

**Preparing for Change in the  
High Desert of Central Oregon:  
Using Human Geographic  
Boundaries to Create Partnerships**

A Report to the  
Central Oregon Initiative of the  
Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management



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**Table of Contents**

Section One: Introduction	1
Section Two: Implications for Public Land Management from Community Description	7
Section Three: The High Desert Social Resource Unit (SRU)	21
Section Four: The Wheeler Human Resource Unit	27
Section Five: The Madras Human Resource Unit	33
Section Six: The Ochoco Human Resource Unit	37
Section Seven: The Deschutes Human Resource Unit	46
Section Eight: The Walker Human Resource Unit	60
Section Nine: The Warm Springs HRU and the North and East Outlying Areas	66
References Cited	71
Appendix A: Seven Cultural Descriptors Used in Community Assessment and Human Geographic Mapping	
Figure One: The High Desert SRU in Central Oregon	4
Figure Two: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Optimizing Productive Harmony Between the Social and Physical Environments	20
Figure Three: The Wheeler HRU	27
Figure Four: An Example of Lost Access to Public Lands	31
Figure Five: The Madras HRU	33
Figure Six: The Ochoco HRU	37
Figure Seven: The Deschutes HRU	46
Figure Eight: The Walker HRU	60
Figure Nine: The Warm Springs HRU	66
Figure Ten: The Hood River HRU	67
Figure Eleven: The Grant HRU	69
Table One: The Primary Industries of Central Oregon	21

# Preparing for Change in the High Desert of Central Oregon: Using Human Geographic Boundaries to Create Partnerships

## Section One: Introduction

### **Background**

The Central Oregon Initiative was begun in 1996 by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Chief of the Forest Service under the directive of Vice-President Gore's Reinventing Government program. Two pilot sites, one in southeast Colorado and one in central Oregon, were selected to begin the effort. The objectives of the Central Oregon Initiative are to: coordinate federal land management agencies as if they were one unit; and, deliver consistent "customer service" and effective land stewardship.

In central Oregon, the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests, the Prineville District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Crooked River National Grassland began implementing this directive in a number of ways. The new, adjoining office buildings east of Prineville of the Ochoco National Forest and Prineville BLM has allowed greater program coordination and sharing of resources. The joint projects successfully undertaken to date include:

- Controlled burns and timber sales;
- Common firewood program and permit;
- Combined phone system;
- Coordinated news releases and a shared public affairs officer;
- Biological assessment.

An additional goal for the Central Oregon Initiative (COI) has been to understand local communities better so that federal agencies could be most responsive to issues and trends in these communities. In addition, it wished to understand the social boundaries that differentiate communities to see if different organizational structures could better correspond, or at least be sensitive, to the human boundaries.

COI contracted with James Kent Associates, based in Aspen, Colorado to perform this work. James Kent Associates (JKA) has a national Assistance Agreement with BLM to help the agency in promoting community-based collaborative stewardship with its various field offices. JKA is well known for its human geographic mapping and for its social ecological approach to land use management.

## **Social Ecology Objectives**

Social ecology draws its inspiration from Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that calls for “productive harmony” between people and nature. In a social ecology approach, the permanence and diversity of both the biophysical and the social environments are equally important. It recognizes that people are part of the ecosystem, and that long-term sustainability depends on human communities being a part of decision-making and having a stake in sustainable practices. Consequently, efforts to understand the social environment are crucial for developing land management practices that sustain both physical environment and human communities.

Social ecology seeks to understand the relationship of people and their resources, to identify the adaptive strategies people are using to survive changing circumstances, and to facilitate action whereby new strategies can take hold. Key to successful adaptation is cultural alignment between formal systems of agencies and organizations and the informal community systems by which residents survive. When formal and informal systems are in alignment, we say the level of “productive harmony,” is high, enabling sustainability over time (Figure Two, page 20). When formal and informal systems are not in alignment, productive harmony is low, conflict is high, and successful action on the ground is stymied. For public land management, it is important to:

1. Recognize the trends that affect, or are affected by, natural resource decision-making;
2. Understand the issues that are important to informal networks in the communities;
3. Communicate in culturally-appropriate ways with a wide range of citizens so that people understand how their interests are being affected;
4. Create collaborative action between citizens and agencies so that stewardship is widely shared (derived from Memorandum, Service First Transition Coordinator, 4/18/2000).

The objectives of this project were to:

1. Use social ecology to define geographic area management boundaries in Central Oregon;
2. Derive implications for internal restructuring through knowledge of the social, economic, and cultural environment.

JKA had a team of six conducting fieldwork during April and May of 2000. A total of 46 professional days has been devoted to the project. The team that conducted fieldwork was:

James Kent  
Kevin Preister  
Joan Resnick

Luis Ibanez  
Su Rolle  
Debra Hill

Given the limited resources at hand, the research is best viewed as preliminary and indicative, not exhaustive or statistically valid. Moreover, because of the large geographic area covered by the COI, breadth and not depth characterize this project. The focus has been on face-to-face contact. Our intent was to let people to tell stories—about their community, about the changes they are observing, and about their ideas for improving federal land management practices. The report is filled with quotes of people speaking for themselves. Our approach had two elements. The first was networking. When talking to a resident, the team would ask whom else they should talk to. People whose names came up repeatedly were especially sought out. The second approach was to use gathering places to engage in local contact—restaurants, exercise gyms, general stores, recreation oriented stores, taverns, beauty shops and barbershops were useful for this purpose.

A constant theme with both residents and agency people during this research was the rapid rate of change that is characterizing the High Desert area of Central Oregon. Agency people told us consistently that their management challenge in the future will be to deal with greater numbers of people on public lands with fewer resources of staff and money. We think this will mean that community partnerships and the use of volunteers will be ever more important in the future. Section Two indicates some ways to facilitate this transition.

### **Human Geographic Mapping**

Human Geographic mapping refers to the identity that people establish with the land that separates one population from another. At different levels of scale, from neighborhood, to community, to region, the social and economic routines and geographic features of an area demarcate one cultural area from another.

Figure One depicts two scales of human geography for the High Desert of Central Oregon. Human Resource Units (HRUs) are geographic areas in which people could be expected to have face-to-face knowledge of others, informal networks of support are strongly developed and rooted to place, and the boundaries reflect most day-to-day and month-to-month activities. The six HRUs aggregate to the High Desert Social Resource Unit (SRU), the second scale of human geography depicted in Figure One. An SRU refers to an identity people have with a region, a common history, background, and economic base. A river basin and other prominent geographic features often demarcate an SRU. While HRUs are characterized by “frequent and customary interaction,” an SRU is characterized by a sense of belonging and a common identity (Quinkert, Kent and Taylor 1986: 8).

HRU boundaries are drawn from a well-developed set of seven Cultural Descriptors. They are:

Figure One:  
The High Desert Social Resource Unit (SRU) in Central Oregon



© 2000 James Kent Associates      Map prepared by Curtis Day, Ochoco National Forest.

1. **Publics:** Segments of the population or group of people having common characteristics, interests, or some recognized demographic feature.
2. **Networks:** A structured arrangement of individuals who support each other in predictable ways because of their commitment to a common purpose, their shared activities, or similar attitudes.

3. Settlement Patterns: Distribution of a population in a geographic area, including the historical cycles of settlement.
4. Work Routines: The ways in which people earn a living, including where and how. The types of employment, the skills needed, the wage levels, and the natural resources required in the process.
5. Supporting Services: Any arrangement people use for taking care of each other, including the institutions serving a community and the caretaking activities of individuals.
6. Recreational Activities: The way in which people use their leisure time.
7. Geographic Boundaries: Any unique physical feature that defines the extent of a population's routine activities.

HRU boundaries are then confirmed with local residents by asking, "What do you call this area?" and, "When does this area end and another begin?" The methodology for drawing human geographic boundaries is described more fully in Appendix A and in Kent and Preister (1999).

For the scope of work developed for this project, our team focused on five HRUs—Wheeler, Madras, Ochoco, Deschutes, and Walker. The sixth HRU, Warm Springs, although important, was beyond the level of resources available for the project; unfortunately, only a few inquiries were made in this HRU. In addition, our team was asked to do preliminary research in some "outlying" areas, notably Dayville and John Day to the east, and Moro, Condon, and Maupin to the north.

When local people talked about "Central Oregon" or the "High Desert" of Oregon, and they were asked to show that area on a map, the SRU map is what they came up with. North of the line, people talk of the Columbia River and the Dalles where the wheat economy remains strong. East of the line, people describe themselves as "Eastern Oregon" with its continued transition to a post-timber society. South of the line, people relate to the Klamath Basin; and west of the line, you are on the "westside" or in "the valley" of the Willamette River.

## **Organization of This Report**

Section Two draws on the community description of the subsequent sections to place the management implications up front. We did not want the detail of the descriptions to get in the way of the central objective of offering guidance to the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management as they prepare for an urban future.

Section Three describes the High Desert SRU as a whole, the trends, the regional influences, and the emerging regional collaboration that is marking the present time. The subsequent section describes each of the community areas for which we did research.



Section Four describes the Wheeler HRU, Section Five the Madras HRU, Section Six the Ochoco, Section Seven the Deschutes, and Section Eight Walker. Section Nine describes the Madras HRU and the “outlying” areas to the east and the north that are outside the SRU.

The HRU descriptions are not uniform since our fieldtime was limited. It does provide a map of the human geographic boundary and basic descriptive information from local residents with whom we talked. All descriptions include a discussion of natural resource issues talked about in the community.

## Section Two: Implications for Public Land Management From Community Descriptions

### **Management Themes Discussed in the Community**

It was very easy to engage High Desert citizens in talking about public land management in the area. This is an active and outdoor population, with keen observers noting changes in the land and in their communities, and with a high interest in maintaining high levels of ecosystem integrity. Like religion and politics, it is a subject that brings out people's passion.

High Desert residents and officials voiced recognition that public lands will play a crucial role in relation to the social changes described in this report. A broader range of management practices to deal with the diverse nature of impacts on public lands will be more important than in the last generation. Public lands will be used for:

- Continued commodity extraction at a rate that does not threaten ecosystem integrity;
- Diverse types of recreation, ranging from high volume intensive uses (skiing at Mt. Bachelor), to low level, dispersed uses (hunting in the Ochocos).
- Community purposes, as is clearly established already, such as for parks, schools, airports, sewage treatment plants, and so on;
- Creation of open spaces, ever more important in an increasingly urbanized setting;
- Providing for low elevation bio-zones, with habitat corridors to upper elevations;
- Education to an urbanized population about ecologically-friendly land uses, both in rural and urban settings;
- Preservation of unique geographic features for future generations, such as Redmond Caves

### ***Positive Feedback About Federal Agencies***

The Forest Service and BLM are well regarded in the communities for the many public services they offer. Among the strong areas of appreciation, as described in later sections of this report are:

- People in the Hood River HRU gave the BLM good marks for returning to their communities to listen to citizens' issues following the 1994 fire. That mistakes can be made, but relations repaired, was significant.
- The Forest Service has played an outstanding role in fostering the Citizen Action Teams in La Pine and Sisters. For rural areas struggling to adapt to a

changing economic base, the attention to local issues and emerging leadership has paid off for both the agency and the community.

- The leadership among formal organizations at the regional level was much enhanced by Forest Service contribution to COTEL—the Central Oregon Telecommunications Task Force—and to the effort to create a four-year institution of higher education through Central Oregon Community College (COCC).
- The agencies’ role in promoting clean-up activities on public lands, as well as weed abatement education and action, has been very well received by a wide spectrum of publics.
- A good number of people commented on how “well-managed” the public lands were that they had visited. The hunting grounds of the Ochoco National Forest and the various campgrounds in the region received special mention.

“The forests are well-managed. The campsites and recreation areas are always well maintained and clean. The restrooms are cleaned everyday, and the surrounding areas are kept clean and neat. This is true even of the small, out-of-the-way camping areas.”

“My husband and I fish a lot. We are impressed by the clean fish-cleaning stations.”

- Finally, despite ongoing challenges in communication, many residents expressed gratitude and recognition for being heard in the various decision processes with which they have been involved. “Our input matters” has been the theme of numerous conversations.

“One point of success is getting news into the local newspaper. I read about Forest Service sales, for example, or bank stabilization programs. You can agree or not, but at least you know.”

### ***Negative Feedback About Federal Agencies***

This report also describes negative comments received about the agencies:

- Citizens want better communication.

“On a scale of 1-10, communication and clear roles with the Forest Service and BLM is a 2. It’s got to start with communication.” [regional official]

“We need to work with the agencies more.” [resort person]

“The agencies will not communicate with us. They have their prescribed burning plan. We had to read about it in the paper. Other areas of the state have strong partnerships. Why not here?” [member, Clean Air Committee of Deschutes County]

“We got smoked twice last month by the Forest Service. It’s their fault we have poor air quality.” [This statement was based on poor information and speaks to the importance of dispelling myths and rumors.]

“Forest Service employees should have experiential training about cattle and grazing. They need to know what it is like to work on a ranch. This would make a better working relationship with ranchers because they would be able to make decisions that would be workable for everyone.”

“My department has solid relations with the Forest Service. The agency has been progressive with lots of collaboration, sharing of resources, information flow and so on. The BLM continues to make empty promises and doesn’t deliver.” [elected official]

- Staff turnover is frustrating because people say they have to “break in someone new.” People rely on face-to-face relationships which does not always correspond to the requirements of working in a formal organization. Managers and recreation specialists were most often mentioned in this regard. Short-term staff do not get as involved in community affairs.
- Residents perceive that local offices of federal agencies are not able to operate independently. It ties with a perception that big government is not to be trusted, and that best government is close to the situation at hand. Residents complain that Washington does not understand the local context.

“They keep doing these ‘done deals’ and forcing them down the throats of people. They won’t always get agreement but that should not keep them from communicating with people who live here.”

“It would be better if the District Offices could make decisions for themselves, instead of decisions coming from other places, where they are not familiar with the land, the cattle, or ranching.”

“There tends to be a disconnect between those working in the field and management. There has to be a flattening of the distance between political management groups and field implementation groups. This would create a more consistent working situation.”

“The Forest Service gets distracted by all the initiatives coming out of Washington. They should ‘stay the course’ and keep to their own mandate.”

“We know that the people who work there are not responsible for what comes down the pipe from DC. Their hands are tied.”

- “Layers of bureaucracy get in the way of common sense.”

“The Forest Service is so hampered internally it literally takes them years to do anything.”

“The Regional Office has tunnel vision. They only see Forest Service, sometimes Forest Service, BLM and National Park Service, but never state or local government.”

“The major challenge of the Central Oregon Initiative has been the bureaucracy. There is resistance at the middle levels. The Forest Service must use charge codes for everything, so it took us years just to get a common map of all public lands in central Oregon.”

“The BLM sense of time is not like a business. They are so slow.”

- Crisis management erodes confidence. Some residents perceive that the agencies are pushed and pulled by continual crisis.

“The agencies need to do less ‘squeaky wheel management.’ Situations are driven most by those who complain. A long term plan stabilizes against dealing with crisis after crisis.”

## **Management Implications from Community Description**

Some of these were derived through discussions with the COI strategy team, citizens suggested some, and some are from JKA.

