

MIKE SPATT
P99/D-507

OWYHEE WILD & SCENIC RIVER STUDY

final
report -
environmental
statement

MARCH 1979

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 interests 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.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary

National Park Service
William J. Whalen, Director

OWYHEE WILD & SCENIC RIVER STUDY
FINAL REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Department of the Interior
National Park Service
March 1979

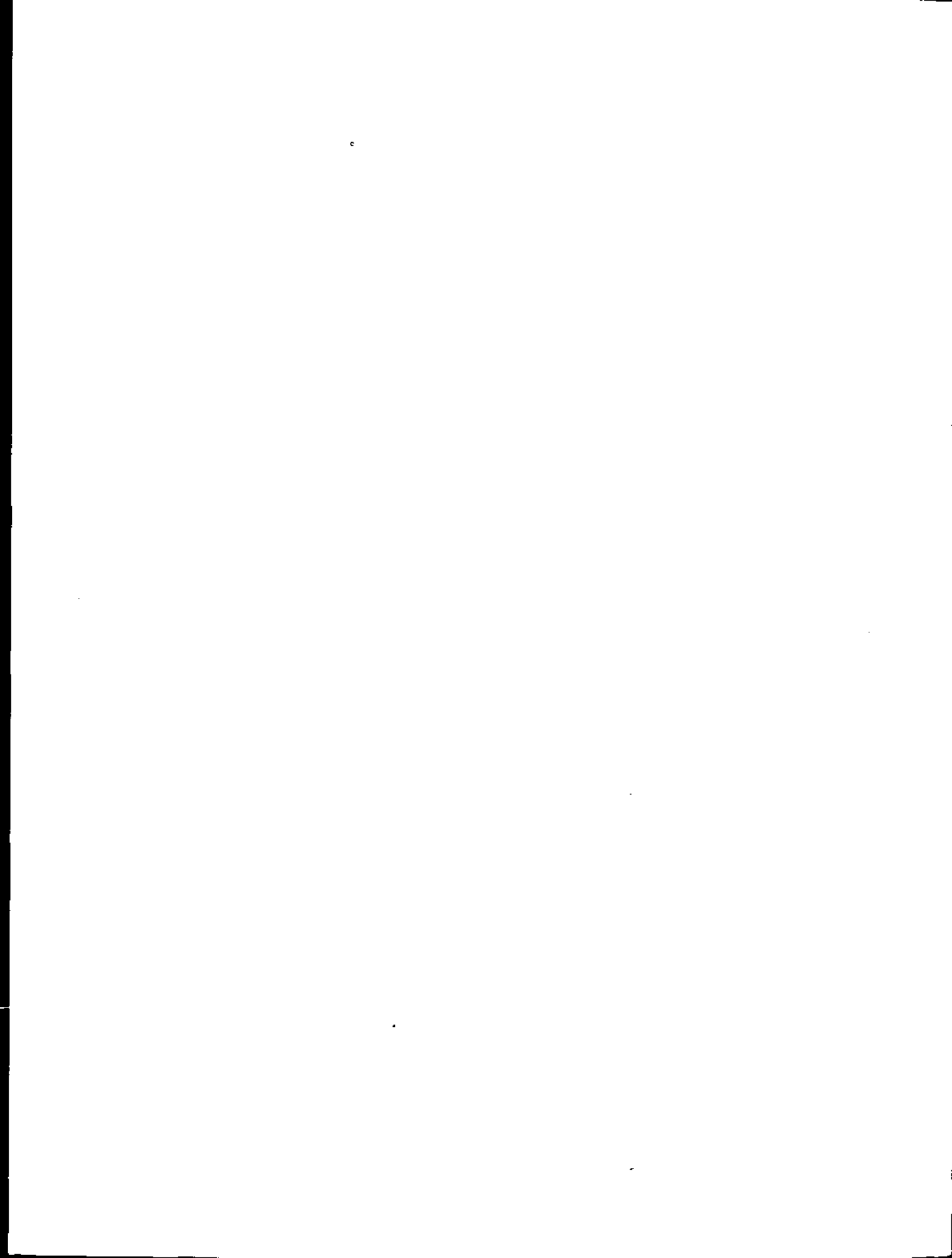


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL	4
Administration	10
Acquisition and Development	11
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT	13
Regional Setting	13
Physical Features	13
Climate	13
Population	14
Economy	14
Transportation Facilities	16
Recreation	16
Description of the Owyhee River Study Area	20
Location and Physical Condition	20
Geology	22
Minerals	22
Geothermal Activity	26
Soils	26
Vegetation	26
Fish and Wildlife	29
Hydrology and Water Resource Development	30
Water Quality	32
Land Ownership	35
Land Use	36

Water Rights	39
Access to River	40
Archeological and Historical Values	40
Recreation Resources	44
III. THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION	45
Impact on Recreation	45
Impact on Local Economy	46
Impact on Transportation	47
Impact on Mining	48
Impact on Soil and Vegetation	48
Impact on Fish and Wildlife	48
Impact on Water Development and Water Uses	49
Impact on Water Quality	50
Impact on Land Ownership and Land Use	50
Impact on Archeological and Historic Values	51
IV. MITIGATING MEASURES INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION	52
V. ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED SHOULD THE PROPOSAL BE IMPLEMENTED	54
VI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY	55
VII. ANY IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED	56
VIII. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION	57
Alternative One - No Action to Include the 192 Miles in the National System	57

Alternative Two - Inclusion in the National System of all but the 14 Miles in Oregon Between China Gulch and Crooked Creek	60
Alternative Three - Inclusion in the National System of all but one or the other River Segments Required for Duncan Ferry or Three Forks Reservoirs	62
Alternative Four - State Protection	65
Principles and Standards	66
IX. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHERS	76

APPENDIX:

Responses to the Draft Report and Draft Environmental Statement	79
--	----

MAPS:

1. Owyhee River Location Map	vii
2. Recommendations	5
3. Regional Transportation	17
4. Major Regional Recreation Areas	21
5. Geology	23
6. Land Capability	27
7. Water Resource Development	33
8. Land Status	37
9. Accessibility	41

TABLES:

1. Average Monthly Runoff in the Owyhee River as Measured by the USGS, 1949-1977	30
2. Land Ownership Within One-Quarter Mile of the 142 Miles of Study River	36

3. Recreation Days (Boating)	45
4. Recreation Days (All Recreation Uses)	46
5. Analysis of Alternatives in Accordance with <u>Principles and Standards</u>	67

FIGURES:

1. Lateral Boundary - Wild Section Lateral Boundary - Scenic Section	7
---	---

SUMMARY

() Draft (X) Final Environmental Statement

Department of the Interior, National Park Service

1. Type of Action: () Administrative (X) Legislative
2. Brief Description of Action:

The Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study was conducted pursuant to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as amended by Public Law 93-621. The study recommends Federal and State actions to add the 192-mile segment of the Owyhee River extending from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho downstream to the Owyhee Reservoir in Oregon and approximately 61,440 acres of adjacent land to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System under administration of the Bureau of Land Management and the State of Oregon. Specific lateral boundaries will be determined by the administering agencies during detailed planning after addition of the segment.

3. Summary of Environmental Impact and Adverse Environmental Effects:

Inclusion of the 192-mile segment and its immediate environment in the National System would have an overall effect of preserving the existing scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife, archeological, and geologic values of the river and its immediate environment.

Existing uses of the area, chiefly livestock grazing, would continue. However, limitations on the use of lands adjoining the river, as well as on the amount and kinds of recreation use permitted, are probable.

4. Alternatives Considered:

In addition to the proposed action, other alternatives considered were:

1. Noninclusion in the National System of any of the 192 miles studied.
2. Inclusion in the National System of all but the 14 miles in Oregon between China Gulch and Crooked Creek.
3. Inclusion in the National System of all but one or the other river segments required for Duncan Ferry or Three Forks Reservoirs.

4. State protection.

5. Comments were Requested from the Following:

Federal Agencies:

Advisory Council on Historic
Preservation
Department of Agriculture
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense
Corps of Engineers
Department of Energy
Department of Health, Education,
and Welfare
Department of Housing and Urban
Development

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Mines
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Geological Survey
Environmental Protection
Agency
Department of Transportation
Pacific Northwest River Basins
Commission

Clearinghouses:

State of Idaho Clearinghouse

State of Oregon Clearinghouse

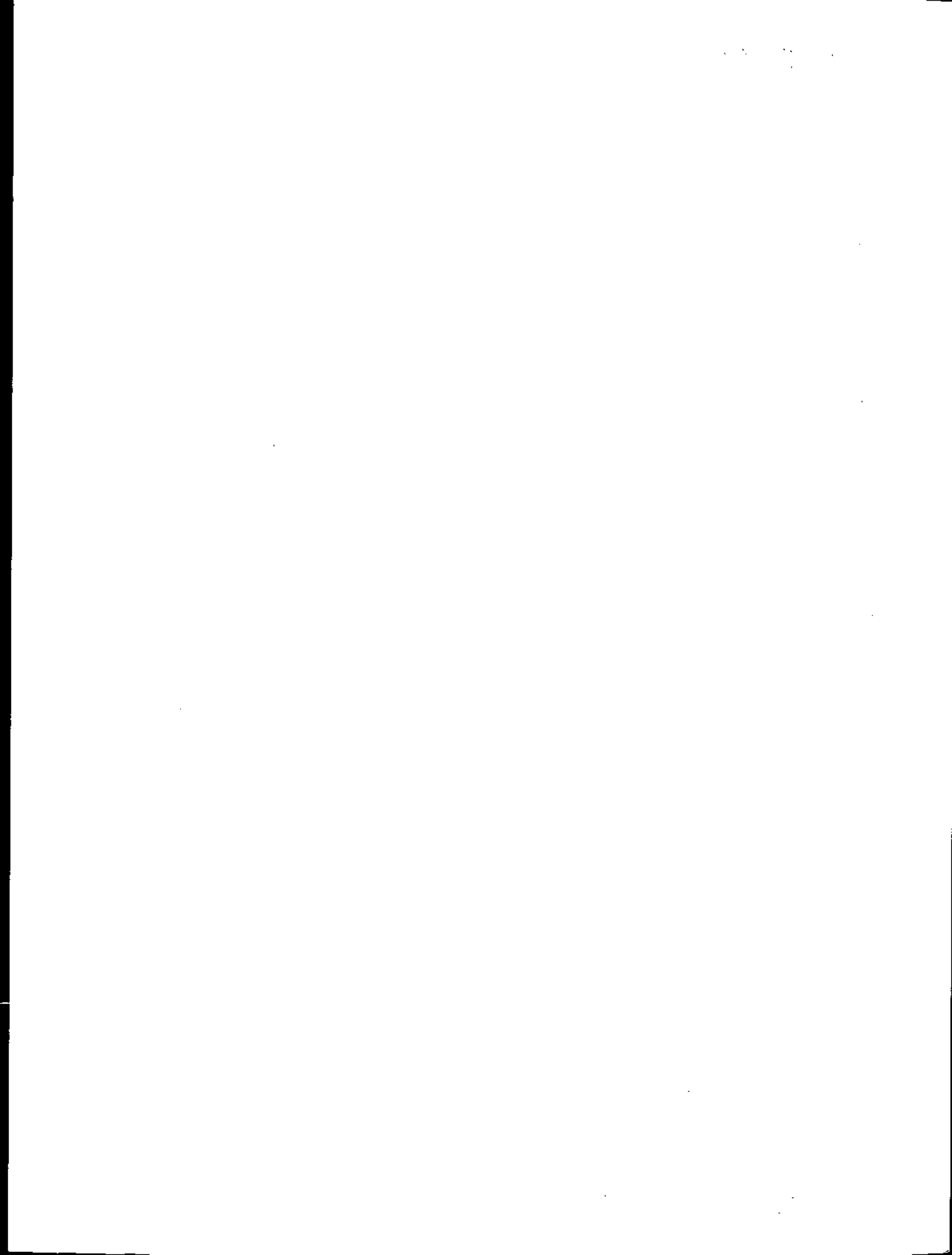
Others:

American Camping Association, Inc.	National Wildlife Federation
American Canoe Association, Inc.	Northwest Mining Association
American Conservation Association, Inc.	Oregon High Desert Study Group
American Farm Bureau Federation	Oregon State Public Interest Research Group
American Mining Congress	Pacific Power and Light
American Petroleum Institute	Sierra Club
Preservation Society	Sport Fishing Institute
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	University of Oregon Outdoor Program
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs	Washington Kayak Club
Friends of the Earth	Western Oil and Gas Association
Idaho Power Company	Western River Guides Association
Interagency Whitewater Committee	The Wilderness Society
Izaak Walton League of America	North Board of Control (Irrigation District)
Local and State Cattleman Associations	South Board of Control (Irrigation District)
National Audubon Society	Cattlemen Associations
National Farmers Union	
The National Grange	

MAP 1 LOCATION

- LEGEND**
- Study Area
 - Cities Over 75,000
 - Cities Under 75,000





INTRODUCTION

This report on the scenic and recreational qualities of the Owyhee River in Oregon and Idaho was prepared under the authority of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended. In the Act, Congress stated:

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dam and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation requisites.

The Act establishing the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System designated eight initial rivers; the system has since grown to include 27 rivers. The Act, as amended, identifies 72 other rivers for study as potential additions to the system, including the Owyhee River from the Idaho-Oregon State border downstream 126 miles to the Owyhee Reservoir. At the request of the State of Idaho, the Owyhee River study area was extended to include the Owyhee in Idaho from the Idaho-Oregon border upstream 66 miles to the west boundary of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. (See Map 1.)

In evaluating the 192-miles, requirements of three major documents were complied with. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the preparation of a report and its submission by the President to the Congress. The report evaluates the suitability or unsuitability of the river for addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and describes the characteristics which do or do not make the area a worthy addition to the system; the current status of land ownership and use in the area; the reasonable foreseeable potential uses of the land and water which would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the river were included in the system; the method of administration; and costs.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires the study of all actions which may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The results are contained in a report which provides agencies, other decision-makers, and the public with:

1. The environmental impact of the proposed action;

2. Any adverse effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented;

3. Alternatives to the proposed action;

4. The relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity; and

5. Any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.

Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources, adopted by the Water Resources Council in 1973, prescribes a systematic method to use in evaluating the various feasible alternative management plans and selecting the plan which makes best use of the resource while meeting the needs of society in a manner acceptable to the public. Studies conducted pursuant to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act are directed at identifying river environments which have outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, and related values, and determining how best to protect those rivers. Such protection may not necessarily result in the maximum economic development. However, the benefits that would be foregone by protecting the river are displayed in such a way as to facilitate the evaluation of tradeoffs. (See Table 5.)

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) was assigned the lead in the Owyhee River study effort by the Secretary of the Interior and most of the study was completed under its direction. On January 25, 1978, study responsibility was transferred to the National Park Service by Secretarial Order Number 3017. Other Federal agencies included on a study team that was established to conduct the study were the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U. S. Forest Service. Representing the State of Oregon on the study team were the River Program of the Parks and Recreation Branch and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Representing Idaho were the Departments of Fish and Game, Water Resources, Health and Welfare, and Parks and Recreation. The Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Mines, and many other public and private interests, although not represented on the study team, provided technical input into the study.



Whistling Bird Rapids, below Rome

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal recommends that the entire 192-mile-long study segment of the Owyhee River extending between the western boundary of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho and the Owyhee Reservoir in Oregon be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. (See Map 2.)

The portion of river downstream from the boundary of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to China Gulch (128 miles), and the portion from Crooked Creek to the Owyhee Reservoir (50 miles), would be added to the National System by Congress and administered by the BLM. A detailed management and development plan for the BLM segments of the river corridor and detailed lateral boundaries would be filed with Congress within 2 years of inclusion of the river in the National System. The portion from China Gulch to Crooked Creek (14 miles) would first be added to the Oregon Scenic Waterways System for administration by the State and then, upon application from the Governor, be added to the National System by the Secretary of the Interior as provided in Section 2(a)(ii).

A lateral boundary extending back varying distances from each side of the river but averaging one-quarter mile is recommended for the two segments which would be administered by the BLM. Where the canyon rim is sharply defined, the boundary would reach to the canyon rim and beyond to the nearest legal subdivision line. Where the canyon rim is not easily defined, the boundary would be drawn to include the visual foreground as viewed from the river. See Figure 1.

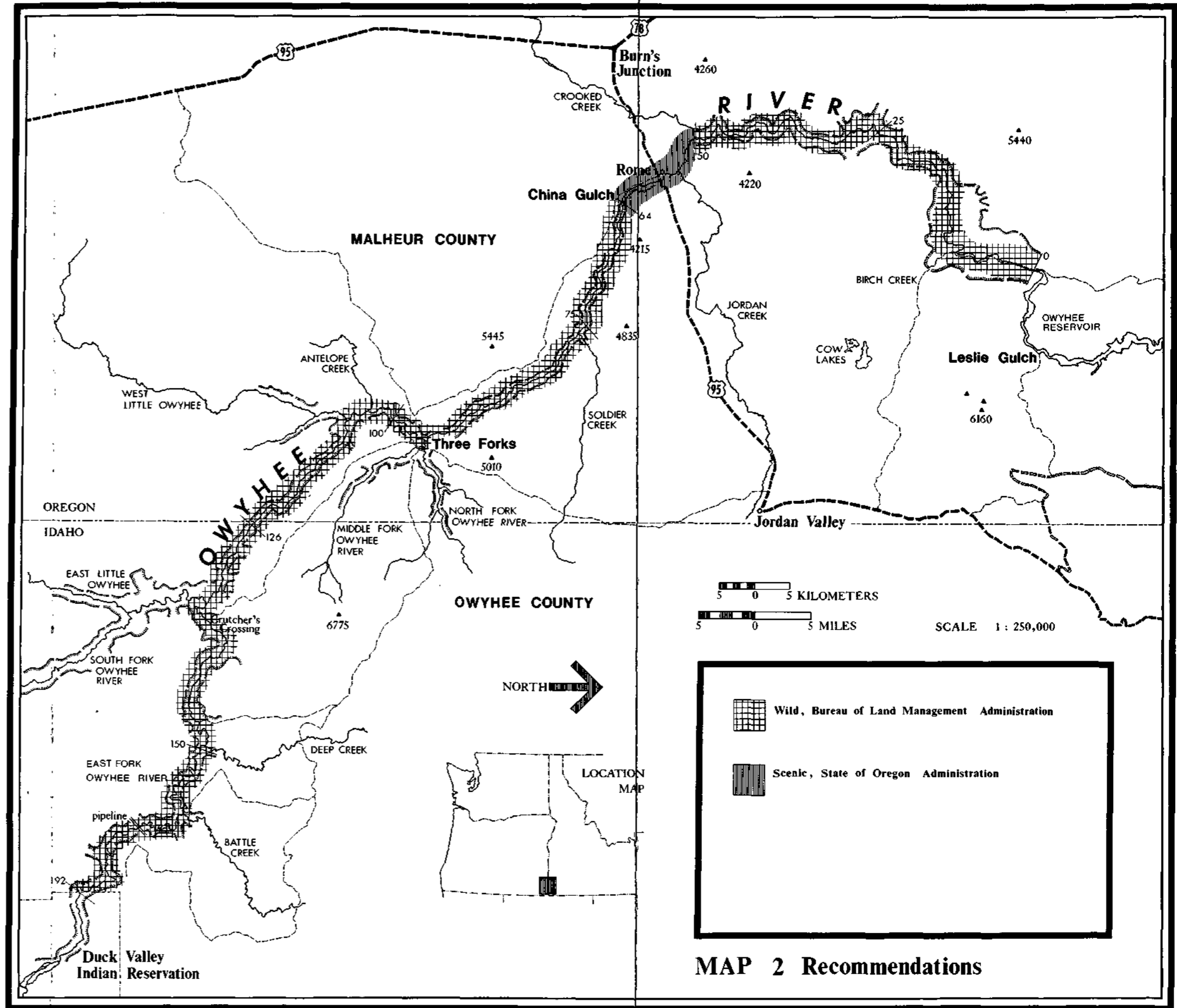
Along the 14 miles which would be administered by the State of Oregon, the lateral boundary would extend a uniform one-quarter mile back from each side of the river, as provided for in the Oregon Scenic Waterways Act.

Approximately 61,400 acres of land would be encompassed by the boundary, including 56,960 acres along the 178 miles of river which would be administered by the BLM, and 4,480 acres along the 14 miles of river which would be administered by the State of Oregon.

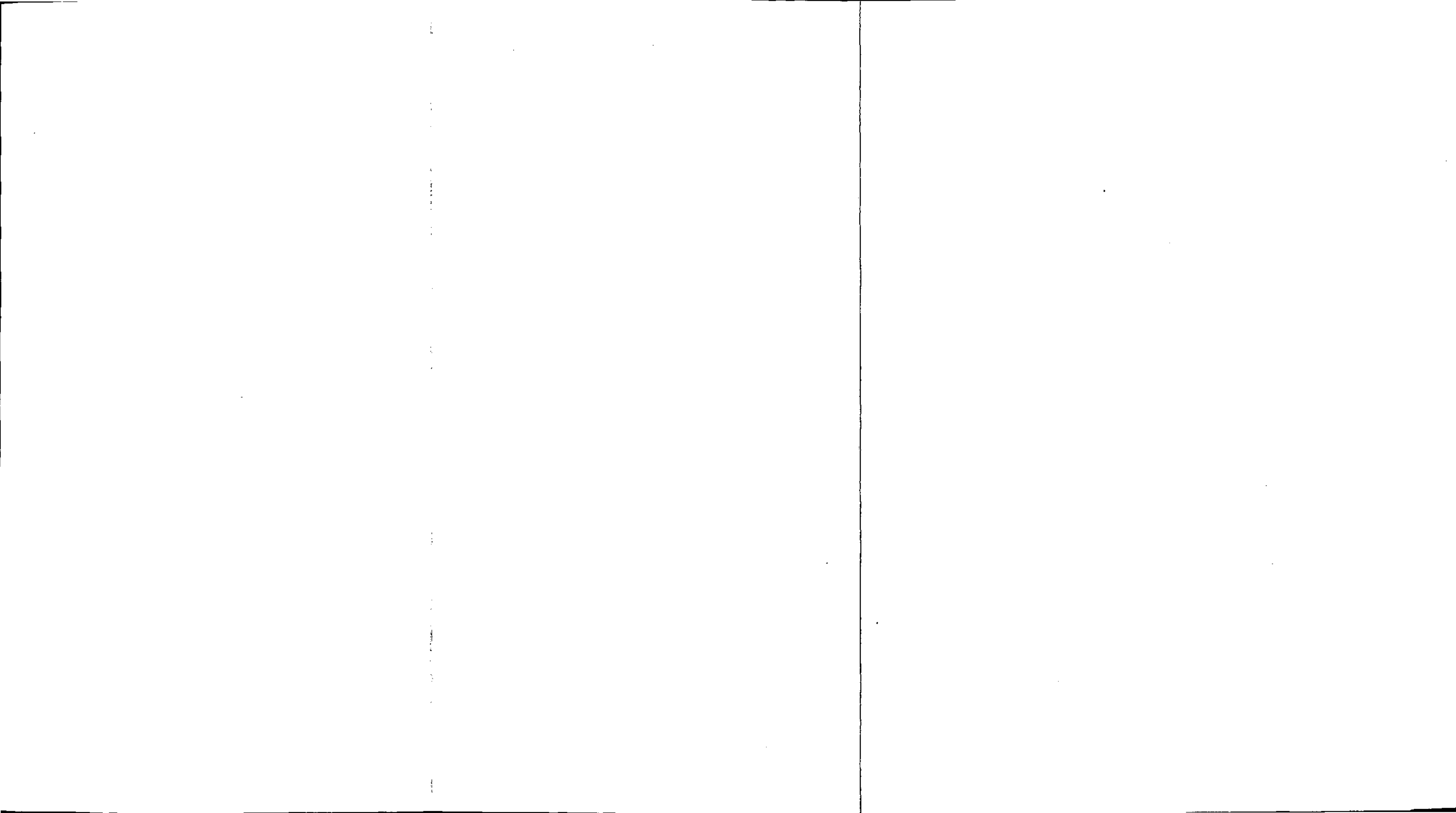
The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the classification of rivers or river segments designated for inclusion in the National System as one of the following

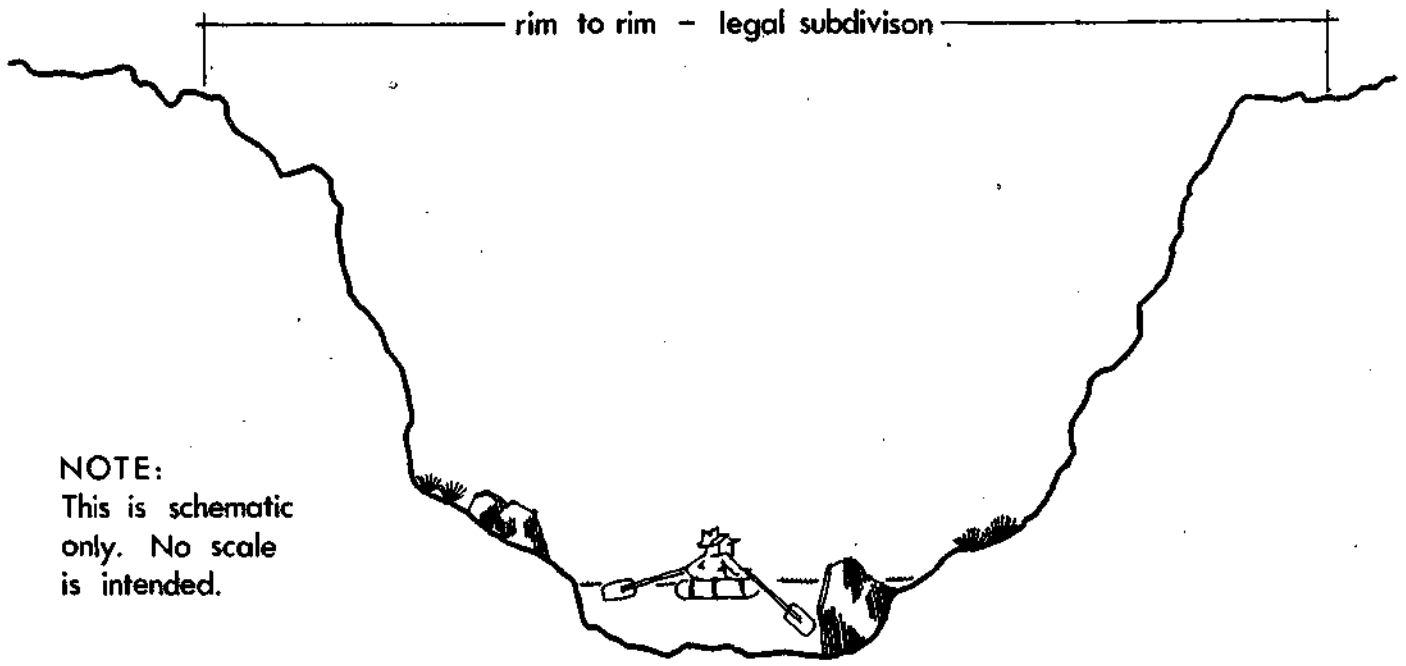
1. Wild River Areas - Those areas or sections of rivers that are free of impoundment and generally inaccessible except by trail with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

2. Scenic River Areas - Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments with shorelines or watersheds still largely



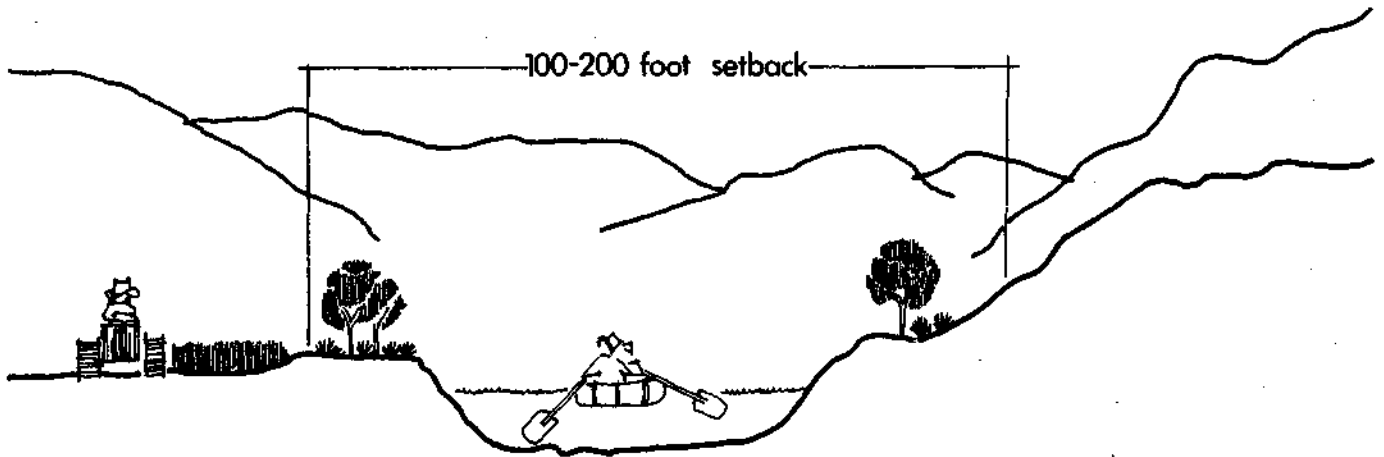
MAP 2 Recommendations





NOTE:
This is schematic
only. No scale
is intended.

LATERAL BOUNDARY - WILD SECTION



NOTE:
This is schematic only.
No scale is intended.

LATERAL BOUNDARY - SCENIC SECTION

FIGURE 1

primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped but accessible in places by road.

3. Recreation River Areas - Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad. They may have some developments along their shorelines and may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

The segments of the Owyhee and the classification they qualify for are as follows:

1. The 128-mile segment downstream from the border of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to China Gulch near Rome, Oregon, meets the criteria for classification as Wild.

2. The 14-mile segment in Oregon from China Gulch downstream to Crooked Creek meets the criteria for classification as Scenic.

3. The 50-mile segment from Crooked Creek downstream to the Owyhee Reservoir meets the criteria for classification as Wild.

The two segments which qualify for Wild classification are deeply entrenched in most places, show little evidence of man's presence, and have a wild, primitive character. The 14-mile section between China Gulch and Crooked Creek which qualifies for Scenic classification is accessible by road and bordered, in part, by agricultural land. The bridge crossing of U. S. 95 at Rome, Oregon, is a popular take-out point for boaters floating the river from Three Forks and the most heavily used launch site for floats of the lower river.

The recommendation that the 192-mile-long study segment qualifies to be added to the National System is based on the finding that it meets the established criteria for designation.^{1/} These criteria are that a river must:

1. Possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values;
2. Be in a substantially free-flowing condition;
3. Be long enough to provide a meaningful recreation experience;
4. Contain a sufficient volume of water during the recreation season to provide full enjoyment of water-related outdoor recreation;

^{1/} Guidelines for Evaluating Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Areas Proposed for Inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System, adopted by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture in February 1972.

5. Contain high quality water or be restorable to that condition.

The study found that the river corridor includes many outstanding qualities and features. Because few roads exist, most of the canyon is a virtually unspoiled wilderness and affords a variety of significant recreation opportunities. Recreational use is low because of the river area's obscurity and the difficult access and rugged terrain. Although the river can be floated in its entirety only during February through May in normal years, the canyon affords other popular kinds of recreation during much of the year, including fishing, hunting, backpacking, nature study, and rockhounding.

The area includes a significant number of important historic and archeological sites and geological features.

The canyon supports an interesting association of animal life, including mule deer, mountain lion, otter, coyote, bobcat, and raccoon. California bighorn sheep have been reintroduced by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Oregon Department of Wildlife. Many raptors, including golden eagles, occur and chukar are abundant. Trout, bass, and catfish live in the river.

The objective of the proposal is described by listing the guidelines which will govern future management of the river as a component of the National System:

1. Maintenance of the free-flowing condition and high water quality of the river.
2. Protection of the natural environment of the canyon and the unusual geologic and wildlife values.
3. Continuation of existing compatible uses in the river corridor.
4. Control and management of recreational use of the area to sustain high quality recreation experience.
5. Management of livestock use in the canyon in accordance with sound range management principles.
6. Protection and appropriate interpretation of important archeological and historical values.
7. Recreation access to the canyon mainly by boat, horse, or foot with motorized travel permitted only on designated roads or vehicular trails.
8. Development of limited public use facilities which are modern in design and harmonious with the natural environment.

Administration

Wild and Scenic River administration would be directed to protecting, enhancing, and making available for present and future use and enjoyment the outstanding scenic and recreational, qualities of the river corridor.

