

level of elk (big-game) habitat protection is provided through application of Regional harvest dispersion constraints

Riparian habitat will be maintained or enhanced through more stringent livestock management requirements to the benefit of wildlife and salmonid fishes. High emphasis is placed on anadromous fish habitat improvement, with about 600 acres per year of habitat improvement targeted. Timber harvest in the John Day River drainage, and elsewhere, will be scheduled so to maintain water flows within desired limits for the protection of anadromous fish habitat

Municipal Watersheds

Timber harvest occurs at a reduced level within the Baker and La Grande domestic supply watersheds. Within the overall objective of providing quality water, management within the Sumpter and Wallowa watersheds emphasizes timber production.

Minerals

Of the areas of known mineral potential 195,000 acres are open to mineral entry with normal coordination requirements, 34,400 acres have restricted entry, mineral rights are privately held on 13,860 acres, and 194,000 acres are closed to new mineral entry

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION OF THE FOREST

It is likely to be more than four decades before effects of management, as directed by this plan, are evident over the entire Forest Through future plans, the direction may change The following remarks describe the Forest after ten and fifty years, assuming the direction from this plan remains constant.

The Forest in Ten Years

Although in some areas the Forest will have a more managed appearance, it will generally have retained its present character. Many of the lodgepole pine sites on Baker and La Grande Districts which were clearcut in the 1980's as a result of the mountain pine beetle epidemic will be occupied by thrifty young stands. There will be newer clearcuts but these will have been blended into the landscape so as to not be readily apparent from major travel routes and viewpoints.

The discerning eye will notice that there has been a reduction in large trees in those portions of the Forest managed emphasizing timber production. Quality stands of old-growth timber will be dispersed across the landscape Large blocks of old growth will continue to exist in wilderness and other areas not managed for timber production. Of the current 173,000 acres of old-growth trees on the Forest, 164,000 are expected to remain

Portions of some roadless areas will have been entered for timber harvest although those which are the most important for recreational purposes will remain unchanged Of the 484,443 acres of roadless area existing today, 410,000 acres are expected to remain roadless in ten years.

In general, providing for recreational users of the forest will receive increased emphasis as compared to the current situation. The range of recreation opportunities currently available on the Forest will be still available, although there will be changes in the amount and location of some opportunities.

Some semiprimitive recreation opportunities will have been lost to development, but quality semiprimitive areas will remain and will be adequate to meet demand

Construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of the Forest trail system will be tailored to recreation demands and protecting other resources. Trails will be emphasized in wilderness, the HCNRA, and semiprimitive areas, but opportunities for trail-related recreation within other management areas will be available.

Development within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area will have substantially increased recreation site capacity in the area and improved recreational access. Major changes will include improvement of the road to Hat Point, construction of a new campground and improved access to Pittsburg Landing, and a new viewpoint near McGraw Creek. Other developed sites on the Forest will have been maintained or improved, with capacity added as needed.

Dispersed recreation sites, such as hunter camps, will retain their desired character although surrounding lands will often have changed significantly as a result of management activities.

Providing fuelwood to Forest users will be a major consideration in decisions such as road management and slash treatment. Although substantial quantities of wood will continue to be available, competition is likely to make it more difficult to obtain. Fuelwood is likely to be of poorer quality.

The principal access roads will be readily identifiable. They will have paved or gravelled surfaces and look suitable for passenger car use. Signs assist the travelers in finding their destinations. The other roads appear less inviting for use. They look rough or primitive, but many of these will be available for use. Some roads will be closed or blocked to standard vehicle use by physical barricades, gates, or signs.

Most traffic management will be accomplished by physical barricades, rather than more restrictive measures such as promulgated closures. Promulgated closures will be used primarily to accomplish seasonal closures, or where total prohibition of traffic is essential to accomplishment of objectives.

Range resources will show noticeable improvement as allotment management plans are developed and implemented. Implementation of Forest Plan utilization standards will have resulted in reduced use levels in riparian areas so that many of the riparian systems show definite signs of recovery. Permitted numbers of livestock and/or seasons of use will have declined slightly in response to the utilization standards and resolution of resource conflicts.

Anadromous and resident fish populations will have climbed, both as a result of investments in fish habitat improvements and because of improved overall riparian condition.

Bald eagle and peregrine falcon populations will have increased. Elk populations will have stabilized at the State management objective levels, while deer numbers will have increased substantially from previous lows.

The Forest in Fifty Years

This plan will be reviewed every 5 years and normally revised every 10-15 years. The following describes the Forest in 50 years as it is expected to be if the management described in this plan continues to that time.

Of the 484,000 acres of roadless area existing today, 380,000 acres are expected to remain roadless in fifty years. Wilderness and roadless recreation areas (Management Area 6) will be unchanged from the present except for subtle vegetational changes. The same will be true of Management Areas 8, 9, and 10 within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. Management Area 11 in Hells Canyon NRA will appear managed to the discerning eye, but will retain a high degree of naturalness. Research natural areas will appear relatively unchanged, as will utility corridors. Many developed recreation sites will have high quality facilities, providing a large variety of recreational opportunities. There will

be private sector participation in the operation of many sites. Environmental education and interpretive opportunities are evident.