**1. Broaden and deepen communication in local communities.** As noted further in the following section, a number of steps could be taken to foster greater communication. The goals should be: a) early consultation—no surprises!; b) equal participation (little-involved publics should be sought out, such as Latinos and Native Americans); c) creating a collaborative climate so that there is ownership and responsibility on the part of citizens in the decisions.

In looking at the opportunities for greater communication, it should be noted that a lot of positive relationships and successful history are already in place. It is not possible, of course, in a finite world, to have perfect communication. The reality is communication takes time and staff have full schedules already. Nevertheless, JKA has witnessed in several other areas that as local capacity is increased, through the phases of communication, participation, and responsibility, the requirements of staff decline. For example, a group of residents conducted a field tour once when the agency person was

called away at the last minute. In some field offices, it has sometimes been uncertain if one was talking to a government employee or citizen—permeable boundaries between agencies and citizens are a goal. What JKA recommends is to create a set of strategies to best utilize the time and resources of staff and citizens so that greater management capacity is the long-term outcome.

a. Staff could be the “eyes and ears” for emerging community issues that will affect public land management. If staff were debriefed on their knowledge of community, much of the work related to knowing the social environment would be accomplished. If staff connections were interwoven more deliberately, broader coverage would be possible. Existing ties between staff and community could be better utilized for improving communication, problem solving, and partnerships. When the importance of staff contacts in the community is explicitly recognized and appreciated, “institutional knowledge” of the community will grow over time, instead of being lost when individuals leave (FEMAT 1993).

b. Make sure that communication is culturally appropriate. When a Native American says, “They send letters,” it is not a positive statement but a statement that something important has been missed. Sending Latino staff members into the Latino community is no assurance of connection. Generally speaking, relegating public contact to formal meetings directed by the agency will not create collaboration. Personal relationships will still be the best. Coming early to meetings, attending a gathering place on the way to a meeting, phone calls, field tours, ranch tours, are all ways to understand better the context of citizen concerns. The following section will expand on this point.

Two cultural patterns have a bearing on agency/community communication:

1. Many residents reported that they go to Bend frequently and know what is going on in the city, but the reverse is not true. Bend people do not go as much to the smaller communities. This was reflected in comments like, “Bend won’t come here for meetings, we have to go there,” and in comments from Bend residents that, “I’ve never even been to Prineville.” If this pattern holds, it may be the case that residents in the smaller communities understand the range of issues affecting the region, while Bend residents may not. It may also be that federal land meetings should be structured to foster more connection of urban people to the rural landscape.
2. The rural pattern of getting something done is, “Just do it.” Numerous stories were told in the rural areas of someone getting injured and others supporting that person in various ways, or a collection is made, and so on. The urban pattern in Bend is different—it is a more formalized culture in which “everything is organized.” One person commented that he never saw kids playing ball in the streets—they were all in leagues. This pattern indicates that “committees” and other formal approaches are not appropriate in the rural areas, but may be in the urban areas.

c. Utilize citizen interest to broaden ties in the community. The Deschutes National Forest has an advisory group that has met for some years. The members of that group we talked with had positive things to say about the function of the group. One person thought the best thing it did was link managers to others in the community. Others thought that a “heads up” on important issues was a benefit. A third pointed out the successful resolution of issues facilitated by the group, as for example, solving a snowmobile/cross country skiing issue. The group also serves as a sounding board for controversial initiatives like the current roadless proposal and the recreation fee program.

In the view of JKA, “representative groups” such as this are inherently flawed because the notion that one person could “represent” ranchers and another environmentalists just doesn’t work. Rather than assume that the group is community, it is more useful to suggest such a group is means to discover community. We have found these groups function well if part of their mission is outreach into the community to broaden the range and nature of agency contacts. As inclusiveness is increasingly achieved during the analysis and decision-making process, public ownership of the outcome can be achieved.

d. Open up on weekends! A number of residents observed that the agencies are not very accessible, particularly in relation to the visitor and recreation activities that bring people to public lands.

“I am the one they are calling because the agencies are closed on the weekends. They could give me information.” [sporting goods store owner]

“The agencies should be clear on what each is capable of doing and should communicate with one another before decisions of any kind are made.”

e. Latino Opportunities with Federal Land Management Agencies

There are opportunities for the BLM and the Forest Service to work more closely with the Latino community related to jobs, outreach, and environmental education.

Latinos in Prineville said that the BLM program for summer labor recruitment did not work because of the lack of face-to-face contact. The Forest Service came to the school and made some presentations in the classroom. As a result, 10 Latino students went through the application process and secured summer jobs with the Forest Service.

“Latinos respond positively to personal contact and to the follow-up.”

One story we discovered had to do with the way that the Forest Service conducted “outreach” to the Latino community. Latino caretakers said the Forest Service sent “coconuts”—people brown on the outside but white on the inside—to promote *Cinco de Mayo*, which is a commercial celebration made most famous by Coors Brewing. This celebration is a fairly minor one with local Latinos. Agency promoters missed the real cultural celebrations because they were not connected to the community.

Particularly in the Latino community, communication has to be face-to-face through personal relationships. The Latino distrust of authority, their day-to-day challenges of survival as a minority group, and the lack of articulate leadership at the formal level, all means that communication strategies must match the community's. Recruitment for the employment programs of the agencies must occur this way as well.

A story was told about a Latino family in a picnic area of the national forest. A tame deer went by and the husband calmly shot it and began skinning it on the picnic table—to the horror of Anglo picnickers nearby. Similarly, we were told that Latinos routinely cut firewood without a permit, not because they wish to be illegal, but because they do not understand the permitting process.

A group in Madras is attempting to create a “Family Literacy” program, which will educate Latino families not only in reading and writing English but also in ways to adapt to U.S. society. The Forest Service and the BLM could be partners in this project and include education about firewood permitting, appropriate use of public lands and so on. People in this program could also inform the agencies of recreation preferences on public lands. For example, Latinos tend to picnic in large groups of extended families. Picnic areas with single tables bolted down are not adequate for their needs.

**2. Ensure that planning is community-based and integrated across both agencies.** A number of residents pointed to the “Urban Interface Plan” that has been underway within BLM. This effort has actually been the revision of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) required by BLM periodically. It is a 10-20 year guide to all land use decisions for the district. The 1989 RMP is considered out of date, both within and outside the agency. Its focus is on traditional landholdings of BLM that are isolated and related to rural publics. Its revision was begun in 1994 to focus on the urban impacts affecting the area and to create a regional vision of how BLM would relate to the myriad of requests of its lands. The effort stalled for lack of funding but is likely to be started again, with renewed funding expected this year.

The early efforts have created expectations in the communities for completion. Many residents have expressed a keen interest in participating in the plan.

“The public can help finish it.”

“There needs to be more in the way of establishing working groups that incorporate the people who are affected by whatever decisions or plans being made. Rather than feeling like landowners are being dictated to by an ‘expert’ whom they may feel does not understand their particular situation, this approach would allow people to have ownership of the plans.”

Our membership would like to participate in the completion of that plan.” [Cline Butte Recreation Association]



Completion of the plan needs to be done in a way that is as collaborative and regional as possible. There is an excellent opportunity to integrate Forest Service and BLM planning in the area. A regional approach will ensure that BLM can stay proactive in the face of the many requests it must deal with about its land uses. An urban component to the plan is an essential aspect.

**3. Use human geographic units as management units for planning and implementation.** The Human Resource Units (HRUs) and the lower level Community Resource Units (CRUs) displayed in this report reflect local routines, social and economic activities, and geographic features that distinguish one population from another. If administrative units matched the human geographic units, it would allow regional management to be sensitive to unique social, economic and ecological features. When a Prineville resident expressed sharp alarm that the Ochoco and Deschutes Forests could be combined, his worry was that the unique aspects of the Ochoco Forest would be lost. People there value the low impact, dispersed nature of hunting and do not want the high-density uses that characterize the Deschutes. Citizen complaint with the current Clinton administration proposal regarding roadless areas is that it is a “one size fits all” solution that is not sensitive to local variation.

Such “management of the unique” would align public land management with the values and direction of local communities. For example, if Prineville is clear about maintaining a pace of moderate growth to protect its small town feel, how can agency activities support this mission?

Our title of this report suggests that use of human geographic boundaries will foster partnerships. We call this, “Staffing the culture.” By that, we mean that coordinated management on the part of the agencies offers unprecedented opportunity to treat the land and its people as one. Rather than being program driven, or driven by administrative boundaries that do not fit the local conditions, we are in the position to address the “productive harmony” challenge posed in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A balance between people and nature means that the health of local communities is as important as biophysical health.

The human geographic maps represent a way to visualize informal community systems and to bring local trends, issues and aspirations to the decision-making table. The GIS technology of digital mapping allows social data to be displayed along with biophysical data. That means that major issues, key community contacts, and communication methods could accompany the maps and create a means for the agencies to “staff the culture.” Washoe County, Nevada, for example, uses a human geographic system linked to GIS to identify and monitor community issues over time. The system can pull up issues by topic or by geographic area and indicate key communication methods to access informal networks (Kent 1993).

The key to using human geography is issue resolution. Without a commitment to “customer service” in getting public issues resolved, other steps are meaningless. If informal network contact and issue identification is done as part of the communication

process, then the base has been created for successful action. Many times, the issue will not belong to the agency but could be turned over to a partner group. Staff incentives should be created for resolving issues and preventing disruption.

“The process to get habitat improvement money through the Taylor Grazing Act is so convoluted. It’s not a priority for staff. They should help these ranchers out.”

**4. Change leadership role from one of command and control to one of expediting and facilitating.** “Leadership should facilitate and not solve or take over,” an agency person said. This approach will require new skills. “The Forest Service was our mentors,” one person said with pride, referring to the Citizen Action Team. She did not want agency control; she wanted support and mutual action.

a. Broaden the COI initiative to include sister agencies, such as Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) and the National Park Service.

b. Ensure agency participation in other partnerships, including the Deschutes Clean Air Committee and the Central Oregon Partnership. The latter effort is being sponsored by the Northwest Area Foundation for several million dollars, and is an effort to draw together the many regional plans in a comprehensive fashion. The advantage of the effort is that it includes environmental, economic and social objectives. Participation in the Central Oregon Partnership would ensure the agencies that rural/urban linkages could be made, and that stewardship activities link private and public lands.

“We have planning skills that we could offer the community to assist residents in dealing with the changes underway. The Community Action Teams we have fostered are a successful model that could be applied in new ways.” [Forest Service person]

c. Reward barrier busters. The agencies could experiment in strategies to reward risk takers among their staff who broaden ties to the community, facilitate the resolution of issues before they become disruptive, and who find innovative ways to increase the responsiveness of the agencies. Bureaucratic policies and procedures remain the largest barrier to collaborative partnerships.

**5. Foster citizen empowerment and capacity building.** At present, citizens in Sisters and La Pine want to coordinate more in doing fuels reduction projects. The Cline Buttes Recreation Association has developed a plan to manage 57 square miles in the “golden triangle” between Redmond, Sisters, and Bend. The Friends of the Metolius has proposed a forest health demonstration project for ponderosa pine management and their other initiatives address both private and public lands.

“The Forest Service must give up control. \_\_\_ can bring forward projects that were not on their radar screen. This is new territory.”

“The District should allow local initiatives by citizens. Right now, there isn’t that freedom.”

Citizen initiatives will increase in the future, driven from both individuals and groups. They present real challenges because of the front-end time they require and because of legal and policy intricacies. However, the rewards are great. Ultimately, staff time can be reduced and the “spread effect” of goodwill and education in the community can be immense.

**6. Support youth.** A number of residents and agency personnel described the current efforts to provide youth with job skills development, employment, and summer work experiences. Repeatedly, work for youth was a key issue for rural areas. This is one area that Forest Service and BLM could meet local needs. Agency staff and youth advocates should be polled for opportunities not yet utilized.

“The summer kids with the Forest Service need supervision. They chopped up the land near my 160 acres on the headwaters last summer, and then they wonder why we are so upset. We never did talk it over.”

“BLM hit a home run with the summer employment program. A high school student could get paid \$8.70 an hour.”

**7. Partnerships and creative use of volunteers are two ongoing products of capacity building.** In a future of limited resources and increasing budgets, partnership and volunteers will be standard operating procedure. The public land agencies in southern California, for example, have had to be very creative in managing the level of human impact they experience. One successful strategy has been the formation of the San Bernardino National Forest Association. This non-profit group serves to generate funding for the Forest it would otherwise not be able to afford. A wide variety of forest management projects are now funded outside the taxing and appropriations process.

The Association has also created a state-of-the-art volunteer program of many hundreds of people. They have successfully breached the perception of volunteers taking more staff time than they are worth. Volunteers have become spokespeople for the Forest in formal and informal public settings, informing the uninformed about forest management and educating urbanites on the use of public lands. The capacity has been created for citizen contributions to management—a good number of retired people involved in the program, for example, devote long hours and are very dedicated to their purpose.

“We don’t have the staff to follow up on volunteer opportunities. It takes investment up front.”

**8. Education is a continuing process.** With more people in Central Oregon, and people with an urban background without direct knowledge of the local ecology, education has become an ongoing management requirement. The efforts of BLM and the Forest Service

to get into the classrooms of central Oregon have been very well received. It may be that a more systematic effort may be required.

As management practices change with improved information, mechanisms could be developed for ongoing education in the community. For example, as thinking changed regarding the importance of woody material in streams, how can this information be transmitted to the communities in a “user friendly” way?

Education should be linked to urban influences. Several community leaders talked about the role the agencies could play in creating urban forest, and eco-friendly strategies for urban living. Assistance in eco-landscaping in urban zones was mentioned as well.

“Promote good environmental stewardship in the cities. The Healy Heights complex in Bend [public housing] is filled with asphalt. There has been no attention to landscaping with environmental sustainability in mind.”

“Educate about the urban habitat. How can we create an environmentally responsible community?”

“Can we get classes for newcomers in environmental education?”

## **9. Foster reasonable economic development through public land decision-making.**

a. Foster economic development related to public land use, specifically with agriculture, timber and tourism. Examples include:

- Increased capacity to provide quality visiting experiences for international travelers. Coordinate with the Central Oregon Visitor Association for improved signage and other efforts to utilize the international market. Include other “eco-tourism” approaches that avoid mass markets in favor of specialty niches. Such examples include horse stables, farm/ranch visitor sites (very successful in some locations), or rock hound promotion (signage, outhouse, resurfacing).

“State Tourism says that 8% of our visitors are international, and that Germans are the largest group and spend the most. Can we get a partnership to create a German language web page or better road mapping and signage?”

- Secondary products from forest lands, including small diameter tree utilization, development of juniper products, etc.;
- Contracting assistance could be provided to local residents for making use of federal contracting opportunities;

- “Bundled” contracts that combine a number of stewardship activities could be supported and advocated at higher levels of organization;
- Business incubation efforts for forest products and tourism could be supported, such as The Innovation Center, the only such organization in central Oregon.

b. Develop feasible strategies to promote economic development through the spending procedures of the agencies. We were told that the Forest Service favored payments to its suppliers by credit card, for which banks charge a 3-6% fee. This practice favored larger companies and was resisted by local merchants. Apparently, the Forest Service felt it was unable to change this practice.

