

**Appendix C**

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**RESOURCE ASSESSMENT**

**Joseph Creek  
National Wild and Scenic River**

**USDA - Forest Service  
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest**

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**Date: 10-25-91**

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**Date: 10-25-91**

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## **WILD AND SCENIC RIVER--JOSEPH CREEK RESOURCE ASSESSMENT--Final**

### **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As a result of the Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988, a segment of Joseph Creek was designated as a Wild and Scenic River (W&SR). Under this act the Forest Service is required to prepare a comprehensive management plan to provide protection of the river values of Joseph Creek. This resource assessment is being done to identify the river values that are outstandingly remarkable and/or verify the Congressionally-named values.

In November, 1990, a draft resource assessment was sent to the public, including other agencies and subject area experts, for review and comment. In that draft document, the preliminary findings of the Forest Service interdisciplinary team verified the outstandingly remarkable values identified in the Congressional Record.

As a result of our review of public and agency comments on the draft resource assessment, wildlife has been added to the list of outstandingly remarkable values. Hence, the findings of the Forest Service interdisciplinary team determined the following resources of Joseph Creek to be outstandingly remarkable values: **scenery, recreation, geology, fisheries, wildlife, and cultural resources.**

### **II. INTRODUCTION**

In 1968, Congress enacted the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and for the first time, established a system for preserving outstanding free-flowing rivers. Joseph Creek was added to this system in 1988 when it was designated as a National Wild and Scenic River by the Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988. As defined by the Act, a National Wild and Scenic River must be free-flowing and have at least one "outstandingly remarkable value." The outstandingly remarkable values of Joseph Creek identified in the Congressional Record include: scenery, recreation, geology, fisheries, and cultural resources.

Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Forest Service is required to prepare a comprehensive river management plan to provide for the protection and/or enhancement of the river values. This river planning process, of which the resource assessment is one step, will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning regulations. Through each phase of the planning process, public involvement will be invited and is essential for the success of a sound management plan.

### III. INTRODUCTION TO RESOURCE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This resource assessment serves as the foundation of the river management planning process. The assessment documents the determination of which river related values or features are outstandingly remarkable or contribute substantially to the river setting or to the functioning of the river ecosystem.

The resource assessment process provides a standardized approach to evaluation of values of designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. This assessment will guide interim management, development of the management plan, and determination of boundaries.

Although the determination of value significance is a matter of informed professional judgement and interpretation, this process includes the following steps or verification techniques:

- The use of an interdisciplinary team approach
- Consideration of uniqueness and rarity at a regional and national level\*
- Values must be river related in that they owe their existence or contribute to the functioning of the river system and its immediate environs.
- The use of qualitative guidelines to help determine significance
- Verification by other experts in the subject area.

The resource value categories that have been considered include:

Scenic  
Recreational  
Geologic  
Fisheries  
Wildlife  
Historic  
Prehistoric  
Traditional Use, Cultural  
Other Resource Values

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\* Based partially on the eight geographic regions described in the 1989 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for Oregon.

#### **IV. RIVER DESCRIPTION**

The Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988 designated 8.6 miles of Joseph Creek from Joseph Creek Ranch to the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest boundary, in the following class:

**WILD RIVER:** The 8.6-mile segment from Joseph Creek Ranch, one mile downstream from Cougar Creek, to the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest boundary.

For the purposes of interim management, the Forest Service, as the lead agency, established a corridor width of 1/4-mile on either side of the river. The interim boundary map, included in Appendix B, shows private and federal ownership. The final corridor boundary will be determined as part of the Wild and Scenic River management plan development.

#### **V. SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF VALUES**

##### **SCENIC**

##### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

The landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features and/or attractions within the geographic region. When analyzing scenic values, additional factors such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over the majority of the river or river segment length and not common to other rivers in the geographic region.

##### **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

The designated Wild and Scenic River corridor for Joseph Creek, while a short 8.6 miles, is a spectacular example of the steep, rimrock-exposed canyons found in Northeast Oregon. Approximately 2000' from rim top to canyon bottom, this stretch of river drainage is appropriately called Joseph Canyon.

