

Appendix C

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

**North Fork John Day River
National Wild and Scenic River**

**USDA - Forest Service
Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests**

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NORTH FORK JOHN DAY WILD AND SCENIC RIVER RESOURCE ASSESSMENT--Final

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of the Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988, a segment of the North Fork John Day River 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 the North Fork John Day River. This resource assessment has been done to identify the river values that are outstandingly remarkable and/or to verify the Congressionally-named values.

On August 1, 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 determined the following resources of the North Fork John Day River to be outstandingly remarkable values: scenery, cultural, recreation, fisheries, and wildlife.

Although geology was mentioned in the Congressional Record as another outstandingly remarkable value, it was identified when a much longer stretch of the North Fork John Day River was considered for inclusion in the 1988 bill. Hence, a more significant change in geologic features from headwaters to the lower termini was the basis for that determination. As in the draft resource assessment, geology is not considered to be an outstandingly remarkable value in the final document. The W&SR designation on the North Fork John Day is typical, geologically, of many other drainages in the Elkhorn Mountains.

As a result of our review of public and agency comments on the draft resource assessment, only minor changes were necessary in the final document. The outstandingly remarkable values for the North Fork John Day River remain: scenery, cultural, recreation, fisheries, and wildlife.

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. The North Fork John Day River 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 the North Fork John Day River identified in the Congressional Record include: scenery, geology, cultural, recreational, fisheries, and wildlife.

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.

A portion of the North Fork John Day Wild and Scenic River was also included in the Oregon Scenic Waterways Program via 1988 Ballot Measure #7 (Oregon Rivers Initiative). This program, established in 1970 by the State of Oregon, is administered through the State Parks and Recreation Department.

The Oregon Scenic Waterways Program includes free-flowing waterways considered to possess one or more "outstanding scenic, fish, wildlife, geological, botanic, historic, archaeologic, and outdoor recreation values of present and future benefit to the public" (ORS 390.805) For each waterway, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department determines which resources within the corridor will be considered "special attributes," and, therefore, subject to rules and recommendations for protection or enhancement of these attributes. For the North Fork John Day River, the State Parks and Recreation Department finds the special attributes to be the same as the outstandingly remarkable values as discussed in this document.

The Oregon Scenic Waterway designation on the North Fork John Day River begins at the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary (at Big Creek) and ends at River Mile 20.2 above the town of Monument. The state/federal overlap is from the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary (Big Creek) to Camas Creek.

The Forest Service, as lead agency for Wild and Scenic River management planning, and the State of Oregon will coordinate planning efforts for the river segment which has this dual designation. If timing permits, a joint federal-state management plan will be developed for this portion of the North Fork John Day River.

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 final 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.

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

The resource value categories that have been considered include:

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

IV. RIVER DESCRIPTION

The Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988 designated 54.1 miles of the North Fork John Day River from its headwaters in the North Fork John Day Wilderness to its confluence with Camas Creek, in the following classes:

Segment A (Wilderness)	WILD RIVER: The 3.5-mile segment from its headwaters in the North Fork John Day Wilderness at section 13, township 8 south, range 36 east, to the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary.
Segment B	RECREATIONAL RIVER: The 7.5-mile segment from the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary to Trail Creek.
Segment C (Wilderness)	WILD RIVER: The 24.3-mile segment from Trail Creek to Big Creek.
Segment D	SCENIC RIVER: The 10.5-mile segment from Big Creek to Texas Bar Creek.
Segment E	RECREATIONAL RIVER: The 8.3-mile segment from Texas Bar Creek to its confluence with Camas Creek.

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 attached map shows private and federal landownership. The final corridor boundary will be determined as part of the Wild and Scenic River management plan development.

The State Scenic Waterway segment which overlaps with the federal Wild and Scenic River designation:

****from the North Fork John Day Wilderness boundary (Big Creek) to Camas Creek.**

The boundaries for the State Scenic Waterway are set at 1/4 mile on each side of the river and will not change.

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 river corridor for the North Fork John Day River contains a diversity of landforms and vegetation that captures the attention of the viewer. Several stretches of the North Fork John Day River received previous national recognition by Congress through enactment of the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984. The North Fork John Day Wilderness includes four separate units, two of these contain Wild and Scenic River segments.

The Baldy Creek Unit comprises approximately 15,000 acres of scenic alpine lake basins and the headwaters of the North Fork John Day River. Further downstream is the North Fork John Day Unit, approximately 85,000 acres, which encompasses the mainstem and its tributaries.

The headwaters area and overlapping Wilderness designation is in the glaciated Elkhorn Mountains. The south side of the river is characterized by stands of lodgepole pine, interspersed with fingers of mixed conifer. Spruce and western larch are found near the river. Subalpine fir is present above 6,000' in elevation.