A number of other community leaders talked about the idea of “aggregated purchases.” For example, telecommunications is a major purchase for the agencies and could be coordinated with other larger purchasers to leverage additional technological support for the region. People talked about the lack of “redundancy” in phone lines that creates susceptibilities to black outs such as occurred twice in the last year when the fiber optic line was inadvertently cut. The lack of redundancy has been a direct deterrent to new business. Demonstrated aggregate demand, and coordinated regional strategies, could leverage better service and lower rates, the thinking goes.

“We don’t have the infrastructure yet. Phone service went out yesterday for the region. There’s a guy east of here who does traffic light control for the state. We will not keep people like that if we don’t address this.”

c. Continue the fine role of USDA Rural Development in fostering planning, engineering, and implementation of rural infrastructure needs.

## **JKA Communication Strategies**

### **1. Access Informal Networks**

Get known at informal level before engaging formal groups.

Identify gathering places and activities where people representing informal networks can be found. Become individually known in these places.

Identify and understand key communicators. Know the routines of these individuals so that regular contact can be established.

Appreciate and get to know authentic historians and storytellers in community.

Have a process to check your own sources of knowledge and data.

Know the rumor systems so that you can work with them.

Reassigned employees should introduce their replacements to key contacts and the community on a face to face basis.

Close conversations with the question, “Who else should I talk to about this?” Keep a journal of the names given by a person and listen for those names again. Even if you do not have time to contact those persons, it indicates the informal network of the speaker and indicates if you are broad enough in your community contacts.

## **2. Foster Collaborative Action**

Always put the community first when interacting with residents, or else you are an outsider in a “selling position.”

Be able to distinguish themes from issues when interacting. An issue is a statement people make that can be acted on, while a theme is an attitude or general perception that characterizes how a network expresses a value or perceives a current trend.

Do not agree or disagree when someone makes a statement about a “personality.”

Relate to formal groups within the context of that group’s formal mission.

Return citizen contacts within 24 hours.

Know the history and geography of local area. Learn and use local place names.

Take the opportunity of community activities to help destroy myths and develop relationships.

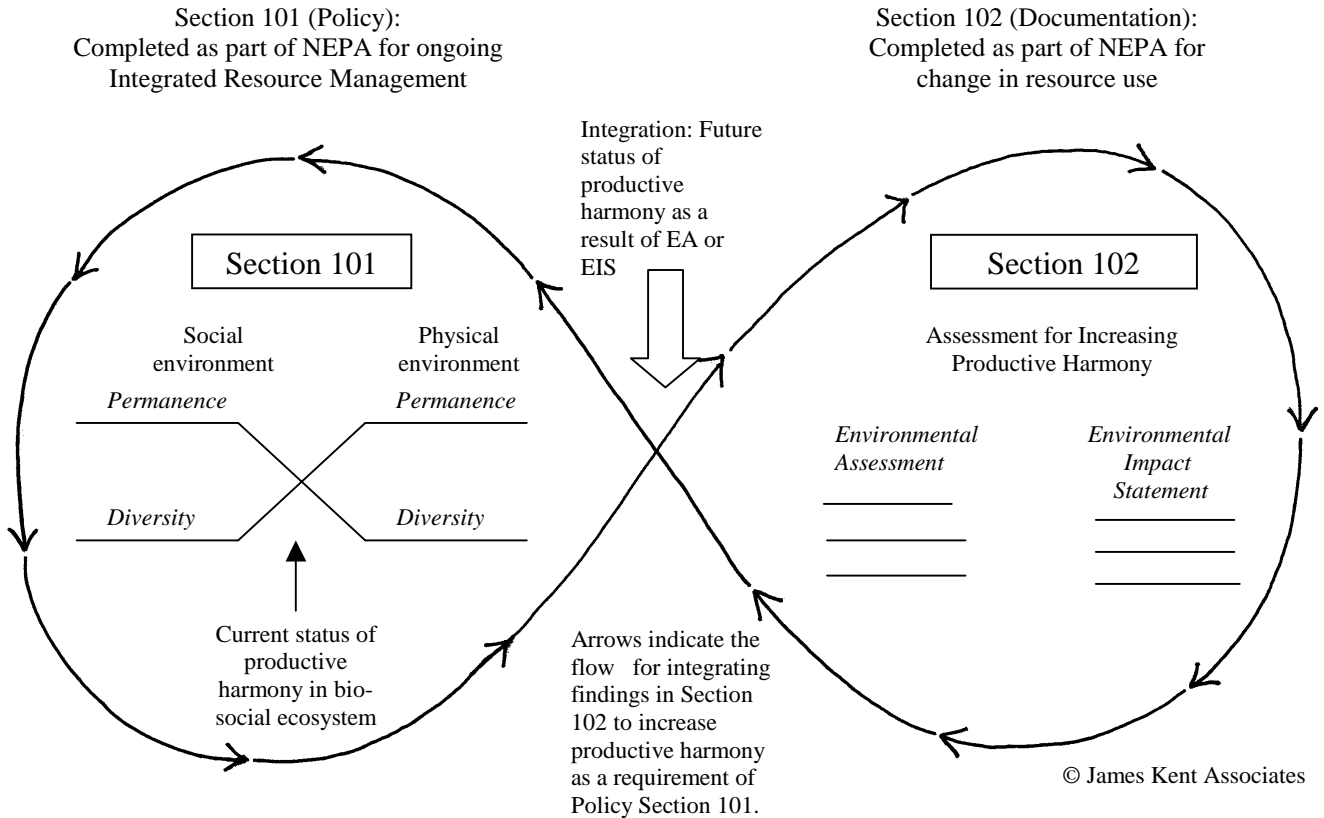
Use an integrative approach when considering and facilitating projects. A project that addresses multiple social, economic, and ecological objectives will be a winner.

Listen for talk that is participatory and sharing, and distinguish it from talk that is exclusionary and demanding.

## **Conclusions**

Figure Two below displays graphically the concept of Productive Harmony embodied in Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Productive Harmony asks the question whether the physical and social environments have high states of permanence and diversity, and then whether a proposed action contributes to or detracts from that state. The figure shows that if environmental assessments and impact statements are driven from analyses of productive harmony, they will be focused and disciplined, and able to resolve issues as they emerge rather than collecting issues for

Figure Two:  
The National Environmental Policy Act:  
Optimizing Productive Harmony Between the Social and Physical Environments



further controversy, which is the norm today. The concepts shown in Figure Two offer several advantages:

- Issues can be identified early, included in analysis, and resolved early;
- Analysis can be appropriately focused;
- Environmental Justice considerations are easily flagged and incorporated;
- Considerations of community health have equal status with considerations of ecological health;
- Community-based planning can more easily be shaped around collaborative stewardship enterprises.

The remaining sections of this report offer descriptive accounts of the geographic areas covered by our field team. These descriptions were the basis for the management implications outlined in this section.

## Section Three: The High Desert Social Resource Unit (SRU)

Figure One in Section One shows a map of the High Desert Social Resource Unit (SRU) developed through this project.

The dominant process taking place in High Desert country is rapid population growth and urbanization. Between 1990 and 1998, Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties grew by 35% to 138,950, while the city of Bend has grown by 74% to 35,635 (Oregon Employment Department 2000: 7). The social environment is characterized by broad-based efforts to adjust and accommodate to this influx.

For many, growth is a dream come true. “Prineville is finally growing,” someone said, and it meant that businesses are doing better, kids can stay in the community if they want, there are more cultural and recreational opportunities, and a vitality brought by people with new ideas. The attractions to the area include sun, climate, a wide variety of recreation activities, and a generally high quality of life.

Primary industrial activity in Central Oregon is listed in Table One.

Table One:  
Primary Industries in Central Oregon

Crook County	Agricultural Products Metal Fabrication Primary Wood Products Secondary Wood Products Tire Distribution Trucking
Deschutes County	Aviation High Technology/Software Recreational Equipment Retail Trade Secondary Wood Products Tourism
Jefferson County	Agricultural Production Asphalt Raw Material Refinery Manufacturing and Fabrication Secondary Wood Products

Source: Economic Development for Central Oregon (2000)

For many others, growth is a loss and a threat. The traditional sectors of agriculture and timber have been steadily declining. There are more people everywhere and settlement in the rural areas is motivated by a desire to “get away from it all.” The emerging economy has left some people in the dust—an increased gap between rich and poor has been



widely noted by residents and some officials. Some people talked of the “negative spiral of development” where economic development spurs jobs that bring people in, that create more impacts, while unemployment stays the same and infrastructure puts unfair burden on existing residents.

OED expects that the employment growth in Central Oregon in the coming years will occur in service, trade, and government sectors, excluding federal employment (2000: 22). Extraction-based manufacturing will continue to give way to more diversified manufacturing. The national recognition of the area as a recreational destination area will fuel the economy as well.

Affordable housing and transportation are the major regional issues. Workforce training, economic development that generates family wages, quality of life, water quality and quantity, youth issues, open space, and other considerations are important at the regional level to forestall poverty and degraded lifestyles that can come with economic transition (Oxborrow 1999).

A number of residents talked about a “cultural split” between the growing urban influence of Bend and the Deschutes HRU and the more rural zones of the north, east and south. The rural areas struggle to maintain their way of life in the face of economic decline of traditional sectors of ranching and timber. They are becoming bedroom communities for the urban areas, with attendant loss of local business and tax base.

For public land management, the future will hold more people who are active on public lands, have less knowledge of local ecology, and have strong environmental values.

### **Emerging Regionalism**

“Well, let me summarize it this way. Prineville is known for Cowboys, Bend for elites, and Madras for Indians.”

Residents in the High Desert SRU described the historical self-sufficiency of local communities as well as the frequent rivalries generated by high school sports or stereotypes about others. Prineville, for example, a generation ago, had its own economy centered around timber production. Its residents point out how commuting to urban jobs has become dominant, retail has been lost, and how their economic fortunes are increasingly tied to the industrial and housing markets of the Bend-Redmond area.

We heard stories of failed attempts at cooperation in recent years that seem born out of the history of self-sufficiency.

- Twelve years ago, Crook County did not want to be part of the housing agency. After the 1998 flood impacted many low income units, the County became interested.

- The Senior Fair was offered for the second time this year. Even though it was billed as a “tri-county” affair and extra steps were taken to make sure public officials represented the three counties, it was held in Redmond and Deschutes County residents were the only ones who attended.
- Deschutes and Crook Counties had opportunities to coordinate their efforts on their respective fairgrounds. Nevertheless, Deschutes constructed an ambitious facility that will now compete with Crook County, even though these facilities are just miles apart.

“At least we don’t have to drive so far.”

The context of self-sufficiency and competition is rapidly giving way to one of emerging regionalism. Fueled by growth and a recognition that many challenges cross boundaries, citizens told us repeatedly that a regional approach will become ever more important.

“On a regional plan, we are at a 6 or 7 on a scale of 1-10.”

“We have not done regional efforts, except by kicking and screaming.”

“We have to recognize now that Bend, Madras, Redmond and Prineville are one region. It wasn’t always this way but it is now.”

“County competition should be over.”

“What happens in one area now affects other areas. If we don’t coordinate with others, we will lose opportunities.”

“This area needs a regional plan. We need a long term recreation plan.”

Oxborrow (1999) listed regional organizations in a recent report:

Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council  
 Central Oregon Regional Strategies Board (Community Investment Board)  
 Central Oregon Regional Community Solutions Team  
 Central Oregon Community College  
 Regional Workforce Quality Committee  
 Economic Development for Central Oregon  
 Central Oregon Area Transportation Commission  
 Cascade Community Development  
 Central Oregon Regional Housing Authority  
 Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network  
 Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Oregon  
 The Commissions on Children and Families and United Ways  
 Central Oregon Community Health Council  
 The Deschutes Basin Resources Conservancy

Watershed Councils  
Central Oregon Environmental Center

Most of these are fairly new, some are sponsored at the level of the state, others were formed at the regional level, and still others were born out of grass roots organizing around common interests. A few examples of the what some of the regional organizations are up to include:

- State community development agencies, through the Central Oregon Regional Community Solutions Team, have been given a mandate to consolidate services and to create “one-stop shopping” for citizens.
- The Central Oregon Environmental Center is 12 years old and has 23 member organizations, dealing with 209 alternative transportation, stewardship, and neighborhood programs.
- FAN (Family Action Network) is a partnership of 19 organizations including law enforcement, district attorney’s offices, schools, and mental health services, to promote early intervention with at risk youth and youth needs. Their goal is to increase the health of communities by setting benchmarks and monitor their progress toward the benchmarks.
- An initiative was created a few years ago to create a four-year school of higher education from Central Oregon Community College. The Chandler Center of COCC conducted a study to evaluate opportunities and a Central Oregon Regional Advisory Board was created to steer the effort.
- The Economic Development group serves the region. It has been able to engender confidence across boundaries and to assure its members that business will be referred to them.
- Central Oregon Tourism Alliance is a coalition of tourist related organizations and companies.
- Central Oregon Partnership is being funded by the Northwest Area Foundation. It has done forums in all the major communities, identifying transportation and affordable housing as major regional issues. A housing needs assessment was completed in June, 2000, through the Northwest Area Foundation and Central Oregon Regional Housing Authority.

The COP through Oxborrow (1999) has compiled the many regional plans developed by the above organizations into one document. The significance of this effort is that it integrates social, economic, and ecological planning into one framework. There has been discussion that implementation of aspects of the plan would be funded by Northwest Area Foundation. The COP is a great resource for the federal land management agencies

for this reason, since the “urban interface”, at least at the formal level, could be accomplished through this venue. Section Two expands on these opportunities.

### **Increasing Diversity**

There is a robustness to social life presently in the SRU. These are not communities in rural decline but in urban growth. Newcomers are active in the outdoors and engaged in a myriad of recreation activities. There are three kinds of diversity characterizing the present era.

Social diversity means there are different kinds of people than ever before. The presence of the rural outlook remains dominant in many places, but added to it are urban values and ideas. The increased presence of senior citizens, along with the costs and benefits of their presence, is felt throughout the region. The area is packed with young people, those who stay for a short time to enjoy the ambience of the recreation atmosphere and the Bend nightlife; young professionals who are drawn by new opportunities; and young people from existing families who do not have to leave anymore to obtain gainful employment.

Economic diversity means that there is a broader variety of ways to make a living in the region. Farming, ranching and timber activities still support a large segment of the population. High technology, light manufacturing and other industrial activities are advancing at a steady pace. Recreation related businesses are proliferating: guest ranches, resorts, golf courses, river and forest outfitting and guiding, bed and breakfast operations, antique and craft shops, galleries, and recreation centers. Professional services from real estate to legal support to consulting firms are growing to provide for the needs of this expanded activity. If this activity can be done in a way that does not impoverish or leave others behind, then economic diversity speaks well for the ability of people in the SRU to remain resilient into the next generation.

Finally, recreational diversity is enormous. The rural areas are characterized as supporting dispersed activities of hunting and fishing, while other areas are intensive and high density, such as skiing at Mt. Bachelor. As one person said, “You can do anything you want outdoors except surf in Central Oregon.” Central Oregon has tremendous visitation from other areas of Oregon, the nation, and the world. We found patterns in this visitation. People from Portland and Seattle, and others from out of state tend to recreate in further northwest of Bend on Century Drive. Historically, people from the Willamette Valley (Eugene, Salem) recreate further south on Deschutes National Forest, west of La Pine. And as crowds become unpalatable in the north, they are coming further south to Metolius, Crescent, and O’Dell.

