



Community Field Reports in Support of  
Upcoming Land Use Planning For the  
Spokane District Office of the Bureau of Land Management:

Submitted to  
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*Enhancing Productive Harmony between Human and Natural Environments*

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Community Field Reports in Support of  
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Executive Summary

The State of Washington is undergoing a profound shift towards an emphasis on conservation, natural resource education, and outdoor recreation, which in some areas is wedded to economic development strategies.

This shift is accompanied by two widespread trends, one toward citizen based stewardship and the second toward multi-interest, multi-jurisdictional collaboration that appears to be transforming local communities.

This report, therefore, encourages a de-centralized planning effort whose objectives should include using the planning process to broaden and deepen BLM partnerships throughout the state and increasing BLM's capacity for responding and sustaining partnership efforts.

The overall reputation of BLM in the state is one of non-presence and non-management. Most people, especially those met casually in gathering places, simply do not know of BLM, its land, or its programs. The people who do know frequently stated that they do not have contact with BLM.

BLM has had notable successes in the State and has many supporters, particularly for individual BLM staff. Its acquisition of critical habitat areas, its recreation sites, and its partnership role in many endeavors are particularly appreciated.

The more dominant theme of BLM management is one of frustration—that BLM does not communicate well or often enough, the BLM does not respond in a timely way to requests for information or consultation, and that management direction often ignores local input.

Many opportunities for citizen-based collaboration and inter-governmental cooperation appear to languish for lack of a timely BLM response.

There are a few management situations in the State that could become disruptive unless there is planning and management attention applied soon.

Each of the human geographic areas described in this report contain one to three management challenges that would lend themselves to a community-based collaborative effort that would in effect be a planning element in the revised RMP.

The critical element for the future is to understand that BLM, because of its recent history in the State of Washington, has a relative blank slate with which to operate, not being associated with the deep-seated or long-lasting animosity and anti-government sentiment that has characterized other areas. Opportunities and risks accompany this finding.

# Chapter One: Toward a Strategy of Community-Based Collaborative Land Use Planning

## Introduction

In this chapter, a strategy is outlined to foster community-based, collaborative land use planning. The subsequent chapters describe the background of this work and the approach used by JKA as well as the findings in each geographic area.

The approach to community-based collaborative planning described here has two strong advantages. It has evolved entirely out of the community fieldwork of this project and so it is broadly grounded in the experiences and guidance of citizens across the state. It is also fully consistent with policy guidelines on conducting revisions to Resource Management Plans.

The BLM H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook places high importance on land use planning that incorporates a community-based and collaborative approach. Appendix A offers a Guide to Collaborative Planning, and Appendix D is Social Science Considerations in Land Use Planning Decisions. There are a number of process guidelines in the Handbook which are useful to review. One appropriate statement is:

“While the ultimate responsibility regarding land use plan decisions on BLM-administered lands rests with BLM officials, managers have discovered that individuals, communities, and governments working together toward commonly understood objectives yield a significant improvement in the stewardship of public lands.” (Planning Handbook: page I-4)

The sections in this chapter are devoted to:

1. Trends Affecting Future BLM Management
2. State-wide Citizen Guidance for BLM
3. Opportunities by Geographic Area for Utilizing Citizen Initiatives in the Planning Process
4. JKA Recommendations for the Planning Process
5. Rules of Engagement

## Trends Affecting Future BLM Management

A trend is defined as a general movement or line of development over a sufficiently long period of time that creates progressive change. Trends cannot be “stopped” in any literal sense because they represent converging behaviors from multiple sources. However, trends can be assessed and steps can be made to minimize the negative effects and to optimize the positive effects, particularly with regard to organizations.

Trends affect an organization one way or another. Prudent management calls for anticipating and analyzing trends and then working with them to accomplish the agency mission. If trends are not

correctly anticipated and incorporated into management, they can cause disruption in the management of an organization.

Two distinct and related trends were discovered by JKA in the course of this project, first, the trend to integrate the four pillars of conservation, education, recreation and economic development, and, second, the trend of citizen-based ecological stewardship.

There is a widespread perception of an economic trend from extraction resources to recreation resources throughout the state. Extraction resources are cattle grazing, mining, and timber production. The term “recreation resources” was heard many times during fieldwork and indicates that recreation is more than an add-on in many parts of the state but, as a true resource, is becoming an economic sector in its own right. The EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) to be developed by BLM should include an economic assessment to more fully document this trend and offer planning guidance to BLM.

On the front page of a recent Sunday paper, the Yakima Herald Republic featured the following headline: “Trails a Tangible Part of Quality of Life” (March 21, 2010). The article related the growing public interest in trail systems and interconnected trail systems which unite three pillars of recreation, conservation and education, and further, how such development is an attraction of settlement for newcomers and businesses to an area and a contribution to quality of life experiences. The additional pillar of economic development is explicit in some areas as well, such as Chelan and Okanogan. This trend of widespread public attention to the four pillars of recreation, conservation, education and economic development is a major theme of this report. This trend is pronounced throughout the state and has a bearing on how BLM develops and implements its plan. In some areas of the state, like Okanogan, the trend is seen as a transition away from traditional economic sectors like agriculture and mining, and toward a developing, valued economic base. In other areas, like Tri-Cities, the trend seems to be a response to a growing lack of open space in an urbanizing area.

The second pronounced and related trend noted in this research, is citizen-based stewardship. Everywhere our team visited, we saw evidence of citizens being active in caring for their environment. From school projects, to clean up days, trail building, stream restoration and many others, it is apparent that citizen-based stewardship is pervasive and widespread throughout the state. To call the trend citizen-based is to acknowledge that much of the impetus for stewardship work is coming directly from individual citizens and is not always institutionally driven. It seems like, instead, that initiatives are most often citizen-based and then institutions come on board later. People are conscious of this trend and see it as a community value they want to embrace.

The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) has identified a number of emerging park and recreation trends at the national level which will affect BLM planning:

1. Increasing population, especially in the urban areas;
2. An aging population who are likely to stay active and demand additional recreation services;
3. Growing ethnic diversity, especially Hispanic, who recreate in different ways;
4. Changing lifestyles because changing work patterns are creating off peak demand on facilities and less structure for activities;

5. Physical activity is valued to combat rising levels of obesity in youngsters and adults;
6. Infill development is fostering increased demand for urban facilities and connectivity to rural opportunities;
7. Convenient recreation as lives are busier and travel costs rise;
8. Recreation choices are desired as people seek diverse recreational outlets.

At the statewide level, the RCO in 2003 projected demand for recreation opportunities in ten and twenty-year segments, and found that hunting and fishing are the only activities expected to continue to decline. The activities expected to increase in popularity, in order of priority, were snowmobile riding, walking, nature activities, cross-country skiing, visiting a beach, canoeing/kayaking/downhill skiing, picnicking, bicycle riding, and non-pool swimming.<sup>1</sup>

### State-wide Citizen Guidance for BLM

Most citizen guidance to BLM regarding its planning effort relates to specific pieces of ground or specific activities. This can be referenced in individual chapters. However, a number of general statements are possible about how residents wish for BLM land to be managed:

1. Continue to consolidate lands for ecological reasons and to promote more effective management.
2. BLM should not divest itself of more land except in relation to consolidation. BLM parcels generally are highly valued in every region of the state.
3. The shift to a recreation emphasis with public lands is pronounced and widespread. The emerging public perception relates four central elements into a vision of public land management: conservation, education, recreation and economic development. The planning process should determine BLM's proper role in supporting the numerous coalitions emerging to further this mission.
4. Communicate more often and more effectively. The perception of a non-answer leads to deteriorating community relations and erodes confidence in public officials.

### Opportunities by Geographic Area for Utilizing Citizen Initiatives in the Planning Process

The subsequent chapters describe in some detail what residents in each geographic area are concerned about regarding BLM management, and some of the opportunities they see for improving management during the next generation of work. By way of summary, this section highlights the issue areas in each Human Resource Unit (HRU) which lend themselves to creating community-based planning elements.

It is important to note that successful collaboration requires matching citizen energy and not the other way around. These nominations for action listed below reflect current citizen energy in natural resource management. An agency cannot defer responding to this energy without risk that the

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<sup>1</sup> Benton County, Comprehensive Parks Plan, August, 2008, Chelan County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan, October, 2007.

energy will go away. Although there are many internal reasons for delay, if it is too long, people will simply have moved onto other interests.

Citizen-based initiatives represent an opportunity for BLM to ride the waves of collaboration and citizen energy to accomplish its own mission and to contribute to community health.

### **The San Juan HRU**

1. Conduct a more thorough assessment of existing organizations, their missions, and their accomplishments, and work with residents to develop a comprehensive vision for all BLM lands in the islands.
2. Assist citizens and BLM specialists to determine the proper course of action, and the proper land use decisions, to address the goal of “better protection,” particularly on Lopez Island.

### **The Okanogan HRU**

1. Develop a recreation resource strategy for the RMP consistent with emerging recreation development in the Okanogan area. Determine the partnership role for BLM given the size and location of its land base. Much guidance for this strategy is available in the County draft comprehensive plan which includes a detailed chapter on recreation development. Coordinate with the many emerging organizations involved in this effort. The explicit link, as in other areas of the state, is: conservation, education, outdoor recreation embedded in an economic development framework.
2. Explore the prospects for planning with the Forest Service. Local residents would be so grateful!

### **The Chelan HRU**

1. Convene a working group to create a long-term management solution for the Douglas Creek area. BLM staff will serve as technical support. Explore available information and develop strategies for each of the outstanding issues, particularly road improvement and maintenance, law enforcement, and organizational development of partnership groups.
2. As part of the planning process, undertake an assessment of regional coalitions involved with conservation, education, recreation and economic development and determine through consultation with citizens, organizations, and internal BLM dialogue, the proper role for BLM in these efforts and what realistically BLM can contribute to these endeavors.

### **The Kittitas/Yakima HRUs**

1. Conduct a review of the Yakima River Canyon Recreation Site through dialogue with user groups, conservation organizations, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and state and federal agencies to identify issues and concerns that affect the long-term viability of recreation development.

2. Determine planning elements required to support the conservation and recreation programs in Cowiche Creek and Naches River drainage.
3. Develop a long-term management strategy for the Rankville ORV area north of Zillah.

### **The Tri-Cities/Moses Lake HRUs**

1. Juniper Dunes would lend itself to management progress through a community-based process. Although some major issues, such as road access and law enforcement, depend on effective BLM and sister agency support, many of the issues can be managed by citizens, groups and organizations. This area has shown that it has the capacity to assist BLM with its ecological and recreation mission.
2. Horse Heaven Rim Trail is a regional concept involving several organizations and local governments. It is the logical next phase in the development of regional outdoor recreation amenities in Tri-Cities to which BLM can be an important partner. The BLM planning process can be used to trigger a local management strategy.
3. Use the planning process to explore and develop BLM's role in an emerging, multi-jurisdictional, regional approach to recreation development and conservation being undertaken in the Tri-Cities area.

### **The Upper Crab Creek HRU**

1. Go the next step to build upon fire management partnerships by addressing existing unresolved issues in a collaborative framework with relevant fire districts and other organizations.
2. Develop citizen-based strategies to deal with hunter impacts in three specific geographic areas, primarily focused on education and coordination with sister agencies.
3. Help the Odessa area develop a top-notch management plan for the operation of an OHV facility on BLM land. Insist on accountability and turn over as much as possible to citizen organizations and local government.

### **The Colville HRU**

1. As in Okanogan, use the recent emergence of regional recreation planning to determine BLM's proper policy role as a partner in terms of its goals of conservation, education, outdoor recreation and economic development. Convene a short-term working group to determine what has been done so far, to identify the gaps and the opportunities, and to develop partnership relationships in the area through which to implement the planning vision.

## JKA Recommendations for the Planning Process

### **Process Considerations**

1. Accept as a working principle that an important goal of the planning process is to deepen and broaden BLM and community capacity for shared management and decision-making through community-based collaborative relationships.
2. De-centralize the planning process. This is an appropriate strategy because BLM lands are scattered and management capacity in each area is not always strong. Given the strong movement toward multi-interest and multi-jurisdictional collaboration, to work through others to accomplish the BLM mission makes sense.
3. Make use of a community liaison in each geographic area. The goals of the liaison are three: a) broaden BLM's relationships in each geographic area and access the social diversity present in these communities in order to make the plan more effective and to prevent the domination of the planning process by the few; b) Facilitate and expedite the development of citizen-based planning elements for each geographic area, as summarized above; and, c) Work to properly align BLM and citizen interests.

The criteria by which to judge whether citizen issues lend themselves to a community-based collaborative planning element include these:

- The citizen issues are widespread in the community;
  - Their solutions lend themselves to a multi-interest, multi-jurisdictional approach;
  - Residents have expressed widespread, consistent desire to be part of the solution;
  - BLM has the capacity to see it through and to match community timelines.
4. The Community Liaison can either be a separate position or it could be shared among BLM staff in each geographic area whose knowledge of the community is good and whose personality suits citizen contact work. Either strategy has pitfalls. If the Liaison is a single position, the tendency of BLM staff may be to become complacent about fostering ongoing collaboration as everyday management practice and instead become dependent on a temporary position. If the Liaison is shared among existing staff, they may wrongly believe that their existing contacts are sufficient for the task at hand. They should be trained in community development techniques that JKA specializes in. The training will instruct on methods to extend the reach of citizen contacts through informal networks and gathering places and include strategies on working with existing organizations for mutual benefit. Training would also ensure that the input staff members are getting is useful for the planning process.

A third option is to have the community liaison work handled by a third party. This option should be selected if it is determined that BLM does not have the internal staff skills and capacity to operate in this fashion.

5. Make use of Working Groups to empower citizens to make beneficial contributions to the planning effort. The section above listed the candidates in each geographic area for citizen-initiated action items that become mini-planning elements in the larger plan. The features of Working Groups are these:
  - They are short-lived, two to four months in length;
  - They are staffed and facilitated by the Community Liaison;
  - BLM specialists are called at timely moments for information and technical expertise;
  - They are not meeting driven but use a variety of methods to explore planning options, including field trips, visits to other organizations, and other means;
  - They must be evidence-based and transparent, open to all, and must include accountability in any recommended direction;
  - Their operation could be staggered at different times throughout the planning area to allow easier staffing;
  - They will require BLM to be innovative in addressing its own requirements to minimize the perception of delay, control and authority.

### **Substantive Considerations**

1. Use the Human Geographic Units™ as the base planning units, not counties or towns or communities. BLM Spokane already has a history of using Human Geographic principles. When it was decided to create the Wenatchee office, the dividing line went right down the state, just west of the Colville. That worked until the Tri –Cities area. If the line had kept going, it would have put Juniper Dunes with Spokane and Saddle Mountain with Wenatchee. Managers understood that both areas relate to Tri-Cities, so they bent the line to the west of the crescent in Benton County and all this went to Spokane. In addition, the recently-acquired lands in Walla Walla and Asotin Counties are being managed from Oregon because these geographic areas, with their associated watersheds, are tied strongly to northeast Oregon.
2. Use the planning process to devise a web-based portal for accessing up-to-date maps showing BLM ownership patterns, along with the rules and procedures for responsible use of BLM lands. Create a technical means online so people can know whose land they are on and what the rules are using downloadable maps. The Yakima and Okanogan County GIS systems lend themselves to this approach.
3. Use the RAC to promote communication in their relevant communities. RACs should be organized not just by “representative interest” but by geographic area, using the Human Resource Units. Offer JKA’s three-day training, “Community Based Ecosystems and Stewardship: Ensuring a Healthy Environment,” so that RAC members can be more thorough and intentional about their public contact.
4. Create a digital newsletter using the mailing list which JKA has submitted. The newsletter should have sections for each HRU so that people can scroll for information about planning

progress on key issues in their geographic area. For hard copy, mailed newsletters, tailor them to the geographic area receiving them. Any public releases should be “issue-centered” so the reader understands that BLM has heard their issue and is responding to it.

5. Use BLM staff that have frequent contact with the public, like fire program officers, law enforcement rangers, and others, undertake some amount of outreach work. Also, use staff people who have personalities suited to public contact work. If staff people are allowed to “self-select” for this work, we have found that they have ample enthusiasm and skills. Training in community description should accompany this strategy.
6. There is a strong trend throughout the state of increased outdoor recreation that is promoted in a multi-interest and multi-jurisdictional manner which is integrated with conservation, education and economic development. Nevertheless, the awareness of the economic benefits of such development is low. Not a single person in these local areas could point to a definitive study that documented the economic benefits of a recreation event, site, or program. JKA recommends that BLM use the planning process to complete such a study. The study could cover all BLM programs in the state, or it could assess a few recreation sites or all recreation sites in one area, as a means to educate the broader population and elected officials regarding recreation development. Citizens could be coached to do research on behalf of BLM, for example, to measure the economic benefit of a single recreation event, from which generalizing statements could be made. Such information would be highly valued by county commissioners, recreation planners, and non-governmental organizations.
7. Use the planning process to develop a socially-responsive wind energy policy for the BLM Spokane Office.

### Rules of Engagement

There were Rules of Engagement discovered during the field work that provide an umbrella under which BLM opportunities can be framed for facilitating citizen initiatives for community based solutions and increasing local capacity for emerging issue management.

The Rules of Engagement, created from the citizen contact by JKA team members, are:

1. Understand that the management of BLM lands must contribute to the sustainability, livability and resilience of citizens and communities that it serves.
2. Using a collaborative approach integrates the physical, biological, social, cultural and economic environments to produce healthy communities and landscapes.
3. Be conscious as to what types of local individual and family businesses can be expanded or created as a result of BLM activity.
4. Recognize that people want to be as self-sufficient as possible in their communities and BLM has a part in assisting citizens to gain that self-sufficiency.

5. Strive to enhance diversity in order that BLM activities assist in creating choices that are not available to citizens today.
6. People are strengthened when they have beginnings and endings to their engagement. Therefore:
  - a. Start only what can be finished.
  - b. Have a deadline that people can work towards to finish a project or engagement.
  - c. Some citizen initiatives will begin and end independent of the NEPA-based planning process. BLM should integrate these initiatives into the planning process as much as possible, but recognize that the timeline for community process may go beyond the bounds of NEPA. Citizen initiatives must be respected from the beginnings to the celebration of endings.
  - d. Take the time to broaden BLM relationships in the community to make citizen initiatives as broad-based and diverse as possible. In the meetings, guard against domination by the few, especially those that push agendas or narrow outcomes. Instead, seek out the caretakers and communicators who are present in every network and encourage their participation. Action born out of the involvement of caretakers and communicators will be grounded, supported and implementable.
  - e. There is a saying, “To get power, give up control” which BLM must practice in facilitating citizen initiatives. BLM cannot drive the process but participates in it. The government role is shifting from “command and control” to “expedite and facilitate.”
  - f. Citizens must take responsibility that comes along with participation. Like parenting a teenager, if BLM is doing all the work, something is wrong. Continually look for opportunities to enhance ongoing citizen action or to “turn over” responsibility and action to citizens.
  - g. Responsibility is accompanied by measurable accountability by which all interests can review progress toward common goals.

## Chapter Two: Background and Approach

### Background

The Spokane District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will undertake a revision of its Resource Management Plan (RMP) beginning in 2010. Required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, the plan will address BLM land uses within its multiple use mandate of FLPMA and must reflect the priorities of local communities and the nation.

In the State of Washington, BLM currently manages approximately 445,000 acres, primarily in eastern Washington with outlying parcels in San Juan, Whatcom and Skagit Counties. BLM also manages about 23.4 million acres of federal subsurface minerals. When the Eastern Washington and San Juan Resource Management Plan is completed in 3-5 years, it will serve as the legal basis for BLM management in Washington until the plan is revised or amended, generally about twenty years out.

The BLM Spokane District Vision has two goals for future planning and management that were addressed in the course of this project:

Goal 1: Transform the District from one that reacts to public requests to one that proactively facilitates sustainable use of public lands and resources.

Goal 2: Transform the current concept of Federal Land Management, become a leader in partnership based management of natural landscapes.

BLM asked James Kent Associates (JKA) to assist it in determining citizen interests related to the planning effort and the vision goals and to suggest communication strategies that would foster the greatest awareness of and participation in the planning process.

The objectives of this project were to:

1. Engage in community fieldwork to describe local geographic areas from social, economic, and cultural perspectives as they relate to land use planning, including the social and economic trends identified by residents.
2. Identify the range of citizen issues and opportunities identified by residents related to public land use planning.
3. Develop preliminary communication strategies based on human geographic mapping, informal communication patterns and methods existing in local communities, and the accepted formal meeting places.

4. Recommend strategies for using the planning process to extend and deepen BLM partnerships in local communities so as to enhance stewardship and land use opportunities that lend themselves to collaborative, citizen-based efforts.

These objectives set the stage for BLM Spokane District to fulfill the goals stated in its vision. The process to accomplish this is to first find out what people care about and how they communicate by geographic area. This sets the context for BLM to be in a strategic position to manage the planning process in a proactive manner, demonstrating responsiveness to the issues and supportive of citizen-based stewardship and collaboration opportunities.

### Approach

JKA is well-known among land use agencies for its 40 years of effort in implementing citizen-oriented approaches to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), land use planning, and management programs. It has assisted BLM through a variety of means, including a thirty-year map licensing agreement for human geographic mapping services, an assistance agreement and various direct service and training contracts through the BLM National Training Center and through a GSA contract. The interested reader is referred to the JKA website at: [www.jkagroup.com](http://www.jkagroup.com). Appendix A contains a background of JKA's history with BLM.

JKA takes a cultural approach to land use policy. We have found that when the culture of an area is understood through its informal networks of communication and caretaking, greater opportunities for responsive and mutual management of public lands are achieved. It is in the everyday routines of residents in a place-based community, with their highly-valued communicators and caretakers, which contain the heart and soul of a community. An early understanding of local culture identifies informal networks and their issues that are crucial to include in planning and management activities. When the planning process fosters proper alignment between informal community systems and the formal institutional interests represented by BLM and other organizations, citizen ownership of the plan is an outcome as well as the ability to implement on the ground. In addition, citizen ownership presents many opportunities to leverage resources and thereby expand the management capacity of BLM. As this report makes clear, citizen-based stewardship is a growing social trend in the State of Washington which has led to numerous coalitions and partnerships, many of which BLM has been a part.

The JKA Discovery Process™ is a qualitative research methodology by which fieldworkers enter the routines of the community to identify communication patterns, major citizen issues and opportunities, in order to see the world as residents do, to get the “inside point of view.” The method requires widespread contact in the area so that all geographic areas are represented, as well as all interest areas. There are three action areas that JKA employs: (1) the SCAN (which is what we have delivered in this contract); (2) the Situational Assessment and (3) Strategy Development and Implementation. Activities (2) and (3) are for later consideration in the planning process.

For this SCAN, we contacted farmers, ranchers, elected officials, business owners, recreation users, young and old people, always asking, “Who else should we talk to about this?” in order to identify informal networks and other avenues of inquiry. In addition, JKA talked with County Commissioners, Mayors, Conservation Districts, Watershed Groups, Fire Districts, the Farm

Bureau, the Cattlemen's Association, Backcountry Horsemen, and numerous other recreation and environmental organizations.

In practical terms, our strategies were two:

1. Identify people "close to the action", that are, involved in BLM lands in some way. These people were identified as key contacts by BLM and then we networked other contacts once we were in the communities.
2. Focus on gathering places which presented opportunities for random conversations with residents, offering an unfiltered glimpse of the attitudes of the person "on the street." This action led to expanded networking from these contacts to others to gain deeper insights into the communities.

Generally speaking, we focused on four topics in discussions with local residents:

1. What is working, and not working, about current BLM management of lands you care about?
2. What issues do you think the plan should address?
3. What opportunities do you see for making things better?
4. How could BLM conduct planning that would make a positive difference for you and your community?

We also followed topics of interest to the speaker. In our work, there is a saying that "People hate to be interviewed but they love to talk." We tried to find people in settings in which they were comfortable so that we could hear the stories of the land, of settlement, of kinship, and of economic livelihood.

Limited time and resource precluded a professional community assessment in each area of the state. The JKA team spent several days in each area, as reported below, but not enough to develop a true assessment. **For that reason, we have called these "Community Field Reports" to signify that they are preliminary assessments only.** As the plan proceeds, ideally more effort in the Discovery Process can widen BLM's understanding of local communities with their informal networks, gathering places, respected individuals, citizen issues and communication strategies.

In total, JKA worked 77 days on this contract. Sixty-four days were spent doing community fieldwork in the geographic areas around the state as reported in the individual chapters. Five days were spent traveling and staging a team from place to place, eight days were spent writing, and two days were spent developing maps. The personnel from James Kent Associates who worked on this project are the following:

Kevin Preister, Project Manager  
James Kent, Senior Strategist  
Trish Malone, Senior Associate  
Eric Darsow, JKA Associate  
Susan Jessie, JKA Associate  
Gustavo Monteverde, JKA GIS specialist

Table One below shows the field time spent and the kinds of contact attained in each geographic area.

Table One:  
Research Days and Types of Citizen Contact in Each Geographic Area

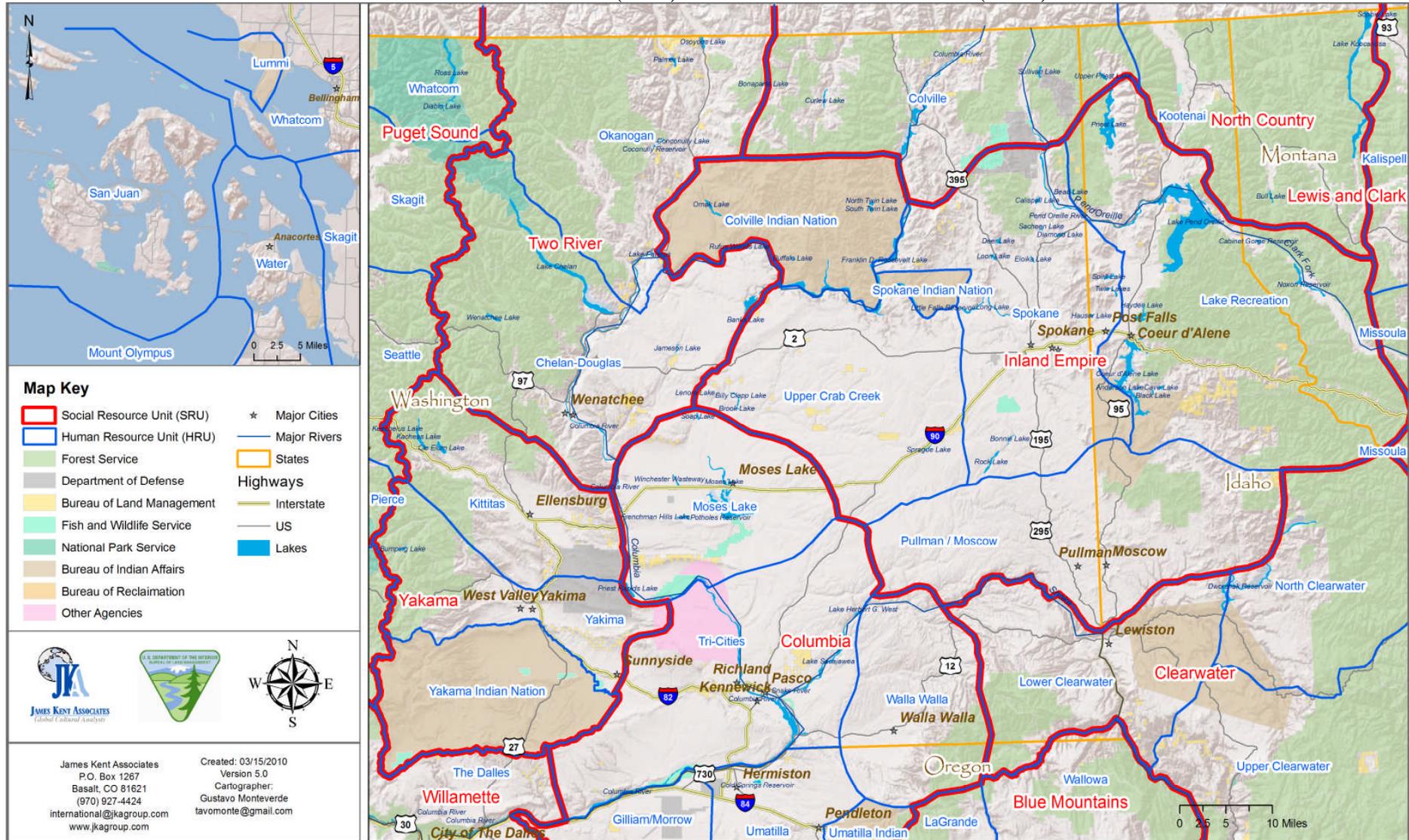
Geographic Area by HRU	Research Days	Types of Citizen Contact			Total
		Individuals	People in Group Settings/Org Meetings	Individuals With Agencies/ Org	
San Juan	5	27	7	19	53
Okanogan	9	29	10	29	68
Chelan	12	36	34	19	89
Kittitas/Yakima	5	9	6	15	30
Tri-Cities (& Moses Lake)	13	18	19	36	73
Upper Crab Creek	12	56	19	8	83
Colville	8	30	30	24	84
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>480</b>

JKA is committed to people having a voice in the planning process. For this reason, we have used quotes amply throughout this report. Hence, the report is longer than would otherwise be the case, and the hurried reader can skip some of the detail. At the same time, the detail alerts BLM to the many nuances present with each issue and captures the range of what people talked about in their conversations. **The community reports are properly considered “Field Guides” since they include much detail about local issues and communication patterns useful for planning activities in each geographic area.** JKA put editorial comments in brackets ([ ]) to explain unclear phrasing or acronym uses.

People were open to talking about BLM and keenly interested in participating in the land use planning process. Almost everyone wanted to be on the BLM mailing list to be informed of planning activities.

As part of the Discovery Process, JKA conducts human geographic mapping in order to capture the ways people actually relate to their landscapes. Figure One below shows the human geographic units in eastern Washington and the San Juan Islands. JKA maps at six scales of human geography, from neighborhood to global units. Figure One shows two scales, the Human Resource Unit (HRU, in blue) and the Social Resource Unit (SRU, in red)

Figure One  
 Human Geographic Units of the BLM Spokane District Planning Area, 2010, Showing Two Scales,  
 The Social Resource Units (SRUs) and the Human Resource Units (HRUs)



© 2010 James Kent Associates

Human Resource Units are roughly equivalent in size to a county but seldom correspond to county boundaries. HRU boundaries are derived from the seven cultural descriptors and by self-reporting of residents living in these areas. The Cultural Descriptors (Appendix B) are Settlement Patterns, Publics, Networks, Support Services, Work Routines, Recreation Activities and Natural and Human-caused Features of the Landscape. HRUs are characterized by frequent and customary interaction. They reveal face-to-face human society where people could be expected to have personal knowledge of each other and strong informal caretaking systems.

People's daily activities occur primarily within their HRU including work, school, shopping, social activities and recreation. Health, education, welfare and other public service activities are highly organized at this level with a town or community almost always as its focal point.

A sense of place, a sense of identity with the land and the people, a sense of a common understanding of how the resources of their Unit should be managed, and a common understanding of how things are normally done characterize this territorial level.

The regularity of interaction within an HRU reinforces a recognition and identification by the residents of natural and man-made features as “home.” Because of this familiarity, boundaries between Human Resource Units are clearly defined in the minds of those living within them.

Social Resource Units are the aggregation of HRUs on the basis of geographic features of the landscape, often a river basin, for example, or a geologic province, and on the basis of shared history, lifestyle, livelihood, and outlook. At this level, face-to-face knowledge is much reduced. Rather, social ties are created by action around issues that transcend the smaller HRUs and by invoking common values (“We are ranching country around here.”).

SRUs are best characterized by a sense of belonging. These are rather large areas and one's intensity of perception as to the Unit's boundary is much more general than at the Human Resource Unit level. Those hold a general feeling of “oneness” who are a part of this regional Unit, and a general understanding and agreement on values and the attributes of being a part of the Unit.

The physical and biological environments play a large role in the development of the cultural pattern at this level of human geography. To a large degree, these environments determine the kinds of basic industries available for people to develop their culture around, and how the industries function in the most effective manner to preserve and strengthen the cultural pattern of the Unit.<sup>2</sup>

In eastern Washington, the Columbia River is a natural boundary between the arid, shrub steppe plateau of Eastern Washington and the wet, dense forests of the Cascade Mountains. As with any significant natural feature, the Columbia separates populations and defines HRUs based on daily routines of local people. A look at the map, however, shows that in the Chelan-Douglas HRU, the river is no longer a barrier—socially and culturally, Chelan and Douglas are the same unit, in part fed by daily interactions across the river.

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<sup>2</sup> James A. Kent and Kevin Preister, “Methods for the Development of Human Geographic Boundaries and Their Uses”, in partial completion of Cooperative Agreement No. 1422-P850-A8-0015 between James Kent Associates and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Task Order No. 001.

The HRUs along the Cascade Mountains are similar in shape. They are watershed areas, stretching from the crest of the mountains to the Columbia River in the case of the Kittitas and Yakima HRUs. These two units share the common Yakima River Canyon. While daily routines are different and occur within the units, they have been tied in a regional sense from early settlement and warrant inclusion in the Yakama SRU.

Okanogan and Colville share a history of timber production, cattle grazing and mining but their isolation precludes their treatment as a single HRU. One older rancher in Okanogan said that they are more like “cousins” to Colville people, with similarities in outlook and lifestyle. Instead, Okanogan has more in common with Chelan-Douglas and they are grouped together in the Two River SRU. This unit is reflected in history hundreds of years old in which the Columbia and the Okanogan Rivers formed a north-south corridor for trade, social relations, and in recent years, recreation.

Similarly, the map reveals the large landscape that claims Spokane as its urban center in the Inland Empire SRU. Note how the SRU stretches across the Idaho Panhandle into western Montana, in essence, capturing the “catchment area” of Spokane. The Inland Empire SRU has its own distinctive history and culture.

Finally, the Tri-Cities HRU is part of the Columbia SRU which includes Moses Lake, Walla Walla and extends into Gilliam, Morrow and Umatilla Counties in northern Oregon. This region has similarities in its desert environment, lower elevation lands, distinctive agriculture, and a love for motorized recreation activities.

### Organization of This Report

The chapters in this report are devoted to each of the geographic areas of the state containing BLM lands, organized by Human Resource Units (HRUs). The HRUs, in order of the chapters, proceeds from the northwest part of the state to the north central, central, eastern and northeaster, as follows:

San Juan	Tri-Cities
Okanogan	Upper Crab Creek
Chelan-Douglas	Colville
Kittitas/Yakima	

Each chapter has the following sections:

1. Key Learning Points for This Chapter
2. Introduction
3. Community Description
4. Community Themes
5. Citizen Issues, Management Concerns and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management
6. Planning Process Considerations

Community Description refers to information gathered from citizens, officials, or printed sources that depict the salient features of a local area—its population, its economy, its social and economic trends, and its daily routines.

Community Themes are attitudes, perceptions and values that are shared widely in the community, repeated and reinforced in everyday conversations. In and of themselves, they are not actionable, but with probing, themes may have citizen issues attached to them that require attention. In other cases, themes are used for political purposes to generate interest in a policy question. Generally, theme language intensifies and can dominate the public discourse about a policy matter if citizen issues are not being addressed. Theme language becomes muted if there is alignment between institutional and citizen interests.

Citizen Issues are defined as a subject of public interest that an individual or group has decided to act upon in order to maintain control, predictability and participation in changes in their environment. Issues can be distinguished from themes in that they are actionable. Citizen issues reveal likely partners in collaborative efforts to improve management situations, while themes do not provide the same predictability.