Commonly viewed from the rim, Joseph Canyon is dominated by grassy, open slopes and benches. Looking up or down river, the view of slope after slope in the distance create a vertically "layered" topography as far as the eye can see. Add to this the many horizontal layers of Columbia River basalt (rimrock), which are exposed on the slopes from canyon bottom to rim top. The combination is a mosaic of dramatic topographic landforms that enraptures the viewer.

Generally, Joseph Creek lies in an arid, steppe vegetation canyon. Large expanses of grass and grass-like elk sedge and pine grass communities, dominated by Idaho fescue, bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg's bluegrass, prairie junegrass, and introduced cheatgrass cover the slopes and benches.

In many places, stringers of trees, such as ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir, grow in the side drainages, where a few streams flow toward Joseph Creek during the wetter season(s). Some small, flat benches near the bottom of Joseph Canyon are filled with lovely, well-spaced, old growth ponderosa pine. A few of the north-facing slopes have conifers scattered on the entire 2,000' face.

The bottom of Joseph Canyon, while visited by only a small number of people, is a contrast to the arid terrain above. The narrow riparian zone along Joseph Creek is a "greenbelt" of vegetation, even in the driest seasons. Immediately adjacent to the creek, a variety of willow species cling to the banks.

Other water-loving shrubs and grasses, sedges, and rushes fill this healthy riparian area. Transitioning between the dry slopes and streamside vegetation, both young black-bark, and older, red-bark ponderosa pines are scattered about. An occasional western larch occurs here, too. Douglas-fir grow on the wetter sites.

Joseph Creek itself doesn't vary much in its appearance throughout the designated Wild and Scenic River portion. It flows over a gentle gradient through the basalt canyon, carving "s" turns and occasionally straightening out for short distances. In places, the water picks up speed as it ripples through coarse gravels or around large rocks. A few cliffs contain Joseph Creek on one side or another; often times a deep pool has been scoured out below. Very little woody debris is in the creek. However, in one place near the upstream Wild and Scenic River termini, enterprising beavers have created a dam across the width of the creek, utilizing a fallen tree.

Seasonal variations in Joseph Canyon highlight the ruggedness of this landscape. Snow on the +4,000' rim is plentiful. But often the snowline can be seen low in the canyon, although large storms may dump snow to the bottom.

Springtime comes early to the steppe canyon country of Northeast Oregon, and Joseph Creek is no exception. Snows melt early, leaving behind slopes that are a carpet of lush green grass. If spring rains are abundant, the greenery persists well into late June or early July. Flowers suited to this climate, especially arrowleaf balsamroot, yarrow, lupine, yellow salsify, heartleaf arnica, pussytoes, desert parsley, and penstemon, bloom in season until desiccated by the intense heat of summer. The more drought-resistant species survive into the fall.

Summer temperatures in the canyon are high, and often stay above 90°f for weeks. The grasses on the slopes dry out by midsummer, and the canyon becomes characteristically brown and dry, save for the trees, shrubs, and riparian vegetation.

Precipitation, when it comes during the summer months, is often in the form of thunderstorms and of short duration. Historically, fires begun by lightning from these storms have been occasional. Most recently, August, 1986, large fires burned through stands of conifer and across grasslands. Some helicopter salvage harvest of the merchantable timber occurred afterwards but it is not evident in the view. The grass slopes always turned green again in the springtime; the natural cycle of fire having played its role in maintaining this vegetative mosaic.

Whether on the canyon rim or creek bottom, evidence of human intrusion is light. A cabin and shed sit at the confluence of Swamp and Joseph Creeks. Remnants of another cabin and a few rusty farm implements are located at another site in the canyon. A few fences separate the cattle allotments, and grazing occurs during the more "hospitable" months. Cattle trails crisscross the slopes. The highway on the canyon rim is not seen from below, nor can traffic be heard except in very few instances. Some trails are present, but seldom used.

### **Finding**

The spectacular natural setting, ruggedness, inaccessibility, and steep topography of Joseph Creek and the surrounding environs of Joseph Canyon creates a lasting impression on those who view it. Depending upon the season that it is visited, one may be enticed to explore it further or may leave with the feeling that it is an inhospitable place for humans. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record that scenery in the Joseph Creek corridor is an outstandingly remarkable value.