### **From Commodity Production to Amenity Production**

A number of observers pointed out that the relatively dry and sunny climate, the stunning visual beauty of the area, plus the diverse outdoor recreation opportunities, are the primary driving forces for the current growth. They argue that enhancement of quality of

life considerations is the most important challenge for preserving economic growth. This point of view is a remarkable turn around from just 15 years ago. It represents a shift away from commodity production (cattle, lumber) to amenity production (scenery, clean water, open space).

The commodity economy was primarily a subsistence based economy where ranchers, loggers, and farmers worked from dawn to dusk to make a living—a living that may or may not have been prosperous. Now the economy has shifted so that people have more free time and more money to spend on recreational pursuits. There is now a wider variety of situations to deal with in terms of public land management (Section Two).

## Section Four: The Wheeler Human Resource Unit

The Wheeler Human Resource Unit (Figure Three) is comprised of the communities of Fossil, Spray, Mitchell and the outlying areas, as shown in Figure Two. Cummings Hill Summit on the north, Ochoco summit on the south, the Wheeler County line on the east, and Clarno mark the unit on the west. Fossil, Spray and Mitchell have connections with each other in family and social ties. Fossil is considered “uppity” by some county residents because it is the county seat and gets more financial support, but there appears to be a strong history of cooperation and working together for mutual benefit. Wheeler has social and shopping ties to Prineville, and social ties, school coordination and social service links with Gilliam and Morrow Counties (The John Day HRU).

Figure Three:  
The Wheeler Human Resource Unit



### **Work Routines**

Most of the work in the HRU is in farming, ranching and timber. While timber was the main work years ago, today it is a minor component of the economy. Some people commute to Prineville for work.

“But you know, I like driving to Prineville and seeing all those trees—it’s beautiful. So I know it [timber harvest] had to stop sometime.”

Local residents commented on the low prices of beef and the consequent ongoing depression of local cattle operations. Apparently niche markets like “Painted Hills Natural Beef”, a collective of local ranches, is doing fine.

“We have to diversify the economy. There are few jobs and we can’t keep our kids in the county.”

“It is difficult to encourage new businesses or residents into the county when properties are so large. Rather than 2000 acre ranches, these lone eagles [global entrepreneurs] like 200-acre parcels. We hope to convince LCDC [Land Conservation and Development Commission] that we need to rezone portions of the county.”

Secondary woods businesses are slowly developing in Wheeler. Juniper fencing, redwood and juniper furniture, decorative wood items, and juniper milling and drying are done in the area. They could use more support from County Extension and State and Private Forestry to help find uses and markets for juniper. Their issues in dealing with federal land agencies are listed below.

The area also has businesses focused on recreation and tourism, including resorts and RV parks. Fall hunting is especially important for the local economy.

“As agriculture has declined, there has been a huge increase in recreation, but not in family-wage jobs.”

## **Support Services**

Residents discussed the formal services available in Wheeler.

“Water is not adequate here to attract new businesses and residents.”

“The housing here is old and needs upgrading. We have a public retirement home that may need to privatize because it’s hard to keep it full.”

“We are losing our safety net in the county. Wheeler County revenue was \$1.6 million last year and is projected to be \$40-50,000 this year (75% to roads, 25% to schools). We now have a skeleton crew to handle 1, 118 square miles.”  
[Wheeler County Judge]

As a strategy to keep their rural schools open, residents of Mitchell have created a boarding school to take in students from Bend, Portland and other locations. A total of 42 students allows their school to remain functional. The school puts on activities for the Senior Center and the town.

“We like to tell students that they have 100 moms and dads watching out for them so they can’t get away with much.”

“My daughter skipped school with a friend once last year. The principal personally went door-to-door and knocked on every house in town until he found them. At first, I thought that was really weird, but then I felt grateful that he’d take it on himself to find those girls.”

The Bridge Creek Watershed Council appears to have been very successful in generating resources to respond to watershed concerns of local residents. With major local concerns being “weeds and water,” the Council has been able to get funding to clear juniper, to seed with grasses, for fencing, and for grazing management. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) helped the council do a Coordinated Resource Management Plan for the watershed and to get qualified for funding. Last year, a student from Oregon State University helped manage the weed program for the watershed council. Forest Service provided the vehicle, BLM the chemicals, the Governor’s Watershed Enhancement Board (GWEB, now OWEB, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board) the funding. More water in the creek has been the result, as well as improved riparian functioning. Despite the success of ranchers in the Council, it has been difficult for the local area to generate the matching funds (25%) to utilize available funding.

The Wheeler County Economic Development Council is made up mostly of newcomers concerned about the viability of communities and incentives to keep kids in the communities through work. It is exploring how to get a fiber optic cable in the area for internet service, and is communicating with Ashland about its success. It also monitors the John Day River Plan and advocates for community interests with BLM.

Other support organizations for the community are the Booster Club, volunteer fire department, and the senior center. In addition to organized groups, informal caretaking is part of local life:

“We have strong values in keeping youth here and keeping families together. 4-H and the County Fair are big support for kids. People pay top dollar—3 times as much as a pig is worth—just to help out the kids.”

“You used to be able to get a high school kid to come help change sprinkler pipe, but nowadays it’s really hard to find anyone. I don’t know if the kids have too much given to them and don’t have a strong work ethic or what.”

“When something happens, everyone pitches in. A rancher up the road had a bad horse accident and within the day all the ranchers around were on the phone with each other and figuring out who feeds in the morning, at night, who takes care of what.”

“Ranchers always seem to have gotten together around Mitchell. Events like the County Fair and Painted Hills Festival bring people together.”



“In the summertime, there are often jam sessions with some of the folks in town that play music.”

“We always helped one another during roundup and whatever comes up. Now when newcomers move in, we make sure to network, so they’ll know what’s going on.”

## **Settlement Patterns**

Some newcomers are returning, after being raised in the area and spending a portion of their adult life elsewhere. A number of people have come to Wheeler from Prineville.

“We used to live in Prineville and decided to get out of the fast lane and slow down.”

Newcomers are easily accepted and consider the schools to be good.

“I heard that Mitchell people had dug their heels in but I didn’t find that to be true. It has been easy to fit in.”

“Most people have either been here forever, moved away already, or work locally. Lots of people work on their own ranches.”

## **Natural Resource Issues**

### **Permits**

“We do juniper fencing. We cut mostly on private lands and BLM lands. The Forest Service bonds [for contracts] are just too high.”

“I can’t seem to get permits to salvage juniper before or after prescribed burns from BLM, but I can get them from the Forest Service.”

“Forest Service firewood is easier to get. BLM firewood seems very limited.”

### **John Day River Wild And Scenic Plan**

“BLM did what they were required to do in meeting the legal minimum, but they really missed the boat in getting local participation.”

“There was more concern for the recreation user in the Plan than for local residents. The impacts of the proposal—increased camping, puts a greater risk to communities from fire danger and law enforcement without mitigation. The local taxpayers would have to carry that burden in additional emergency services.”

“Job opportunities in the county caring for the parks was not addressed.”

“The Draft Plan seems to have taken the Deschutes Plan as their basis and built on that. Parts of the plan even refer to the Deschutes. But these are very different ecosystems and communities.”

“Fossil is always the meeting place but is not the most convenient for other county residents. Service Creek or ‘Big Sars Corral’ are more centrally located for county residents. Or, smaller meetings in each town should be considered.”

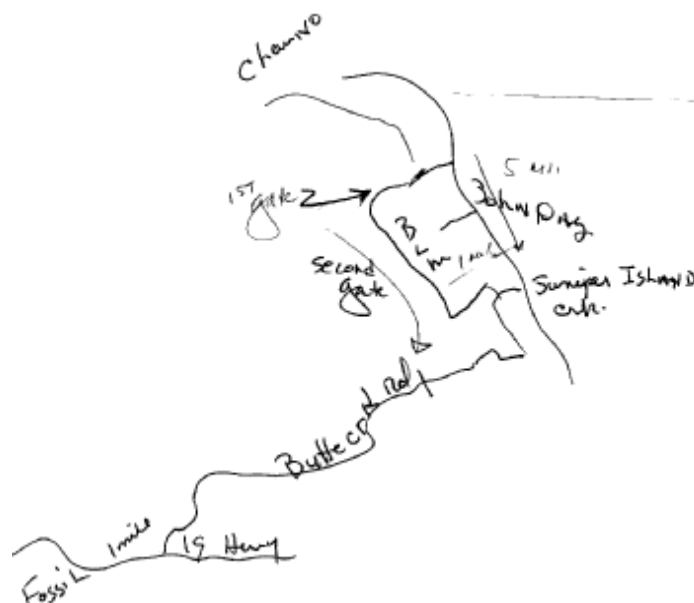
“We felt hurt and deeply slighted by the BLM—not only did they not take into consideration local impacts to ranchers and the community at large, they refused to meet with our Economic Development council.”

“BLM relies too much on Washington. If they don’t start to interface on a personal level, and listen, it’s not going to be good. The John Day River Plan is one more hit.”

### Access

“Many roads are now closed that accessed traditional hunting areas. I can draw you a picture of how a large area (Township 6-7S, Range 19E) has been blocked off to local uses for hunting, fishing, picnicking. This is a five mile stretch along the John Day River between Clarno and Butter Creek Road. First, \_\_\_\_\_ was permitted to gate a road that had been used through her land and BLM. Then \_\_\_\_\_ blocked Butter Creek Road so Juniper Island Creek is now inaccessible. You’d think BLM would consider who has used that public land all these years before privatizing it now.” [The picture is shown in Figure Four.]

Figure Four:  
An Example of Lost Access to Public Lands



“Large Suttan Creek Block was traded and locals lost a huge area for hunting.”

“When BLM exchanges land, there are consequences for local hunting and recreating. Several new sites are either not suitable for hunting or they are closed to vehicles.”

“It seems like more and more private landowners are able to block roads that we’ve used historically to access BLM lands—our lands. It doesn’t seem right. Loss of hunting hurts the local economy.”

### **Other**

“The Forest Service staff seem to change more than BLM. It is harder to get relationships going with the Forest Service. It feels like we have to stay on them to get anything back.”

“BLM is responsive and gets things done.”

“It has been great working with Ollie Jones at the Forest Service who works with communities in getting grants.”

“We have to do more allotment monitoring (measuring, documenting, photographs), but if the grass gets eaten down by winter, we can’t put cows out in the spring, regardless if the grass was eaten by cattle, elk, or campers’ horses. The Forest Service was willing to do some experimenting with monitoring a sensitive species of flower for grazing effects rather than exclude two entire areas (one is now off limits).”

“We can’t get the Park Service to any Watershed Council meetings. It would really help if they were part of the weed program.”

“The elk herd exceeds management objectives by more than 2000 but Fish and Wildlife still won’t increase tags for elk.”

“Landowners along the creek refused to let a California student do a bird study. They were afraid she might find an endangered bird on their property.”

## Section Five: The Madras Human Resource Unit

The Madras Human Resource Unit (Figure Five) includes the communities of Madras, Metolius and Culver, west to the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, south on Highway 97 until Juniper Butte and Haystack Reservoir, east to Clarno, and north to the midpoint between Antelope and Kent, and including Shaniko.

Figure Five:  
The Madras Human Resource Unit



Madras residents believe other residents in the region think them of in negative terms. Its reputation is for lower income, racial tensions, and criminal activity. Many people began their stories of Madras relating such perceptions, and then went on to claim the perceptions were stereotypes and to relate positive aspects of the community.

“We have a negative reputation because of gangs and our school attendance rates, but those are simply misconceptions.”

“The concentration of Latinos here makes it easy for anyone to stereotype us.”

### **Settlement and Work Routines**

Early history in the Madras HRU relates to sheep and cattle wars that characterized other parts of the West. Cattle interests in Prineville conflicted with sheep interests in Madras. The so-called Cattle Wars were not resolved until 1906. A large wave of settlement

occurred during the “dust bowl” years of the 1930s. With the rise of the Australian sheep industry in the 1950s, local sheep herding declined, and cattle influences became stronger.

Today, agriculture and the presence of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation remain dominant influences in the area. The Madras area is characterized by farm activity—lots of irrigation, hay fields and farm houses, interspersed with other housing. The soils in the Madras area are some of the most fertile in the region and the farming economy remains strong. It has the largest remaining timber mill in the region, drawing commuting workers from the Bend area. Other employers are secondary wood products, including Brightwood, a major employer of 1200, and a boat manufacturing facility, Seaswirl Boats.

The population in Jefferson County grew by 27% from 1990 to 1998, to 17,400 people. Some of the growth can be attributed to the settling of Latino farm laborers and the in migration of their families after the Immigration Reform and Family Reunification Act. Some of the growth is also attributed to “spillover” from the Bend-Redmond area. The area is especially attractive for its affordable housing.

The economy of Jefferson County has been described as a “diverse economic base made up of stable or expanding industry sectors” (OED 2000: 15). The lumber and wood products industry expanded by 15% during the 1990s, while non-manufacturing employment expanded 29% during the same period. Transfer payments, reflecting an increase in the retirement sector, grew by 88% between 1987 and 1997 (OED 2000: 42).

### **Support Services**

Housing costs are reported to be 10-15% lower than in Redmond and Bend, so the area has attracted commuter spillover from these communities. There is now active commuting to Bend for employment, and from Bend to the mills in Madras.

The schools reported that their student population is 33% Native American and 19% Latino. Several people in the community had the idea that race relations among adults are fairly positive and increasingly tolerant, but negative among the young. Gang activity is persistent and requires constant monitoring. The Warm Springs Indian Reservation beginning this year is now retaining its students from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, instead of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Although this step is considered important for maintaining Indian history and heritage, some residents and school officials believe it contributes to the racial tension and lack of integration in the schools.

“Cultural diversity and tolerance do not get learned early enough—it’s hard for Indian kids to adjust when they wait that long.”

The schools report one of the highest drop out rates in the state—9 %. A high absentee rate hurts school funding, but many local residents believe this problem reflects a cultural bias on the part of the educational system. Many cultural events in Latino and Native

American lifestyles require absences from schools. Funerals can last many days, for example.

“Absenteeism doesn’t account for cultural differences.”

Current community issues include:

- The quality of education is a high concern in the community.
- Library services are up for a vote.
- High teen pregnancy rate alarms residents.
- Improvements to Highway 97 are planned through Madras this summer.
- Positive outlets for children and youth are wanted, notably a recreation center, sports gym, skateboard park, and so on.  
“Kids have to go to Redmond to the movies.”
- Support for schools appears to be lacking.  
“This community does not support education. We see that in failed ballots or levies and the lack of community involvement.”
- A low security prison is scheduled for construction.

## **The Latino Presence**

The largest concentrations of Latino people in the High Desert SRU reside in the Madras HRU. In previous generations, that influence was created by farm labor requirements and early Latinos were migrant workers. They replaced earlier migrants of different ethnicity. Years ago, farmworker housing was scattered throughout the community to promote worker integration in the community. Although migrant labor remains an important component of this community, a significant portion of the population has “settled out.” In the migrant community, there is no longer an impact season. People are settling all year round. They work in agriculture, the mills, restaurants and other locations. We were told that although in the 1970s there were no Latino businesses, there are now 28 Latino businesses in the area. Latinos are becoming an important force for redevelopment in the area. Latino settlement was encouraged by the Immigration Reform Act of 1986 and by the Family Reunification Act of 1990. These acts made it possible for Latinos to legalize their status in this country and to bring in their families.