The BLM now administers more than 90 percent of the lands along the two segments which would be classified Wild. If those segments are added to the National System, a management plan would be prepared by that agency. That effort would be closely coordinated with the preparation of a management plan by the State of Oregon for the 14-mile segment from China Gulch to Crooked Creek which would be classified Scenic. The coordinated joint-plan would involve full cooperation and active participation of other Federal and State agencies, local units of government, and existing and potential user groups. The plan would be based on an analysis of the area's recreation carrying capacity. Its aim would be to protect the river experience by achieving the proper quantity and mix of recreation uses.

Land use controls necessary to preserve the existing integrity of the river environment would be determined in the preparation of the master plan. The controls would restrict those developments and uses which would detract from the existing water quality, recreational, scenic, historical, archeological, or fish and wildlife values of the area. Controls, however, would generally allow existing uses to continue since most are in harmony with Wild and Scenic River values.

Cooperation would be sought to protect the environmental quality of the watershed. This would require the active cooperation of Federal and State agencies, local units of government, and the private sector in developing and enforcing land use practices to protect the area from the dumping of garbage, sewage pollutants, and other contaminants.

The BLM's management planning for the Wild segments would include regulations pertaining to mining. Those regulations would be designed to provide safeguards against water, air, and noise pollution and unnecessary impairment of the scenery.

Use of off-road vehicles, aircraft, and motorboats would be regulated within the river corridor. Those regulations would be developed by the BLM and the States of Oregon and Idaho in cooperation with other public and private interests and seek to minimize impacts on the river environment, prevent harrassment of wildlife, and minimize conflicts with other uses.

Fishing and hunting would continue within the proposal area under applicable Federal and State regulations.

Livestock grazing, the predominant land use along the Owyhee, would be continued under license from the BLM on all Federal land but moderated as necessary so as not to be detrimental to soil stability, vegetative patterns, wildlife distribution, water quality, or other environmental values. Similarly, livestock use of State and private lands would continue.

At the earliest opportunity subsequent to the establishment of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River, further studies of the area would be made to locate, identify, and evaluate historic and archeological sites, and plan for their preservation and interpretation. Sites meeting applicable criteria would be nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Access to the Owyhee River system is difficult during most of the year, with the exception of the U. S. 95 crossing at Rome, Oregon. The management plan would prescribe methods of achieving a better distribution of visitors in the area.

Acquisition and Development

Within 2 years of the Owyhee's addition to the National System, the BLM would complete studies needed to identify definite lateral boundaries and to prepare a comprehensive plan, including the identification of land or interests which should be acquired along the BLM-administered sections. The planning efforts would be coordinated closely with a similar effort by Oregon involving the Scenic segment, as well as with the State of Idaho and appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and jurisdictions.

On private land along the segments administered by the BLM, protection of the river corridor would be accomplished chiefly through the acquisition of scenic easements. A scenic easement is designed to permit existing or expected land uses compatible with the intent of the Wild and Scenic River Act, and to protect scenic values of the river. The terms of a scenic easement are negotiated between the landowner and the administering agency. In return for appropriate compensation, the landowner binds himself, his heirs, and successors to refrain from using or developing the land in certain specified ways which detract from the scenic or natural character of the river. A scenic easement may not restrict, without the landowner's consent, any regular use exercised prior to the acquisition. The use of a scenic easement permits title to the land to remain in private ownership and on the tax rolls.

Easements which serve to assure public access to the banks of the river may also be necessary. Access easements are obtained the same way as are scenic easements.

If the Owyhee River is added to the National System, fee title to private land along the BLM-administered sections could not be condemned because the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act forbids condemnation in fee when more than 50 percent of the land along a federally administered river is publicly owned. State-owned lands located within the portion administered by the BLM could be obtained only with the consent of the State.

Specific development needs will be identified by the BLM in the comprehensive management plan. However, developments would be restricted to a level which assures safety, sanitation, and, as a major guiding principle, the retention of the existing natural character of the river corridor. No additional roads would be constructed, and the development of camping areas and other facilities would be modest and designed to harmonize with the surrounding landscape.

Estimated Federal costs (1976 dollars) for the recommended plan are:

Acquisition of lands or interests on lands (760 acres)	\$304,000
Development Costs	\$485,000
Annual Operation and Maintenance	\$120,000

Those costs include the acquisition of scenic easements by the BLM of an estimated 760 acres in private ownership. Developments include the improvement of 6 miles of road, modest improvement of the access points and staging areas at Three Forks and Rome, construction and servicing of sanitary facilities at commonly used camping spots along the river, and development of one scenic overlook and two administrative sites.

Funds would be sought by the BLM for the purpose of carrying out the mitigating measures listed on page 52.

The State of Oregon contemplates little development or operation and maintenance expense. Therefore, the cost to the State of administering the 14 miles would be minimal. For example, of approximately 85,000 acres of private land located within one-quarter mile of the State's existing scenic waterways, the State has had to acquire only about 500 acres in fee and 100 acres of scenic easements. Condemnation has been used three times.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Regional Setting

Physical Features

The Owyhee River basin encompasses lands located in northern Nevada, southwestern Idaho, and southeastern Oregon. The Owyhee drainage area includes approximately 11,337 square miles. The main tributaries are the North, South, East, and Middle Forks, Little Owyhee, and Battle, Deep, Crooked, and Jordan Creeks. See Map 1. The river rises in the Owyhee, Independence, Santa Rosa, and Tuscarora Mountains of southwestern Idaho and northern Nevada at an elevation of 6,000 feet and flows northerly and eventually unites with the Snake River near the town of Ontario, Oregon, at an elevation of 2,000 feet.

The Owyhee drainage basin is located within the Payette section of the Columbia Plateaus Physiographic Province. The southern portion is primarily a high northward-sloping plateau. The general elevation of the plateau surface ranges from slightly over 6,000 feet near the Nevada border to approximately 4,000 feet near Burns Junction. The general continuity of the plateau surface is interrupted by the entrenched Owyhee River and its tributaries and by isolated hills and mountains.

The surface topography of the plateau has been further subdued in the northern portion of the study area by the filling of topographic lows by very young basalt flows. This resulted in the damming of drainage patterns and interior drainage basins. These younger basalts extend nearly across the entire study area at approximately the latitude of Cow Lakes.

The northernmost portion of the Owyhee Upland has been eroded and dissected into a rolling, hilly topography. Below the rolling hills, the flood plains of the Malheur, Owyhee, and Snake Rivers merge to produce a landscape of low relief.

Climate

The climate is typified by very hot summers and cold winters. The temperature normally ranges from 32 degrees in January to 80 degrees in July. However, temperatures of below zero and over 110 degrees are not uncommon.

Most precipitation occurs at higher elevations. In the Owyhee, Independence, Santa Rosa, and Tuscarora Mountains where the Owyhee originates, the mean annual precipitation averages 35 inches. Over the intermediate plains in Idaho, precipitation averages 19 inches. At the confluence of the Owyhee and Snake Rivers, the mean annual rate

of precipitation drops to 8 inches. Precipitation occurs mostly during winter. The driest months are July and August.

The relative humidity is low, moderate winds are frequent, and there is an abundance of sunshine. The growing season ranges from 100 days at the upper elevations to 140 days along the lower reaches of the Owyhee.

Population

The Owyhee River basin in Owyhee County, Idaho, and Malheur County, Oregon, is sparsely populated, averaging fewer than two people per square mile. Large, widely scattered ranching operations are the dominant type of agricultural activity in the upper basin. Most of the population is concentrated in the lower basin in Malheur County. Approximately 85 percent of the population of Malheur County lives in the town of Ontario and the surrounding farmlands. See Map 1. The population of the Jordan Creek area in Oregon is 750, while the upper Owyhee in Idaho supports 1,300 persons, mostly on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. Rome, Oregon, the only community along the study segment, has a population of approximately 40. The populations of Owyhee and Malheur Counties were 6,000 and 24,000, respectively, in 1975.

Economy

During the early days of settlement, the economy of Owyhee and Malheur Counties was closely linked to the mining industry. Silver mines in the Silver City, Idaho, area on the Jordan River, were the largest in the region at one time. Mining activity declined sharply in the late 1880's but is currently being reactivated with the development of a large open pit silver and gold mine near DeLamar on Jordan Creek.

Livestock were introduced in the late 1860's to meet the local needs. The livestock industry later replaced the mining industry in importance, and by the 1920's, peak numbers of cattle and sheep occurred. Today, large numbers of cattle still use the rangelands, but sheep numbers have been greatly reduced.

The economy of the Owyhee Basin is based primarily on agriculture. Below the Owyhee Reservoir, irrigated lands along the Snake River produce crops with an annual gross value of about \$20 million. Among the more important are alfalfa, clover, sugar beets, onions, potatoes, corn and small grains, and truck and seed crops. A small amount of the irrigated acreage is in orchards. Above the Owyhee reservoir, along the study stretch, the economy is based on livestock and hay and forage crops. The principal use of the mountains, foothills, and sage-covered plains is livestock production.



Canyon below Rome

In the future, most economic expansion will center downstream from the study stretch on the irrigated land along the lower Owyhee and Snake Rivers. Livestock use of the open range in the study area should continue at present levels unless a higher production of areas planted in crested wheat and other grasses allows greater livestock production.

Recreation is increasingly important to the Owyhee Basin's economy. While few public or private facilities exist, the region's hunting, fishing, river floating, and other outdoor recreation opportunities are resulting in a greater interest in the area for recreational use.

Transportation Facilities

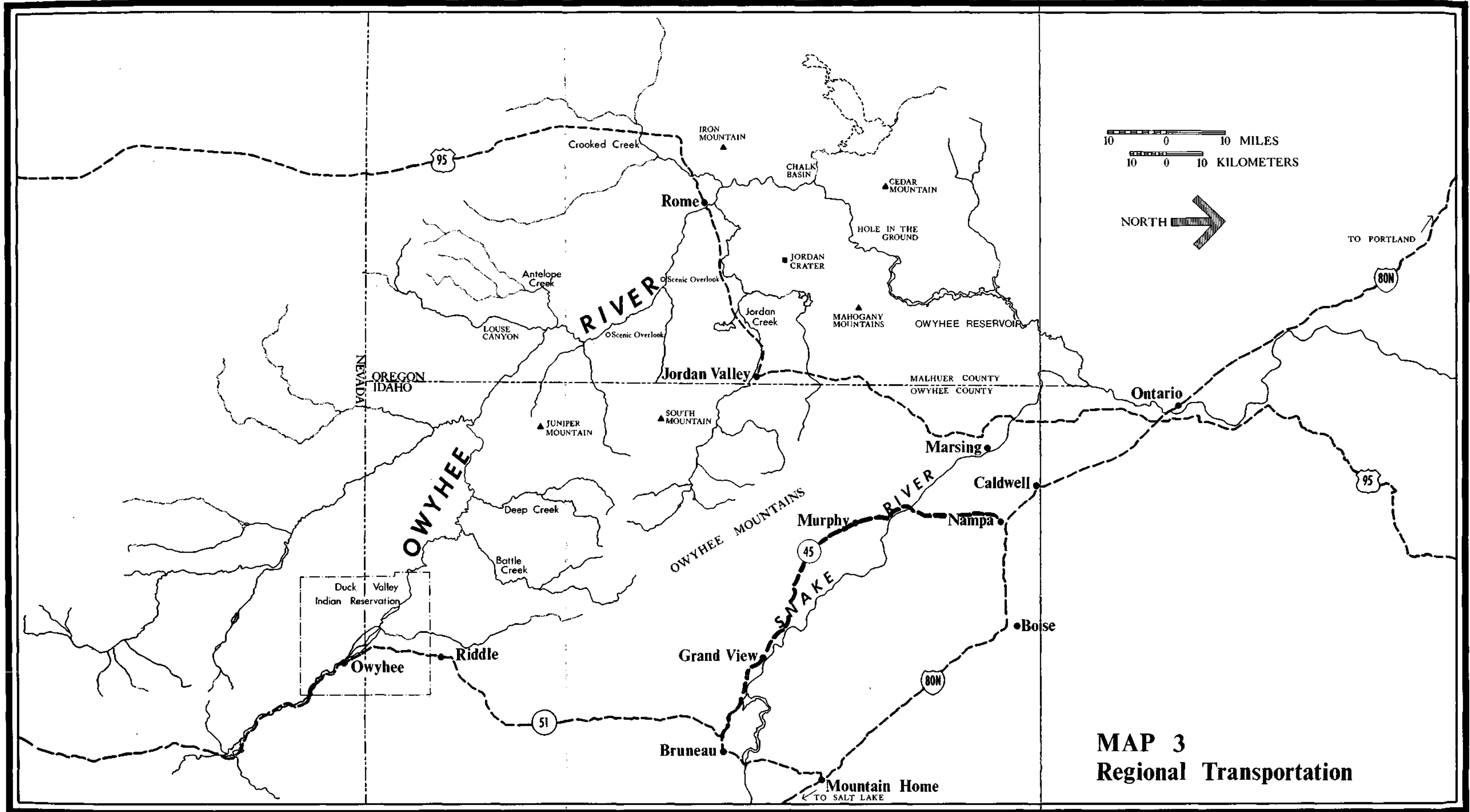
As shown on Map 3, there are limited transportation facilities in the Owyhee Basin. Interstate I-80 North is the main connecting route between Boise and Salt Lake City to the east and between Boise and Portland to the west. U. S. Highway 95, which crosses the Owyhee River at Rome, is a major north-south route through Idaho, southeastern Oregon, and Nevada. Idaho State Primary Route 78 connects Murphy, the Owyhee County seat, with Bruneau, Grandview, Marsing, and Hammett. Idaho State Highway 51 extends from Mountain Home, Idaho, via Gunsmoke, through the Duck Valley Indian Reservation into Nevada. The remainder of the basin is roadless or has improved or unimproved Bureau of Land Management or county roads. Neither Idaho nor Oregon currently has plans for the construction of new roads.

Scheduled airline service is available at Boise, Idaho; Ontario, Oregon; and Elko, Nevada. There is no scheduled air service to Owyhee County, Idaho. Charter and private planes utilize a number of airstrips located in or near the river corridor.

Recreation

Abundant outdoor recreation opportunities exist in northcentral Nevada, southwest Idaho, and southeast Oregon. Hunting is one of the most popular recreation pursuits in the region with some of the most sought after species being mule deer, sage grouse, Hungarian partridge, valley and mountain quail, chukar partridge, pheasant, ducks, and geese. There is limited hunting for antelope and California bighorn sheep.

Fishing is available in much of the Owyhee Basin. Small streams flowing out of the mountain areas provide trout fishing as do portions of the Owyhee drainage itself. The major fisheries in the Owyhee include trout, smallmouth bass, and channel catfish. The Snake River offers trout, channel catfish, small and largemouth bass, crappie, and other game fishing. Cow Lake, the Owyhee, Antelope, Sheep Creek, Mountain View, and Wildhorse Reservoirs, and numerous stock watering ponds provide additional fishing. Public boat access and camping facilities are available on the Owyhee Reservoir. Commercial guides and outfitters lead trips in the region.



10 0 10 MILES
 10 0 10 KILOMETERS



TO PORTLAND

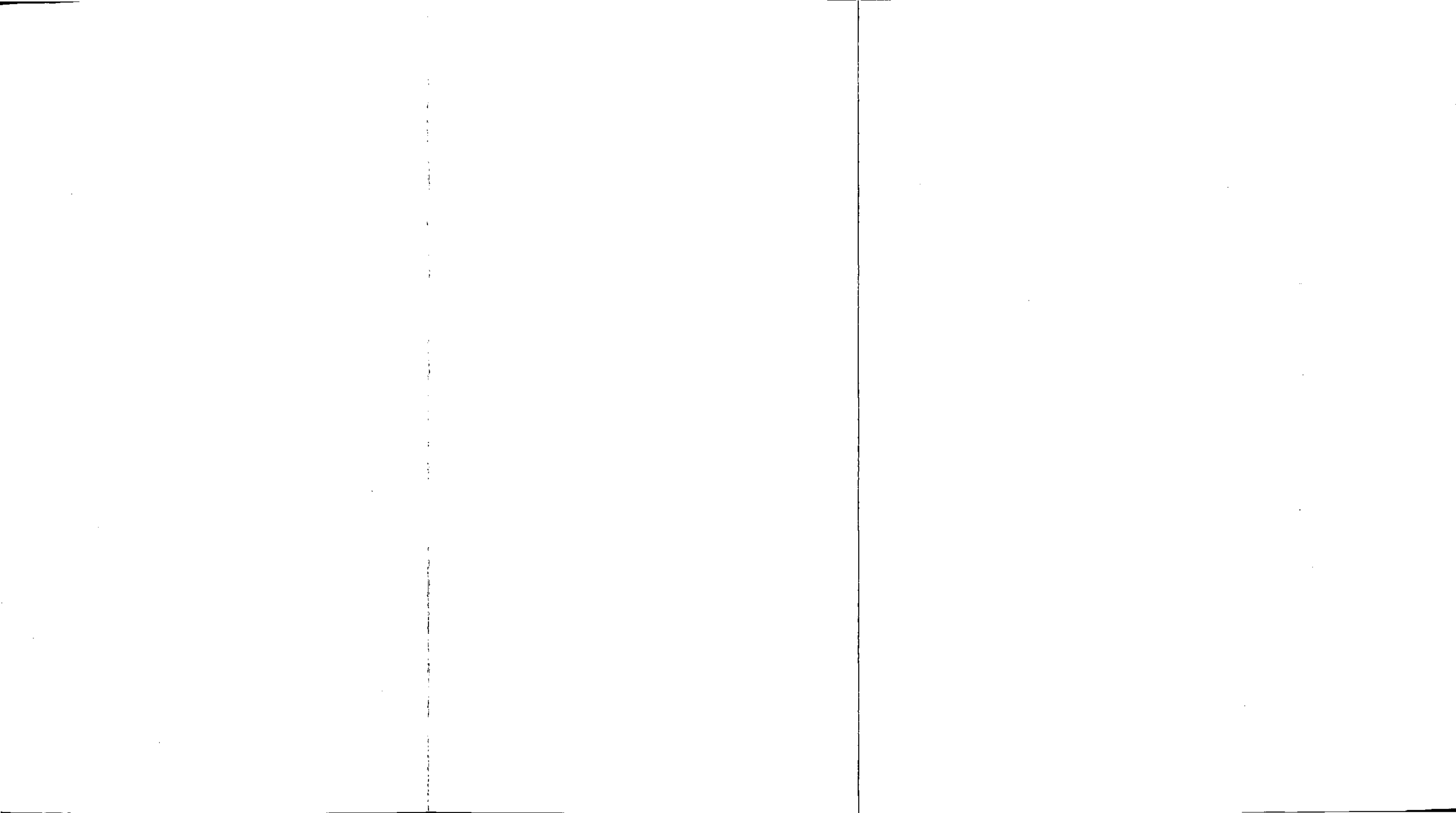
80N

95

MALHUR COUNTY
 OWYHEE COUNTY

MAP 3
Regional Transportation

TO SALT LAKE





Sandbar/Campsite

Within a 200-mile radius of the Owyhee River, there are eight federally administered recreation areas. See Map 4. These include the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area about 200 miles north in Idaho, the Sawtooth National Recreation Area north of Boise, the Jarbidge Wilderness immediately southeast in Nevada, the Eagle Cap Wilderness in north-eastern Oregon, and the Strawberry Wilderness near John Day, Oregon. Also in Idaho are the Gospel Hump Wilderness and the Salmon River Breaks and Idaho Primitive Areas. All are administered by the U. S. Forest Service.

The BLM manages the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area along a 33-mile stretch of the Snake River near the town of Grandview, Idaho. The BLM also operates a recreation site at Leslie Gulch on the Owyhee Reservoir and Stack Park on Brownlee Reservoir.

The State of Idaho administers Bruneau Sand Dunes State Park. Oregon maintains a state park on the Owyhee Reservoir near the dam and has a state recreation area along Succor Creek north of Jordan Valley. Oregon also has a state park near Ontario on Brownlee Reservoir. Idaho Power Company has two parks on lower Brownlee Reservoir, one on Oxbow Reservoir, and one on Hells Canyon Reservoir. Local parks exist in the towns of Owyhee, Idaho, and Jordan Valley, Oregon.

The Rogue River is the only Oregon river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Illinois River, a tributary to the Rogue, the John Day River in north central Oregon, and a small portion of the Snake in Oregon are currently under study. Within Idaho, the Middle Fork Salmon, Middle Fork Clearwater and its Lochsa and Selway tributaries, Rapid River, and St. Joe River are in the National System. A 68-mile segment of the Snake bordering Idaho and Oregon is also in the National System. In Idaho, the Bruneau River, and the Salmon River from the town of North Fork downstream 237 miles to its confluence with the Snake have been proposed for designation, and the Priest, Moyie, and an additional segment of the Snake are under study.

Description of the Owyhee River Study Area

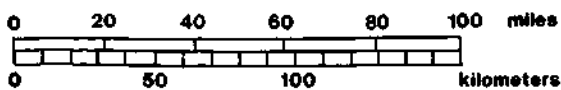
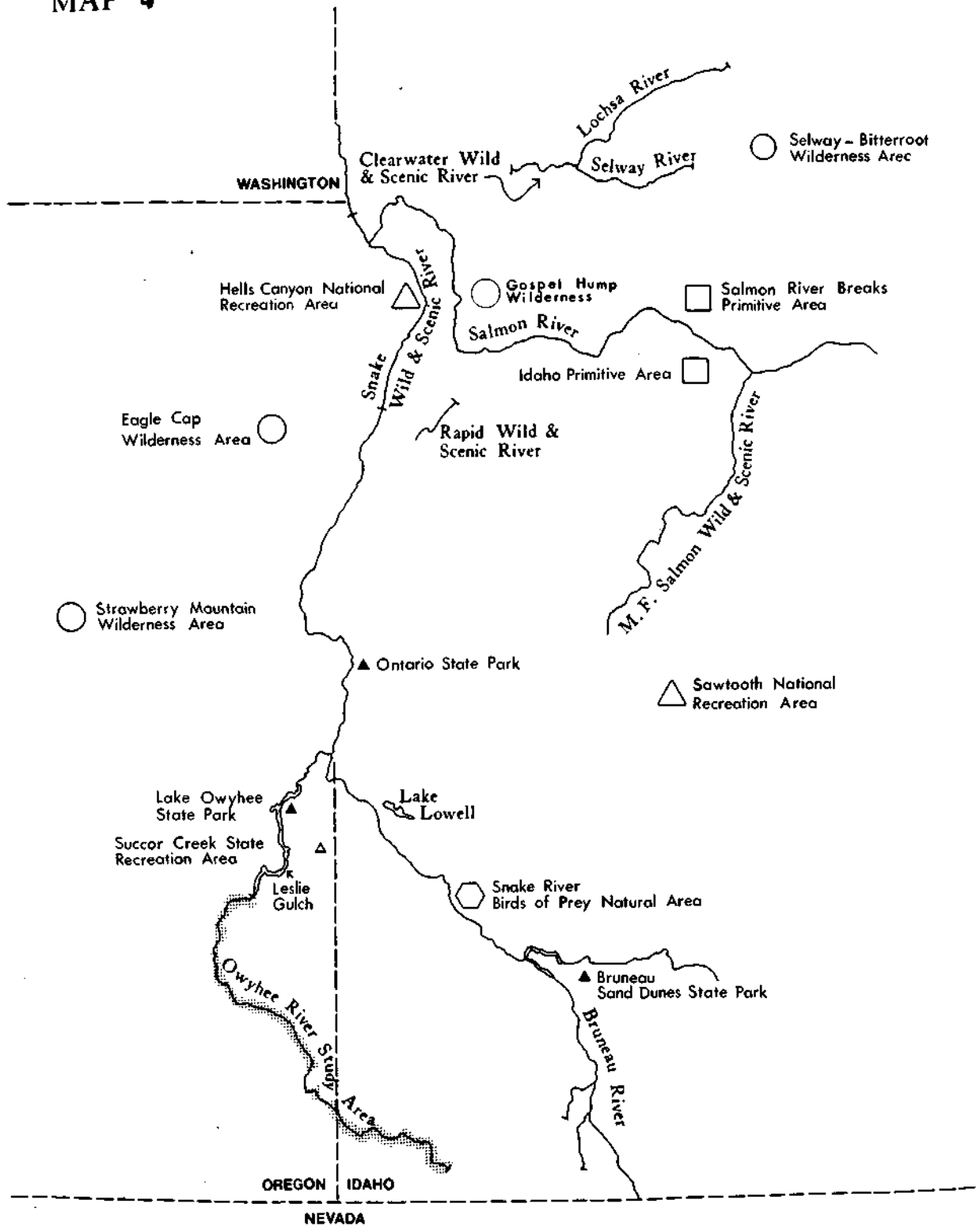
Location and Physical Condition

The study area includes the 192 miles of river extending from the western boundary of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho, downstream along the East Fork to its confluence with the South Fork, down the South Fork to its confluence with the North and Middle Forks at Three Forks to form the main stem, and down the main stem to slack water of the Owyhee Reservoir.

As the East Fork enters Idaho from Nevada, it flows through the grasslands of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. Upon leaving the reservation, it descends into a narrow, deeply incised canyon. Downstream 128 miles, the river immerges at China Gulch just upstream from the community

MAJOR REGIONAL RECREATION AREAS

MAP 4



of Rome, and for the next 14 miles, from China Gulch to Crooked Creek, flows across an agricultural valley. U. S. 95 crosses the river at Rome. The river reenters the canyon at the mouth of Crooked Creek and continues in the canyon downstream 50 miles to slack water of the Owyhee Reservoir.

Extending back from the Owyhee River canyon is a broad sagebrush plain. The canyon, because of its isolation from the sagebrush plain above, has an environment of its own. The most deeply entrenched portions of the river are those within Idaho and from Three Forks downstream to China Gulch. The canyon below Crooked Creek is not as deep but has a greater variety of geological formations. The river has a moderate gradient averaging 12 feet per mile, characterized by a succession of pools, ripples, and short rapids.

Geology

Rocks exposed along and adjacent to the Owyhee River range in age from late Miocene to Recent. From oldest to youngest, these groups consist of rhyolitic flows, basalt flows, sedimentary rocks, young lavas, and alluvial deposits. See Map 5.

Benchlands were formed during a period of intensive volcanic activity. Lava flows filled the stream valleys, including the Snake River, damming them and impounding large lakes. Several thousand feet of sediments were deposited in the lakes which subsequently were drained by streams eroding through basalt dams.

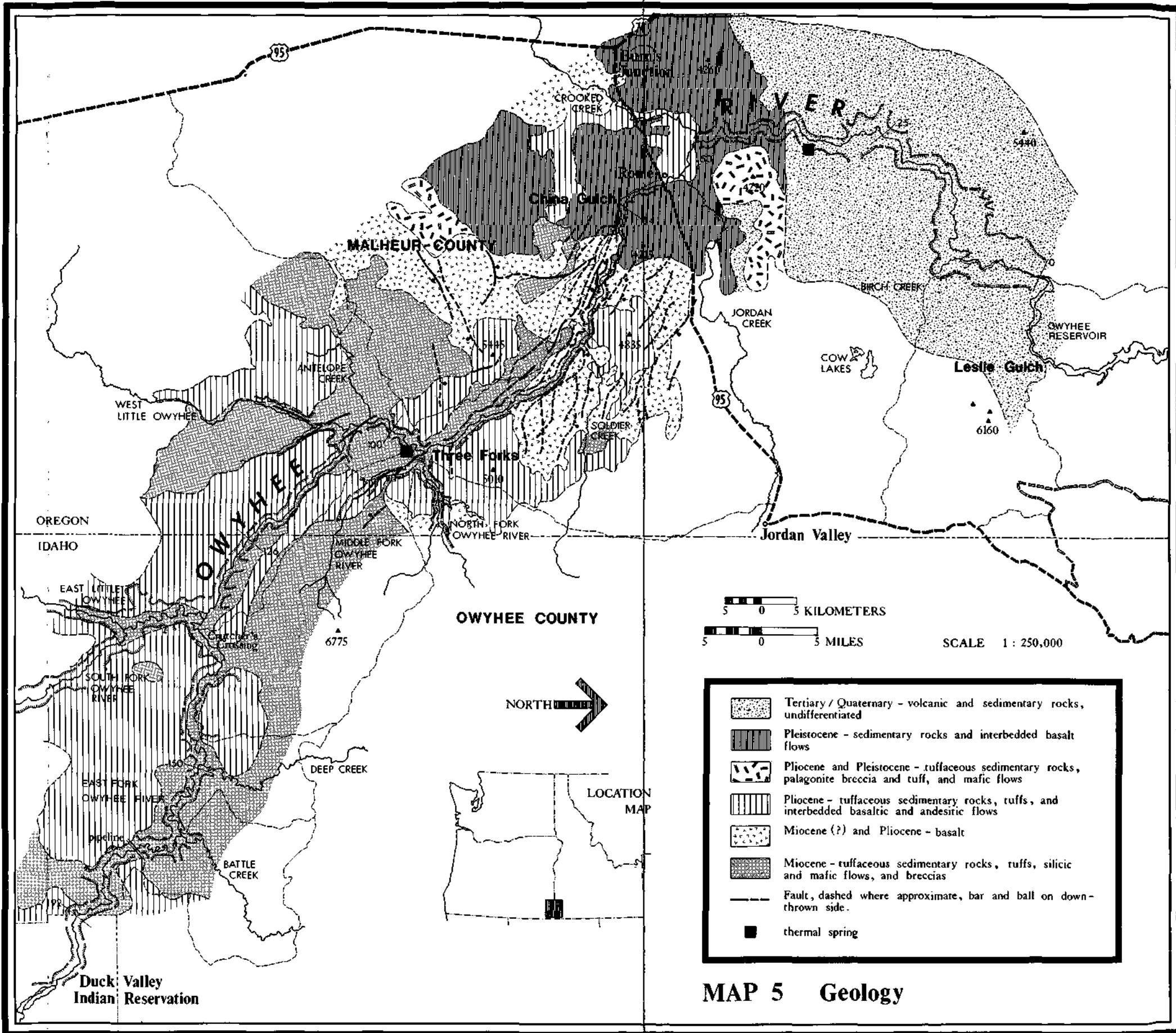
The geologic features are influenced by faulting and warping. A portion of the river valley is structurally controlled by a fault which has down-dropped the east side of the canyon relative to the west side.

The colors within the canyon vary from mainly buff or reddish-colored rhyolite and darker basalt to the area called Chalk Basin typified by alternate very dark and chalk-colored deposits.









Minerals

The Bureau of Mines reports that there are no patented mining claims located along the Owyhee River, nor are there any known potentially minable metallic or nonmetallic mineral deposits. There is interest in dredging sediments from the bed of the river in Idaho for gold, and opal and jasper are sought.

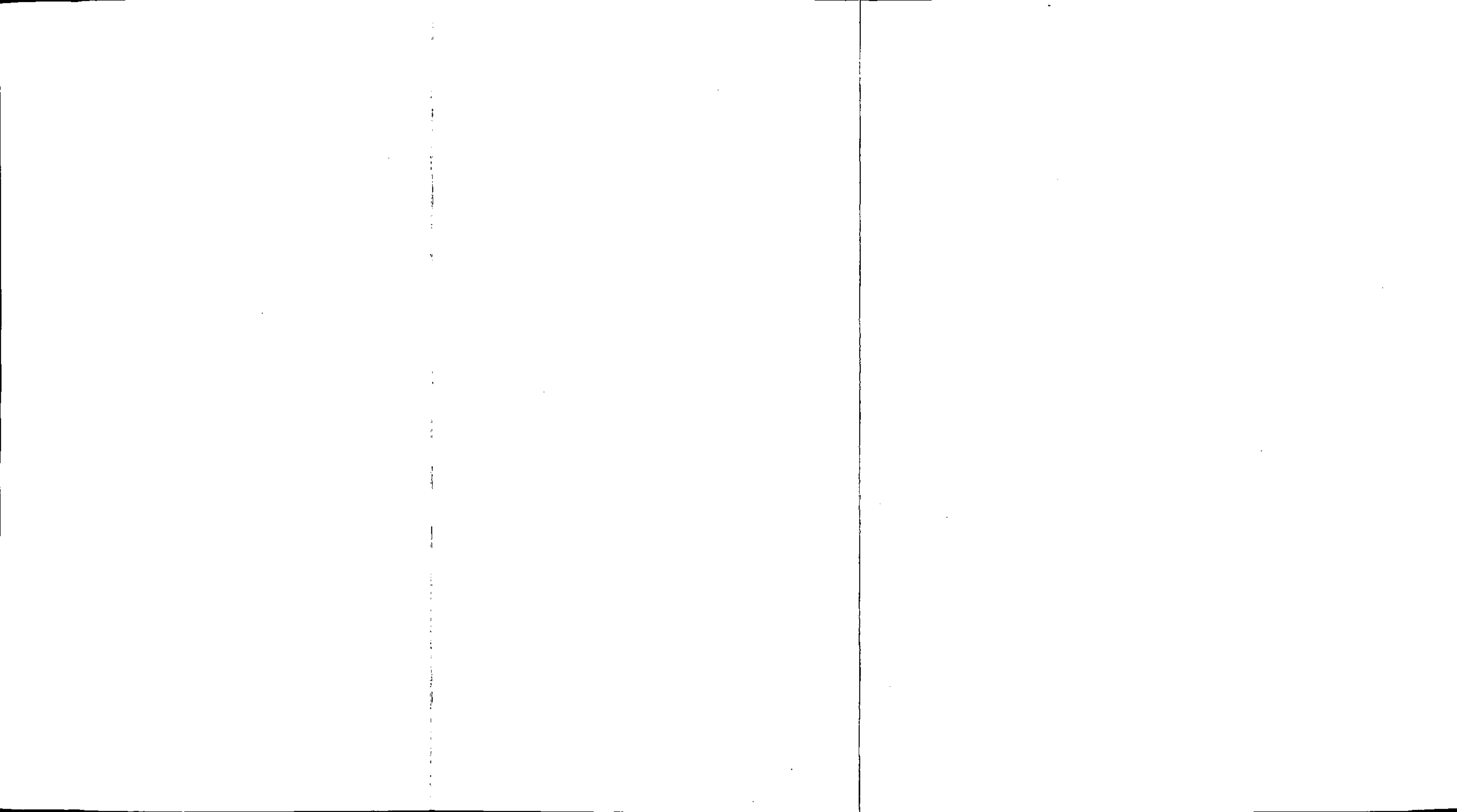
There are some deposits of zeolite fluorspar derived from altered volcanic tuft occurring several miles west of Rome, Oregon. They may cover 5 to 10 square miles. Mining those deposits would not detract from the scenic quality of the study area because they are out of sight from the river, and compliance with existing Federal and State water quality laws would prevent any significant reduction in water quality of the Owyhee River.

