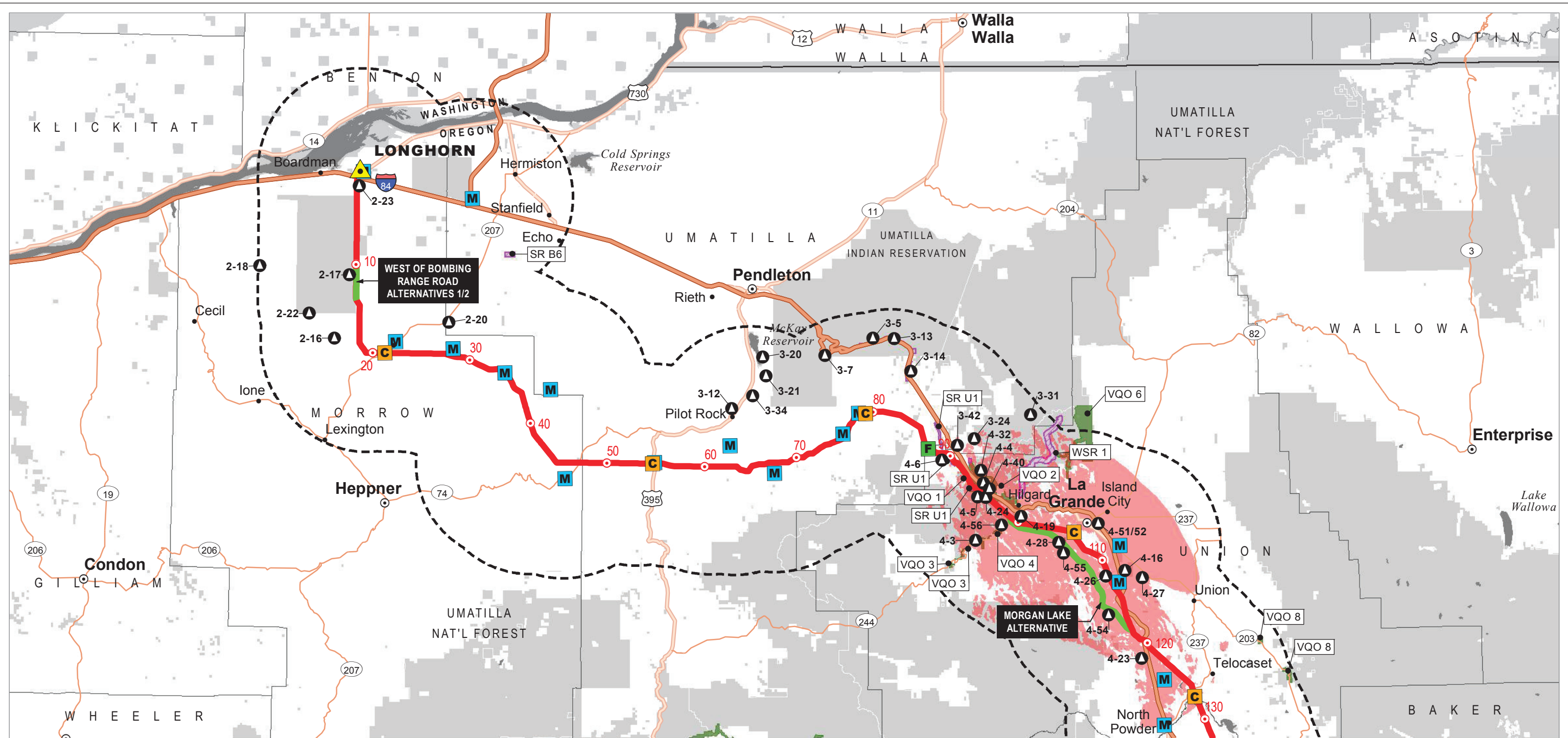
**Attachment R-6a  
Scenic Resources**

Viewshed  
West of Bombing Range Road Alternatives 1/2

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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December 2016



Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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December 2016

- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Viewshed (Morgan Lake Alternative Only)
  - Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible
  - Scenic Features**
  - Key Observation Points

- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile Marker
  - Communication Station
  - Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area