New Latinos are accepted easily. They have sponsorship from their hometown or home state in Mexico and other locations. This is a *compadre* system, whereby a newcomer has a place to stay, and assistance in getting a job.

“Kids who came here 20 years ago are now working in service industries and government centers. So now there are Spanish speakers in key places that can help the newcomers.”

It generally takes two years “in the fields” until networking can land a Latino another job. After 5-6 years in Madras, a Latino is ready for the greater opportunities of Redmond and Bend.

Although there is support for individual newcomers, the Latino community suffers from a lack of unity. The differences in the community—between “legals and illegals,” those that have been here awhile and the newly arrived, and those that “work in the fields” and business owners—are played out in the lack of leadership and the lack of common direction. Because of these factors, the Latino community in Madras relies on informal caretaking through trusted individuals, rather than formally established organizations, to adapt to Madras society.

Madras is a community that has had more practice in dealing with ethnic diversity and is more comfortable with it. A few years ago, when the Rainbow Coalition held its gathering in the Ochoco National Forest, Prineville residents were quite alarmed by some of the activities and the physical appearance of some participants, while Madras residents took it more in stride.

### **Natural Resource Issues**

When ranching began to dominate Madras agriculture in the 1950s, several ranchers obtained grazing permits for Forest Service and BLM lands. The restoration of the grasslands, in partnership between ranchers and the agencies, was well regarded in this area.

“I remember what those lands used to look like in comparison to today.”

“I have a farm and run cattle next to BLM. BLM land is overgrazed.”

“The loss of agricultural employment because of mechanization is troublesome.”

## Section Six: The Ochoco Human Resource Unit

The Ochoco Human Resource Unit (Figure Six) is comprised mainly of Crook County. It stretches from the Ochoco Summit on the north, to a line south of the Prineville Reservoir through the Maury Mountains to the south, generally from the county line on the east beyond Suplee, to just west of Powell Butte on the west.

In addition to our fieldwork, staff from the Forest Service and BLM participated in this community description.

Figure Six:  
The Ochoco Human Resource Unit



### **Settlement Patterns**

Crook County in 1998 had a population of 16,650, experiencing an 18% increase since 1990, while Prineville grew to 6,920 in the same years, growing by 29% (OED 2000: 7). The City's population is projected to grow from 2.5 to 3.5% over the next two decades, a jump from the moderate annual rate of about 1% for prior years (City of Prineville 2000: 1)

Much of the current settlement is "spillover" from the growth in the Bend-Redmond metropolitan area. Prineville is the source of lower cost land and housing, although a number of observers point out that the housing cost differential is beginning to disappear.

Nearly 90% of the in-migrants to the area are under 65. Retirement makes up an important part of the migrating population, and many of them are "early retirees" under



65. Retirement motivation is attributed to a wish for a drier climate and a smaller community.

“I don’t miss the rain of Tigard a bit.”

Many in-migrants are young families attracted to the small town lifestyle and affordable housing. City officials estimated that of the last 200 units sold, 25% were retirees, 25% were existing younger families seeking to upgrade, 30% were from Bend and Redmond, and 20% were from other locations.

“We all used to live in town but there’s lots of new subdivisions going in all over. My parents moved out first and bought a house in \_\_\_\_, and then we built a new custom house and now my brother and his wife and kids just moved there too.”

“When I see these large, expensive homes that are going in, I have to wonder, ‘What are these people doing? Where are they working?’”

Other in-migrants are adults who were raised in the area as kids. Numerous stories were told of going off to the city, starting a family, and then returning to the area to raise the kids and to get away from the “rat race.”

“My son is 37 and just moved back with his family after years in Las Vegas. He got fed up with city life.”

“I moved here from southern California 7 months ago. My mom moved here years ago and we visited often. When my kids turned 10 and 13, I decided to get them out of there.”

Residents seem to have a “live and let live” philosophy with settlement. Nicer homes exist next to run down homes, mobile homes next to conventional homes. Some properties are filled with extra cars and items lying about, and others are kept landscaped and bare. Redevelopment is not happening as much as new building. It may be that the costs of redevelopment are higher than new home construction. New residents are preferring bigger lot sizes and animals. Farmlands are getting broken up because of new development pressures. Open space is not yet a concept talked about.

Latinos are present in greater numbers and tend to live in the trailer parks. There is now a Latino store. Latinos have been a very minor public in the area until very recently. Now, their presence is more visible. Currently in the schools, only about 3% of the student population is enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The school has noted a slight increase in Latinos over time. Latinos remarked that their lives were much better since coming to southern Oregon—potable water and decent jobs stand out. Two stories were reported in which Latino children were beaten or treated badly. They were also quite insistent that townspeople overall have been very hospitable and that they have felt welcomed in the community.

The key feature of settlement is absorption of a growing population. Socially, settlement is driven by the attraction of people to the area because of its rural feel, small town atmosphere, and friendliness. Residents expressed ambivalence about this growth. Some thought of it in positive terms

“Prineville is finally starting to grow.”

Others were less positive:

“We get questions, ‘Are you almost done [building]?’ When we say the subdivision has 100 units to go, they roll their eyes.”

Although the oldtimers do not entirely dislike the idea of new people coming in, there is some resistance. Many do not want to see any changes happening. They don’t want it to be like the bigger cities.

“The transition has been OK. Oldtimers are not as active and the new generation is saying OK.”

“Newcomers are all right if they are not the bad element. If they are honest and make an effort, they will be accepted. We have had some doozers come in here.”

“It is so friendly here. Neighbors in Portland wouldn’t even talk to us.”

“I was thinking this morning driving to work how many people wave to say ‘hi!’ and I realize how many people I’ve gotten to know.” [a newcomer of two years]

“Newcomers seem like they get along OK. They get plugged into churches and the Senior Center.”

“When I was younger, I knew everybody in town and now that’s really changed.” [woman in her early thirties, born and raised in Prineville]

“It seems like we know a lot of people but we don’t really feel welcomed yet.” [newcomer of one year]

“We are very proud of this town. We are 6<sup>th</sup> generation.”

“You have to get involved to feel welcomed. Some people just get isolated.”

“It is still a town you can walk down the street at 1 a.m. and be safe.”

## **Work Routines**

Livestock was been the primary mainstay of the economy for the first 50 years after settlement. The Ochoco and the Prineville Reservoirs, however, have brought about many

specialized cash crops through irrigation projects. These crops include mint oil, seed crops such as carrots, and sugar beets (City of Prineville 2000).

“We have been both farmers and ranchers. Raising kids on the farm was wonderful.”

“You have to leave the land fallow here one year in three or it doesn’t come back. Conservation is the key word.”

In Paulina, family ranches are becoming corporate ranches, run by out-of-area owners or investment boards. The sellers tend to leave the area. While older ranchers tend to work exclusively on the ranch, younger ranchers typically hold two jobs.

Timber production dates from the 1890s and accelerated after the 1930s. Partly due to cutbacks in the federal timber supply, secondary wood products manufacturing (molding and millworks) is now dominant in employment (City of Prineville 2000). The average pay in secondary plants is less than lumber mills and timber harvesting jobs. Many citizens commented on the loss of the mills, which ones are remaining, and so on.

“I remember Dad would drop us off in the snow on the way to his logging job. We’d play all day and he’d come back to pick us up at the end of the day.”

“In the early ‘90s, when logging was really slowing down, I went back to school at the community college in Bend and got trained in computers.”

“My husband drives a log truck and work dried up here. He’s working now in California for a year, and comes home once a month. He has the same wages he did in ’86.”

The Les Schwab Tire Company has its company headquarters in Prineville and has well over 800 employees. It is a significant source of employment for ex-timber and wood products workers. Residents worried whether headquarters would be moved to the I-5 corridor and what a loss to the town it would be.

The recreation-tourism sector of the economy is growing as well. Hunting and year-round fishing are major attractions for visitors. Rockhounding in the area is world renowned and is showcased each year at a Rockhound “Powwow” at the County Fairgrounds (City of Prineville 2000: 3). New recreation stores, such as the fly fishing store, have reportedly done very well.

The retirement influence in Crook County is quite pronounced. Transfer payments, which is the infusion of pension and other retirement income into an area, grew by 71% between 1987 and 1997. It has become the number one source of personal income for Crook County residents (OED 2000: 40).

Overall, like other parts of Oregon, the economy has shifted from a reliance on agriculture and timber to one of trades and services fueled by recreation, tourism, and retirement. The trades and services sectors are associated with lower wages generally than the manufacturing sectors. This economy often requires both spouses to work and is linked to community issues such as youth supervision after school.

Some residents pointed to a “manana” type of attitude among local service businesses. Local businesses have had to learn that someone from another town can provide that service, and that if they want the business they have to be available.

“When I first came, it was difficult to get any services. Sometimes it still isn’t easy. They’d say, ‘Gee, I’m sorry but we’re going hunting next week, and then I’ve got to do something with my wife, and I’m not sure how soon I can get to you.’”

Many residents noted a visible increase in commuting in the last 5 to 8 years.

“Commuting has really gone up in the last 5 years.”

“This is a commuting economy. Check out the Redmond highway at 6 a.m.”

“This is turning into a bedroom community for Redmond and Bend. Most of the teachers who teach here, don’t live here. Most people don’t like it. One of these days, we will wake up with a larger community but no infrastructure to support it.”

“So many new people are driving to the Redmond-Bend area for work. The infrastructure is not keeping up with demand, the revenues are not enough to pay for them, so the question is, how will the city and county meet this challenge?”

The commuting is associated with economic leakage related to a loss of retail stores to Bend.

“Bend retail has been growing and has hurt our retail. We can’t compete with the ‘box’ stores.”

“We lost Penny’s, Sears, Ericksons. Clothing stores are really needed.”

“Most people go to Redmond or Bend for stuff. You can’t even find a decent pair of underpants in this town. You hear on the radio, ‘Support your community—buy local’ but it’s crazy if it’s not available or you can’t afford it.”

“There used to be a Sprouse-Reitz and that was the only place in town to get fabric. Now there’s no place to buy material for sewing and everybody here sews!”

“There’s a lot of turnover in businesses. Here one day, gone the next.”

“The town really needs new business and industry, but the ‘fathers of the community,’ who are all older, are trying to keep the small town feeling. They discourage new business.”

“Elected officials discourage new business.”

## **Support Services**

The city has infrastructure needs in the next several years that will need addressing. City sewer will approach capacity within a few years. A jail is needed and “roads are in bad shape and need work.” The fire district and department relies on volunteers and is well-regarded. Other services in the community were observed:

“You don’t want to go to the hospital here. They’ll kill you. I lost my grandfather and nearly lost my grandmother to incompetent health care.”

“We’ve got a great new library with lots of computers and things for everyone.”

Residents were active in their discussion and support of kids and youth. A strong theme emerged that “kids need more to do.” Some worry was expressed about emerging gangs and new kids in the schools, but “it’s mostly safe for kids.” A recent decision refused to allow a Boys and Girls Club to be build on school property.

“There’s nothing for high schoolers to do. You can’t even go to a movie here. That’s one reason there is so much alcoholism and teen pregnancy here. My husband used to drink a lot in high school and luckily doesn’t now. I never was much into that. I don’t know if a place to ‘hangout’ would help, but other than bowling and an occasional skate night, there’s not much.”

“There’s a lot of stuff for kids—water sports, baseball, dance. But what we really need is an indoor swimming pool. We’ve got good teams but they can’t practice year round because there’s only the outdoor pool.”

“There’s a lot of teen pregnancy and alcohol use.”

“The Eastside Four Square Church is building a Teen Center using manufactured homes out near BLM, hoping to offer more activities for kids.”

“Youth are challenged because there’s nowhere to hangout. Alcohol is a big problem. Then if they are coming home from Redmond, they slide off the road. Teen pregnancy also a concern. There are a number of girls now pregnant and with small children at the high school. The kids can’t wait to leave.”

Many residents linked Prineville's past to a low value for education. With the timber economy of the past and the blue-collar base, a good education was not important. People could earn a good living without it. As Prineville is becoming drawn into the urban economy of Bend-Redmond, education is increasingly important. Some people believe the high school has deterred some families from settling here.

The Senior Center serves from 120-220 meals per day. The Soroptimists' contribution in starting and running the Center was commented on favorably by many residents.

“We even have seniors from Bend and Redmond coming here. There's one couple from Madras who drive over every day for lunch. If a regular doesn't show up for a day or two, I call them to see what's going on.”

Many organizations exist to serve the interests of local residents. Among those mentioned by residents were churches, American Legion, Eagles, VFW, Grange Clubs, ROTC, Boys and Girls Club at the high school, and the Senior Center.

A large number of partnerships exist between the federal land management agencies and local organizations. Among them:

- FS/Crook County Health and Human Services grant for youth and other services through the Rural Community Assistance program.
- FS/BLM have sponsored a day care.
- State Police
- Forest Service and Paulina have cooperated to develop a dump station.
- Law enforcement
- 911 Dispatch
- The coordinated woodcutting program of BLM and Forest Service

Among informal support services noted in the community are:

- School sports program
- Hospice tree (Forest Service)
- Adopt-a-Highway clean up by various organizations
- Support for the Humane Society
- Support for families at Christmas
- Aid to the High School
- The community rallying together during the flooding.

“Folks really pulled together in the flood of '98. We lost 7 seniors because they lost everything and it broke their hearts. A couple died within two weeks of each other. At that age, it's nearly impossible to start over. It just takes too much out of you.”

“This town is really 'cliquish' until some disaster hits, then everyone comes together, meets the needs, and then almost overnight, it's back to the old cliques.”

“This is the most caring community I’ve ever seen—the volunteering and the community spirit. There are many people who volunteer for community service projects, such as going out to the recreational areas to clean up, clear brush, and generally keep their forests in good condition.”

“It’s a nice town for kids. It seems like every girl takes dance lessons. And lots of sports things.”

“People do seem to take care of each other, especially if you’re part of a church.”

Paulina residents are even more self-reliant. Although they do have emergency services and Life Flight for emergencies, they do not need law enforcement (and do not need it, thank you very much!) and rely on neighbors and friends. Informal networks with lots of “unwritten rules” dominate the community. Community projects are done by 4-H, the church, Pau Mau Club, and the Rodeo club. The local school offers K-8. High schoolers go to Prineville.

### **Recreation Activities**

Residents are outdoor oriented and take ample advantage of outstanding hunting and year-round fishing. The community “rolls out the red carpet” for visiting hunters--stores stay open late, baked goods are sold, and booths provide information. The Reservoirs bring in 300-400,000 visitors each year. Agriculturalists complain of trespass, vandalism and other problems created by this influx. Residents felt that education of recreationists will be an ongoing challenge, both for visitors and residents.

“We are only one hour to the best habitat anywhere.”

“We are well known for bear and elk. You can be in these areas in 35 minutes. People who come here also relocate here for this purpose.”

“Hunting and fishing are big here. My husband is a hunter. Also, people go to the mountains to play in the snow in the winter, camp in the summer to escape the heat and to be near trees.”

“Seniors come here to slow down. They like the year round fishing.”

“There are a lot of equestrian activities that draw people in.”

“We do a lot of camping and fishing.”

“There is a huge influx of visitors in the summer. The main street is so busy with a stream of cars going through. It gets so bad you can’t even buy gas because the lines are 5 miles long.”