## **RECREATIONAL**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating.**

Recreational opportunities are, or have the potential to be, unique enough to attract visitors from outside of the geographic region. Visitors would be willing to travel long distances to use the river resources for recreational purposes. River-related opportunities could include, but not be limited to, sightseeing, wildlife observation, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating.

Interpretive opportunities may be exceptional and attract or have the potential to attract visitors from outside the geographic region.

The river may provide or have the potential to provide settings for national or regional usage or competitive events.

### **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

Joseph Canyon provides a limited range of recreational opportunities due to the topography, remoteness, climatic conditions, and lack of easy motorized access to the river itself. With Joseph Creek situated approximately 2,000' feet below the nearest paved road, getting down to it is limited to foot, horseback, or a long ride on a gravel road which ends at Joseph Creek Ranch. This private property is the upstream termini of the Wild and Scenic River designation.

Joseph Canyon will continue to be managed as a Roadless Area as directed in the Forest Plan for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. In general, this management direction will ensure that the area be maintained in a primitive, unroaded state.

Two trails lead to the canyon bottom, both are steep and difficult whether on foot or horseback. Extreme daytime temperatures during the summer months and into early fall make the trip very hot, dry, and dusty. Once at the bottom, a Forest Service trail, rated "more difficult", parallels Joseph Creek above the riparian vegetation and on the canyon sideslope. Views from the trail are overlooking the creek and up to the "breaks" at the canyon rim. Potential hazards include poison oak along the trail in the bottom of the canyon, and rattlesnakes at just about any elevation. The latter are the large variety, too.

It is safe to say that these factors keep human use in the Joseph Creek corridor down to an ambitious few, and typically during spring, summer, or fall. In relative terms, fall season warrants the most use, and is popular for big-game hunting accessed by horseback. Hunters interested in a high-quality hunt in a remote setting are rewarded with an arduous pack-out when successful.

State Highway 3 generally parallels Joseph Canyon in a north-south route, although it is not in the Wild and Scenic River corridor. This paved road connects Enterprise, Oregon, with Lewiston, Idaho, and is, in itself, a spectacular drive which winds down into such major drainages as the Grande Ronde and Snake Rivers. Along Joseph Creek, though, the highway remains about 2,000' above the river, but the many natural openings along the highway allow partial views into Joseph Canyon.

Joseph Canyon Viewpoint, a turnout with a Forest Service interpretive sign, is the point where many people stop and get out to take in the entire view from rim top to bottom. Here, Joseph Creek winds its way through the canyon bottom, dwarfed by the vastness of surrounding slopes and basalt outcrops.

The Joseph Canyon Viewpoint is a potential site for inclusion in the Nez Perce National Historic Park. This park, established in the 1960's, encompasses a number of scenic and historic sites in and



around Lewiston, Idaho. Many of the sites are associated with the history and culture of the Nez Perce Indians and the story of Chief Joseph.

Presently, there is interest to include additional sites outside of Idaho, such as the Joseph Canyon Viewpoint. The original Park legislation allows for other states to join in at any time. Certainly, enabling Joseph Canyon Viewpoint for park inclusion would highlight, on a national scale, the opportunity to interpret Chief Joseph's birthplace and winter encampment activities.

Joseph Creek, while it supports anadromous fish populations, has low flows in the summer months combined with high water temperatures due to upstream management practices. While some fishing for resident species does occur, it is unknown what success rate is presently achieved by the few hardy souls who pursue the sport here. The comfortable water temperature is inviting to some recreationists for swimming during the heat of the summer.

Joseph Creek is not a "floatable" river, although there is one written account of a springtime kayak trip that provided the boaters with the thrill of their life. They also acknowledged not ever wanting to do it again, and suggested that no one else do so, either. Extreme low flows the rest of the year make it undesirable from the opposite standpoint.

It is unlikely that winter sports activities occur at all due to the low elevation at canyon bottom and consequently lack of snow depth.

While few pursue the depths of Joseph Canyon either on foot or horseback, those that do are rewarded with a high quality "wilderness" experience in the absence of a Congressional Wilderness designation.

The likelihood of encountering other recreationists is slim, but one must watch their step, as this is where rattlesnakes reign supreme.