The north side of the river (outside of Wilderness) had past harvest activities for removal of beetle-killed lodgepole pine. The associated conifer species remain. Several large meadows and other smaller wetland areas provide diverse scenery and outstanding wildlife habitat. An "old growth" aspen stand along the river corridor is part of the proposed (Forest Plan recommendation) Cougar Meadow Research Natural Area, and is a notable plant community feature.

Progressing downstream towards, and including, the second Wilderness unit (North Fork John Day Unit), a similar species mix is found, with some rock outcrops and steep side slopes into the river canyon. Below the Wilderness boundary, rimrock topography is common, with small fingers of trees in a few places. Below Horse Canyon there is an area of about 1/2-3/4 mile long known locally as the "cliffs" or "narrows" due to the sheer rock cliffs confining the North Fork John Day River. The tree species, where present, are typically ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and western larch.

The Forest Road (73) which parallels the North Fork John Day River outside of Wilderness is included in the National Forest Scenic Byways Program. The intent of this nation-wide program is to identify those roads which travel through the spectacular scenery of the National Forests. Recognition given to this portion of road certainly was due, in part, to the scenic beauty provided by the river environment.

Finding

Like other river drainages in the Elkhorn Mountains, the North Fork John Day River corridor possesses diversity in vegetation and topographic landforms. Significant sections of the river had already been

recognized through the 1984 Wilderness designation. The proposed Cougar Meadows Research Natural Area also encompasses a portion of the river drainage. The paved road which parallels part of the river was administratively designated a National Scenic Byway. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record regarding the outstandingly remarkable scenic value of the North Fork John Day River.

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

The North Fork John Day River corridor provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The two river segments in Wilderness are paralleled by trails for both hiking and horseback riding in the scenic North Fork John Day Wilderness. Several of these trails lead to the Elkhorn Crest National Recreation Trail. This trail follows the crest of the glaciated Elkhorn Mountains, and affords spectacular views of the North Fork John Day River headwaters.

River segments outside of Wilderness are easily accessed by roads. Visitors to the area often travel the Elkhorn Drive National Scenic Byway, which is adjacent to part of the North Fork John Day Wild and Scenic River. It is the main route by which visitors access the entire area to recreate.

Heaviest use in the river corridor occurs in the summer and fall seasons, primarily associated with camping and big-game hunting, drawing many visitors from outside the area. A number of campgrounds have a primitive or limited level of development, and dispersed camping in open areas and flat spots along the river is popular. Big-game hunters utilize these areas heavily during the fall, in search of the high quality hunt for which this area is known. Several trailheads provide access to the Wilderness trails.

Fishing along the banks of the North Fork John Day River is also very popular, while recreational gold panning is another activity pursued by visitors. Only during the spring runoff period are the last few miles of the designated portion of the North Fork John Day River floated by rafts, canoes, or kayaks. Pursuit of this recreational opportunity is modest. Some snowmobiling occurs during the winter months.

Finding

The quality and diversity of recreational opportunities available along the North Fork John Day River corridor makes it a popular area year-round for local visitors and those from outside the area. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record on recreation being 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

The North Fork John Day River drainage is typified by rugged rock outcrops. The side drainages are often steep with mixed conifer species reaching down to the river. Sheer canyon walls confine the river approximately 1/2-3/4 mile in the area known locally as the "cliffs" or "narrows". The Elkhorn Mountains are rocks of sedimentary origin; layers of ash (probably from Mt. Mazama) 7-14" thick can be found in places.

A wide variety of rocks can be seen along the North Fork John Day River itself. These include metamorphosed igneous rocks such as granites and diorites, and volcanic rocks such as basalt, andesite, tuff, and pyroclastic flows. The Elkhorn argillite formation is the predominant sedimentary rock in the upper drainage; it also includes small bodies of limestone, tuffs, and conglomerates. Glacial till, with its mixed layers of fine sand and large boulders, can also be seen in the upper drainage. Many of these rock units have been metamorphosed, faulted, and folded producing a variety of shapes and colors. Further downstream, the river has cut through layers of older and younger basalt and volcanic rocks to form cliffs and narrow canyons.

Finding

Overall, the geologic features within the North Fork John Day River drainage are not particularly unique to the region. Geology is not retained with "outstandingly remarkable value" status, although the "cliffs" area is an outstanding feature and notable for this river corridor. The history associated with the drainage's mining activity is very significant, and is more appropriately dealt with under the Historic section of this document.

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. Consideration 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

The John Day Basin is the only undammed major basin in the state, and the North Fork John Day River supports the largest and most important run of anadromous fish in this Basin. The North Fork and its tributaries support an estimated 70% of the total spring chinook salmon run and 43% of the summer steelhead run within the subbasin. This is the largest spawning population of wild spring chinook and summer steelhead in the Columbia River system.