Management Concerns are concerns residing in the formal bodies of society, including federal, state and local units of government, environmental groups, recreation groups, non-governmental organizations, and corporations. Management concerns are important to integrate into the planning process along with citizen issues and legal directives, in order to find appropriate courses of action for all parties. It is helpful to keep citizen issues and management concerns distinct so that neither is lost.

Opportunities are ideas that local residents or agency people have for improving the planning process or particular management situations. When an issue was expressed, JKA team members often asked, “What would you do about it if you could?” thereby getting people to problem-solve about workable solutions.

Planning Process Considerations are ideas provided by residents or officials that they believe would improve the planning process. The considerations involve the best ways to communicate, the best time and place to have public meetings, how the meetings are structured, and the means devised to foster ongoing citizen participation in the plan as the process proceeds.

## Chapter Three: The San Juan Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. San Juan citizens highly value good land management and conservation and are very active around these interests.
2. Island people show high social capital with much practice in working together and many informal and formal means to take care of each other.
3. Island people are active land stewards.
4. People understand and accept an economy based on visitation and retirement, but they want the level of impacts managed and they want the economy shaped to take care of cost of living squeeze created by that economy, such as affordable housing and adequate social services.
5. BLM has been highly valued as a community partner, especially since assigning a staff person to live in the community and provide a human face for the agency.
6. BLM is not always seen as a good partner and creates citizen issues through delays, inaction, and shifting priorities.
7. Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements are two:
  - a. Conduct a more thorough assessment of existing organizations, their missions, and their accomplishments, and work with residents to develop a comprehensive vision for all BLM lands in the islands.
  - b. Assist citizens and BLM specialists to determine the proper course of action, and the proper land use decisions, to address the goal of “better protection,” particularly on Lopez Island.

### Introduction

JKA conducted 5 professional days of community fieldwork in the San Juan Islands and made the following types of citizen contacts:

Individuals	27
People in group settings (organizational meeting, outlet stores)	7
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>19</u>
Total contacts	53

The San Juan HRU is shown in Figure Two and is comprised of San Juan County. Local residents described little interaction between San Juan Islanders and Canada, but a few people pointed to some level of interaction with other islands outside the San Juan archipelago, for example, Lummi lands and other islands that “we consider part of the San Juans.” Historically and currently, indigenous people have family and social interaction across this line. However, in terms of daily and weekly routines and other cultural descriptors outlined in Appendix B, it is appropriate to treat San Juan County as its own Human Resource Unit.

Figure Two  
The San Juan Human Resource Unit



### Community Description

San Juan County population was estimated at 15,294 in 2008, an increase of 8.6% since 2000. The 2025 projected population of San Juan County is 22,513. Of the county population, 75% live outside its three urban village areas. The population break down by island and by community is shown below.

San Juan Island (unincorporated):	5,214	Friday Harbor:	2,220
Orcas Island:	4,894	Eastsound:	980
Lopez Island:	2,396	Lopez Village	190

(Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management)

Orcas Island contains the Eastsound Village and the hamlets of Deer Harbor, Doe Bay, Olga, Orcas Landing and West Sound. It is known as the mountainous island with varied terrain. Its basaltic, hard rock soils permit houses to be at the edge of cliffs, but preclude beaches. The lack of beaches often surprises visitors, locals say. A couple residents believe the island gets the most visitors and is the wealthiest island, but this was not confirmed. Orcas was the fruit basket for the northwest for many decades. Orcas apples were a valued brand name in New York City in the 1920s. This robust agriculture did not survive the Depression.

Residents described loving their island and their community, and the values of knowing neighbors, taking care of each other, and a sense of fun living because “we’re all in it together.” A gentleman in his early 40s was telling JKA about earlier life on Orcas, pointing out where the pier used to be, how ferries used to come up the Eastsound, and other details that seemed very precise. When we asked him how long he had lived here, he told us ten years! His wife is from the islands and they decided to move back. This kind of story illustrates how newcomers become incorporated in the social fabric

of the community, repeating the stories as if they are their own, and becoming over time the history of the future.

This same gentleman then went on to relate a recent house fire that displaced a family. He began to list all the ways in which the community supported the family—the grocery gave vouchers, emergency housing was provided, and so on.

“The Mayor is a Great Dane. Dogs ran for mayor as a fundraiser and the Dane won.”

Despite the many positive aspects of local life, residents and officials are concerned about the cost of living impacts affecting the middle and lower classes on the island. The sense is that the community is not working any longer, the community is becoming more stratified and that, even though taxes are not going up, the quality of life is going down. A storm water system was planned in 1990s, but never implemented. The rich and retired do not use or support the schools. The economic viability of families is declining. Housing costs are high, wages are low, and health care is a major issue. Housing is very limited in the summer.

Economic innovations are occurring, recycling wood, mushroom farming. Organic farming is being attempted which works in the summer but it's not enough for the winter. There is talk of trying to expand the season through a conference center, or other means.

A current bond measure, if it passes, will build a flexible structure for evening classes. School on-line learning has become an unexpected revenue generator, although some worry about the long-term implications of this trend.

The community had a long-standing conflict over the ownership and management of Madrona Point near the Eastsound community, and the point eventually reverted to the Lummi tribe. Several people mentioned this conflict and its impacts on the community. Apparently, there are still unresolved issues about decisions that were made.

“Madrona Point is now Lummi because it was sacred ground. They had a guy out there in pink pajamas who would turn people away from going on the point. He tried that with me and I told him I was Choctaw and Cherokee and what about me”? He told me I could go out there.”

Lopez Island is known as the most rural and agricultural of the major islands. It has a slow pace of life which residents value. Numerous references were made about Friday Harbor being “Sin City,” as if to underscore the quiet life.

“It's so relaxing, nothing you have to do, read a book.”

“Most people around here just stay home. They love to party and drink [laughs].”

“People in the San Juans are like the ferry—they appear to be moving very slowly. You don't know you're moving, but you get there.”

Storytelling is a popular pastime.

“There is a story told about Blind Island. A man lived there with his family and had to leave for extended periods for fishing. He came back to find his family and his house gone. His family got sick of living alone on the island and moved the whole house onto Shaw Island. They would not move back onto Blind Island with him and so he lived alone on the island after that.”

Lopez is known for a tradition that is not witnessed on other islands—everyone waves. Old or young, in a vehicle or walking, people wave. Without fail, people we passed on foot or in car greeted us with a wave. It is also a walking and bicycling island. Many walkers were observed on the small rural roads that lace across the island.

Some visitors and many newcomers are related to island residents. The ties to relatives seem to be an important settlement pattern by which people end up here. Other people come for the beauty, but other factors become important. One person said, “People come for the beauty, but they stay for the community.” This quote reflects the long-held pull of the islands and the strong communities that make them up.

“As a kid, I kept coming out here to visit my grandparents. Eventually, I just stayed.”

“I’m 26 years old and moved from Spokane, so isolation was a bit of a shift for me. I live with sister and brother in law. I love the natural setting. The worst is finding people my age. Iceberg is my favorite place to go.”

“In the summer, it is breathless here. That’s why I live here. I have a place in Seattle, but as retirement set in, I spent more and more time here. I am not bothered by the business of summer because most people are in the village. I don’t notice visitor impacts.”

“I am on island visiting my parents. I live on the mainland now but I come here whenever possible. I love the islands. I lived in Friday Harbor for eight years but left for a better paying job. My parents fell in love with Lopez when they visited and ended up moving to Lopez Island. I miss living here. There is just easiness with life.”

Lopez seems to have a strong local artisan tradition. Many local products were sold in the stores such as jams, pickles, wine, bread, coffee, postcards, wines, salsas, apple butter, spice rubs, and mustards.

Lopez islanders, of course, accommodate the many spring, summer and fall visitors.

“Lopez is overrun with bicycles in the summer. Bikers love the island because it’s flat.”

Displacement of people from the island has always occurred, local people said. People simply cannot afford to live here. Today, the perception is that locals are dying out, young people leave, and over time, the island gets wealthier and wealthier. For awhile, San Juan County was the fastest growing in the state. Properties are reported to be getting larger.

“There is new affluence, especially along the shoreline. We have the highest retirement population in the state.”

“One thing it [new wealthy residents] has brought was enough people to create more jobs, and they are better paying. A service job in the San Juans will pay three times what a service job will pay in the rest of the state. This is so needed because of higher cost of living here.”

“People are forced off all the time and this will always happen in a place like this.”

“In the ‘90s, the affordability gap between housing costs and income was \$4-5000. Today it is \$150,000.”

Lopez Housing Options’ senior homes are in Lopez Village, and Lopez Community Land Trust’s fourth affordable-housing community, Common Ground. The latter is a net-zero sustainable energy project. Both projects address affordable housing issues on Lopez. The Lopez Village Market is currently expanding and completing construction on a new, larger building.<sup>3</sup>

Native American interests in the San Juans were not assessed during this project. However, the Director of KWIAHT, Center for the Historical Ecology of the Salish Sea, had this to say about the Native American heritage in the San Juan Islands:

“The San Juan Islands were the home of the Coast Salish people. The area was a hub of trade prior to European contact and had many tribal groups affiliated with the islands. Salish trade was the unifying force, not tribal affiliation like on mainland. People gained status by intermarrying with trading partners, elevating their status and accumulating wealth. Lopez natives were Samish, traced to a particular longhouse. Descendants of the Coast Salish people on Lopez today are found mainly as members of the Samish Indian Nation, based in Anacortes, and the Lummi Nation, based near Bellingham, and many of them live today with relatives on Vancouver Island.

“European contact accelerated trading and fostered even more mixing of people. No Indian reservation or native rights movement happened on the islands. Indians immediately assimilated socially and economically, and figure prominently in the history of the islands with many well-known families. They never practiced public or island-wide cultural events, but cultural traditions were maintained at the family level. In the 1900 census, about half of the population of San Juan County was “Indian” or members of historically Coast Salish families. It is fair to say that Indians created the San Juan culture that gradually got whiter and whiter. It was a ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell’ policy, even though today many prominent members of the community are Indian.

“Small islands and islets were used by Coast Salish people for some of their camas gardens, and as summer homes for the special dog breed they used for making yarn for weaving cloth

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<sup>3</sup> The Book of the San Juan Islands, published by the Journal of the San Juan Islands, 2010.

and blankets. Salt water provided a natural fence, keeping dogs in and deer out. Families brought salmon to feed the dogs.

“A 1974 federal court decision on Indian treaty fishing rights applied to some 26 federally-recognized Indian tribes, nearly all on Reservations. Of these, 17 have successfully asserted fishing rights in the San Juan Islands. Through this process, it evolved that Indian people making legal decisions about San Juans were on the Reservations which were a mixture of many tribes and many languages, Different tribal people had to learn how to work together. There were strong advantages to affiliate with ‘official’ tribes so some of all the tribes did so. They’d get enrolled in a recognized tribe because it conferred some benefit. This process has made it difficult to work in a culturally-appropriately way on the Islands, because other tribes now have legal rights to intervene in areas that in which they were never strong culturally. Many times, this prevents local tribal voices from being heard. The native perspective on the islands is to ‘take care of things’, especially burial sites, and new proposals should be discussed with respected native people on the islands in addition to the formal consultation at the tribal government level.

“There is evidence that the “grasslands” reported by early explorers and settlers were actually the early spring leaves of cultivated Liliaceae such as camas, bordiaecas, native onions or native upland rushes that look very grass-like at a distance and stay green all year. The 1841 U.S. Exploring Expedition, and the 1857-1859 U.S. Boundary Commission surveys of the islands were carried out in winter and early spring (January-April), when Liliaceae and rushes are quite green, and our native grasses are still mainly brown!”

BLM landholdings in the San Juan Islands relates to three time periods. Prior to statehood, U.S. Lighthouse Service was directed to do lighthouse development in the islands, identify a water corridor for shipping and economic development. These were federally held lands, then they went to the General Land office, from there to BLM. That is why some of the headlands, or head points, belong to BLM. With statehood, it was determined that all surveyed lands would become state lands and all un-surveyed lands would become federal. The islands had not been surveyed, so they came under federal ownership with BLM management. Finally, BLM undertook acquisition and trading in the 1980s and 1990s, with special islands going to Fish and Wildlife Service.

Groups contacted through the course of this research include:

Friends of Chadwick Hill  
Friends of Lopez Hill  
Keepers of the Patos Light  
KWIAHT, Center for the Historical Ecology of the Salish Sea  
Orcas Island Community Foundation  
San Juan Board of County Commissioners  
San Juan County Parks Volunteers  
San Juan Chapter Native Plant Society  
San Juan County Land Bank  
San Juan Preservation Trust  
Turn Point Lighthouse Preservation Society

Trust for Public Lands

Other organizations with likely interest include:

Boy Scouts of American, Troop 94, Lopez  
Friday Harbor Power Squadron  
Lopez Community Land Trust  
Lopez Island Conservation Corps  
Lopez Island Family Resource Center  
Lopez Island School  
Lopez Island Yacht Club  
Eastsound Planning Committee  
Friends of Odlin South  
Orcas Island Fire Department  
Salmonberry School  
San Juan County Council  
San Juan County Parks Department  
San Juan County Sheriff Department  
San Juan Initiative  
San Juan National Historic Park  
San Juan Nature Institute  
The SeaDoc Society  
Sea Shepherd  
Soundwatch  
U.S. Coast Guard  
Washington Water Trails Association  
Whale Museum

### Community Themes

**“We love the BLM lands.”** This theme is the predominant one that was part of nearly every conversation.

“These properties are really important to Lopez and San Juan County. They are treasures, and BLM sees this.”

**“Our values are preservation and conservation.”** BLM lands are not the only ones of interest to residents as they look to preserve lands which are important ecologically and aesthetically. Residents described a strong demand for open, public land. For example, the San Juan County Land Bank recently bought Turtle Back Mountain on Orcas, a premier location on that island. It also bought Fisherman Bay Spit on Lopez that is close to town and has a mile of beach.

“We got a lot of criticism [when we bought the land at Fisherman Bay]. It was expensive. But I think in 50 years, people will think that is the most important thing we did.” [San Juan County Land Bank official]

“Passion for the land is so deep.”

“The islands can get very active on land use issues.”

“People are starved for welcoming use of beautiful land.”

“There is no place to go except where we are.”

“We take care very well of what we have. We are lucky to have these lands.”

“These are our resources, despite who owns them. We don’t want someone else taking them.”

**“Close the gate.”** A portion of the community wants to prevent additional change and growth. Residents say that the people that want that the most are those that just got to the islands. The more pronounced value is a rural one—that people have the right to use their property as they see fit.

“I just can’t get with that ‘close the gate’ attitude. Years ago, we were in some public debate, and a newcomer said, ‘Let’s keep it the way it is,’ and I just had to respond, ‘Well then let’s wind the clock back to when I got here, so you have to leave.’”

**“Islanders show high tolerance for conflict but they prefer it behind the scenes.”** Islanders frequently chuckled when they described conflicts on the islands.

“People don’t want it in the open if they can avoid it.”

“Island people stick together, even if they have conflicts.”

“Even if you have conflict with somebody, you’re still on same side.”

### Citizen Issues, Management Concerns, and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

#### **Low Awareness of BLM**

“I knew that BLM owns Colville Point and I think they own Lopez Hill, too.”

“Many people confuse BLM with DNR [Department of Natural Resources].”

“BLM manages Skull Island and Victim Island. BLM ownership is not known in most cases.”

“I’m not sure what BLM does or wants. What are the management goals for those parcels? BLM should protect more lands.”

“What is BLM?” [Waiter in Eastsound]

“I was surprised when I learned about how extensive BLM holdings are. They have lots of little parcels, islands, literal rocks and the ACEC lands. Mostly BLM is well-regarded or unknown.”

### **On Future Development of BLM Lands**

“Don’t develop, not even a picnic table. I don’t think BLM promotes their areas and we like it that way. It feels like a place for locals.”

“Don’t trample the BLM lands like at Shark Reef Park.”

“Locals don’t want development of BLM areas. Not having signs keeps the traffic down.”

“BLM lands are favored for hiking and walking.”

### **Lopez Hill**

Lopez Hill is not BLM but its story is included here because it shows how people came together to protect the land.

“We started Friends of Lopez Hill four years ago. DNR [Department of Natural Resources] wanted to get rid of this land. We had about four or five people in the core but got many more involved. Lots of people use the hill. We connected with local politicians. Bob Myr and Tom Cowan were great. Helped us connect with the legislature. We got into the Trust Lands Transfer Program. DNR awarded 50 year lease to the County. And the San Juan County Land Bank became the administrator and managers of the land. County Parks has no dedicated funding and they have had budget cuts. The Lopez desire was preference for county management, to keep it close to the people.”

“This is the largest undisturbed land on the island. It is mature 2<sup>nd</sup> growth timber of 90 years. It was ignored for 80 years which helped.”

The Land Bank is now drafting a Long Term Management Plan with two goals: 1) Keep it open for recreation, especially mountain bikers; and 2) Preserve the watershed.

### **Iceberg and Colville Points**

“I go to Iceberg a couple times a week.” [Common statement]

“BLM has done a great job at Iceberg and Colville Point. The southern properties are very valuable for us.” [Very common]

“A key goal for BLM should be for native plant restoration. Agriculture had such a great impact on Lopez that there are only remnants of native grasslands left. Invasive thistles are common. Open grasslands in Washington are rare and valued. Can BLM do a pilot for grassland restoration?”

“Colville and Iceberg are culturally important. There are camas fields that have been out there for a long time.”

“Additional parking for Iceberg should be addressed by BLM. At the present time, the parking area at the San Juan County Parks Agate Beach day park is used for Iceberg parking. Iceberg visitors also use private property south of Agate Beach. During the summer months, it can become a problem for day park users to find parking space because of the folks headed for Iceberg. BLM does pay a small fee for the use of the Agate Beach facilities, the parking and toilet. I’m not sure how much.”

“BLM has done well in creating more access. The next steps for BLM should be full legal access and handicap accessibility.”

“BLM does not own access to Iceberg. Current access is through private property, which is voluntary and subject to change. Although some people say leave it the way it is, access is needed and adequate parking is needed. I can see not advertising but the public should have access with notice about where these lands are.” [Common statement]

“I monitor and take care of Agate Day Park. It has turned into a BLM parking lot. It gets hectic in the summer. Iceberg is now on the list. Visitors learn about it when they visit and they head for it. Used to be people would turn at end of road, onto the easement and park. The owners were getting upset. Nick has taken care of that through ample signage and contact.”

“I run the volunteer program for the ACEC lands. There are about 26-28 volunteers who have been doing this for many years. We do recreation monitoring and turn in reports to BLM. The ACEC is open to public but its purpose is restoration also. We have violations like dogs and camping that we try and keep down. There are lots of retired people that come here. Two of the volunteers live on the street with Iceberg parking which helps.”

“What needs to change is better parking for Watmough and Colville Point.”

“On Iceberg, we don’t own access.” [The speaker was referring to BLM not owning access but said “We.” Talk about citizen ownership!]

“We don’t want to keep the numbers down but to modify our impact. I’m concerned about dogs. They should be leash only in order to cut down the impact of human visitors. We got rid of bikes. We put welcome signs on the inside, not by the road.”

“Parking and toilet issues were terrible at Watmough. Nick has worked hard to get some nice improvements in there. We all set a tone for how it’s treated. Before, you would see bags of

trash around the toilet because it was clear no one was caring for the area, ‘So why should I? Now, there is none of that.’

### *Cultural Heritage*

“Reef net fishing used to be practiced there, traced to 4 BLM sites. This was a method unique to Indian fishing which was used only on the San Juan Islands.” [KHAIHT director]

“Camas fields were ignored [on BLM lands] and weeds came in.”

At Watmough Bight, we found a very old hearth in an unexpected place that confounded the experts. I got stories from the old families about a ‘coming home’ ceremony to call the Sockeye home to the islands. That’s what we think this was. The point areas that BLM has were reef fishing complexes with what we would call today slash and burn agriculture on South Lopez.”

“There is evidence that the small rock islands were used for camas cultivation to keep the deer out.”

“When BLM and others talk about restoration, the meaning is not clear. Restoration back to ecological health? Restoration back to before European contact? What’s important is that these are not ‘grasslands’, they are ‘cultural landscapes.’ BLM properties in the past were culturally-managed for certain outcomes. ‘Grasslands restoration’ should really be ‘cultural restoration.’”

“Let’s do demonstration plots of camas. That would be great. We have plenty of work days and field trips. I am sure I could get volunteers needed to assess, monitor, and develop.”

### **Level of Protection**

It was obvious through conversations with Lopez Islanders that much prior discussion has occurred about the current ACEC [Area of Critical Environmental Concern] designation of BLM lands and the desire for better levels of protection. Almost to a person, people recognized that ACEC designations can be changed administratively within BLM, and that an NCA [National Conservation Area] designation would give the lands permanent protection. It is not clear whether residents understand the pros and cons of the NCA status beyond the goal of “better protection.”

“I’m a member of a group pushing for higher land protection for BLM lands by designating them as an NCA. We thought ACEC was adequate and that it was highest, but we found out it isn’t. The ACEC designation can be changed administratively.”

“Under Bush, BLM officials were maximizing economic value. It gave us alarm. If there is opportunity for permanent protection, we are determined to do it.”

“When DNR [Department of Natural Resources] decided to divest itself of all its lands in the San Juans, it was very scary. We realized that agencies would not always protect our interests.”

“NCAs come with money I understand thru NLCS, the National Lands Conservation Service.”

“There is still the perception that BLM is more resource oriented and not recreation and preservation oriented. The current BLM approach could change and leave us high and dry.”

“BLM has 1000 plus acres in San Juan County. Only 450 acres have any protection—Chadwick Point, Colville Preserve, Watmough and Iceberg. These are ACEC's [Areas of Critical Environment Concern, an internal BLM designation]. This designation can be changed by BLM at any time. I would like to see more protection like a National Conservation Area that would provide continuity in management with a focus on conservation.”

### **Access**

“Chadwick Hill is a great spot for trails. New people tend to block off access. Years ago, you could walk where you wanted.”

### **Visitor Impacts**

“Residents complain of beach walkers and will try to kick you off, but a lot of times the beach is not private ground. The law says something about high water mark and the beach is below that.”

“We find some rubbish in the toilets sometimes. I pick up trash if I see it. It's never that much.”

### **Cattle Point, San Juan Island**

“Efforts to get grasses back from invasives are futile.”

“Visitors let their dogs run. As sheep country, this makes people nervous here.”

“A lot of people in Cape San Juan and Cattlepoint Estates were afraid that wells would be affected by public land management, but it hasn't happened.”

### **Turn Point Lighthouse Site, Stuart Island**

Stuart Island reportedly has about 15 full-time families, and the population swells up to 300 in the summer. Most residents have been long-term over the years. On the west end of the island, separated by private property which serves as a buffer between visitors and residents, sits the Turn Point Lighthouse. There are “million dollar views” from the site, and visitors watch whales and

container ships ply the deep waters nearby offshore. A resident involved with the lighthouse counted 3000 visitors to the museum in 2009 between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Visitors are drawn to the scenery and the lighthouse, as well as for activities like ocean boating and geo-caching.

Washington State Parks received the lighthouse from the Coast Guard in the early 1990s, but it eventually reverted to federal ownership and ultimately to BLM. BLM conducted an assessment and has made modest administrative and physical advancements, but significant decisions have been deferred for this planning process.

In the meantime, an informal network of Islanders and others began to mobilize to clean up the lighthouse. They eventually formed a nonprofit organization in 2005 called the Turn Point Lighthouse Preservation Society (TPLPS). Its goals are to avoid large footprints while renovating buildings to house a museum and to showcase the history of the lighthouse. Early on, roofs were put on the Keepers' Quarter and the Barn. The museum was located in the Mule Barn because BLM determined the Fog Watch building was too deteriorated. In 2006, the group put up cameras for security, 20 solar panels on the hill above the complex, a microwave radio, and a furnace in the Keepers Quarters for minimal heat and to keep the building dry.

When BLM determined that someone had to live on the site, the group came up with the idea of a docent program. Like a primitive camping site, the group got water and an outhouse. The first docent program occurred in 2008 and went very well. The docent greeted visitors, informed them of the history as well as the rules and safety considerations. No incidents marred the success. Work parties accomplished additional clean up.

The vision of the group is a Keepers for a Week program, allowing them to have rotating staff in place, with a great program. They have a long term plan drawn up that outlines the basic infrastructure necessary to make the docent comfortable and the grounds safe, including systems for water, septic and electricity.

The group feels their project has good local support. Some of the group members are long-term residents of Stuart Island and believe long-termers are comfortable with the level of activity. While part-timers sometimes get worried about change, they reside on the east side of the island which is separated by private property from the lighthouse site on the west end.

In the fall of 2008, BLM completed a CASHE inspection which identified safety concerns related to lead paint, the water system, a hand railing, and the building integrity of the Keeper's Quarters. A mitigation plan was to follow but no one in TPLPS has seen it.

It is fair to say that the relationship between BLM and TPLPS is ambivalent at best. Although its group members had many positive things to say about the relationship and about accomplishments to date, they also expressed frustration and anger in working with BLM. Their concerns are these:

1. BLM seems arbitrary in their requirements. Things can change and all of a sudden something else has to be done. It leaves group members feeling unsettled.
2. BLM takes so long to respond, weeks and sometimes months for simple correspondence. "We want this done in our lifetime and we're old!" is a major theme of their frustration.

3. It prefers to delay a decision than to make a decision.
4. After the CASHE inspection, BLM's attitude was "We are in charge, do it our way."
5. Concretely, their issues are:
  - a. Conflict over the docent quarters. The group wanted to prepare better living quarters (dry, with electricity) for the summer docent but BLM has refused.
  - b. The group lost an entire season with delays over electrical contracting because its bid, which had been discounted to \$3,000, was still over the \$2,500 BLM limit for that type of contract.
  - c. The group bought latex paint and was told they could not store it where they had because it was not safe.
  - d. BLM wants a "Primitive Host Pad" with certain standards but offered no support. The group felt the standards were inappropriate and cost prohibitive as it would have involved barges of gravel to get the site to grade.
  - e. Why is ADA [American with Disabilities Act standards] needed if handicapped cannot get to the site?
  - f. BLM wants a gutter, roof and flag pole that is historical and refuse to consider alternative products that look similarly but are much cheaper or last longer.

## **Orcas Island Issues**

### **Indian Island**

"Fireworks for years were done on Indian Island. This year they did it on a barge."  
[Information sharing, no issue]

"I was upset at the way BLM prohibited fireworks this year on Indian Island. I know there are reasons they had to do it, but I still felt blindsided." [Local official]

"For the last 25 years, fireworks have been done on Indian Island. Then \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ at the Chamber had to deal with last minute changes [when BLM prohibited fireworks in 2009]."

### **Maps and Information**

"The county is preparing a draft map showing all the jurisdictions but the feds are not on it. It would be good for BLM to support a map that would show all jurisdictions."

The Orcas Fire Department does clean up out at Patos Island once a year. They don't get paid; they just know it needs done."

### **Outlying Rocks and Islands**

"The small islands are fire hazard in the summer. The State wants fires only in designated places with a fire ring. Many people have no common sense. There is makeshift camping all over."

“State law says the road ends at the water. That is the point of public access, like at Doubty Point. Nearby owners don’t like this law. It is a political hot potato. It’s called a ‘road in list’. San Juan County Parks has it. Doubty Point has cliffs, but there is limited camping.”

“Some islands you can only get to at low tide, like Victim and Skull.”

“Boaters and kayakers need pull out areas. Some tiny islands have black oyster catchers, a bird that lays eggs on the rocks. We don’t allow guides to land on these. We keep a tight rein on guides. We don’t allow people to get close to seals. We educate clients on the front end. People know they can call us.” [Kayak shop. Their system is to hire guides, rent to visitors, and guides take out a group. Guides are trained to know about species’ needs and ecological concerns. The shop knows if a guide is messing up or whether bad weather, other factors cause problems, so they can weed out bad ones. In addition, if they sense visitors will not be respectful, they don’t send them to the sensitive places so they are protected.]

“Kayaks have more impact than power boats because they surprise animals.”

“BLM should be clear of its management goals. Do research. Which rocks do you want? Don’t publish about these areas because it will just attract more people. Help the stuff that’s left.”

“Twin Rocks is a pull out for seals. So is Doubty Point.”

“These organizations like BLM and DNR [Department of Natural Resources], they lose budget and abandon places, but people still camp, they still visit.”

### **Other Orcas Issues**

“BLM should support and fund research on land management issues in this environment.”

“No signage.”

### **Patos Island**

Keepers of the Patos Light was begun three years ago as a nonprofit organization to protect and restore the lighthouse on Patos Island. The lighthouse dates from 1893 and the U.S. Lighthouse Service. The Coast Guard managed the facility for some time before it came to BLM in the 1980s. The group brings out volunteers to do the trails and they tell the history to visitors, sometimes camping for up to a week. There are no buildings currently. A Washington State Park has seven campsites.

The group reports 5000 visitors a year to Patos, all arriving in personal watercraft. Sailboats tie to one of three buoys or anchor in Active Cove. Anchors are not preferred because of the fast currents in the cove. Kayaks are the most popular. Motorboats come up on the beach but have to be careful to leave before the tide drops. Sometimes rowers even make it to the island. Many visitors have been coming to Patos for years and they know the stories too.

The local goals for the island are to not overuse it, to keep the area in good condition, and to showcase the local history. Keepers of the Patos Light would like to develop the means for docents to be on Island for the whole summer and they are seeking grants for this purpose. In addition, the pit toilet currently is inadequate and it hopes for a compost toilet. Perhaps a modest dock at some point would be good.

“Kayakers go out to Patos. There is camping on the southwest side. The Fire Department takes care of the west side. They burned down old buildings, take care of weeds. They just do it, they don’t get paid.”

## **BLM Management**

### **General**

“We want a cohesive management approach for all BLM property in the county.”

“I am so glad that BLM hired an outside realm (JKA) to talk with people.”

### **Support for Local Personnel**

Nearly everyone had words of praise for Nick Teague and the job he has done in the community on behalf of BLM. These comments were volunteered freely and were never solicited.

“Having Nick Teague is a real benefit to our community. There was no personal face to BLM before Nick. We would see management once in awhile and they’d visit the various properties. With Nick, issues are taken care of promptly, from trees falling on the trail, to vandalism. ”

“Nick is part of community and knows how to link us to the right officials in BLM.”

“I’m amazed at what he can accomplish, especially his ability to find and organize volunteers monitors.”

“Nick is out there, he listens, he asks questions, he gets things done.”

Pam Kemp and Rich Bailey were spoken well of also.

### **Collaborative Relationships**

“I like working with BLM. For a federal agency, they do OK.”

“One thing that is really needed here is strong management support to empower and motivate very capable people. BLM can’t always give up control. It is not always a good partner. All collaboration is partnership, and BLM does not get that.”

“The list of failed partnerships or frustrated partner stories is very long. Some people will talk to you [JKA] straight, but others will not want to jeopardize the relationship with BLM.”

“For native American relations, the right links can be made with respected Indian elders, showing cultural protocol. Talk about how to take care of things. If BLM then says the right thing publicly from this knowledge, it can forestall political backlashes.”

“The relationship with BLM has gone up and down. There were strong ties at first.”

## Planning Process Considerations

### **Meeting Locations**

For a county-wide meeting, Friday Harbor has the most convenient meeting space available at the Mullis Senior Center because it is within walking distance of the ferry. It seats about 150 people and has room dividers for smaller gatherings (360.378.2677). Because people in the San Juan Islands will not easily travel to other islands for a meeting, and because BLM on Lopez Island is so important to those residents, JKA recommends an additional meeting on Lopez Island. The best location is the Lopez Community Center which will seat about 100. The Lopez Library is good for small gatherings.

On Orcas Island, meetings often held at the fire house or the city center. The Orcas Senior Center is used often for meetings as well.

At Cattle Point, on San Juan Island, there are 5-6 events a year with food (“Chat N Chew’s”) that bring people together. The community is proud of the fire house it built, and it serves as the meeting place. It seats about 100. “We do pancake breakfasts there. They are so popular.”

Any public meetings in the San Juans must accommodate the ferry schedule. Parts of whole days must be devoted to getting from place to place. It is important that meetings close early enough for people to catch ferries home. One resident said that Orcas Power Company has gone so far as to have their annual meetings on the ferry!

“BLM must do 3 meetings. It can’t do one for all the islands. People won’t come.”

### **Communication**

Residents advised BLM to use the local newspapers for updates on the planning process. There is a community calendar published and the weekly newspaper prints a calendar.

“Use the grocery store for notices. Put them on the door next to the death notices. We are sure to notice it then!”

“BLM should go to the Chamber of Commerce and the Realtors Association, and possibly the Builders Association, and possibly faith-based organizations. There is lots of wealth and

egos here with a gigantic activist network. You have take hat in hand and go visit the right people. Maybe they won't agree but the personal effort means often that they will not actively oppose." [Orcas resident]

"People must have good information. You can't make judgments without information. Publications and a website would help."

"We can do a good job publicizing. It's hard to do outreach here because there is so little media. E-mail is pretty good but we know that lots of people do not read the online newspapers." [San Juan County Land Bank]

"There is a small, vocal group of private property rights people here that get worked up about conservation programs."

### **Collaboration**

A key message from residents of the San Juan Islands to BLM is: "Understand and support what is already going on." People felt that because the management capacity on the islands is low, particularly in relation to other agencies, that it is especially appropriate that BLM fit in and rely on the ongoing assessment and management that is occurring routinely.

"BLM should just be very upfront with its intentions."

"Community-Based Planning has already been extended to us."

"In scoping, BLM should talk about the lands that it has. What are the options for management? Inform people with background information. We've had successful meetings with Parks where such presentations were followed by using post-it tags around different stations that have questions, "How would you like to handle...? Like parking. What are the options?"

"BLM should do community building as part of its plan. We are its partners."

### **Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Conduct a more thorough assessment of existing organizations, their missions, and their accomplishments, and work with residents to develop a comprehensive vision for all BLM lands in the islands.
2. Assist citizens and BLM specialists to determine the proper course of action, and the proper land use decisions, to address the goal of "better protection," particularly on Lopez Island.

## Chapter Four: The Okanogan Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. Okanogan Country is a deeply rural area undergoing a transition from agriculture and timber to recreation which creates tension between the old and the new.
2. The recreation economy seems to be growing and has stimulated the development of regional recreation planning, notably through the County's draft comprehensive plan, which includes local and regional trail, agri-tourism strategies, and a multi-user orientation. The explicit link is: conservation, education, outdoor recreation embedded in an economic development framework.
3. Motorized and non-motorized users are fairly polarized in their perspectives and low in their cooperation, although there is common ground in some areas and some history of successful collaboration.
4. User groups have developed effective organizations that understand agency process, can raise money, and accomplish real things on the ground. These organizations will be capable partners or capable adversaries depending on how well their interests are incorporated into the planning process.
5. Even though BLM is a minor landholder, people value BLM lands and welcome BLM's planning process. People want to participate. Okanogan County government wants to be an active participant in planning and praised BLM for early notification.
6. Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements are two:
  - a. Develop a recreation resource strategy for the RMP consistent with emerging recreation development in the Okanogan area;
  - b. Explore the prospects for planning in conjunction with the Forest Service.