“We used to be able to go to Smith Rock for picnics, but now it is a state park. You have to pay.”

For recreation, Paulina residents rely on satellite TV and baseball, basketball, and volleyball games. Activities revolve around potlucks, vehicles, guns, alcohol, and horses. OHV use is widespread, and fishing and hunting are widespread activities. Commercial hunting ventures are increasing. There is increased interest in hiking opportunities by non-locals. Community events include card parties, soup dinners, dances and pig roasts.

### **Natural Resource Issues**

“One big problem we have in this town is with kids having parties on BLM land, getting drunk and then having accidents on their way back to town. Last year, two kids died that way. They fell off of Rim Rock. They were both drunk.”

“Kids do ‘mudbogging’—take their trucks out and trash out some open space, often public lands. They drive into the school parking lot and they get extra points for mud.”

“I think they should clean the lands more often. Every time I go to Redmond, I pull off on the side of the road and I see all of the garbage. It’s sad. Our public lands are being used as dumps.”

“We used to run cattle on BLM land but the grazing allotments have gone down to the point where it’s not worth being in the business anymore.”

Loss of severance tax for timber receipts. It was amazing how everyday citizens stated the same numbers as officials in citing this loss;

Many residents commented on the new BLM/ Forest Service complex east of town.

“The new buildings are promoting strip development. They should have helped establish Prineville as the gateway, kept to downtown to stay available. You have these Post Offices, too, building on the edge of town—they become lost as gathering places.”

“They sure have big offices way out there. I really don’t know what they do, but we like it when they come and use our business.”

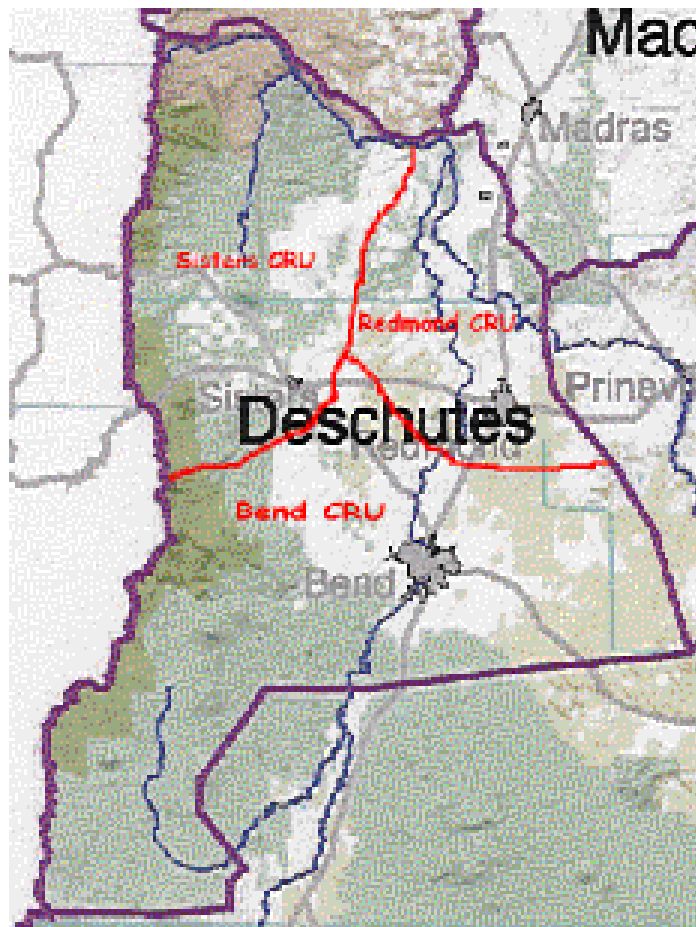
“The federal government plays a key role in creating more livable communities. There could be more attention to the consequences of facility location on housing, transportation, and downtown vitality.”



## Section Seven: The Deschutes Human Resource Unit

The Deschutes Human Resource Unit is depicted in Figure Seven. It stretches from the Warm Springs Indian Reservation along the Cascade crest to Wickiup Reservoir, up the west side of Highway 97 to include Sun River, south and east of Bend to Big Bear Butte, north generally along the county line, taking in Redmond and tying in with the southern border of the Reservation. Figure Six also shows the three Community Resource Units (CRUs) within the Deschutes HRU—Redmond, Sisters, and Bend, the so-called “triangle” that is experiencing the more profound urbanization in the region.

Figure Seven:  
The Deschutes Human Resource Unit



This section will describe the HRU in general terms and then the unique features of the three CRUs.

There are two competing themes in the HRU:

1. “Growth is scary.” [very common] Many people expressed worries about the growth, both in terms of preserving the quality of life that makes the area desirable, and in terms of the community services necessary to serve a growing population. The discussion on Community Issues will provide greater detail about these concerns.

“It’s scary how fast it’s growing.”

2. “Growth is exciting.” [also very common] There is a palpable level of excitement in these communities about the changes that are occurring—that the economy is growing; new people are bringing in new ideas, leadership and perspectives; the area provides any kind of recreation imaginable for a very active population, “except surfing;” and, the region is coming into its own vis-à-vis other areas of the state and the nation.

“With Bend annexation now at 50,000 a benchmark has been reached. Businesses often target 50,000 before considering a new location.”

One effect of urbanization is the increasingly specialized nature of its land use. Land use in this area up to the recent past has been mixed, as is typical of a rural area. Whether in Redmond, Sisters, or Bend, it is easy to find mobile homes next to custom homes, homes neatly kept next to homes with last decade’s cars in the yard, large animals on one parcel next to one that has suburban grass, or fences around one property next to properties without. Only in the core urban areas and the newer housing areas is there evidence of specialized purposes—adult communities, middle-class subdivisions, and so on. In the future, it is likely that different uses will be regulated more closely.

The area is experiencing an economic transition from timber and agriculture to manufacturing, recreation and retirement. The trades and services sector dominate the economic base.

“When the mills collapsed, gainful employment was lost. The wages and benefits are not there for service jobs.”

The Deschutes Fair and Expo Center, completed in 1999 and built on 132 acres, is the largest fairgrounds in Oregon. It is rapidly become a regional facility to showcase numerous recreation, sports, and cultural events. Created through a county bond levy, the projects total cost is more than \$30 million. Among its features are a multi-use indoor arena, a conference center with three facilities, and a High Desert Activities Center, and an outdoor arena. Its events already clog the calendar and feature a range of events from horse shows, rodeos, RV trade shows, concerts, art shows, sporting events, motocross races, banquets, conferences, dances, fiddler sessions, and of course, the yearly fair (The Redmond Spokesman Visitor Guide 1999).

There are now three destination resorts in the HRU—Black Butte, Eagle Crest, and Sunriver. Their promoters point to the benefits of employment and amenities for the local area, with only the impacts of “traffic and school kids.” Resort detractors point to the

generally lower pay of these facilities and the demand for affordable housing for workers that such facilities create.

”Destination resorts will become a taboo word.”

The Sunriver Homeowners Association has 4000 members, of which ¼ are full time and ¾ are part time. Through fees paid by owners, the association furnishes police, fire, community development, communication, recreation and accounting. There seems to be a strong sense of community, with residents first relating within the association, then to Sunriver, and then to Bend. La Pine is a minor association. Despite the transiency of much of the population, there is a core community of people with leadership to address issues of concern. Volunteer efforts have included noxious weeds, and litter control.

The Sunriver community is active in forest health issues. There is a 1000-acre meadow called Great Meadows with a stable that is managed through the association. The association also has a large program called “Ladder Fuels Reduction.” Association members inspect private property each year, requiring compliance with association standards, and issuing notices if necessary. The standards stipulate how much bitterbrush and rabbit brush is to be left after treatment. This year, the association is treating 150 acres in 5 units through a bid process. It is on a six-year cycle for fuels. The success of the association in treating fuels reduction in an ongoing way may earn them a better classification for “fire readiness.” The association does not work on public lands directly but its board is active in support of agencies’ efforts. After a recent fire approached Sunriver, firefighters credited the fuels reduction effort of the Forest Service for minimal fire damage.

The recreation activities in the HRU are enormous.

- “This area has 10 million visitor days per year. Deschutes County generated \$1.8 million in 1999 from the lodging tax, one million of it being attributed to Bend itself. The Tourism Council is working on an Oregon designation as “Quality Service City”, qualifying it for money. A “customer service survey” is underway as well as development of a five-year plan.” [local official]

The state Tourism Commission reported that tourism is Oregon’s 4<sup>th</sup> largest revenue source, generating an estimated \$5.2 billion in 1998. Total visitors to state in 1997 were estimated to be 43.5 million. Specific to the Bend area, the survey reported that 85% of visitors are satisfied with services, 57% heard about Bend from “friends, relatives, word of mouth,” and 95% reported that they were likely to return. The survey revealed visitor dissatisfaction with local signage and a reliance on food servers and clerks for tourism information. Customer training for visitor service employees was identified as a current need in the Deschutes area (Deschutes National Forest, Public Affairs Officer, 5/14/2000).

## **The Community Resource Unit of Redmond**

Figure Seven shows the Community Resource Unit of Redmond. It proceeds from Juniper Butte in the north, takes in the Lower Bridge country and west to the end of BLM lands, cuts through the “golden triangle” to include Cline Buttes, and swings east to the county line between Alfalfa and Powell Butte.

Redmond was created through irrigation infrastructure developed by community leaders in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Between 1990 and 1998, Redmond’s population grew by 74%, to 12,435 (OED 2000). The city of Redmond was reported to have grown 13% in the last two years by a city official. The city issues a building permit a day. Infrastructure capacity is all right for now. The settlement pattern of Redmond is fairly high density in the inner areas, and larger acreages and the presence of farm animals in the periphery. The city has also started to build larger, more expensive homes in the southeast.

“Outside the city people like 5 acre parcels; they want the space. They are from Portland and they came here for space.”

The present economic base of Redmond is linked to the greater HRU, especially Bend, as well as to the region. The growth of recreation, tourism and high tech industries that is fueling the region is having unique effects in Redmond. First, it is sharing the title with Bend of regional service center. The presence of the airport, the new fairgrounds in Redmond, the planned expansions at COCC’s North Campus, and the strip development filling in between Redmond and Bend, means that Redmond will be a key player in the region as time goes on. Second, its base of relatively affordable housing stock is serving workers of the area very well, contributing to commuting frustrations, but providing a service not matched elsewhere. Third, similar to other areas that must live in the shadow of a larger city, Redmond is specializing in its activities so that it remains attractive to diverse segments of society. For example, Redmond has become known for its 11 antique shops and attracts area visitors and Bend residents. It is moving ahead with its railroad depot restoration and taking other steps to showcase its history.

“This is a town of worker bees. They live here because affordable housing stock is here. The housing is unpretentious and simple.”

The major employers of Redmond are the Redmond School District (675 employees), Eagle Crest Resort (640) and the Central Oregon District Hospital (294) (Spokesman 1999: 30).

Residents reported strong support for local businesses.

“The shift is from farming type stores to domestic, or I don’t know what you’d call it.”

Residents told many stories of the agricultural history of Redmond and its transition away from that base. Apparently, the soils in the area are not that good, with the exception of the Lower Bridge Country. Agricultural activity in the area operated in fads or spurts. In the 1960s and 70s, small dairies were very popular until the bulk dairies began to out-compete them. Poultry were introduced. Farmers thought because it was dry there would be less respiratory disease, but they ended up bringing disease from the “valley.” There was not much market, and bigger operations again took over. Many tried sheep off and on, others tried potatoes.

“All my family was farmers. At the last reunion, only one was still farming.”

As agriculture declined, landowners shifted to other uses. Those that subdivided prior to land use laws then sold their parcels and moved on to other things. Others went into business for themselves. Today, much of agriculture in the Redmond area is called “hobby farms”—they generate little income, provide a tax write off for the owners, and they require ample dollars to get into.

Redmond High School grew from 1100 to 1600 in the last 8 years, a rate of 45%. The ethnic composition has been holding steady, with Caucasians numbering 98-99%. The income level of students has generally been rising and new students tend to be better educated and more focused than existing students. The High School expects natural resource curriculum and environmental science to be even more popular in the future.

“Redmond is a city crazy about its parks,” one official stated. The city has numerous parks. Open Space Park in the northeast area of town has lots of people using the land for walking, hiking, jogging, and baseball games. Residents are presently debating about Dry Canyon, whether all or part of it should be a park, and how to compensate owners if their land is not developed.

“Everyone wants to be outside.”

A number of community themes came out repeatedly in residents’ stories.

1. “This community is volunteer oriented.” Examples mentioned included the sports complex, the railroad depot restoration, the Boys and Girls Club that was recruited, and the recently dedicated community center.

“One thing I like about Redmond is that, even though a number of people move here, they don’t seem to be bent on changing it. They join in the community, like 4-H, horses, and other activities.”

“The churches are strong here.”

2. “There is a smaller feel here than Bend.”

“When we lived in Bend, we woke up one night with sirens and commotion next door. When we looked out, we saw police arresting people next door. We decided that Bend was not where we wanted to live and we moved to this mobile in Redmond. People are friendly here. It’s a nice place to live.”

“Redmond is so much more mellow than Bend. Much less violence or evidence of drugs. Still lots of us go to Bend for entertainment—Club 97 is good for dancing!”

3. “Bend versus Redmond”

“Bend has already built to their UGB [urban growth boundary] and will be forced to infill.”

“Redmond is the location for the next wave of growth because their UGB [urban growth boundary] is not filled in.”

“We are the center but Bend will not admit it. There is lots of rivalry dating back to high school competition. We have the regional airport, and we have more industrial land.”

“Bend won’t come here for meetings. We go there all the time.”

“Bend and Redmond are growing together. Maybe the county is a resource to bring these entities together.”

***Community Issues of Redmond***

**Parks**

Dry Canyon in Redmond has been contentious recently, with residents having a keen interest in preserving it for a park, but which portions, and how to compensate landowners, has not been worked out.

“I’ve never seen a town so crazy about parks. You can find one every few blocks. There is consensus about keeping Dry Canyon open.”

“The City won’t help us keep these small parks open. I think they are concerned with the expense for parks under 3 acres. The developer in our neighborhood agreed to give one acre to the city for open space, but now wants to divide it into 5 lots and it looks the City is going to do it.”

## Poverty

“People working here are not making huge wages. Many times, they are not even making enough to live independently. Many young people are living three and four to a housing unit. A popular bumper sticker seen around says, ‘Central Oregon: Poverty with a View.’”

## Transportation

The need for a by-pass is only going to get worse. Twenty years ago, city fathers said no because they wanted the traffic.”

## Loss of retail

“Stores worry now about the big store. Downtown is going to specialty stores. Seniors can’t find things now. Like there is no drug store.”

## **The Community Resource Unit of Sisters**

The Sisters CRU (Figure Seven) goes from the Sisters Mountains northeast into Jefferson County to include Squaw Creek and the Cove Palisades State Park, west along the Warm Springs Indian Reservation’s southern border to Jefferson Peak, and south along the Cascade ridgeline. It includes the neighborhood areas of Camp Sherman and Black Butte Ranch, both distinctive areas in their own right. Resources did not permit identifying their unique interests.