- Land Status**
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Private
- Other Features**
- County Seat
  - Other

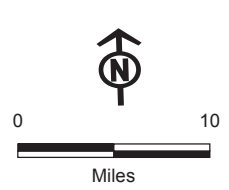
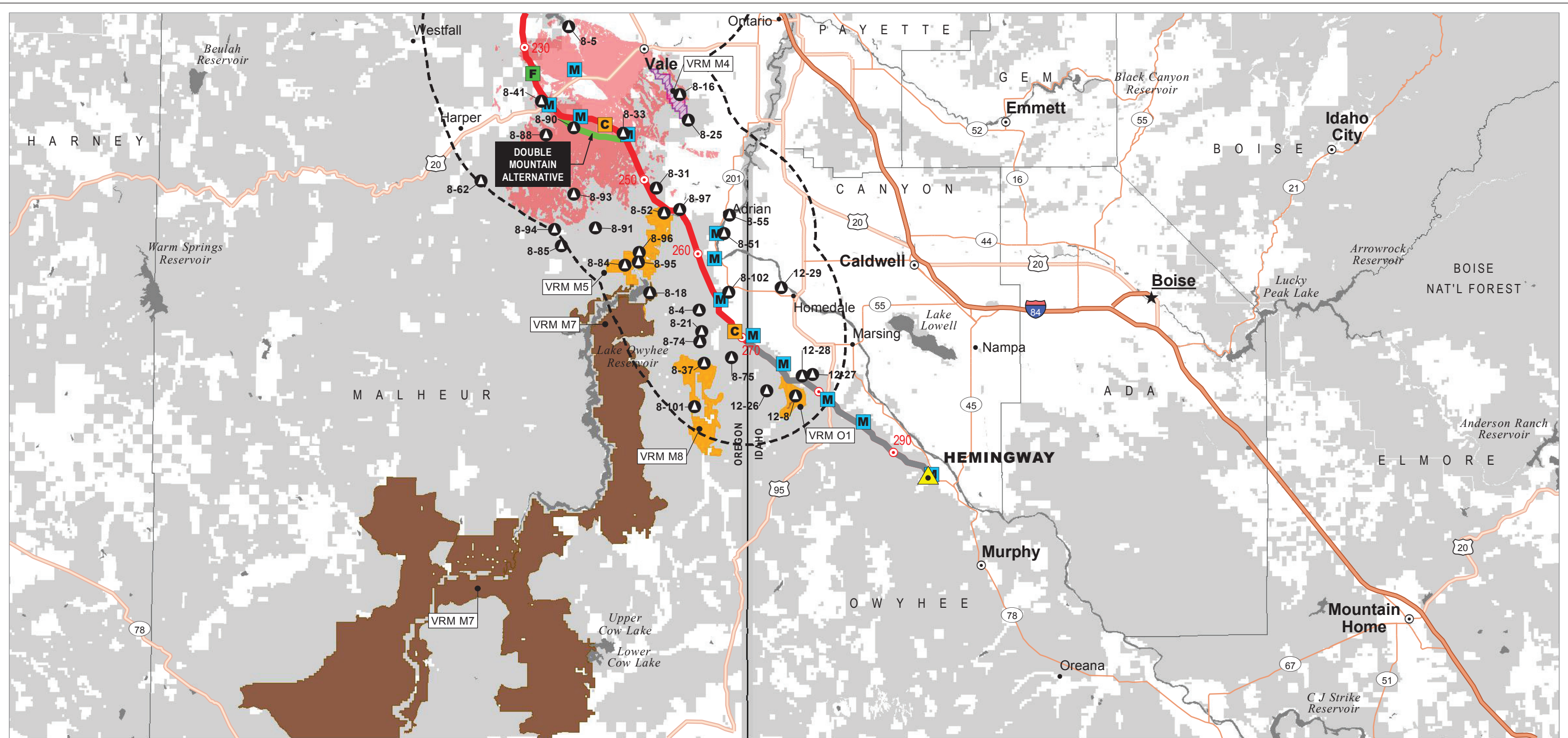
- Roads**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads

Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

**Attachment R-6a  
Scenic Resources**

Viewshed  
Morgan Lake Alternative





**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
- Viewshed (Double Mountain Alternative Only)**
- Area Where One or More Towers May Be Visible to 10-miles
- Not Visible
- Scenic Features**
- Key Observation Points

**Project Features**

- Proposed Route
- Alternative Route
- Proposed Route Not In Oregon
- Ten-mile Marker
- Communication Station

**Land Status**

- Scenic Resources (polygon)
- BLM VRM Class I
- BLM VRM Class II
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
- Private

**Other Features**

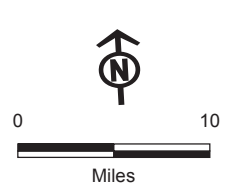
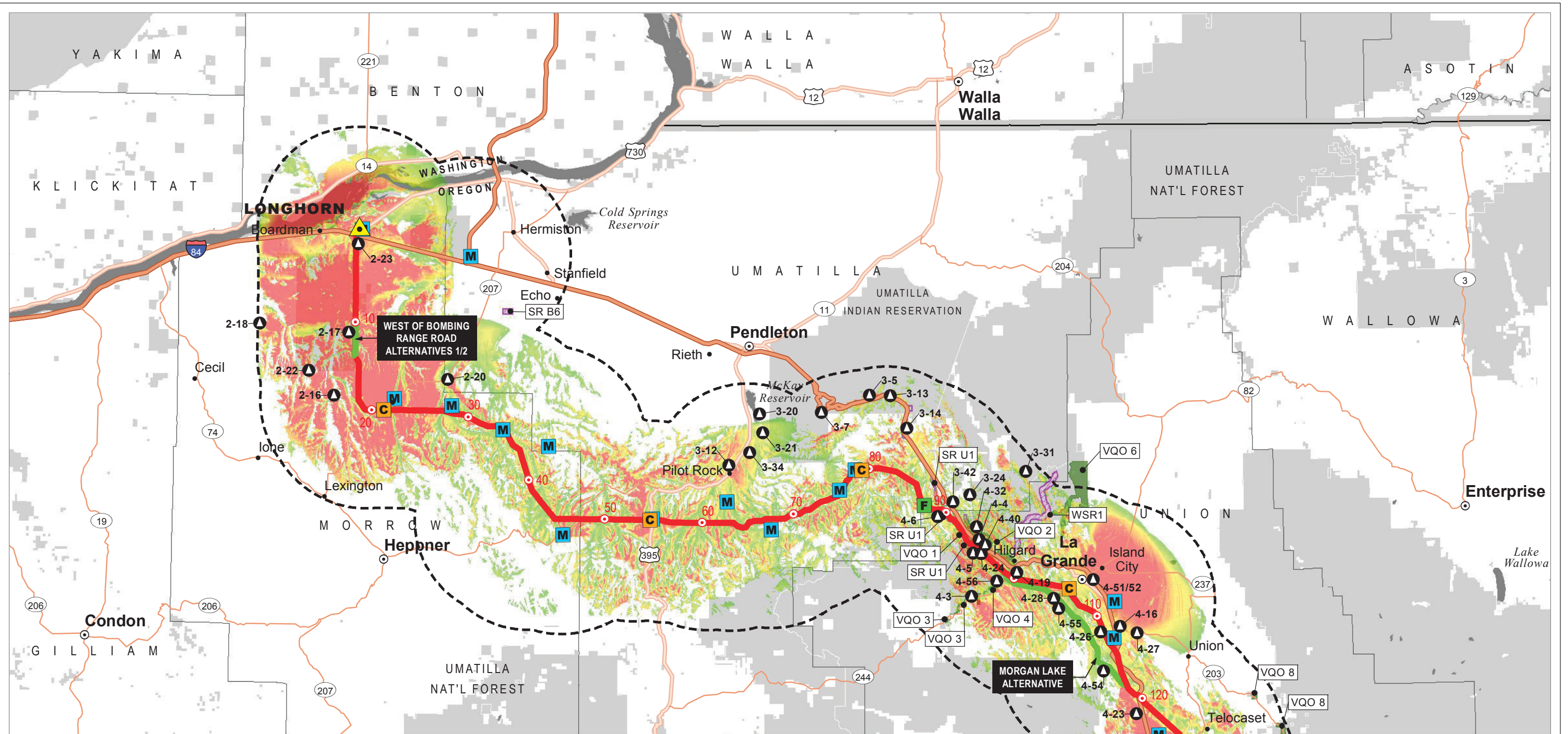
- Light-Duty Fly Yard
- Multi-Use Area
- Station
- State Capital
- County Seat
- Other
- Roads**
- Interstates
- Highways
- Major Roads