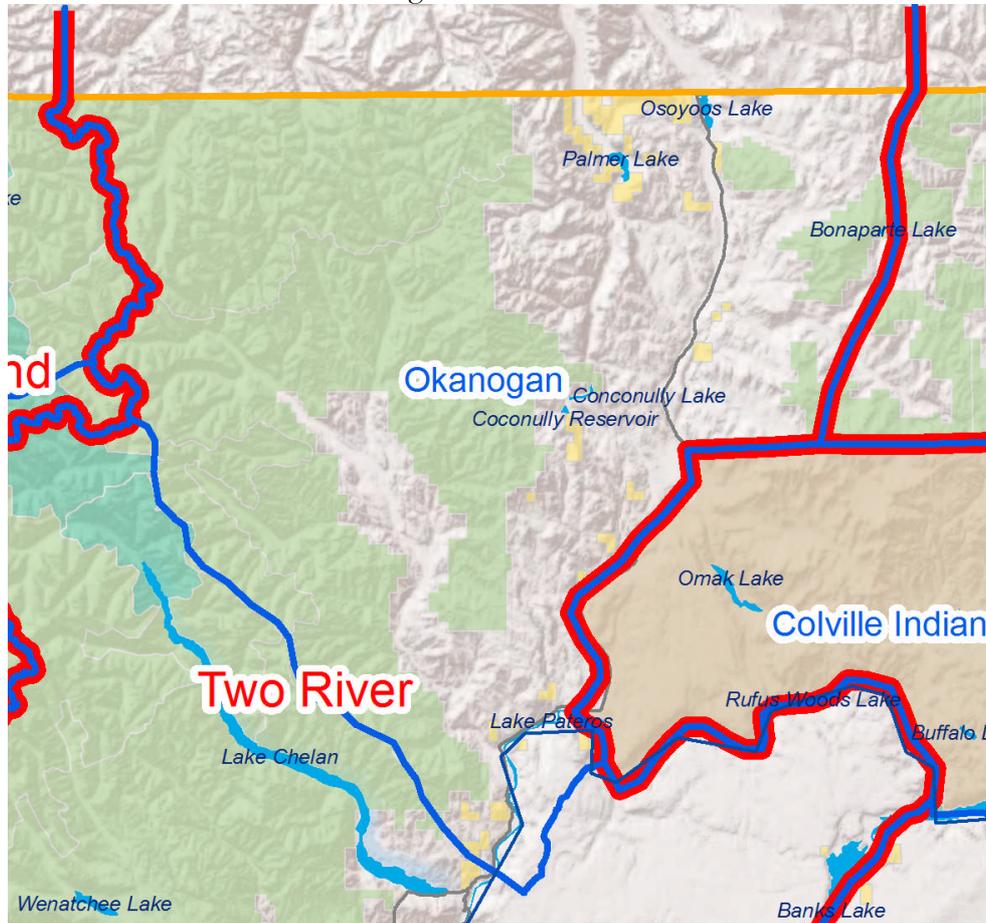
### Introduction

JKA conducted 9 professional days of community fieldwork in the Okanogan HRU.

Individuals	29
People in group settings (organizational meeting, outlet stores)	10
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>29</u>
Total contacts	68

The Okanogan HRU is shown in Figure Three and is comprised primarily of Okanogan County. On the west, the unit ends at the crest of the Cascade Mountains, on the south the unit ends just south of the county line and town of Azwell, on the east the unit boundary is the Colville Indian Nation and ends west of the Ferry County line, and the northern boundary extends into Canada. Okanogan country has been a north/south corridor for hundreds of years. For example, for many years in the late 1800s, long cattle drives were conducted between Washington State and British Columbia to serve the economies of both areas. Moreover, residents confirmed the customary and routine contact across the border:

Figure Three  
The Okanogan Human Resource Unit



“Before 9/11, we thought that the Canadian border had disappeared. There is lots of interaction across the line. Then the border patrol built their empire along the border and it has slowed down cross-border interaction.”

“A lot of British Columbia was settled by Americans and for generations there has been family and friends cross-over with Okanogan.”

“Some of my family settled in Okanogan and some in British Columbia. I have cousins on both sides of the line.”

“A lot of people along the border cross over regularly and illegally. One American couple has been lifelong friends with a Canadian couple, separated only by a hedge. They are elderly and they go back and forth all the time.”

“My daughter got an “enhanced license” and goes across the border for dental work. Credit cards now charge the exchange rate, so a lot of people have stopped shopping over there.”

“9/11 cut down on the interaction across the border.”

## Community Description

Here is a summary of the area provided by Okanogan County:

“The county has a population of 38,400 people. Okanogan, with a population of 2,415, is the second largest city in the county, and the county seat. Omak, the largest city in the county has a population of 4,495. Other cities within the county are: Brewster (2,055), Conconully (177), Coulee Dam (890), Elmer City (310), Nespelem (235), Oroville (1,615), Pateros (595), Riverside (305), Tonasket (1,025), Twisp (1,000), and Winthrop (375). The county has an unincorporated population of 21,764, while the incorporated population is 15,136, with a density of 7 persons per square mile.” (From: <http://www.okanogancounty.org/demographics.htm>).

“Agriculture and forestry are the major economic generators for the county and are the foundation for the region, which employs approximately 5,756 people. Government, retail trade, services, and manufacturing are a few of the major employers within the county. Omak, the regional center for services and trade, is experiencing a great deal of growth. There is also increasing commercial development pressure in the area between the Canadian border and Oroville. The City of Coulee Dam is the location of Grand Coulee Dam, one of the largest concrete structures in the world, and largest electricity producer in the United States. The Dam also has a visitors’ center with guided tours, background movies, and extensive information of the region. The Methow Valley, located in the western portion of the county, is quickly becoming a destination for outdoor lovers and enthusiasts and includes hundreds of square miles of cross-country ski trails, snowmobile parks, mountain biking, fishing, camping, hiking, and offers many tourist accommodations and weekend get-a-ways, and a possible four seasons destination resort.” (From: <http://www.okanogancounty.org/demographics.htm>).

In 2008, the Okanogan County population was estimated to be 40,033, an increase of 1.2% since 2000. Only 30% of the land within the county is in private ownership due to the amount of state and federal land.

The traditional culture in Okanogan has been ranching, mining, and timber. This culture is in decline. Omak lost its mill, for example. Only 9% of the county work force is now involved in forestry and agriculture while over 70% are involved in professional, service or sales occupations.<sup>4</sup> For many decades, the presence of Hispanics has been growing, first as migrants connected to the orchard culture, and more recently as full-time residents. What local people call a “hippy” sub-culture has also been present for decades and it has evolved into a “new age” community promoting recreation and conservation. Tonasket, for example, seems to be a vibrant community that actively mixes all these elements with some success, whereas in Oroville, there is some, but much less, evidence of the newer culture.

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<sup>4</sup> Okanogan County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2004.

The recreation economy is growing. The Methow River Valley is becoming well-known and well-developed in recreation amenities that serve the Seattle metropolitan area. There are a number of seasonal resorts along the lakes and other places. Agri-tourism has developed as a means to combine traditional agricultural lifestyles with a visitor economy in order to enhance both. In short, this has become an area that is more obviously diverse socially and economically which is trying to cohabitate and generally does so well.

“There is lots of agriculture in the area and is the focus of many businesses. Timber mills have recently closed down and that has impacted the community through job loss. They did plywood and this was a huge job draw.”

“There are many more retired folks coming into the area and living on the outskirts of the town.” [Tonasket resident]

“There are cattle ranchers here, hill people, and hippies. Twenty years ago they would never talk to one another and they were very polarized. We used to have 3 mills here, but there are none today.”

“I am a second generation Hispanic immigrant who came to live in the valley because my mother wanted to stay here. My dad was manager of orchard workers and we treated our men well, but there was and still is cheating going on. A mixed record of worker treatment. There aren't as many orchards now but there are more Hispanics. When I was in school I was one of the few Hispanics but it's a lot now. I know a lot of families who wanted to settle down.”

In the midst of this change, social problems are occurring.

“There are gang-bangers coming up from LA and hiding out here. There are Indian gangs and Mexican gangs and they just a few months ago got into a shoot out about a mile from here.”

“This community is so poor and with poverty comes a mentality of dependency on the government and with that comes an attitude of deserving. The poverty comes from white folks, Hispanics, and natives.”

“I grew up in this area and remember when there were two grocery stores in Okanogan. Today there are none. Downtown is drying up.”

“Do not break up land and sell 20 acres ranchettes. Sage brush spring and fall pastures are a huge economic base.”

The people in the Okanogan country are very active outdoors. The traditional culture is oriented to work in the outdoors and productive uses of the land. Beyond the cattlemen, the area is filled with outdoor enthusiasts who hunt, hike, snowmobile, use ATVs [all terrain vehicles], bird watch, and ride bike.

“I had too much city. I like the smallness of the area. There is a general friendliness in the Okanogan area. People greet strangers and there is a welcoming feel to the whole area.”

“The Hispanics don’t recreate in the way we do. Recreation seems to be a white man’s activity. Either you do redneck recreation or environmentally-correct recreation. People either run dirt bikes or these big quads or hike and watch the birds. Hispanic recreation involves going to WalMart on Sunday and a birthday party at the local park.”

In the last several years, many well-organized and powerful recreation groups devoted to ORV, horse riding, and snowmobiling. They are very aware of agencies’ processes and willing to organize to further their interests. There have been notable accomplishments in trail development that involves fundraising, organizing and trail building. These groups could be capable partners or capable adversaries, depending on how it goes.

Residents reluctantly acknowledge the reality that agencies are part of everyday life. In an area with high public landownership, there are many state and federal agencies that influence the economy, outdoor activities, and other features of daily life. The U.S. Forest Service presence is multi-generational, extending now back over a 100 years, with many staff and retired staff living in the area. Even though there are many citizen issues dealing with the Forest Service, there is also a record of accomplishment and some community support as well. There is an ease and acceptance in having Forest Service people be part of the community. In recent years, the presence of Department of Natural Resources (DNR), state fish and wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and BLM has grown.

“There are a lot of acronyms around here.”

The JKA team talked with the following agencies and organizations with likely interest in the BLM planning process:

- City of Oroville
- Conservation Northwest
- Mule Deer Foundation
- North Central ATV Club
- North Central Washington Resource and Conservation District
- Omak Chamber of Commerce
- Okanogan Borderlands Historical Society
- Okanogan Conservation District
- Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation District
- Okanogan County Commissioners and Planners
- Okanogan County Extension
- Okanogan County Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board
- Okanogan County Snowmobile Club
- Okanogan County Tourism Council
- Okanogan Public Utility District
- Okanogan Trails Council

Okanogan Trails Scenic Byway  
Okanogan Valley Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen's Association  
Okanogan Valley Land Council  
Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest  
Okanogan Wildlife Council  
Oroville Border Patrol  
Oroville Chamber of Commerce  
Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation District  
Pacific Northwest Trail Association  
Riverside Sportsman Association  
The Economic Alliance  
VIA 97 International Alliance  
Washington State Snowmobile Association  
Wild Sheep Foundation

Other organizations with likely interest include:

North Central Washington Economic Development District  
North Central Audubon Society

### Community Themes

**“This area is going through a transition from agriculture and timber to recreation.”** Although not everyone would agree that the changes being experienced in Okanogan country are a transition from one thing to another, almost everybody commented in some way on the contrasts in lifestyle represented by the old and the new. The old is the traditional economic base of agriculture, timber and mining. The values of these people are for productive uses of the land—taking care of it, but using it to benefit humans. These folks seem to feel outnumbered, making statements that people don't appreciate ranching, and that the priority of the land management agencies is now recreation and wildlife, not cattle grazing and mining. The new is recreation. There is energy in the air as people describe the emergence of conservation, education, trails interest, and recreation as an economic development strategy, with that complex receiving prominent attention in the draft comprehensive plan of the County currently under review, and particular trails getting the support from county government.

**“Everybody should be able to use public land.”** This is an overarching public value heard from all segments of the community. Nobody advocated for keeping certain interests out of public land areas and there is a strong belief that recreation uses are compatible and can be done on the same ground. One reason wilderness proposals are resisted is that they exclude certain uses which go against this value. “Keep public lands public.”

**“We don't like management from the other side of the mountain.”** Many people talked about more positive relations with land managers of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Forest Service when there is staff present locally. The perception is that when managers are local

they talk things over more and make better decisions. It leads to mistrust when agencies that have influence but low presence such as BLM. “We invited them but they weren’t here.”

**“No management is mismanagement.”** This phrase was heard several times in describing BLM, sometimes in anger, sometimes in a matter-of-fact way. Officials would say, “We work together with BLM very well. I haven’t seen them in a couple years, though.” “BLM does not seem to have much interest up here.” “BLM is not managing what they have.”

**“We like to grumble against government but what we really want is communication.”** Many comments were made that government is ineffective and the comments were applied to all levels of government. It may even be fair to say that anti-government stories were the favorite and most common stories told. However, JKA noticed that in almost all cases, there was another part of the message. People left an opening about how things could be different and better, most of the time related to the idea of better communication.

**“The agencies have ‘paralysis by analysis.’”** This phrase was used in relation the Forest Service but also in general to other agencies. It was used to describe the many, often contradictory, laws that agencies must follow that has led to perpetual analysis but not much done. The idea that agencies want to study things forever relates to the perception that agencies do not respond to citizens in a timely way.

**“There is a wall between wilderness people and motorized people.”** Residents described a chasm in perception between wilderness advocates and motorized recreation users, with both having limited perspectives. Wilderness people believe the land will manage itself while motorized recreationists believe they can go anywhere and not create real damage, both false beliefs according to Okanogan people who try to see both sides. “Environmentalists” are seen to have a political agenda of restricting use while outdoor recreationists have also become skilled at using the courts. There appears to be little compromise or cooperation between these interests, making Okanogan among the most polarized areas of the State on these issues.

**“There is plenty we can work together on.”** The themes indicate real divisions in local society and the degree of polarization witnessed by the JKA team is more pronounced than anywhere in the state. Despite sharp differences, however, there is a deep history in the area of people working together, supported by the geographic isolation of this area and the rural ethic of friendliness and handshake relationships.

## Citizen Issues, Management Concerns and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

### **Information**

Public awareness of BLM land and its location is not high. Most people were aware that BLM had property in the area but people often expressed uncertainty about where it was.

“We’ve had several inquiries for better maps that would show mines, and rights of way. People are unsure whether to contact DNR [Department of Natural Resources] or BLM or whose land they are on. People want access.” [Historical Society]

“BLM maps never help. They don’t show houses or even some roads.”

## **Grazing**

A cattleman described the “fee-based” grazing system in place in this area and contrasted it with the more common system of “permitted” leases of grazing land from a land management agency. Because this system requires no permit, he has no contact with BLM range conservation officer. He has several 40-acre parcels of BLM land within his private holdings, so all lands are managed in the same way.

“There is a major need in the area for more public lands grazing. More land should be opened up for these purposes.” [ RC & D, Resource and Conservation District]

“Landowners aren’t getting compensated for the takings that occur on their property. There is a problem with the biological assessments associated with ESA [Endangered Species Act]. They are done on a county level and this means that the private landowners are locked into a certain course of action because the declaration of critical habitat is done on a county level. They can’t use their private land for what they want and this is a problem that is probably due to resource constraints on more accurate pinpointing of the critical habitat areas that are of concern. From a BLM perspective, this translates into more restrictions on what can and cannot be done in managing that BLM public land.”

“People do not appreciate the value of ranching. A calf that is worth \$600 is really worth \$3000 before the calf leaves the county from all the other people that make money in the process. New people are coming in that are not production oriented.”

“BLM’s plan should be production oriented, and that means grasses. Grasses are more important than sagebrush and should be favored in management.”

“When wolves make it back to this country, it will cost the cattlemen. They will do lots of damage before you would know about it. Compensation programs do not work well.”

“Fuel costs nearly killed ranchers a couple years ago.”

“The Forest Service is pushing birding in its plan. Says it’s the biggest thing ever. Can you imagine? It’s nuts. It is misplaced emphasis.”

“BLM should actively manage grazing permits. You cannot manage by absence.”

## Recreation

### *All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Use*

ATVs is the term favored in Okanogan for off highway vehicle use. ATV use is discussed a lot in Okanogan territory and symbolizes to some extent the rift or cultural tension between more traditional people and the newer, more environmentally-oriented residents.

The travel management plans of the Forest Service designate areas either as open or closed and allow street vehicles to use open roads. The travel management plan for the Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest is not yet completed, so Forest Service roads in this area are still considered “open” for quad use, although some roads are dual use.

“The Forest Service needs to open up more roads for ATV [all terrain vehicle] use. They are closing many for protection of animal species movement patterns, but I think that the number of closures is far too great and that the ‘old timers’ aren’t able to go up and see their old favorite hunting places anymore.”

“There is a legal pathway to ride ATVs from Loomis all the way down to Okanogan, and that is a lot of distance. It’s not used too much yet, but people really appreciate that it’s there.”

“I don’t think you can ride on any BLM ground around here, but I’m not sure.”

“Because there is so little land that is accessible to ATVs and motorized uses, there really isn’t that much left to compromise on. Of the 107 million acres in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, only 30,000 acres have roads.”

“The worst are those who live in Seattle with their ATVs and they are the most irresponsible because they’re not as close to the land and they don’t have anywhere to ride in Seattle. They want to go off trail. My group will tell them to stop breaking rules when they’re out there.”

“We don’t want to go everywhere. We want to be able to go on roads and trails. And if the trails have to be used for managing the forests, then let the motorized vehicles on there, too. Snowmobiles can do cross country travel because it is not the same impact on the soil.”

“The population is getting older and there should be more trails suited to motorized use for this population to use the trails.”

“Recreation motorized vehicular noise is not always compatible with other users.”

“There are many volunteers from the ORV community who want to use hard stream crossings (on rocks) and take steps to minimize impact. Nobody is advocating for cross country travel on ATVs.”

“The motorized vehicle users volunteer for trail maintenance much more frequently than do the hikers. The hikers don’t really volunteer much. And the ATV users take the trails that are the least accessible because they can access them with their ATVs when they have the special permission to do so. They can literally do four times the amount of work as a trail crew on foot.”

“Access is a challenge. We often have to use BLM land to get to the Forest Service ground using roads and trails.”

“The main purposes of the snowmobile association are the work on improving signage on the trails and to promote good trail and backcountry use through education. When we are out there and we see somebody riding off trail or breaking the rules we’ll confront them and explain that what they’re doing is detrimental.” [Snowmobile club officer]

“The facts are that ATVs are hard on the land. We’re not saying don’t have ATV, but let’s at least acknowledge that all that riding in the national forest has done incredible damage. How do we get around that? Let’s talk about it.”

“I do not like ATVs and what they do to the ground, but they are a legitimate use. I would be in favor of designated areas, even ‘sacrifice areas’ for more aggressive use. Get longer ATV loops, 20-30 miles, but restrict off road riding. That’s where the damage comes in.”

“I am not a fan of ATV use. They tear up the land and they scare the game. Even though there are only a few places that they can actually be ridden, the stores still have good sales.”

### **Trails and Trail Maintenance**

People described good relationships with Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, and state Fish and Wildlife regarding trail development and maintenance.

“I wish we had more people to help maintain trails. We are just a small group, about 50 members and 20% do all the work. At times, we think it is a no win proposition. We are making some headway but agencies continually say they don’t have enough money to maintain trails, so they are closed.”

“The trailheads for horse staging areas need to be larger. Most of them only fit a couple horse trailers and the rest have to park on the road.”

“Trailheads should have shelters for picnics or functions. Trailheads need pit toilets because of Leave No Trace principles.”

“Trail development in eastern Washington should be a priority. BLM lands have not been the high use areas, not like state parks. As people become more interested in the arid lands, the shrub steppes and the channel scablands, and these other features in eastern Washington, trails will be ever more important.”

“More emphasis on better stewardship—and more public outreach by BLM in terms of education on BLM lands. Stewardship and trails and education as to what is there on the BLM lands.”

“Generally, BLM lands do not have good signage or access.”

“We enjoy BLM lands in the early spring. We hike, look at mine shafts, do metal detecting along the Similkameen River.”

The Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail is an approved trail now extending from the Pacific Ocean on the Olympic Peninsula along the Canadian border to Glacier National Park. In the Okanogan area the trail includes BLM land near Nighthawk along the Similkameen River. Another portion, the Whistler Canyon Trail south of Oroville, proceeds east from Highway 97 onto BLM and Forest Service land on Mount Hull. BLM has been an active partner in both these trail segments. Okanogan County has been active in promoting the success of the Whistler Canyon Trail.

“The County help on this was amazing. If some of the old guys in this restaurant knew this, they’d throw a fit.”

“The BLM is looking to buy a portion. That stretch of the BLM land is the only access to the Forest Service land plot on the east side. It is the only access to public lands on that whole Highway 97 corridor. It will open up lots of area to a diverse group of users. There is no good access point from the east. The process is going better than expected.”

“We are pleased to have BLM as a partner. Getting access to public lands is our mission. Now that BLM agreed to the purchase, we can get the trailhead developed. People can use this trail for years to come.”

“The Pacific Northwest National Scenic trail should always be non-motorized. That area is a mountain sheep lambing area.”

### **User Fees**

ATV users invariably said that they would be willing to pay in order to get access to authorized trail routes.

“Given the current tax situation, we’re going to have to consider more user fees and coordinate them. So you don’t need six stickers. Partnering is the way to go to share the pain and the gain.”

“The biggest complaint I hear about is camping fees. People say, ‘Why should we have to pay camping fees for public land?’” [Okanogan County Tourism Council]

“I don’t want to see ‘pay to play’ but there has to be some balance. Perhaps if the licensing fee was higher there would be less trash and vandalism out in the national forest. People leave their trash when they hunt, especially when they mushroom pick. The Forest here just spent a quarter of million dollars to clean up the forest after the mushroom pickers left. The picker only has to pay a \$50 licensing fee and then that person brings in 20 other people. They left all their garbage their camp site. There should be a more stringent law for mushroom pickers. At the national level, perhaps a fee for ORV would help locally. But if there is a fee, the monies generated better stay in that program to enforce and maintain.”

### **Guiding**

“I don’t like to guide on BLM ground because if I do I have to open my books to them to verify the fees that he is getting. I don’t want to do that.” [Hunting guide]

“I’d like to get a permit to use BLM land for my base camp. It would work better for me. Do you know who I’d talk to?”

“People are sick of hunting public lands so they are going to private lands and using a guide. Others have limited time and want to make sure they have a quality experience, so they go with a guide.”

### **Rockhounding**

“Don’t stop rock hounding.”

## **Mining**

Mining has been an important economic activity in Okanogan since the beginning. It seems to have strong community support. In recent years, there have been concerted and sometimes successful attempts to stop mining.

“I would like to see more strict rules on how BLM gives mining permits out. I was part of a coalition to stop a mine up there and while we did stop the open pit gold mining, the company resubmitted for an in-ground mine and got the permit.”

“BLM must advocate for responsible mining. And then have an enforcement mechanism for the plan. The public needs agencies to protect the land. The public should not have to rely on small NGO’s to protect the environment.”

“In 1992 we stopped open pit mining. In 2005 the Corps came back with a different plan and approach for underground. So they are open and mining and trucking the contents to Republic to the mill. The road is traveled by some 100 trucks a day passing between the

mine and the mill. That is some 50 miles between the two, and the folks along those roads are fed up with the noise and traffic.”

## **Wilderness**

“Okanogan doesn’t need more wilderness and that’s the truth. Okanogan County has more wilderness than any county in the state. Yes, you can have horses in there but no one has money to maintain the trails so then you can’t use them.”

## **Ecological Health**

“We’d like BLM to connect into the planning effort that is looking at connectivity issues state-wide. It is the Washington watershed habitat analysis connectivity working group addressing Washington biodiversity. You could contact Jen Watkins with Conservation Northwest.” [Conservation Northwest representative]

“There are wildlife corridor issues involved with Highway 97 that I hope BLM will look at in their plan.”

“There is finally good research that substantiates that wild and domestic sheep do mate, and to the detriment of the wild sheep because of disease. We don’t want to affect agriculture, but if there are opportunities to move grazing allotments so that wild and domestic sheep do not mate, that is better for wild sheep.” [Wild Sheep Foundation]

“Take the salmon issue. Salmon can’t jump up a 10 foot drop, they just can’t do it. They were planted, and then we have to protect these planted populations. The people pushing environmental protection are using faulty science so their arguments lose all credibility.”

Many residents talked about the current litigation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the lynx habitat designation. Snowmobilers believe if the finding stands that their activities will be restricted so individuals and clubs have been active in challenging the science contained in the analysis.

“My group went ‘judge shopping’ and we are now in the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court because the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit is too busy on the gay rights stuff. The Sierra Club actually sued the Fish and Wildlife Service over the lynx too. They were saying there wasn’t enough critical habitat designated. They did the same thing with the science, used it to suit their whims. Thus F&WS made the decision not to do an EIS.”

## **Roads**

“BLM and Forest Service are actually removing roads because they aren’t being maintained. If roads are maintained, they are either closed or they must be entirely maintained by volunteer trail users. In fact, the snowmobile groups do lots of trail maintenance. The ATV group also, and they even paid to have erosion control done on some of their trails—15 miles. They hired a guy to come in and adjust the water control parts of the trail for a few thousand dollars.”

“Volunteers can help maintain the roads.”

“We have a problem with a BLM road called Submarine Mine Road, that’s what we call it. Rock Shop Road also. These skirt up along the Canadian border and have become impassable in a couple areas. We almost lost a truck once. Hunters keep trying to go up there, ATVs, motorcycles.” [Border Patrol Agent]

## **Palmer Mountain**

Palmer Mountain is managed by BLM and, through acquisitions, it has become almost all BLM except for 10-12 private inholdings. Apparently there are no residences on the mountains but several active mining claims. Residents voiced two concerns about management in this area, a desire for access and the manner in which BLM is handling the mineral claims in the area. The access interest mostly relates to hunting and some concern was expressed about more housing on the east side of the mountain and whether or not the presence of the homes will lead to less access. At least one of the private inholders believes BLM changed historical road designations from public to primitive, thereby restricting access for traditional, historic uses of the mountain. The changed designation is making the exercise of mineral rights difficult. One gentleman intends to take legal action against BLM. Evidently, Okanogan County has taken up the road issue as an “RS2477” claim and has stipulated that the road is historically public.

“There is limited access to Palmer Mountain. The only real way to get onto the BLM land for hunting purposes is a few access points in the northwest corner. There are a lot of private land owners on the east side that forbid access through their land that it is hard to get to.”

“I’m not sure you can use Black Bear Road anymore to get onto Palmer.”

“Where is the signage, where is the access on Palmer Mountain?”

“I am about to sue BLM in federal court. I can’t say much to you because of this but you can talk to my attorney in Okanogan. BLM is waiting for me to die so this will go away.”

## **Access**

“Private parties are leasing state land and then gating it off. They are kicking people off the public lands. That’s the kind of thing that you hate to see. I’m a very avid hunter and I’ve been getting into state land or BLM, you’ve got to cross private property and you can’t cross it. I’m kind of old school and hunted this for years. Those deer and other game animals are public property. It’s not for the private entities to cut it off so they can hunt them.”

“Landowners complain that people come on their land and cut fences. It’s a few that have spoiled it for everybody. A lot of these people are from outside the area. Hunters come in and cross property lines when they hunt.”

“If you go from town [Riverside] to Conconully, it is basically private. Behind the private is lots of state land and fish and wildlife land. I’ve asked for access to the state lands and I’ve been told, ‘No way!’ They have it tied up with members only. They have it for guiding clubs and hunting clubs. It’s a money thing, not a sportsman issue.”

“Access is the number one issue for all public lands.” [Okanogan County Tourism Council]

“There is little access to high lakes, so BLM is important this way.”

### **Rights of Way**

“We have miles of Rights of Way through BLM that have been abandoned. We want to give them back to BLM but it wants us to cage over the mouth of the tunnels. One tunnel is a mile long. We were going to collapse them but concerns over sensitive species will keep them open. The idea now is that there will be big metal gates across the tunnel openings. It’s been two to three years since we talked with BLM.” [Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation District]

### **BLM Lands along the Similkameen River**

“There really isn’t much access at all to BLM ground north of Palmer. The lands are actually bluffs and sheer faces, so there is no practical way to get a road up there to get access to the land. Particularly the land up by Chopaka is good hunting ground but because it has no roads, it cannot really be hunted easily from the trailhead on state forest land.”

“These are low use, low management lands. We occasionally direct a hunter to which lands are BLM and which are private but that’s about it.”

### **The Shankers Project**

“This thing got people stirred up around here. There was a town meeting about the issue and there was standing room only. The town was opposed to the project.”

“There are three alternatives. If they pick the higher dam level, it would flood our property. Needless to say, we don’t like that idea.”

### **Fire Management**

“The 93 square-mile Tripid Fire of 2004 shows that you can’t ignore the forest and call it management. If we can manage the forests proactively, we can avoid the catastrophic damage that comes from letting them alone.”

“The Tripid Fire was not managed properly. And after these fires, there were lawsuits to prevent the loggers from going in and getting the fallen wood. But after a year, the wood is rotted and useless, so the environmentalists only have to hold them off for a year.”

“Land management agencies should promote access to make houses more fire defensible. We’re concerned that newcomers don’t know as well as oldtimers how to get out. Better maps are needed. Is a thinning program possible?” [Aeneas Valley fire district, west of Tonasket]

## **Weed Management**

“The noxious weeds on BLM lands are likely to become a bigger problem that they would anticipate.”

“The County noxious weed board is incredibly active. It’s a huge problem, the biggest in the state. They have sought lots of special funding. They formed a three year weed management area that I think BLM signed onto. I rarely saw BLM at the meetings.”

“Weed money has gone away. If it continues, we’ll be where we were 30 years ago when weeds were so bad they were altering ecosystems. If you have changes in plant structure, then you have shifts in wildlife behavior. Knapweed was very pervasive and not good for livestock grazing—it caused a shift in the deer and rodent populations.”

“The noxious weed problem is not being taken care of. The county sends letters to private homeowners asking them to control their weeds and threatening to have somebody remove them professionally.”

“Okanogan County is holding steady or gaining in the weed war. The hoary alyssum is coming in, dealing us fits, as well as the puncture vine at Palmer Lake. It’s all about education. Here is a poster we put in store windows last year. This year, we’ll put these in campgrounds. Road closures are not the best, because you can’t get in there to do treatment. ATVs and motorcycles spread things but they also are eyes for us. Keeping the roads open is better to monitor.” [Okanogan County Noxious Weed Board]

## **BLM Management**

“Overall, BLM is going a great job.”

“I’d like BLM to manage all trails. They are great to work with and their mission is closer aligned with trail management than other agencies.” [Pacific Northwest Trail representative]

“There needs to be more BLM land swapping because BLM land cannot be managed in these little parcels. The key to good management is having administrative continuity.”

“Work on consolidation.”

“BLM lands here are special, Palmer Lake, Split Rock, Chopaka. It should hold on to what it has. These are important for the community.”

“The lack of participation by BLM has damaged their image in the area. It is good to have participation by these other agencies because then the planning work will become more visible.”

“I encourage BLM to manage land based on the environmental realities rather than based on fear of litigation from the NGOs [non-governmental organizations]. The NGOs come in and they make the agencies shudder and they don’t even try to get a compromise because they are so worried about the lawsuits. But there needs to be a compromise and what is best for the resources is more important than the special interests.”

“It is great to see BLM planning start with conversation, with having you guys [JKA] come out to identify the issues. That will help a lot.”

“BLM has to address the law enforcement issue. From off road issues to illegal shootings and dumping, BLM simply lacks sufficient law enforcement. How will the Plan handle this?”

“When BLM is up here, we’d appreciate a heads up so we know. If BLM has concerns, let us know. They are not up here that often, but when we work together, it’s fine. {Border Patrol Agent]”

“We have worked well with BLM, good coordination with its staff on the Enloe dam relicensing. BLM helped with the recreation plan.” [Okanogan PUC]

“If you are going to safe guard the environment, you must also have a fiscal responsibility to manage the environment.”

“Manage by geographic area, not by the whole.”

“Use science to show the whole story.”

## **Opportunities**

“What is really needed is an umbrella resource management agency to tie together the public lands under BLM, Forest Service, Reclamation, and DNR, all of them. There are just so many agencies.”

## Planning Process Considerations

### **About Forest Service Planning**

“I don’t see what Forest Service has done. They are too secretive. We have only seen their planning once it made it to draft form. And this is often because of the prevalence of personal agendas within the Forest Service.”

“Forest Service planning has been contentious and the meetings have been stressful. Their meetings are always like this. BLM should avoid this.”

“Forest Service employees are disillusioned with the planning process. Planners should be open and listen to their own staff.” [Forest Service employee]

“People are used to the Forest Service calling the meetings. We tried different meeting approaches. We told people that rather than we present, we want you to have conversations with others. We hired contractors to facilitate. A couple from Spokane told me it was the first time they had talked to a cowboy and they learned a lot. I don’t always see people give up positions, but getting to know others has had good results.” [Forest Service employee]

“BLM does not look at all values of the land. The Forest Service looks at the aesthetics and recreational value as well.”

### **Meeting Locations**

BLM is not a major player in Okanogan. It will be difficult to have a single meeting that accomplishes very much or that will attract residents from the whole county. Tonasket is the most likely community that could draw people from both the north and south parts of the county but even that location is questionable. Meeting attendance depends on the degree of controversy according to many local residents.

“People from Oroville may or may not come down to Tonasket, just depends on whether the topic is of interest to them. People from Tonasket may or may not drive down to Omak for a meeting. Again it will depend on how passionate they are about the subject.”

In Tonaksat, use the School Commons. The cattlemen will not come to the Community Cultural Center. Tonasket Coffee Shop is a gathering place useful for routine communication to wide numbers.

In Loomis, there is a double-wide trailer that could be used as a meeting hall. It is right next to the Kwik Mart in town.

In Omak and the town of Okanogan, many people mentioned the Agriplex fairgrounds which will seat 250. Other nominations included the Omak Inn, the Peppertree Inn and the Koala Street Grill. While a single, central meeting is typically held in Okanogan, JKA is not convinced that this approach will bring in people from the northern areas.

### **Communication**

As a rural area, Okanogan relies on face-to-face contact for trusted, effective communication. The use of email and websites will work for groups and individuals “close to the action” but not for the majority of residents. Advertising through the newspaper and radio is effective.

Okanogan County officials were keenly interested to learn of BLM's upcoming planning process. When JKA staff met with two County Commissioners and several county planning staff, they had just finished a meeting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and expressed anger at the way that agency had announced plans after they were already completed. They were extremely praiseful of BLM's effort to communicate early before the plan had begun.

"We don't want to react to plans already made. We want early and frequent involvement in the plan. We want good maps to be able to discuss in detail. We need more than outreach, but meaningful public participation, be a part from the beginning. We want to help craft the plan. Right out of the chute, you got points [for coming to us early]. This is a real opportunity to shine, timing is everything. BLM has been out of the limelight, so it is not tarnished. Don't blow it. With modest efforts, big rewards."

County staff went on to point out that their GIS department could offer useful support to the BLM planning effort. Staff also emphasized their need for BLM to accommodate the pace of local government.

"We know they have to do NEPA and an EIS but they don't know what we have to do. Let us mesh the federal and local processes."

"BLM did well [on another project we worked on together]. But we get halfway through and they begin to wave this and that. We have to do this, then that. They didn't know our process. BLM has to know local government process. BLM began to flop around and it became difficult."

"They review problems to death. I have been doing the NEPA work for them for the trail, for over a year. I leverage dollars. One landowner wants a trade. We just can't get answers. They just sit on it."

## **Collaboration**

"We applaud the concept of working with other partnerships. The big push is to coordinate with other agencies. The more coordinated the management can be, we gain efficiency but we gain better land management."

"Just to get everybody and the agencies to sit at the table to talk about what should and shouldn't be done accomplishes nothing." [Spoken with passion and vehemence]

"If planning is really going to be collaborative, you can look at the most successful organizations. They say leave your hat at the door. That means that control is shared, that all perspectives have value. It takes awhile to get there. It took awhile for us before local people and environmental groups realized we are all in it together."

"Scoping should allow for local language and it often doesn't."

“There must be common base from neighboring lands for management of resources. Agencies should work together across their boundaries.”

“BLM must do a better job at weighing the greater public benefit. In their multi-use management, what is sustainable? Mandate so you don’t lose any pieces of the puzzle. Sustainability should be more regionally-managed.”

There is enthusiasm that BLM might be more visible.