Sisters population is about 820, but the “greater Sisters area” has about 8000 people (The Nugget, Sisters Oregon Guide, 1999). The destiny of Sisters has been shaped by its settlement. With the high amount of public ownership within and around it, it has had a core of land in the town that was fairly well built out years ago. As a result, approximately 10% of Sisters residents live in the core of the community, in housing that is much older and in need of re-development. The other 90% of residents live in the periphery around the community, in nicer, newer, and larger homes that reflect much of the recent in-migration. These class differences have played out politically over the years, but greater cooperation has been achieved the last two years.

The economic base of Sisters is centered around tourism and recreation along with some light industrial activity. The story is that Sisters was rejuvenated in the 1970s when principals from Black Butte Ranch offered to subsidize redevelopment of the retail areas of Sisters if merchants would agree to an “old western” motif. Merchants agreed, sizable investments were made, and there has been a core of tourism related businesses functioning ever since. Sisters is known as the summer playground for people from “the valley,” that is, the Willamette Valley to the west. Summer homes are prevalent.

“In the summer, the cars are so thick coming down the highway, I can wait forever to cross the street.”

Light industrial activity includes “Y-Tech” that produces electronic pest control devices, and Desertronics that manufactures chips for Y-Tech. Metabolic Maintenance and Multnomah Publishing are major employers, as is The Forest Service and the school district. The area has a good number of retirement businesses, as well as so-called “lone eagles” who make their living in the global marketplace via telecommunications and travel, so live in the Sisters area for its quality of life considerations.

The Chamber of Commerce recently took over economic development initiatives. It determined that business recruitment was not feasible because of limited land. It is focusing on business retention expansion, as well as strategies to get beyond a five month tourist economy.

Rapid housing inflation has been the result of increasing demand from newcomers and the sewage limitations of Sisters that has stymied redevelopment of the town’s core. Most housing in the core is substandard. Some zoning within the urban growth boundary would permit four-plex construction, but at a reported \$4.75 square foot, affordability remains elusive.

“The Lazy 2 was sold and went from \$1 million to \$7 million in five years.”

Five new housing developments are planned or underway. They are priced too high for the average worker. Many workers commute from Bend and Redmond to their jobs in Sisters. Even business owners are reported to live outside of town.

Sisters has a number of community groups functioning to improve local conditions. Among the most important are CATS, SOAR, and Habitat for Humanity. The Citizen Action Team was fostered by the Forest Service and credited for creating new leadership in the community and working through the polarized conflicts of several years ago. The Forest Service also provided computers, office, and communications help. CATS organized a community process of discussion, debate and strategic planning that clearly lays out future direction for the community. Community goals include a performing arts center, a possible community center at the present site of the middle school, and playfields. With regard to natural resources, the CATS facilitated the purchase of Squaw Creek near Camp Polk by the Deschutes Basin Land Trust for riparian and fish habitat restoration activities.

SOAR is Sisters Organization for Activities and Recreation, which became a taxing district last year. It focuses on youth activities such as rock climbing, white water, and before and after school programs. It has a mid-youth center and is now trying to create a teen center.

Habitat for Humanity bought the house that holds its thrift store six years ago. The proceeds from its store have been enough to fund the construction of 14 homes in the Sisters area.



Residents believe that community organizations are working together better than they did in the past.

“This town is so strong with volunteers. The elementary school needed classrooms, so local people built four. That was quite an undertaking.”

### *Community Issues in Sisters*

The major infrastructure issue in Sisters has been sewage. The community’s reliance on septic tanks has not been adequate, and a sewage treatment plant was recently approved. Construction should begin soon. The Forest Service played a crucial role in the sale of land to the city for sewage treatment. It is expected that completion of the sewage plant will induce intensive home building and home redevelopment activity.

Prior to two years ago, Sisters was wracked by sharp conflicts in the community about future direction.

“There was a split between the growers and the no-growers, but those against growth left town.”

The CATS is exploring with the state legislature a parish form of government that would allow its true boundaries to function as the decision-making unit.

The strategic plan of Sisters developed through CATS identified affordable housing as the first priority.

“We lost the lumber camp that for 30 years was our low cost housing.”

“The Circle 5 [trailer park] is raising space rent to \$275. Lots of workers live there.”

“The gap between low and high income in Sisters is widening.”

“We need more diversity in the economy. Tourism is seasonal. People have to put money away for the winter. We need jobs that are not tourist jobs.”

“Half the 30 workers at the telemarketing company come in from Redmond.”

### *Community Issues Regarding the Forest Service*

Residents were quite clear about the positive contributions of the Forest Service to their community over the last several years. Among the key benefits discussed were:

- Fostering the Community Action Team;
- The land exchange for the new sewage treatment plan;

- The kiosk and restrooms on the west side, funded through national scenic by-way program;
- The Squaw Creek Historical Festival is still talked about;
- Coordinated fuels reduction efforts;
- The presence of the ranger station in town is praised as promoting communication and collaboration.

While interagency coordination for fire is considered good, a number of residents voiced interest in greater collaboration between fire management agencies such as the Forest Service and private landowners.

“I want to get permission to treat the Forest Service land next to mine for fire protection. I understand this is not common. People are pleased with the cutting but there is more to do.”

“It has been annoying dealing with the Forest Service on the land exchange. It was extremely frustrating to see how local staff were hampered by higher levels. The higher we went, the more inflexible the agency became.”

“The Forest Service is getting out and talking more than it did 5 years ago. This is good. If there is an issue, they are active on it, such as the land exchange. The new Ranger realizes he needs cooperation if he’s going to get things done.”

“The trailhead passes were a nightmare for community relations. No one questioned the need for funds, but it was not coordinated well. This year, the program has been designed so that one pass fits all, but just for Forest Service lands.”

“The biggest issue years ago was the Forest Service shelterwood timber program, which was really just a two-step clearcut. It generated a lot of ill will. It ripped the land up pretty good. Once their plan was done, they stopped. Reforestation has been successful on all these 20-60 acre clearcuts.

“We need more input on road closures. Many support the closures, especially on flat ground, but they get no chance for having their say.”

“In the summer, the Forest Service is not able to keep up with the litter, the dumping, the horse manure. They need to use citizens more to help them.”

“Illegal wood cutting still goes on.”

“The Deschutes Forest closes off dispersed areas. We get the feeling that they are afraid of litter. They just close off more and more places.”

“I resent commercial gatherers, like pine cones. We like to pick mushrooms. They make me feel unwelcome.”

“Citizens for trail park maintenance are needed, especially after winter.”

## **The Community Resource Unit of Bend**

Although Bend (Figure Seven) is the center of much of the activity written about in this report, it is getting the least treatment, partly because our direction was to focus more on the rural areas. However, the Neighborhood Resource Units (NRUs) of the city of Bend were developed as part of this project. Although these boundaries were not digitized for this report, the map is on file with the Ochoco National Forest.

Ranching in the Bend area was initially large operations. In recent years, agriculture is now hobby operations or specialized, like llamas, plants, a gin making plant, and wineries. A feed store in a new suburb in Bend is very busy. The owner stated that they do regular business with ranchers from Paisley and other eastern towns. Their local business is primarily suburban. Rich people buy 5 to 40 acres, get big animals, and use local BLM lands for riding.

The city of Bend is struggling to manage the growth of the last several years and to maintain its livability. It has recently completed a citizen survey that identified transportation and growth as major community issues.

“Bend is so much a class system—you are either wealthy or like the rest of us—working class.”

It will be important in the next phase of work of the Central Oregon Initiative to get with residents of Bend to hear their stories of changes in their community and of their relationship with public lands. We understand from agency personnel that their ties in the city are fairly formal—city officials, county commissioners, organization directors, and so. They also have ties with user groups that are organized into clubs. The next phase should be neighborhood based so that widespread contact can be achieved. Contact with supply businesses that service public lands activities (recreation stores, feed stores) will broaden the base of communication and set the stage for collaborative problem-solving.

## **Natural Resource Issues in the Deschutes HRU**

Trash

“I am a permittee with BLM. The biggest issue for me is trash that my neighbors and I find. In some places, it is as far as the eye can see. One neighbor went to enormous expense to clean it up, only to see it start to accumulate again the next season. We are afraid of potential liability with BLM if this continues.”

## Recreation

“Certified wheat free horses will soon be required on trails, as they do in Idaho and California. It’s for the control of noxious weeds.”

“Armed law enforcement in the last 4-5 years is insulting. I understand the need but it makes me feel like a criminal.”

“The Redmond Caves should be preserved, restored, and integrated with a regional vision. It is surrounded by industrial land. You could get an interpretive center in there. Could there be a partnership in there?”

“The Forest Service should work with the concessionaires more, get them to be more responsive to the public. You go to resorts and get bad advice, and the Forest Service gets the complaint.”

## Recreation fees

“I don’t agree with trail fees. This is public land.”

“I can’t afford the fees to get Forest Service and BLM lands.”

“Day use fees and permits are keeping local people from enjoying the recreational areas that many have grown up with. How about a different set of fees for residents than for tourists?”

“There are some areas of Forest Service and BLM lands that I don’t go to anymore because I can’t afford the fee, especially if I’m just going there an hour.”

“We used to go to trailheads at midnight because we’d leave after I got off work. We wouldn’t know until the last minute that we needed a permit and you can’t get one when the stores are closed.”

“The fees are better coordinated now. One pass will get you into all Forest Service lands.”

“Fees should be applied consistently between the two agencies.”

## Access

“Those guys [Forest Service and BLM] act like it’s their ground and it’s not. They are cutting off access to public lands. There are too many road closures.”

## Off Road Vehicles

“We are replacing the devil of timber with the devil of ORV [off road vehicles].”

“Environmentalists shut down ORV near Millican. Isn’t it better to have them in place to minimize damage?”

## Communication

“Education needs are growing, to learn the history and ecology. There are more and more people with less and less knowledge of the land.”

“New people are not yet plugged in, in terms of public involvement, knowledge of the land, participation in civic affairs.”

“The Chamber could help direct people to recreation opportunities. Let people know where to go with their four-wheeler, what to do.”

“Outfitters do not have a good working relationship with the agencies—but would like to. It’s not that we have large disagreements either. I understand the restraints the BLM is under. Also, we are not very organized—it’s like we need a union or something, instead of all these independent voices.”

“It used to be Fish and Game would make the rules with the hunters. Now, with the feds involved more and more, it’s all ponytails. They are all enviros wanting to shut the land down. It’s all political now.”

“The Chamber could help direct people where to go for four wheel driving and other recreation activities.”

Inadequate law enforcement on public lands is a common public issue.

Land exchanges have a long and varied history in the area. Many exchanges have been between agencies. The values of land trades of BLM lands around Redmond for the airport and the fairgrounds, and perhaps the school, is a premier case of supporting community development in appropriate ways. Residents have identified other potential sites. The most logical future growth in the Deschutes HRU, for example, is between Bend and Redmond, the site of much BLM land. Future requests should be considered in a regional context and in a way that promotes appropriate land uses in the lower elevations, such as for open space, habitat corridors and other valued qualities.

“The School District is exploring a 2<sup>nd</sup> high school site by the airport. It is working with BLM since it is their land. The district is trying to evaluate the extra costs of development for such a distant site, versus the cost savings of BLM’s cheaper land.”

“If Forest Service land is not good for agriculture or forest conditions, development is appropriate.”

“The fairgrounds is hoping to work with BLM to acquire land for a campground, parking, and a racetrack.”

“It’s natural that the Forest Service should manage BLM lands in La Pine. It makes sense geographically and socially.”

#### Resource Use

“I opened my furniture company last month, making juniper and small log products. I can’t always get juniper. It doesn’t seem to be available from public lands.”

“Locals can’t find firewood.”

#### Fire

“We have to keep dealing with the fire hazard or we’re all going to burn.”

“Fire suppression is needed, especially in the recreation areas.”

#### Other

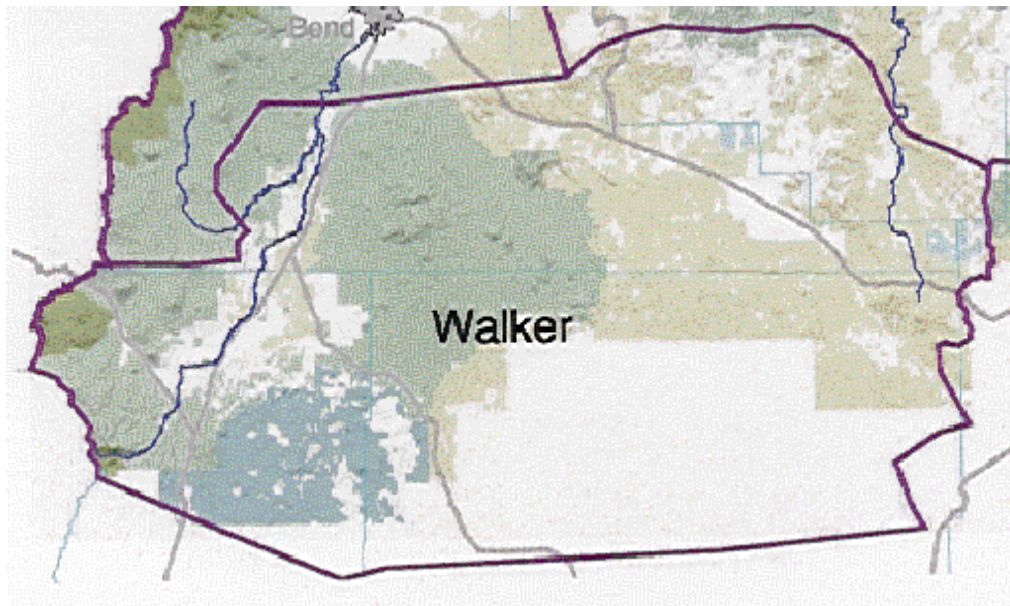
“How should the log cabin at Muskrat Lake be dealt with?”

“Those places along the Metolius are now being lived in year round. How can the septic take that without harming water quality?”

## Section Eight: The Walker Human Resource Unit

The Walker Human Resource Unit (Figure Eight) is the largest unit within the High Desert SRU. It stretches from the Cascade crest on the west to Glass Butte on the east, and from a point between La Pine and Sunriver on the north, to Diamond Lake Junction on the south, well into Klamath County. La Pine is the dominant population and service center. The unit includes Fort Rock and Christmas Valley, as well as Millican and Brothers, although Millican has been increasingly pulled into the Bend orbit as urbanization has grown. The following discussion relates primarily to the Chemult-La Pine corridor.

Figure Eight:  
The Walker Human Resource Unit



Several community themes were related by La Pine residents.

“La Pine has the reputation of being a backward town, full of drug addicts and welfare people, but the contrary is true. We have a community with different values than Bend. La Pine folks come here to get away from it all, to live in semi-seclusion.”

“La Pine is known as the ‘black sheep’ of Deschutes County. We are also known as ‘South County.’”

“It is surprising how much behind the scenes collaboration is going on in South County. There is tremendous support among groups dealing with social issues like domestic violence, teen pregnancy etc.”

“This area is ‘Bend-centric.’ Bend has the power and the money. In the past, it was difficult to get the Commissioners to recognize our problems, but that is much better now.”

“People take pride in the fact that La Pine is a beautiful rural community. There are some exciting things happening. For instance, we are involved with the Northwest Area Foundation and now we are looking how to work regionally on some of our issues.”