**Attachment R-6a Scenic Resources**

**Viewshed Double Mountain Alternative**

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community  
 Z:\UtilServ\Boardman\_Hemingway\Reports\002\_Oregon\_Energy\_Siting\_Council\03\_Final ASC\Exhibits\IR\_Scenic\Maps\Attachment R-6a\Attachment R-6a Viewshed\_Double Mountain.mxd  
 December 2016





Map Area

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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December 2016

**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
- Visibility (Proposed Route Only)**  
# of Towers Visible to 10-miles
- High
- Low or Not Visible

**Scenic Features**

- Key Observation Points
- Scenic Resources (polygon)
- Visual Management Areas**
- USFS VQO Retention
- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
- Alternative Route
- Ten-mile Marker
- Communication Station

**Other Features**

- Light-Duty Fly Yard
- Multi-Use Area
- Station

**Land Status**

- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
- Private

**Other Features**

- Cities or Towns**
- County Seat
- Other
- Roads**
- Interstates
- Highways
- Major Roads



Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

**Attachment R-6b Scenic Resources**

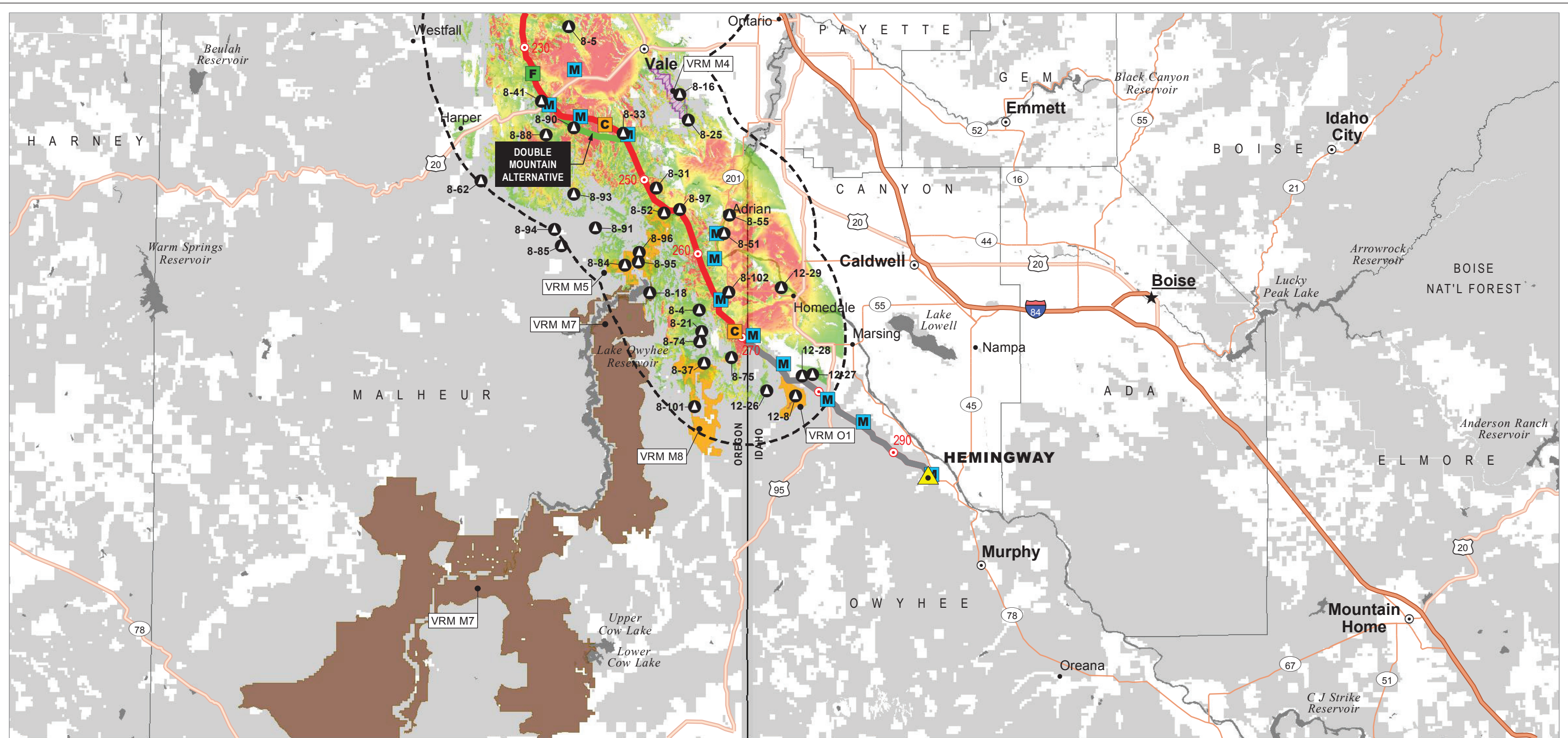
Potential Tower Visibility Proposed Route