“They are marginal landowners but that doesn’t mean people don’t want them there.”

### **Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Develop a recreation resource strategy for the RMP consistent with emerging recreation development in the Okanogan area. Determine the partnership role for BLM given the size and location of its land base. Much guidance for this strategy is available in the County draft comprehensive plan which includes a detailed chapter on recreation development. Coordinate with the many emerging organizations involved in this effort. The explicit link, as in other areas of the state, is: conservation, education, outdoor recreation embedded in an economic development framework.
2. Explore the prospects for planning with the Forest Service. Local residents would be so grateful!

## Chapter Five: The Chelan-Douglas Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. Chelan-Douglas has diverse habitats, agriculture, and economy.
2. This area is passionate about outdoor recreation and has done more than perhaps any other part of the state in promoting the combined elements of outdoor recreation, conservation, education and economic development. These four pillars are represented in many policy statements of government agencies, community organizations and coalitions.
3. Local, regional and water trails are extremely popular and involve wide segments of the community in their planning and construction.
4. There is a widespread perception that outdoor recreation has added to the quality of life and to economic development from family and business in-migration.
5. Douglas Creek is often talked about as a special and unique area, with high interest expressed in creating better ecological and social conditions in this area.
6. Law enforcement and road maintenance in public land areas are two recurring issues for which people would like to see improvement.
7. Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements are two:
  - a. People would like to work with BLM to create a long-term management solution for Douglas Creek;
  - b. As part of the planning process, BLM could undertake an assessment of regional coalitions involved with conservation, education, recreation and economic development and determine through consultation with citizens, organizations, and internal BLM dialogue, the proper role for BLM in these efforts and what realistically BLM can contribute to these endeavors.

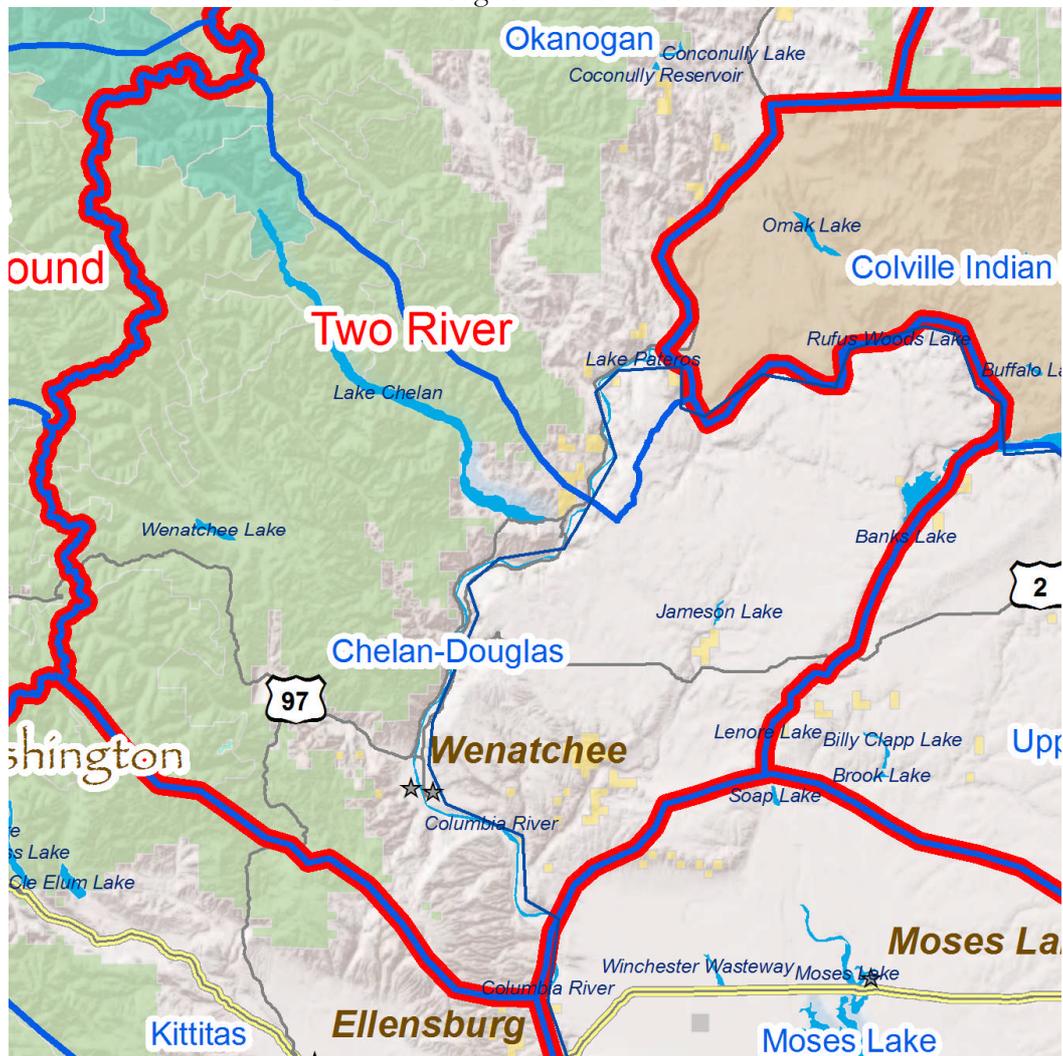
### Introduction

JKA conducted 12 professional days of community fieldwork in the Chelan HRU.

Individuals	36
People in group settings (organizational meeting, outlet stores)	34
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>19</u>
Total contacts	89

The Chelan-Douglas HRU is shown in Figure Four and is comprised primarily of Chelan and Douglas Counties. On the north, the boundary is north of the Stehekin River and Lake Chelan, to the west, the boundary is on the crest of the Cascade Mountains, to the south, the boundary is along the Wenatchee Mountains in a southeast/northwest direction, and to the east, the boundary is to the east of the Moses Coulee and along the Grand Coulee at Banks Lake.

Figure Four  
The Chelan-Douglas Human Resource Unit



### Community Description

Estimated 2008 population for Chelan County was 71,540 and showed a 7.4% increase since 2000. The population is expected to be 101,859 by 2025.<sup>5</sup> Douglas County population was estimated at 36,653 in 2008 and showed a 12.4% increase since 2000. Chelan County is 87% public land, of which 80% is Forest Service.

<sup>2</sup> Chelan County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan, October, 2007

“Railroads played a major role in the growth of the area, bringing both supplies and settlers. This growth needed water, and irrigation canals became the center of agricultural success in Chelan County. The ability to form public utility districts in 1930 allowed residents to own power companies. In the same time period, the United States started building irrigation and flood control dams on the Columbia. In 1937 the Bonneville Power Administration was created to distribute electricity to publicly owned utilities. That same year the Chelan County PUD formed. Since then, the PUD has acquired and operates multiple dams in Chelan County.” (Chelan County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan, October, 2007).

Agriculture is devoted to winter wheat, spring wheat and fruit crops. The diversity of fruit crops has been augmented in recent years by blueberries and wine grapes and there is an emerging wine economy in the area. The area is well-known for its diverse habitats, from upland forests to the sage steppes of the lowlands. High technology firms are reported locating in the area as well, including Microsoft and Yahoo, apparently attracted to the low power rates.

People say different groups are coming into the area. Professional people, retired people, people who want out of the rat race on the “Westside” are beginning to change the feel of the towns in this area. The perception here is that recreation development is in part responsible for the attraction of the area. People are reportedly moving here from the coast and from from California. Retiree people are bringing money with them. This area is a throughway to Okanogan as it has been for many hundreds of years. Today it is for recreation, immigration and some people say for drug trafficking.

The Chelan area seems to attract people drawn to an outdoor lifestyle. There also seems to be a settlement pattern in which middle-age people come back to care for their aging parents and then stay.

“We came back to take care of my parents.”

“I came back for the small town life, a desire to be outdoors.”

“We just arrived back in town after having been gone for 8 years.” [Bike store owners]

“I stay because of the small town feel of the area. I was originally from California and came up here for the small town feel.”

Chelan and Douglas Counties are quite different even though they are part of the same Human Resource Unit. Chelan County has many more people, more urbanization, more economic diversity, and more diverse geography and natural settings. Douglas County has a much lower population, it is very rural in outlook, agricultural in its economic base, and is mainly characterized by arid sage steppe lands. Despite these differences, the areas have worked well together over the years and show a great deal of cooperation around many mutual interests.

“Waterville has changed a lot. I used to know 85% of the people here and now I only know about 15-20% of the people.”

“My family and parents are still here. It is a predominantly farming-based community.”  
[Waterville resident]

“I love the Apple Festival. Everybody comes. I take my panel truck and park it where I can get a good view for the parade, and watch with my friends. There is a classic car parade, too.”

The population in this area is passionate about outdoor recreation of all kinds. They love that you can go up for snow and down for mountain biking and other activities. The Wenatchee School District has a program of outdoor education on public lands, coordinated in part by the Chelan Douglas Land Trust.

“My friend had an accident in the ‘60s and to save his leg, they fused his knee. But he is the most active outdoorsman you will ever see. He won the national championship in skiing twice. He mountain bikes with one leg using a specially designated bike.”

“We’d love to see BLM promote recreation opportunities. We have great recreation and great history of ingenuity in the area, plus we put recreation into an economic development focus.”

“This area is changing. There is more talk of quality of life, not just development no matter what. Trails would never have had this focus years ago.”

Chelan-Douglas has a large number of agencies, community-based organizations and coalitions based in the Wenatchee area with common educational, conservation, recreation, and development goals. The development of these four pillars into policy and program frameworks is perhaps more advanced here than any other areas researched for this project. People see that these four elements, properly aligned, will be healthy for their lifestyles, for the community, for ecological viability, and for their economy.

Groups that are likely to be interested in the planning effort include:

- Chelan Chamber of Commerce
- Chelan County Board of County Commissioners
- Chelan County Watershed Planning Unit
- Chelan Douglas Dialogue Group
- Chelan Douglas Land Trust
- City of Entiat
- City of Wenatchee, Parks and Recreation
- Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center
- Complete the Loop Coalition
- Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
- Douglas County Watershed Planning Unit
- Ducks Unlimited
- Foster Creek Conservation District
- Healthy Lands Roundtable

Initiative for Rural Innovation & Stewardship (IRIS)  
The Nature Conservancy  
The North Central Washington Biodiversity Council  
Pathways Wenatchee  
Port of Chelan  
South Douglas Conservation District  
Stemilt Partnership  
U.S. Forest Service  
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board  
Washington Trails Association  
wenatcheeoutdoors.com  
Wenatchee Ducks Unlimited  
Wenatchee Foothills Community Strategy  
Wenatchee Sportsmen's Association  
Wenatchee Valley Sports Council  
Wenatchee Valley Trails Coalition

Here are brief and a few of many examples of how groups have worked to develop recreation, conservation, education and economic development:

“The clubs I have been involved with have worked with State DNR to preserve structures in the Stemilt Basin and the Colockum area. Our club did the manual labor and volunteered their time. This was a good relationship. We even raised money to rent the land for parking.”

The Stemilt-Squilchuck Community Vision has three central goals: protecting water resources, conserving critical habitat, and maintaining recreational access to public lands ([http://www.tpl.org/content\\_documents/wa\\_stemilt\\_4brochure.pdf](http://www.tpl.org/content_documents/wa_stemilt_4brochure.pdf)).

For example, one of the industry clusters that is the focus of the economic development program of the Port of Chelan is recreation tourism because of its ability to attract people into the area. Its goal is to nurture the growth of outdoor recreation through coalition relationships.

The Wenatchee Foothills Community Strategy is an effort to bring developers, local and state government, and recreation interests together to foster design in development that promotes conservation and outdoor recreation while enhancing property values.

The following story is an example of how deeply community-based environmental management has affected this area.

“In the 1990s, the State of Washington, through its Fish and Wildlife Department and the Department of Ecology decided to watershed assessments. Their first efforts did not go well and in fact resulted in disruption in several places because of the top-down nature of the initiative. People felt that agency people were trying to ‘snowball dumb farmers with science.’ The in-stream flows proposed by the agencies exceeded actual levels, which farmers knew, but seemed a ploy of agencies to stay in control. The uproar led to State Law 2514

which said the state would give \$1/4 million for people to form Watershed Planning Units to do watershed assessments and action plans. Entiat was one of the first. The Entiat watershed is only 4% private. Cascadia Conservation District was our facilitator. We used the CRMP process [Coordinated Resource Management Plan]. BLM was involved as was DNR [Department of Natural Resources], Audubon and others. The CRMP and the WRIA [Water Resource Inventory Area, the planning product of State Law 2514] have become by law the federal analysis for the feds. That is the Forest Service plan unless compelling evidence is presented that another alternative is better.

“We are righteously proud of this effort. It stipulates for the first time minimum stream flows, or instream flows, water quality etc. Now we are re-creating the meander of the river, making it smaller, which is better for fish, better habitat. BLM has done habitat work here on their parcels (Keep it up!). Now we have the capacity to move beyond a project-by-project approach, but rather, we can now do entire reaches of the river in a concerted fashion. One section at a time is done completely and we move on.

“Watershed Planning Units became the implementers. The money comes from federal, state and NGO [non-governmental organization] sources. As a result, BPA [Bonneville Power Administration] shifted its funding from projects to monitoring. We get \$50,000 a year for it. The [Upper Columbia] Salmon Recovery Board likes it too. The CWPP [Community Wildfire Protection Plan] is adopted by NMFS [National Marine Fisheries Service] as the short-term salmon recovery plan.” [Retired official involved in this effort, Entiat resident]

### Community Themes

**“The land is a gift for everybody, regardless of class or status.”** “These are amazing resources around here and good efforts should still be made to preserve them.”

**“Pretty much half of everything is environmental around here.”** This statement was a rueful comment of high environmental awareness of activity in the Chelan region.

**“A few key people have done amazing things for the land around here.”** This theme reflects the very strong value and practice people have shown for taking care of the land. Rather than just a “few key people,” it is scores and scores of people.

### Citizen Issues, Management Concerns, and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

#### **General Outdoor Recreation**

These general statements can be made regarding comments of residents about outdoor education:

- Nearly everybody is engaged in outdoor recreation of some kind or another, it seems, and most people listed more than one activity that they are involved with.

- People reported that recreation activity has been steadily increasing along with the population.
- People go to public lands based on activity and interest, not on ownership.
- There is a remarkable growth of organizations and coalitions of organizations dedicated to the alignment of four interests: conservation, education, outdoor recreation and economic development.
- BLM is not a key player. There is a low awareness of what can be done with BLM lands, except for ORV people who always seem to know where they can go.
- People do not go regularly east of the river to recreate, and sometimes expressed surprise at being asked. The national forest is highly valued, especially in summer for its coolness, and there are many private and public places near the towns for much of the recreation.
- Budget cuts are closing roads and people are very aware of fiscal issues affecting recreation.
- There is some tension between motor and non motorized use but a moderate center is there.

## Douglas Creek

Douglas Creek is a unique dry land creek that has remote qualities but it is located nearby. One local resident told the story of Douglas Creek:

“The Great Northern Railroad was built I about 1892 to Wenatchee to compete with steamboats taking wheat to market. The Douglas Creek portion was built as a spur line to Oroville off the main line, which came up the Moses Coulee to Mansfield. The train operated until 1992. The twists and the turns of the tracks through the Douglas Creek Canyon were difficult for the cars to maneuver. The trestles would get flooded. Newer cars could not make the turns and created high maintenance costs for the company. Burlington abandoned the line, and in the 1990s it was acquired by BLM.”

Many people believe that Douglas Creek is ideal for multi-use recreation activities (Figure Five). BLM has indicated its conservation and recreation focus. Other jurisdictions and organizations have a part to play. People want to go there. There seems to be high interest in a multi-modal recreation area of hiking, mountain biking, picnics, driving, and, under some conditions, ORV use. Lack of management capacity has meant that the area has degraded and is associated with a number of social problems. People do not feel safe. It is the largest BLM parcel in the area, but it is not considered to be well-managed.

“Keep Douglas Creek open. Various citizen groups routinely commit to cleaning up Douglas Creek. People throw trash, baby diapers, bottles, leave old make shift camps.”

“Why plan for something that is already dedicated? [This speaker believes that a Douglas Creek trail has already been “dedicated”, obviating the need to plan for it.]

“BLM bought Douglas Creek. It is served by a poor county road and the county can’t afford to maintain the road. BLM is pushing recreation, birding, etc, but who takes care of the road?”

“People agreed with the county at the meeting to not do anything unless BLM agrees to law enforcement and clean up. There was a drug death out there several years ago. Families like this area but don’t always feel safe. They do camping, bird watching, hunting, swimming.”

“I used to swim all the time there as a kid.”

“BLM did a clean up last year. Only 8-10 people showed up but we got a lot out of there. There have been limited improvements. A sign was put up but vandals got it. The area needs more traffic to cut down on that stuff.”

“We could never get permission to get a small trail builder out there. It would not take much, a couple thousand, to rent a small excavator and get that trail built. Take out 4 X 4 concrete piles that are left. The area was bermed to keep four wheelers out but they went around. The tunnel was closed but it collapsed and made a cauldron. We could get these things fixed up.”

“Close it in spring for runoff. Someone needs to be out there on daily basis. The sheriff does not want to be. BLM could deed it to state parks, which is active in trails, but I’d rather BLM kept it because the feds have a more consistent budget.”

“The road used to go through, but when the beaver dams went in, there was a flood on the county road and they wanted to abandon it. Now there is a road cut in the middle but it is still accessible from both sides.”

“When the railroads abandoned its line and BLM acquired the land, one section of land went to Mr. Daly. It’s not clear now who owns that piece. One guy bought the right of way up to Mansfield and told us he would sell it. Mr. Daly says he owns it, but it is just as likely that BLM owns the key section. This is a legal issue. BLM or Mr. Daly should bring a friendly case to get a declaratory judgment.”

“BLM needs to do two day use areas, one on either side.”

“It is a system trying to restore itself. There is friction between the recreation interests and ecological interests as a special area.”

“The BLM proposal calls for rip rapping large areas to deal with erosion, the north side and channel the water. We are most troubled by this aspect.” [Nature Conservancy representative]

“Some people are upset with BLM about the road but the road is the county’s. How could we find money for the road? How will the long-term road maintenance be handled? It’s hard to find money for maintenance.”

“Douglas County gets PILT money. They can afford the road.”

“The Douglas Creek trail needs more than the volunteer work that has gone into it.”

Figure Five  
Photo of South Entrance to Douglas Creek



“The Wenatchee Sportsmen’s Association helped clean up the lower Douglas Creek Trail. We did 7,000 hours of volunteer time. A school group from Waterville did the clean up in the upper Douglas creek area. We were recently involved in the county attempt to condemn the land. I personally talked with many Douglas Creek folks to educate them that if they close this area people will still use it; the trash will not go away. The only way to get it cleaned up is to get more people actively using the land in the area. Clubs recreating will reduce crime, trash, and that sort of thing.”

“Poaching is a problem in the area with Hispanics. Douglas Creek is a wintering ground for mule deer.”

“The Mexican population has moved in there and they don’t pick up their stuff. They party, stay on the land and live there until they get thrown off. They are not much into recreation or hunting. The migrant workers along Douglas Creek just hang out and live there.”

“Douglas Creek is a beautiful 13-mile area of fishing and access to roads. Keep it open and police it more, pick up garbage.”

“Douglas Creek Road should stay open. You need emergency access, and no matter what happens, people will be going in there. I’ll bet there are 1,000 people out there this weekend from the coast.” [South Douglas Conservation District]

Evidently, a meeting in 2009 laid the groundwork for a way forward in improving conditions at Douglas Creek. With a level of consensus widely seen as pragmatic and feasible, the best overall approach was determined to be:

- Volunteers to staff and monitor;
- Parking and day use facilities, for picnics;
- Low maintenance;
- Make sure any agreement has deadlines
- Maintain the portion of the road that is sustainable (the drop down into Slack Canyon and the first mile heading south and east);
- Allow and maintain motorized access to this point;
- Close the problematic portion to 4-wheeled vehicles (cars, trucks, ATVs), keep it open to dirt bikes;
- Enforce the closure.
- BLM creates parking, camping, and pit toilets in the heart of the creek's canyon somewhere short of the first undercut bank;
- Some of the same amenities (parking, pit toilets, trash cans) could be located at the south end of the road near the collapsed tunnel.

(Source: <http://www.justgetout.net/Wenatchee/16320>; meeting held 4/23/09)

These ideas are consistent with discussions of local residents with JKA. This “proposal on the floor” would have to be vetted again in the community and the specific details worked out in a community-based planning approach. The long-term maintenance remains unaddressed as is the question about a community group (either existing or to be formed) which would undertake day-to-day management of the area.

“The recreation crowd would respond very positively to the concept.”

“Tie economic development organizations in with this idea, like the Economic Development District and the Chamber of Commerce.”

### **ORV (Off Road Vehicle) Use**

ORV users express consistent language—“We’re good citizens, we want to collaborate, we show respect, the few ruin it for the many, the destructive people are from outside the area and we would ‘pay to play.’”

“I fish and use horses on public lands. ATVs have a negative impact on the environment because they dig up the soil.”

“I almost got run over by a dirt biker because I couldn’t hear them coming around a lake and that was frustrating. They go too fast. You can’t tell exactly where they are all the time.”  
[Hiker]

“We aren’t allowed to ride on the Forest Service roads. I have to go up to Omak or down to Moses Lake to do my four-wheeling. There’s not much on the private property because of the worry about liability and lawsuits.”

“I actually sold off my ATV because there was nowhere to ride it and instead got a motorcycle with plates that I can ride around on Forest Service roads.”

“The agencies, particularly the DNR [Department of Natural Resources], don’t recognize the contributions that their users make to the forests. They clear trails and clean up and pay taxes but the only message that comes out of the agencies is ‘Bad, bad, bad’ about the ATV users. They never get recognized.”

“I would pay a use fee to use more roads. We just want more trails to ride on, roads are fine, trails are fine, just open them up and we’ll pay to use them. We already buy tags and we’ll buy more.”

“When we run into Forest Service employees, they just harass us up there.”

“I worked on an ORV panel once. It was terrible, all conflict management. Groups who wanted to recreate thought that they were born with a right to do it. They went so far as to argue that the impact of their vehicles was insignificant. They didn’t even address issues of erosion and the stream running that they do. And when all was done they were still thinking that way.”

“There are two groups not willing to organize: the dirt bike riders and the 4-wheel ORV users.”

“Most times BLM is at least a step behind changes in OHV. Look how quickly quads came in.”

“Why not designate a place for four by fours so they have a place to go and lessen the damage in other places?”

“BLM should support responsible use and bust those who cause damage.”

“We don’t have much contact with the ORV community. They go to Saddle Mountain and the forest. They are more tri-cities.”

“There are continued problems with access. There are no trails or facilities. People want trails and tracks. I do a lot of my riding at Malaga. I live in Mansfield and we can leave the town and do all the riding we want on the roads out there. I’m OK using roads.”

“One trend in recreation is people trailering their motorized vehicle ORV to Canada, Oregon and California to ride. These rigs cost as much as a car. People just don’t have anywhere close to ride off-road.”

“There is no place to take your ORV around here. It takes 3 hours and \$34.00 in gas to go play at Moses Lake.”

“People will pay to access public lands for OHV use.”

## **Bicycling**

Mountain biking is reported to be extremely popular in the Wenatchee area.

“There are enough bike trails in the area for all the biking I’d like to do.”

“We have to keep mountain bikers from impacting flora—signage and trails are important for managing these particular impacts. There is fragility to this ecosystem.”

“I don’t like mountain bikers. They come down the trail at a high speed and completely focus on the trail. They are not looking where they are going, so they often do not see a hiker until they are right on top of each other. The mountain bikers are silent, horses you can hear coming at a steady pace, and 4-wheelers you can hear 2 miles away.”

## **Snowmobiling**

“I don’t have much trouble finding places to ride in the winter.”

“The goal of the state-wide snowmobiling group is to have access to everything—but this is an unreasonable goal. They use this strategy to keep from losing ground but it also means that they are advocating for something far flung.”

“I would like to see work done to resolve differences between snowmobilers and skiers. They don’t tend to mix well. The trails or trailheads tend to be dominated by one sport. But there are good examples out there of use areas that are multi-use focused and there is enough parking. There are proper signs for the particular users.”

“It would be okay to increase fees on snowmobilers if this meant an increase in the use of the trails. Federal land managers do have some fees that come from the state agencies that do the vehicle registrations.”

“I am an avid snowmobiler and, yes, there are a few bad apples. I always bring trash sacks and pick up stuff if I see it. Most people are responsible.”

## **Trails**

It would take a separate chapter to describe all the work being done on trails in this area. The two groups which are most involved and have a good overview of the region are the Wenatchee Valley Sports Council and the Chelan Douglas Land Trust.

“There is work on a trail around the Lakeside park area that crosses many administrative lines and private property. It’s a town-wide thing.”

“BLM participated in the West Hills Trail. Now they want BLM to keep it.”

“For volunteer efforts, there is no trouble getting enough help.”

“We want to add a trail up the bluff behind the interpretive center we’ve set up and connect with the Entiat trail. How would we proceed?” [Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center]

## **Jameson Lake**

Jameson Lake is of interest to hunters and wildlife. Access is a continuing issue. Part of the access issue was solved by the land exchanges. There are some camping, ORV activities there, and some law enforcement issues. BLM operates a series of car-accessible camp grounds in the area east of the lake.

The Jameson Lake access road (7 miles long) is well maintained and appears relatively new. There is a small resort called Jack’s right at the lake that appears to rent canoes and provide for RV parking. There are no administrative postings except for a BLM-Road closure sign near one of the campsites, about two miles down the dirt road.

“Water levels are rising at Jameson Lake and no one knows for sure why. There was an algae bloom which killed the fish. We need BLM land but they said no because of the costs of EIS preparation. Because rising water levels have resulted in natural drainage, several septic tanks have been flooded. We have to lower the water level. The District needs a ‘head structure’ to store enough when needed. It is basically a concrete weir. We need land for this structure.” [Foster Creek Conservation District]

“It’s important to deal with changes in land patterns, like ORV use on newly acquired lands.”

## **Vandalism**

“The monument at the trailhead up on Moose Lake road was vandalized a little while back and shot up by kids. These kids also come up here with their “SUVs” and “Wild Guys” to tear up the road and cause trouble. Today the technology is here to have cameras even in places like this to monitor things.”

“Vandalism is an ongoing issue on BLM property.”

## **Access**

“I want better access to BLM land. I have to go through private property to get to public lands often and that access is denied.” [Gold and silver prospector]

## **Roads**

“Police should maintain roads more aggressively. When roads get wet, there is no traction, no matter how crazy your tires are. It gets all sticky. Just shut down the road so it doesn’t get damaged. Police the roads. Consider systems like at the national parks with busses to avoid too much individual car traffic.”

“BLM does not have a great track record on road maintenance and law enforcement.”

## **Education and Maps**

“There should be more education of the younger generation about stewardship because a few ruin it for the many. Education is key in the schools, in programs, etc. It is human nature for some to be wild, but we can work to avoid it.”

“People go out there and don’t know what they’re doing. They run over young trees with their snow machines and then leave litter. They even cut down live trees and burn them. There is no excuse for not knowing about how damaging this is.”

“BLM put out a great map for recreation. Check with the GIS section in the Spokane office. The goal should be to produce such a map in each block area.”

“Often maps are outdated and OHV folks don’t know they are on private land or public.”

“There weren’t any maps of the BLM down at their office. I used to send people down there to get them and then just the other season I was down there and there weren’t any maps.”

## **Law Enforcement**

“Public land doesn’t have the funds to support law enforcement. The image of the lands could improve if law enforcement increased on public lands to cut down on OHV misuse, theft of resources, wood cutting, camping in sensitive areas, etc.”

## **Weeds**

“Weed control is really needed, especially knapweed in the Douglas Creek Valley.”

“BLM should expect invasive and noxious weeds to get worse and should plan for it.”

“Some of the big problems are with knapweeds. For a long time, the Forest Service would not let the state release biological control agencies on federal land. There was no real justification for this. BLM has been a little more liberal. But there needs to be better control of the knapweed.”

“Resource issues are: weeds and old roads. Old roads that normally would have been closed by now have revegetated because of constant use. There must be a concerted effort to reduce roads so that weeds do not spread.”

“BLM is doing a good job with knapweed control.”

## **Fire Management**

“There is a push for fuel reduction on federal land. Managing this is better but there will continue to be issues that creep up in terms of urban/wildland interface.”

“There is an increase in the amount of suburban interfaces with public lands. This poses a threat when fires come. The problem can be reduced by consolidating land holdings. Change public and private owners such that the public lands will be uninterrupted. This work is going on in the government. There is a problem in managing the small plots. This is a major resource drain on the agencies.”

## **Grazing**

Our RAC [Resource Advisory Committee for BLM], along with two eastern Oregon RACs, did the Standards and Guidelines for grazing which have held up well since being implemented. The language is good.” [Eastern Washington RAC representative]

“Range specialties within BLM are declining. Other specialists get more numbers and more attention. BLM has forced cattle numbers down.”

“We want grazing to continue. BLM needs flexibility in the plan to accommodate grazing.”

“BLM set new standards for grazing. If there is damage, the grazer mitigates.”

## **Ecological Health**

The importance of managing for better soils, wildlife, and vegetation was voiced by many people.

“What is BLM doing with endangered species? I wish we could get better information from them. For example, do they have to do “Section 7” consultation with FWS [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service] like we do? Can they coordinate at all? [Foster Creek Conservation District]

“Impacts on native species must be managed better.”

## **Land Acquisition/ Consolidation**

“Continue the land exchange program. Get out of the checkerboard, for example, Badger Slope, Juniper, Yakima Canyon. There are current opportunities at Saddle Mountain, Yakima

Canyon, and Rattlesnake. The trend is to continue to keep the land, not divest. These lands are valued for quality of life. Wildlife and recreation interests will champion this approach.”

“They will have to consolidate their holdings so these isolated parcels actually get managed. Get rid of unmanageable parcels. BLM should not acquire unless they are key resources.”

The City needs a place for a transfer station and the school needs land for a district office.”  
[City of Entiat]

### **Recreation Mitigation**

“BLM set new standards for grazing. If there is damage, the grazer mitigates. There is no similar mechanism with recreation although arguably recreation impacts can reach the level of grazing.”

### **Rocky Reach Dam**

“Rocky Reach Dam is BLM. For mitigation for the dam, BLM is required to do wildlife which WDFW [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife] agreed to do. But they can’t manage and the weeds are terrible.”

### **Collaborative Relationships**

“There should be inter-mingling of cohesive management strategies for neighboring agencies instead of each one doing their own thing.”

“Collaborative planning has the pitfall of becoming angry. But the strategic planning with state parks on the winter recreation came up with good ideas.”

“One of the keys is to involve groups early. Be wary of land owners because they can be set in their ways quite heavily. It is really hard to get the recreators and the developers to work together. They often can’t agree with each other.”

“They mixed everybody together purposefully so that they didn’t just clump up along lines that they would ordinarily be comfortable with. They took various overlay maps of owners, trails, resource, etc, and had people write their ideas on the overlays and then that data will be pulled together.”

The Chelan County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan calls for coordination with federal, state and local recreation planning.

“We want individuals involved but they will burn out with long protracted processes, endless meetings.”

“There is different thinking now. Coalitions are evidence of this. Everybody is getting better at this.”

“A community-based approach will build a long term commitment to the plan and reduce protest. When you have a community-based process, it is hard for the district manager to change it, and it’s hard for outsiders to get to you.”

## **BLM Management**

“BLM is moving from extraction resources to conservation and recreation resources. Its MO is to work with others to accomplish its mission. The BLM office is here but they don’t have lands here. There is frustration that BLM moves so slowly.

“BLM is the best of the agencies because of the relatively relaxed restrictions on their land. They have the most opportunities for recreation.”

“All management plans should be economically self-supporting for the agencies and this can be accomplished through usage fees, leases, etc.”

“In the process of conserving land, the federal agencies get static from the counties because they want to have land for the possibility of acquiring and thus increasing their tax base. Federal agencies pay back some usage fees to the local governments in lieu of the local taxes that are lost.”

“It’s been a wonderful experience doing the volunteer work and working with BLM. It is still a priority for me. Trust has wonderful momentum.” [Trail volunteer]

“I want BLM to inform the public about what it’s doing. It’s better than it used to be. We want the land to be managed. We want to be kept informed.” [County Commissioner]

“Support and participate in the Arid Lands Initiative.”

“Crum Canyon people wanted to work with BLM and BLM said we don’t have the time or resources. People are angry about that. They’re resentful. Once you alienate a small community, people remember forever. (They say it’s not too late.)”

“The ‘Watchable Wild Flowers’ project that BLM participated in was very successful. This project involved 10 BLM properties in Washington and the driving directions and species maps on each of the sites. The brochure is a valuable resource and is supposed to be reprinted. BLM also sponsored a 12-year Ethnobotany project to showcase 13 common plants used by Native Americans for shelter, cosmetics and medicine. It has generated a book that will soon be published. These projects have been innovative and BLM supported.”

## Planning Process Considerations

### **Meeting Locations**

Wenatchee is a central location that will bring people from as far east as Quincy to the north at Chelan. Two places commonly mentioned are both City of Wenatchee facilities (509.888.6200), the Wenatchee Convention Center and the Wenatchee Community Center.

### **Communication**

“There is a need for people to get organized and support the use and infrastructure to do it without being destructive. Work with the government agencies to decide and practice good management with low land impacts. There is not being done enough.”

“Get a public lands dialogue going with the Forest Service, BLM, city mayors, local land trust, the plant society, the county. It doesn’t need to go on forever. It will help the other groups communicate better too. The community will get excited about this—maps, pictures, field trips, get people out into the space. Show how their input will be used.”

“Get out of meetings. Get a broader input than meetings where just a few dominate. Not more involvement but more effective.”

“You must decentralize the meetings to get good input. People are not going to drive long distances to attend a BLM meeting.”

About 900 readers get the Conservation Newsletter of the South Douglas Conservation District, which invited BLM to post information about its plan. The local radio station, KOZE, is used to communicate public events. The newspaper is less effective than other means. One person suggested the Nickel Ads.

### **Coordination with Other Plans**

“Is it too late for BLM to join the Forest Service planning?”

This chapter has described some of the many coalitions and planning efforts currently underway, with which BLM would want to interface as its plan proceeds. The Chelan County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan of October, 2007, identified several plans and processes underway:

- Ecoregional Assessment for the East Cascades Region. The Nature Conservancy identifies priorities for conservation of biodiversity.
- Wenatchee Watershed Management Plan. Chelan County addressed water quantity and instream water flow, water quality, and habitat.
- North Cascade Initiative. The Wilderness Society is creating a collaborative effort for preserving lands with one area focusing on enhancing recreation.

- Chelan County Lands Dialogue. The partnership is focusing on three areas, with one looking to landscape level recreation functions within the context of habitat identification and protection.
- Sunnyslope Long-Range Plan, 2007. The Chelan County and City of Wenatchee document guides decisions over the next 20 years with policy on recreation and connectivity in the Sunnyslope subarea.

### **Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Convene a working group to create a long-term management solution for the Douglas Creek area. BLM staff will serve as technical support. Explore available information and develop strategies for each of the outstanding issues, particularly road improvement and maintenance, law enforcement, and organizational development of partnership groups.
2. As part of the planning process, undertake an assessment of regional coalitions involved with conservation, education, recreation and economic development and determine through consultation with citizens, organizations, and internal BLM dialogue, the proper role for BLM in these efforts and what realistically BLM can contribute to these endeavors.