### **Finding**

The range of recreation opportunities in and along Joseph Creek, including surrounding Joseph Canyon, is somewhat limited due to the physical characteristics of the area. However, what is lacking here in quantity, the visitor will find in quality of the recreation experience being pursued. Hiking, horsepacking, birdwatching, wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, and photography can be enjoyed in a solitary manner in a spectacular setting.

The potential for inclusion of Joseph Canyon Viewpoint into the Nez Perce National Historic Park highlights the importance of this site. The Park status would bestow a national focus on the opportunity to interpret an interesting part of Nez Perce history. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record that recreation is an outstandingly remarkable value.

## **GEOLOGIC**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

The river or the area within the river corridor contains an example(s) of a geologic feature, process, or phenomena that is rare, unusual, one-of-a-kind, or unique to the geographic region. The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage of development, represent a "textbook" example and/or represent a unique or rare combination of geologic features (erosional, volcanic, glacial, and other geologic structures.)

### ***Evaluation of the Present Situation***

During the Miocene Epoch 15-30 million years ago, widespread volcanism layered much of Northeast Oregon with Columbia River basalts surrounding the Wallowa uplift. Molten lava poured from many simultaneously erupting fissures covering much of the previous landforms. Lavas up to 200' thick pooled in some areas, while most layers were formed 50-100' thick.

There are basalt dikes exposed in Joseph Canyon. A short distance south of Joseph Canyon and east of Highway 3, are a series of small buttes. These are actually basalt cinder cones, or old volcanoes, from which some of the lava poured, showing that the plateau flows did come from this area and that they were fed by these dikes. This is one of the few places in which volcanic vents have been recognized in Northeast Oregon.

After the volcanic period, the erosion began. The spectacular down-cutting of rivers like Joseph Creek allow us to view the depth and layers of basalt which resulted from these repeated episodes of volcanism. Rugged Joseph Canyon consists of stacked layers of basalt lava flows and columnar basalt 10 to 200 feet thick. Red visicular scoria and lighter colored andesites can also be seen in the benches and cliffs. Interbeds of lakes sediments, consisting of mudstone, clay, coal, and sandstone can be found between some lava flows.

### ***Finding***

Much of Northeast Oregon geology is typified by Columbia River basalt canyons, exposed by the down-cutting of rivers. Joseph Creek is a textbook-perfect example of this. The wide canyon-rim, steep sideslopes, dikes, and basalt layers are exposed features from the erosional action of the creek. This 2,000' canyon is virtually unmodified and its spectacular details can be easily viewed from the canyon rim. Therefore, this finding agrees with the Congressional Record that geology is an outstandingly remarkable value.

## **FISHERIES**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of either fish populations, habitat, or Native American cultural use - or a combination of these river-related conditions. Considerations shall be given for potential as well as existing values.

**Populations.** The river is internationally, nationally or regionally an important producer of resident and/or anadromous fish species. Of particular significance is the presence of wild stocks and/or federal or state listed threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Diversity of species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of outstandingly remarkable.

**Habitat.** The river provides or has the potential to provide exceptionally high quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region. Of particular significance is habitat for wild stocks and/or federal or state listed or candidate threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Diversity of habitats is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of outstandingly remarkable.

## **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

### ***Populations***

Joseph Creek is being managed by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) for wild steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) production. Steelhead is currently listed on the Region 6 Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list. At this time, no angling is allowed for steelhead. The main spawning tributaries, except for Swamp Creek, are upstream, and below, the Wild and Scenic River designation and include Cougar, Chesnimnus, Peavine, and Elk Creeks. The designated stretch of Joseph Creek, in effect, serves as the migration corridor in winter and early spring. However, it is likely that some steelhead, when conditions are right, spawn in the Joseph Canyon portion of the river. It is intended that these wild runs will help sustain the lower Grande Ronde and Snake River fisheries.

Joseph Creek is also managed for a wild rainbow trout fishery and in the past was noted for producing large trout. However, in recent years, this has declined. Small mouth bass exist in the lower part of Joseph Creek, downstream of the Wild and Scenic River designation.

There is no record of chinook salmon in Joseph Creek, and bull trout is unable to survive here due to the high water temperatures.