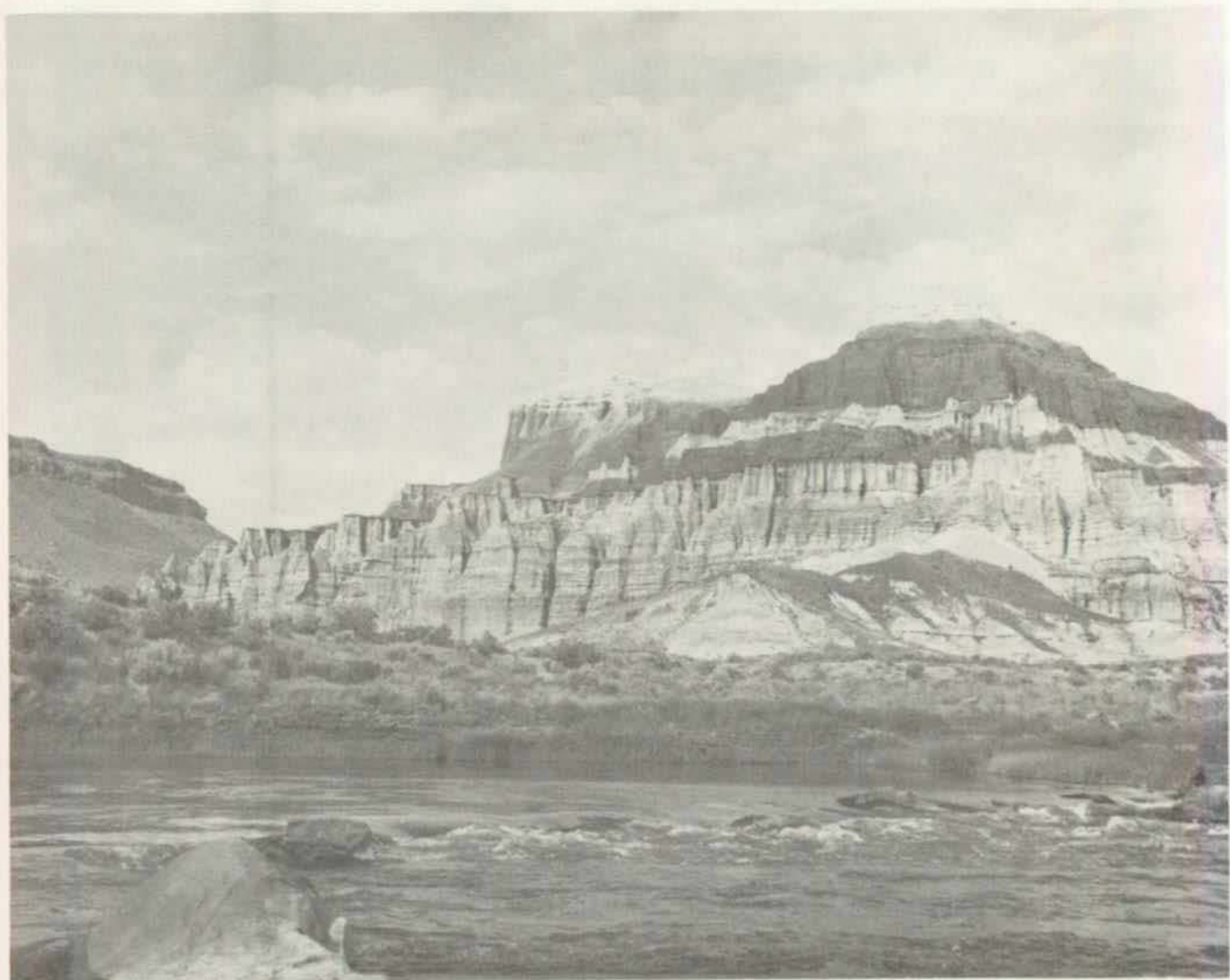


5 0 5 KILOMETERS
 5 0 5 MILES
 SCALE 1 : 250,000

-  Tertiary/Quaternary - volcanic and sedimentary rocks, undifferentiated
-  Pleistocene - sedimentary rocks and interbedded basalt flows
-  Pliocene and Pleistocene - tuffaceous sedimentary rocks, palagonite breccia and tuff, and mafic flows
-  Pliocene - tuffaceous sedimentary rocks, tuffs, and interbedded basaltic and andesitic flows
-  Miocene (?) and Pliocene - basalt
-  Miocene - tuffaceous sedimentary rocks, tuffs, silicic and mafic flows, and breccias
-  Fault, dashed where approximate, bar and ball on down-thrown side.
-  thermal spring

MAP 5 Geology





Chalk Basin

Geothermal Activity

The 127-mile study portion of the Owyhee River in Malheur County is a portion of an important geothermal resource area known as the Battle Mountain Heatflow High. The area currently is being investigated and evaluated for its geothermal potential in terms of possible electric power production. The proximity of several hot springs and the presence of recent volcanic activity indicates possible future energy development potential, although no sites of commercial potential are as yet known to be within the Owyhee River canyon.

Soils

The soils inside the canyon walls are well drained on steep slopes. Where the canyon widens, alluvial soils occur.

An interpretive grouping of soils into land capability classes has been developed by the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture. Soil characteristics considered in determining the capability classes include depth, texture, wetness, permeability, structure, reaction, water-holding capacity, and inherent fertility. Other factors considered include slope, erosion hazard, climatic conditions, and overflow hazard as they influence safe use and management of the land.

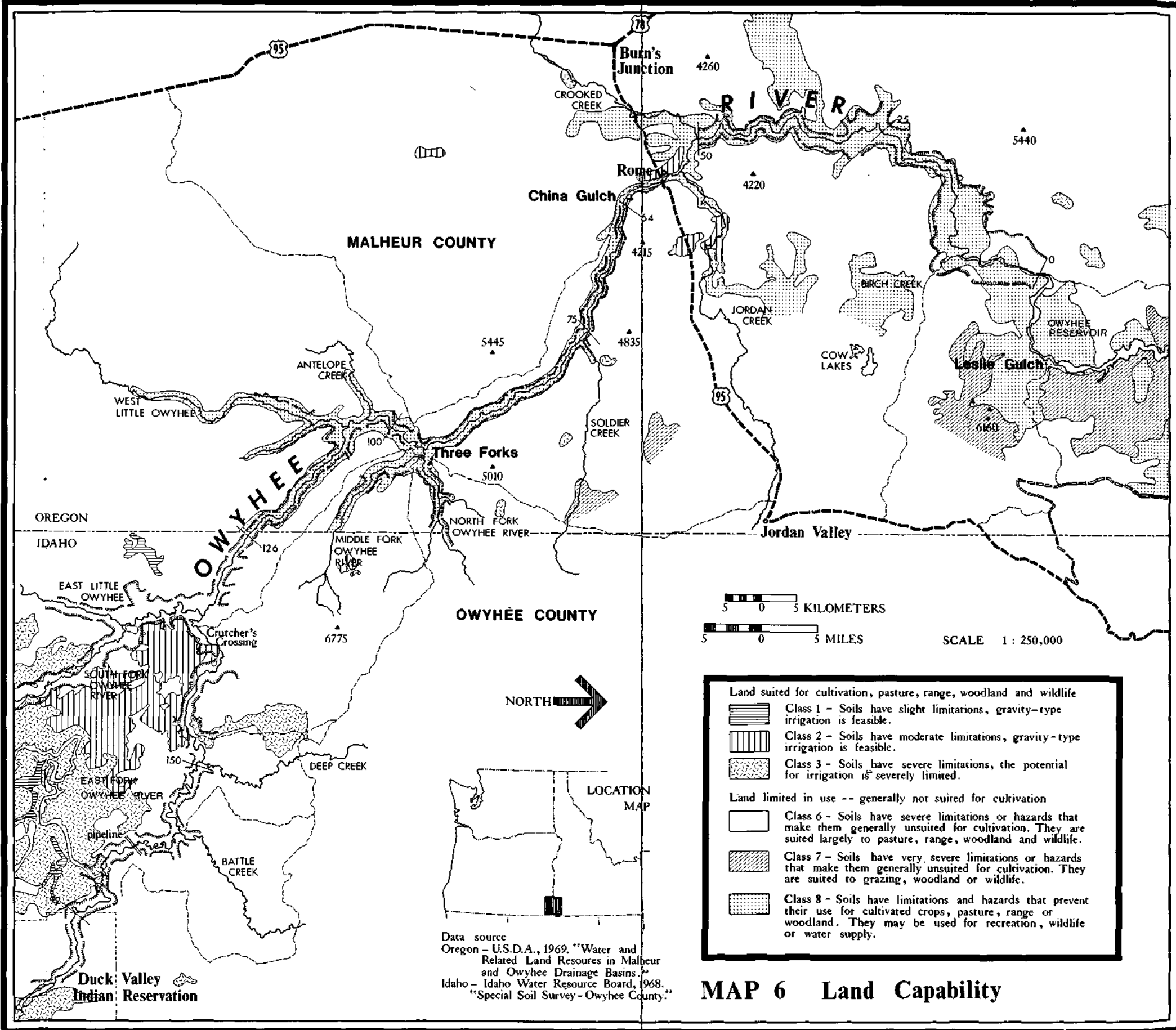
The classification is broken into two divisions: (1) land in capability classes 1 through 3 suited for cultivation and other agricultural uses, and (2) land in capability classes 6 through 8 suited for range, forest, wildlife habitat, and water supply uses because of limitations. See Map 6.

As shown in the land capability map, the soils along the 178 miles (of the Owyhee River system) lying within the deep canyons, are very limited in agriculture use, or any other intensive use. They consist of a combination of Rockland, Rough Broken and Stony Lands, Colluvial Lands, and small but very significant depositional soil areas adjacent to the main channel that support most of the perennial vegetation. Most of these small soil areas were formed from deposition discharging from the small tributaries and high meanders of the channel.

The soil occurring along the 14 miles from China Gulch to Crooked Creek is deep silt-loam. This soil has been described by the Soil Conservation Service as "suited to cultivated crops, pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife."

Vegetation

Vegetation within the Owyhee River Basin is characteristic of the northern desert type of pinion-juniper climax community. The more common plants are bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, big sage, juniper, cheat grass, Idaho fescue, and bluebunch wheatgrass. Juniper and an

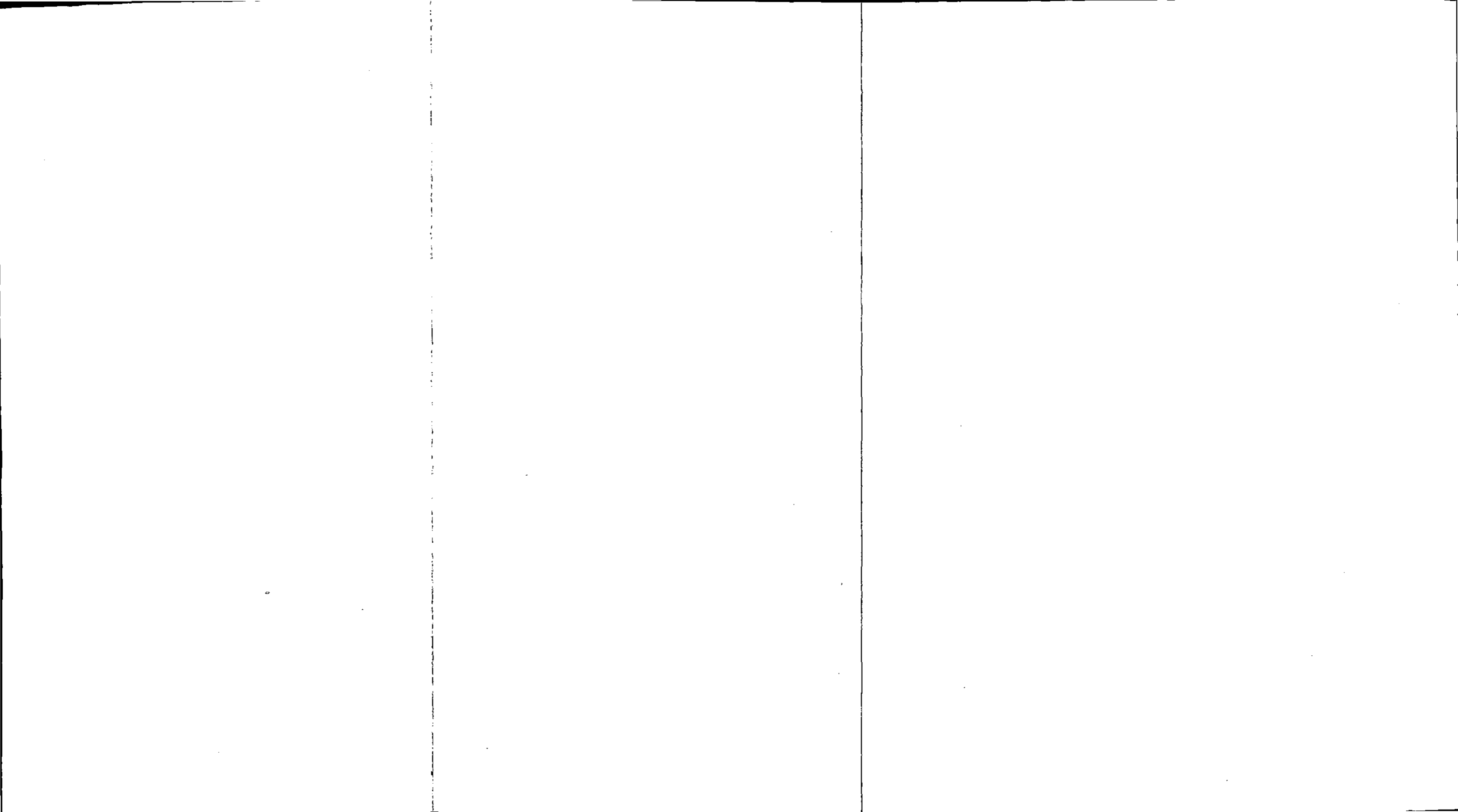


5 0 5 KILOMETERS
 5 0 5 MILES
 SCALE 1 : 250,000

- Land suited for cultivation, pasture, range, woodland and wildlife
- Class 1 - Soils have slight limitations, gravity-type irrigation is feasible.
 - Class 2 - Soils have moderate limitations, gravity-type irrigation is feasible.
 - Class 3 - Soils have severe limitations, the potential for irrigation is severely limited.
- Land limited in use -- generally not suited for cultivation
- Class 6 - Soils have severe limitations or hazards that make them generally unsuited for cultivation. They are suited largely to pasture, range, woodland and wildlife.
 - Class 7 - Soils have very severe limitations or hazards that make them generally unsuited for cultivation. They are suited to grazing, woodland or wildlife.
 - Class 8 - Soils have limitations and hazards that prevent their use for cultivated crops, pasture, range or woodland. They may be used for recreation, wildlife or water supply.

Data source
 Oregon - U.S.D.A., 1969. "Water and Related Land Resources in Malheur and Owyhee Drainage Basins."
 Idaho - Idaho Water Resource Board, 1968. "Special Soil Survey - Owyhee County."

MAP 6 Land Capability



understory of brush occupy the more moist sites at the higher elevations, largely in Nevada and the Owyhee Mountain Range in Idaho. Sagebrush and grass are common to the lower plateaus and valley floors. Hay and forage crops for livestock, chiefly alfalfa, are raised on the irrigated lands in the Rome area. Within the canyon walls, the native vegetation is sparse except at the canyon's many springs where currant, sedge, and wheatgrass grow profusely.

Based on information compiled by the Smithsonian Institution, the following plant taxa believed to occur in or near the study area were proposed by the Fish and Wildlife Service in the July 16, 1976, Federal Register (150 CFR Part 17) as endangered:

Erigeron latus (wild daisy)
Haplopappus radiatus (goldenweed)
Hackelia cronquistii (cronquists stickseed)
Hackelia ophiobia (forget-me-not)
Astragalus purshii (milk vetch)
Astragalus sterilis (milk vetch)
Leptodactylon hazedae (prickly phlox)
Lepidium davisii (no common name)

Fish and Wildlife

The river canyon and rim lands provide suitable habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife. Mammals and birds are most commonly seen along the river and at springs where the vegetation is most dense. This is especially true during the summer months when shade provides relief from the sun and the riparian vegetation remains green. Many animals depend on the river canyon for survival.

Mule deer live throughout the canyon. They are most numerous during the winter months when they seek refuge in the canyon from the more severe conditions above. Pronghorn antelope are present on the more level areas back from the canyon. Three large predators, the mountain lion, bobcat, and coyote, range over the area.

The California bighorn sheep, reintroduced in the East Fork Owyhee canyon in 1963, is doing well and expanding slowly westward and up tributary canyons. Commonly called the rimrock bighorn, its numbers had increased to an estimated 250 in 1974. The canyon and adjacent rimlands provide the food, water, space, and shelter necessary for reintroduction. This subspecies has recently been removed from the Department of the Interior's "threatened" list.

Other mammals residing in the study area are the badger, beaver, muskrat, otter, marmot, racoon, porcupine, blacktail jack rabbit, cottontail rabbit, pygmy rabbit, and smaller species. The kit fox, rare in Oregon, may exist in the Rome area.

The usual endemic amphibians and reptiles are found along the river including the great basin rattlesnake and the collared and leopard lizards.

Some 150 species of songbirds are found, as well as numerous species of waterfowl and upland game birds. Sage grouse are present along with chukar and Hungarian partridge, and valley and mountain quail. Canada geese, mallard ducks, and mergansers nest in the canyon.

Birds of prey sighted include the bald and golden eagles; kestrel and prairie falcons; the redtail, Swainson's, and Ferruginous hawks; and the great horned, short-eared, screech, and burrowing owls.

No animals classified as endangered or threatened by the Secretary of the Interior are known to reside in the study area although habitat suitable for the endangered peregrine falcon may exist.

Prior to the development of the Owyhee Dam, chinook and coho salmon, steelhead trout, and other anadromous fish migrated from the Pacific Ocean upstream through the Columbia-Snake systems into the Owyhee River. The construction of that and other dams downstream on the Snake stopped these migrations.

Rainbow trout, squawfish, chiselmouth, shiners, dace, and bridge-lip and coarsescale suckers are native to the river. The red-banded trout may also exist. The Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife has successfully introduced channel catfish, smallmouth bass, and other spiny rays.

Hydrology and Water Resource Development

The average annual precipitation within the study area is 15 inches, most falling during the fall and winter months. Most water in the river comes from the winter snowpack on the high mountains. Natural streamflow is generally characterized throughout the basin by highest runoff from late winter to early summer. (See Table 1.) However, because of the aridity of the basin and the absence of extensive high altitude snowpack, runoff varies widely from year to year.

TABLE 1. Average Monthly Runoff in the Owyhee River as Measured by the USGS, 1949 - 1977

January	736 cfs	May	1,846 cfs	September	131 cfs
February	1,089 cfs	June	889 cfs	October	159 cfs
March	2,003 cfs	July	245 cfs	November	207 cfs
April	3,028 cfs	August	140 cfs	December	417 cfs

The Owyhee River from Wild Horse Reservoir in Nevada downstream to the Owyhee Reservoir in Oregon is in a free-flowing condition. The river has been studied by various Federal and State water resource agencies.



Launch site on private land near Rome

The Corps of Engineers has no active investigation in progress in the Owyhee River Basin. The Corps has furnished preliminary information on flood control needs to the Bureau of Reclamation in connection with past studies by that agency. Small flood control projects have been requested by local interests along Jordan Creek. However, no studies have been made due to apparent lack of economic feasibility. The Corps reports average annual flood damage in the Jordan Creek drainage to be approximately \$40,000. Minor flood damage occurs in the Rome area along the Owyhee River.

The Federal Power Commission reports that there are no existing licensed projects on the Owyhee River, nor are there any pending applications for license.

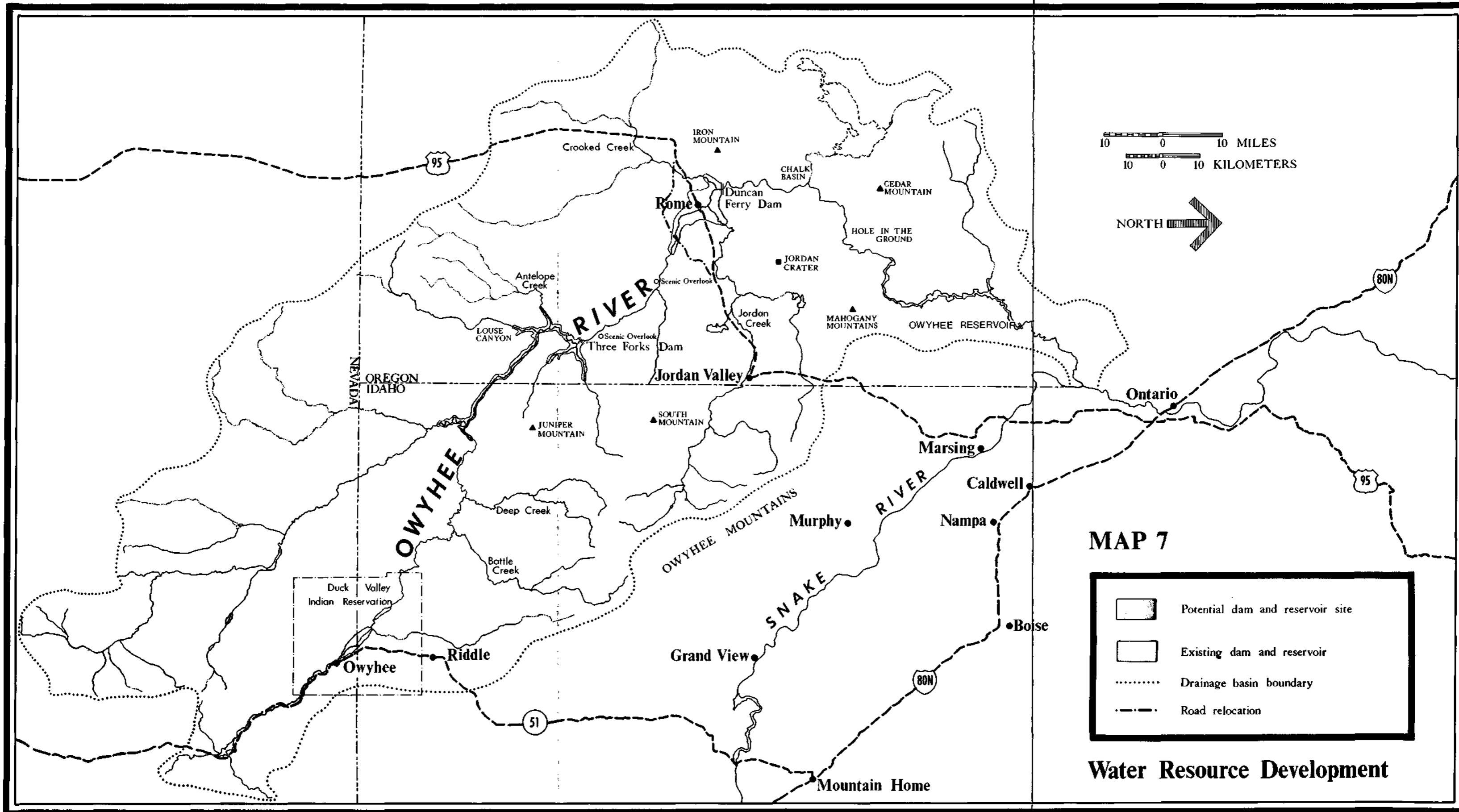
Irrigators downstream from the study segment have been interested for many years in having additional storage developed upstream from Owyhee Reservoir to supplement their present irrigation water supply during dry periods. As a result, the Bureau of Reclamation conducted investigations during the late 1950's and early 1960's of two potential storage sites on the main stem Owyhee River. The two sites were Duncan Ferry, just downstream from the mouth of Crooked Creek, and Three Forks, just below the confluence of the three forks of the Owyhee River. See Map 7. The Reconnaissance Report, Upper Owyhee Project, Idaho, dated June 1965 indicates neither project is economically feasible. The Bureau of Reclamation also conducted a feasibility study during the early 1970's of a storage development on Jordan Creek, a major tributary to the Owyhee River. As outlined in the concluding report, Jordan Valley Division, Upper Owyhee Project, Idaho-Oregon, dated August 1973, this development was found not justified because costs exceeded benefits.

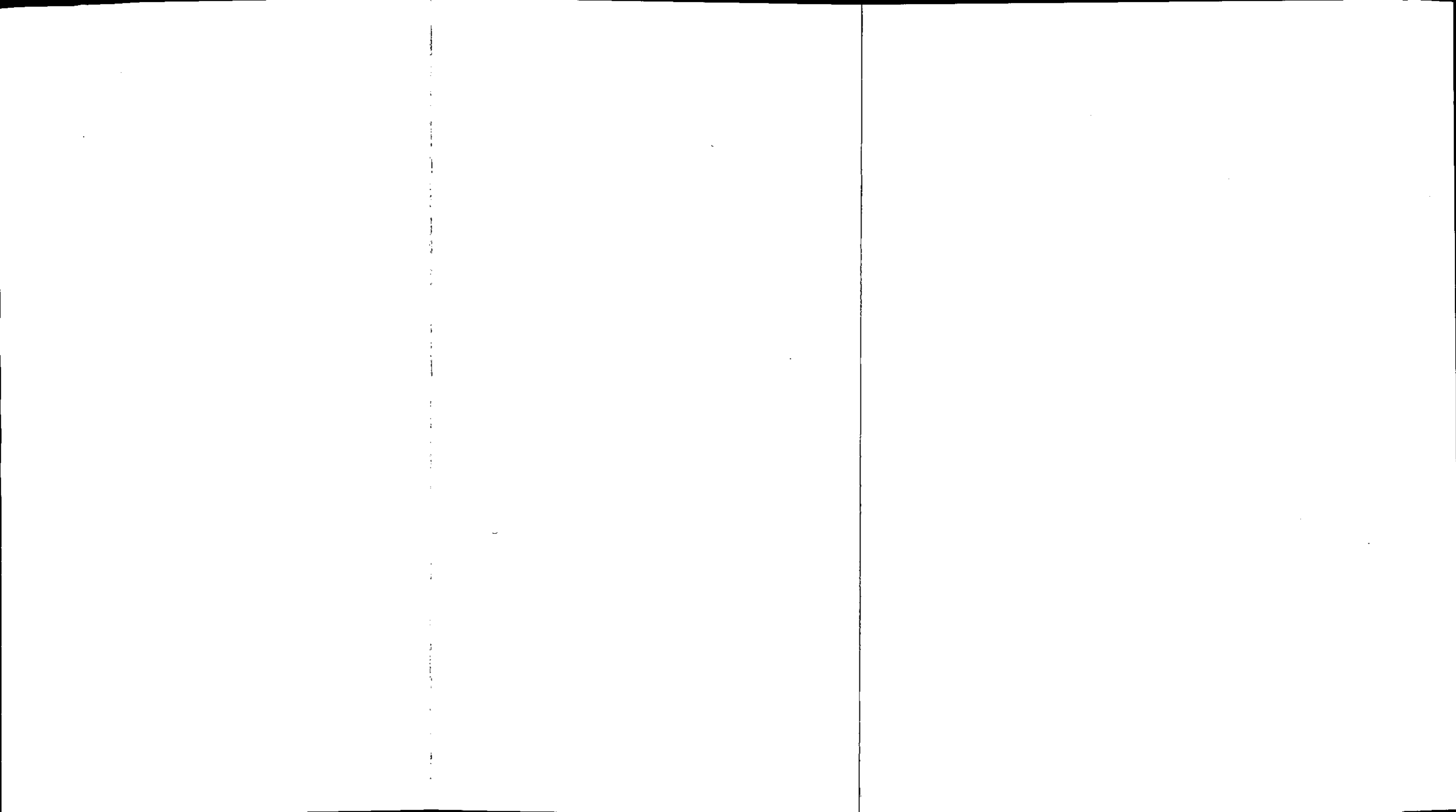
However, Owyhee Project water users still have an interest in developing additional storage upstream from Owyhee Reservoir for supplementing their present irrigation water supply. With new storage, the increased amount of irrigation water available to the Owyhee Project would reduce water shortages which occur with present facilities during a series of dry years and decrease the amount of water that has to be pumped from the Snake River. The Duncan Ferry Reservoir would inundate 30 miles of river and 8,900 acres, including the Rome Basin. The Three Forks Reservoir would inundate 45 miles of river and 7,400 acres.

The low-head hydropower potential of tributary streams in Idaho is currently being evaluated by the U. S. Geological Survey.

Water Quality

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare completed a comprehensive water quality study of the Idaho segment of the Owyhee in 1977. The findings of that study are that the entire Idaho segment of the Owyhee is categorized as Class A (primary contact recreational waters) by Idaho's Water Quality Standards and Wastewater Treatment Requirements.





By definition, Class A waters are for "uses where the human body may come in direct contact with the raw water to the point of complete submergence. Those waters may be used for swimming, water skiing, skin diving, support and propagation of fish, aquatic, and semi-aquatic life, and other wildlife."

Oregon does not have a water quality classification system similar to Idaho's; however, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality regularly monitors the water quality of the river at Rome, and periodically at several other points. From the Idaho border to China Gulch, the river conforms closely to Class A waters as defined by Idaho standards. Within the Rome Basin, some irrigation projects return water to the Owyhee. Jordan Creek, its waters clouded by irrigation projects in the Jordan Valley, also empties into the Owyhee in this area. Those irrigation returns increase the turbidity of the Owyhee and reduce water quality below the levels of the river's upper reaches. The reduction, although not drastic, is evident from Rome to the Owyhee Reservoir. Additional assessment is necessary before the reduction can be qualified and quantified. Oregon, other than routine monitoring, has no plans for conducting a comprehensive water quality study.

Concentrations of mercury in excess of Food and Drug Administration guidelines of 0.5 parts per million have been detected in fish from Jordan Creek. The mercury is thought to originate in the runoff from old mining sites and from regular runoff. Small concentrations of mercury likely exist downstream from Jordan Creek.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended. One program under the Act (Section 208) requires each State to develop a water quality management program to achieve clean water. The State programs are to be designed and implemented by June 1979. Prior to the June 1979 deadline, a planning process will identify sources of pollution, determine priorities, and suggest methods of local implementation and control. The effects of the Idaho and Oregon programs on the Owyhee River are as yet unknown.

Land Ownership

Of the total land area within one-quarter mile of the study segment, 6 percent (3,760 acres) is privately owned. The remaining land is in public ownership and administered by the BLM (87 percent) or states (7 percent). Most (3,000 acres) of the privately owned land occurs in the vicinity of Rome. A few isolated private ownerships exist above and below Rome. The States of Idaho and Oregon own several parcels which are consolidated school sections. Land ownership is summarized in Table 2 and its distribution shown on Map 8.