## Chapter Six: The Kittitas and Yakima Human Resource Units

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. Steady to rapid population growth and social and demographic changes are affecting Ellensburg and Kittitas County. It seems these changes are being absorbed by the communities in healthy ways.
2. The level of awareness of BLM lands and of the rules which govern them is low.
3. Yakima River Canyon management represents a successful multi-jurisdictional collaboration to resolve law enforcement and recreation management issues to create a successful, intensive-use recreation site.
4. Yakima County because of budget difficulties is selling its parks and welcomes support from other agencies in making recreation resources available to its citizens.
5. Cowiche Canyon Conservancy and its partners have successfully accomplished the first phase of the William O. Douglas Trail and need BLM and community support to go the next phase.
6. An informal ORV area called Rankville is used intensively and needs planning and management attention to properly address. Some community resources are available to assist in this effort.
7. Opportunities for Community-Based Planning Elements are
  - a. Conduct a review of the Yakima River Canyon Recreation Site through dialogue with user groups, conservation organizations, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and state and federal agencies to identify issues and concerns that affect the long-term viability of recreation development.
  - b. Determine planning elements required to support the conservation and recreation programs in Cowiche Creek and Naches River drainage.
  - c. Develop a long-term management strategy for the Rankville ORV area north of Zillah.

### Introduction

JKA conducted 5 professional days of community fieldwork in the Kittitas and Yakima HRUs and talked with the following kinds of people:

Individuals	9
People in group settings (organizational meeting, outlet stores)	6
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>15</u>
Total contacts	30

The Kittitas and the Yakima HRUs (Figure Six) are separate geographic areas but united by the Yakima River Canyon. The Kittitas HRU on the north proceeds on a southeast/northwest line along the Wenatchee Mountains, on the west, the boundary is the crest of the Cascade Mountains, on the south, the boundary is on the ridge tops between Interstate 90 and State Highway 410 and proceeding to Priest Rapids Lake, and on the east, the boundary proceeds in a north/south direction along west side of the Columbia River. The Yakima HRU on the north follows the ridge tops between Interstate 90 and State Highway 410, on the west along the crest of the Cascade Mountains, on the south along the north boundary of the Yakama Indian Nation, and on the east, the boundary

proceeds from south of Sunnyside, north to take in parts of the Hanford Reservation and the Highway 24 corridor, and proceeds north and west to Priest Rapids Lake.

Figure Six  
The Kittitas and Yakima Human Resource Units (HRUs)



BLM's actual holdings in these two areas are not great which warranted single treatment in this Chapter. Kittitas and Yakima are joined by the Yakima River Canyon that unites them in a single, high-use recreation area. Kittitas also contains BLM parcels along the Caribou, Skookumchuck Creeks, the Rocky Coulee area near Vantage, and lands south of Ellensburg on the Monastash Ridge. In addition to Yakima Canyon, Yakima BLM areas include holdings on Cowiche Creek and a checkerboard of lands in Rattlesnake Hills northwest of Interstate 82.

## Community Description

Kittitas County population was estimated at 38,951 in 2008, increasing by 16.8% since 2000.

Yakima County population was estimated at 234,564 in 2008, increasing 5.4% since 2000.

The Kittitas HRU spans the lush forested Cascade Mountains to the Upper Yakima River plains and the Columbia River. The metropolitan college town of Ellensburg lays midpoint with easy access to recreation. The geography of Kittitas provides for diverse recreation areas including; Yakima River Canyon for rafting, fishing and camping, to Moses Lake trails, camping and ORV site, and of course the Cascade Mountain range for hiking, skiing, and biking.

People in Ellensburg and Kittitas County reported these characteristics of community life:

- Central Washington University is a big part of the town; the town “dies” during the summer months when the students leave.
- There has been rapid population growth during the last couple of decades that has surprised local people.
- The housing situation in Ellensburg was commented by several people noting the influx of people from Seattle and other areas drawn to the natural beauty of the area. Housing also proliferated apparently because of some exception that allowed well drilling without the usual permitting or restrictions.

“So little housing settlements sprang up all over the area because they could put in wells so cheaply.”

Residents also noted that at the peak of the housing boom, many houses were being built and they were of shoddy construction. Now that the housing bubble burst, there are all sorts of excess housing for college students. People basically started renting out these excess housing units for very cheap.

- The Hispanic population has grown rapidly.
- Residents are aware of the many recreation choices in the area. The diversity of choices is one of the appeals of the area.

“We have all seasons here and lots to do.”

“Really, everything is outdoors here in the area. Close to Moses Lake and Yakima. Skiing, hiking, it’s all in the area.”

## Citizen Issues, Management Concerns, and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

### **Kittitas HRU**

#### **Yakima River Canyon**

Yakima River Canyon has been a popular recreation area for Ellensburg and Yakima residents for many decades. About 10-15 years ago, it had a terrible reputation for social problems associated with high density recreation uses. Unruly behavior, alcohol problems, vandalism, and numerous other law enforcement issues caused the responsible agencies, including BLM, to threaten to close the area to public use. Several groups came together to clean up the canyon and things changed. Today the river is a popular summer floating spot for college students and families alike.

The BLM campsites are very well used. During the big holidays such as Labor Day and Memorial Day, the Roza camping area with 160 sites will be completely full. Other BLM camping in the canyon is at Squaw Creek and Umtanum.

Law enforcement has been an ongoing public land issue in this area for some time, mostly related to Yakima Canyon and the unsafe conditions of several years ago. Residents said that the County Sheriff has done a great job at patrolling the canyon better. The department declared it a “safety corridor” to encourage responsible use. The Sheriff’s Department had only great things to say about their relationship BLM. Things like “quick response on problems,” “really good people to work with,” and “good to work with.” Three different sheriff deputies praised the BLM ranger, Tim Nickolin.

“Yakima Canyon used to be quite dirty until the Sheriff started to patrol the canyon more aggressively.”

Season passes for use at the Yakima Canyon BLM-managed campsites are sold at the Chamber of Commerce. The day use permits are sold on site in the canyon itself. There used to be a Forest Service office in Ellensburg but when they closed that down and moved to Cle Elum, they contracted with the Chamber to sell the passes such that people didn’t have to drive up there to get the season pass.

There are groups such as from the University that do periodic cleanups up the canyon.

In a JKA drive through the canyon to talk with visitors, storekeepers and local residents, the story was the same—things are better, law enforcement has helped, and few complaints from users.

The Yakima Canyon is home to mountain sheep, some of whom are diseased and are being selectively shot. There are currently volunteers in the canyon to work with the hunters to track and shoot sheep who have pneumonia.

“There is blue ribbon fly fishing up the canyon. There is also an annual February float and there are nice parties on either end of the cold float.”

The canyon is used a lot by all sorts of recreators—boaters, birders, etc. The Audubon Society has done some sort of project up the canyon, too.”

“I’d like to see boat launch at Bighorn. It is located right in between two launches and would be convenient for people who want to float down the river.”

“There are a couple of BLM landings that abut a private landowner who has blocked off access to their parking areas. I would like to see more access there and expanded parking opportunities.”

“I haven’t heard of any undesirable stuff going on in the canyon. There is some graffiti but it is basically just high school kids coming out here and doing it. Not much trash. The river is actually pretty clean, but it depends on your standards.”

“The BLM campsites are very well used. During the big holidays such as Memorial Day and Labor Day, the Roza camping area with 160 sites will be completely full. Very popular.”

Local officials acknowledged The Cascade Land Conservancy for doing good work in the canyon. It sponsors an outdoor education event in the canyon on BLM land each year. There are also various planned trail projects throughout the canyon. The group is in the planning stage of adding to the State Scenic Bi-way through the canyon with an interpretive building and conservation easement. The BLM has not attended any meetings on this nor given any feed back or input, which is frustrating to local participants.

### **Other Citizen Issues**

Large numbers of the publics do not know where BLM lands are located, including one County Commissioner who didn’t know there was BLM land down the Yakima River Canyon.

“I couldn’t even point you which direction BLM land can be found.”

Many people we spoke with at gathering places and specialty stores such as; hiking, skiing, and hunting, told us they mostly recreated to the west of Ellensburg in the National Forest and the many trails in and around town and the county.

There are no ORV places to ride close by. Many ORV recreationists said they travel to destinations such as Moses Lake or Juniper Dunes if they wanted to get off road. But if they were just out for a few hours they would go into the National Forest “green dot” roads open to ORV. ORV enthusiasts want more open trails. There is a misconception around where BLM land is, whether it is open or closed. Numerous people think Saddle Mountain ORV is closed during winter months and question if Juniper Dunes has access through private property. Many people told us, “Parents have a responsibility to teach their kids how to use ATVs properly instead of letting them sit in front of the television all day.”

BLM does not get back to people in a timely manner.

“When land exchanges are involved, the BLM doesn’t get back to citizens and it is frustrating and creates animosity.”

“Land exchange with the BLM can be very frustrated and lengthy. The amount of time it takes BLM to make progress feels unnecessary from the public’s point of view. There should be better communication between BLM management staff and all parties during land exchange negotiations.”

### **BLM Management Concerns**

BLM Management Concerns in this area relate to the lack of recreation guidance in the current Resource Management Plan (RMP). The new plan is desired to address this deficiency. In addition, the 1998 Yakima River Management Plan decided the river was suitable for Wild and Scenic designation, but eligibility was never determined. The eligibility will be determined during this planning effort. BLM also has the challenge of managing scattered tracts and will seek public guidance in addressing this. In some areas, BLM land is intermingled with Fish and Wildlife management areas which have proposed authorizing grazing. The decision has not been well-received by environmental groups and BLM must determine what its management approach should be.

### **Opportunities**

Work with the Cascade Land Conservancy in Ellensburg towards the establishment of State Scenic Bi-way as part of Wild and Scenic designation. Work collaboratively with others for best outcomes.

Communicate better with citizens. Phone calls should be responded to within 24 hours, and letters within a week.

Create maps to let people know where BLM lands are, if they are open, and what the rules are.

Managing scattered land tracts does not pose a problem or an issue unless BLM does not engage in some form of dialogue with citizen user groups.

Appoint a community liaison to better interact with citizens, user groups, government officials.

## **Yakima HRU**

### **William O. Douglas Trail**

A coalition of the City of Yakima, Yakima County, BLM, the Forest Service, Cowiche Conservancy, and others, are planning and implementing The William O. Douglas Trail which will go from the city of Yakima, up the Naches River to Ranier. Cowiche Conservancy is the lead agency. BLM has several hundred acres involved. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is involved.

The site includes a BLM ACEC [Area of Critical Environmental Concern] of a rare plant community. There is a need to collect ecological material and do interpretation. BLM has done one interpretive sign (Figure Seven). It also published a brochure entitled, “Cowiche Canyon--where Ancient Floods of Fire Form the Grand Architecture.”

A volunteer work day is needed soon because there is a trail wash out. The next phase for Cowiche Canyon is further acquisition of another set of parcels, and development of a recreation program to maintain the trail.

One issue shared by Cowiche Canyon Conservancy is the slow, onerous nature of land acquisition for BLM. It can take up to six years and landowners can't wait.

“We need a way to do fast track for priorities.”

Figure Seven  
Interpretive Sign Developed by BLM for Cowiche Canyon



(Source: Cowiche Canyon Conservancy)

### **Yakima County BLM Interests**

Yakima County has interest in the William O. Douglas Trail of which BLM is a part.

The “Remote” designation of the County includes Rattlesnake Ridge where BLM owns many checkerboard parcels. For the County in this area, lots are 40-acre minimum and face certain kinds

of restrictions. BLM is usually the ridge top. The County has a “critical areas ordinance” in place in this area which deals with slides, hazards, buffers to streams, and upland wildlife.

### **ORV (Off Road Vehicle) Use**

Off-highway people in the Yakima area described favorite places to go that included the Tampico area west of Yakima, Mattawa, off Road R into the Saddle Mountains, and Juniper Dunes which is preferred in winter when the sand is not as dry. Similar concerns were expressed about Juniper Dunes that were heard from other Juniper users: better access, some modest improvements such as a restroom, and better signage.

“Eastern Washington needs a website that says what is open, related links, maps and boundaries, a downloadable map, like the Colorado hunt maps. They are detailed. You know where you are.”

“The neighbor to the east of Saddle has a new fence, so I know that is not BLM. On the ridge, you can’t tell whose land you’re on.”

“People are bored with GPS units. They leave them home. Go with online maps with automatic email alerts when there are changes.”

“Horn Rapids [in Tri-Cities] cost \$20, I don’t really mind this. But if you charge fees and it’s by the rig, you’ve just eliminated families. A mom and dad and a couple kids, it would add up fast. Big Pines on Yakima River charges \$28 for overnight camping.”

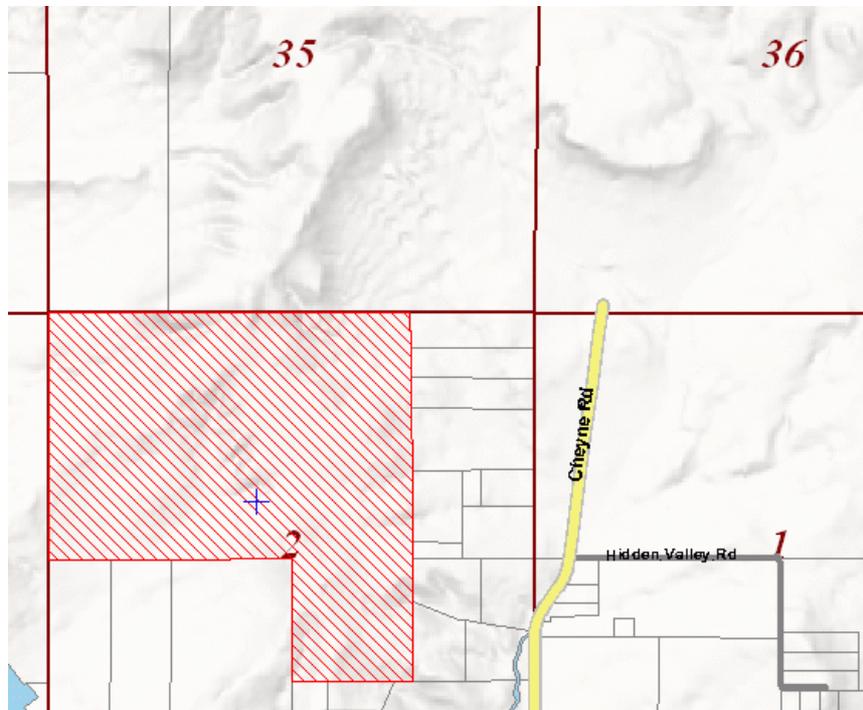
“We pay .03 cents a gallon gas tax that goes in the ‘NOVA’ funds, state revenues that go into State Recreation and Conservation Office. This fund was healthy and was funding ORV activity but the state took the money for other purposes. The fund has been gutted, although the state says the money will come back in 2011.”

“Reeder Foothills out of Gold Bar [northwest Washington], was shut down by DNR [Department of Natural Resources]. Thousands used that area. A recreation plan was getting developed and DNR pulled the plug.”

### **Rankville**

Rankville is the informal name given to an ORV use area on BLM land a couple miles north of Zillah. The Dust Dodgers is an off-highway group in Yakima that has been in existence for 35 years and has taken on informal management of the site. Two of its members described the history of Rankville and took JKA out on site to look it over. They say the area has been used for over 20 years, and they debated whether or not to “keep this under the radar.” They decided that this stance was unrealistic and they are determined to see if the site can be officially approved in some way. Figure Eight shows the BLM parcel in use. Not shown on the map, there is another BLM parcel to the immediate northwest in which the group is interested.

Figure Eight  
The Informal “Rankville” ORV Site North of Zillah



(Source: Yakima County GIS Department, [www.yakimap.com](http://www.yakimap.com))

They think they should obtain a status called “ORV Park District” through the state. Once it’s completed, the district becomes a government agency within county government, so county must sign off. It is then open to funding from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to pay for easements, improvements, and maintenance. Their goal is to get such a designation before there are more houses.

Access to the site is uncertain. Access is currently allowed by a resident on the west side of the property along an irrigation canal who enjoys ORV activities himself, but the gentleman is getting older and could change his mind. However, Cheyenne Road (Figure Eight) is the preferred access because there are fewer homes, and they are far off the road.

Organizers associated with the site appear to have good relations with the neighbors. The area is in a bowl so sound does not appear to carry. They said the neighbors confirm this. The group does an annual clean up. Members have put up fences with the neighbors, and put out orange flags to keep people out. Beyond the new fencing is old scars from many years ago, when the whole area was routinely used, but with fewer numbers. Some natural recovery from the wheel tracks in this area has occurred.

“Somehow people find Rankville. There’s lots of weekend use from the west side.”

“The county would likely welcome BLM looking at Rankville as an ORV site. The County has been getting rid of parks because of budget. The cities have been picking up them up. The County can’t do recreation, so it would appreciate help.” [Yakima County official]

## Planning Process Considerations

### **Meeting locations**

Ellensburg will bring people from the majority of the area if they are interested in what the meeting is about, even as far east as Ephrata, Quincy, and Moses Lake. In Ellensburg, the Hal Holmes Community Center is often used (509.962.7240), and seats up to 200 people.

In Yakima, common meeting places are: a) Yakima Valley Museum: 2105 Tieton Dr. Yakima WA 509.248.0747; and, b) Yakima Area Arboretum: 1401 Arboretum Dr. Yakima WA 509.248.7337.

Here is what residents said about public meetings:

“Public meetings don’t work. They bring the crazies out. You miss too many people. It doesn’t meet people where they are. Do open houses and field trips. Really penetrate the communities, pick up the phone and call people you know.”

“Have community groups host BLM.”

“Meetings tend to be dominated by a few groups and the people in the middle are silent. Thus, having a 3-5 minute time limit on the public comments is an important step to allot the time more equally among people.”

Kittitas County has no comprehensive plan.

### **Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Conduct a review of the Yakima River Canyon Recreation Site through dialogue with user groups, conservation organizations, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and state and federal agencies to identify issues and concerns that affect the long-term viability of recreation development.
2. Determine planning elements required to support the conservation and recreation programs in Cowiche Creek and Naches River drainage.
3. Develop long-term management strategy for the Rankville ORV area north of Zillah.

## Chapter Seven: The Tri-Cities Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. The Tri-Cities HRU is crazy for outdoor recreation of all kinds. It has affected the whole region and every level of government has policy guidance about it.
2. There is a notable increase in community capacity to develop and maintain recreation amenities while incorporating a conservation ethic.
3. A dominant theme expressed in the community is that “We’re waiting for BLM to do something.”
4. The Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area has been enormously popular for many years as a recreation site, particularly as an ORV site, drawing people from around the state and the Northwest. Outstanding issues are many and include the necessity of a legal access road, law enforcement, ongoing maintenance, degree of development, local management capacity, and environmental protection. There is a high degree of frustration regarding management of this site.
5. Staff of the City of West Richland expressed numerous issues in dealing with BLM about the large number of small parcels within the City, voicing their disappointment about slow response time in the context of a rapidly urbanizing area.
6. The proliferation of trails and regional trails, both constructed and proposed, involve BLM lands in Horse Heaven Hills, the Rattlesnake Hills, and in individual communities.
7. Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Elements are:
  - a. Juniper Dunes would lend itself to management progress through a community-based process. Although some major issues, such as road access and law enforcement, depend on effective BLM and sister agency support, many of the issues can be managed by citizens, groups and organizations. This area has shown that it has the capacity to assist BLM with its ecological and recreation mission.
  - b. Horse Heaven Rim Trail is a regional concept involving several organizations and local governments. It is the logical next phase in the development of regional outdoor recreation amenities in Tri-Cities to which BLM can be an important partner. The BLM planning process can be used to trigger a local management strategy.
  - c. Use the planning process to explore and develop BLM’s role in an emerging, multi-jurisdictional, regional approach to recreation development and conservation being undertaken in the Tri-Cities area.

### Introduction

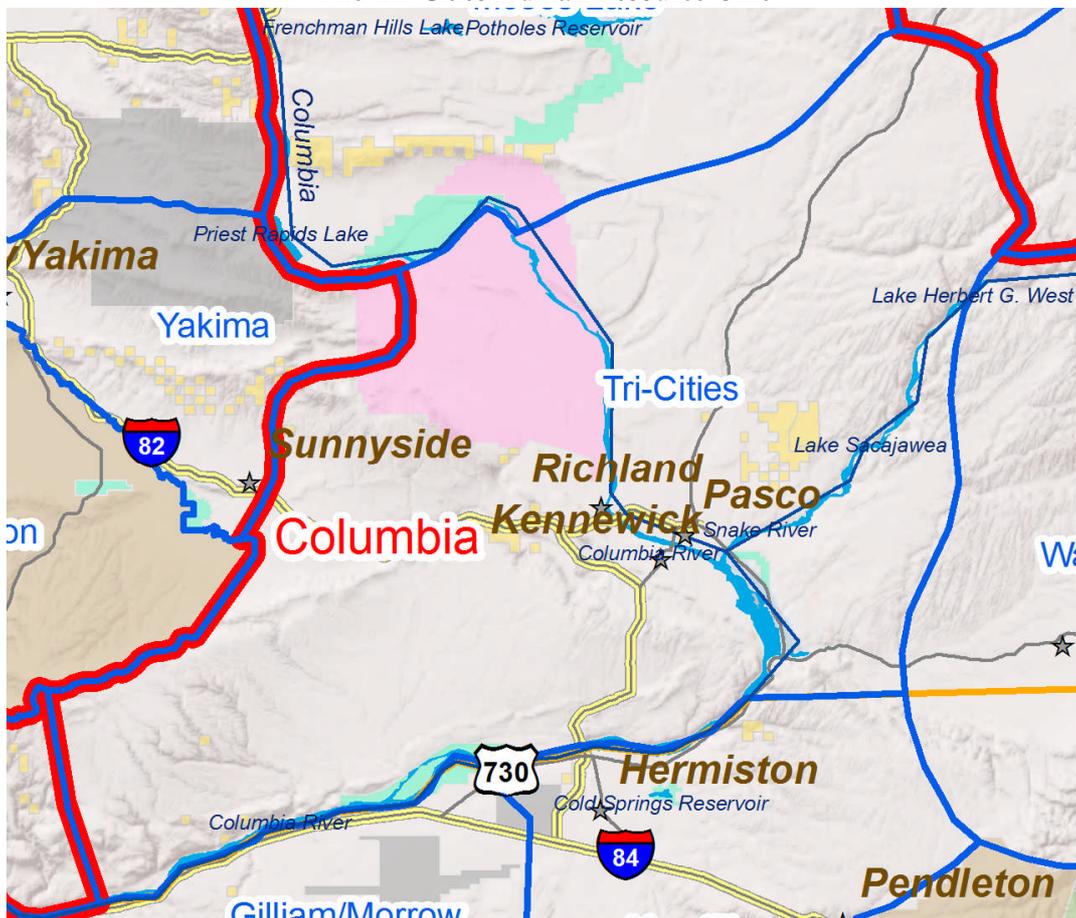
JKA conducted 10 professional days of community fieldwork in the Tri-Cities HRU.

Individuals	15
People in group settings (organizational meeting, outlet stores)	19
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>32</u>
Total contacts	66

The Tri-Cities HRU is shown in Figure Nine and is comprised primarily of Benton and Franklin Counties, and including the cities of Pasco, Richland, Kennewick, West Richland and Benton City. The north boundary proceeds northeast from Hanford Works to include Providence Coulee, Connell and the Highway 395 corridor, proceeding nearly to Lind in Adams County. On the west, the boundary is near Prosser in the Yakima Valley, proceeding southwest along the Yakama Indian Nation border and cutting south to the Columbia River between Bickleton and Goodnoe Hills. The south boundary proceeds east along the Columbia River and the state line into Walla Walla County to include Wallula Gap, Eureka, and the lower reaches of the Touchet River.

The Tri-Cities HRU encompasses the BLM areas contained within Horse Heaven Hills, scattered parcels in the Benton City, West Richland and Richland urban areas, and the Juniper Dunes Wilderness northeast of Pasco. The HRU includes the Tri-Cities confluence of the Columbia, Snake and Yakima Rivers, along with Walla Walla River farther south.

Figure Nine  
The Tri-Cities Human Resource Unit



## Community Description

Benton County population was estimated to be 163,058 in 2008, showing a 14.4% increase since 2000. Franklin County population was estimated to be 72,783 in 2008, showing a 47.5% increase since 2000.

The Hanford facility of the Department of Energy has been a central part of the Tri-Cities economy since World War II. It is associated with the common perception that people in the area are highly educated, with more Ph.D.s than anywhere. It is also a working man's area, with blue collar and industrial employment and a strong agricultural base. The economic base of the area is primarily agriculture, retail, and nuclear-related industries related to the Hanford Site and the Energy Northwest power reactor.

Tri-Cities has been undergoing steady to rapid growth. A Franklin County Commissioner said that the county was 17<sup>th</sup> in national growth in 2005-06 because of the presence of Hanford and cheap land. The Hispanic population makes up 49% of the total in Franklin County, and 16% of the total in Benton County, while the state-wide increase was 10% in 2008 (estimated, U.S. Census).

A number of residents commented that the sheriff and local police departments have made a dramatic reduction in crime which was a major social issue just a few years ago.

## Community Themes

### **“We’re waiting for BLM to do something.”**

- Have a map to designated where BLM land is and a phone number to call to notify them if there are problems
- BLM gives lip service but no action
- Gain legal road access to Juniper Dunes
- Update web site to reflect current rules, regulations, and situations

## Citizen Issues, Management Concerns and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

### **Outdoor Recreation in the Tri-Cities HRU**

Benton County has eight parks totally 2314 acres that have conservation and recreation elements. The Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility is a BLM R & PP (Recreation and Public Purpose) lease that the county subcontracts to the Tri-Cities Shooting Association which cites 1600 members. Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve contains 560 acres which were purchased in 2005 through a partnership using private, state, and county funds in order to conserve shrub steppe habitat and provide recreation opportunities for local residents. As evidence of the level of interest in conservation and recreation opportunities, a trail building event recently attracted 95 volunteers.

Horn Rapids Park is 565 acres on a five-mile stretch of the Yakima River which includes a campground, a horse camp, boat launch and multi-use trails. The park is used as an outdoor education center by area schools. The Horn Rapids ORV Park is a City of Richland park that is leased to a private operator, Horn Rapids Motorsports Complex, which conducts races and other events that attracts people from throughout the Northwest. Many local residents said they make use of this facility. Horse Heaven Vista is a six-acre park located above Prosser which would become part of the Horse Heaven Rim Trail. Its recently installed restrooms were just “tagged” with graffiti paint.

The Benton County comprehensive parks plan has a number of findings of importance to BLM:

1. Most people who participated in the plan development were interested in hiking and walking, with bicycling and nature activities the next most common activities.
2. The most needed facilities are trails, closely followed by preserves and waterfront parks.
3. Residents placed a high value on collaboration as a means to design, implement, and operate park projects.
4. The idea of regional trails which would involve multi-jurisdictional coordination was actively promoted by residents during the planning process, including:
  - a. A Horse Heaven Rim Trail, along the crest of the Horse Heaven Hills;
  - b. Rattlesnake Ridge Trail, connecting Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve with Red Mountain via Candy Mountain; and
  - c. A Rattlesnake Mountain Trail, connecting Horn Rapids Park to the Vernita area along the crest of Rattlesnake Mountain through Hanford Reach National Monument.<sup>6</sup>

The Benton County Parks Plan states that BLM owns 4% of the public land in Benton County, or 15,380 acres.

Horse people are very active in the Tri-Cities area. There are three active chapters of Backcountry Horsemen—Rattlesnake Ridge Riders, Purple Sage Riders, and Wine Country Riders. Favored places to ride are Horse Heaven Hills, Juniper Dunes, Saddle Mountain and Rattlesnake Hills. Generally, horse people stated that they are using Juniper Dunes less frequently in recent years because of the access issue.

Other recreation/conservation clubs include Intermountain Alpine Club, Chinook Bike Club, Friends of Badger Mountain, Tapteal Greenway, Rivers to Ridges Open Space Network, Friends of Amon, Tri-Cities Shooting Association, Model Airplane Association, Eastern Washington Dirt Devils, and Peak Putters Four Wheel Drive Club.

Conservation groups include the Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (LCBAS).

BLM and others are concerned about continued loss of shrub steppe habitat with its decline of associated species. At the same time, this area is experiencing a big push for land conservation and trail development. As some of the land is set aside and new trails have been debated, county and city

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<sup>6</sup> Benton County, Comprehensive Parks Plan, August, 2008.

officials and pro-development interests have voiced concern about loss of tax revenue. However, proponents of open space preservation and trail systems point out the quality of life considerations that make them valuable in attracting valued residents and as a tool for education about conservation values.

This dynamic was expressed clearly in the development of Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve. This effort was broadly community-based and spawned by citizens who were concerned about the loss of this striking visual landmark and hiking mecca due to the continued urbanization of the area.

A steering group named the Friends of Badger Mountain (FOBM) organized a large public fundraising effort which resulted in the mountain being purchased in 2005 and deeded to Benton County. Now at 599 acres it is one of the largest parks in the County.

An electronic trail counter at the base of the Badger Canyon Trail showed that the trail was used 59,000 times from May 2008 to May, 2009. As additional funds have made trail expansion possible, FOBM has organized the building of additional trails. A trail work day was held on March 6-7, 2010 which attracted 80 volunteers on Saturday and 45 on Sunday. The groups involved in this effort included churches, Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI), Backcountry Horsemen (Rattlesnake Ridge Riders Chapter), Chinook Bicycle Club, and the Washington Trails Association ([Tri-City Herald](#), March 8, 2010).

Residents repeatedly brought up Badger Mountain in conversations with JKA to show the broad community interest in trail development and conservation.

Eco-tourism is a concept that is being embraced by the Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau. Tourism research shows that boomers want active and experiential tourism, and “Badger [Mountain Preserve] is proving this,” said its director.

With the success of the Badger Preserve, FOBM worked with other local groups who care about preservation of open space to form the Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network. With representation from Benton and Franklin counties and the area’s cities the Network is drafting a plan for open space and trail connections in the bi-county region. Public input was solicited through four public workshops and over 300 surveys returned. The draft plan is currently being presented to agencies and organizations, including staff and elected officials from the counties and cities. The group expects that the final plan will be presented to the public this fall.

“We hike all the time around this area. I have no idea where BLM lands are. We hike and use ORVs. For ORV we camp west of Yakima Little Naches River, and we also go to Horn Rapids ORV Park.”

### **Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area**

Juniper Dunes is a large area managed by BLM northeast of the Tri-Cities area. It contains the Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC, an internal BLM designation), and a designated Off Road Vehicle Area. For many years this has been a destination for ORV users throughout the region despite the fact that this federal property is

landlocked—there is apparently no current legal access to get onto the site. Knowledgeable observers say that 1000 people on a weekend can use Juniper Dunes.

This is a popular site which comes up easily in conversations with residents who say that the area is enormously popular with ORV and horse people and some hikers who come from many different areas.

The BLM State-wide RAC was active at one point, trying to secure agreement for the long-term management of the area. The interim strategies developed through the RAC worked for awhile but the lack of resolution to the road issue prompted closure of the road at one point by a private landowner.

The history of this area and its management is long and convoluted. Franklin County at one point tried to broker an agreement with the two U.S. Senators and Congressman which earmarked \$650,000 to buy a portion of the road, but the deal fell through.

“My son and I go out there with our dirt bikes. No, we’re not part of a club.”

“We dirt bike out there with my kids. My wife uses an ATV [all terrain vehicle].”

“We have not gone out this year, but we went 10-11 times last year. We really enjoy it. We like winter the best, October to May, because you get better traction in the sand.”

“My parents ride out there. My wife would like a restroom. Summer is too dusty. We like fall and spring.”

“Our club does one or two hikes out there a year in the spring time, plus individuals go out there hiking all the time.” [Intermountain Alpine Club]

Access remains the critical existing issue at Juniper Dunes. The lack of public access has put pressure on the nearby private landowners for many years due to people using their property to gain access and to trespass, vandalism, and other problems with the large numbers of visitors. Residents said that the farmers and the dairymen nearby experience people trying to get through. Sometimes people park on the Pasco Kahlotus Hwy and hike in. Dirt bikers sometimes will take off in nearby fields.

Mr. Peterson was owner of the first two miles of road but he has sold it to a corporation, Premier Farm properties, LLC out of Champaign, Illinois. Many local people feel like he is still in the game however, and has some controlling interest.

“We went to BLM in Washington D.C. on three occasions to resolve the road issue and we were told that BLM is not in the road building business. We’re just in limbo now. The County is willing to take over the road once it is improved.” [Franklin County Commissioner]

“\_\_\_\_\_ bought a section of land to swap with BLM but this is stalled. We are pretty critical of BLM. We attended meetings in Spokane, talked with the director. Things don’t get done.” [Equestrian]

“We tend not to go out there anymore because we know we’re illegal.” [Horse club representative]

“The last time the gate was open, a motorcycle immediately goes into my new field and tore it up. After that a vehicle of mine was stolen for a joy ride.” [Nearby property owner]

“The no trespassing sign is daunting.”

“Lori Baker, a BLM employee out of the Spokane office, came out to create a GPS of trails in preparation for ORV trail planning at Juniper Dunes. Where is her report? She also used the calculations of the state of Oregon, ORV economic report, to calculate the economic impact for Tri-Cities. Her calculations show that Tri-Cities will benefit by \$7 million if Juniper Dunes was marketed with ORV camping and legal access resolved. Where is her report?” [Long-time participant in Juniper Dunes management].

“I haven’t been in there in years because of all the confusion about access.” [Long-time resident]

Figure Ten

Photo Showing a No Trespassing Sign at the Entrance to Juniper Dunes



“The County is putting in a road off Highway 395 at King City that will go east through Peterson Road. I think this will force BLM to work with the County in determining legal access. When things come up, BLM is not up front and does not let the public know what they are doing.” [Long-time user]

“I grew up near Juniper Dunes and we used to ride out there all the time. Now people disrespect the land and other people’s property. We have to educate people about how to leave no trace when they are out on the land. Keep Juniper Dunes open to public. Now, there are signs out there posted, ‘Keep out.’ What’s the deal?” [See Figure Ten for photo.]

“Maintain the road. The last half is rutted and full of potholes.”

“There is another access from the backside. I think it is private and now closed. We used it in the late 90s. We live in Othello so we liked coming in on that side. We’d turn on Elm Road along the power lines. There was a sign in box. I think this part is a county road because it’s on the maps.”

“I bought a section of 640 acres expressly to try and clean this situation up, hoping that I could trade it for a BLM section. The trade would straighten the property lines, and it would allow people to be on the southeast edge of my property and go straight to the site. I gave them the lease, I took the risk, I charged nothing, all in the good faith effort to get something resolved. Three years I’ve been waiting. I’m about ready to close the gate again. BLM does not have the will to get this thing done.” [Nearby property owner]

A number of people said that Juniper Dunes is self-regulating—if there are too many people, use drops off.

“We regularly go out to Juniper Dunes with about 12 in our circle, and we often meet another 12 out there that come from Benton City. We camp and ride. We love it the way it is. This is best time of year. Later in the season when more people are out there, we don’t go, and go elsewhere.” [Franklin County resident]

“We don’t go out there in peak season. Too many people.”

People seemed careful to say that they don’t make problems at the site.

“We make sure we stay out of farmers’ circles. We take flags and use them. The Kennewick motorcycle shop has them.” [ORV user]

“I don’t want to see any changes. I don’t mind going behind a bush. We pack in and pack out. There is not a lot of trash out there.” [Franklin County resident]

“Two wheelers cannot pick up trash so easily so they have specific dates for clean up. Four wheelers can pick something up and put it in the back of their rigs more easily. We have clean up times each year.”

Juniper Dunes has a history of cooperative projects at the site.

“We have done improvement projects out there and we’ve done self-policing, like we monitor the fences, inspect the guzzlers, and identify weeds for spraying. There have been many group projects. Fences were burned down.”

Juniper Dunes also experiences user conflicts, although this did not seem to be a dominant occurrence.