### ***Habitat***

Overall, the fish habitat in Joseph Creek is very good, except for the high water temperatures. The gravels and pools are excellent for rearing trout and steelhead, and the riparian vegetation remains intact in this stretch of river.

Grazing and timber harvest practices on Joseph Creek upstream of the Wild and Scenic River designation, and on some of the main tributaries, have contributed to extremely high water temperatures. A high of 75°F was measured at the confluence of Swamp and Joseph Creeks. This, despite the fact that water temperatures in Joseph Canyon at and below the confluence with Swamp Creek tend to be slightly cooler than the segment further upstream. Efforts to improve riparian conditions to help reduce water temperatures upstream of Joseph Canyon is currently a focus for Bonneville Power Association-funded projects and livestock grazing permits.

### ***Finding***

Joseph Creek is recognized as an important wild steelhead and wild rainbow trout fishery, and will continue to be managed as such. It is a significant tributary to the Grande Ronde, and hence, Snake River system. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record that fisheries is an outstandingly remarkable value.

## **WILDLIFE**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either wildlife populations habitat, or Native American cultural use - or a combination of these conditions.

**Populations.** The river or area within the river corridor contains nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species. Of particular significance are species considered to be unique or populations of federal or state listed or candidate threatened, endangered and sensitive species. Diversity of species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of outstandingly remarkable.

**Habitat.** The river or area within the river corridor provides exceptionally high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance, or may provide unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for federal or state listed and candidate threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met. Diversity of habitats is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination of outstandingly remarkable.

## **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

### ***Populations***

Many species of wildlife common to the region inhabit Joseph Canyon, including Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, black bear, bobcat, coyote, mountain lion, beaver, otter, mink, and other small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep were indigenous to the area. A small herd generally ranges in the Table Mountain area near the downstream Wild and Scenic River termini. After the 1986 fires, about 8-10 bighorn sheep moved further upstream into Joseph Canyon, and a resident herd of 25-30 animals is established in the area.

A healthy population of black bear exists in Joseph Canyon, and bear sign is abundant in the riparian area along the creek. Approximately 800 Rocky Mountain elk winter in the canyon "breaks" during a typical winter, and mule deer are also common.

Chukar, mountain quail, and ruffed grouse are found here, with blue grouse on the ridges. Many non-game birds inhabit the lower canyon and riparian areas. The snake population is also extremely healthy.

Bald eagles (USFWS listed as threatened) winter here and can often be seen soaring over Joseph Canyon from November through April. Golden eagles can be seen in the area as well. Rio Grande turkeys were released in lower Joseph Creek in the mid-1980's, and a few are found along the stream corridor. Peregrine falcons (USFWS listed as endangered) have been re-introduced to lower Joseph Canyon; sightings of the birds in the area indicate the effort has met some success.

### ***Habitat***

Habitat in Joseph Canyon is quite varied due to the dry, upland slopes and contrasting riparian area in the canyon bottom. The narrow riparian zone along Joseph Creek provides a "greenbelt" of vegetation even in the driest seasons. A number of willow species cling to the streambank, and other water-loving shrubs, grasses, sedges, and rushes grow well here.

Overall, habitat is in fair condition, although the winter range present to support Rocky Mountain elk and mule deer is very good. Grasses such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, cheatgrass, and grass-like elk sedge predominate.

Sightings of peregrine falcons in Joseph Canyon indicate they use the area for post-nesting dispersal and late season migration. Excellent nesting habitat occurs just downstream of the designated stretch of Joseph Creek, where peregrine falcons have been re-introduced by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

There is a long history of livestock grazing on the grassy slopes of Joseph Canyon. Impacts from other human use is minimal due to the difficulty of access to the area.

## **Finding**

While some of the wildlife populations which exist in Joseph Canyon may be common regionally, the sheer diversity of them and the significance of the federally-listed species elevates their importance. The habitat present for the re-introduction of an endangered species (peregrine falcon) is notable, as is the common sightings of (threatened) bald eagles during the winter months. The bighorn sheep population is also important. These factors combine to elevate wildlife to an outstandingly remarkable value for Joseph Creek.