TABLE 2. Land Ownership within one-quarter mile of the 192 miles of Study River

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Federal	53,380	87
State	4,300	7
Private	<u>3,760</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	61,440	100

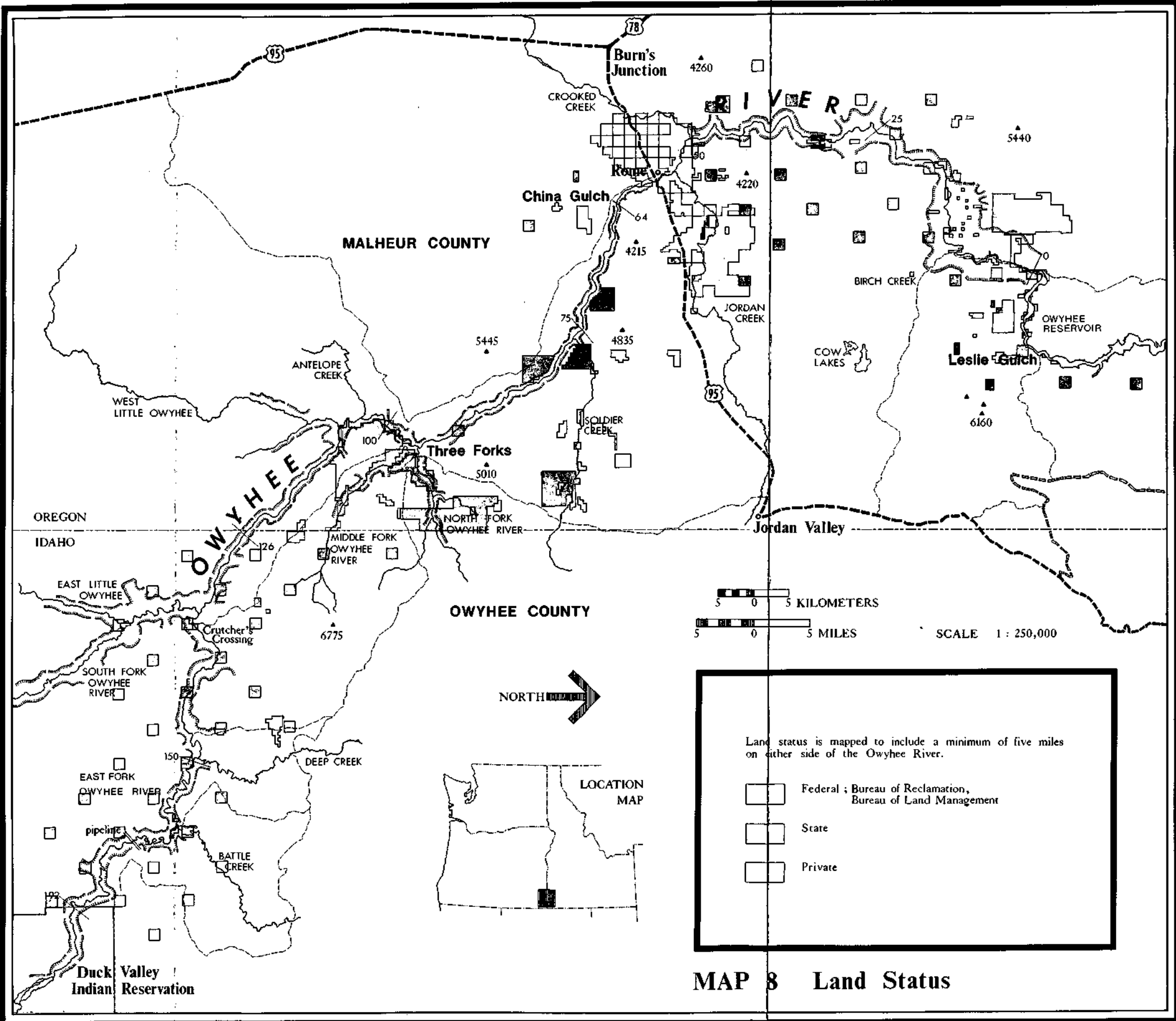
Land Use

Much of the land in the canyon is unusable because of the precipitous nature of the canyon sides along most stretches. Where use is possible, grazing predominates both on public and private lands. Less than 1 percent is in cropland, chiefly in the vicinity of Rome.




The BLM district offices at Vale, Oregon, and Boise, Idaho, are conducting resource analyses of the area and formulating management framework plans. Their plans, which were initiated prior to the passage of Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579), recommended that the Owyhee River canyon from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation downstream to China Gulch and from Crooked Creek downstream to Hole-in-the-Ground be studied for possible designation as a primitive area. Passage of P.L. 94-579 requires the Bureau of Land Management to review roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands for wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of 1964. As a result of that direction, the Bureau has established a policy of suspending the designation of primitive areas. The policy may be reevaluated when the identification of potential wilderness areas on the public lands has been completed. Wilderness classification would provide a substantial measure of protection to the river environment.

The Duck Valley Indian Reservation occupies 300,000 acres immediately east of and upstream from the study area. Activities on the reservation could affect the river. Approximately 1,000 people reside on the reservation, sustained largely by a livestock economy based on 12,000 head of cattle. At present, 12,000 acres are in cultivation and irrigated by river water. Virtually all is in alfalfa or native grasses. This acreage is being expanded at a rate of 200-400 acres a year with a maximum of 28,000 acres ultimately expected to be in cultivation. Much of the water diverted for irrigation returns to the river. Culinary water is obtained from several deep wells.

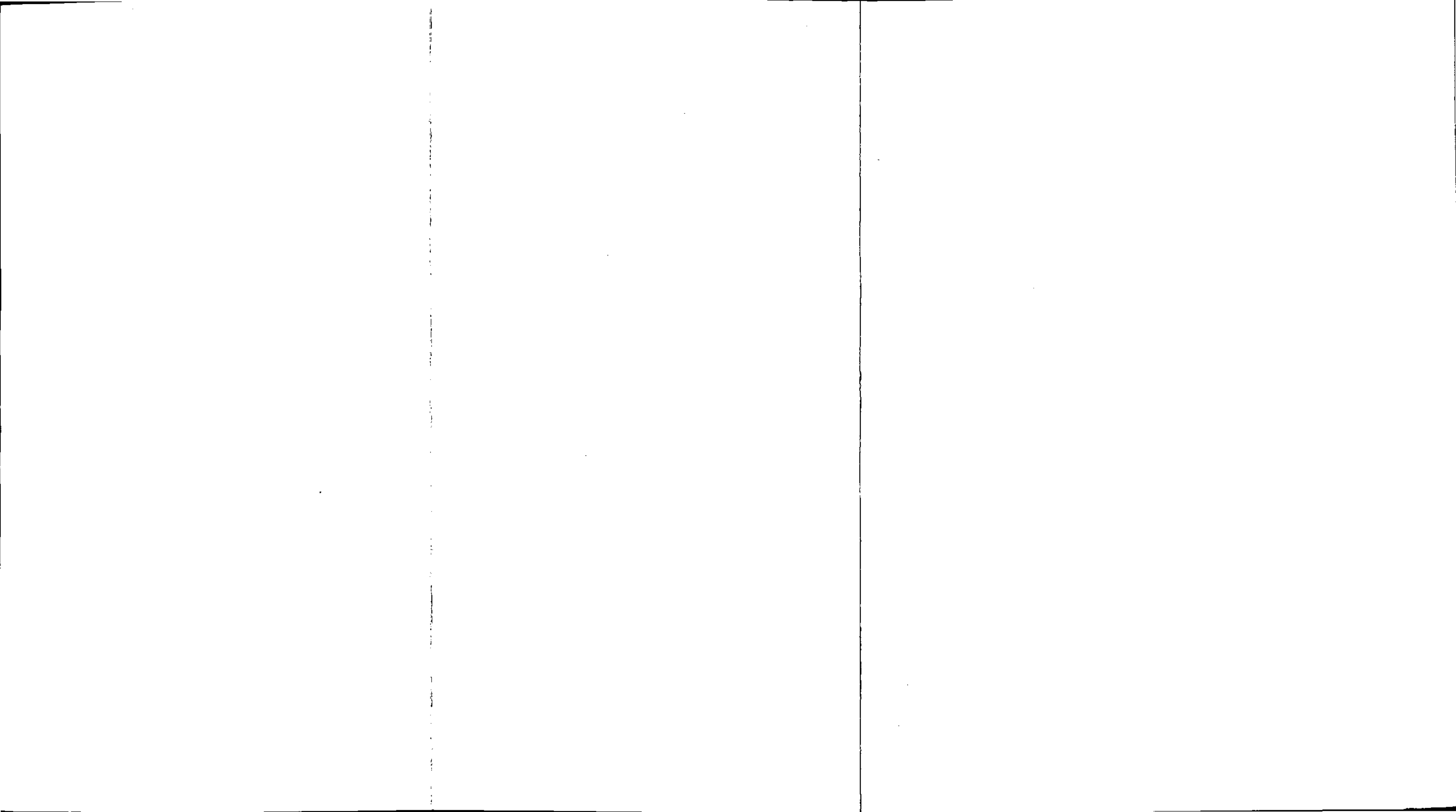
Most of the Federal land area back from the rim of the canyon is open to use by livestock under license from the Bureau of Land Management.



Land status is mapped to include a minimum of five miles on either side of the Owyhee River.

-  Federal; Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management
-  State
-  Private

MAP 8 Land Status



An estimated 300 animal unit months localized grazing occurs within the canyon, particularly on private lands where side canyons converge such as at Three Forks and Birch Creek. Major cattle crossings are found at several points including Dairy Pastures, Three Forks, and Crutchers Crossing.

Owyhee County, Idaho, has a comprehensive plan, but no zoning ordinance. Malheur County, Oregon, has completed comprehensive planning and zoning in accordance with the Oregon State Land Conservation and Development Act. At Rome, the zoning is Agricultural. The balance of the area is zoned Open Space.

There is one existing facility for the transportation of energy resources affecting the Owyhee River study area. A petroleum pipeline crosses the river just below the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

The Idaho Department of Water Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, and other State and Federal agencies are making preliminary reconnaissance studies of the general area in connection with the current comprehensive coordinated joint plan studies of the northwest being coordinated by the Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission. These preliminary studies provided input to the Idaho State Water Plan which was adopted by the State Water Board and approved by the State Legislature in 1978.

Water Rights

Many individuals or entities in Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon own and claim rights to the waters of the Owyhee, mostly for agricultural purposes. In Oregon, these rights have been adjudicated and, as of 1976, 195 had been perfected and another 19 were in the application stage. The rights in Nevada and Idaho have not as yet been adjudicated. The largest upstream water withdrawals occur in the Duck Valley Indian Reservation where 12,000 acres are irrigated from the river. The reservation utilizes the waters of the river chiefly for irrigation purposes, although some domestic livestock and recreation use is also made. The waters are collected in Wild Horse Reservoir, located 20 miles south of the reservation in Nevada, and then released into the river where a portion of the flow is diverted for reservation irrigation purposes. The reservoir has a storage capacity of 72,000 acre-feet. The present dam was constructed in 1970 by the Bureau of Reclamation under contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Within the reservation, two smaller reservoirs (Sheep Creek and Mountain View) have been developed by the Indians for recreation purposes, chiefly trout fishing and camping. Other withdrawals occur farther upstream in Nevada. The net effect is that rights to the waters of the Owyhee, either adjudicated or claimed, exceed flow capacity. If all rights were simultaneously exercised, the effect on the river could be to virtually dewater it. Any remaining flow would result largely from irrigation returns. For example, the estimate is that 80 percent of the water utilized for irrigation

on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation returns to the river. However, full utilization of water rights has yet to occur.

Access to River

With the exception of the U. S. 95 crossing at Rome and Highway 51 through the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, access to the river is difficult and infrequent along most of the study segment. See Map 9.

There is an improved dirt road leading to the pipeline crossing just below the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. There is a vehicular trail down to the East Fork just above Battle Creek which has not been maintained, four-wheel vehicular trail crossings at Crutchers Crossing and Pipeline Crossing, and a somewhat better all-weather road crossing at Three Forks. From Three Forks to the U. S. 95 crossing at Rome, there is no road access. Below Rome, the first point of access is into Hole-in-the-Ground Ranch. A county road runs down Birch Creek to the river. Below Birch Creek, more roads reach the river.

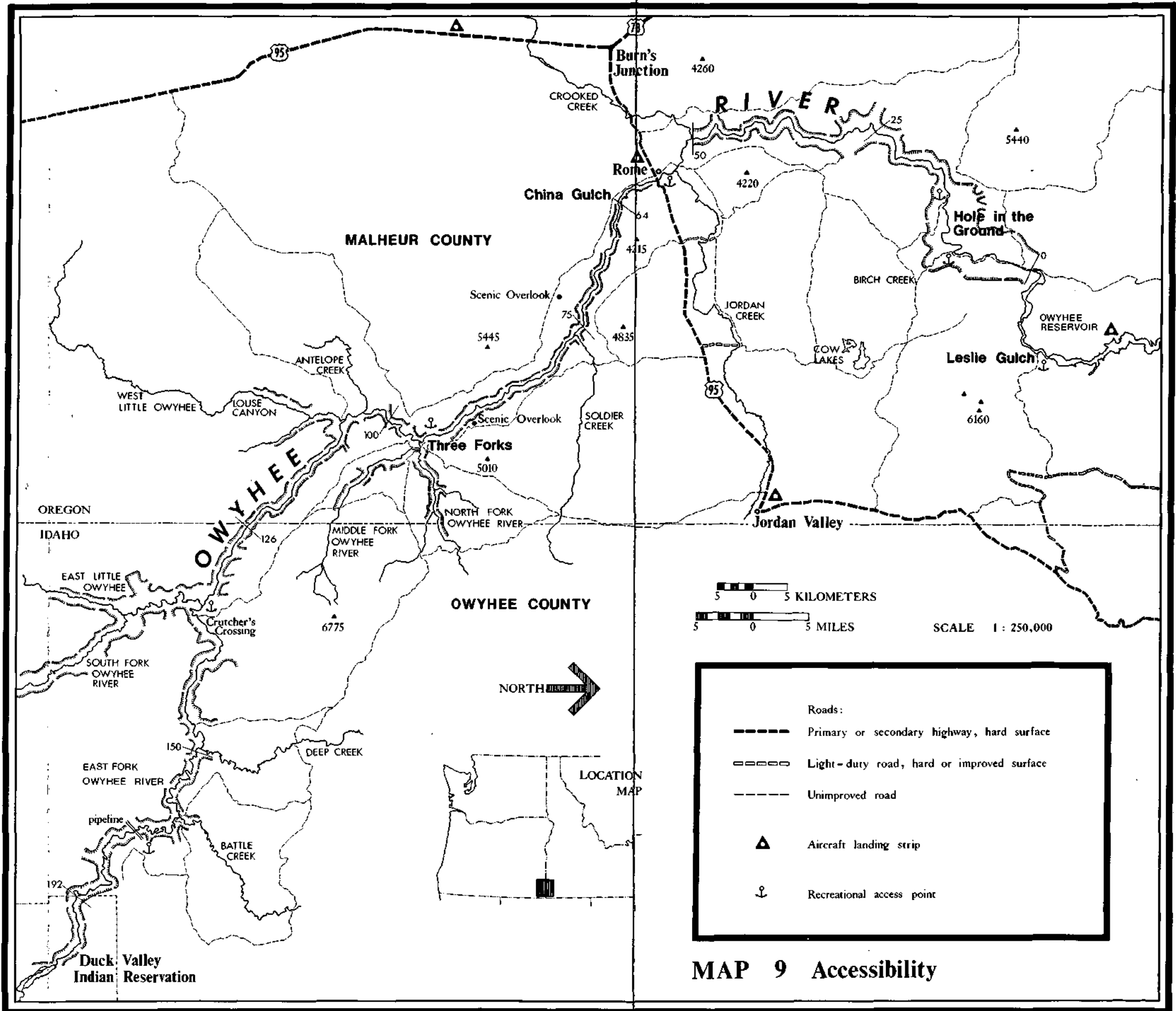
The main put-in and take-out points for boaters are at Three Forks, Rome, Hole-in-the-Ground Ranch, and Leslie Gulch on the Owyhee Reservoir.

There are no regularly maintained foot trails into the canyon. However, the stream can be reached by way of draws and breaks in the rim, especially along the East Fork from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to its confluence with the South Fork. Many miles of the canyon are not accessible from the rim because of the near vertical cliffs. This is particularly true in the section from Three Forks to China Gulch and below the confluence of the South Fork downstream to Louse Canyon. Although there are no foot trails along the canyon bottom, most of the distance can be hiked during low water using game trails and by wading the stream bed. At points 10 miles and 15 miles upstream from China Gulch, the Bureau of Land Management has developed scenic overlooks.

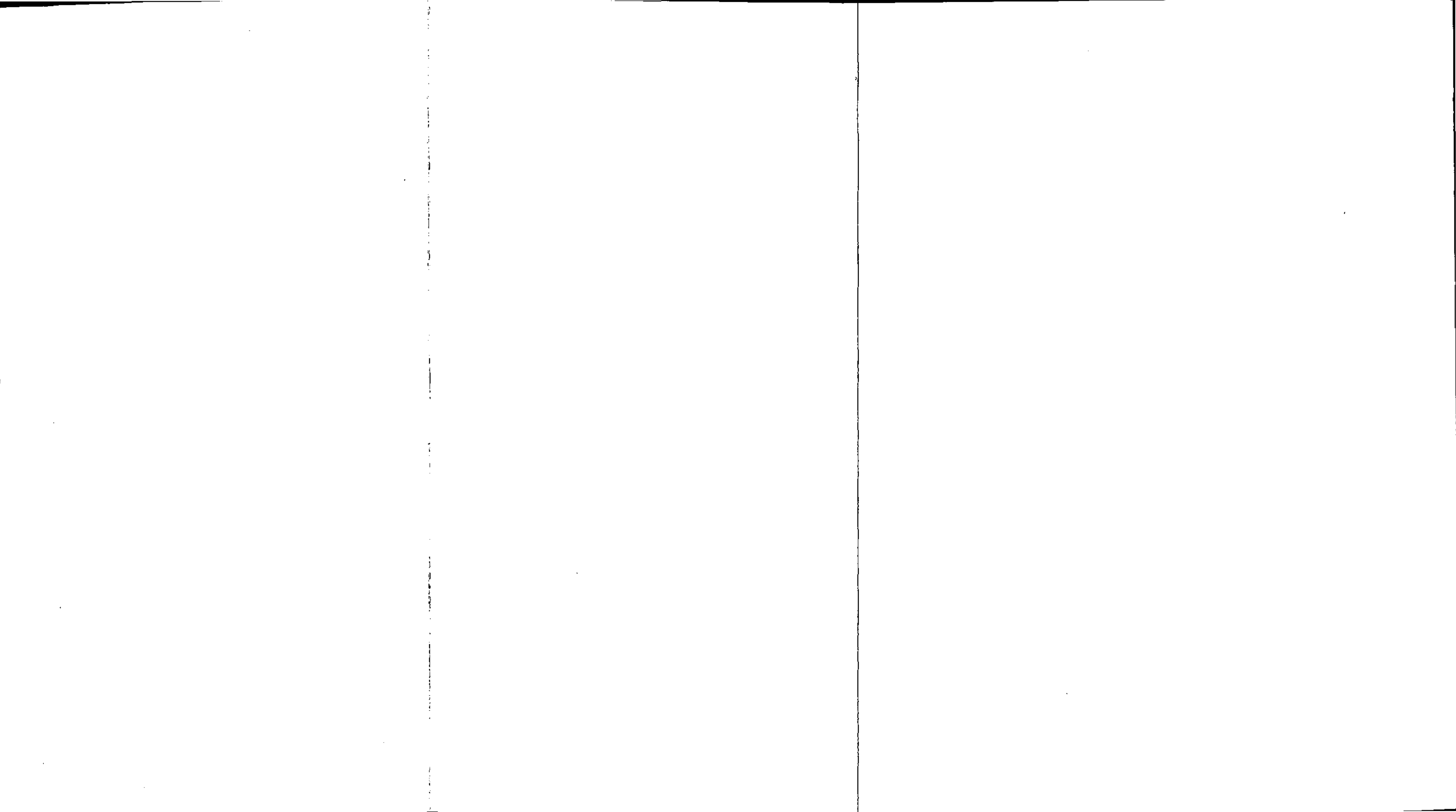
During February through May in normal years, the entire river is boatable by experienced drift boaters, rafters, and kayakists. During the balance of the year, floating is difficult because of low water conditions.

Archeological and Historical Values

An archeological survey of the entire study area has not been completed, although the BLM is seeking funding. The Vale District Office of the BLM conducted an intensive archeological reconnaissance of the river from the mouth of Crooked Creek to the upstream end of the Owyhee Reservoir. Sites which were examined contained a rich yield of artifacts. Based on information gathered during that reconnaissance and other field investigations of limited portions of the study area, it is likely that the unsurveyed portion of the study area also includes numerous



MAP 9 Accessibility



archeological sites. Dirty Shame Rockshelter, which is located on Antelope Creek, was excavated by a crew from the University of Oregon in the summer of 1973. That site has provided a 9,000-year record of cultural adaptation in a previously unknown area.

Extensive vandalism, relic collecting, and destruction of sites has already occurred in certain areas of the river canyon and rim rock. Illegal diggings have occurred along the riverbank and in caves which line the canyon. Degradation of the sites is accelerating as more people visit the canyon.

The first exploration by white men of the Owyhee River occurred in 1818 when Donald McKenzie of the Northwest Fur Company set out to find new trapping areas. The name Owyhee originated when Hawaiian Islanders accompanying the McKenzie expedition were sent into the Owyhee Mountains to see if the area was suitable for trapping beaver. The scouts never returned and the area, first called Sandwich Island Country, was later called the Owyhee Country, as the natives had referred to their homeland. Fifteen years later, the McKenzie expedition was followed by Captain Benjamin L. E. Bonneville.

It was not until gold was found in California in the 1850's and prospectors began to comb the West, that gold was discovered along the Owyhee River's Jordan Creek tributary. The mining towns of DeLamar, Dewey, Ruby City, Silver City, and Baxterville were developed in the general vicinity of the Owyhee River.

Although virtually roadless and inaccessible, lands within the Owyhee Canyon were settled because they were inexpensive, often priced less than \$1 per acre. Conflicts with the Indians inevitably arose when the government gave away lands utilized by the Paiute, Snake, Shoshone, and Bannock Tribes. The culmination of these conflicts was the Bannock-Paiute War of 1878 which was fought throughout the study area.

In 1878, 1,000 Texas longhorns were imported into the Owyhee Country by early cattle ranchers. The severe drought and freeze of 1888-89 were the ruin of many cattle ranchers. Sheep ranchers did not suffer as great a loss. Both businesses recovered and the increased competition for rangeland eventually led to range wars. Those ended with the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act which essentially marked the end of the open range in the frontier west. Cattle ranching has largely replaced the grazing of sheep within the canyon complex.

A number of buildings, relics of early settlement by white man, remain standing along the river. Studies have yet to be made to determine the historic significance of those structures. No buildings or archeological sites have as yet been added to or nominated for inclusion on the "National Register of Historic Places."

Recreation Resources

Outstanding recreational opportunities are available in the canyon, including drift boating, rafting, kayaking, hiking, photography, nature study, rockhounding, fishing, hunting, and camping. The Owyhee is being recognized throughout the country as a prime early-season white water river and is becoming increasingly popular with both commercial and private river runners. In 1976, an estimated 162 parties involving 972 people spent 4,540 days boating the river. Total recreation use was calculated to be 6,243 recreation days. During the high water period, February through May, the river can be float-boated throughout most of its length. Because of the limited access, boaters are confined to three or four major runs, and must make it through or hike up and out long distances. Along much of the canyon, hiking out is difficult because of the almost vertical canyon sides.

Exploring the canyon on foot provides opportunities for photography, nature study, and rockhounding. Present use is light because of the restricted access and the steep and rough terrain. This use, however, is expected to increase as word spreads of the canyon's scenic beauty and unspoiled character. Hikers are best advised to stick to the rims and make only short trips into the canyon. Hiking the full length of the canyon bottom is not possible.

The sports fishery includes remnant populations of rainbow trout and excellent populations of smallmouth bass and catfish. Mule deer, California bighorn, antelope, chukar partridge, quail, and sage grouse afford opportunities for hunting, study, and photography.

Boating is the most rapidly growing recreational pursuit. However, other uses will undoubtedly increase as the area becomes better known. Unofficial estimates are that recreation use can be expected to increase about 10 percent each year.

III. THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Because this study was conceptual and because only minimal development is proposed, site-specific information is not presented. The general impacts expected are described in as much detail as can be reasonably provided, given the level of detail of the study and the data base. This non-site-specific approach is embodied in the following discussion.

The proposal recommends that the BLM complete master planning for the 178-mile Wild portion of the river it will administer within 2 years of enactment of the proposal by Congress. Adoption of a management plan would require conformance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Executive Order 11593, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's procedures (36 C.F.R. Part 800), and the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

In the case of the 14-mile long Scenic section, before it could be added to the National System, Oregon would need to add it to the State Scenic Waterways System.

In evaluating impacts on the river environment and land use as a result of adding the Owyhee River to the National System, the assumption is made that recreation use of the river will be controlled so that it will not exceed a recreation carrying capacity yet to be determined by the BLM.

Impact on Recreation

Use data compiled by the BLM from a cooperative BLM-Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife boater registration study and from BLM Special Recreation Permits for the years 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1978, the only years records have been kept, reveal the following:

TABLE 3. Recreation Days (Boating)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Above Three Forks (90 miles)</u>	<u>Three Forks to Rome (44 miles)</u>	<u>Rome to Owyhee Res. (58 miles)</u>	<u>Total</u>
1974	200 (estimated)	385	1,847	2,432
1975	125	262	2,182	2,831
1976	120	240	4,180	4,540
1977	Drought conditions virtually eliminated recreation use.			
1978	130	711	3,581	4,422

The BLM believes the figures should be adjusted upward 10 percent to compensate for boaters who failed to register. It also believes that boating represents 80 percent of all recreation use. Total recreation use figures, therefore, were:

TABLE 4. Recreation Days (All Recreation Uses)

Year	<u>Above Three Forks (91 miles)</u>	<u>Three Forks to Rome (44 miles)</u>	<u>Rome to Owyhee Res. (58 miles)</u>	<u>Total</u>
1974	275	529	2,540	3,344
1975	171	360	3,000	3,892
1976	165	330	5,748	6,243
1977	-	-	-	-
1978	179	978	4,924	6,080

On the basis of these figures, overall recreation use of the river increased 14 percent in 1975 over 1974, and 38 percent in 1976 over 1975, while decreasing 3 percent in 1978 under 1976. Little use occurred in 1977 due to a severe drought.

Without controls, the BLM estimates that recreation use would increase an average of 10 percent per year. However, the BLM has recognized the adverse effect overuse will have on the river environment and the quality of recreation experience and currently is exploring ways of limiting use to carrying capacity. Preliminary estimates are that the segment downstream from Three Forks is being used at about the maximum level desirable. Upstream, several times the present use could be sustained. Steps will be taken to guard against vandalism and to prevent littering or to clean it up.

By preserving the free-flowing, essentially primitive character and the scenic, fish and wildlife, archeological, geologic, and other values now present along the river, the proposal will have the major, long-range impact of protecting the existing high quality of recreation use.

Impact on Local Economy

The impact on the local economy will be slight if the river is approved for inclusion in the National System. Future use of private lands along the river will be confined to continued agricultural and other such uses which would not degrade the scenic and recreational values of the river corridor. The acquisition of scenic easements may result in about \$4,000 less county tax revenue than would occur if the river were not added to the National System, except to the extent that reimbursement would be forthcoming from the Secretary of the Interior as a result of P. L.

94-565, the Payment in lieu of Taxes Act. Outside of the Rome area where most of the private land exists, there are only two private owners with 160 acres in Oregon, and three private owners with 600 acres in Idaho. The 14 miles at Rome, proposed for State Administration, includes 9.2 miles of frontage in private ownership and approximately 3,000 acres in a corridor one-quarter mile back from each bank.

There will be less ultimate need for additional goods and services because of restraints imposed on the recreation use of the river to prevent use from exceeding carrying capacity.

The net long-term impact on the local economy, while not great, may be to generate less business and commerce than would be the case if the river were not classified. The effect of this impact in the Rome Basin would be more intensive than in the general river area because Rome is the hub of river use.

Impact on Transportation

Impacts on two aspects of transportation are expected to occur: impacts on existing transportation activities and impacts on planned facilities.

The existing road system is more than adequate to accommodate present and future recreation use. No additional road construction would be necessary. Off-road vehicular travel would be regulated if the proposal is implemented. The degree to which this would occur would depend on the controls the management agencies believe are necessary to protect the river environment. In the long run, there will be less traffic and less off-road vehicle use than without designation because of the limitation of use to carrying capacity.

The proposal, if enacted, would make the Owyhee subject to the provisions of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended. Section 4(f) states that the Secretary of Transportation:

...shall cooperate and consult with the Secretaries of the Interior, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture and with the States in developing transportation plans and programs that include measures to maintain or enhance the natural beauty of lands traversed. After the effective date of this Act, the Secretary (Transportation) shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any land from a public park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from such use.

Because there are no major transportation plans involving the proposed area, it is unlikely that application of Section 4(f) would occur. However, should it become necessary to construct a transportation facility which would traverse or in any other respect use lands associated with the proposal, Section 4(f) would not necessarily preclude construction, provided the Secretary of Transportation, upon consultation with the Secretaries of the Interior, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture, determines that there were no feasible and prudent alternatives to use "and that all possible planning to minimize harm" has been accomplished. Section 13(g) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides that easements and rights-of-way may be granted upon, over, under, across, or through components of the National System.

Impact on Mining

Addition of the 178 miles to the National System and classification as Wild would cause Federal lands one-quarter mile back from the river to be permanently withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and operation under the mineral leasing laws. In addition, no dredging or other mining activity adversely affecting the bed of the river would be permitted by the States of Idaho and Oregon. The results would be a major impact on mining to the extent that mineral potential exists. The U. S. Bureau of Mines reports little or no mineral potential. However, an application before the Idaho Department of Water Resources to dredge a segment of the river for gold and a claim before the BLM in Oregon for gold mining are pending. In addition, although there are no jasper mining claims along the river, some interest in minor development may exist.

Impact on Soil and Vegetation

The soils along the Owyhee River system are very limited for agricultural or any intensive use. They consist of a combination of rockland, rough broken and stony lands, colluvial lands, and small but significant depositional soil areas adjacent to the main channel that supports most of the perennial vegetation. These soils range in texture from fine clays to loamy sands. Not only are they significant vegetation supporters, but they are protected by vegetation growth to the extent that vegetation damaged by nature or man's use can destroy this part of the channel resource that is necessary for the survival of the native wildlife.

One of the net effects of designation will be added protection for soils and vegetation through more intensive management of canyon uses.

Impact on Fish and Wildlife

The riparian habitat is vitally important to wildlife in the arid country surrounding the Owyhee Canyon. The best cover, forage, and water are found in the canyon and side canyons. Wild animals, fish, and birds

have a limited tolerance to human disturbance and are vulnerable to increased disturbance. The several hundred resident mule deer and other big game species present in the canyon will continue to be exposed to hunting pressure and some disturbance from people using the canyon and floating the river. Smaller animals and birds may also be disrupted or displaced by human use. The broods of geese in particular experience displacement during the spring float boat season. While no animals classified as endangered by the Secretary of the Interior are known to reside in the study area, habitat suitable for the endangered peregrine falcon exists. Fish populations also are vulnerable.

These considerations are a major factor limiting carrying capacity and will be taken into account by the BLM and State of Oregon in determining the amount of use permitted. In the long run, designation of the river will make restrictions on use possible and help to protect the canyon's fish and wildlife.

Impact on Water Development and Water Uses

The Owyhee, from Wild Horse Reservoir in Nevada downstream to the Owyhee Reservoir in Oregon, is in a free-flowing condition. This portion of the river has been studied by various Federal and State water development agencies, but there currently are no projects under active consideration, proposed, authorized, or being constructed.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's, the Bureau of Reclamation evaluated two potential major reservoir sites, one at Duncan Ferry and the other at Three Forks. Neither was found to be economically viable. However, the possibility exists that changing conditions may someday make feasible the development of one or both sites, although the Bureau of Reclamation has no plans at this time for reanalysis. Inclusion of the Owyhee in the National System would preclude such development. The effect of this decision would be a major, long-term impact to the extent that alternative uses of the water are foregone. However, this decision is not irreversible since the potential for development would remain and could be realized if Congress later determines development is more in the national interest than preservation.