Map 1









**Map Area**

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen and the GIS User Community

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December 2016

**Scenic and Visual Resource Features**

- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
- Visibility (Proposed Route Only) # of Towers Visible to 10-miles
  - High
  - Low or Not Visible

**Scenic Features**

- Key Observation Points
- Scenic Resources (polygon)

**Visual Management Areas**

- BLM VRM Class I
- BLM VRM Class II

**Project Features**

- Proposed Route
- Alternative Route
- Proposed Route Not In Oregon
- Ten-mile Marker

**Land Status**

- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
- Private

**Other Features**

- Cities or Towns
- State Capital
- County Seat
- Other
- Roads
  - Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads

**Communication Station**

- Light-Duty Fly Yard
- Multi-Use Area
- Station

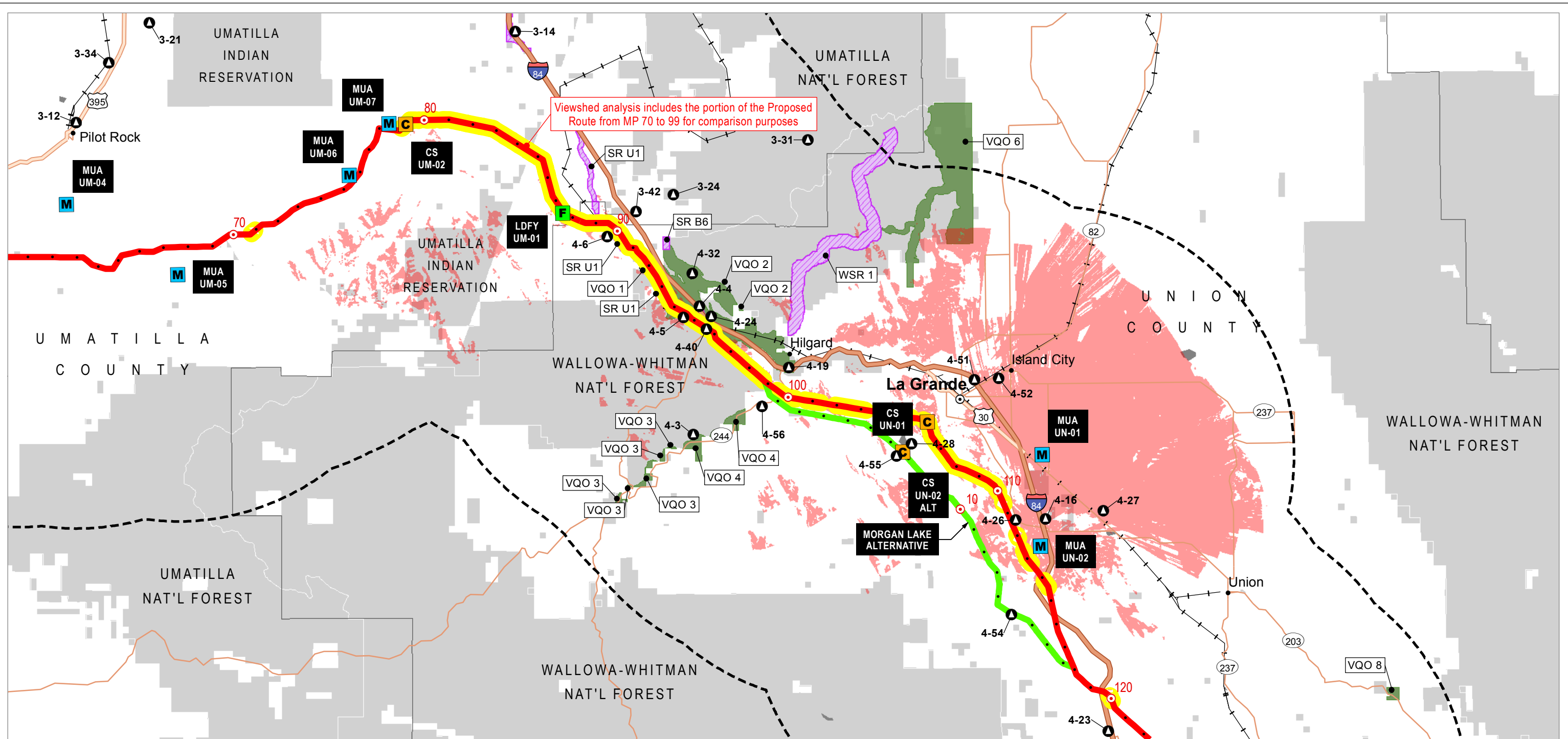
**IDAHO POWER**  
An IDACORP Company

Boardman to Hemingway  
Transmission Line Project

**Attachment R-6b  
Scenic Resources**

Potential Tower Visibility  
Proposed Route

Map 3



Viewshed analysis includes the portion of the Proposed Route from MP 70 to 99 for comparison purposes