“Some ORV people are rude and even hostile. Some shut down their engines and courteously wait for us to pass. We always say thanks. The two mile stretch between the parking lot and the fence that marks the wilderness is the stretch where incidents may happen.” [Horse user]

Some people stressed the affordability of Juniper Dunes.

“Horn Rapids is cost prohibitive for many families. It’s just too expensive. We put on an event last weekend and it almost costs too much for a sponsor to go there anymore. None of my friends use the ORV trails or camping area. What’s great about Juniper Dunes are the diversified users, different family members can get out and enjoy the area. Mostly the different users get along.”

Most people wanted the area to be kept the way it is while others want changes.

“With more people comes more rules, so don’t develop anything.”

“If my wife was voting, there would a restroom out there. But it would get vandalized so then what?” [Common]

“If the road issue is fixed, that is all that is needed.” [Common]

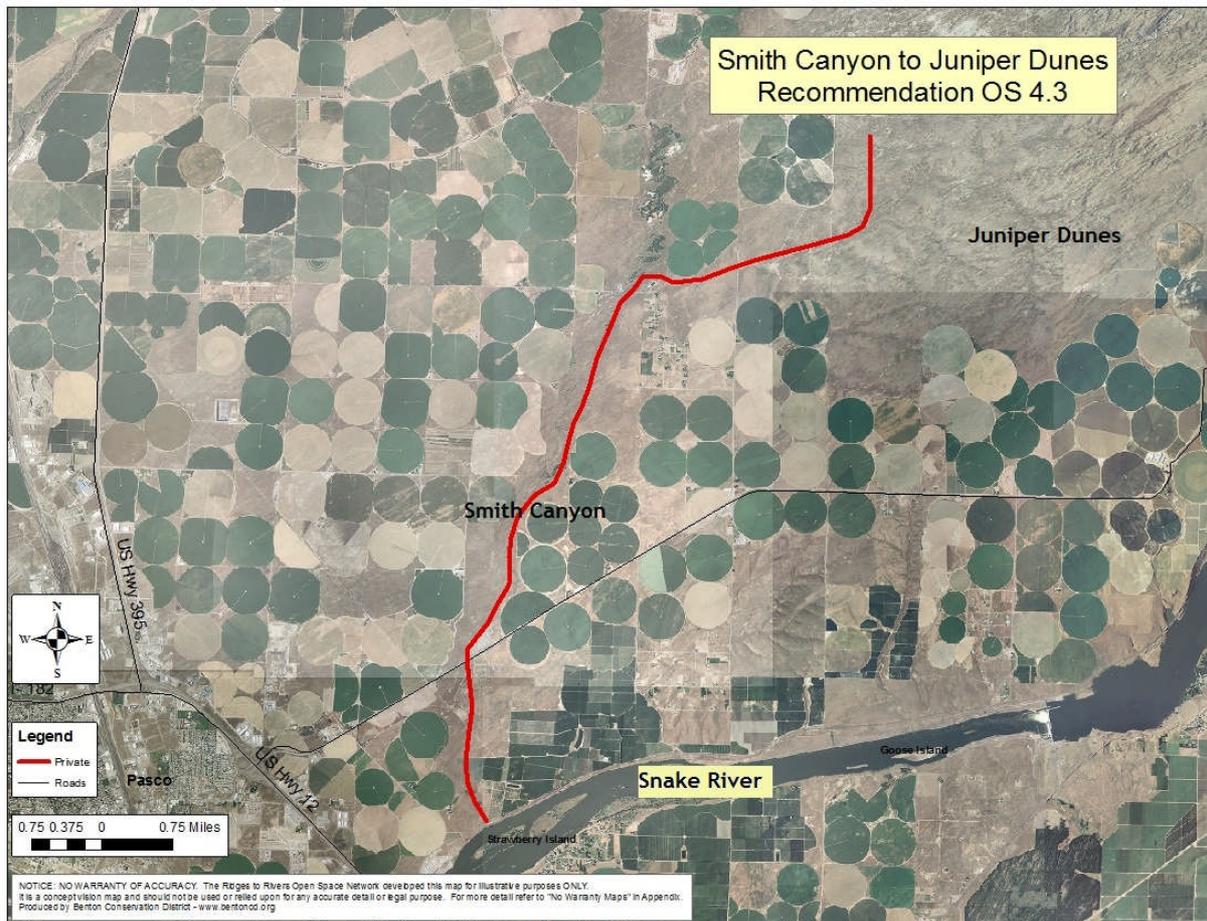
“A bathroom is not worth it. It will get ruined by idiots.”

“They should stop burning pallets out here. People leave broken beer bottles, dirty diapers, just garbage. The area needs more policing. Maybe the county inmates can clean up the area, or have groups adopt Juniper Dunes.” [ORV users]

“We need more police patrols. There is too much vandalism and disregard for property. People throw trash, bottles, have fires. A few people make it bad and the rest of us have to pay. User groups need to share.”

“There is a possibility of a trail extension from Juniper to the Columbia Plateau Trail through Smith Canyon which is managed by the Bureau of Reclamation. This is the area that drains Juniper Dunes.” [Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network, see Figure 11]

Figure 11  
Proposed Trail Connecting Juniper Dunes to the Snake River



Source: Ridges To Rivers Open Space Network, Conceptual Plan

### Management Concerns of BLM

There is currently no legal access. BLM wants to keep the fence intact and it currently requires frequent repairs. The boundaries do not always reflect topography and need to be refined. It is a designated area for ferruginous hawks whose populations are in decline. It also has been difficult to get sufficient agreement from interests in the Tri-Cities area to accomplish a workable plan at Juniper Dunes. Law enforcement issues are common, from vandalized outhouses (which were subsequently removed) to trash and appliance dumping, and occasional user conflicts.

### Management Concerns of Others

The Audubon Society voiced concern about the sensitive species with habitat in the Juniper Dunes area. Its members do not believe that ORV use is appropriate because of the importance in protecting sage grouse, sage thrasher, sage sparrow, ferruginous hawks, burrowing owls, ground squirrels and rabbits. Recent studies have shown that disturbance of the “microbiotic crust” of the

sage lands results in the loss of the single layer of soil and associated habitats, creating the dust conditions common to the area. Members also pointed out that fire management is a critical component for operating Juniper Dunes safely as fires in recent years have been higher intensity which destroy the microbiotic crust and bring in invasive weeds.

“In this area, if you disturb the soil, you will get invasives.”

“The ferruginous hawks at Juniper Dunes are nearly gone. They made habitat for them but with car traffic, they abandoned it. They like late spring and early summer out there.”

“ATV’s [all terrain vehicles] collapse the burrows of the owls and the habitat is lost.”

### Juniper Dunes Opportunities

The JKA teams asked residents and officials whether a community-based approach to figure out long-term management solutions would work in Juniper Dunes. Most people thought there would be enthusiasm for such an effort, “if the road issue was resolved.” People feel like the road issue is BLM’s responsibility to manage but that if it was resolved, other aspects of site management could be worked out with local initiative. A few people talked about a non-profit organization, like “Friends of Juniper Dunes”, which could manage the site.

“Many have tried [to craft a workable management approach at Juniper Dunes].”

“Juniper Dunes would lend itself to a community-based approach if the process was science-based.” [Environmental interest]

“BLM would need an ORV office. It would allow them to claim state money. The hourly contributions of volunteers lead the state to drop money from their green sticker program back to the fund to pay for the officer. ORV officers know where the money is and how to leverage it.”

“A non-profit group could work if it was multi-user and a formula could be worked out to accommodate the many interests.” [Horse person]

“BLM must show resolve, to build trust again that they are a reliable partner.”

“Volunteer clean up would be good to keep it open.”

The basic features of a management approach at Juniper Dunes, at least according to people who use it, are:

- Keep Juniper Sand Dunes open and accessible; the access road is a private road that needs resolution
- Juniper Dunes needs to have garbage clean up on consistent basis and police patrol more often

- There must be signage to BLM properties. At Juniper Dunes, put in a kiosk with ORV information and rules. People don't know the rules.
- The Sheriff said they would stop by Juniper Dunes more regularly if it was easier to get into the area.
- Put up a web site to post information with a phone number for emergency, fire regulations, flag rules, helmet laws, etc.
- Management tool: How does BLM post public ground, how does BLM communicate with public to let them know about restrictions, how does BLM get info out to the public?
- BLM open space should be better understood by the public.
- BLM needs to have a good solid inventory of what lands are in the region.

### **Willamette Heights, City of West Richland**

The City of West Richland currently has about 12,000 people and is projected to grow to 21,000 by 2027. Willamette Heights is a residential area within the City of West Richland that contains several parcels of BLM land. The City's staff refers to these lands as Sections 6 and 8. The lands were divided into 2.5 acre parcels, and City staff wants to designate the lands as open space. In addition, BLM has let a number of R & PP leases (Recreation and Public Purpose) in this area that contain a middle school, a park and a fire station, and apparently there are pending leases as well. City staff shared the following concerns about BLM land:

1. Each of the parcels has a 33' "federal access utility easement" around all or part of the perimeters which make City planning difficult. BLM claims that it does not have the authority to vacate these easements but the City's perspective is that the easements were created through BLM authority and hence could be vacated by BLM also. . In the meantime, neighbors drive on neighbor's property because it is legal and they can. The city can't say, put your driveway here and not here, because legally they can put it where they want. There are conflicts between neighbors because of this. It also makes these 2.5 acre lots difficult to develop because they have 33' easements around the edges.
2. Local residents formed an LID (Local Improvement District) to get in streets and other infrastructure, but the city cannot assess BLM a share of this. So BLM as landowner gets increased value of the property, but it is due to other taxpayers footing the bill.
3. Most of the access easements in these two areas are not improved making it difficult for emergency services to locate residents.
4. The city wants to get ownership of these parcels and dedicate them as open space through deed restrictions because that is consistent with what landowners were told to expect and that is what they want. Figure 12 shows a photo of an irrigation district outbuilding placed near BLM land, an example of the difficulty of planning under current conditions with BLM. Note the weed intrusion due to road construction.
5. The City wants to acquire parcels 173 and 174 for a park, but has not applied because BLM has told the City they will not process any applications until BLM's new land-use policy is completed (3-5 years). Why not continue this process under the existing plan?
6. The City would like to designate Lots 56, 57, and 66, shown in Figure 13, as open space.

Figure 12  
An Irrigation District Outbuilding in Willamette Heights



Figure 13  
Lots 56, 57, 66 on BLM Land, City of West Richland



## Horse Heaven Hills

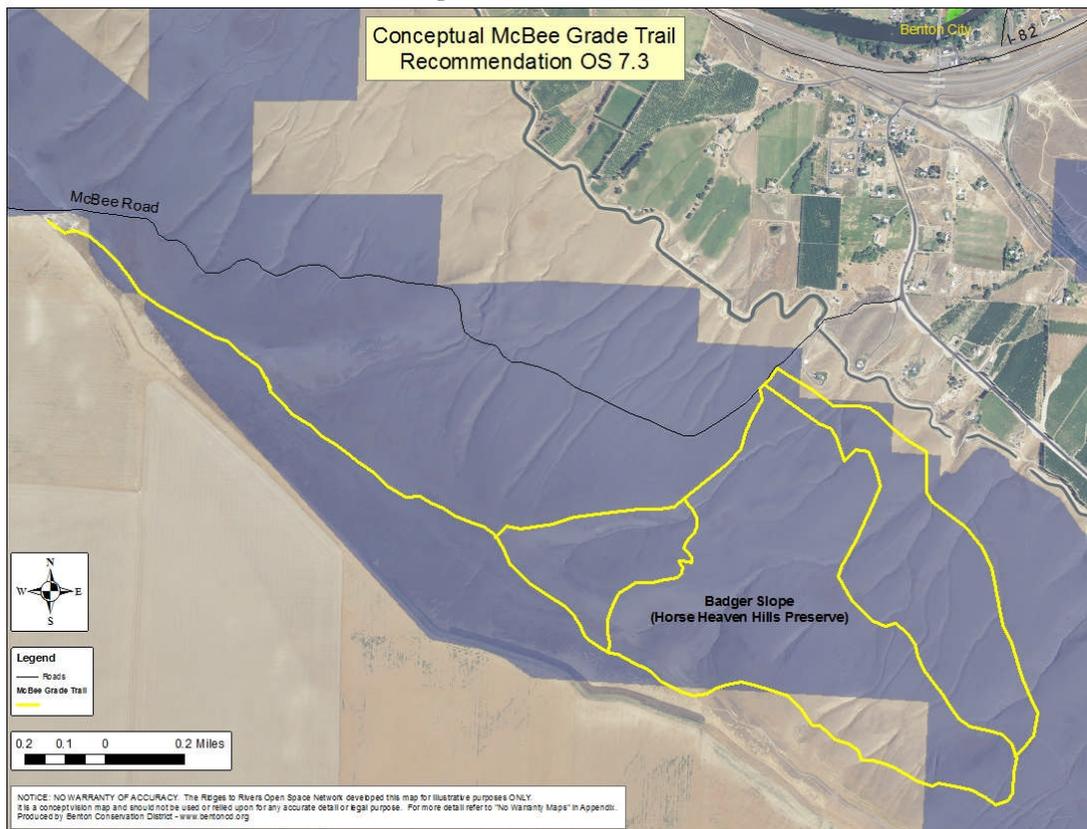
Horse Heaven Hills stretch south of Interstate 82 about 18 miles between Prosser and Tri-Cities of which BLM manages about one-half to two-thirds of this stretch, about 12 miles. The Benton County Parks Plan has identified the concept of a Horse Heaven Rim Trail as desirable for the future development of the County. City officials in Prosser have expressed a similar desire (below). People point out that the ridge top is a de facto trail now. Figure 14 shows part of the proposed trail.

“It was closed to motor traffic a couple years ago because it was getting beat up. There were a few fires up there too. This area has the best views in the region.”

“Let us design the official trails in this area for BLM. We call this area Horse Heaven Hills Preserve. We will take over the trail areas and maintain them.”

“McBee Grade is very popular for trail running, mountain biking, hiking, and horse use.”

Figure 14  
Conceptual McBee Grade Trail



(Source: Ridges to River Open Space Network, Conceptual Plan)

Promoters acknowledge unresolved issues in their proposal. Some BLM parcels, for example, are not on the ridge proper but off a bit, so work would have to be done to properly align ownership of the trail.

A portion of the Horse Heaven Rim Trail is being promoted by the Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network. This group has a very broad-based steering committee comprised of both counties, the cities of Benton City, Kennewick, Pasco, Richland and West Richland, as well as numerous non-governmental organizations, recreation clubs and conservation organizations.

### **City of Prosser**

Prosser is a small town of about 5100 in western Benton County that is nestled between Horse Heaven Hills and the Yakima River. It has been growing at about 6% a year since 2000. It is Benton County's seat which was begun in 1905 from the eastern portions of Yakima and Klickitat Counties. Agriculture has always been the mainstay of the local economy, with ConAgra having about 400 workers for its potato processing plant and several other food processing companies being located in the business park by the freeway.

The presence of Washington State University (WSU) experimental station has proved pivotal to the town's development, as Professor Walter Clore proved that the soils of the Yakima Valley were indeed suitable for growing wine grapes, and may rank among the world's best for that purpose. Since the early 1980s, over 40 wineries have developed or located in the 10 square-mile surrounding Prosser,<sup>7</sup> leading Prosser to be known as the wine capital of Washington State. The Borders Village is a cluster of wineries within town that has developed into a visitor destination. This kind of development is unique in the nation. Many spin off businesses have begun in the area, including restaurants, bed and breakfast establishments, lodging facilities, and the Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center, which was just approved for funding. Some of the local horse tours in the area which make use of BLM lands include these winery tours in their annual events.

Because of these developments, Prosser has begun to actively address quality of life issues for its residents, including trail systems and recreation programs. City officials are interested in two areas of BLM land management that could contribute to the town's development. First, the City is interested in working with BLM to make use of, or acquire, its parcels in the town that are near or contiguous to the city's trail system. Figure 15 shows what city officials believe is a BLM parcel between the Yakima River in the distance and Chandler Canal. Parcels like this are desired to contribute to the park and trail system of the community. Access to BLM ground is a continued interest in the Prosser area.

Second, the City is just beginning to explore ways to protect the Horse Heaven Hills from urban encroachment. City officials are noting development activities along its base, including a subdivision that has begun up on hills overlooking town. As the City has begun a review of current and potential

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<sup>7</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosser,\\_Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosser,_Washington)

Figure 15  
BLM Land between the Yakima River and the Chandler Canal



future uses of Horse Heaven Hills, it has become interested in the concept of the Horse Heaven Rim Trail, proposed between Prosser on the west and Webber Canyon on the east, near the Tri-Cities.

### **Badger/ Rattlesnake Trail Proposal**

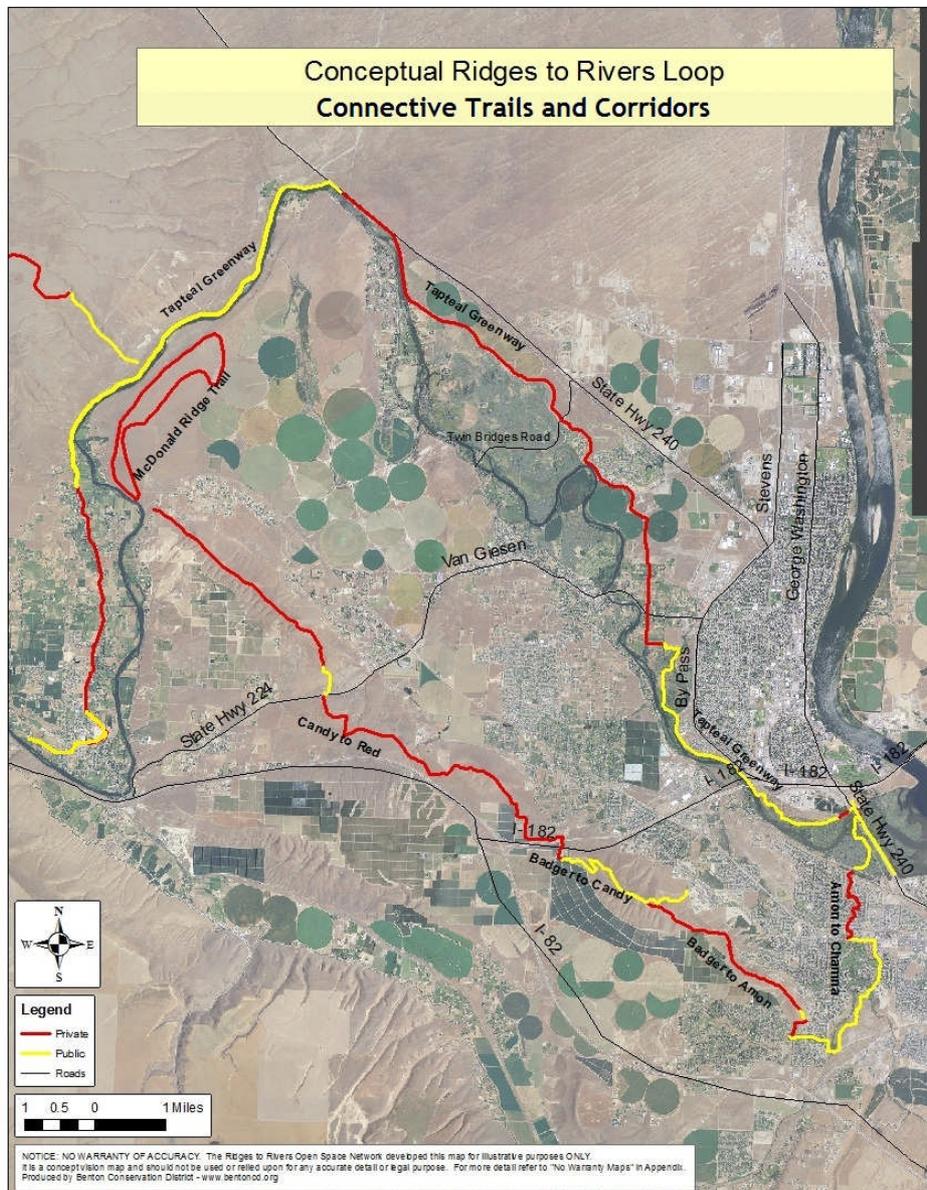
Some residents have proposed a trail along the “rattles” of the Rattlesnake Hills, from Badger to Candy, to Red, to Rattlesnake. The conceptual layout for the trail is shown in Figure 16.

### **City of Richland**

BLM has several checkerboard parcels in Richland. Two are Badger Mountain Park holdings and an easement on the east branch of Amon Creek. The City maintains leased BLM lands through police patrol and trash pickup. The City currently needs land for ball fields for which no BLM land would be suitable. The City also manages 80 acres of Badger Mountain Park for BLM. City officials stated that they believe that:

1. BLM open space should be better understood by the public.
2. BLM needs signage and public communication.
3. BLM needs to have a reliable inventory of what lands are in the region and a useful display of that inventory through online maps or some other means.

Figure 16  
Proposed Ridges to Rivers Loop Trail



Source: Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network, Conceptual Plan

## Wind Power

Residents noted that number of meteorological towers in the area and the likely prospects for wind energy development proposals.

“BLM should expect some push back on wind proposals. It should be upfront in the plan about its intentions and how the process works.” [Benton County official]

### **Transmission Line**

A couple residents were concerned about the proposed 38-mile transmission line corridor proposed by Pacific Power to run between Selah and Vantage Washington. The line is proposed to be generally parallel with an existing line and will cross four miles of BLM land, 19 miles of Yakima Training Center (U.S. Army) land, and 15 miles of private land.

“The line should go through the firing range, but they want the east side of the river where it is most disruptive.”

### **Frustration with BLM Management**

“BLM should use science to decide where changes will be made. They just seem to make changes without common sense about what they are doing. I heard they were going to put a fence up at the bottom of a sand dune with regard to grazing. I told them you can’t put it right up against the sand dune because people coming over the dunes will not see the fence in time. There will be accidents all the time. Well, they put the fence up right along the dunes and then after awhile decided they had put it in the wrong place and moved part of it, but not all of it. I can’t even ride along between the dunes and the fence on a two-wheeler. It’s too tight. So that cost BLM extra money to send a repair crew out, when it was common sense to move the fence a little to begin with.” [Long-time recreationist]

### **Other Issue Topics**

“How does BLM fit into Hanford’s decommissioning? Some of those lands will be transferred to federal land management agencies but we don’t know which ones.” [Benton County Commissioner]

“BLM should participate in the Arid Lands Initiative out of the Governor’s office.” [Environmentalist]

“I tried to get BLM to approve an easement so I could get a road built inside a Burlington Northern right of way. It was only about 400 feet with a public road on each side. It would have had multiple benefits in routing truck traffic and promoting the Business Park. Someone high up in BLM shut it down.” [Benton City engineer]

“We want BLM to give up fees for events. It’s a hassle.” [Recreation club]

“If I send an email or call them, they should respond in a timely manner. But I hear nothing. In a recent email, they didn’t respond so I sent the question to my congressman and he contacted the BLM. They called back right away. So why don’t they call me?” [Recreation user]

“Keep the website updated. We, the public, have no way of knowing what is going on. I went on the BLM site to find out who you were and what you were doing, but I found nothing.” [Local resident, in response to JKA discussion]

“User groups don’t communicate with each other, then they get fragmented and don’t work together at all.”

## **Saddle Mountains**

Saddle Mountains are in southern Grant County and are part of the Moses Lake Human Resource Unit. JKA did not find strong identity in Moses Lake for Saddle Mountains. Moses Lake recreationists enjoy Moses Lake sand dunes and hiking and biking on trails nearby. When asking the general public about BLM, people did not relate to recreating on BLM or know where BLM lands are. The strongest expressions of interest in Saddle Mountains came from nearby residents, ORV enthusiasts from around the state and particularly the Tri-Cities area, environmentalists concerns about habitat issues, and some urban dwellers in Ellensburg and Wenatchee. Tri-Cities people relate the strongest to Saddle Mountains, so they are being included in this chapter.

The Saddle Mountains run in an east-west direction from Grant into Kittitas Counties. Lands in this area are managed by Department of Natural Resources, the railroad and Plum Creek Timber. BLM lands are located in Grant County and are designated as “open” for ORV uses. The area is very dry, so there is little there. The area is popular for rock hounding, hiking, hang gliding off the east side, and ORV uses.

### **Future Land Use**

Local residents, ORV enthusiasts, and other recreation users expressed a clear desire to keep Saddle Mountains open.

“We do trash clean up to maintain good relations with the neighbors.”

“BLM should maintain the roads.”

### **User Conflicts**

Users reported some conflicts.

“Is it legal to bring an ORV onto BLM ground if there are also cattle there?” [Saddle Mountain area resident]

### **ORV Uses**

Each ORV user we spoke with said ORV users are willing to “pay to play.” In this area, access into Saddle Mountains occurs through Mattawa along Road R.

“We love Saddle Mountain. It is great riding. Me and my sons do the Odessa Poker Run so we use Saddle to practice on.”

“Saddle Mountain was designated as an open area for OHV use. This was a bad BLM decision. There are too many impacts on wildlife and archeological sites. Policy should be: ‘closed except for designated spots’. This is destination area from western Washington.”

“Keep ORV limited to current locations. Don’t expand the ORV area.”

“Open some jeep trails, make an ORV park available, make land available for all to use: hunters, fisherman, ORV, horseback riders, hikers.”

### **Ecological Issues**

Environmentalists expressed concerns about Saddle Mountains. It is viewed as a critical corridor between Hanford National Monument and the Yakima Training Center, with a resident sage grouse population that people want to keep healthy.

“If you take a dirt bike up the hills once or twice, that scare will be there for 10 years.”

“ORV use is not appropriate in some places where weeds can be introduced or erosion is an issue. The timing should be regulated also to avoid sensitive times for sensitive species.”

“BLM must keep noxious weeds controlled. Goat Horn can and does get into truck tires and then the weed gets carried off to other areas.”

“Weed laws must be tougher. Hounds Tongue is a very bad noxious weed. BLM and the Forest Service have to spray more to control noxious weeds and support education for weed control.”

“Preserve the shrub steppe habitat, it is an endangered habitat. BLM must limit road construction. With low precipitation the area is susceptible to fire. Manage the area so there are no fires. Two migrating birds come to Saddle Mountain, the Sand Hill Crane and raptors. Both need shrub steppe to live.”

### **Wind Energy Development**

“We don’t want wind turbines on the Saddle Mountain ridge top. Wind turbines need to be built closer to the consumer of electricity. Build them where there is more wind on the west side of mountain. The turbines are noisy and throw off chunks of ice. They also have lights on them. We don’t know their impact on wildlife, people, and plants.”

### **Maps**

People commonly stated that it is difficult to know where BLM land is or what the rules are for use.

## Planning Process Considerations

### **Meeting locations**

For public meetings in Tri-Cities, the TRAC Center (Trade, Recreation and Agricultural Center) in Pasco is often used. It is a county owned event center that is well-used, convenient and affordable. Other locations which were suggested include the Benton PUD (509-582-2175), Columbia Basin College (509.547.0511, ext. 2333), and the Battelle Auditorium at Hanford (509.375.6500). which seats 290 and is a 15-minute drive.

### **How to Foster a Meaningful Planning Process in the Tri-Cities HRU**

The Tri-Cities area has shown tremendous gains in its capacity to develop and care for recreation sites. People are passionate about this and have volunteered countless hours to participate in both the development and use of recreation sites. Moreover, BLM lands are considered highly important, in part, because of the unique qualities of each site, and partly in regional strategies that involve BLM land. As the speaker below makes clear, encouraging recreation development that also addresses community health is a strong means by which to become community-based.

“Treat the communities as partners; help them preserve landscapes and quality of life in the face of pressures. Send a mailing list with a one-page marketing piece of BLM objectives, contributions to open space, quality of life. Send this information to the mayors and cities. Do webinars and video conferencing. These are getting big. Foster healthy communities.”  
[City administrator]

“It’s not real collaboration if BLM just listens to our concerns and then ignores them. When we just get a letter in response, it doesn’t sit well.” [Benton County official]

“BLM should be good neighbors not landlords.”

The Growth Management Act of Washington State requires consistency between various levels of government planning.

The Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau has offered to promote BLM scoping through its newsletter.

### **Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Juniper Dunes would lend itself to management progress through a community-based process. Although some major issues, such as road access and law enforcement, depend on effective BLM and sister agency support, many of the issues can be managed by citizens, groups and organizations. This area has shown that it has the capacity to assist BLM with its ecological and recreation mission.
2. Horse Heaven Rim Trail is a regional concept involving several organizations and local governments. It is the logical next phase in the development of regional outdoor recreation

amenities in Tri-Cities to which BLM can be an important partner. The BLM planning process can be used to trigger a local management strategy.

3. Use the planning process to explore and develop BLM's role in an emerging, multi-jurisdictional, regional approach to recreation development and conservation being undertaken in the Tri-Cities area.

## Chapter Eight: The Upper Crab Creek Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. Despite low population growth and some decline in smaller towns, agriculture in Lincoln County appears strong with strong community traditions.
2. Local people tend to view CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) and BLM lands as “out of production” and as contributing to increased fire hazard because of higher vegetation levels.
3. Outdoor recreation is growing in the area and is accepted as a form of economic development although many people are uncertain about the implications.
4. Farmers and ranchers generally do not understand BLM’s range management program and believe it adds to the fire hazard without necessarily accomplishing ecological objectives.
5. BLM has taken many steps to develop a multi-jurisdictional fire management plan, but some issues remain which need to be addressed.
6. Hunter impacts on landowners in three specific geographic areas are intense and not well understood by many officials.
6. People in the Odessa area have worked diligently to develop a credible OHV program and a proposal to implement it on BLM ground. The effort has broad community support, even though not all issues have been resolved.
7. Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Elements are:
  - a. Go the next step to build upon fire management partnerships by addressing existing unresolved issues in a collaborative framework with relevant fire districts and other organizations.
  - b. Develop citizen-based strategies to deal with hunter impacts in three specific geographic areas, primarily focused on education and coordination with sister agencies.
  - c. Help the Odessa area develop a top-notch management plan for the operation of an OHV facility on BLM land. Insist on accountability and turn over as much as possible to citizen organizations and local government.

### Introduction

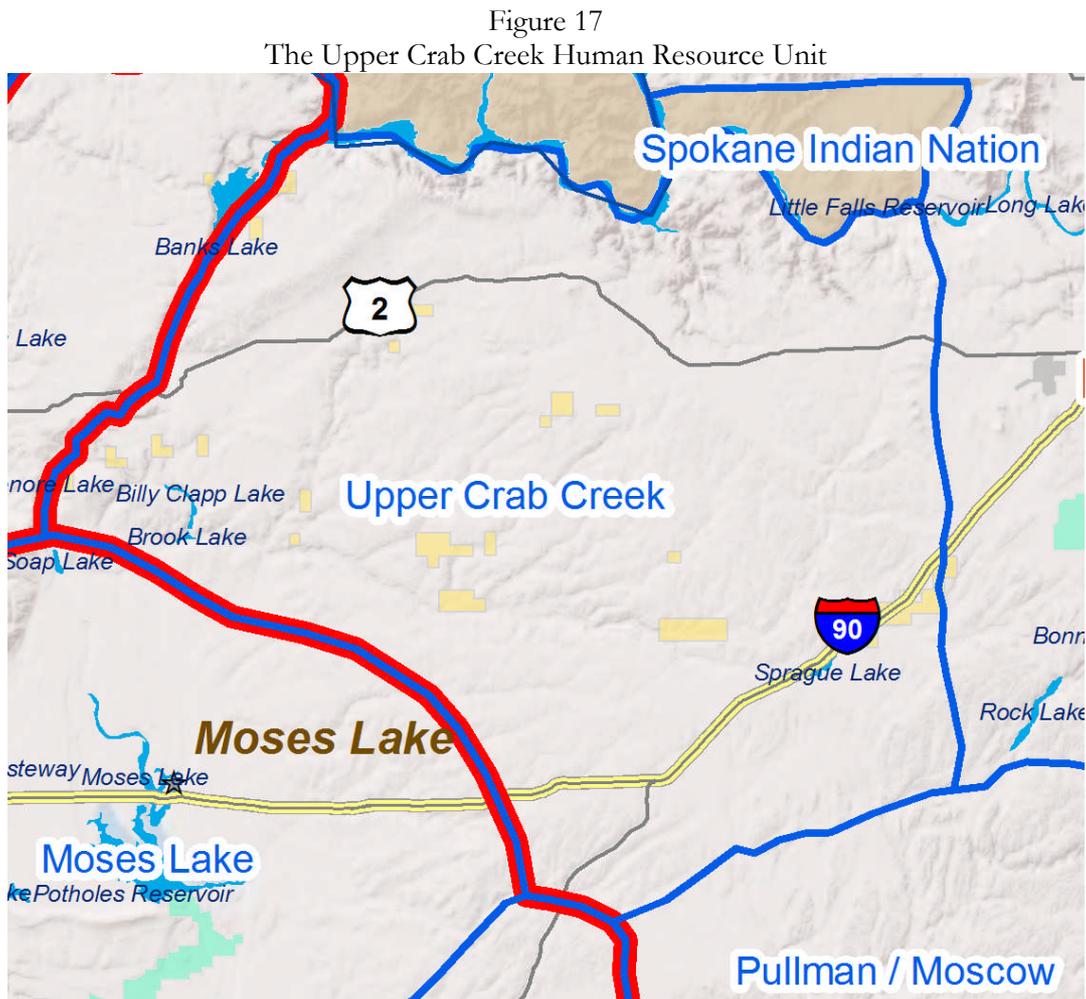
JKA conducted 12 professional days of community fieldwork in the Upper Crab Creek Human Resource Unit (HRU), focusing on areas with concentrations of BLM land. The JKA team talked with a total of 83 people, as shown below.

Individuals	56
People in group settings (organizational meetings, outlet stores)	19
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>8</u>
Total contacts	83

JKA talked with farmers, ranchers, townspeople, business owners, recreation users, County Commissioners, Mayors, Conservation Districts, Watershed Groups, Fire Districts, the Farm Bureau, the Cattlemen’s Association, a hospital administrator, as well as recreation and environmental groups in the Spokane area. In addition there are two watershed planning groups,

WRIA 43 and 55, and the Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area (GWMA, administered by the Adams, Franklin, Grant and Lincoln County Commissioners) which have interest in BLM planning.

The Upper Crab Creek HRU is shown in Figure 17. On the north, the boundary is marked by the southern edge of the Colville and Spokane Indian Reservations. Its western edge extends to Banks Lake in northern Grant County, south to include the Wilson Creek area, and southeast into Adams County to include Ritzville. Its eastern line coincides with the Lincoln County border to include Reardan.



BLM has acquired about 80,000 acres in the HRU over the last couple of decades, primarily dedicated to shrub steppe habitat restoration, cattle grazing and recreation. BLM holdings also include Fishtrap and Hog Lakes near Sprague. The BLM lands called Escure Ranch, properly in the Pullman/Moscow HRU, are considered in this chapter because of their proximity.

## Community Description

The Upper Crab Creek drainage is known as a premier winter wheat growing area, an area for dryland farming noted for its productivity.

“Lincoln County grew in population to a peak of over 17,000 around 1910. During this time, there were more than 2,000 farms in the county and almost twice as many people lived in the rural areas as in the towns. Presently, farms are much larger in average acreage, but fewer in number” (Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan 1983).

Lincoln County population was estimated at 10,344 in 2008, an increase of 1.6% since 2000.

The county extension agent provided information that further substantiates the decline in the number of farms but the increased acreage associated with each farm. Table Two below. It shows that the number of farms associated with each commodity has indeed declined dramatically. A casual review of production levels might lead one to think that production has declined as well, but two factors mitigate that conclusion. One, the lands out of production in the CRP program were substantial and also offer substantial incomes for local landowners. Two, if the 80,000 acres acquired by BLM is factored in, one can see that the net production per acre could be said to have increased.