## **HISTORIC**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

The river or area within the river corridor contains a site(s) or feature(s) associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that was rare, unusual or one-of-a-kind in the region. A historic site(s) and/or feature(s) in most cases is 50 years old or older. Of particular significance are sites or features listed in, or are eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

The significance of Joseph Creek is a vital part of Nez Perce tribal history. Many Indians and non-Indians believe that Chief Joseph was born in a cave on Joseph Creek. Most historical, as well as present-day, accounts identify this cave downstream of the Wild and Scenic River designation, nearer the mouth of the river.

The area near the mouth was a meeting place for the Nez Perce Tribe, and Chief Joseph and his family and band wintered here. It is certain that tribal members travelled upstream along Joseph Creek hunting, fishing, and gathering. Both the creek and canyon are named for this famous Nez Perce tribal leader.

Less is known about the few historical sites relating to settlement by Euro-Americans along Joseph Creek. These sites are evidence of early homesteading in this canyon, and features include a few rusty farm implements, old hayfields, and remnants of structures. More favorable climatic, and hence growing, conditions in nearby Grande Ronde Canyon made the latter location more desirable than Joseph Creek for permanent settlement.

## **Finding**

The canyon country of Joseph Creek plays a vital role in Nez Perce tribal history. Most important is the proximity of Joseph Canyon to the gathering place for Chief Joseph and his band at the mouth of Joseph Creek. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record that the cultural resources (historic) are an outstandingly remarkable value.

## **PREHISTORIC**

### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

The river or area within the river corridor contains a site(s) where there is evidence of occupation or use by native Americans. Sites must be rare, one-of-a-kind, have unusual characteristics or exceptional human interest value(s). Sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting

prehistory; may be rare and represent an area where a culture or cultural period was first identified and described; may have been used concurrently by two or more cultural groups; or may have been used by cultural groups for rare or sacred purposes. Of particular significance are sites or features listed or eligible for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

Joseph Canyon was primarily used by the Joseph band of the Nez Perce Tribe, but other tribes visited the area for hunting, fishing, and gathering purposes. Since no extensive cultural resource inventory in the canyon has been completed, only a couple of prehistoric sites have been identified thus far.

#### **Finding**

The few identified prehistoric sites are not notable for the geographic region. However, it is likely that more sites would be found if an extensive cultural survey was completed. In the meantime, known and discovered sites are protected under existing statutes, regulations, and policy. The historic importance will maintain the outstandingly remarkable value for cultural resources as determined by Congress.

### **TRADITIONAL USE, CULTURAL VALUES**

#### **Criteria for Outstandingly Remarkable Rating**

The river or area within the river corridor contains regionally unique location(s) of importance to Indian tribes (religious activities, fishing, hunting, and gathering). Locations may have unusual characteristics or exceptional cultural value being integral to continued pursuit of such activities. Locations may have been associated with treaty rights on ceded lands or activities unprotected by treaty on ceded lands or in traditional territories outside ceded lands.

#### **Evaluation of the Present Situation**

Joseph Creek is included within the ceded boundaries of the Nez Perce Tribe. The area was used in prehistoric and historic times for fishing, hunting, and gathering. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Tribes) also occasionally utilize the area.

#### **Finding**

No extensive cultural resource inventory has been completed on Joseph Creek and no regionally unique sites have been identified by the tribes at this time. However, there is much interest in nearly all the drainages in Northeast Oregon by various tribes as having special cultural value associated with their history and present-day activities. This is especially true for the Nez Perce Tribe due to the proximity of Chief Joseph's activities to Joseph Canyon. Also, those rivers having anadromous fish runs are of interest to all tribes. At this time, it is undetermined whether or not "Traditional Use, Cultural Values" will have status as an outstandingly remarkable value. The tribes will continue to be consulted throughout Wild and Scenic River management plan development to see if this value meets the criteria for an outstandingly remarkable value rating.