The economy of Walker HRU until recently was focused on natural resource sectors of agriculture and timber. The big mill at Gilchrist is the main source of employment. It used to be a family owned business and, just in the last few years, it was sold to Crown Pacific, who is said to be liquidating old growth to appease their stockholders. The rumor around town now is that the company has been sold to Sierra Pacific of California.

“When Crown came they let go of all their primary management. They let go of all the ‘gyppos’ that used to work for the Gilchrist family. Now if they are working at all, they are marking trees for the Forest Service at a service wage.”

“Not many wood cutters anymore.”

“Since the mills closed, there has been a change in the kinds of work that locals can do. Many cut firewood and that is how they make a living. The opportunities in La Pine are very limited.”

Ranchers and farmers are having a tough time unless they have big operations. Schools and Mid-State Electric Cooperative are now the biggest employers. As in other parts of rural Oregon, commuting to the urban zones for jobs is now the dominant economic patterns.

“Twenty years ago, you could make it on one income. Newly retired folks came in and both had to get jobs.”

La Pine settlement pattern is dispersed. Residents are scattered “all over into the mountains and the woods and the back areas.”

“People are in La Pine because they want to get away from it all—specifically, they did not want to be in Bend.”

La Pine evidently was zoned for relatively small parcels in the 1970s before land use laws took hold. According to residents, it used to be that the majority of landowners were absentee, like snowbirds, and retreat cabins for vacations. Many are semi-retired now and



most commute. La Pine has grown from a time of land speculation, like in the Christmas Valley, to more gradual growth. It is said to be the largest unincorporated area of the state, with a population of 12-18,000 depending on the season.

“Used to be a lot of absentee owners but now there are more year-round residents who are becoming more involved in community.”

“More and more young families are moving in, taking advantage of affordable housing and commuting to Bend to work.”

“There is more commuting now. Just look at the traffic in the morning.”

“There is more manufactured homes now.”

“There has been an explosion of people. Twenty years ago, there used to be 30 homes 7 miles east of La Pine. Now we are totally surrounded.”

“If you don’t see this community from the air, you don’t realize there are so many people.”

Communication in La Pine appears to an outsider to be problematic since there is no city government and no high-density downtown. Nevertheless, informal communication is effective and relied upon. The Minute Market and the truck stop are gathering places, as are the schools. Many people use e-mail. Network communication is high, although the level of rumors indicates that important networks do not get connected.

In addition, effective community leadership has been emerging in recent years, in part because the population shifted from absentee to full-time residents. Also, a 1992 farm bill allowed the Forest Service to promote rural development through Community Action Teams (CATS). The CATS is now a big force in the community, with most local organizations as members. It has elected officers, meets twice a month, and has multiple subcommittees. The Forest Service used to facilitate but that is less necessary now.

## **Community Issues**

Incorporation of the area is an idea that has been discussed for many years and is presently being debated again. The success of the Community Action Team (CATS) in mobilizing community action around key issues has prompted another look at this issue. The issue presently is being inaccurately linked to a subdivision proposal that local residents said would bring in 1800 units. Many residents stated they did not want the subdivision approved, and rumors are linking the subdivision and incorporation. The Northwest Area Foundation funded a study about incorporation for La Pine. The people opposed to incorporation are concerned about rising taxes and more “government control.”

“Now there is kind of a war going on between those that want to be incorporated and those who don't.”

“The 4<sup>th</sup> try is underway to get La Pine incorporated. Most feel it's an effort by developers to build hundreds of homes north of La Pine.”

“The CATS realizes that unless a tax base is created, La Pine will struggle in absorbing the growth from Bend.”

“There is a perception that incorporation would turn us into a big thing. There is a lack of understanding of the land use laws that keep us rural. The cost of incorporation would be \$1.50 per \$1000 of assessed value.”

A new subdivision proposal was the most talked about issue during our time in the community. Residents described how the county has approached BLM for land on which developers would construct 1800 units.

“The water table is shallow here and not suitable for development in the same way we have in the past. So the county wants to consolidate growth so sewer and water services will be less expensive. It makes sense, but it will change the character of our community.”

“I question this kind of development when we are unable to meet the basic needs of existing residents. We have no organization, and we are going to have an urban population coming in and demanding services. The value system of this population is, ‘keep it rural, keep the feel rural’; you can see it in our publications.”

“The proposal calls for building 1800 homes. There are many that think that our infrastructure won't take that level of impact and that they will be taxed out of their homes. The CATS is really pushing for annexation in the fall election. If it is approved, then development will most likely take place.”

“The rumor going around town is that those people living northwest of downtown on septic systems will be re-located to this new housing development. People are up in arms about that. What they need to know is that this is not the case.”

## A Drug Culture

“There are too many drugs here.” [common]

“It's getting more dangerous because of the drugs; more violent. There was a husband who was kidnapped and left to die.”

## Services

“We have lost 5 medical providers in the last six months, and our second clinic will close June 9. We are in a real crisis.”

“We are losing our primary care people and there is no tax base to do anything.”

“La Pine is trying to be proactive in getting better water and sewer.”

“The South County economy needs a shot in the arm. I have to go to Bend just to get a pair of socks.”

“La Pine does not have enough deputies. There are only 6 deputies for this entire area.”

“There are so many septic tanks and the water table is so shallow, it is inevitable for wells to be contaminated.”

## Schools

“This is amazing to me, we have a 40% turnover rate in the schools. When you see this, you typically think of a migrant community, but we don’t have agriculture here. It is a new kind of migrant community.”

“The schools do not have a good reputation, ranking only above Prineville. They’ve been trying to get their budgets up.”

“The school turnover rate indicates lots of stress in those families, and the social problems that come with it.”

“The Klamath Falls School District is a huge disconnect here. Gilchrist Elementary should be part of the La Pine District. Klamath Falls does not come here for a meeting. Everybody goes there and that’s a huge disadvantage.”

“There is a sense that the economy is really booming here in Central Oregon, and that there may be a job here. But then they may find that the cost of commuting to Bend for a job that is not really paying very much is not worth it. So maybe they accept sub-standard housing on this acre in the woods and they move there. There is snow and many miles of unpaved, deeply-rutted roads—if you don’t have the proper car, you can’t commute. If you have a family that has an older car and can’t afford snow tires, how can they get in and out?”

## **Natural Resource Issues**

“It’s a natural fit for the Forest Service to manage that interior BLM block. It makes sense geographically and socially.”

“Some locals don’t like the clearcut management approach to the bug kill problem that occurred on BLM lands compared to the Forest Service uneven age management on adjacent lands.”

“I border Forest Service lands and I am extremely worried about fire. The Forest Service does a very poor job with fire reduction on interface lands.”

“BLM has made some good uses of their land by donating it for a library, schools, and a softball park.” [common]

“The Forest Service and the BLM do a good job of getting public input and then making changes. Our input matters.” [common theme]

“Every time I have made suggestions, my input has been printed. I know they are listening.”

“We have to work harder to keep kids out of trouble. We’ve had some success by working diverse partners, 4-H and others. The Forest Service and BLM could be partners to create more opportunities for youth.”

One prominent story involved local efforts to clean up garbage on BLM lands in the area. A county police officer applied for and received a grant from Deschutes County for clean up. A citizen team collected tons of garbage and 7000 tires. Apparently, the BLM office directed the tires to a warehouse that turned the tires away when they saw the large number. The county dump would not allow free disposal, saying it was a federal problem if the tires came from federal property. A community-driven partnership had gone awry.

“BLM hardly comes around. The garbage on their lands is a big problem and they don’t seem to do enough to address it.”

The Forest Service expressed interest in participating in the forestry curriculum in the local schools, teaching ecology, good timber practice, etc.

## Section Nine: The Warm Springs HRU and the North and East Outlying Areas

### **Warm Springs Indian Reservation**

Figure Nine shows a map of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. The reservation has about 4000 members, of whom 700 work directly for the Council in one way or another. Tribal Council committees include wildlife, timber, cultural, land use, water board and educational. The 5 tribes recently developed a “People’s Plan” in which people were involved and made recommendations to the Tribal Council. This input was made into a management plan.

Figure Nine:  
The Warm Springs Indian Reservation



In addition, the Warm Springs nation has about 10,000 acres of ceded lands and works closely with the BLM in managing those lands. The lands are located in the John Day Basin, the Hood River Basin and the mouth of the Columbia River Basin (so called custom lands). The Tribes own lands that are within BLM’s jurisdiction, but tribal staff reported little collaboration.

“We maintain fishing and hunting rights on many of those lands as well as our rights to congregate and use them for our spiritual rituals. These rights were given to us by signed treaties but much too often their word and spirit are not taken seriously.”

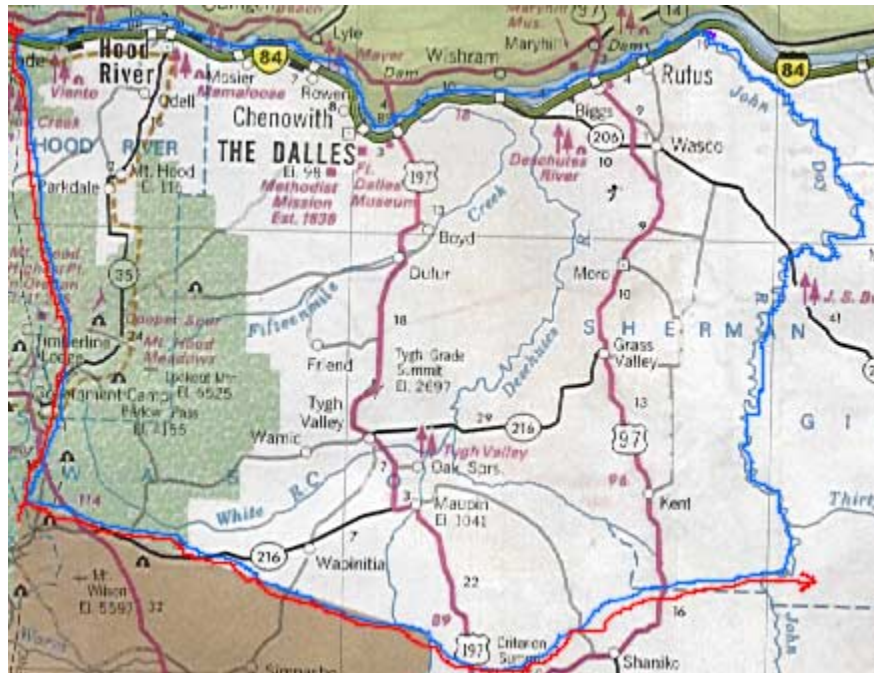
“BLM does not include us in the planning of EISs [environmental impact statements]. We would like to be contacted before the process begins rather than to be notified after the fact. That’s how this thing called trust can be established, through collaboration.”

The Tribes just purchased a 5,000 acre ranch on the lower John Day and is looking at more purchases in the mid John Day Region.

### **North—The Hood River Human Resource Unit**

The Hood River HRU (Figure Ten) extends from the crest of the Cascades on the west to the John Day River on the east, from the Columbia River on the north to the Warm Springs Indian Reservation on the south. It is comprised of parts of Hood River, Sherman and Wasco Counties. Our team spent one day in the communities of Kent, Grass Valley, Moro and Maupin, talking with local residents and confirming boundaries. They described a sheep and cattle history, railroad settlement, and participation in the wheat economy of the Columbia River Plateau. Wheat, barley and cattle dominate agriculture.

Figure Ten:  
The Hood River Human Resource Unit



The red lines on the map indicate that this area not in the High Desert Social Resource Unit, but in the Columbia SRU.

Like other areas of Oregon, this area has been undergoing economic transition. More tourism and recreation influences are present, such as scenic by-ways that are bringing in

more traffic and business during the spring and fall seasons. Antique shops and the promotion of local history through museums are prevalent.

Local recreation is centered on fishing and hunting. Residents discussed a popular farm program created to regulate the price of wheat by controlling production. The program encouraged the return of some lands for wildlife that has increased the hunting stocks.

Many of the smaller towns have become the housing supply for people who work in the Dalles and commute on a daily basis. The Dalles is the dominant service center for the HRU and serves the three county area in terms of retail, medical, and social services.

Two situations dealing with natural resource management have a bearing on future management direction. Several of the residents told stories of the grass fire in 1994 and described their anger at BLM for how it was handled. That this story came up from so many people in a limited sample indicates the story is widespread. Apparently, BLM wanted the burn to continue for ecological reasons, but several people were in danger of losing their cash crops. Some anger was directed at one specific person of the agency. However, these same residents independently offered that the situation was made better by BLM's willingness to hold public meetings after the fire and "take the heat." Evidently, some healing took place during these meetings and residents described positive relations currently.

"We use fallow periods and recognize the benefits of fire. But this was our livelihood."

"They [BLM] used to not give us the time of day. If there was a fire, they were in charge with little or no working with us. But now they take the time to explain plans, what's needed and it's a great working relationship."

The second set of issues residents described related to the river guides that bring business to the area through use of the Deschutes and John Day Rivers. Residents complained that the river guides do not live in the community but in Portland, that they do not honor laws, are not sensitive, and bring in their own food. Local fishers complain of being pushed out. Residents thought that perhaps guides should be trained in local etiquette.

### **East—the Grant Human Resource Unit**

East of Prineville and Mitchell along Highway 26 are the communities of Dayville, Mt. Vernon, John Day, and Canyon City. People here do not refer to this area as "central Oregon" but "eastern Oregon." Figure Eleven shows the Grant Human Resource Unit in blue, while the red line shows an SRU line that separates central from eastern Oregon. The red arrows indicate that the Grant HRU relates more to points east than to points west.

Residents pointed out that, until a few years ago, their area was totally timber dependent. The transition to a new economic base has not been a smooth one. Some stores have been



closed. Some believe the leadership is resistant to change and is thereby making the situation worse.

Figure Eleven:  
The Grant Human Resource Unit



“Our situation is similar to Burns, but at least they have a highway running through and they have a progressive county.”

“We feel isolated in John Day and don’t really feel connected to anywhere else. If we lost our Thriftway, we’d really be lost.”

“Compliments to the Forest Service for the \$80,000 grant for airport and engineering assistance.”

“We have a segment of retirees that are well to do, and many poor people who come here for welfare, but we are losing our middle class families who are the real supporters of the community.”

“I’ve been here for 20 years and I’m still considered a newcomer. You’re not considered a local unless your grandmother was born here.”



## **Public Issues Related to the John Day River Wild and Scenic Plan**

“I had the feeling that BLM already had the plan written and were simply ‘feeding’ it to the council [Resource Advisory Council] in small segments.”

“The River Plan is made more complex by all the entities involved—Forest Service, BLM, State Fish and Wildlife, State Highway, the Warm Springs Tribes. The Forest Service and BLM did not work together at all in preparing the plan—they each wrote their own version.”

“The BLM and Forest Service idea of management is nonuse (limiting use and setting quotas on guides) because it is easiest for them. The agencies are not considering grazing and agricultural use, as well as recreational. They do not consider the economic impact of their decisions and do not work with the economic development communities. There is a need for balance and compromise.”

“The people who have lived in this area enjoy and respect the river and take care of it. The BLM and Forest Service have placed more restrictions which squeezes out the local people. The people who love the river and the land are not being able to use it, and the tourists are the first ones to destroy it. People with more money, such as groups like the Sierra club, can make radical changes with nor regard for the local people.”

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