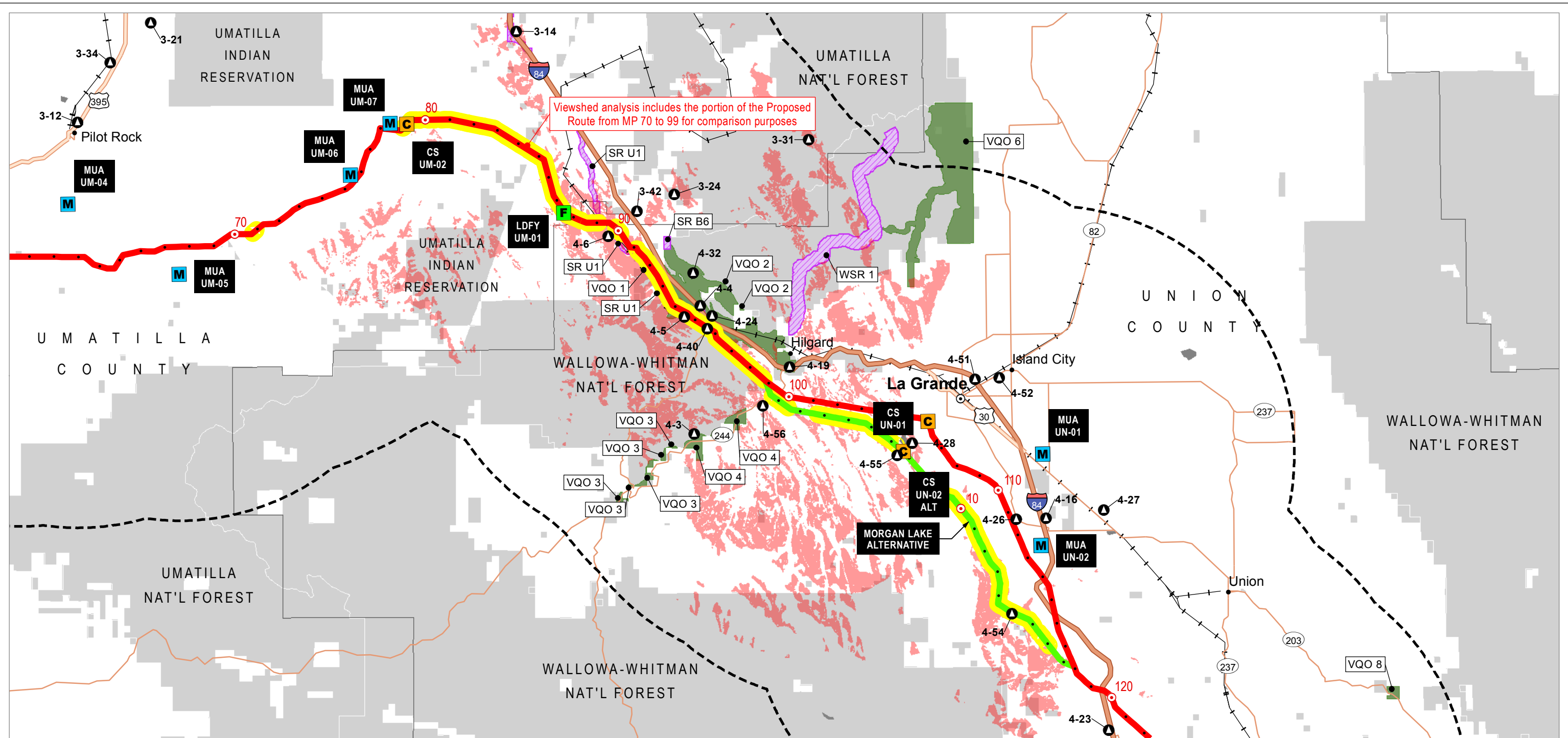
- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Estimated ROW Clearing in Forested Land (width exaggerated for map scale)
  - Area Where Full ROW Clearing in Forested Land May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible
- Viewshed**
- Area Where Full ROW Clearing in Forested Land May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible
- Scenic Features**
- Key Observation Points
  - Scenic Resources (polygon)
  - USFS VQO Retention
- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile
  - Mile
  - Communication Station
- Land Status**
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Private
- Other Features**
- Cities or Towns
  - County Seat
  - Other
- Roads and Railroad**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads
  - Railroad
- Other Features**
- Light-Duty Fly Yard
  - Multi-Use Area

Source(s): BLM, Esri, IPC, ODFW, NPS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastystyrelsen and the GIS User Community

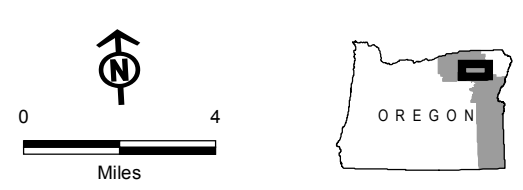
Z:\UtilServ\Boardman\_Hemingway\Reports\002\_Oregon\_Energy\_Siting\_Council\03\_Final ASC\Exhibits\Scenic\Maps\Attachment R-6c\Attachment R-6c Viewshed\_Forest

December 2016





Viewshed analysis includes the portion of the Proposed Route from MP 70 to 99 for comparison purposes



- Scenic and Visual Resource Features**
- Scenic Resources Analysis Area (10-mile buffer of Site Boundary)
  - Estimated ROW Clearing in Forested Land (width exaggerated for map scale)
  - Area Where Full ROW Clearing in Forested Land May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible
- Viewshed**
- Area Where Full ROW Clearing in Forested Land May Be Visible to 10-miles
  - Not Visible

- Scenic Features**
- Key Observation Points
  - Scenic Resources (polygon)
  - USFS VQO Retention
- Project Features**
- Proposed Route
  - Alternative Route
  - Ten-mile
  - Mile
  - Communication Station

- Land Status**
- Other Federal or State Lands or Indian Reservation
  - Private
- Other Features**
- Cities or Towns
  - County Seat
  - Other

- Roads and Railroad**
- Interstates
  - Highways
  - Major Roads
  - Railroad