Many individuals or entities own or claim rights to the waters of the Owyhee in Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon. The Duck Valley Indian Reservation utilizes water from the river to irrigate 12,000 acres. Many individuals along the river in the three States also withdraw water for agricultural related purposes. Water rights have not been adjudicated in Nevada and Idaho. In Oregon, 195 rights have been perfected and another 19 are in the application stage. The net result is that there is insufficient flow to supply all of the rights or claims made on the river if they were all exercised simultaneously. There is sustained flow in the river because many rights are not being fully utilized. The effect of designating the river may make it desirable at some future time to seek to acquire upstream water rights so that a

sufficient amount of flow can be maintained in the designated section to accomplish the purposes of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Although unlikely, the result of such acquisition would reduce the amount of water available for other purposes.

Impact on Water Quality

Water quality in the stretch of the Owyhee under study is suitable for a full range of recreation activities. The segment in Idaho underwent a comprehensive water quality study by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in 1977. This study revealed that the river is of excellent water quality, suitable for primary contact recreation. The Oregon stretch of the Owyhee is believed to be of the same quality as the Idaho segment downstream from the Rome Basin where the return of irrigation water causes slightly greater turbidity. This condition exists all the way to the Owyhee Reservoir. Also, small amounts of mercury likely exist downstream from Jordan Creek as revealed in concentrations of mercury in excess of the 0.5 parts per million Food and Drug Administration guidelines which have been detected in fish from Jordan Creek. This is not seen as a problem.

The long-term effect of designation is expected to be an improvement in water quality for two reasons. First, restricting use to carrying capacity will eventually cause a leveling off of use. Second, more intensive management will result in better litter control and in camping being limited to designated camping areas having adequate sanitary facilities.

Impact on Land Ownership and Land Use

Ninety-four percent of the lands which would be affected by the proposal are in Federal or State ownership. Private ownership is predominant only in the 14-mile-long Rome Basin from China Gulch to Crooked Creek. Only five parcels of private land totaling 760 acres and portions of 11 State school sections are scattered above and below the Rome area.

The proposal provides that the State of Oregon would have administrative responsibility over the approximately 4,430 acres located within one-quarter mile of the river in the Rome area including 3,000 acres in private ownership. The BLM would seek easements on the approximately 760 acres in private ownership located above and below Rome to assure that noncompatible uses do not occur in the future.

The effect would be to continue agricultural and livestock uses along the river, while preventing residential, industrial, or other more intensive uses which would degrade the natural environment.

There is one existing facility for the transportation of energy resources in the Owyhee study area. A petroleum pipeline crosses the river immediately downstream from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

The existing facility would not be affected by implementation of the proposal.

The present private owners of lands bordering the river have done a careful job of husbandry and few changes, if any, in current land uses are foreseen. However, acquisition of certain development rights should be undertaken to assure that proper range management practices are continued in the future.

The impact of the decision to retain the undeveloped character of the Owyhee as a Wild and Scenic River would be long-term but reversible. Alternative uses of the land would be precluded if they are incompatible with the maintenance of the present natural river environment.

Impact on Archeological and Historic Values

Preliminary reconnaissances of the Owyhee drainage have indicated the existence of many archeological sites. There are also several abandoned dwellings still standing which date back to early settlement.

Upon designation, use of the river corridor would be limited to carrying capacity and special efforts made to inventory and safeguard historical and archeological sites. Therefore, the long-range effect would be to provide a greater degree of protection than would be the case if the river were not added to the National System and fewer efforts were taken to control the amounts and kinds of use.

IV. MITIGATING MEASURES INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM, in cooperation with the two States, would locate specific boundaries and prepare a detailed management plan for the Wild river segment within 2 years after its designation by the Congress and commence implementing that plan as soon as possible. As part of the plan, the following actions would be included to mitigate the effects of the proposal:

1. The recreation carrying capacity of the river area will be determined for the purpose of protecting the river environment and continuing the high quality recreation experience presently available. Use limitations would then be enforced so that the carrying capacity is not exceeded. Presently, most of the use occurs on the segment from Rome to the Owyhee Reservoir. Efforts will be made to achieve a better distribution of use. Major considerations in defining carrying capacity will be to determine the amount of use soil and vegetation can withstand, and the limit of use beyond which fish and wildlife populations will be adversely affected.

2. Threatened or endangered species of fauna and flora will be identified and special measures taken for their protection by the management agencies in consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

3. During the preparation of a management plan for the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River, studies of the area would be made to locate, identify, and evaluate historic and archeological resources and to develop methods and procedures for their preservation and interpretation. Those resources meeting the criteria for nomination for addition to the "National Register of Historic Places" would be nominated to it. If added, they would be accorded the procedural protection of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (80 Stat. 915). The survey would be conducted in consultation with the Oregon and Idaho State Historic Preservation Officers and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Cultural resources worthy of preservation but not yet listed in the "National Register" are accorded the procedural protection of Volume 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Any Federal action affecting the proposal's historic and cultural resources would be developed in consultation with the Oregon and Idaho State Historic Preservation Officers and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with a view to assuring that, to the extent possible, adverse effects would not result without mutually agreed avenues of mitigation.

4. Campsites at appropriate locations will be designed, developed, and maintained in a manner which will prevent or discourage littering, water pollution, soil erosion, etc.

5. Boaters will be cautioned regarding the dangers of running the river and informed about the skills, experience, and equipment needed for safe passage. This will help to reduce the search and rescue efforts of the counties, States, and BLM.

6. Additional personnel will be assigned by the BLM to patrol the area in order to protect environmental values and important historic and archeological sites.

7. The continuation of existing nonrecreational uses of the area which are compatible with protecting the river environment including livestock and agricultural uses will be encouraged.

8. Efforts will be made to reduce litter by stressing a program of "bring out what you take in."

9. Regulations for motorized access will be issued and enforced. They would involve consideration of public safety; noise, air, and water pollution; damage to soil and vegetation; harassment of wildlife; and conflicts with other uses of the area. The regulations may specify times, zones, and seasons for the use of particular types of motorized equipment.

V. ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED SHOULD THE PROPOSAL BE IMPLEMENTED

Unavoidable adverse impacts expected to occur as a result of designation of the Owyhee as a Wild and Scenic River are:

1. Regulations on use and potential limitations or distribution of uses would cause a loss of personal freedom of users to go where, when, and how they might otherwise desire.

2. Restrictions on further development and use of the area for commercial purposes cannot be avoided. Dams and other major water developments will be precluded. New mining operations on public lands within one-quarter mile of the stream segments classified Wild will be precluded. The contribution to the local economy of such developments will be foregone.

VI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Inclusion of the 192-mile segment of the Owyhee River and the approximately 61,440 acres comprising its immediate environment in the National System will contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity of the proposal area in providing high quality public recreation.

The existing primitive environment of the river corridor will be continued in its present condition for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. A specific framework of rules and regulations governing all uses including recreational and commercial development would be applied to the area. No major physical changes are planned. Existing short-term uses of the environment will remain substantially unaltered under the proposed plan.

VII. ANY IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED

No major physical changes to the existing environment are planned. Accordingly, no resources would be irreversibly or irretrievably committed. By designating the Owyhee River as a component of the National System, all natural resources in the river corridor would be committed to the management objectives of preserving the river in its free-flowing condition for the benefit and enjoyment of present and generations.

Designation of the Owyhee River as a unit of the National System can be modified or reversed by the Congress should it be in the National interest at some future time. Such a possibility could occur if the future needs of the Owyhee Project water users were to expand to the point that additional storage were required.

VIII. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

In addition to the proposed action of adding the 192-mile study segment to the National Wild and Scenic River System with the BLM administering 178 miles and the State of Oregon administering 14 miles, there are other alternative courses of action which could be taken. They are:

1. No action to include the 192 miles in the National System.
2. Inclusion in the National System of all but the 14 miles in Oregon between Crooked Creek and China Gulch.
3. Inclusion in the National System of all but one or the other river segment required for Duncan Ferry or Three Forks Reservoirs.
4. State protection--designation by Oregon and Idaho of those portions of the 192 miles located within their respective boundaries for State protection and possible addition to the National System as provided for in Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Alternative One - No Action to Include the 192 Miles in the National System

Existing management policies by public and private landholders along the 192 miles of river have protected scenic and recreational values in a generally adequate manner. Most scattered areas of private ownership are used for grazing and have been managed in a manner which reflects environmental sensitivity. Most private landowners hold grazing allotments on adjoining Federal and State lands and utilize those lands seasonally for livestock range. The future, however, poses a number of problems which may influence scenic and recreational values. There is no assurance that the present compatible uses of private lands will be continued, especially at Rome, Three Forks, Crutchers Crossing, and Birch Creek. Private lands at these key points could be converted to other incompatible uses. County zoning in Malheur County will help assure that any such conversion of use will be handled in a manner compatible with sound planning practices, but not necessarily in a way that will maintain the present river environment. There is no zoning in effect in Owyhee County.

There are no assurances that construction of a dam at Duncan Ferry or at Three Forks will not occur, or that mining claims will not be staked and developed within the canyon.

There is no assurance that the steadily increasing recreation use of the area can be properly managed and regulated for the safety of the recreationist and for the protection of environmental, archeological, and historical values. Funds and personnel under existing Federal and State programs may not be adequate.

Impact on Recreation

Demand for river-related recreation opportunities in a scenic and primitive setting is growing rapidly. Consequently, recreation use along the Owyhee River will continue to increase. Estimates are that the increase may average 10 percent annually. Without adoption of the proposal, recreation use will likely grow until it exceeds the desirable carrying capacity and adversely affects the river environment and quality of recreation experience. Developments such as river impoundment, mining, or the indiscriminate development of private land would degrade or distract from the primitive character and the scenic, fish and wildlife, archeological, geologic, and other unique values of the river area.

Impact on Local Economy

Recreation use will continue to increase without controls and exceed that which would occur with the recommended plan. Therefore, there will be a greater long-term demand for goods and services and stimulus to the local economy. Without the constraints on land use imposed by the proposal, there will be an increase in the tax base. The economic benefits, however, may be more than offset by increased search and rescue, law enforcement, and other related costs as a consequence of more recreationists in and near the river and a greater development of lands.

Impact on Transportation

Increased development and greater recreation use of the river will require expansion and upgrading of transportation systems. Without Wild and Scenic River designation, there would likely be less management along the river and, therefore, less control of trespass across private lands.

Impact on Mining

Although the U. S. Bureau of Mines has reported no mineral potential of any consequence in the immediate area of the river, there is interest in dredging for gold along a segment of the river in Idaho and in mining a claim on lands overlooking the river in Oregon. Those actions which would have an adverse effect on scenic and recreation values have been deferred pending a decision of whether the river will be added to the National System.

Impact on Soil and Vegetation

Excessive recreation use will expose the soils and vegetation along the Owyhee River to more disturbance. The impacts will be most severe at access points, campsites, and the canyon's many springs.

Impact on Fish and Wildlife

Excessive recreation use will expose the fish and wildlife of the Owyhee River area to undue disturbance and exploitation. Any water development, such as the construction of a dam at Duncan Ferry or Three Forks, would impact existing fish and wildlife, particularly wildlife dependent upon the riparian habitat inundated by a reservoir. Other possible development activities, such as mining, may adversely affect fish and wildlife.

Impact on Water Development and Water Uses

Past investigations of potential Federal water development projects have identified two storage sites on the study segment of the Owyhee River--at Duncan Ferry and Three Forks. Neither project was found to be economically feasible. Development, therefore, appears unlikely. Development of either site, however, would result in the inundation of a long segment of river and a large amount of land, including some land in private ownership. The Duncan Ferry site would result in the inundation of 30 miles of river and 8,900 acres of land. The Three Forks site could result in inundation of 45 miles of river and 7,400 acres of land.

Some additional water could be diverted directly from the river for irrigation in the Rome area. However, the amount likely would not be substantial and could occur even with the Recommended Plan.

Impact on Water Quality

The combination of increased development in the river area and excessive recreation use and less intensive management would increase the possibility of water pollution.

Impact of Land Ownership and Use

Likely, fewer private lands along the river would be acquired by the BLM or States for public purposes.

Impact on Archeological and Historical Values

Ever increasing recreation use along the Owyhee River and continued short-handed management will expose the archeological and historical sites in the area to increased possibility of disturbance and exploitation.

Note: Other possibilities exist under the alternative of including none of the 192 miles in the National System. Under authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-579), the BLM will be analyzing the potential of the Owyhee River canyon for inclusion in the National Wilderness System. Designation as Wilderness would achieve much of the protection that would occur if the BLM portions of

the river were added to the National System as discussed under the Recommended Plan. In recognition of the need to limit recreation use to carrying capacity, in 1978 the BLM began investigating ways to manage the kinds and amounts of use within the Owyhee Canyon.

Alternative Two - Inclusion in the National System of all but the 14 Miles in Oregon Between China Gulch and Crooked Creek

Designation of the segment of river from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho, downstream 128 miles to China Gulch in Oregon, and from Crooked Creek downstream 50 miles to the Owyhee Reservoir would serve to protect 178 miles of the river, as described in Chapter III, THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION. The major impacts would be on the 14 miles between China Gulch and Crooked Creek left unprotected, as presented in this section and in Table 5.

Most of the land along the 14 miles is in private ownership and used for agricultural purposes. It is the only major portion of the study segment which is not deeply incised. The U. S. 95 crossing at Rome is the major access point for boaters along the study segment.

Impact on Recreation

Nonprotection could have a major adverse impact on the river environment and quality of recreation use along the 14 miles. It is the most vulnerable portion of the river in the study segment because of the ready access, gentle topography, and because most of the land adjoining the river is in private ownership. Although the scenery is unspectacular in comparison with the balance of 178 miles and much of the land along the river is in cultivation, it has a pleasing pastoral quality. This quality would decline if the lands fronting the river were developed. Although this has not occurred to any great extent, the only impediments are county zoning regulations and they are not designed specifically to protect the river environment.

A greater quantity of recreation use would be possible as more access roads were built and lands fronting the river were converted from agriculture to more intensive uses.

Impact on Local Economy

Increased recreation use would result in a growing demand for goods and services and would create new business opportunities, stimulate the local economy, and add to the tax base. Additional law enforcement would have to be provided.

Impact on Transportation

With increased recreation use and development of lands along the 14 miles of river, there may be a need for additional roads and road maintenance.

Impact on Mining

Unless new mineral deposits are discovered, there would be little impact on mining since known deposits along the 14 miles are negligible.

Impact on Soil and Vegetation

Increased development and use of lands fronting the river would be at the expense of the natural vegetation and result in soil disturbance.

Impact on Fish and Wildlife

More intensive use of lands along the 14 miles of river would displace some wildlife. Increased fishing pressure could adversely affect the present high quality of the sport fishery.

Impact on Water Development and Uses

Nonprotection would remove one obstacle to development of the Duncan Ferry Reservoir. A Bureau of Reclamation report dated June 1965 found this project to have an unfavorable benefit-cost ratio. However, interest continues in development of the reservoir by the downstream Owyhee Project water users. Development of additional storage may be needed because of water deficits which could occur during dry years.

New agricultural developments along the 14 miles may increase the consumption of water from the river, but only slightly.

Impact on Water Quality

New developments near the river could adversely affect water quality to a minor degree. However, quality controls now in effect should help to maintain the present high quality of water.

Impact on Land Ownership and Use

No easements on private lands would be acquired along the 14 miles to protect the river environment. The impact would, therefore, be significantly less than under the Recommended Plan.

Impact on Archeological and Historical Values

There would be a risk that archeological and historical sites along the 14 miles would not be surveyed as rapidly or protected as effectively. The extent and importance of these sites is presently unknown.

Alternative Three - Inclusion in the National System of all but one or the other River Segments Required for Duncan Ferry or Three Forks Reservoirs

A dam at Duncan Ferry would inundate 30 miles of river leaving 162 miles free flowing, including 112 miles upstream and 50 miles downstream. The impacts of retaining 162 miles in a free-flowing condition would be similar to the impacts discussed in Chapter III. The major exception is that most (3,000 acres) of the 3,760 acres of land in private ownership bordering the 192 miles of river are located in the Rome Valley which would be inundated by a dam at Duncan Ferry. Another difference is that the segment which would be inundated is one of the most popular free-flowing sections for boating purposes.

A dam at Three Forks would flood 45 miles and leave 147 miles free flowing, including 52 miles upstream and 95 miles downstream. Again, the impacts of retaining 147 miles free flowing would be similar to the impacts discussed in Chapter III. Although the canyon that would be inundated by a dam at Three Forks receives much less use than downstream, it is one of the most deeply entrenched and scenic portions.

In order not to duplicate the discussion contained in Chapter III with respect to the portions of the river which would remain free flowing under this alternative, only the impacts of constructing one or the other dams at Duncan Ferry or Three Forks are summarized in this section. The impacts are presented in more detail in Table 5.

Development of the Duncan Ferry or Three Forks sites would provide additional storage on the Owyhee River for irrigation as well as creating hydroelectric power production and providing flood control benefits. The increased amount of irrigation water available to Owyhee Project users would reduce the water shortages which occur with present facilities during a series of dry years. The existing system of water use and distribution would remain unchanged except that the amount of water pumped from the Snake River could be reduced.

Although neither development is economically feasible, as reported by the Bureau of Reclamation in a June 1965 reconnaissance report entitled Upper Owyhee Project, Idaho-Oregon, future conditions may alter this situation.

The following impact analysis assumes that one or the other of these reservoirs would be developed and is based, in part, on the analysis contained in the 1965 report.

Impact on Recreation

Development of either reservoir would result in the substitution of flat water recreation opportunities for the opportunities available with a free-flowing river as described in Chapter III.

The surface area of the Duncan Ferry Reservoir would be 8,900 acres and provide opportunities for such flat water pursuits as fishing, water skiing, boating, swimming, and waterfowl hunting. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated an increase in the use of the fishery by 7,830 annual fisherman days for the Owyhee River above Lake Owyhee and 60,000 annual fisherman days for the reservoir. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation estimated an average of 77,000 days of other kinds of recreation use annually.

The surface area of the Three Forks Reservoir would be 7,400 acres and provide similar flat water recreation opportunities as at Duncan Ferry. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated an increase in the use of the fishery by 9,400 annual fishing days for the river above Owyhee Lake and 60,000 annual fisherman days for the reservoir. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation estimated an average of 23,000 days of other kinds of recreation use annually.

Impact on Local Economy

Development of either reservoir would have a significantly favorable impact on the local economy both because of the infusion of money during construction and the goods and services that would have to be provided to the recreating public once in operation.

Although there would be some loss in county tax from the agricultural lands inundated (1,000 acres in irrigated pasture or cultivated land at Duncan Ferry), this expectedly would be more than compensated for by the increased business and rise of land values resulting from development.

Impact on Transportation

Duncan Ferry would require the construction of 19 miles of highway around the upper end of the reservoir to replace the 2 miles of U. S. 95 which would be inundated.

Three Forks would inundate 5 miles of an access road to the BLM's Brown Ridge Administrative Area. Construction of a crossing of the Middle Fork and improvement of 23 miles of access road would be required.

Impact on Mining

There are no known economic mineral deposits in lands that would be inundated by either reservoir. The only significant deposit is zeolite fluorspar occurring several miles west of Rome and outside the area of the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.

A number of small hot springs would be inundated but none are believed to have commercial potential. The exact number is not known.

Impact on Soil and Vegetation

The main impact on soil would be to stabilize river flows and prevent flooding and the accompanying erosion.

The impact on native vegetation would be to inundate vast areas of sagebrush and grasses. Practically all of the 8,900 acres which would be inundated by Duncan Ferry, and the 7,400 acres by Three Forks, are mantled with native sagebrush and grasses.

Impact on Fish and Wildlife

Duncan Ferry would inundate a minor amount of upland game and fur bearer habitat. It would result in a moderate increase in waterfowl habitat.

Three Forks would inundate 3,200 acres of deer range, chiefly river bottomlands. Nesting areas of Canada geese and mallard ducks along the river would be lost, although replacement may be possible on the reservoir.

The present excellent stream fishery would be replaced by an expected equally excellent flat water fishery comprising the same sport fish and possible additional species. The river at Duncan Ferry presently supports smallmouth bass and channel catfish. At Three Forks, rainbow trout also occur.

Impact on Water Development and Water Use

Duncan Ferry and Three Forks would provide two types of irrigation benefits. One would be to increase the amount of irrigation water available to downstream Owyhee Project water users. At Duncan Ferry, the benefits would average 7,900 acre-feet annually, while at Three Forks, the benefits would average 8,500 acre-feet annually. The second would be to reduce the dependence on water pumped out of the Snake River with benefits at Duncan Ferry averaging 24,000 acre-feet annually and at Three Forks 26,100 acre-feet annually.

Flood control benefits of \$28,000 annually for each reservoir were estimated by the Corps of Engineers.

Power production would be 73,780,000 kw hours annually at Duncan Ferry and 104,200,000 kw hours at Three Forks.

Impact on Water Quality

This impact is unknown; however, present stringent quality controls would continue in effect.

Impact on Land Ownership and Use

Duncan Ferry would inundate 8,900 acres, including 7,800 acres of privately owned or State-owned lands and 1,100 acres of BLM lands. One thousand acres are in cultivation or irrigated pasture and the balance in livestock range. Seven sets of ranch buildings, two small groups of combined commercial and residential buildings, and one elementary school would be lost.

Three Forks would inundate 7,400 acres, including 5,300 acres of Federal or State-owned lands and 2,100 acres of privately owned land. Virtually all of the area is livestock range. One set of ranch buildings and one cabin would be lost.

Impact on Archeological and Historical Value

Aerial and ground reconnaissance of portions of the study segment indicate that there are a significant number of archeological sites. A portion of those occur in the segments which would be inundated by Duncan Ferry and Three Forks Reservoirs. The number and location of the sites have yet to be surveyed.

Alternative Four - State Protection

Under this alternative, the States of Oregon and Idaho would take legislative action to protect those portions of the 192 miles of river located within their respective boundaries.

The State of Oregon currently has a State Scenic Waterways System. That system was enacted following a referendum of the voters and includes those portions of the Owyhee from the Idaho-Oregon border downstream to Three Forks and from the mouth of Crooked Creek downstream to Birch Creek, a total of 70 miles. The 48-mile portion from Three Forks downstream to Crooked Creek, plus the 8 miles from Birch Creek downstream to the slack water of Owyhee Reservoir are not in the Oregon State System. They could, however, be added by designation of the Governor and concurrence of the State legislature.

Under the Oregon Scenic Waterways System, any development or changes of use on non-Federal lands within a quarter mile of the river are regulated. Plans for construction, tree-cutting, prospecting, mining, or other changes of land use must be submitted to the State Scenic Waterways Coordinator. If the State determines that a proposal would substantially impair the natural and scenic beauty of the waterway, the landowner may not proceed for 1 year. During the period, the State may negotiate modification of the unacceptable plan or, if this is not possible, acquire the land involved, by condemnation if necessary. If the State does not acquire the land, the landowner may proceed with his plan after 1 year.

The State of Idaho does not have a Natural Rivers System. However, a State Water Plan adopted by the State Water Board in 1977 recommends that such a system be established by the State legislature and lists the Owyhee for inclusion.

Designation of the 192 miles by the States would most likely be accomplished with the BLM continuing to administer its lands, and the States administering the balance of lands in accordance with a cooperative management plan prepared jointly by the two States and the BLM. Other possibilities would be for the BLM to continue to hold title while entering into agreements with the States to manage BLM lands.

Implementation of the State Protection alternative would achieve many of the same results that would be achieved under the Recommended Plan. The exception is that there would be no prohibition against the licensing or development of water projects by Federal agencies, unless the Secretary of the Interior were to add the river to the National System upon application from the Governors, as provided in Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Principles and Standards

In accordance with requirements contained in Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources, adopted by the Water Resources Council, a comparison and evaluation of the trade-offs between the Recommended Plan and the other feasible alternatives has been prepared.

Under Principles and Standards, relevant beneficial and adverse effects of each alternative plan are concisely arrayed into four accounts: National Economic Development (NED), Regional Development (RD), Environmental Quality (EQ), and Social Well Being (SWB), as presented in Table 5. The system of accounts identifies the various gains and losses of each alternative plan, relative to the others.

The NED account shows the effects on the economic base of the nation for each alternative by comparing the increases or decreases in the overall output of goods and services.

The RD account displays the beneficial and adverse effects of each alternative on the economic base of the two counties through which the Owyhee River flows.

The EQ account compares the physical impact along the river corridor for each alternative by showing how the environment would be improved or damaged.

The SWB account displays the beneficial or adverse effects of each alternative on the quality of human life, both within the two affected counties and the nation at large.

Table 5. Analysis of Alternatives in Accordance with Principles and Standards

Accounts	Recommended Plan ^{1/}	Alternative One: No Action ^{2/}	Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome ^{3/}	Alternative Three: ^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir	Alternative Four: Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir	Alternative Four: State Protection ^{10/}
<u>National Economic Development</u>						
1. Acquisition of required acreage.	BLM: Acres Cost Easement 760 \$304,000 State: Minimal ^{5/}	BLM: None State: None	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan. State: None	BLM: Acres Cost Easement 150 \$60,000 State: None	BLM: Acres Cost Easement -- -- State: Minimal	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan. State: Minimal
2. Development costs.	BLM: Rd. improvement \$120,000 Campgrounds (2) 270,000 Scenic overlook (1) 10,000 Admin. sites (2) 80,000 Sanitary facil. 5,000 \$485,000 State: Minimal ^{6/}	BLM: Would seek funds to realize many of the developments listed under the Recommended Plan, but with less chance of success. State: None	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan. State: None	BLM: Road improvement \$ -- Scenic overlook 10,000 Admin. sites -- Sanitary facil. -- \$10,000 State: None	BLM: Road improvement \$ -- Scenic overlook 10,000 Admin. sites 30,000 Sanitary facil. 5,000 \$75,000 State: Minimal	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan. State: Minimal
3. Administrative costs (annual operation and maintenance).	BLM: Operation \$ 80,000 Maintenance 40,000 \$120,000 State: Little or none ^{7/}	BLM: Would seek additional staffing in order to help states protect the river area but with less chance of success. State: None	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan. State: None	BLM: Operation \$20,000 Maintenance 5,000 \$25,000 State: None	BLM: Operation \$20,000 Maintenance 10,000 \$30,000 State: Minimal	BLM: Same as under Recommended Plan, State: Minimal ^{8/}
4. Recreation benefits realized.	A yet to be determined number of recreation days annually (carrying capacity).	Likely more than the carrying capacity since no limits would be placed on recreation use.	Carrying capacity would be exceeded because no use limitation would be in force in the 14-mile Rome area.	Somewhat less than the carrying capacity plus about 85,000 reservoir recreation days. ^{8/}	Somewhat less than the carrying capacity plus 70,000 reservoir recreation days. ^{8/}	Same as under Recommended Plan.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four: State Protection^{10/}</u>
5. Economic benefits foregone.	Loss of 31,900 acre-feet irrigation benefits, \$28,000 flood control benefits, and 73,780,000 kwh power production benefits at Duncan Ferry; or the loss of 34,600 acre-feet irrigation benefits, \$28,000 flood control benefits, and 104,200,000 kwh power production benefits at Three Forks. ^{9/}	None	Same as under Recommended Plan.	None	None	Same as under Recommended Plan. ^{9/}

Regional Development

1. Increase in regional income.	Most of the funds used by the BLM to acquire lands, develop public use facilities, and provide for operation and maintenance would be expended locally.	Unlimited recreation use would result in an increase in regional income over what would be realized under the Recommended Plan.	Same as under Recommended Plan.	In addition to income from acquisition, development and operation/maintenance of the river segments in the National System, substantial income would be realized as a result of development and operation of the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same except development of Three Forks Reservoir was estimated in 1965 to cost \$31,566,900, and annual operation to be \$135,400.	Most of the funds used by the States and BLM to acquire lands, develop public use facilities, and provide for operation and maintenance would be expended locally.
---------------------------------	---	---	---------------------------------	--	--	--

Development of the reservoir was estimated in 1965 to cost \$23,685,000 and operation \$122,800 annually.^{8/} Today, these figures would be much higher.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four: State Protection^{10/}</u>
2. Decrease in regional income.	Possible minor reduction in livestock use if range were found to be over-utilized in places. Loss of income from residential and commercial developments which would be precluded. Loss of income because neither the Duncan Ferry nor Three Forks Reservoirs would be developed. Fewer income-producing goods and services will be dispensed because recreation use would be limited to carrying capacity.	None	Same as Recommended Plan, except that there would be no special limitations on residential and commercial developments or recreation use along the 14 miles.	Duncan Ferry would inundate 8,900 acres in cultivation or irrigated pasture and 7,900 acres of livestock range. Seven ranches and two small commercial establishments would also be inundated. ^{6/}	Three Forks would inundate 7,400 acres most of which is livestock range. One ranch would also be inundated. ^{8/}	Same as under Recommended Plan.
3. Changes in tax base.	Fee/easement acquisition of 1,460 acres would reduce the county tax base by an estimated \$4,000 annually, except to the extent that reimbursement would be forthcoming as a result of P.L. 94-565, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act.	Would increase as more lands are developed.	Same as under Recommended Plan.	Unknown	Unknown	Same as under Recommended Plan.
4. Search and rescue responsibility.	A more careful monitoring of float trips and floater capabilities would result in less need for search and rescue.	Would increase in proportion to increased use	Same as under Recommended Plan.	Same as under Recommended Plan.	Same as under Recommended Plan.	Same as under Recommended Plan.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four: State Protection^{10/}</u>
<u>Environmental Quality.</u>						
1. Impact on ecosystem.	Would provide environmental protection to the river corridor and prevent its degradation along the entire 192 miles.	Unlimited recreation use and a lack of restrictions on other types of uses would have an adverse effect on ecological values.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan. Forks Reservoir.
2. Impact on Fish, Wildlife, Soil, and Vegetation.	The goal would be to maintain optimum populations of fish and wildlife species, and maintain a healthy range condition along the entire 192 miles.	Unlimited recreation use and a lack of restriction on other types of uses would have an adverse effect on fish, wildlife, soil, and vegetation.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
3. Endangered and threatened flora and fauna species protected.	Special efforts would be taken to identify and protect endangered or threatened species along 192 miles.	Unlimited recreation use and a lack of restrictions on other types of use would have an adverse effect on endangered species.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
4. Number of miles of free-flowing river.	192 miles.	None, except for the 70 miles of river presently included in Oregon's Scenic Waterways System. Such inclusion affords a degree of protection from Federal licensing or development, but not the outright protection provided by inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.	178 miles.	162 miles.	147 miles.	192 miles.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four: State Protection^{10/}</u>
<u>Social Well Being</u>						
1. Protection of archeological and historical sites for study.	Maximum protection would be achieved because recreational use of the area would be limited, manpower would be allocated for patrol purposes, and special efforts would be taken to locate and safeguard sites and to educate the public along 192 miles of river.	Only what is already provided.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
2. Increased diversity of recreation opportunities.	Efforts would be made to realize the full range of recreation opportunities available in the area, consistent with protecting the river environment and quality of recreation experience.	Although no special efforts would be taken to increase the quality and diversity of recreation opportunity, likely the full range of opportunities available would be realized.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
3. Increased quality of recreation experience.	A primary management objective would be to maintain the existing high quality recreation experience by limiting the amount and kinds of recreation use.	The quality of recreation experience would deteriorate as use increased over the area's carrying capacity.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four; State Protection^{10/}</u>
4. Enhancement of areas for public enjoyment and study.	Easements would be acquired to protect scenic values and provide public access. Through more intensive management, natural historic and archeological values would be protected. Incompatible uses of lands would be terminated.	BLM and States would continue to enhance areas under existing authorities.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
5. Preservation of open space.	Existing open spaces would be protected from adverse types of use or development.	BLM and States would continue to protect open space under existing authorities.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.
6. Enhancement of public health and safety.	Efforts would be made to control human pollution through the siting of comfort stations at camping spots and other points along the river. River runners would be screened to weed out the ill-equipped or unqualified. Literature and maps would be published to reduce risks.	BLM and States would continue enhancement efforts under existing authorities.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan Ferry Reservoir.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan.

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Recommended Plan^{1/}</u>	<u>Alternative One: No Action^{2/}</u>	<u>Alternative Two: Inclusion of all but the 14 miles at Rome^{3/}</u>	<u>Alternative Three:^{4/} Inclusion of all but Duncan Ferry Reservoir</u>	<u>Inclusion of all but Three Forks Reservoir</u>	<u>Alternative Four: State Protection^{10/}</u>
7. Incidence of employment and income.	Local residents would be employed to help develop, operate, and maintain the area. Professionally guided boat trips would be limited along with other types of recreation use in a manner consistent with the area's carrying capacity.	Unlimited recreation use would result in increased employment of local guides and an increase in the demand for goods and services.	Same as Recommended Plan along the 178 miles administered by the BLM.	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 30 miles of river which would be inundated by the Duncan	Same as Recommended Plan, except along the 45 miles of river which would be inundated by the Three Forks Reservoir.	Same as under Recommended Plan. Forks Reservoir.