Table Two  
Number of Farms and Acres in Production in Lincoln County, 1982, 2007

Commodity	Farms		Acres/Head		Yield	
	1982	2007	1982	2007	2007	1982
Wheat	590	308	360,806	313,441	53.5	48
Barley	431	114	127,910	39,870	1.4	1.2
Hay	281	197	19,444	25,365	2.5	xx
Cattle	332	157	21,002	12,960 ('02)	xx	xx
CRP*	xx	403 of 796	xx	148,830	xx	xx
Rangeland	376	106	440,626	368,000	xx	xx
Total			969,788	908,466		

\*CRP = Conservation Reserve Program (Source: National Agricultural Statistics Services)

The phenomenon of shrinking farm size is a national one but pronounced in Lincoln County. A Lincoln County Commissioner gave local context to the trend. Farm size must increase to stay competitive, reducing the number of farms in operation, and reducing the number of families. “Whereas before you’d see six houses on a stretch of rural roads, now you see two,” the Commissioner said.

The agricultural lifestyle has produced strong caretaking networks.

“In the big fire, my new corrals all burned and the fences burned too. My wife called a work day and we had 75 people show up. It was all replaced in a day. My family members were all work crew bosses and directed the work. The grange burned, too.”

The Conservation Reserve Program was begun in 1985 with the original goal of reducing supply to raise prices. People are paid to keep their land out of production. Over time, the focus of the program shifted to the environmental benefits of not farming for wildlife, erosion and so on. About 20% of the cropland in Lincoln County is CRP lands. CRP contracts must be renewed on a periodic basis. The CRP program is important for BLM because, although people understand they get financial benefit from the program, CRP land, like BLM land, is considered “out of production” and therefore wasteful. In addition, both sets of land, by virtue of their management approaches, have higher vegetation levels than the average farm plots, leading to higher fire hazards.

Most people who voiced an opinion believed that agriculture will stay strong in the area. Many noted that young people are sometimes coming back to work the land as the elders get older and die.

“If wheat prices stay up and fuel costs are not too high, people can stay in it.”  
“Wheat is doing well. Cattle are in the tank.”

Some land is getting broken up for development. Many people expressed a concern that this trend will grow. Changing demographics and a changing way of life are being seen at the local level. Cheap rural housing is apparently attracting lower-income residents with social problems like drug use. “We call them squatters,” one official said.

“They are coming from California, Seattle, retired Silicone Valley. Now timberlands are house sites.”

“WSU [Washington State University] gave up its forestry program” [which reflects this change of lifestyles]. The waterways are getting degraded. They used to be kept up when logs were getting pulled down the river by the tugboats.”

“The dam had all the employment. Now it’s commuting to Seattle.”

The nearby urban population of Spokane is active in the outdoors and makes use of the Upper Crab Creek area extensively to hunt, fish, ride horses, have dog trials, hike and bicycle, accentuated by the presence of BLM lands in the area such as Fishtrap and Hog Lakes, Escure Management Area, Odessa, Jameson Lake and Swanson Lake.

The Odessa area in recent years has witnessed the successful development of a biofuels plant, Inland Empire Oilseed that has provided 24 jobs. There are also two grass plants that employ 6-8 people. In addition, the Barr Regional Bio Industrial Park at the Fishtrap freeway exit has a 4 MW plant going in that will be a digester of grass clippings in the region.

BLM has acquired 80,000 acres of land in Lincoln County over the last couple of decades and now owns 5% of the land base<sup>8</sup>. BLM bought land in this area to acquire sagebrush steppe habitat, a declining habitat that BLM is under some obligation to restore. Most BLM land is leased to farmers for cattle grazing but with fewer cattle per acre, leading to a number of citizen issues noted below.

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<sup>8</sup> Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Lincoln County, Washington, 2009.

“Sometimes we have to remind cattlemen that we didn’t buy the land for them.” [BLM staff]

### Community Themes

**“If you take care of the land, it will take care of you.”** This is a culture of working people, active on the land, and imbued with a value that for the land to be productive, it must be cared for.

**“Government should not own land.”** This statement is a philosophical statement of value made by rural agricultural people who make a living from productive use of the land. This statement appears to be widely believed as a statement of principle.

**“What does BLM do? Where is BLM?”** In many casual encounters with passers-by in this area, people expressed a lack of awareness of BLM’s presence in the county, its land management goals, and the location of BLM land. This was not true for people active in agriculture, recreation or governance.

**“We have great appreciation for individual BLM staff people.”** Individual BLM staff was uniformly praised for their public service, communication, flexibility and practical approaches to natural resource management. Many times, this statement would be accompanied by an expression of distrust for BLM as an organization.

**“We can’t compete with BLM for local land purchase.”** This statement is associated with citizen issues, reported below, but was often stated by individuals with no personal experience in BLM land transactions.

**“BLM is not a good neighbor [around fire and grazing policies].”** This theme, also, has citizen issues attached to it, but was also used generally by people to make a point for which they had no direct experience, indicating the potential for theme language to enter into the planning process.

**“We need more tourist dollars.”** There seems to be widespread acceptance of a local economy that includes a tourism component, although much variation was expressed about what that might actually mean.

**“You have all these acronyms now.”** People talked about the growing presence of acronyms in their lives, like BPA [Bonneville Power Authority], DNR [Department of Natural Resources], Fish and Wildlife, and now BLM. The theme is used to express increased complexity and the necessity of dealing with multiple government agencies in the course of everyday life.

**“Everyone should have a chance at using BLM land.”** Dirt bikes, hunters, fisherman, hikers, horse riders, not just a select group of people, but everyone. This theme speaks to a core value.

## Citizen Issues, Management Concerns, and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

The following issue topics are described in this section:

- Location of BLM Lands
- Grazing
- Fire Management
- Recreation
- PILT
- Weeds
- Hydration
- BLM Management

### **Location and Acquisition of BLM Lands**

The land acquisition program in Lincoln County has significantly affected the area in terms of agriculture, fire management, tax revenues and other measures. By and large, these changes have been accepted, but residents are uncertain about BLM's future intent. BLM should communicate clearly through the planning process whether more land acquisition will occur.

“If BLM intends to buy more land here, we'd like to know it. As commissioner, you always hate to be the last to know.” [Lincoln County Commissioner]

“It is hard to identify BLM lands. Without a GPS [geographic positioning system], you can't know. There used to be these small yellow signs but they are only every section. You need more.” [Common]

### **Grazing**

BLM acquisition of shrub steppe habitat in the last several years has presented a new dynamic into the lifestyles in the Upper Crab Creek area.

“With BLM, our grazing now is comingled [multiple ownerships]. We're not used to that. We have DNR [Department of Natural Resources] and FWS [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service] too.”

BLM grazing regimes are not as generous to cattle as local practices. Farmers said that BLM permits for grazing are for about 2/3 the number of cattle that farmers would have. Farmers and local residents tend to interpret BLM's management approach as misplaced or less effective than their own. When they hear that the range management practices of BLM is oriented to sharp tail habitat improvement, many don't quite believe it, and point to the general decline of the bird despite habitat mitigation measures. It is fair to say that local people do not understand BLM's rationale for the grazing levels they allow.

“Back in the days when there were more sharp tails, we had cows back then too. The fires are too big now because of reduced grazing.”

Farmers say that they are not allowed to graze as many cattle in public BLM leasing as they can with private grazing.

“We used to run 600 pairs but after the fire and with BLM policies we are down to 360 pairs now. It used to be a rule of thumb that 24 acres are needed for a cow/calf pair. BLM’s new standard is 60 acres.”

“Let more cows on to reduce fire risk.”

Local residents believe they cannot compete with BLM in purchasing grazing lands.

“Locals buy land for \$50-\$75/acre for agricultural uses. BLM does a complex appraisal, comes in and offers \$200/acre or more and they get what they want. Locals can’t compete.”

“I can’t compete with BLM in buying ground. I’m not convinced they are done buying. They can pay \$6-700/acre and going rate is half that.”

“It’s a fairness issue. If you don’t have a home base, you can’t lease BLM land. Your property has to be contiguous or you’re not allowed.”

Some farmers who are dependent on BLM leases say they cannot survive economically if BLM further restricts grazing.

“Grazing cannot go down anymore for me or I will have to get out. I am very dependent on BLM. My operation is 80% BLM land.”

Farmers are frustrated by Department of Ecology’s emphasis on oxygen and nitrates.

“DOE has a stringent water quality law. If a cow turd is in the stream, it is your fault and you are liable. Fencing is the only way to go for them.”

“DOE letters will be threatening around stream issues.”

“DOE only has a few collecting stations along Crab Creek. Fecal counts are low and sporadic but you can’t tell if it’s cattle or wildlife but we have to be responsible. They can’t control wildlife, so we have to control cattle.” [Cattleman]

Some places are seen to have too many cattle, especially in wildlife areas.

“There are free range cattle in the Seven Springs area. They should get more cattle off of there. The water holes dry up and wildlife is forced elsewhere. It’s harder for upland birds (chukars, pheasant, quail, and huns). If BLM can create more forage for mule deer, and cover for Hungarian partridge, that would be great.”

Even though residents in the Upper Crab Creek area do not look at range management in the way that BLM does, they still had ideas to improve local conditions in the face of existing grazing regimes. These opportunities included:

- Experiment with rotations.
- BLM should spray better.
- Try strip grazing.
- Try burn resistant shrubs.
- Buy easements instead of ground to keep people on the land.
- Explore the forage bank concept, so if someone experiences a loss, they could graze BLM for short periods.
- Early notice for future buying or for further reductions in AUMs
- Use the plan to educate about weed control and range management.
- Toughen weed controls
- Explore firebreaks as a fire management tool

## Fire Management

There is a perception in Lincoln County that BLM adds to the fire risk because of “poor management” by which people mean that BLM has lower levels of grazing on its lands, and higher levels of vegetative cover, thereby adding to the fuels load that spawn the hotter, larger fires of recent years. The CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) lands contribute to higher fuel loads as well. Farmers believe that BLM’s range management prescriptions leave more stubble on the ground and contribute to higher-severity fires.

“Higher fuel loads [from BLM policies] contribute to the severity of fires.” [Common]

Although people regularly commented that the relationship between BLM and local fire districts has improved, it is clear that residents believe further progress is needed. Some residents have the perception that local fire districts cannot fight BLM fires. Apparently, this is not the case if local fire district personnel have the appropriate certification. Fire district staff took issue with this requirement several times as it adds an element of cost to their training for which they are not compensated.

“Can BLM pay locals to get this training?”

“BLM cannot be held liable for impacts from its fires, but if a private fire comes on BLM ground, you can be liable.”

“There have been fires at Swanson and other places, fire season restrictions, coordination with local fire departments. This still needs improving.”

“This area needs more fire breaks. The old roads should be used with some extra cleared around them. \_\_\_\_ at BLM has already started this program.”

“When there is a fire on BLM who is responsible? They wouldn’t let us take dozers on the site but we did anyway. What are we going to do, just watch?” [Odessa volunteer]

“That big fire two years ago happened because of BLM fire management. I was burned out completely, but \_\_\_\_\_ of BLM was real good in helping me.”

“Fire districts want better working relationships with BLM.” [Common]

## **Recreation**

The Upper Crab Creek HRU has historically been agricultural through and through. The idea of recreation activities being part of their economic base is a new one for residents of this area. JKA noted acceptance of the trend, with most people voicing uncertainties about how it will play out for their communities, and a few people being skeptical that a recreation sector could ever do as well as an agricultural sector for economic livelihood and quality of life. Nevertheless, there is high awareness of growing recreation activities in the area and BLM’s role in that activity through its acquisition of hunting lands and development of recreation sites. This development appears most pronounced in Odessa.

“The county wants public use of BLM lands through recreation.” [County Commissioner]

“Hunting and recreation helps the county. I can see that it brings money in. But BLM ownership takes tax money from the tax rolls.”

“The BLM fee structure is not geared to the recreation user. It is skewed against competitive events. A whole lot of people don’t get permits.”

No recreation users pushed for segregated uses. “All users should share,” is the dominant message. Some even pointed out that seasonal change gives everybody a time—fall for hunters, winter and spring for horse people, summer for ORV use.

“We get rowdy campers at the campgrounds sometimes, out at Pacific Lake, Coffeepot Lake and Hot Creek.” [Sheriff’s office]

“If people lose out here, their land goes to resorts.” 11

### ***Fishtrap and Hog Lakes***

Fishtrap is a BLM recreation area that includes State Fish and Wildlife land and several private parcels. It is a scant 30 miles southwest of the Spokane/Coeur-de Lane urban areas, as well as the Fairchild Air Force Base. It has become enormously popular for outdoor recreation activities such as target shooting, hiking, fishing, gliding, bird watching, scenic viewing, astronomy, bird dog trials, paintballing, survival group events, and hunting. Many special recreation permits are issued for events in this area including geo-caching, dog trials, and horseback riding. While group activities are increasing, individual activities probably predominate.

“I like to swim and fish at Fishtrap. I didn’t know it was BLM.” [Sprague teenager]

Fishtrap is comprised of two lakes, Fishtrap Lake and Hog Lake. Hog Lake has more use. It's a more pleasant spot, with more trees and easier access to water. Fishtrap has the name, but is less attractive or accessible. Summer is for Fishtrap Lake and winter is for Hog Lake. There is no developed campground.

The BLM law enforcement officer said that user conflicts are increasing, although the recreation users that JKA talked with did not report user conflicts. The number one issue in Fishtrap is the target shooting.

"If I was a younger man, and the shooters weren't around, I would do horse and mountain bike rental. One idiot was shooting down a road."

"Most people don't get maps, so they go down the draw and start shooting, not knowing that the resort is right there."

"The shooting is so bad that you could not recognize a sign and fence post that was put up. It was twisted and torn up beyond recognition."

"We are so close to Spokane. There are huge numbers of target shooters that come in, so many that it is dangerous, especially on weekends. We don't even go up there on weekends. There were 3 cows shot 2 years ago in two separate instances. Can we do something? Designate an area?"

"There is enough ground for OHV and horse riders. OHV and horses don't cross paths for very long, maybe 5 seconds, very infrequently for there to be a problem."

"I am against my government buying land and restricting use and access. I heard BLM was going to fence off Sprague Lake because of some bird habitat."

"Everyone should be able to use the land—hunters, fishermen, ORV, horse riders. It is better to use it than not. I don't see any problems with joint use."

The issue of target shooting is being addressed by BLM through a "supplemental rule"—a separate study to determine an appropriate management approach. A logical course of action is to relegate target shooting to the more isolated, less-used portions of the site, allowing 90% of the visitors to be in a shooting free area.

Other issues in the area include concerns about wildlife impacts and road maintenance

"In the spring, mule deer fawns need to be undisturbed. The Poker horse event brings in 300 horses at once. It's too much. The dog trials impact the birds too much."

"We want to hunt coyote. Can you tell us where to go?" [They were told to get good maps, visit BLM in Spokane, and know whose land they are on.]

“With two cold winters, pheasants were hurt, chicks don’t make it. Fewer hunters. People now farm all the way to the road, so there is less brush build up, less pheasant habitat.”

“I’d like BLM to maintain the roads. The area has great trails but we can’t get our horse trailers into the area because of huge ruts in road. Expand the bathroom facilities, expand the camping.” [4-H leader]

“There is a poor road in Fishtrap. Sometimes we can’t get our trailer in.” [Horse rider]

“Some forget, some don’t care, some are careless.”

Potential next steps in development at Fishtrap could include:

- Developing a campground at Hog Lake. It is more accessible, has more trees, and BLM owns more of the shoreline.
- Improving the signage to class it up, a better organization of signs, especially at road and trail intersections.
- Cleaning up Hog Lake to improve the entrance.
- Undertaking an outreach and education program to raise awareness of the rules and care for the land, through kiosks and working with other groups.

“Developed campgrounds have a positive influence. With a 24-hour presence, you bring in more responsible people. Illegal activity declines, there is less vandalism. That’s how it worked in Yakima Canyon.” [BLM law enforcement officer]

### **Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Use in Odessa**

People in the town of Odessa have proposed to BLM the designation of an OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) route in the Lakeview Ranch just a few miles from town. Promoted by a small group of people who have been very active in developing the concept, the idea has been discussed throughout the community for some time. The proposal is for a nine mile loop trail going from Odessa to Pacific Lake, going close to Wilbur and making use of a couple county roads. Horse and hiking use will be accommodated.

JKA conversations with people in Odessa showed that most people were positive about the proposal. Another set of people voiced support coupled with a list of concerns to be addressed. The people JKA spoke with about the proposal were both random individuals met in stores, along streets, and through network contacts, as well as individuals who were sought out because of their involvement in or opinions about the proposal. Of probably 40 people we talked with in this manner, not one person was opposed. Even a person who was identified for us by proponents of the proposal as an opposition person said he had concerns but that he wouldn’t stand in the way of the proposal.

The positive aspects of the proposal people talked about were:

Figure 18  
The Stumpjumpers Event in Odessa



(Source: [www.ohv-odessa.com](http://www.ohv-odessa.com), used by permission)

The Stumpjumpers [Figure 18] have a good reputation. Look how well they cleaned up. It took them a week after the event. People who didn't follow rules, including the organizer's son, was kicked out immediately. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year. At first just did a one-year lease to see how it worked and they went into a second 10-year lease."

"The OHV proposal would mean good things for the county and for Odessa."

"Odessa needs the OHV proposal. It would bring people to town and create jobs. We don't understand why BLM is so slow about this." [Odessa Mayor]

"Odessa is a good place to try an OHV park. It's dry and the lands are desolate. The county would like to try it." [Lincoln County Commissioner]

The concerns people talked about were:

- ORVs will chase wildlife.
- ORV presence in the desert will result in fires, as the spark arrestors on the ORVs are either absent or not always effective.
- It will be impossible to prevent that small percentage of people who will leave designated areas and go off-trail into the desert and causing damage.
- Weeds will spread.
- Neighbors will experience impacts like fences being down.
- There are hieroglyphics on site that people want protected.

- The road closures would have to be seasonally managed according to dryness. The usual March closures are January this year because it is so dry.

The worst critique came from a long-time Odessa resident, who then told two stories of individuals who recently were “out there tearing around”:

“There is no way that the ORV proposal can control the land getting torn up and the fire hazard. Dirt bikes are the worst. They have power and the knobby tires tear things up. Next year, water washes down the tracks and gets to be big rut. Also, anyone allowed on that trail, especially dirt bikers WILL go out into the brush. They do that now. Access in and out of there cannot be controlled.”

Residents also talked about the presence of ORVs in town or on public roads. Apparently, the State of Washington permits ORV use locally if supported through local ordinance. Residents debated about whether visiting ORV users will ride irresponsibly, as apparently the towns of Odessa and Wilbur have approved ORV use in town. County officials have also discussed whether designating some country roads as appropriate for ORV use would be feasible.

Project planners believe the concerns can be addressed. They use national guidelines established by the Blue Ribbon Coalition. Their plans include provisions for signage, clean-up, erosion control, washing rigs to prevent invasive weeds from spreading, and safety inspections.

Project proponents are currently frustrated that BLM has not provided an answer to their proposal.

“BLM is stalling.”

“You should have seen BLM’s 11 points of concern in their letter. Save the whitetail [deer] of which there are none. Erosion, sensitive species, law enforcement, fires. I think most of them have been addressed.”

“The town should back the BLM ORV proposal to bring business into town. OHV riders will not disrupt land. They’ll police after themselves. The current town council doesn’t support the proposal, but most business owners do. We need the trail system.”

Odessa is pre-adapted for greater outdoor recreation use because of its recent past.

- It has attracted equestrians for many years and is the site of a horse endurance event.
- There are several recreation sites and day use areas in the Odessa area.
- The Stumpjumpers event now brings in 10,000 people annually.
- Ocktoberfest used to bring in 20,000 people. Although its day is gone, the town has been used to hosting large numbers of people.
- The local tavern was purchased recently by a long time motorcycle enthusiast who now attracts other motorcyclists from around the state.
- In April, 2010, Odessa will host Washington’s only Off-Road Only Motorcycle Show

- The promotion of the ORV proposal has raised awareness, debate and acceptance among the area's residents.

### **Hunter Impacts**

“Hunters don’t know whose ground they are on.” [Common]

Here is what farmers had to say about the impacts of hunters in their areas:

“When rifle hunting season opens, it is spooky around here. Modern Rifle Season for deer—that’s the bad one. Fishermen stop and ask permission. If hunters don’t wave, they’re bad, that’s what we’ve decided. Leased hunting land on private land is very different. People are very responsible. They learn and follow the rules. They work with the owner to coordinate. If the hunt is private, you call the owner of the land.”

“There are lots of hunting pressures here—trash, vandalism. Down south, we could not keep the gates closed. Hunters always opened them, cattle get out, get into areas they are not supposed to and I am held responsible as the lessee. This kind of event is not our fault.”  
[Lincoln County farmer]

“Over 100 people were on the 3000 acres that are part of my allotment. I counted 30 rigs or so on both sides of the road. I can’t figure out why people wouldn’t want to go elsewhere.”

“BLM gives us no shooting signs but people do anyway.”

“One guy shot right here by my front porch. I went up to him and said, ‘What are you thinking?’”

“Fences are cut.”

“One neighbor was on her porch talking to a friend when she heard a bullet whistle by. Then they saw a deer come by and soon after a couple of idiots asking if they had seen a deer come by.”

“Lincoln County puts out no trespass signs at the rock quarry but many times there are 4-5 campers in there, all with fires.”

“I’ve seen group hunts of 20, 10 from one side, and 10 from the other. One time I saw a group of 10-12 deer, all worn out, jumping my fence, and behind them was a row of ten men pushing them toward the others.”

“Deer Modern Rifle, 10 day season, is the worst. They all feel pressure to get a deer. In Idaho it’s different. You can do other seasons, like bow, modern, then muzzle so it is more relaxed.”

To improve hunting conditions for local farmers, these ideas were suggested:

1. Why not do a lottery to keep the number of hunters to reasonable level? The money from a lottery could go to build fences, etc.
2. When you get your license you check boxes, public or private. If you're going to public land, what part of Washington, southeast, northeast, north central? Then they could figure out if certain areas are getting over-used. If computer says the area is full, you have to go somewhere else.
3. State of Washington puts out "Rules and Procedures" book each year for hunters. This could include education stuff for the stupid, don't shoot near homes, wave, say high to owners etc.

"We get tired of it. Gates are left open. When you get your license, you should get an education."

Three areas emerged as especially troublesome to farmers and rural dwellers experiencing hunter impacts—1) the BLM land west of Sprague in the very south of Lincoln County; 2) Escure Ranch; and, 3) Coffeepot and Harrington. For this reason, people suggested Sprague as a "half-way" meeting spot for residents in these areas about this topic. Sprague has a community hall and a chamber of commerce meeting room. Notices in the store and the post office will reach a lot of people.

### **PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)**

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) is a federal program of payments to local governments to compensate for the presence of non-taxable federal lands in their jurisdiction. Residents in this area made several general comments that BLM acquisitions in Lincoln County has resulted in the loss of tax revenues. People closer to this issue understood that BLM makes PILT payments to the County instead of taxes. Comparisons done by local residents and elected officials showed that PILT payments exceeded the tax revenues that the lands would have generated. What these people were concerned about, and it was an issue raised several times, is that the County does not distribute the PILT monies to the "junior districts" like the hospital and the fire districts.

"Our fire district is all volunteer. We are locked in at a certain tax rate, so there is not much we can do with our budget."

"How come the hospital doesn't get any of the PILT money since they got a share of taxes? The amount BLM pays the County exceeds the agricultural tax on same land by far."

"Why doesn't the county pass along PILT money to the junior districts?"

One opportunity suggested is to encourage state legislative action to get counties to share the PILT revenues with their junior districts.

## Weeds

“If cattle must be controlled for the spread of weeds, recreation vehicles should have to do their part.”

“I want BLM to take care of their weeds. I take care of my property and look over at BLM and it’s bad, especially Canadian thistle.” [Odessa resident]

“They are pushing us to use certified weed-free hay when we go in to get straggling cows in November. Hounds’ Tongue is bad, hard to get rid of. Such a bale is \$15 compared to \$6 for regular.”

“We’d like BLM to coordinate more on weed control.” [Farm Services Agency]

“BLM are bad neighbors, don’t fix fences, don’t spray weeds, need to change their fire policy. BLM needs to be friendlier towards spraying of noxious weeds.”

“BLM should spray more for noxious weeds. Hounds’ Tongue is terrible.”

## Hydration

The Odessa area is experiencing a declining aquifer. JKA was told that Columbia Basin Irrigation Project (CBIP) allowed deep well drilling in this area as a compensation for the lack of a promised CBIP project. As a result, although this interpretation is not accepted by all, the deep wells of the area have dried of local lakes such as Pacific Lake.

There is currently a proposal to pump water from Roosevelt Lake through Hot Canyon and rejuvenate the “Chain of Lakes” within the Crab Creek watershed. The Crab Creek Watershed Group is oriented to rehydration of Pacific Lake and generally in maintaining stream flows.

“Eleven years ago, the [Pacific] lake was full. There is a proposal to bring water from the reservoir. The governor and state legislators back the idea. There is a canal system that would be used to transport the water.”

“There is a proposal to use treated sewage water from Spokane to rehydrate the waterways.”

“This used to be all dry land farming but it has been shifting to irrigation for several decades. Well levels and aquifers have been dropping ever since.”

“We want the lakes rehydrated. We grew up with those lakes. When I was a kid, we couldn’t wait for church to get out because we’d get on \_\_\_\_ Lake and race our boats. The lakes are part of our lives.”

“Open the canal. Pacific Lake was the place to go on weekends when I was young. There was plenty of water. Now there is no water.”

“Water would go down the chain of lakes, 13 of them, drop into Crab Creek drainage go to Moses Lake and then to Potholes. Water wells are deep around here. They can go to 2000 feet. One guy told me the other day his son had drilled a well that cost \$640,000!”

“My well has been dropping 3-5 feet a year.”

“Bring back water to rehydrate the lakes, help the aquifers, and help the fishing. BLM owns above and below these sites. They can bring in the water to fill the lakes.”

Residents and officials are clear in asking that BLM participate in any relevant re-hydration projects. This request is explicit in the plan developed by the Crab Creek Watershed Group. Currently, there is a low level of information about the project. What is clear is that people expressed grieving and loss about the lost lakes and that the lakes played an important part in the life of the community.

### **BLM Management**

Many people had great things to say about BLM.

“BLM has a crossing through this allotment. I fenced my property, protecting water quality and riparian values. We work together pretty well.”

“We talk to BLM. They are invited to annual fire chief meeting in the spring. We have a good working relationship with them.” [Fire district chief]

“I personally use BLM land and so do others. I go to Rock Creek, Twin Lakes, Seven Springs, and Telford. I have a 30-year history with BLM. They are doing great job.”

It is hard to identify BLM land. “There are not enough yellow signs.”

Swanson Lake is an irritant, feeds anti-government feeling  
BLM and Fish and Wildlife Service have adjoining ground at Swanson Lake. They created a joint mitigation effort to restore sage grouse habitat.

“Swanson used to have 500 head on it. Now it has none.” [Common, used to express concerns about the potential loss of a way of life]

“They kicked all the animals out, spend \$3million a year for 2 full time employees, and are things better?”

“BLM should be good neighbors not land lords. Instead of being a landlord, work with me. Let BLM buy the fencing and I’ll put it up.”

“BLM did not participate in development of the watershed plan. They were a ‘no show.’ That is irritating. BLM has responsibilities.”

## Other Topics

“My wish list would include extending the airport runway at Sprague like Odessa and Davenport, to avoid the onerous TSA requirements. It is next to BLM and they could help. We did one extension 10 or 15 years ago.” [Farmer and local leader]

### Planning Process Considerations

BLM does not have a history of conflict in the Upper Crab Creek country. The issues reported here are not disruptive, they have not been long-lasting and they are not intractable. In a sense, BLM has a “blank slate” from which to generate its plan for the next generation of management work. At the same time, as these pages make clear, there are several very real issues in the Upper Crab Creek communities that need to be responded to in order to create positive alignment.

### **Timing and Location of Meetings**

As a farming region, residents often stressed that winter is best for planning activities, November to December. Evenings are best. Weekday evenings always have some conflicts but Wednesdays appear best.

Meeting around Odessa could be at the community center or old town hall any evening of the week, but not when Stumpjumpers, Oktoberfest, or other major events occur. Davenport has a community center that is often used and is considered a central location.

Use the official “scoping” meetings merely as a springboard to decentralize the planning process through the steps suggested below.

Davenport. Davenport Memorial Hall is managed by the Lincoln County Parks and Recreation Department (509.725.3251) that seats up to 200. Davenport is considered a central location. April is very busy in farming communities like Davenport and should be avoided.

### **How to Foster a Meaningful Planning Process in the Upper Crab Creek HRU**

The dominant message from residents regarding BLM planning is:

“People can’t get to all the meetings. It will be better if BLM comes to our meetings, and fits in with events that are already happening.”

“The problem with meetings is that everyone yells, nothing gets done.”

An example of what not to do:

“Fish and Wildlife had a good process going for the Swanson Lake Project. It has a local steering committee that had good people on it. We’d go talk stuff over and then \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ from Fish and Wildlife just stopped the meetings. We were never told why.”

Instead, here is what people suggested:

1. **Tie in with existing meetings, bring BLM ideas in for review, and let other groups host BLM.** These include the Wheatgrowers' Association, Farm Bureau, Watershed Groups, Cattlemen's Association, and WRIAs (Watershed Resource Inventory Area).

"Farmers don't use email. It is better for the cattlemen's assn to invite BLM in, rather than have BLM say, 'We are coming in.'"

"Give me a list of questions. I can send them out to the cattlemen." [Chair, Cattlemen's Association]

"Mailables don't work. Work through the Cattlemen's Association."

"Paper notices are best. The little Advertiser is free. It's the best place. BLM could also come to our Crab Creek Watershed meetings. Just call and get on the agenda."

"If BLM made that effort, they would be appreciated. Could BLM join us for the March meetings?" [Watershed Group representative]

2. **Keep communication informal as much as possible.** Open houses and field trips are the best, hearings are the worst. The two purposes of an Open House are to acknowledge issues and to educate.

Coffee Clutches are held regularly in Chiefs, Odessa Drive In, and Rolling Thunder Tavern. BLM has been invited to attend.

"BLM should attend the coffee clutches. Lots of farmers and ranchers are there, about 7:30 in the morning." [Owner, Rolling Thunder Bar]

"If BLM wants, they could use the bar in daytimes for meetings. It's a good way to keep it small and informal." [Owner, Rolling Thunder Bar]

"Don't forget the BBQ." [Suggesting that food events are always appropriate]

3. **Use other people to get people to the meetings.** Use others' newsletters.

"Yes, I could get people to meeting if I wanted." [Respected farmer]

"Let the City help BLM with its plan. Let city hall know. We can do an ad; get an article in the paper. Consider using the Lion's Club to facilitate local gatherings. There are 25-30 Lions here and it is all the movers and shakers in town, school, police, and business. Have the Lions sponsor it." [Odessa Mayor]

“There are two BLM people that live nearby. Have \_\_\_\_ work with the Lions as a way to keep everyone updated.” [Odessa Mayor]

The Farm Bureau, and other organizations, invited BLM to use its newsletter.

4. **This is the opportunity to “Tell the BLM Story.”** Use the planning process to educate about range management, fire management, hunter safety, and Odessa’s ORV proposal.

“The range guy did photo stories that worked very well. Why are they doing what they are doing? What are they accomplishing?”

“Vegetation provides many benefits that make the fire risk worth it. What can be done to mitigate the fire risk (besides less forage?) Evaluate and demonstrate with higher fuel loads. Help people understand.”

“It is good that BLM is bringing its range expertise to the area.” [County extension agent]

### **Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Elements**

1. Go the next step to build upon fire management partnerships by addressing existing unresolved issues in a collaborative framework with relevant fire districts and other organizations.
2. Develop citizen-based strategies to deal with hunter impacts in three specific geographic areas, primarily focused on education and coordination with sister agencies.
3. Help the Odessa area develop a top-notch management plan for the operation of an OHV facility on BLM land. Insist on accountability and turn over as much as possible to citizen organizations and local government.

## Chapter Nine: The Colville Human Resource Unit

### Key Learning Points for This Chapter

1. The area has traditionally been involved in timber production, grazing and mining. While recreation interests are accommodated, culturally the area remains traditional.
2. Recreation activity has been growing steadily, although most activity remains local and regional from the Spokane metropolitan area.
3. Regional recreation planning has been initiated in the area that is multi-jurisdictional and multi-user in scope that local people see as a prime opportunity for economic development.
4. Public awareness of the location and use of BLM lands is low but most people wish for BLM to retain ownership of current lands.
5. BLM has been a good partner in forest management projects and could use the planning process to further explore partnership contributions it could make.
6. BLM needs to communicate its future intent with regard to land trades, consolidation and acquisition.
7. An Opportunity for Community-Based Planning Element is:
  - a. As in Okanogan, use the recent emergence of regional recreation planning to determine BLM's proper policy role as a partner in terms of it's the goals of conservation, education, outdoor recreation and economic development. Convene a short-term working group to determine what has been done so far, to identify the gaps and the opportunities, and to develop partnership relationships in the area through which to implement the planning vision.

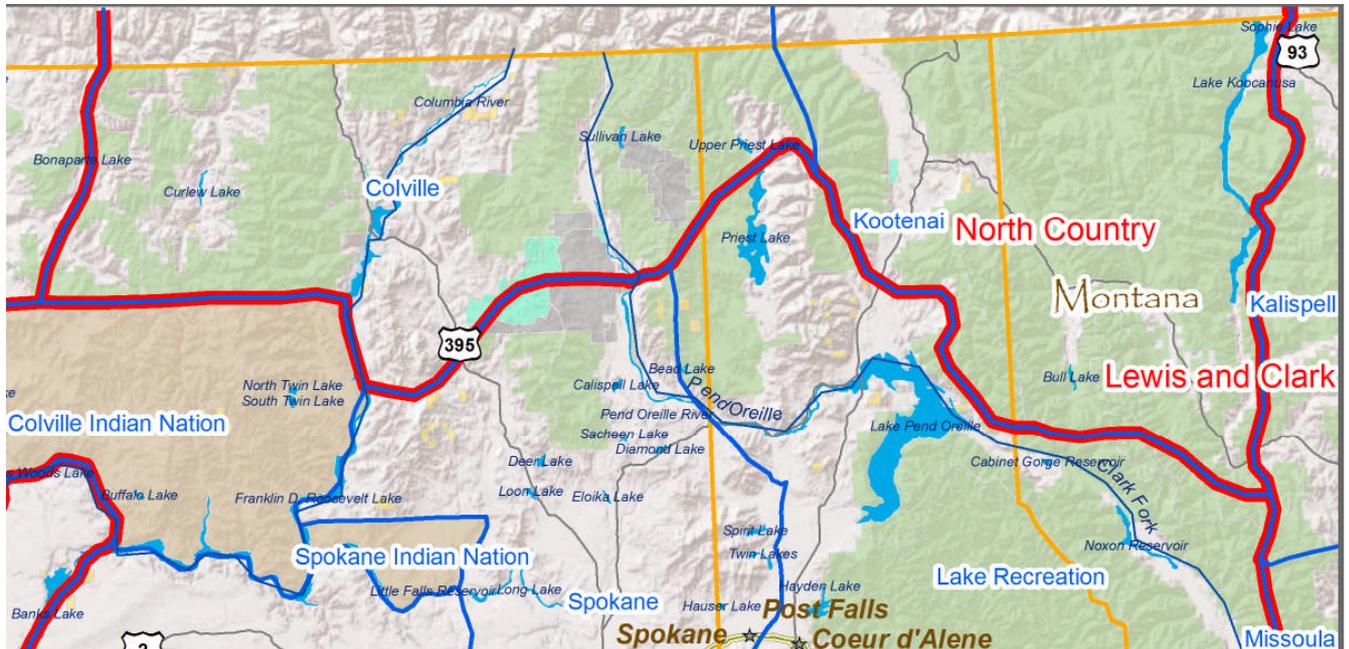
### Introduction

JKA conducted 8 professional days of community fieldwork in the Colville Human Resource Unit (HRU), focusing on areas with concentrations of BLM land. We talked with a total of 84 people, as shown below.