### **OTHER SIMILAR VALUES**

Additional river-related values were considered during the assessment process, including but not limited to hydrologic, paleontologic, botanic, and ecological resources. Expert review of the draft

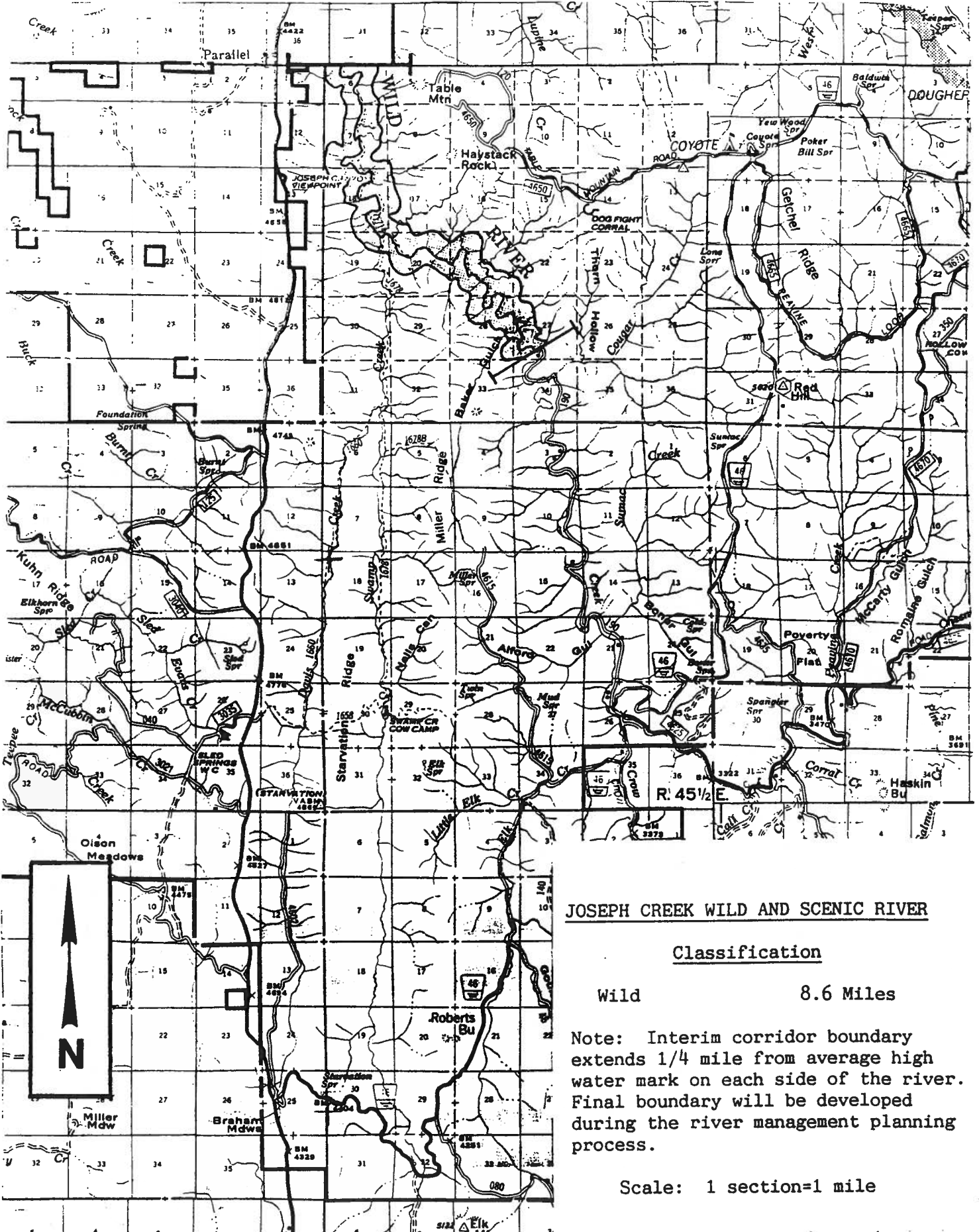
Resource Assessment did not reveal any information that would warrant the need to develop separate sections on these additional values, or to identify them as outstandingly remarkable. If notable, hydrologic, ecologic, botanic, and paleontologic values are included in the discussions of the major value areas (see values).





JOSEPH CREEK--WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDOR MAP

APPENDIX B



JOSEPH CREEK WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

Classification

Wild

8.6 Miles

Note: Interim corridor boundary extends 1/4 mile from average high water mark on each side of the river. Final boundary will be developed during the river management planning process.

Scale: 1 section=1 mile