- 1/ Recommended Plan. Inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System of the entire 192 miles studied, with the BLM administering 178 miles and the State of Oregon administering the 14 miles in the Rome Basin.
- 2/ Alternative One. No Action. Noninclusion in the National System of any of the 192 miles.
- 3/ Alternative Two. Inclusion in the National System of all but the 14 miles in the Rome Basin, with the BLM administering the 178 miles included.
- 4/ Alternative Three. Inclusion in the National System of all but one or the other river segments required for Duncan Ferry or Three Forks Reservoirs. The assumption is that one or the other of the reservoirs would be constructed.
- 5/ If the State were to add the 14 miles in the Rome Basin to its Scenic Waterways System, authority would then exist to control land uses, and, if necessary, acquire lands in order to prevent undesirable developments or uses. Based on experience along other rivers in the State Scenic Waterways System, it is expected that little or no land acquisition by the State would be necessary.
- 6/ The State of Oregon provides only minimal development on its scenic waterways.
- 7/ The State of Oregon does not assign a manager to its scenic waterways but rather delegates the responsibility to the nearest State Parks personnel along with that person's existing duties.
- 8/ Reservoir figure(s) were obtained from the Bureau of Reclamation report Upper Owyhee Project, Idaho-Oregon, dated June 1965.
- 9/ It is unlikely that dams would be licensed or constructed by Federal agencies if the river were in State river systems and the Governors were opposed to the dams. However, this possibility cannot be ruled out.
- 10/ If protection of the 192 miles were undertaken by the States of Idaho and Oregon, several assumptions are made:
 - A. The Governors would apply to the Secretary of the Interior to have the river added to the National System, as provided for in Section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Secretary would take that action.

- B. The BLM would continue to manage its lands along the river and orient management of those lands to dovetail with the protection efforts of the States.

The result would be almost the same degree of protection as if Congress had added the river to the National System as proposed in the Recommended Plan.

IX. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHERS

Consultation and Coordination in the Development of the Proposal and in the Preparation of the Environmental Statement

First the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and then the National Park Service have been the lead agencies in the preparation of this study report. The study was carried out as a cooperative study team effort with the Bureau of Land Management, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Forest Service, Oregon State Scenic Waterways Administrator, Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, and Idaho State Parks and Recreation Department. In addition to the study team, numerous Federal, State, and local agencies and interests provided technical input and review, including the Bureau of Reclamation. Most of the field work was completed in 1975.

Public information meetings initiating the study were held in August 1975 in Ontario and Jordan Valley, Oregon. An additional six public meetings were held in the spring of 1976 after the study team found that the 192 miles met the criteria.

The meetings provided interested individuals and organizations opportunities to state their opinions about the study team findings and to discuss the future management alternatives available for the Owyhee River. Approximately 200 people attended the public meetings. A number made statements, and many others wrote expressing their feelings about the Owyhee study and the river's future. People's opinions varied greatly. Some favored adding the entire river to the system. Some wanted a smaller area included. Others opposed adding any of the Owyhee to the National System.

In addition to statements made at the meetings, approximately 175 pieces of correspondence were received expressing views about the future of the Owyhee.

The Idaho and Oregon State Historic Preservation Officers were consulted in regard to "Procedures for Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties" within the proposal area, pursuant to 36 C.F.R. art 800. Their responses are summarized in the report and included in the Appendix. Comments of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation are also included in the Appendix.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service was not consulted pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act because no endangered or threatened species are known to be affected by the proposal.

Coordination in the Review of the
Draft Environmental Statement

Copies of the draft environmental statement were submitted to the following:

Federal Agencies:

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Department of the Interior
Department of Commerce	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of Defense	Bureau of Land Management
Corps of Engineers	Bureau of Mines
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare	Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Transportation	Fish and Wildlife Service
Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission	Geological Survey
	Environmental Protection Agency
	Department of Energy

Clearinghouses:

State of Idaho Clearinghouse	State of Oregon Clearinghouse
------------------------------	-------------------------------

Others:

American Camping Association, Inc.	National Farmers Union
American Canoe Association, Inc.	National Wildlife Federation
American Conservation Association, Inc.	Northwest Mining Association
American Farm Bureau Federation	The National Grange
American Mining Congress	Oregon High Desert Study
American Petroleum Institute	Oregon State Public Interest Research Group
American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society	Pacific Power and Light
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	Sierra Club
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs	Sport Fishing Institute
Friends of the Earth	University of Oregon Outdoor Program
Idaho Power Company	Washington Kayak Club
Interagency Whitewater Committee	Western Oil and Gas Association
Izaak Walton League of America	Western River Guides Association
National Audubon Society	The Wilderness Society
Local and State Cattleman Associations	



APPENDIX

**RESPONSES TO THE DRAFT REPORT
AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF MINES
2401 E STREET, NW.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20241

DES-78/17

June 27, 1978

Memorandum

To: Robert L. Eastman, Outdoor Recreation Planner, National Park Service


From: Chief, Office of Environmental Coordination

Subject: Draft report and draft environmental statement for Owyhee Wild and Scenic River in Oregon

All non-federal lands within one-quarter mile of a river in Oregon come under the management of the Oregon Waterways system. All plans for prospecting, mining, or otherwise changing the landscape must be submitted to the State Scenic Waterways coordinator for permits.

The mineral resources along the river have been evaluated by the Bureau of Mines. Comments were forwarded to the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service in the report "Mineral Resources of the Owyhee River Study Area, Idaho and Oregon."

Both the DES documents and the draft study include an adequate discussion of the geology and mineral resources in the proposed "Wild and Scenic River" area. No mineral resources would be adversely impacted by the designations.


for W. L. Dare





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

12 JUN 1978

Honorable Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

You requested the views of the Secretary of the Army on the draft report and draft environmental impact statement on the proposed Owyhee Wild and Scenic River in Oregon and Idaho.

We have reviewed both documents and find no conflict with any projects or current proposals of this Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Blumenfeld".

Michael Blumenfeld
Deputy Under Secretary



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
REGIONAL OFFICE
EXECUTIVE TOWER - 1405 CURTIS STREET
DENVER, COLORADO 80202

REGION VIII

July 3, 1978

IN REPLY REFER TO:
8SS

Mr. Robert L. Eastman
Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Eastman:

This is in response to your letter dated May 18, 1978, regarding the draft report and draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposed Owyhee Wild and Scenic River.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) assigned areas of expertise and responsibility for review of other agency EIS's focus on consideration of a proposal's compatibility with local and regional comprehensive planning, and impacts on urbanized areas. The designation of the Owyhee River as an element of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System appears to be outside of HUD's assigned areas of responsibility. However, we recommend that letters indicating the attitudes of local and regional planning bodies be included in the Final EIS for this proposal.

We appreciate this opportunity to review your draft EIS. If we can be of further help, please contact Mr. Walter O. Kelm at FTS 327-3102.

Sincerely,

Raymond D. McKinney
Director
Program Planning and Evaluation



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410

23 JUN 1978

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

IN REPLY REFER TO:

CSR

Your Reference:
A64(410)

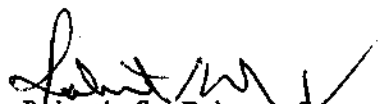
Honorable Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Your letter of May 16, 1978, to Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris enclosed a copy of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River draft report and draft environmental impact statement for review.

We have forwarded the Report-EIS to our Seattle Regional Office which will forward this Department's comments, if any, directly to you by the due date of June 30, 1978.

Sincerely,


Robert C. Embry, Jr.
Assistant Secretary



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20245

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Trust Services
Wildlife & Parks
459

JUN 28 1978

Memorandum

To: Director, National Park Service
Attention: Robert L. Eastman

From: ^{ACTING} Director, Office of Trust Responsibilities

Subject: Draft Reports - Owyhee Wild and Scenic River
Study and Environmental Statement

This is in reply to the Secretary's May 16 letter to the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, file reference: A64(410) requesting comments on the subject documents.

Following our cursory review of the draft reports, we are of the opinion that our trust responsibilities will not be involved; however, since the limited access to the Owyhee River includes State Highway 51 which crosses within the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, we are asking the Phoenix Area Office to review the draft reports and provide your office with a response that will reflect input from the Duck Valley Tribal Council.

James G. Indrich





Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

July 28, 1978

Honorable Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

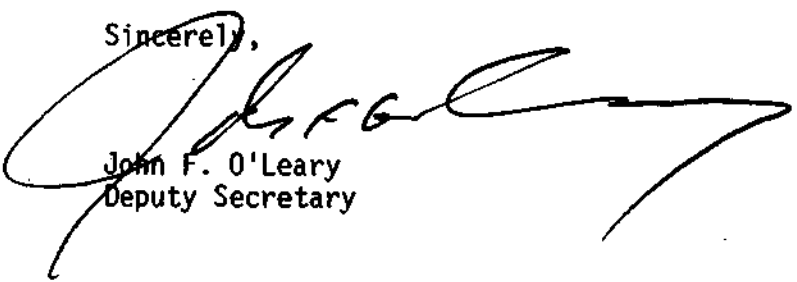
Dear Mr. Secretary:

Secretary Schlesinger has asked me to thank you for your letter of May 16, 1978, (reference A64(410)), inviting the Department of Energy to review and comment on the Department of the Interior's draft report and draft environmental impact statement on the proposed Owyhee Wild and Scenic River in Oregon and Idaho.

The draft report and draft statement have been reviewed and we have no comments to offer. We should like to mention that a portion of the area adjoining the river in Idaho has a potential geothermal resource. We should not like to preclude developing that resource should it prove economical.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this statement.

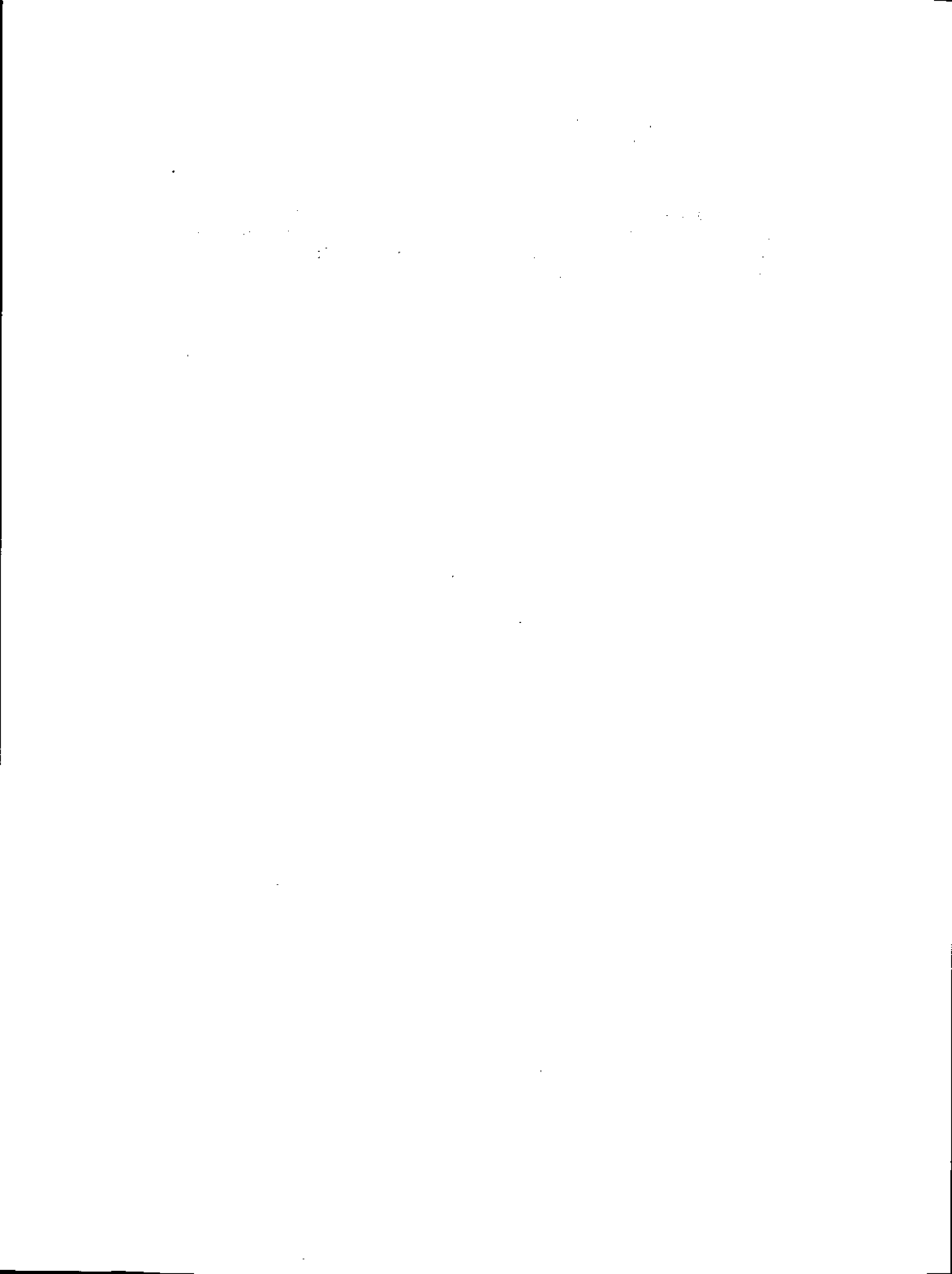
Sincerely,



John F. O'Leary
Deputy Secretary

Comments of the Department of Energy
dated July 28, 1978

1. The development of geothermal resources within the boundaries of the river area normally would be precluded, unless it could be accomplished in a manner that would not disrupt scenic or environmental qualities.





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY
REFER TO: 727
121.

JUL 25 1978

Memorandum

To: Director, National Park Service

From: ^{Assistant} Commissioner of Reclamation 

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Statement (DES 78-17) and
Draft Report -- Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study --
February 1978

This is in response to the May 16, 1978, letter from Secretary Andrus to Mr. Douglas M. Costle (copy to this office) distributing the subject documents for review.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the subject documents and find that most of our comments on the preliminary draft of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study submitted to the Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, on November 19, 1976, have been incorporated in the February draft of the study documents. Those that were not are mentioned again in the comments below.

Draft Environmental Statement (DES)

Page iii - The downstream Owyhee River water user organizations are still absent from the list of those who have been asked to comment on the DES and report. Since the Owyhee Project interests have commented strongly on the proposal, and their concerns are the subject of a major alternative presented (alternative 3), we suggest that they should be invited to review these documents if they have not already done so. At least the two following entities should be included (although the Owyhee Project has numerous individual irrigation districts): the North Board of Control in Nyssa, Oregon, and the South Board of Control in Homedale, Idaho.

Page 30, partial paragraph at top of page, last seven lines (also in Study Report, page 45, first two paragraphs) - These sections state incorrectly that the Bureau of Reclamation has recommended that the potential Duncan Ferry and Three Forks storage sites be

excluded from consideration for wild and scenic river designation. Although we made the suggestion early in the study process at the request of downstream Owyhee River water users, we reconsidered that position in the latter part of 1976 when we reviewed the preliminary wild and scenic draft report and DES. At that time, we concluded that it was our obligation to convey to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR): (1) the position and reasoning of the water users who opposed the designation, and (2) our past study findings on the storage sites under study. Based on a review of past studies and available data, we concluded that we should neither support nor oppose the potential designation of those reaches. Our comments of November 19, 1976, to BOR were intended to convey that position. We ask that the draft report and DES be corrected accordingly.

2

Page 33, third paragraph, 8th line (Also in Study Report, page 21, second paragraph, 8th line) - These sections indicate that Public Law 94-579 "invalidated the authority of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage primitive areas and in its place gave BLM the authority to manage wildernesses within the National Wilderness System." Clarification of this statement would be helpful as we did not understand BLM's authority to be invalidated, rather that they were given additional duties to take actions relating to the evaluation of potential wilderness areas.

3

Study Report

Pages 48-56, Table 4 - The use of Footnotes 9/ and 10/ is confusing. It appears that the two are reversed or used interchangeably. Some clarification may be appropriate. It should be noted that the recreation data used are taken from a 13-year old recreation report (Page 55, explanation of Footnote 9/) and may not be the best basis for evaluating recreation impacts.

4

Comments of the Bureau of Reclamation
dated July 25, 1978

1. Following receipt of the Bureau of Reclamation's July 25, 1978, memorandum, copies of the DES were forwarded to the two irrigation districts for review and comment.
2. The report and FES have been changed to reflect this comment.
3. The report has been clarified to indicate that the BLM's policy of designating primitive areas has been suspended as a result of the authority to have areas designated as Wilderness.
4. The footnotes have been corrected, as suggested.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

August 24 1978

Honorable Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is in response to your May 16, 1978, letter requesting our views on your draft report and draft environmental statement on a proposal for the Owyhee River.

There are some discrepancies between the two documents which make it difficult to assess the impact of the proposal, especially on the private farmlands. For example, on page 39 of the report, it is noted that an estimated 700 acres would be acquired in fee and 760 acres in scenic or access easements, while the impact statement notes there are only 760 acres of private land along the segment to be federally administered. In this area, where private lands are such a small part of the total acreage, acquiring 700 acres in fee and converting them to other uses could have a significant effect on the local economy.

The report on page 4 states that based on a zone averaging one-quarter mile on each side of the river 69,120 acres would be encompassed. Actually, a one-quarter mile zone would only encompass 61,440 acres. If the definite boundaries of the area are held to an average of one-quarter mile, over 7,600 acres would be excluded from the proposal. Undoubtedly, some of this excluded area would consist of private lands. If so, and the proposal is implemented, the acquisition costs should be lower and the impact on the private lands and the local economy will be reduced.

We agree with the study findings and conclusions that the Owyhee meets the criteria for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The preferred alternative, designation of the river, appears to be, on balance, in the public interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposal.

Sincerely,

Carol Tucker Foreman

-92-

Acting Secretary

Comments of the Department of Agriculture
dated August 24, 1978

1. The report has been changed to indicate that scenic easements would be acquired on the 760 acres of private land bordering the portions of river which would be administered by the BLM.
2. The report has been corrected to reflect the 61,440 acres which would be encompassed within a boundary averaging one-quarter mile back from each side of the river.



United States Department of the Interior

1793 (911)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

OREGON STATE OFFICE
P.O. Box 2965 (729 N.E. Oregon Street)
Portland, Oregon 97208

JUL 28 1978

DES-78/17

To: Director (260)
From: State Director
Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Statement (DES) and Study Report (DSR) for the proposed Designation of the Owyhee River as an Element of the National Wild and Scenic River, Oregon and Idaho.

Comments on subject document are as follows:

General

As stated on page 43 of the DES, the document is conceptual in nature and not site-specific. However, the specific comments listed below would add quantification to the DES.

In both the DES and the DSR, the sections discussing Archaeological and Historical Values need to be revised. A partial survey was conducted during the summer of 1976 and a copy of the final report was submitted to the Northwest Regional Office, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, on November 4, 1977. | 1

Specific for DES

Page 8, Third Paragraph. Idaho should be included in determining regulations. | 1

Page 10, Last Paragraph. What coordination has been made with Oregon, specifically through the Department of Transportation? | 2

Page 11, Third Paragraph. The Owyhee Canyon will be analyzed for wilderness potential per Section 603 of FLPMA.

Page 25, Map 6. The legend does not depict the meaning of the "dot" pattern. Both class 6 & 7 categories are blank--one of them should be that "dot" pattern. | 3

Page 20, First Paragraph. What in a moderate gradient?
A river gradient profile would be helpful.

4

Page 28, Fourth Paragraph. Include bald eagle and
change sparrow hawks to kestral hawks.

Page 28, Last Paragraph. A chart showing average annual
precipitation on a monthly basis and a chart depicting
average monthly CFS would be helpful.

5

Page 41, Second Paragraph, Last Sentence. Is this a
true statement? If Malheur County is the frame of ref-
erence this is an untrue statement.

Page 41, Third Paragraph. Hiking should be clarified.
The hiking potential is limited to the rim with only
short trips into the canyon. Hiking the length of the
canyon bottom is not possible.

Page 44, Second paragraph. The State of Idaho should
be included.

Page 44, Fifth Paragraph. The impact on the local econ-
omy at Rome, OR. would be major.

Page 45, First Paragraph. This paragraph should be rewritten
to include the recreation services and economic gain to
communities of Rome, OR, and Jordan Valley, OR.

Page 48, Fourth Paragraph. Fee title by BLM may not be
possible. Should be limited to conservation easements.

Page 50, First Paragraph. Idaho should be included.

Specific for DSR

Page 36, Last Paragraph. The one sixteenth section area
should be corrected from 4 acres to 40 acres.

Specific for both DES and DSR

Page 14 of DES and Page 9 DRS, Transportation, Second
Paragraph. There is a limited, scheduled airline service
to Ontario in Malheur County. Air Oregon Airlines provides
Monday through Friday service from Portland and several
other Oregon communities to Ontario in the morning and
service from Ontario to those cities in the afternoon.

Page 38 of DES and Page 29 of DSR, Archaeological and Historic Values. The first paragraph should be revised. A suggested revision is: An intensive archaeological reconnaissance of the entire study area has not been completed. The Vale District Office of the BLM conducted an intensive archaeological reconnaissance of the river from the mouth of Crooked Creek to the upstream end of the Owyhee Reservoir. Based on information gathered during that reconnaissance and other field investigations of limited portions of the study area, it is highly likely that the unsurveyed portion of the study area also contains significant archaeological and historical sites. Dirty Shame Rockshelter, which is located on Antelope Creek, was excavated by a crew from the University of Oregon in the summer of 1973. That site has provided a 9000-year record of cultural adaptation in a previously unknown area. In the second paragraph substitute "illegal collecting of artifacts" for "relic collecting." In the fourth paragraph substitute Captain Benjamin L.E. Bonneville vice Captain Benjamin de Bonneville. In the fifth paragraph substitute "land inhabited by the Northern Paiute and Shoshone" vice "Paiute, Snake, Shoshone, and Bannock Tribes." Also replace the last sentence of this fifth paragraph with the following: "The culmination of these conflicts was the Bannock-Paiute War of 1878 which was fought throughout the study area."



Comments of the Oregon State Office, Bureau of Land Management
dated July 28, 1978

1. The report has been changed to reflect this comment.
2. Background information required in the study was obtained from State agencies. Specifically, inquiry was made of the State Department of Transportation regarding plans for new highway projects which would impact the area.
3. Map 6 has been corrected.
4. The river gradient averages 12 feet per mile.
5. A chart providing the monthly average annual cfs has been included as Table 1.



United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO

6220(930)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Idaho State Office
Federal Building, Box 042
550 W. Fort Street
Boise, Idaho 83724

July 20, 1978

Mr. Edward J. Kurtz
Acting Regional Director
USDI
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike
Seattle, WA. 98101

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

We have reviewed the Department's draft study report and environmental statement for the Owyhee River and offer the following comments.

Draft Study

Page 4 Recommendations, Item 7. We realize that legislation to add rivers to the National System normally only includes fund authorization for acquisition, development and operations and maintenance. However, there are other major costs incurred by the administering agency such as those related to management plan preparation, and the cultural resource surveys as mentioned on page 29 of the Draft Study and page 50 of the draft Environmental Statement.

In light of the current pressures to undertake archaeological surveys for preparation of range environmental statements and other priority work, the BLM's recreation management budget is already over-committed and under-funded.

We suggest that recommendation No. 7 be expanded to include a statement that funds also be provided to the BLM for preparation of a management plan and to carry out all the mitigation measures listed on page 50 of the draft ES.

The funding request would not be included in the draft legislation, but such a recommendation in the final study report would be helpful to us in supporting the need for funds through our normal budgetary process.



Without the necessary budget increases it is doubtful we can complete the management plan in two years because of higher priority programs in BLM.

Page 7 - The figures for land acquisition, development and O&M were estimates at best, and by the time a final report is submitted to Congress, they will be at least three years old. These costs should be adjusted upward in the final report to reflect annual inflation rates.

2

Page 8, fourth paragraph - The correct spelling is DeLamar.

Page 14, first paragraph - This should be Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

Page 17 - Add the term "variety ophiogens" to "Astragalus purshii."

Page 18, first paragraph - Peak discharges usually occur during April or late May.

Page 18, second paragraph - Will the results of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare study be used to update the final report?

Page 21, first paragraph - The estimate that 10% of the land is grazing land seems low unless this statement is qualified by "land use directly along the shoreline of the Owyhee River." On page 21 it is stated that most of the BLM land is managed under multiple-use concepts include established grazing allotments. BLM land accounts for 86% of the land along the Owyhee River in the Study Area.

1

Page 21, second paragraph - The statement concerning BLM's authority to manage primitive areas was not invalidated by P.L. 94-579.

Page 22, last paragraph - The Duck Valley Indian Reservation straddles the upper Owyhee River in Idaho and Nevada. Wild Horse Reservoir is not shown on Map 7.

Page 25, second paragraph - Three Forks should be included as one of the main takeout points. On Map 8, the access route to the put-in point at pipeline crossing on the East Fork should be on the east side of the river, not on the west side as shown.

Page 31 - We question if the carrying capacity of 4,500 recreation days is anywhere near being accurate. If it is, then the estimated costs on page 39 seem extremely high when compared to this low amount of use.

For example, above Three Forks, the Boise District estimates that 40 boating parties per year can be accommodated without degradation to the canyon environment. If each party consisted of 15 people for a 6 day trip, the carrying capacity for boating in this stretch alone would be 3,600 boater (recreation) days. Added to this would be the other rec-

3

recreation uses that would likely occur, especially with a National System designation.

Considering all recreation use, it is estimated that the ecological carrying capacity upstream from Three Forks would be about 8,000 recreation days. Non-boating recreation activities at and near Three Forks would account for about on-third of this use.

This is a rough estimate of carrying capacity, and a final determination will have to be based on additional studies.

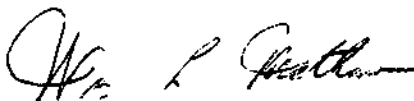
Page 49, item 4 - Again, the carrying capacity is too low. Also, since there is an adequate supply of surface acres of water to satisfy demand well into the future, the reservoir use shown in alternative three would be a result of use transfer from already existing reservoirs. This use would not represent an additional benefit to the regional economy.

Draft Environmental Statement

Page 8, fifth paragraph - The proposed route of the Pacific Power and Light transmission line has been changed, and as now proposed, it will not cross the Owyhee River.

Page 50 - In item 4, it should be mentioned that campgrounds will be developed only at those few locations where improved access roads already exist.

Sincerely yours,

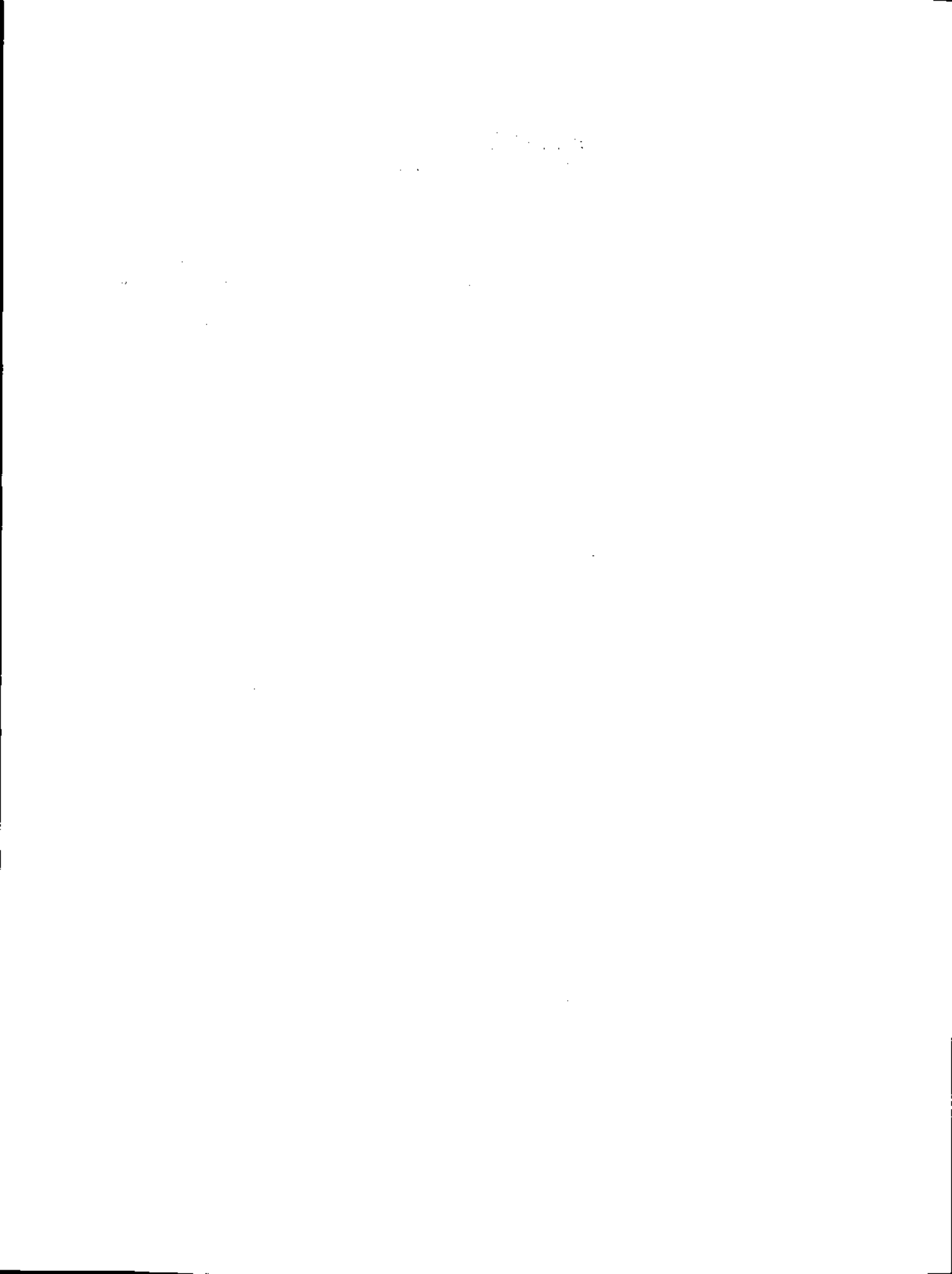


Wm. L. Mathews
State Director

cc: I-1

Comments of the Idaho State Office, Bureau of Land Management
dated July 20, 1978

1. The report has been changed to reflect these comments.
2. The report now indicates that the cost estimates are 1976 dollars. They will need to be adjusted upward at such time as Congress were to add the Owyhee River to the National System.
3. Revised recreation use data has been provided by the BLM and included in the report.



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION X

1200 SIXTH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98101



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: M/S 443

JUN 23 1978

Robert Herbst, Assistant Secretary
of Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Herbst:

We have completed our review of your agency's draft environmental statement (DES) for the proposed Designation of the Owyhee River as an element of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. We would like to submit the following comments for your consideration.

Water Quality, page 30 DES

Mention should be made, in the final environmental statement (FES), of the statewide 208 water quality management planning taking place in both Oregon and Idaho and how this planning relates to the Owyhee proposal. | 1

Access to the River, page 37 DES

We suggest that this section be expanded in the FES, to define the location and type of recreational access areas being planned for the river. Also, this section should define the sources of drinking water and the method of sanitary waste disposal and potential for water quality degradation at each site. | 2

Impacts on Water Quality, page 47 DES

The FES should reference the effort being made in Oregon to monitor the water quality of the river. This was mentioned in the "Wild and Scenic River Study", but omitted from the DES. | 3

Alternatives, page 55 DES

We suggest that Table 4, page 48, of the "Wild and Scenic River Study" be included in the FES. This type of presentation is most useful for comparing the potential impacts of the various alternatives. | 4

From the standpoint of the Environmental Protection Agency's areas of concern and expertise, we are rating this statement LO-1 (LO - Lack of Objections; 1 - Adequate Information). This rating will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our responsibility to inform the public of our views on proposed Federal actions under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, as amended.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this draft environmental statement. Please do not hesitate to contact Dennis Ossenkop, of my staff, should you have questions or desire further information regarding our comments. We can be reached at (206) 442-1285 or (FTS) 399-1285.

Sincerely,

Alexandra B. Smith

Alexandra B. Smith, Chief
Environmental Evaluation Branch

Comments of Region X, Environmental Protection Agency
dated June 28, 1978

1. Reference to the EPA's 208 program has been added to the report.
2. The detail suggested in this comment will not be available until such time as Congress designates the river and the BLM prepares a detailed management plan. Developments are discussed conceptually in Chapter I under Acquisition and Development.
3. The text has been changed to reflect this comment.
4. The report and environmental statement have been combined into a single document which includes Table 4 (new Table 5).