Individuals	30
People in group settings (organizational meetings, outlet stores)	30
Individuals representing agencies, organizations	<u>24</u>
Total contacts	84

The Colville HRU (Figure 19) includes Pend Oreille, Stevens, Ferry and parts of Okanogan County. On the north, it stretches into Canada. On the west, the boundary stretches between Chesaw and Wauconda Summit. The south boundary proceeds on the north edge of the Colville Indian Nation, to the south along the Columbia River on the east side of the reservation, and proceeds east just south of Gifford and Addy in a northeast direction into the Idaho Panhandle. The Colville and the Kootenai HRUs comprise the North Country SRU that includes the northeast part of Washington State, the northern Idaho Panhandle and northwest Montana and parts of southern British Columbia. As with other human geographic areas, patterns of human affiliation extend across state and national lines, acknowledging the common links between this area and British Columbia. JKA

Figure 19  
The Colville Human Resource Unit



was told of long-standing family and social ties between Canada and the U.S. from the beginning of white settlement.

“We joke that you can erase the Canadian border there have been so many long standing ties across there.”

“Half my family is here and half is in Canada.”

“The Reservation is different and separate and they work hard to keep it that way.”

“There are many tri-county organizations like “Tri County Health.”

The Colville HRU does not include southern Stevens County because of its pull into the Spokane orbit:

“The growth at Suncrest along the River at the County line exceeds anywhere else. There are 45,000 people in Stevens County and half of them are there. They don’t have identity with Stevens but with Spokane.”

“If Spokane does its north/south freeway that they’ve been talking about for 40 years, that will help ease access to Stevens County. I have a friend in south Spokane with family ties here and he says in the time it takes him to get up here, mainly because of time getting through Spokane metro area, he could be in Montana.”

“People that live on the Spokane River between Long Lake and Nine Mile Falls do not even know they live in Stevens County. They have no association to the north.”

### Community Description

Table X below shows the estimated 2008 population and population changes since 2000 for the three-county area. It reveals modest growth in population in Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties but very little growth in Ferry County.

Table Three  
Population and Population Change in  
Stevens, Ferry and Pend Oreille Counties, 2000, 2008

County	Est. 2008 Population	% Increase since 2000
Stevens	42,050	5.0
Ferry	7,353	1.3
Pend Oreille	12,859	9.6

The economic driver of the region is primarily timber, agriculture, mining, recreation and tourism. Hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, ORV use, and camping are all a part of the draw to this area. The Columbia River runs through the area from North to South and brings multi-recreation assets as well as employment. Spokane is the closest and largest city for the region. For many people that need or want anything more than Wal-mart or who have major medical or health concerns, they drive to Spokane. The Colville Indian Reservation and the Spokane Indian Reservation are contiguous to this region and have some influence across its boundaries. Huckleberry Mountains in the southern part of Stevens County is considered part of the Spokane HRU. It is known for large and delicious huckleberries, and has a growing small industry as a result.

Residents reported attachment to the land because of all the outdoor recreation like skiing and hiking.

“My husband and I love it here because of the outdoor life. I was born and raised here. We bought the business a few years ago.”

Long-time residents speculated about the future for the area. They noted that Stevens County and Colville are a medical hub, with 40 doctors here and a new hospital expansion that cost \$35 million. Broadband came in a few years ago. They also note that the sales tax is low compared to other areas of Washington. With low impact fees as well, the cost of doing business is not onerous.

“When I came here in 1972, there were five churches, eight taverns, and give doctors. Today there are 25 churches, one tavern and 35 doctors.”

Three events discovered during the fieldwork process were creating a positive buzz with community residents that JKA talked with. One was the regional recreation planning, discussed below, which was initiated as part of the Forest Service planning effort, but has since spun off on its own.

The second was the East Wedge Project, collaboration between the Forest Service, Stevens Conservation District, the state Department of Natural Resources and others. The “wedge” is the northwest portion of Stevens County that is created by the Columbia River flowing in a southwest direction from Canada. The wedge is approximately 48,000 acres of mostly Forest Service land but also with private and state lands. The project calls for stream side restoration, salmon habitat restoration, road erosion repair, forest thinning, and other ecological prescriptions in which the Conservation District is the lead agency and is managing NEPA documentation as well as local contracting. Its planners say the project is unique to the Forest Service in that they have contracted the entire landscape project, including some of the NEPA documentation, with the local Conservation District. The project will result in a number of forest products that will generate additional jobs. A key feature of the project could be to compare timber sale contracts with stewardship contracts in terms of their contributions to local employment.

The Wedge project was spawned through the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition, a collaboration of timber companies, environmental organizations, and public land management agencies. The group has about a ten year history. Its claim is that it has worked on 22 projects in the last six years, and none of them resulted in appeals or litigation. Its members point out the coalition has resulted in getting more “product” out. The 2002 harvest for example was about 18 MMBF (million board feet) while the 2008 harvest was 61 MMBF.

The group intends to respond to the newly-passed Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009/Title IV. If the group is successful in its bid for a project through this Act, it will allow a 10 year contract for large scale proposal, in which the funding comes from Washington D.C., not from the local Forest Service budget. They are developing a plan for 600,000 acres, mostly in Ferry County, that would include BLM. Grant criteria include local timber production for which Stevens County can be competitive. Their approach will use an All Lands Approach. Although federal money can't be used for private ground, the group will look to leverage resources. The goals are to reduce fire risk and to accomplish restoration work.

The third event that had people talking was the start of a biomass (woodchips burning) facility in Springdale. Apparently, the state now has a mandate to create 15% of its energy portfolio in renewable energy, plus the federal stimulus money was available, resulting in this approval. The facility in Springdale has a 5 MW burner, enough for about 6,000 homes. Another, larger facility is planned at Valley with four burners.

The organizations and community groups talked with by JKA included:

- Backcountry Horsemen
- Chewelah Chamber of Commerce
- Colville Chamber of Commerce
- Colville National Forest
- Northeast Forestry Coalition
- Panorama Gem and Mineral Club
- Stevens County Board of Commissioners
- Stevens County Conservation District

### Community Themes

**“We support multiple use, cattle, timber and recreation.”** The traditional culture is based on cattle grazing, timber production and mining. While outdoor recreation has become significant, it is perceived as an add-on but not a substitute for traditional activities, in part because recreation does not add directly to local government revenue the way that traditional economic sectors do.

**“It’s a great place to live and a hard place to make a living.”** Just because people love living in the Colville HRU does not mean that it is easy to make a living. Although this is a contradictory statement, it fits the area.

**“Recreation is a plus [when it does not interfere with timber production and grazing]. It is not organized but should be.”** Outdoor recreation is coming into its own, despite the ambivalence with which it is held by many. There was visible excitement with some individuals and groups at the regional recreation planning currently underway.

### Citizen Issues, Management Concerns and Opportunities Regarding Natural Resource Management

#### **Low Awareness of BLM**

JKA was told over and over again that “I don’t know where any BLM lands are.” BLM parcels are scattered throughout this HRU and are often next to private property. The average citizens out hunting or hiking do not know which public lands they are on.

“I never know what BLM land is. I figure if it is logged land, it is probably BLM, but I’m not sure. I am on Stranger Mountain a lot in the Hucklebees. Is that BLM?”

“People because they never know if they are on BLM or not, so it will be difficult for you to find people who even know they visit BLM lands.”

“What is BLM?”

#### **Forest Management**

The Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition, as described above, is developing a proposal to manage 600,000 acres of land, mostly in Ferry County, that would include BLM.

“Will BLM attach itself to this proposal and give us support?”

“You must show a mature plan. You have to have a sawmill and biomass capacity, and we have both.”

The philosophy of the Coalition is that collaboration will lead to successful timber sales and greater timber production. Pride was expressed that this area has been able to hold onto its timber mills better than other areas of the Northwest. The belief that timber production should be part of the future in this area appears widespread.

The “Big Burn” of 1910 created “doghair” patches of very thick Lodgepole pines in the region that are now reaching the end of their lives. Residents expect agency initiatives in the next few years that will address this ecological change.

Forest Capital has been buying large parcels of timberlands. People are waiting to see the company’s intent regarding their lands.

“Are they conservation oriented which means they will shut down access to the land over time?”

“They sprayed an area north of here and neighbors were upset that they were overrun with moose, deer, and other animals.”

“Vaagan Brothers are the leading edge. They bet their future on small diameter. Its wood-fired generating plant has been making electricity for many years.”

“We cut timber too hard in the past, don’t tell me otherwise.”

“Forest Capital is into clearcutting everything, replanting, and then doing real estate development.”

## **Outdoor Recreation**

Outdoor recreation is said to be increasing in this area although no studies were discovered to substantiate this. People said that most outdoor recreation is local and from the Spokane metropolitan area.

### **Trails**

“You don’t see those triangle signs anymore. They would tell who yields to whom.”

“Mountain bikers go so fast, especially the free riders. They will get a ride as high as they can go and then come racing down. Faster the better for those guys. They never move a pedal. They need a separate area for the safety of all.”

“We want to promote and enhance outdoor recreation. There was a family that came in, looking for a good snowmobile map so they would know where to go. They were frustrated

that they could not find one. We lost them. Instead, we want people like that to stay several days.” [Two business people]

“I do everything, snowmobile, mountain biking, motor sports. There should be no closures except in winter. I like the Montana system. It opens to all in spring, all varieties, berry picking, all the rest. In the fall you lock the gates. Then winter recreation is given their areas. When the snow is 10 feet or more, you are not disturbing wildlife.”

“There is little impact from snowmobilers and cross country skiers. Dirt bikes cause some problems, it’s true, up in Pend Oreille, Chamber Lake.”

“We need more education. It only takes the 2% [to spoil it for the rest].”

“The County is working with Forest Capital to open up a multi-use trail for horses, snowmobiles and ATVs from Loon Lake to Tumtum on the Spokane River.” [Stevens County Commissioner]

“Private land gets posted. We need access to public lands. Will the agencies commit to continual work on this?”

### **OHV (Off-Highway Vehicle) Use**

“Let the OHV people ride. Open up BLM to OHV.”

A local OHV group is working on road system through Loon Lake and Colville. They can ride 100 miles. The National Forest had to implement restrictions and crack down on OHV users. The Forest Service didn’t used to enforce OHV regulations but recently it got out of hand so they are enforcing now. But where they allow rides there are no campgrounds, so how do you get there on public roads? I think the time of year for OHV ought to be restricted. Just like hunting season, have an OHV season. Colville has strict ORV rules.”

“ATV people worked to open up county roads.”

### **Regional Recreation Planning**

Through the Forest Service planning process, an effort was begun to do regional recreation planning. Called a NEW START Team, for Northeast Washington Sustainable Recreation Team, the effort has now become independent of Forest Service planning. The group is supported financially by Horizons which is affiliated with the Northwest Area Foundation. The foundation is funding projects to alleviate poverty and also doing leadership training throughout the area. This is a tri-county effort which involves the Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the state Fish and Wildlife Department.

The intent of the effort is to inventory current recreation resources, programs and projects, assess the opportunities for future recreation development, and to coordinate planning in the region. Part of the effort is to avoid duplication of services, get the businesses customer oriented. This is a

phenomenal effort, particularly because organizations, including county governments, do not have a strong history of working together.

“Motels and resorts don’t even refer people to other places when they are full.”

### **Rockhounding**

There is a rockhounding club in northeast Washington and the activity is reportedly quite popular. The high number of old mine sites is favorable to this activity. First Thought Mountain and Flagstaff Mountain are popular sites.

“We are safe. We don’t go in the mines.”

“Keep mine sites open.”

### **Weeds**

Stevens County Noxious Weed Control Board addresses noxious weed issues in Stevens County with education and occasionally regulation. Knapweed, knapweed boll weevil, and Hoary alyssum are particular problems. A state law dating from 1995 stipulates that it is the private landowner’s responsibility to control weeds. The Weed Board first makes people aware and offers education. In a rare few cases, the office contracts weed control work and sends the bill to the landowner.

The Weed Board would like to consult with BLM about BLM projects and coordinate on weed issues whenever possible.

### **Huckleberry Mountains**

BLM land in the Huckleberries Mountains are reportedly old mine sites. Residents in this area reported low use of BLM because the recreational use of private land is more prevalent.

“I don’t believe there are safety issues there because they were open pit. But the key is access. If you can’t get better access, it’s better to trade or sell.”

“There are a couple logging operations up there that BLM has managed well.”

“BLM wanted me to sell, they wanted to block up parcels, but I said no. They are good neighbors.”

### **Mining**

“This area heavily mineralized; mineral markets will come back and what then? What will happen to minerals and what will BLM’s policy be on future mining?”

“Has BLM retained authority over minerals on lands that it has exchanged?”

“I’d like to see them open up mining.”

### **Scattered Parcels/Consolidation**

BLM has engaged in a process of buying, selling and trading parcels in northeast Washington for many years. People are aware of this program and wonder what BLM’s intent in the future will be. Will it divest remaining landholdings? Will it acquire more? Residents would appreciate knowing. The management of scattered tracts presents ongoing management challenges.

“Don’t spend a lot managing random pieces. I know of an agency that spent \$100,000 to survey a 40 acre piece that had value a fraction of that.”

“There is deep resentment in the way that BLM bought and sold land. They told nearby people that they would be informed when they offered land for sale, and then brought in Clearwater. Locals were not informed, and others got the opportunities.”

“Richard Parrish from BLM has been great to work with. BLM was pulled in for Summit Pierce Project. It was a Forest Service and a CWPP [Community Wildfire Protection Plan]. The public meetings were positive. Also on the Conconole Lake Project, BLM had an isolated 40 and Richard jumped in enthusiastically-- ‘Tell me what you want.’ In Republic too, BLM brought in money at the right time for that project.”

“I want BLM to hold onto these lands. Why fix it if it ain’t broke? They are always willing to work with you.” [Cattle rancher]

We’ve been doing land trades with BLM for lands that have no access. We joke that now it’s a private headache. We’ve appreciated the land trades. Phase 5 is complete. If there was Phase 6, that would be good.” [Vaagan Brothers representative]

### **Other BLM Management Issues**

Compared to the Forest Service, which is sometimes perceived as indirect and slow to respond, people expressed appreciation that BLM is more direct with information, and its staff is more flexible and practical.

“Be aggressive. Revegetate sooner with palatable grass species. Get better multiple uses to get fewer thistles. Keep the cattlemen involved.”

“BLM does a good job. I run about 900 acres, get the cattle off in the fall.”

“BLM needs more education about resource values and different management approaches.”

PILT [Payment In Lieu of Taxes] goes to roads and schools, not the general fund. But we can shift the funds from roads to uses we need.” [Stevens County Commissioner]

“It’s best if BLM keeps its present lands. It’s better than timber companies.”

“People in this area don’t want wilderness. There is no budget for maintenance so you have more fires. Mother Nature will manage if we don’t.”

The Joint Powers Resolution is a county initiated process that forces the feds to come to us. They must work together in an equal manner. It was the National Park Service attitude more than anything that has fueled this move for us. Decisions must respect our cultural and economic values. Not approved yet at the county.

### **Opportunities**

Develop strategies to inform people about the location of BLM land, how to get access, and the rules of use. Continue to work on access to BLM land where needed.

Stevens County completed its Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in 2008 which could be consulted for information and policy guidance.

## Planning Process Considerations

### **Meeting locations**

Meetings are often held at the fairgrounds in Colville. Ads in the paper are helpful, as well as early contact with key individuals to work out the agenda and the goals.

### **Opportunities to Develop Community-Based Planning Element**

1. As in Okanogan, use the recent emergence of regional recreation planning to determine BLM’s proper policy role as a partner in terms of it’s the goals of conservation, education, outdoor recreation and economic development. Convene a short-term working group to determine what has been done so far, to identify the gaps and the opportunities, and to develop partnership relationships in the area through which to implement the planning vision.

Appendix A:  
Background of JKA History with the  
Bureau of Land Management



JKA Company Activities with BLM Since 1995  
February, 2008  
James Kent Associates

Sections:

1. Task Order History of the JKA Assistance Agreement (W.O.)
2. Contracts Independent of BLM Assistance Agreement
3. Partnership Series Courses Which JKA Assisted in Development and Instruction
4. Planning Concepts Courses Taught by JKA through the National Training Center

**1. Task Order History of the JKA Assistance Agreement**

1. Original Mapping Work with national Planning Office, 1997.
2. The Bradshaws start up, Phoenix District Field Office. Contact: Mike Taylor, 1999.
3. One day workshop, Pendleton, Oregon, Snake-John Day RAC, 2000.
4. Central Oregon Initiative, human geographic mapping and social assessment, Prineville District Field Office. Contact: Tina Welch.
5. Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Medford District Field Office. Contact: Tim Roussatt.
6. Middle Snake Multi-Use Park, Shoshone District Field Office. Contact: Bill Baker, 2001.
7. Service First, One day workshop, Canon City District Field Office.
8. Farmington BLM Field Office; social and economic assessment for new Resource Management Plan; issue identification and resolution related to oil and gas development. Contact: Steve Henke, 2002
9. Discovery Weeklong, Fieldwork as a Scoping Process for RMP, Yuma District Field Office. Contact: Gail Acheson, 2002.
10. Arizona Strip BLM; courses in Community-Based Stewardship; training in the Discovery Process and Human Geographic Mapping; Contact: Roger Taylor, Diana Hawks, 2003.
11. Presentation to oil and gas industry, Farmington District Field Office.
12. The Discovery Process applied to oil and gas development in New York, Eastern States Regional Field Office.

13. Bradshaws/Agua Fria National Monument Planning Effort, Phase 2, Phoenix District Field Office. Assistance in various aspects of the RMP process, including public contact, issue management, and social/economic analysis. Contact: Teri Raml, 2000-2004.
14. Human Geographic Mapping Project, Willamette National Forest and Eugene/Salem District Field Offices Salem and Eugene Districts. Contact: Julie Dugan, 2002.
15. Discovery Weeklong, Workshops and fieldwork in Community-Based Stewardship, Arizona Strip District Field Office. Contact: Roger Taylor, Diana Hawks, 2003.
16. Yuma FO, Discovery Weeklong, Incorporating Winter Visitors into RMP Planning. Contact: Gail Acheson, Tom Zale, 2003.

## 2. Contracts Independent of BLM Assistance Agreement

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2006 | Community Description, Issue Identification, and Communication Strategies in Ten Northeast Oregon Counties to Support the Land Use Planning of the Prineville and the Baker Field Offices of the Bureau of Land Management. Contact: Tina Welch. |
| 2004 | Participated in DOI leadership forum, 4C's Task Force, in outlining methods to deepen community based management approaches. Contact: Bob Lamb, W.O.   |
| 2004 | BLM Oregon/ Washington Leadership Forum, May 10-13. Presentation entitled: Social Ecology: How Do We Engage the Public? Contact: Penny Woods, Baker City.  |
| 2003 | Las Cruces FO, Discovery Weeklong, Community Contact for PrePlan Development. Contact: Ed Roberson, Tom Phillips.  |
| 2000 | Coos Bay FO, One day training.   |

## 3. Partnership Series Courses with Which JKA Assisted in Development and Instruction

### A. Community-Based Partnerships and Ecosystems: Ensuring a Healthy Environment

Phoenix, AZ	November 28 - December 1995
Butte, MT	September 9 - 12, 1996
Coos Bay, OR	February 25 - 27, 1997
Montrose, CO	April 28 - 30, 1997
Bend, OR	May 13 - 15, 1997
Ely, NV	June 17 - 19, 1997
Boise, ID	February 24 - 26, 1998
Big Bear Lake, CA	April 14 - 16, 1998
Elko, NV	September 15 - 17, 1998
Pinedale, WY	February 9 - 11, 1999
Safford, AZ	February 23 - 25, 1999
Tonapah, NV	March 9 - 11, 1999
Cloudcroft, NM	May 11 - 13, 1999
Yuma, AZ	October 28 - 30, 1999

Espanola, NM	November 4 - 6, 1999
Carlsbad, NM	February 9 - 11, 2000
Lake Pleasant, AZ	April 11 - 13, 2000
Farmington, NM	May 23 - 25, 2000
Silver City, NM	May 31 - June 2, 2000
Cody, WY	February 20 - 22, 2001
Quincy, CA	March 27 - 29, 2001
Lake Havasu City, AZ	April 3 - 5, 2001
Waldorf, Maryland	April 17 - 19, 2001
St. George, UT	May 15 - 17, 2001
Winnemucca, NV	June 26 -28, 2001
Parker, AZ	October 29 - 30, 2001
Bullhead City, AZ	November 7 - 9, 2001
Kanab, UT	January 31 - February 2, 2002
Grand Junction, CO	March 12- 14, 2002
St. George, UT	March 19 - 21, 2002
John Day, OR	April 16 - 18, 2002
Alamosa, CO	November 19 - 21, 2002
Lewistown, MT	December 3-5, 2002
Billings, MT	February 5 - 7, 2003
Miles City, MT	April 7 - 9, 2003
Craig, CO	May 19 - 21, 2003
Dolores, CO	September 11-13, 2003
Taos, NM	September 8 - 10, 2004

B. Learning Community

Lake Pleasant, AZ	November 30 - December 1999
Socorro, NM	May 30 - June 1, 2001
Elko, NV	September 20 -22, 2001
La Grande, OR	December 4 - 6, 2001

C. Community Economic Assessment

Cuba, NM 9/21-23/04  
Taos, NM, 8/10-12/04  
Battle Mountain, NV 3/23-26/04  
Elko, NV, 9/19-21/02

D. Place Based NEPA

Battle Mountain, NV 8/2003  
Craig, CO 5/2004  
Taos, NM 12/2004

#### 4. Planning Concepts Courses Taught by JKA through BLM's National Training Center

##### Calendar Year 2007 Class Dates

Jan. 9-11	Bakersfield RMP	Bakersfield, CA
Jan. 23-25	Temecula RMP	Temecula, CA
Oct. 2-4	Baker RMP	Baker City, OR
Nov. 27-29	Rio Puerco RMP	Albuquerque, NM

##### Calendar Year 2006 Class Dates

Feb. 14-16	Jarbidge RMP	Twin Falls, ID
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##### Calendar Year 2005 Class Dates

April 5 - 7	Upper Snake RMP	Idaho Falls, ID
April 26-28	Shoshone RMP	Twin Falls, ID
May 17-19	Kremmling RMP	Kremmling, CO
Sept. 27-29	Lander RMP	Lander, WY

##### Calendar Year 2004 Class Dates

Jan.13 - 15	Little Snake RMP Amendments	Craig, CO
Jan.27 - 29	Yuma RMP	Yuma, AZ
Mar.16 - 18	Las Cruces "Tri County Plan"	Las Cruces, NM
May 4 - 6	Cedar City RMP	Cedar City, UT
Aug. 17 - 19	Roswell RMP	Roswell, NM
Aug. 31 - Sept 2	Cottonwood FO RMP	Grangeville, ID
Sept. 14 - 16	Coeur d'Alene Field Office RMP	Coeur d'Alene, ID
Oct 13 - 15	Hollister Field Office	Hollister, CA
Oct. 26 - 28	Miles City FO RMP	Miles City, MT

##### Calendar Year 2003 Class Dates

Jan.22 - 24	Moab, Monticello RMPs	Moab, UT
Feb. 18 - 20	Battle Mountain	Battle Mountain, NV
Mar. 11 - 13	Ukiah RMP	Ukiah, CA
May 28 - 30	GS/E NM RMP Grazing Amendment	Kanab, UT
Sept. 16 - 18	Prineville (John Day Basin RMP)	Prineville, OR
Oct. 21 - 23	Kobuk Seward Peninsula RMP	Fairbanks, AK

##### Calendar Year 2002 Class Dates

Mar.19 - 21	The Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA	Winnemucca, NV
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July 30 - Aug.1	Kemmerer RMP	Kemmerer, WY
Aug. 20 - 22	King Range NCA	Briceland, CA (Arcata FO)
Sept. 4 - 6	Headwaters (Butte) RMP	Butte, MT
Oct. 15 - 17	Glennallen RMP	Glennallen, AK

### Calendar Year 2001 Class Dates

March 12 – 14	Price FO (Pilot)	Price, UT
June 4 - 6	Arizona (4-6)	NTC
June 26 – 28	Palm Springs/El Centro FO's	La Quinta, CA
July 10 – 12	Pinedale FO	Pinedale, WY
Aug. 6 - 8	Santa Fe (NH Trail)	Santa Fe, NM
Aug. 22 – 24	Dillon, FO	Dillon, MT
Oct. 10 – 12	Craters of the Moon Nat'l. Mon.	Twin Falls, ID
Oct. 29 - Nov.1	AZ Strip FO	St. George, UT
Nov. 14 – 16	Pocatello RMP	Pocatello, ID
Nov. 27 – 29	Steens Mountain Plan	Burns, OR

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*Enhancing Productive Harmony between Human and Natural Environments*

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Appendix B:  
Seven Cultural Descriptors Used in  
Community Assessment and Human Geographic Mapping<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> James A. Kent and Kevin Preister, “Methods for the Development of Human Geographic Boundaries and Their Uses”, in partial completion of Cooperative Agreement No. 1422-P850-A8-0015 between James Kent Associates and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Task Order No. 001.

## **ONE**                      ***Describe the publics and their interests***

### **Definition**

A public is any segment of the population that can be grouped together because of some recognized demographic feature or common set of interests. A public may exist currently or at some future date; it may reside permanently in a geographic area, or may live elsewhere and have an interest in the management of natural resources. Sample publics include ranchers, loggers, tourists, small businesses, industries, miners, senior citizens, minorities, homemakers, youth, preservationists and governmental bodies.

By identifying publics and characterizing each public's interests, a resource manager can understand how segments of a population will be affected differently by resource decisionmaking. Also, predictions can be made about how changing public interests will influence management in the future.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- What publics are within the immediate sphere of influence of resource management and decision making activities? What are the ongoing interests of each identified public? Which of the publics have specific resource-related interests? Are there any public interests or activities that affect resource management activities?
- Is there any public that is directly affected by the resource decision making process? Which publics currently benefit from jobs generated by the resource outputs? Are there any individuals, businesses or industries that are dependent upon a specific output?
- Which publics could potentially benefit from resource use and development activities? Which publics could potentially be impacted from a change in current management activities?
- What publics are outside the immediate sphere of influence of resource management activities, but use the resource or are involved in the decision making process? Do these publics have a relationship to the resource because they affect or are affected by resource management activities?

## **TWO**

## ***Describe the networks***

### **Definition**

A network is comprised of individuals who support each other in predictable ways and have a shared commitment to some common purpose. Networks may be informal arrangements of people tied together for cultural, survival, or caretaking reasons. Networks may also be formal arrangements of people who belong to an organization, club or association which has a specific charter or organizational goals. Networks may function in a local geographic area or may influence resource management activities from regional or national levels. Examples of informal networks include ranchers who assist each other in times of need, miners who work on the same shift, grass-roots environmentalists, or families who recreate together. Examples of formal organizations include a cattlemen's association, coal mining union, preservationist or snowmobile club.

A knowledge of networks citizens form to express their interests is essential for identifying public issues relating to management activities and for monitoring the effectiveness of resource decisionmaking.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- What informal networks do each of the identified publics form to express their interests? What is the function of each network? When and where does each informal network gather to share information or services? How do the members of each network communicate with each other?
- Which networks function in an ongoing manner for cultural, caretaking or survival reasons? Which networks are temporarily involved around particular events or issues?
- What is the informal leadership in each network or who is respected and why? Are any networks more effective than others in addressing the issues that concern them?
- Which networks extend beyond the local level and function on a regional or national scale? Are there any regional or national networks that influence resource management activities?
- What formal organizations, associations or clubs do the identified publics form to express their interests? What is the purpose of each group? When and where does each formal organization meet to share information or provide services? How do the members of each group communicate with each other? Which organizations operate in an ongoing manner and which operate temporarily?
- What is the formal and informal leadership in each organization or who is respected and why? Are any groups more effective than others in addressing the issues that concern them?
- Which organizations have a membership that extends beyond the local level and operates on a regional or national level? Are there any regional or national organizations that influence resource management activities?

## ***THREE Describe the settlement pattern***

### **Definition**

A settlement pattern is any distinguishable distribution of a population in a geographic area, including the historical cycles of settlement in an area. This cultural descriptor identifies where a population is located and the type of settlement categorized by its centralized/dispersed, permanent/temporary, and year-round/seasonal characteristics. It also describes the major historical growth/non-growth cycles and the reasons for each successive wave of settlement.

Knowledge of settlement patterns provides a resource manager with a basis for predicting the significance of probable population changes associated with resource management and development activities.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- Where do people live and how is the population distributed in the immediate geographic area? Are the settlement areas dispersed throughout the countryside and/or centralized in towns and cities?
- What is the history of settlement? What types of people came with each successive wave of settlement? Why did people settle in the area? Are there any particular characteristics of the settlement pattern that make it unique?
- Have there been any significant increases or decreases in population in the past? What caused these? Is the current settlement stable or on the increase or decrease? What is causing this trend?
- What major changes have occurred during past settlement cycles? How rapidly have these changes occurred? How have people handled or accepted change in the past? Are these changes easily recalled by people?
- What new publics have settled in the area in recent years? How have long-term residents accepted newcomers? Is the area settled with diverse or homogenous publics? Which settlement areas are integrated with diverse publics and which are not and why?
- What future publics can you anticipate residing in the immediate geographic area? What will be the possible causes of the future settlement patterns? How rapidly will the settlement occur?

## **FOUR**            *Describe the work routines*

### **Definition**

A work routine is a predictable way 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 are used to generate a profile of an area's work routines. The opportunities for advancement, the business ownership patterns, and the stability of employment activities are also elements of the work routine descriptor.

A knowledge of work routines can be used to evaluate how alternative uses of natural resources will affect the ways people earn a living and how changes in work routines, in turn, will impact future natural resource uses.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- What are the ways in which the people in the immediate geographic area earn a living? Are people self-employed or employed by small business or large corporations? What are the primary employment activities and the approximate percentage of people involved in each sector?
- What kinds of skills are required of people in the various types of employment? What level of pay is received? Has there been any significant shift in employment activities or income levels in recent years? If so, has the shift influenced resource use or management activities?
- Are the majority of businesses owned locally or by corporations and people from outside the area? Are generational cycles of families in the same employment typical?
- Are there any work routines that are seasonal in nature? Are the seasonal jobs taken by residents of the area or from outside the area? Do many people work two jobs or is it common for families to have two wage earners? Is the unemployment significant? If so, among which publics?
- What is the average age of the labor force? Are youth able to find employment in the area? Are there adequate opportunities for advancement? Do people change jobs frequently or work in the same activities most of their lives? Which publics have a strong cultural identity associated with their work?
- Is there a compatible mix of employment activities? Which activities are aggravating each other? How do current resource management practices maintain the mix of activities? How could future changes in resource management stabilize or enhance the current employment mix?

## ***FIVE***

## ***Describe the supporting services***

### **Definition**

A supporting service is any arrangement people use for taking care of each other. Support services occur in an area in both formal and informal ways. Examples of formal support services include the areas of health, education, law enforcement, fire protection, transportation, environment and energy. Examples of informal support activities include the ways people manage on a day-to-day basis using family, neighborhood, friendship or any other support system.

A resource manager can use the supporting services descriptor to evaluate how alternative uses of resources will affect the ways people take care of each other and how changes in supporting services, in turn, will impact future natural resource management.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- Where are the formal support services such as the commercial, health, education, transportation, protective, energy facilities located? What is the geographic area that is serviced? Which services are used routinely by people in the area? Which services do people have to leave the area to obtain?
- How are the services operated? Are the facilities and services provided adequate for the area? Which are inadequate and for what reasons?
- What informal supporting activities occur in the area? How do people care for each other on a day-to-day basis and in times of crisis? Do families, friends, church or volunteer organizations provide support?
- How much do people take care of each other on an informal basis and how much do people rely on formal services? Do people still trade for services or almost always pay cash for services?
- How are the elderly, single parents, youth, poor and others taken care of? Are informal systems used such as neighborhoods, or are formal organizations used for assistance? To what degree do people take care of their own problems or rely on government agencies and formal services? Do all people have access to the supporting services and activities?
- Has the amount or type of supporting services changed in recent years? How has the provision of support services and activities changed? What has contributed to these changes?

## **SIX**

## ***Describe the recreational activities***

### **Definition**

A recreational activity is a predictable way in which people spend their leisure time. Recreational opportunities available, seasonality of activities, technologies involved, and money and time required are aspects of the recreational descriptor. The frequency of local/non-local uses of recreational resources, the preferences of local/non-local users, and the location of the activities are also included.

A manager can use this cultural descriptor to evaluate how alternative uses of resources will affect the ways people recreate and how changes in recreational activity, in turn, will impact future resource management.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- What are the principal types of recreational activities of people in the area? Which activities, sites or facilities are most preferred? Are certain activities seasonal?
- What is the orientation of the leisure time activities? Are the activities individual, family, team, church or school related? Are there significant recreational activities in which a wide range of individuals participate? How do groups like youth and senior citizens recreate?
- How much time is spent in recreational activities? How much money is spent on recreational activities? What kinds of recreational vehicles or equipment are used? Do the majority of activities occur on public or private lands and facilities?
- Are there recreational opportunities in the area that attract people on a regional or national scale? What activities, sites or facilities are most preferred? Are certain activities seasonal? Is there a significant number of businesses that rely on the income from these recreational activities? Which activities relate to natural resource uses and management?
- Have there been any major changes in recreational activities in recent years? What events caused the change? What types of sporting goods or recreational license sales have been on the increase? What recreational sites or facilities have experienced an increase or decrease in use and why? Do current recreational sites and facilities accommodate the demands? What changes in recreational activities are anticipated in the future and why?
- What written and unwritten rules do people use when recreating? Is there much of a difference between the recreational activities of residents in the area and those who temporarily visit the area? How does the type of recreation differ?

## **SEVEN**      ***Describe the geographic boundaries***

### **Definition**

A geographic boundary is any unique physical feature with which people of an area identify. Physical features separate the activities of a population from those in other geographic areas such as a valley that people identify as being “theirs” or a river that divides two towns. Examples of geographic boundaries include topographic and climatic features, distances, or any unique characteristic that distinguishes one area from another. Geographic boundaries may be relatively permanent or short-lived; over time, boundaries may dissolve as new settlement patterns develop and as work routines and physical access to an area change.

By knowing the geographic boundaries of a population, a manager can identify and manage the effects of natural resource use and development that are unique to a particular geographic area.

### **Questions Used to Complete Human Resource Unit (HRU) Characterization**

- How do people relate to their surrounding environment? What geographic area do people consider to be a part of their home turf? Within what general boundaries do most of the daily activities of the area occur? How far do the networks people use in their routine activities extend throughout the area?
- What is the area people identify with as being “theirs”? Are there any particular characteristics, social or physical, that people think are unique to the area? What features attracted people to the area or provide a reason to stay?
- Are there any physical barriers that separate the activities of a population from those in other geographic areas? Are there any evident social barriers?
- What are the predominant uses of the land and what topographic or climatic features support such activities? What percentage of the geographic area is in the private and public sector? Is most of the private land owned by year-round residents or by people from outside the area?
- Have there been any significant changes in the use of the land and its resources in recent years? What has caused the changes? How have these short- or long-term changes affected people and their ways of life? How accessible is the area to external influences? What kind of influences? Are these beneficial or negative impacts on the area?