Most of the principal road system is completed. These roads will have paved or improved surfaces. A few may have State Highway designations. Most other roads are either visually inviting only to high clearance type vehicles used by the more seasoned forest traveler, or are closed or blocked to standard vehicle use. A total of 11,500 miles of road are expected to exist.

Most traffic management is accomplished by physical barricades, rather than more restrictive measures such as promulgated closures. Promulgated closures will be used primarily to accomplish seasonal closures, or where total prohibition of traffic is essential to accomplishment of objectives.

Nontimbered areas will remain unchanged in appearance, and where forest and openings are interspersed, the general character, as seen from a distance, will be similar to today.

The most noticeable changes will occur in the areas designated for timber management outside the Hells Canyon NRA (Management Areas 1, and 3 and 18), especially in areas where no harvest has previously occurred. It will be apparent that many areas are being managed for high levels of timber production; e.g., tree stands of different ages; trees within stands the same size and spaced for rapid growth, the forest floor relatively free of fallen trees; and few large dead trees (snags). Stand ages will vary from 0 to 90 years with regeneration units (recent clearcuts, shelterwood, or seed tree harvest units) more evident than at present.

The foregoing tends to give the picture of a mosaic pattern of even-aged stands in Management Areas 1, 3 and 18; a "tree farmed" appearance. There will, however, be many conditions that will disrupt this mosaic, and the managed Forest will still contain many of its present characteristics. These conditions include 36,750 acres of designated old-growth groves, dispersed through Management Areas 1, 3, and 18, and ranging size from 30 to 600 acres. Nearly 100,000 acres of timbered land unsuitable for timber production will be interspersed in patches of several acres to hundreds of acres in size. An additional 19,000 acres of riparian vegetation (along live and intermittent streams) and 49,000 acres of particularly sensitive visual management areas (visual foreground) are intermixed through the intensively managed lands. The riparian and visual management objectives will retain or emphasize their special resource values, and will result in their retaining a natural appearance even when viewed from close distances. The proximity of old-growth groves, unsuited lands, riparian zones, and key visual management areas to intensively managed areas will create variety over the area as a whole. Of the 173,000 acres of old-growth forest existing today, 161,000 acres are expected to remain.

Within Management Areas 3 and 18, conversion of timbered areas to a managed condition will have taken place more slowly. Some lands considered suitable for timber production will not have been entered by the year 2030, being maintained as mature timber stands for wildlife cover.

In summary, the forested areas where timber management occurs (approximately one-half of the forest) will appear more dominated by human activities than at present, but there will also be many similarities to today's conditions.

The range of recreation opportunities currently available will still be available, but competition for each will be much greater. Opportunity for recreation in a primitive (wilderness-like) setting will be similar to the present. Opportunities for motorized and nonmotorized recreation in a semiprimitive ("back-country") setting will be reduced, while opportunities for recreation in a roaded modified setting will increase.

Fuelwood from the Forest will no longer be available as a primary source of home heating for most local area homes.

Range resources will show a dramatic improvement with areas of resource conflict being small in size and few in number. To accomplish this, it is likely that livestock numbers will be lower. All allotments will be operating under approved allotment management plans. Both upland and riparian soils and vegetation are at or nearing natural potential conditions as improvements in management and implementation of utilization standards maintain livestock use at acceptable levels and insure adequate control over timing and duration of use.

Whereas sightings of bald eagles are now a rarity on the Forest, there will be more sightings, especially near large lakes and streams. Salmon will be present in the Grande Ronde River system in much higher numbers than today and will be slightly increased in the North Fork John Day River system. Elk will remain near present levels, deer will recover from recent lows.

A description of each management area is provided in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Proposed and Possible Management Activities by Management Area

Tables 4-4 and 4-5 display the acreages of the various management areas (described later in this chapter) and the proposed and probable management practices to occur within each management area. Details of timber management activities for each management area are found in Appendix C, the Ten-Year Timber Sale Action Plan.

Table 4-4
MANAGEMENT AREA ACREAGES

Management Area	Acres
1 Timber Emphasis	716,245
3,3a Big Game Habitat Emphasis	382,113
4 Wilderness	582,700 3/
5 Phillips Lake Area	4,967
6 Roadless Recreation (backcountry)	122,788
7 Wild and Scenic River	26,909 4/
8 HCNRA Snake River Corridor	14,355
9 HCNRA Disp Rec /Nat Veg	161,078
10 HCNRA Forage	123,029
11 HCNRA Disp Rec/Tmbr. Mgt.	70,706
12 Research Natural Areas	15,160 2/
13 Homestead Further Planning Area 1/	5,733
14 Starkey Exp For & Range	27,051
15 Old-Growth Forest	36,750
16 Administrative and Recreation Sites	5,744
17 Utility Corridors	6,594
18	59,743
Total	2,349,215

1/ If the Homestead Further Planning Area does not become wilderness, 3,708 acres would become part of Management Area 10 with the remaining acres being within Management Areas 1 and 3.

2/ 12,450 acres within wilderness, Snake River Corridor, Dispersed Recreation/Native Vegetation, or further planning allocation.

3/ Includes 23,760 within wilderness that have been designated in the Oregon Omnibus Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988.

4/ Includes 9,140 acres along the Imnaha River within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area.