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

6223(1)(370)

Memorandum

SEP 14 1978

To: Director, National Park Service
Deputy
Through: Assistant Secretary, Land and Water Resources
From: Director, Bureau of Land Management
Subject: Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study--Comments on
February 1978 Draft Report

[Handwritten signature]
SEP 15 1978

We have reviewed the subject report and offer the following comments:

Page 21: The discussion relating to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and primitive areas is not entirely correct. The FLPMA did not "invalidate the authority of BLM to manage primitive areas." Because of the language in the FLPMA, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has made a policy determination not to designate any additional primitive areas. This decision is based on the provisions in the FLPMA that require (a) a wilderness review of those roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands for wilderness characteristics and (b) ultimately a recommendation to Congress of the suitability or nonsuitability of the inventoried areas for designation as wilderness.

Suggested Language

Passage of P.L. 94-579 requires the Bureau of Land Management to review roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands for wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of 1964. As a result of this direction, the Bureau has established a policy of suspending the designation of primitive areas. This policy may be reevaluated when the identification of potential wilderness areas on the public lands has been completed.

Page 25: The report states that the entire river is floatable during April, May, and June, but that there is insufficient flow at other times. It is recommended that some additional discussion be offered on this point, particularly when the study team findings on page 32 indicate the study segment meets all of the eligibility criteria, including "containing a sufficient volume of water during the recreation season to provide full enjoyment of water-related outdoor recreation."

Page 42: Alternative number 1 does not discuss the potential for slack water recreation if reservoirs are constructed. In fact, the report does not assess the opportunity for flat water recreation compared to the recreation opportunity resulting from designation.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer these comments.


Acting Associate

Comments of the Bureau of Land Management
dated September 14, 1978

The report has been revised as suggested.



United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

In Reply Refer To:
EGS-Mail Stop 441

June 27, 1978

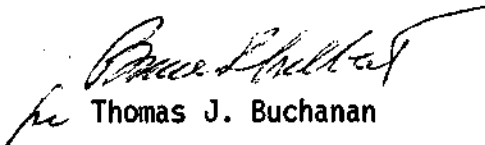
Memorandum

To: Acting Chairman, Interdepartmental Study Group on Wild
and Scenic Rivers

From: Thomas J. Buchanan, Geological Survey

Subject: Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study Draft and
Owyhee River Draft Environmental Statement

The subject reports have been reviewed by the Water Resources
Division District Office in Portland, Oregon, and our reviewer's
comments are enclosed. Thank you for giving us an opportunity
to review these reports.


Thomas J. Buchanan

Enclosure



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Water Resources Division
P. O. Box 3202
Portland, Oregon 97208

ATTN: ANN LENNOX

June 26, 1978

EGS-Mail Stop 441

Memorandum

To: Acting Assistant Chief Hydrologist for Operations, Reston VA
From: District Chief, WRD, Oregon District
Subject: PUBLICATIONS - Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study Draft and Owyhee River Draft Environmental Statement

We have reviewed those parts of the subject EIS and Wild and Scenic River drafts which pertain to hydrology.

The discussion of hydrology is very limited in both reports, particularly for reports primarily concerned with discussion of a river system.

The limited flow information for Owyhee that is presented under Hydrology and water quality, page 18 "Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study Report," (draft) for the gaging station, Owyhee River near Rose, Oregon, agrees with the data published by the U.S. Geological Survey in our report, "Water Resources Data for Oregon, Water Year 1975."

The last sentence in the first paragraph under Hydrology . . . , p. 18, could be updated to include the 1976 and 1977 water years by rewriting it as follows: "The average annual discharge during the 28-year period is 907 cfs."

Table 1 - ANNUAL RUNOFF on page 29 of the EIS is in error. Some of the data shown for Owyhee River near Rose is actually the data for Owyhee River above Owyhee Reservoir and vice versa. Also, there are now two years' additional data for Owyhee River near Rose. According to water resources data published by the U.S. Geological Survey, Table 1 should appear as follows:

TABLE 1 - ANNUAL RUNOFF

Station	Complete years of record	Runoff in acrefeet		
		Maximum	Minimum	Average
Owyhee River at Rose, Oregon	26 (1950-77)	1,710,000	136,000	660,000
Owyhee River above Owyhee Reservoir, Oregon	22 (1930-51)	1,110,000	153,000	620,000

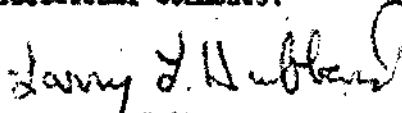
2

Acting Assistant Ch. Hyd. for Operations
ECS-MS441
Owyhee River

- 2 -

June 26, 1978

We did not realize that the Idaho District had not been furnished copies of the draft statements. We are forwarding them our copies. If they have any further comment, they will notify you by telephone. We have discussed the drafts with the District Chief in Boise, Idaho, and it is likely that Idaho will have no additional comments.



Larry L. Hubbard
for Stanley F. Kapustka

cc: District Chief, Idaho District

Comments of the U. S. Geological Survey
dated June 27, 1978

1. The report has been revised to reflect these comments.
2. Table 1 has been changed to show mean monthly runoff.





United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

In Reply Refer To:
EGS-Mail Stop 441

July 3, 1978

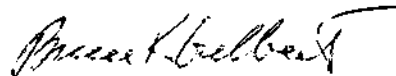
Memorandum

To: Acting Chairman, Interdepartmental Study Group on
Wild and Scenic Rivers

From: Bruce K Gilbert, Geological Survey

Subject: Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study Draft and
Owyhee River Draft Environmental Statement

Enclosed are some additional comments just received from our Idaho
District Office concerning the subject report.


Bruce K. Gilbert

Enclosure



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Anna M. Lenoir, WRD, MS 441, Reston

DATE: June 30, 1978

FROM : District Chief, WRD, Idaho

SUBJECT: Owyhee River Wild and Scenic River Study, draft environmental statement: 78-17

Review comments for subject environmental statement are as follows:

P. 25, penultimate paragraph; p. 30, last line of third paragraph; p. 37, third line of penultimate paragraph; and in other places, the texts refer to East Fork. Evidentially, the authors mean the Owyhee River above Three Forks. No map in the report shows an East Fork--only an East Little Owyhee River. This should be clarified. Both reports would be more meaningful and would serve as a better basis for evaluating items 4 and 5 on page 5 of the environmental statement if the hydrology section were expanded. For instance, a table showing mean monthly flows for the periods of record at Owyhee River above China Diversion Dam, South Fork Owyhee near Whiterock, and Owyhee River at Rome could replace table 1, p. 27, of the environmental statement. This would provide a basis for assessing distribution in time and other characteristics of the flows at various sites in the study area, especially the section in Idaho.

The report also could state that the low-head hydropower potential in Idaho streams, including Owyhee River, is presently being evaluated.

E. F. Hubbard
Ernest F. Hubbard

cc: Regional Hydrologist, WRD, WR
Stanley F. Kapuska, WRD, Oregon

Comments of the U. S. Geological Survey
dated July 3, 1978

1. The East Fork Owyhee has been identified on report maps, as suggested.
2. Table 1 of the report has been changed to give the mean monthly flow, 1949-1977, as measured at Rome.
3. This information has been added to the report.



IDAHO DEPARTMENT of PARKS & RECREATION

Statehouse Mail

2177 Warm Springs Ave.

Boise

Idaho

83720

(208) 384-2154

Dale R. Christiansen, Director
R. P. Peterson, Deputy Director



John V. Evans, Governor

July 17, 1978

Mr. Stan Young
Rivers Coordinator
U.S. National Park Service
Federal Building, Rm 990
915 Second Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174

RE: Owyhee River Report & Environmental
Statement 558.7

Dear Stan:

In reference to the recent Owyhee Wild River Study Draft, I have the following comments to offer.

On all the maps which reference river mileage, I would suggest that it be compared to the statements made in the text. The mileage shown on all the charts show 0-175 miles whereas in text reference is made to 178 miles as wild river and 14 miles as scenic. I would suggest that you show the 50-64 mile segment (14 miles) as scenic on all the maps and charts show 0-192 miles on river.

Page 38, text refers to 1/16 section as being 4 acres. I believe 1/16 of a section equals 40 acres.

Page 43 bottom of the page under Alternative 3, I believe the word any is in error. I believe its to read All (table heading).

Page 45 refers to alternatives for state protection. The Idaho legislature passed a state river system resolution. It is very vague and only speaks to approving the state water plans policy objective of establishment of a system. It is not a formal law. I will ask Jim Wrigley to send you a copy of that piece of legislation with his comments.

On page 49, Table 4 dealing with the NED account for Principles and Standards, I have a question relative to the recreation days carrying capacity of 4500 recreation days for the river under several of the alternatives. 4,500 river recreation days seems to be a rather low estimate for recreation on the

Owyhee River. With the development that is recommended on page 48 for campgrounds, trail development, etc., it seems to me that the recreation visitor days would be considerably higher. As an example, the development of two campgrounds at \$270,000 and use of the Corps of Engineers recent figures for deluxe campground development at \$5,000, you would have a 50 unit campground or two-25 unit campgrounds. If we use an estimate of three days/ weekend use of campsite this would give us a 50-unit campground used three days full capacity which equals 150 camper unit days. 150 times an average of three people per site gives us 450 man days per weekend. If we multiply that by a 20 weekend season, we have 9,000 camper days per year (estimate). Those 9,000 camper days would generate recreation activities such as swimming, fishing, hiking, and river boating, etc. which would raise the total recreation days on river quite a bit. In addition, day use would add to this total.

3

The use of 4500 recreation days annually might need further review and explanation as to what that constitutes. The benefit cost ratio alone of just development to recreation days would be considerably out of line if the report only showed 4500 visitor days or recreation days.

Secondly, reference is also made on page 49 for Alternative Three which speaks to reservoir recreation days and a reference was sited for the Upper Owyhee Project Report. I would suspect that the 70,000 reservoir recreation days might be somewhat different in light of the fact that it would not be new opportunities but it would be transferred from Owyhee Reservoir and other southern Idaho local reservoirs during selected parts of the year. It might be necessary to check with the Bureau of Reclamation to determine what their recreation figures are presently on Owyhee Reservoir. They might be quite a bit less than the 70,000 that might have been shown for Three Forks Reservoir or the 85,000 shown per Duncan Ferry Reservoir. I would also assume that a considerable amount of the recreation that would be expected to occur would be drawing people from the southeast Idaho area. That being the case, then the Idahoans would have the choice of going to Owyhee to Three Forks or to other existing reservoirs that they are presently using as alternatives.

4

On page 50 of the report, under accounts, Item 3, Changes in tax base, there was federal legislation that was passed in 1976 called "Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act" which would provide revenue (\$.75/acre) in lieu of taxes to that county where federal lands exist. Such being the case, there would be a net gain of \$87.50.

These are the only comments that we wish to make at this time.

Sincerely,

DALE R. CHRISTIANSEN
DIRECTOR


William G. Hagdorn, Chief
Comprehensive Planning Bureau

WGH/eh

cc: Martel Morache, State Rivers Coordinator
Jim Wrigley, Dept. of Water Resources

PUBLIC LAW 94-565
94TH CONGRESS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

Public Law 94-565
94th Congress

An Act

Oct. 20, 1976
[H.R. 9719]

To provide for certain payments to be made to local governments by the Secretary of the Interior based upon the amount of certain public lands within the boundaries of such locality.

Local government
units.
Public lands,
payments.
31 USC 1601.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That effective for fiscal years beginning on and after October 1, 1976, the Secretary is authorized and directed to make payments on a fiscal year basis to each unit of local government in which entitlement lands (as defined in section 6) are located. Such payments may be used by such unit for any governmental purpose. The amount of such payments shall be computed as provided in section 2.

Amounts,
determination.
31 USC 1602.

Sec. 2. (a) The amount of any payment made for any fiscal year to a unit of local government under section 1 shall be equal to the greater of the following amounts—

(1) 75 cents for each acre of entitlement land located within the boundaries of such unit of local government (but not in excess of the population limitation determined under subsection (b)), reduced (but not below 0) by the aggregate amount of payments, if any, received by such unit of local government during the preceding fiscal year under all of the provisions specified in section 4, or

(2) 10 cents for each acre of entitlement land located within the boundaries of such unit of local government (but not in excess of the population limitation determined under subsection (b)).

In the case of any payment under a provision specified in section 4 which is received by a State, the Governor (or his delegate) shall submit to the Secretary a statement respecting the amount of such payment which is transferred to each unit of local government within the State.

(b) (1) In the case of any unit of local government having a population of less than five thousand, the population limitation applicable to such unit of local government shall not exceed an amount equal to \$50 multiplied by the population within the jurisdiction of such unit of local government.

(2) In the case of any unit of local government having a population of five thousand or more, the population limitation applicable to such unit of local government shall not exceed the amount computed under the following table (using a population figure rounded off to the nearest thousand):

If population equals—	Payment shall not exceed the amount computed by multiply- ing such population by—
5,000	\$50.00
6,000	47.00
7,000	44.00
8,000	41.00
9,000	38.00
10,000	35.00
11,000	34.00
12,000	33.00
13,000	32.00

If population equals—	Payment shall not exceed the amount computed by multiplying such population by—
14,000	31.00
15,000	30.00
16,000	29.50
17,000	29.00
18,000	28.50
19,000	28.00
20,000	27.50
21,000	27.20
22,000	26.90
23,000	26.60
24,000	26.30
25,000	26.00
26,000	25.80
27,000	25.60
28,000	25.40
29,000	25.20
30,000	25.00
31,000	24.75
32,000	24.50
33,000	24.25
34,000	24.00
35,000	23.75
36,000	23.50
37,000	23.25
38,000	23.00
39,000	22.75
40,000	22.50
41,000	22.25
42,000	22.00
43,000	21.75
44,000	21.50
45,000	21.25
46,000	21.00
47,000	20.75
48,000	20.50
49,000	20.25
50,000	20.00

For the purpose of this computation no unit of local government shall be credited with a population greater than fifty thousand.

(c) For purposes of this section, "population" shall be determined on the same basis as resident population is determined by the Bureau of the Census for general statistical purposes.

(d) In the case of a smaller unit of local government all or part of which is located within another unit of local government, entitlement lands which are within the jurisdiction of both such units shall be treated for purposes of this section as only within the jurisdiction of such smaller unit.

Sec. 3. (a) In the case of any land or interest therein, acquired by the United States (i) for the Redwood National Park pursuant to the Act of October 2, 1968 (82 Stat. 931) or (ii) acquired for addition to the National Park System or National Forest Wilderness Areas after December 31, 1970, which was subject to local real property taxes within the five years preceding such acquisition, the Secretary is authorized and directed to make payments to counties within the jurisdiction of which such lands or interests therein are located, in addition to payments under section 1. The counties, under guidelines established by the Secretary, shall distribute the payments on a proportional basis to those units of local government and affected school districts which have incurred losses of real property taxes due to the acquisition of lands or interests therein for addition to either such system. In those cases in which another unit of local government other

Payments to counties.
31 USC 1603.

Distribution guidelines.

Regulations. than the county acts as the collecting and distributing agency for real property taxes, the payments shall be made to such unit of local government, which shall distribute such payments as provided in this subsection. The Secretary may prescribe regulations under which payments may be made to units of local government in any case in which the preceding provisions will not carry out the purposes of this subsection.

(b) Payments authorized under this section shall be made on a fiscal year basis beginning with the later of—

(1) the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1976, or

(2) the first full fiscal year beginning after the fiscal year in which such lands or interests therein are acquired by the United States.

Such payments may be used by the affected local governmental unit for any governmental purpose.

Rezoned land. (c) (1) The amount of any payment made for any fiscal year to any unit of local government and affected school districts under subsection (a) shall be an amount equal to 1 per centum of the fair market value of such lands and interests therein on the date on which acquired by the United States. If, after the date of enactment of legislation authorizing any unit of the National Park System or National Forest Wilderness Areas as to which a payment is authorized under subsection (a), rezoning increases the value of the land or any interest therein, the fair market value for the purpose of such payments shall be computed as if such land had not been rezoned.

Payment limitation. (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the payment made for any fiscal year to a unit of local government under subsection (a) shall not exceed the amount of real property taxes assessed and levied on such property during the last full fiscal year before the fiscal year in which such land or interest was acquired for addition to the National Park System or National Forest Wilderness Areas.

(d) No payment shall be made under this section with respect to any land or interest therein after the fifth full fiscal year beginning after the first fiscal year in which such a payment was made with respect to such land or interest therein.

31 USC 1604.

Sec. 4. The provisions of law referred to in section 2 are as follows:

(1) the Act of May 23, 1908, entitled "An Act making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and nine" (35 Stat. 251; 16 U.S.C. 500);

(2) the Act of June 20, 1910, entitled "An Act to enable the people of New Mexico to form a constitution and State government and be admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, and to enable the people of Arizona to form a constitution and State government and be admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States" (36 Stat. 557);

(3) section 35 of the Act of February 25, 1920, entitled "An Act to promote the mining of coal, phosphate, oil, oil shale, gas, and sodium on the public domain", commonly known as the "Mineral Lands Leasing Act" (41 Stat. 450; 30 U.S.C. 191);

(4) section 17 of the Federal Power Act (41 Stat. 1072; 16 U.S.C. 810);

(5) section 10 of the Taylor Grazing Act (48 Stat. 1273; 43 U.S.C. 315i);

(6) section 33 of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (50 Stat. 526; 7 U.S.C. 1012);

(7) section 5 of the Act entitled "To safeguard and consolidate certain areas of exceptional public value within the Superior National Forest, State of Minnesota, and for other purposes", approved June 22, 1948 (62 Stat. 570; 16 U.S.C. 577g);

(8) section 5 of the Act entitled "An Act to amend the Act of June 22, 1948 (62 Stat. 568) and for other purposes" approved June 22, 1956 (70 Stat. 366; 16 U.S.C. 577g-1);

(9) section 6 of the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (61 Stat. 915; 30 U.S.C. 335); and

(10) section 3 of the Materials Disposal Act (61 Stat. 681; 30 U.S.C. 603).

Sec. 5. (a) No unit of local government which receives any payment with respect to any land under the Act of August 28, 1937 (50 Stat. 873), or the Act of May 24, 1939 (53 Stat. 753), during any fiscal year shall be eligible to receive any payment under this Act for such fiscal year with respect to such land. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to apply to the Act of August 28, 1937 (50 Stat. 873), or the Act of May 24, 1939 (53 Stat. 753).

Eligibility.
31 USC 1605.

(b) If the total payment by the Secretary to any county or unit of local government under this Act would be less than \$100, such payment shall not be made.

Sec. 6. As used in this Act, the term—

Definitions.
31 USC 1606.

(a) "entitlement lands" means lands owned by the United States that are—

(1) within the National Park System, the National Forest System, including wilderness areas within each, or any combination thereof, including, but not limited to, lands described in section 2 of the Act referred to in paragraph (7) of section 4 of this Act (16 U.S.C. 577d) and the first section of the Act referred to in paragraph (8) of this Act (16 U.S.C. 577d-1);

(2) administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management;

(3) dedicated to the use of water resource development projects of the United States;

(4) nothing in this section shall authorize any payments to any unit of local government for any lands otherwise entitled to receive payments pursuant to subsection (a) of this section if such lands were owned and/or administered by a State or local unit of government and exempt from the payment of real estate taxes at the time title to such lands is conveyed to the United States; or

(5) dredge disposal areas owned by the United States under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers;

(b) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior; and

(c) "unit of local government" means a county, parish, township, municipality, borough existing in the State of Alaska on the date of enactment of this Act, or other unit of government below the State which is a unit of general government as determined by the Secretary (on the basis of the same principles as are used by the Bureau of the Census for general statistical purposes). Such term also includes the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

Sec. 7. There are authorized to be appropriated for carrying out the

Appropriation
authorization.
31 USC 1607.

provisions of this Act such sums as may be necessary: *Provided, That,* notwithstanding any other provision of this Act no funds may be made available except to the extent provided in advance in appropriation Acts.

Approved October 20, 1976.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 94-1106 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
SENATE REPORT No. 94-1262 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 122 (1976):
 Aug. 5, considered and passed House.
 Oct. 1, considered and passed Senate.

Note.—A change has been made in the slip law format to provide for one-time preparation of copy to be used for publication of both slip laws and the United States Statutes at Large volumes. Comments from users are invited by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20408.

Comments of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
dated July 17, 1978

1. The report has been changed to reflect these comments.
2. Reference to the resolution passed by the Idaho Legislature has been included in the text.
3. After consultation with the BLM, the discussion on carrying capacity has been revised. Originally, the BLM had suggested a tentative carrying capacity of 4,500 recreation days annually. After further consideration, they requested that no figure be used until a detailed study can be made. The purpose of that study will be to determine the amount and kinds of recreation use possible consistent with protection the area's environmental integrity and sustaining the high quality recreation experience now available.
4. The Bureau of Reclamation reports that the Owyhee Reservoir, which it administers, received 63,652 recreation days use in 1975, 62,900 in 1976, and 68,500 in 1977. The assumption that much of the recreation expected at Three Forks or Duncan Ferry Reservoirs would be drawn from other nearby recreation areas appears reasonable.





STATE OF IDAHO

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME 600 SO. WALNUT ST. - P. O. BOX 25
BOISE, IDAHO 83707

July 14, 1978

State Clearinghouse
Bureau of State Planning and Community Affairs
STATEHOUSE

Dear Sir:

Re: National Park Service/Owyhee River Wild and Scenic Rivers Proposal,
SAI# 00680638

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has reviewed the referenced document and has the following comments:

We concur with the recommendation that the section of the Owyhee River from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to the Oregon-Idaho border be added to the National Wild and Scenic River system and be classified as "wild."

Page 9, Paragraph 4, Lines 1 and 2: Change to read as follows: "...there are eight federally administered recreation areas." The Gospel-Hump Wilderness should be added.

Page 13, Map 5: Add the location of the Gospel-Hump Wilderness.

Page 21, Paragraph 1, Last Sentence: Change the sentence to read as follows: "The balance of the lands are too inaccessible or precipitous for commercial use."

Page 25, Paragraph 3, Lines 6 and 7: Change to read as follows: "There are four-wheel drive trails to the East Fork just above Battle Creek, Pipeline Crossing and to Crutchers Crossing, and a two-wheel...."

Page 31, Table 3. Recreation Days (All Recreation Uses): The table should be adjusted in the column "Above Three Forks" to reflect the following: Deer hunting man days, 1,500; chukar hunting man days, 180; bighorn sheep hunting man days, 70. These man day figures are directly associated with the canyon complex.

State Clearinghouse
Page 2
July 14, 1978

Page 35, Paragraph 4, Lines 2 and 3: Change to read as follows: "Recreational use is low because of the difficult access and rugged terrain and lack of notoriety ...?"

Page 38, Paragraph 5, Line 6: Change to read as follows: "obtained only with the consent of the State, and then only if donated or by exchange with the Bureau of Land Management."

Page 39, Present Use, Paragraph 1, Last Sentence: We suggest this sentence be deleted. The management framework plan will determine the need for any grazing allotment adjustments.

Page 48, Table 4, Recommended Plan, 2. Development Costs: We recommend against any trail development in the Idaho segment and only minimal road access improvement at the Pipeline Crossing and at Crutchers Crossing for ingress and egress to the East Fork for floating activities. Primitive access is part of the uniqueness of the area and should remain relatively so.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Page 27, Last Paragraph: The California bighorn sheep were first introduced in 1963 and the estimated population in 1974 was 250 animals. We believe the population is at least at that level now.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Robert S. Seltzer
for Joseph C. Greenley
Director

Comments of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game
dated July 14, 1978

The report has been changed to reflect these comments.



STATE OF IDAHO

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

STATEHOUSE, BOISE, IDAHO 83720

GORDON C. TROMBLEY
DIRECTOR

STATE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS

JOHN V. EVANS
GOVERNOR AND PRESIDENT
PETE T. CENARRUSA
SECRETARY OF STATE
WAYNE L. KIDWELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL
JOE R. WILLIAMS
STATE AUDITOR
ROY TRUBY
SUPT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

10 July 1978

Mr. Maurice H. Lundy, Regional Director
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
915 Second Avenue, Room 990
Seattle, Washington 98174

RE: Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study

Dear Mr. Lundy:

We would appreciate your consideration of the following comments concerning the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study.

Several sections of State endowment land are within this study area. These sections are programmed for exchange to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

In a letter dated December 7, 1977, we requested the following language be included in the proposed Bruneau-Jarbidge wild and scenic rivers legislation:

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire, by exchange, title to the State of Idaho endowment lands granted to the State by the Enabling Act and any other Act of Congress, such lands being within or contiguous to the boundaries of this Wild and Scenic Rivers System. These exchanges shall be accomplished pursuant to Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579; 90 Stat. 2756).

Lands and interests in lands acquired pursuant to this authority shall, upon acceptance of title, become public lands, and shall be subject to all laws, rules and regulations applicable to other public lands covered under this Act.

We ask that this language also be considered for the Owyhee wild and scenic river proposal.

Sincerely,

Lynn H. Thaldorf
Natural Resource Planner

LHT:kg
cc: A-DL&R

-132-

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Comments of the Idaho Department of Lands
dated July 10, 1978

The proposal to amend P. L. 90-546, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, to permit the exchange of Federal lands for State lands along designated rivers, is under consideration by Congress..





State Of Idaho

DIVISION OF BUDGET, POLICY PLANNING AND COORDINATION
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

July 18, 1978

JOHN V. EVANS
Governor

Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83720

Mr. Edward Kurtz, Acting Regional Director
National Park Service
US Dept. of the Interior
4th and Pike Building
Seattle, Washington 98101

RE:R:Owyhee (PNR)PCR
SAI# 00680638

Mr. Kurtz;

Thank you for the opportunity to review the OWYHEE WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY. Comments were solicited from the following State agencies:

Idaho Dept of Fish & Game
Idaho Dept of Lands
Idaho Dept of Parks & Recreation
Idaho Dept of Water Resources
Natural Resources Bureau; The Division of Budget, Policy
Planning & Coordination
Ida-Ore Regional Planning & Development Association,
Weiser, Idaho

Please see the attached letter from the Dept of Lands concerning language inclusion in the proposal. The Dept of Fish & Game concurs with the proposal that this section of the Owyhee River be added to the National Wild and Scenic River system. Also included in the Department's attached letter is a list of recommended changes in the text of the proposal. Other State agencies offered no comments.

Sincerely,

Michelle Liebel
State Clearinghouse Coordinator



State Of Idaho

DIVISION OF BUDGET, POLICY PLANNING AND COORDINATION
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JOHN V. EVANS
Governor

Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83720

TO: State Clearinghouse
FROM: Barbara DeShazo - Natural Resources Bureau
SUBJECT: Comments on Owyhee River Wild and Scenic Rivers Proposal

1) One of the biggest arguments that has been heard against areas becoming classified in the system is the ultimate reduction in tax revenues. It is noted that this study does state that slightly less county tax revenue may result.

Also, there is to be a certain impact on local economy resulting in less business and commerce being generated.

Suggest actual cost impact on landowners and residents be determined.

2) Potential exists for development of reservoir sites at Duncan Ferry and Three Forks. Inclusion in the national system would prohibit alternative uses of the water. It is true that Congress could eventually reverse the decision but recognizing the inherent problems in approaching federal government with such a proposal, action should not take place until actual determination of the possibility for this happening is made.

3) As a result of inclusion, boaters will be monitored to assure they have required skills, experience, and equipment for safe passage down the river.

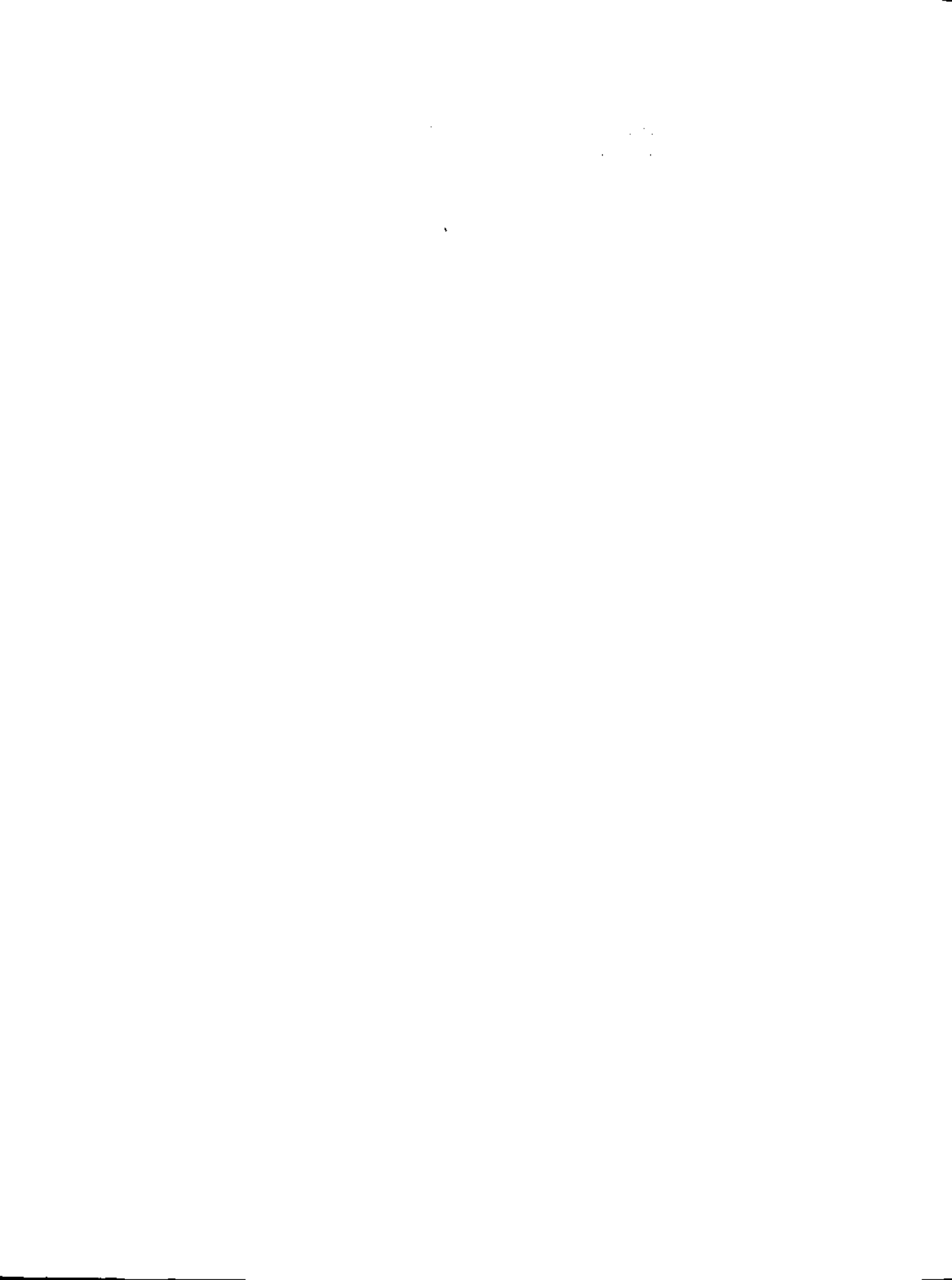
This seems unfeasible in that nearly 24-hour monitoring would become necessary. Public might not appreciate what they might term as "harrassment." Does this take place in any other areas? If so, what results have there been?

No essential differences with the concept for inclusion of this area in the Wild and Scenic Areas system.

Comments of the Idaho Division of Budget,
Policy Planning and Coordination
undated

1. Implementation of the proposal may result in approximately \$5,000 less in County taxes. This figure has been included in the report. The affect on business and commerce cannot be reasonably estimated.

2. Boaters would be cautioned about the risks involved and advised on equipment when they register to run the river. A similar system is employed by the U. S. Forest Service on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River in Idaho.





OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

PNRS STATE REVIEW

Project #: 2006

Return Date: JUN 14 1978

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- The environmental impact is adequately described.
- We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- No comment.

REMARKS

RECEIVED
JUN 13 1978
DIVISION OF STATE LANDS

We concur with the recommendation listed on page 36. This area would be a good addition to the wild and scenic rivers. Alternative #4 would be the best plan, with approximately 14 miles managed by the Oregon Scenic Waterways System.

Agency Lands By [Signature]



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

P N R S S T A T E R E V I E W

Project #: 800-1-320

Return Date: JUL 14 1978

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension!

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- The environmental impact is adequately described.
- We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- No comment.

REMARKS

Page 49 of the Draft EIS for the Owyhee River, ^{Proposed} National Wild and Scenic River, is an adequate statement of commitment to the protection and interpretation of archeologic and historic resources.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
STATE PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
525 TRADE STREET SE -140-
SALEM, OREGON 97310

Agency

By

David G. Talbot



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

P N R S · S T A T E R E V I E W

Project #: 7806 4 320

Return Date: JUL 14 1978

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- () This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- () The environmental impact is adequately described.
- () We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- () No comment.

REMARKS

See Attached memo.



STATE OF OREGON

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: Intergovernmental Relations Division DATE: July 13, 1978

FROM: Jake Szramek, Water Resources Department

SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft Report Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study

1. The report does not present compelling reasons for federal designation other than the river appears to meet the prescribed criteria. | 1
2. Page 10. Other rivers in Oregon currently being studied for federal designation should also be mentioned. | 2
3. Page 22. Even though total legal claims under existing water rights may exceed the flow during portions of the year the Owyhee is not over appropriated. A fully appropriated stream would have no flow. | 3

Comments of the Oregon Department of Water Resources
dated July 13, 1978

1. A more complete discussion of why the river qualifies for addition to the National System has been added to the report.
2. Other Oregon rivers in the National System or under study are listed in Chapter II under Recreation.
3. A stream may be overappropriated and underutilized, as the Owyhee, and still have flow.



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

P N R S S T A T E R E V I E W

Project #: _____

Return Date: JUL 1 1979

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- The environmental impact is adequately described.
- We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- No comment.

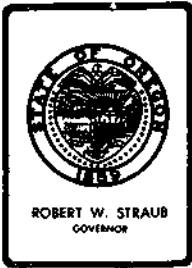
REMARKS

The portion of the Owyhee River in Malheur County is a portion of an important geothermal resource area known as the Battle Mountain Heatflow High. This larger area is currently being investigated and evaluated for its geothermal potential in terms of possible electric power production.

Provisions should be made in the Owyhee Wild River designation for further geothermal studies and evaluation. Warm to hot springs are known to occur along the course of the river.

Comments of the Oregon Department of Geology
dated July 14, 1978

The study and evaluation of possible geothermal sources of energy within the boundaries of a designated river would require approval of the Secretary of the Interior. Approval would depend upon the amount of impact on the river environment.



Executive Department

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS DIVISION

ROOM 306, STATE LIBRARY BLDG., SALEM, OREGON 97310

July 28, 1978

Edward J. Kurtz
Acting Regional Director
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, WA. 98101

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

RE: Owyhee
PNRS 7806 4 320

Thank you for submitting your draft Environmental Impact Statement for State of Oregon review and comment.

Your draft was referred to the appropriate state agencies. The Departments of Economic Development, Geology, Forestry, Water Resources, Lands and Historical Preservation offered the enclosed comments which should be addressed in preparation of your final Environmental Impact Statement.

We will expect to receive copies of the final statements as required by Council of Environmental Quality Guidelines.

Sincerely,

For *Martin W. Loring*

Martin W. Loring,
Manager
Grants Coordination &
Management Section



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

PNRS STATE REVIEW

Project #: 806 4 320

Return Date: _____

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- () This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- () The environmental impact is adequately described.
- () We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- () No comment.

REMARKS

The Oregon State Department of Forestry has reviewed the Owyhee River Draft Environmental Statement. Our review reveals that there are no adverse impacts to forest lands or forestry within the 69,120-acre study area.

The Department of Forestry supports the Recommended Plan as set forth in the Draft. Implementation of this proposal is not expected to create significant conflicts with established land uses in the area.

The Department of Forestry would like to be informed of planning details as they are developed in the comprehensive management plan.



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

PNRS STATE REVIEW

Approved by [signature]

Project #: 2000

Return Date: JUL 14 1978

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- () This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- () The environmental impact is adequately described.
- () We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- () No comment.

REMARKS

The Final EIS should take into consideration the economic development impacts of each alternative.

Comments of the Oregon Department of Economic Development
dated July 14, 1978

To the extent possible in a study of this conceptual nature, the economic development impacts are discussed for each alternative.



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Phone: 378-3732

STATE A-95 REVIEW ADDENDUM

APPLICANT: National Park Service

PROJECT TITLE: Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study

PNRS #: 7806 4 320

DATE: August 1, 1978

The State Clearinghouse has received additional comments from Fish & Wildlife subsequent to our conclusion letter of July 28, 1978, please see copy(ies) attached for your attention.

Additional Clearinghouse comments:

- Please consider this letter and enclosure(s) an addendum to our previous letter.
- A copy of this letter and enclosure(s) should be forwarded to the federal funding agency as required by OMB A-95.

If you have questions please contact the State Clearinghouse at the above address and telephone number.



OREGON PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW SYSTEM

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Intergovernmental Relations Division
240 Cottage Street S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310
Ph: 378-3732

PNRS STATE REVIEW

Project #: 7806 & 320

Return Date: JUL 14 1978

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. A response is required to all notices requesting environmental review.
2. OMB A-95 (Revised) provides for a 30-day extension of time, if necessary. If you cannot respond by the above return date, please call the State Clearinghouse to arrange for an extension.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW DRAFT STATEMENT

- () This project does not have significant environmental impact.
- () The environmental impact is adequately described.
- (X) We suggest that the following points be considered in the preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding this project.
- () No comment.

REMARKS

Comments are attached.

Comments on
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE'S
DRAFT STUDY REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT
COVERING THE PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION
OF THE OWYEE RIVER UNDER THE
NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission has not adopted an official position concerning the proposed National Wild and Scenic River designation of the Owyhee River. About 25 miles of the South Fork and 45 miles of the main Owyhee River within the study area are now classified by Oregon as state scenic waterways.

Both the draft of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic Study Report and the Draft Environmental Statement on that study have a number of discrepancies and voids. These should be corrected so that they will not mislead future reviewers or leave others with false impressions. These are taken in sequential order under separate headings for each report.

Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study Report

Page 9, paragraph 2. Add "rockhounding" (agate and other rock collecting) to the list of outdoor recreational opportunities. This activity is probably second only to hunting as the most popular recreational use of the Owyhee Basin.

Page 10, paragraph 1, line 3. Succor Creek is north of Jordan Valley, not south as stated.

Page 17, paragraph 3. More information on amphibians and reptiles should be added. Especially the leopard and collared lizards should be shown to occur.

Page 17, paragraph 4. In the list of birds the spelling of "Swainson's hawk" should be corrected. Also, the screech owl should be added to the list.

Page 17, paragraph 5. In the listing of fish, the coarsescale sucker, dace, redbside shiner, and carp should be added to the list.

Page 25, paragraph 5. The month of March should be shown in period when the river can usually be floated by boat.

Page 30, paragraph 2. "Rockhounding" may surpass hunting as the most popular recreational activity within the river's riparian zone.

Page 30, paragraph 3. The period of high water should be shown as March through June. Also the last sentence should be amended with the addition of "... and one portage is frequently necessary between Three Forks and Rome under most flow conditions."

Page 30, paragraph 4. We request that the first sentence be amended to read, "Use data compiled by the BLM from a cooperative BLM-Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife boater registration study and from BLM Special Recreation Permits for the years 1974, 1975, and 1976, the only years records have been kept, reveal the following:".

Page 31, paragraph 3 (last paragraph). In the second sentence please add "bobcat" and "beaver" to the list of animals and after the word "photography" please change the period to a comma and add "hunting, and trapping."

Page 35, paragraph 4. March should be added to the list of months in which the river can normally be boated.

Page 39, paragraph 1. We urge that the proposed developments be reduced to delete from the plan the Three Forks campground and the Hot Springs picnic area and the unidentified 16 miles of trail construction. Those factors which make the Three Forks and Hot Springs areas aesthetically unique very probably would be destroyed by concentrating the ever-increasing public use at those points. The purpose of the proposed action is to preserve these and other areas as aesthetically pleasing wilderness sites rather than to create park conditions with campgrounds, picnic areas, and miles of trail scars along a river where access and transportation should be restricted to boat use, which leaves a minimum of use evidence.

Owyhee River Draft Environmental Statement

Page 14, paragraph 6, line 4. The name should be "channel catfish," not "channel cat."

Page 18, paragraph 3. The second sentence should be changed to show that Succor Creek is "north" of Jordan Valley, not "south" as is stated.

Page 27, paragraph 1. In line 4 "Idaho fescue" is misspelled; lines 4 and 5 the term "mountain brush" should be more definitive as it is confusing; in line 10 "currant" is misspelled; and in the same line we do not know the name "bridlevale."

Page 28, paragraph 2. The listing of amphibians and reptiles is too general to be of value. Individual species including the collared and leopard lizards should be shown.

Page 28, paragraph 3. In the upland game bird listings of the second sentence the ending words "... and California mountain quail" should be deleted and in its place the words "... valley and mountain quail" added. The next sentence dealing with goose and duck nesting is a gross exaggeration insofar as the Oregon portion of the river is concerned. The waterfowl nesting has been greatly reduced by boating use, hence a more correct statement would be "Canada geese, mallards, and mergansers commonly nest in the Owyhee Canyon."

Page 28, paragraph 4. This paragraph should be changed to read, "Birds of prey sighted include the golden eagle; kestrel and prairie falcon; redtail, Swainson's and ferruginous hawks; and great horned, short-eared, screech, and burrowing owls."

Page 28, paragraph 7. Dace and coarcescale suckers should be added to the list of fish.

Page 43, paragraph 5. We request that the first sentence be amended to read, "Use data compiled by the BLM from a cooperative BLM-Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife boater registration study and from BLM Special Recreation Permits for the years 1974, 1975, and 1976, the only years records have been kept, reveal the following:".

Page 46, paragraph 4. The sixth sentence which alludes to "Several hundred broods of geese" is a gross overestimate. Some geese do nest in the Owyhee River canyon. However, those that continue to use the area are harassed and many displaced during the nesting season which coincides with the principal boating period.

The opportunity to review the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's Draft Report and Environmental Statement and to submit these recommended corrections is appreciated.

Comments of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
dated August 1, 1978

The report has been revised to reflect these comments.

Advisory Council on
Historic Preservation
1522 K Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

September 29, 1978

Mr. Stanford Young
Chief, Division of River, Trails and
Water Project Studies
National Park Service
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, Washington 98101

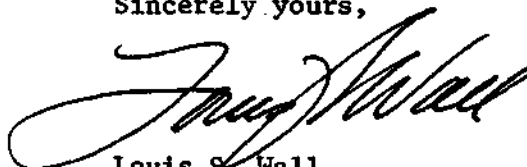
Dear Mr. Young:

This is in response to your request of September 21, 1978, for comments on the draft environmental statement (DES) for the proposed Owyhee Wild and Scenic River, Oregon and Idaho.

The Council has reviewed the DES and notes that while cultural resource studies to date indicate no properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the proposed undertaking, additional cultural resource studies will be undertaken prior to project implementation. The Council also notes that the National Park Service recognizes its responsibilities pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470f, as amended, 90 Stat. 1320) should the above-cited cultural resource studies identify previously unknown significant properties. Accordingly, the Council looks forward to working with the NPS in accordance with the "Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties" (36 CFR Part 800) in the future, as appropriate.

Should you have questions or require additional assistance, please contact Brit Allan Storey of the Council staff at P. O. Box 25085, Denver, Colorado 80225, or at (303) 234-4946, an FTS number.

Sincerely yours,



Louis S. Wall
Assistant Director, Office of
Review and Compliance, Denver

ROBERT W. STRAUB
GOVERNOR



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE CAPITOL
SALEM, OREGON 97310

September 5, 1978

The Honorable Cecil D. Andrus
Secretary of the Interior
Interior Building
C Street between 18th & 19th, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Cece:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft reports of the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River study.

Two years ago I wrote to Maurice Lundy, BOR Regional Director, in strong support of national designation for the entire study segment. (A copy of that letter is enclosed.) I continue to support federal protection of the river and its canyons.

The enabling legislation, if it is to succeed, should provide for state and local participation in planning for recreational uses. This could help to overcome another source of objections. We would not want to see massive recreational use of these fragile canyons.

We find merit in the amendments to PL 90-542 offered by Phillip Burton, at the request of the American Rivers Conservation Council. Some of these originated with our staff to meet specific problems in Oregon, and they seem to provide for state scenic rivers most of the protective measures of national designation.

Sincerely,


Governor

RWS:pt

Enclosure

-157-

cc: Congressional Delegation

ROBERT W. STRAUB
GOVERNOR



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE CAPITOL
SALEM, OREGON 97310

June 21, 1976

Maurice H. Lundy, Regional Director
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
915 Second Avenue, Room 990
Seattle, Washington 98174

Dear Mr. Lundy:

Thank you for sending me the preliminary report of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study team.

During the 1975 Legislative session I supported a bill to add the river segment between Three Forks and Crooked Creek to the Oregon Scenic Waterways System. Defeat of that measure in the House by a narrow margin can, I think, be attributed largely to misunderstanding of its effect in Malheur County. There seems to be even less understanding of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers program.

I sympathize with the ranchers' apprehensions. Land use planning is to them a new concept. They are a long way from Salem and light-years from Washington. Their perceptions of natural values and recreational needs are different from the urban proponents of river protection.

I think we may not entirely overcome these fears. But we must try in three particular areas to answer local concerns if the project is to succeed.

1. The water resource. We regard inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System to be necessary to carrying out the provisions of our Scenic Waterway Act prohibiting impoundments. We know that both the Three Forks and Duncan Ferry damsites have been rejected by the Bureau of Reclamation as not feasible. The Duncan Ferry site is within the State Scenic Waterway. The Three Forks Site, while downstream from the South Fork, would be equally unacceptable to our state scenic waterway law because it would flood the Scenic Waterway upstream.

But irrigation districts in the Adrian-Nyssa area still press for construction of these discredited dams -- chiefly, now, for Duncan Ferry, which would flood the agricultural valley at Rome. The Bureau of Reclamation, by failing to speak out clearly regarding the matter, may encourage such fruitless speculation. We understand that neither "dam" made it past a negative reconnaissance report in 1965. It would be helpful if the Bureau would say so publicly so that we can deal openly with legitimate issues.

2. Management of Public Lands. Many in Malheur County fear that national designation will end existing grazing and related uses of BLM lands along the river. We understand that is not so, and that grazing and existing agricultural uses are consistent with classification as a "wild" or "Scenic" river. But the Federal guidelines and the report should make clearer the fact that agricultural uses, including grazing, in the canyon in a manner consistent with good land management practices are consistent with "wild" and "scenic" river status and will continue, in order to answer the ranchers' fears.

3. Management of Private Lands. The study report should acknowledge emphatically that within the private agricultural land at Rome there is no need for additional public access to the river or for public development of parks, campgrounds or facilities beyond a minimal boat launching site at the east end of Highway 95 bridge. Apart from that, any public use in the area, such as hunting, fishing, rock-hounding, boat launching or retrieval, should be by the land-owners' consent only. The provision in Public Law 90-542 for condemnation of a river access easement is a source of genuine concern at Rome. A commitment to avoid its use should be made.

I make these points not being critical of your report, but because I think the public is entitled to know to the greatest extent possible exactly what to expect from any action government contemplates. The Bureau of Land Management does not need an added year or more of study to conclude that agriculture in the Rome valley should not be interfered with or that grazing can continue along the river corridor.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation is the agency best qualified to conduct such studies impartially, free from any agency bias. The BLM and the Bureau of Reclamation should support your efforts by giving answers. With real understanding, local opposition will diminish.

Turning now to your seven specific questions:

Q. Do you agree that the Owyhee meets the criteria for qualification listed on page 8?

A. Yes

Q. What sections, if any, of the Owyhee should be added to the National System?

A. All study sections.

Q. What is your reaction to the classifications described on page 11 and shown on the map on page 10?

A. They are correct. "Scenic" classification, as most protective of agriculture, is best for the Rome area.

Q. What should the lateral boundaries of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River be if the river is classified, both for the Wild and Scenic sections?

A. In the Rome area, from 200 to 400 feet above ordinary high water should be adequate. In the canyons, rim to rim along surveyed lines would be ideal, but less might serve where adjoining land is public or the rim is far back from the river as at Three Forks or Birch Creek.

Q. Should the Owyhee be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System?

A. Yes.

Q. If the Owyhee is added to the system, should it be administered by a Federal or State Agency?

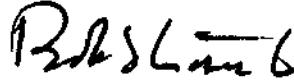
A. Joint, cooperative state/federal administration can work very well. We have found on the Rogue that the differing mechanisms of the state and national river acts complement each other, strengthening both in the area of land use management. Two segments of the river are, of course, in the Oregon Scenic Waterways System already. If local concerns can be neutralized, The Three Forks-Crooked Creek and The Birch Creek-Reservoir segments could be added to the state system by the Governor's action. It is in that middle section that joint administration would be most valuable.

Q. Would you add to or delete any of the list of management objectives listed on page 15?

A. Not at this time.

The opportunity to review the preliminary report is most appreciated. I floated the Owyhee some seven years ago and count it the best river trip I've ever had.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Lamb".

Governor

RWS/jh



OREGON ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

2637 S.W. WATER AVENUE, PORTLAND, OREGON 97201 / PHONE: 503/222-1965

July 12, 1978

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES Tigard
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
Portland Chapter
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
Portland Chapter
Southwestern Oregon Chapter
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Oregon Chapter
ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA
AUDUBON SOCIETY, Central Oregon, Corvallis,
Portland, Salem
BAY AREA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
Coos Bay
S.E.I.N.G.
CENTRAL CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL
CHEMISTS, Salem
CITIZENS FOR A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
Corvallis
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER GOVERNMENT
CLATSOP ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL
EAST SALEM ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL
ECO-ALLIANCE, Corvallis
EUGENE FUTURE POWER COMMITTEE
EUGENE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
FURTAKERS OF AMERICA, Coos Bay
GARDEN CLUBS of Cedar Mill, Corvallis,
McMinnville, Nahalem Bay, Seaside
GREENPEACE OREGON
H.E.A.L., Astoria
LAND, AIR, WATER
Eugene
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Central Lane
Coos County
MCKENZIE FISHERS, Eugene
MCKENZIE GUARDIANS, Blue River
NORTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE CENTER
NORTHWEST STEELHEADS COUNCIL OF TROUT
UNLIMITED, Crater Lake, Corvallis,
Tigard, Willamette Falls
OBSEDIANS, INC., Eugene
1,000 FRIENDS OF OREGON
OREGON ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY PASSENGERS
OREGON BASS AND FISH CLUB
OREGON GUIDES AND PACKERS
OREGON HIGH DESERT STUDY GROUP
OREGON LUNG ASSOCIATION, Portland & Salem
OREGON NORDIC CLUB
OREGON PARK & RECREATION SOCIETY
Eugene
OREGON ROADSIDE COUNCIL
OREGON SHORES CONSERVATION COALITION
O. S. P. I. R. O.
PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.
Lane County
Portland
PORTLAND RECYCLING TEAM, INC.
P.U.R.E., Bend
SANTIAM ALPINE CLUB
Salem
SELLWOOD-MORELAND IMPROVEMENT
LEAGUE, Portland
SIERRA CLUB
Pacific Northwest Chapter, Eugene
Columbia Group, Portland
Klamath, Klamath Falls,
Mary Rivers, Eugene
Mary's Peak, Corvallis,
Mt. Jefferson, Salem,
Rogue Valley, Ashland
SCD
STEAMBOATERS
SURVIVAL CENTER, U. of O., Eugene
TEAMSTERS FOOD PROCESSORS
THE TOWN FORUM, INC.
Cottage Grove
UMQUA WILDERNESS DEFENDERS
WESTERN RIVER GUIDES ASSOCIATION, INC.
WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY ASSOCIATION

Mr. Edward J. Kurtz
Acting Regional Director
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, Washington, 98101

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

Enclosed are comments from the Oregon
Environmental Council on the Draft EIS for
Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Study.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these
comments, and request they be included in the
Final Statement.

Sincerely,

Andrea Hyslop

Andrea Hyslop
Assistant to the Director

Enclosure
ALH

COMMENTS OF THE OREGON ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL ON OWYHEE WILD AND SCENIC RIVER
STUDY (DRAFT) JULY 12, 1978

The Oregon Environmental Council is a coalition of approximately 70 sportsman, planning, health, recreation and labor organizations and 3,000 environmentally concerned Oregonians. Preservation of free flowing wild and scenic rivers is a long standing concern of the organization and its members, who believe that man's increasing impact on his environment makes it vital that wilderness be preserved for its own sake.

OEC favors inclusion of a total 192 miles of the Owyhee River System in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. If it is not possible at this time to adopt the recommended plan (Alternative Two), the inclusion in the national system of all but the 14 miles at Rome would be acceptable, given that a reasonable effort would be made to protect this segment for later inclusion into the national system.

The General Management Objectives present a positive direction for the administering agency. However, in several instances, the Draft Study is deficient.

Boundaries

Often the canyon rim is difficult to define. The boundary should be drawn to adequately protect the canyon and its adjacent resources, such as archaeological sites, rather than conform to the "visual foreground as viewed from the river." (p. 36)

Mining

The potential impact of mining claims is not adequately assessed. The zeolite fluorspar deposit near Rome is well within sight from the river (p.15). Mining scars such as the jasper site near Birch Creek detract substantially from the scenic quality of the area.

Recreation

The Owyhee affords an outstanding whitewater recreation experience. During the months of April, May and June much of the River would receive a Class III rating, with a number of III+ and Class IV rapids. The Class I and II designation (p. 30) might apply at the end of the summer.

Little research exists to determine a reasonable method of rationing river recreation use. The BLM did not indicate their method of establishing a carrying capacity of 4,500 recreation days. The effect of implementing such an arbitrary figure at this time would be to deny access to the recreationist.

Development

The overall policy for developments states that "developments should be restricted to a level which assures safety, sanitation, and, as a major guiding principle, the retention of the existing natural character of the river corridor." (p. 38). In contrast to this statement, estimated costs include six miles of road improvement for an unidentified area (p. 39). In addition, the campground at Three Forks is a primitive site and should continue to be maintained in that condition. Another scenic overlook is unnecessary as existing ones are infrequently used.

3

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments and request they be included in the final impact statement.

Oregon Environmental Council
2637 SW Water Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97201

Submitted to:

US Department of Interior
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, WN 98101

July 12, 1978

Comments of the Oregon Environmental Council
dated July 12, 1978

1. The text has been changed to reflect this comment.
2. The BLM has reconsidered the 4,500 carrying capacity and requested that the report indicate a study would be made to determine carrying capacity shortly after designation.
3. The developments identified in the report are intended to help protect the river environment and the safety of visitors. For example, modest facilities at staging areas, such as Three Forks, will serve to protect those areas. Minor improvements are necessary to repair hazardous sections of access roads. An additional overlook would be developed only if future use increases to the point that it is needed.



South Board of Control, Owyhee Project

Homedale, Idaho 83628

Phone 337-3760

BEVERLY FISHER
Treasurer

ERICH KNEHANS
Secy.-Mgr.

July 18, 1978

Mr. Edward J. Kurtz
U.S. Department of the Interior
Acting Regional Director
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, Washington 98101

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

This is in reference to your letter of June 6th with copies of the Department's draft report and environmental statement to a proposal to designate a portion of the Owyhee River in Idaho and Oregon as a component of National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The comments we wish to offer on behalf of the Directors and 1500 water users of the area is in general agreement that we should not designate this area, as tax money would be poorly spent and could not be justified for the return's received for whom it may serve.

This is a very limited area in what and whom it can serve, and has other possibilities in the future that its uses can be directed to in behalf of mankind's future needs. There are potentials here which can mean a lot in reservoir sites for fish and wild life to enhance the area when used as multipurpose dams for power - water needs - flood control and erosion.

This area should not be locked up for a few selfish interests for a very few people. The good Lord gave this to all of mankind to be administered and properly used for the needs of all.

We should at least provide the two sites for reservoirs, so when needed they can fit it in with Nature's Plans to improve the area and serve our future generations needs.

Sincerely,

Erich Knehans
Erich Knehans, Secy.-Mgr.
South Board of Control

The Wilderness Society

2637 S.W. Water Ave., Portland, Oregon 97201 (503) 223-1067

July 18, 1978

Edward J. Kurtz
Acting Regional Director
Pacific Northwest Region
National Park Service
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

The Wilderness Society supports the draft report recommendation of the Department of the Interior to designate a portion of the Owyhee River in Idaho and Oregon as a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

We ask, however, that you take the following into consideration:

1. Lateral boundaries for the sections qualifying as Wild should extend generally from rim to rim of the canyon, and, where necessary, should be extended beyond the rim so that there is at least one-quarter mile on each side of the river. | 1

2. No developed campground should be constructed at Three Forks. The river ecosystem is too delicate to handle the large use created by a developed campground in that area. | 2

We thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,



Joe Walicki
Northwest Representative

JW/ak

cc: Honorable Mark Hatfield
Honorable Frank Church
Honorable James McClure
Honorable Howard Cannon
Honorable Paul Laxalt
Honorable Al Ullman

Comments of the Wilderness Society
dated July 18, 1978

1. The report recommends as a concept that lateral boundaries should extend in most places from rim to rim and average one-quarter mile back from the 178 miles of river classified Wild. Actual lateral boundaries would be defined following designation by Congress after careful study by the BLM to determine the location which would be needed to adequately protect the river environment.

Along the 14-mile Scenic segment which the report recommends for administration by the State of Oregon, boundaries would extend a uniform one-quarter mile from the river in conformance with the Act establishing the State Scenic Waterways System.

2. The report recommends the development of modest facilities at Three Forks and Rome, both of which are major staging areas for parties boating the river. The facilities would serve to accommodate existing types of use and protect the sites rather than being designed to attract other kinds of use.

Mr. Dennis Swisher
Crutcher Crossing, Owyhee River
P. O. Box 275
Jordan Valley, Oregon 97910

June 26, 1978

Mr. Edward J. Kurtz
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, Wash. 98101

Mr. Kurtz,

I thank you for the letter that you sent me and also the enclosures of the Draft Report and the Draft Environmental Statement concerning the turning of the Owyhee River into a Wild and Scenic River. I am in favor of making the Owyhee into a Wild and Scenic River, but on the other hand, I don't think everyone and everything in the vicinity of the river should become subordinate to the Wild River. The Wild and Scenic River should blend into our livestock community instead of becoming a disturbing factor. I have a few disagreements and suggestions to make.

Page 47
draft
environ-
mental
statement

(1) It is pointed out that up stream water rights may have to be acquired to insure sufficient flow, especially during dry years. If this is even thought of with the least seriousness, I think that the entire project should be dropped here and now. Water isn't just for amusement here in the desert, it is a very serious fact of life in dry years. It would be a joke to have water to float the river in a dry year when ranchers were going dry out on top, their stock without water. Besides that you would start up a different regulation of the river flow which would have consequences up and down the river. Floating these wild rivers is one form of amusement, a serious form of amusement.

Page 48
draft
environ-
mental
statement

(2) Grazing privileges should be protected. During the more than the one hundred years that men have been living here, hundreds of thousands of head of sheep, cattle and horses have grazed and are still grazing along the rims and in the river and a few thousand men and women have tended them and there is still a wild and beautiful canyon much the same as it was before a white man ever saw it. That couldn't have happened with any other industry operating along the river. As of now stockmen are using about half of the 172 miles of the proposed wild river. The Stockmen use the river mainly during the fall and winter and the river floaters use it mainly during April, May and June. Each is of no bother to the other. The cattle hurt the canyon very little, but when you start exporting humans into the canyon, the canyon is going to change and not for the better.

Page 46
draft
environ-
mental
statement

(3) There are old mining claims in the canyon. Your reports are certainly biased against mining. There is a likelihood of ore being found along the canyon and it shouldn't be left in place. Mining is held in low esteem in the United States and on the other hand the great minds and the civilization of Ancient Greece are highly regarded among our peoples. What they don't tell us is that the great Grecian civilization and the great Grecian minds all dried up when the gold and silver and copper ran out. Some one has to pay for all this amusement, recreation, and education, and it usually has to begin with industry, processing a basic product. Ore of one kind or another is one of our most important products.

(4) The Rome area should be left completely out of this. The ranchers and business people shouldn't be forced into this against their will. The government would be meddling in all their affairs, causing them all kinds of problems. Leaving the Rome area out should have no affect one way or another on the quality of the river, either above Rome or below it.

Page 4
Owyhee
River Study
Draft

(5) Since the meetings held here in Jordan Valley and the meeting in Murphy, Idaho about twenty miles (20) have been added to the plan. It now continues on from Birch Creek to Leslie Gulch. Now you are getting into one of the greatest fishing holes in the West. This belongs to the fishermen, another type of recreationist. If this was is in the Wild River the fishermen would be regulated by whoever manages the Wild River. They have enough regulation now. Over the years the Fish and Game people and the sportsmen have worked out a successful system of management of their own. You would simply be trespassing on them if you included the backwaters in the Wild River. This section of the study, Birch Creek to Leslie Gulch should be dropped from the plan.

I have floated from the El Paso gas line to the Hole in the Ground, about 160 miles of the study, and the Owyhee has just about anything that you will find on the Middle Fork of the Salmon or the Bruneau or the Rogue and maybe a few things you won't find on the others. This Wild River project could be beneficial to us ranchers which would be a lot to expect from the Government. But on the other hand if it doesn't interfere with our present system, that would be good enough.

Finally, I would like to suggest that the falls up the river from Crutcher Crossing, where the two men drowned recently, be simply named Dead Man Falls. The place is beginning to be called by a variety of names.

Thank you for your patience.

Yours truly,

Geneva Smith

4

5

6

7

Comments of Mr. Dennis Swisher
dated June 26, 1978

1. The intent of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act appears to be consistent with the views expressed in the first paragraph of Mr. Swisher's letter. Section 10(c) of the Act states that, "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 consistent therewith, limiting other uses that do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of these values."
2. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Section 13) provides for the purchase of upstream water rights to insure sufficient flow to accomplish the purposes of the Act. However, it is questionable whether Congress would agree to add a river to the National System if there was a prospective need to acquire upstream water rights. If added, Congress may guarantee upstream water rights as when adding a portion of the Snake River to the National System (P. L. 94-199). In that instance, Congress specified that its addition would in no way "...limit, restrict, or conflict with present and future use of the waters of the Snake River and its tributaries upstream..." Also, that "No flow requirements of any kind may be imposed on the waters of the Snake River...."
3. Continued agricultural use of adjoining lands, including livestock use, is considered to be compatible with wild and scenic river objectives. Of course, livestock use should be carried out in accordance with sound range management principles.
4. The U. S. Bureau of Mines surveyed the study segment and reported little or no significant mineral potential and no patented mining claims. If the river is added to the National System, all Federal lands situated within one-quarter mile of the 178 miles classified Wild will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and from operation of the mineral leasing laws.
5. The Rome area, including the 14 miles of river between China Gulch and Crooked Creek, is proposed for addition to the Oregon Scenic Waterways System and protection by the State. Addition to the National System would then be possible, but only at the discretion of the State.
6. No additional river mileage has been added. The river segment under consideration extends downstream to the slack water of the Owyhee Reservoir.

7. A procedure exists for assigning names to places. Suggestions are submitted to: Executive Secretary of Domestic Names Committee, U. S. Geologic Survey, Reston, Virginia 22092.

National Park Service
Seattle, Wash.

Jordan Valley Ore
June 1978

Mr Edward J. Kurtz.
Acting Regional Director.

Dear Sir:

In response to your costly Owyhee
River Wild and Science Study - The oppose any
part of this section being made Scenic.

First: The U.S. Govt. County & State. meddle far
too much in everything and make a mess always.

Second: Recreationers could care less about how
our lands are kept beautiful. They trample,
loot and destroy. Where we spend our lives
trying to preserve and make a ~~living~~ living. but
keep land beautiful. This land you want the
Govt to declare Scenic. is our homes.

It is beautiful Only because we pay
dearly both in work and money. And we
dont need your mob of fun seekers. tramping
littering and looting - Keep them Out !!!

How can any area stay Wild & Scenic
with the recreationists that drive all over
our fields and the lands. This idea of
yours is stupid and a rotten deal.

People are disrespectful. all they know
is "destroy - Play -

They do definitely Object - to this Owyhee Scenic
Deal.

They are proud of this land, because we live and care for it. Ranchers and farmers. pay for the land and the up keep? That is why it is beautiful.

Keep your mob of recreationists out? and it will stay peaceful and as God made it.

Lets just take a look:

First: The wild life and birds, geese ducks + Chukars are becoming less and less each year. Thanks to the boaters, hikers and rock hounds. People that play ~~pl~~ destroy! How can wild life have freedom with mobs of people - disturbing their nests, young.

Second: Just open your eyes and look how the (B&M) takes care for instance the range they mis manage so badly by moving cattle (that ranchers pay for use of (even tho' Andrus would like to run us out) moving Cattle constantly - and bunching them up until the range looks like a bed ground or Corral. Ruining the vegetation - then blame ranchers. who are wiser they Build roads all over the hills so Recreationists have easy access to steal cattle (which happens). They aren't wise enough to see what they are doing. Motto of B&M. Bully + brass beat ranchers. Control! so others can Play!

The government is so wasteful and foul up with Poor management. with in experienced people trying to run it;

Your Slogan: Come recreationists. Play - Tramp out the lands. Its yours to destroy - who Cares!

Government will pay you friends and relatives. free loading jobs. Dumb dirt farmers + ranchers keep on digging up money for us -
Play!