Summer steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss) spawn in streams tributary to the designated Wild and Scenic River section, and use the North Fork John Day River for rearing habitat. Summer steelhead are native stocks; no hatchery steelhead smolts have ever been stocked in the John Day Basin. The run contributes to sport and tribal harvest.

Spring chinook (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha) spawn in the North Fork John Day River and its tributaries. The chinook runs are native to the John Day Basin and have never been supplemented with hatchery chinook. The run contributes to commercial, sport, and tribal harvests. However, since 1978 sport harvest has been closed and tribal harvest has been very limited. These harvests will increase when escapement (number of adult fish returning to spawn) improves.

The John Day River Basin, including the North Fork John Day River, is managed for the production and regulated harvest of wild spring chinook and summer steelhead. The genetic integrity of the runs is unique compared to the majority of Columbia River Basin anadromous fish runs, which are supplemented by hatchery fish or were established from non-native stocks.

Bull trout (Salvelinus confluentus) is listed on the Forest Service Region 6 and State Sensitive species list, and is in Category 2, US Fish and Wildlife Service. Bull trout depend on high quality water with temperatures which rarely exceed 49°F. The upper North Fork John Day River meets their specific habitat requirements and is thought to have one of the few remaining healthy bull trout populations in the state.

Redband trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss sp.) are a non-migratory native subspecies of rainbow trout. According to fish biologists, there is a high probability that this subspecies exists in conjunction with rainbow trout in the North Fork John Day River. Upcoming surveys planned for this river will verify their existence and population distribution.

Other major species which historically occupied this drainage include Pacific lamprey, sculpin, and mountain whitefish. Less is known about their current population size and distribution, although whitefish are generally abundant throughout western North America. Whitefish and Pacific lamprey have not been an important commercial or sport harvest species, but have contributed to tribal harvests.

Habitat

The importance of the fisheries and associated habitat present in the North Fork John Day River made it a high priority for inclusion in the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984. The redd counts in the Wilderness tend to be higher than those portions outside of Wilderness. This is due to the highly-oxygenated, cold, clear water flowing over excellent spawning gravel, plus the adequate amount of large woody material in the river creating diverse habitat for fish. Additionally, the amount of river drainage under Wilderness protection contributes importantly to maintaining cold water temperatures in the lower North Fork John Day River.

Overall, the spawning, rearing, and holding habitat for anadromous and resident salmonid fish is good throughout this river corridor. There is a fair amount of granitic (spawning) gravels and cobble, and boulder-sized substrate; the latter contributing to the habitat for invertebrate fish food. Sufficient finer (sandy) substrate conditions exist due to the granitic parent material in the headwaters. There is a plentiful amount of large woody debris in the river which helps to diversify habitat and create pools.

A stream survey on the North Fork John Day River is planned to provide more specific data on the fishery habitat and substrate quality.

Finding

The exceptional high quality and importance of the fisheries habitat and its resident and anadromous fish populations and diversity qualifies it as an outstandingly remarkable value. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record.

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

The wildlife population is diverse and thought to be generally stable. The North Fork John Day River drainage serves as a major migration route for big-game species. Approximately 2,500 Rocky Mountain elk (an indicator species) use the drainage to migrate from their summer range in the Elkhorn Mountains to their winter range in Bridge Creek Wildlife Area. Another 1,000 mule deer utilize the drainage for a similar migration route. A small population of white-tail deer reside in the dense, brushy, mosaic-type habitat found at lower elevations.

Documented sightings of black bear, cougar, bobcat, and wolverines have been made in the river drainage. By the number and frequency of sightings, it is thought that both the black bear and bobcat populations are moderate. Less is known about the others; populations most likely are low.

Numerous sightings of bald eagles (listed as a threatened species) wintering along the North Fork John Day River around the confluence of Camas Creek have been documented. Golden eagles have been sighted and osprey perch and nest trees can be found along this stretch of river as well.

There is a variety of woodpeckers found in the river corridor, specifically pileated woodpeckers (an indicator species of old-growth habitat). Goshawks (another indicator species) and great gray owls also utilize the area, as well as small mammals such as mink and beaver. It is probable that river otter also reside here.

Habitat

In general, excellent wildlife habitat exists in Wilderness, while those portions of river corridor outside of Wilderness tend to be in fair condition. In the upper reaches, a 20,000 acre sheep allotment has been vacant for many years; the last known time the area was grazed by domestic animals was in the 1950's. Therefore, the natural wet meadows in this upper portion are near pristine, and provide high quality habitat for big-game, hawks, owls, and small mammals. The riparian condition is very good in Wilderness.

Impacts from resource use and management such as timber harvest, mining, road building, and fire suppression have degraded portions of the river corridor, generally outside of Wilderness. Some of the flat, open meadows and/or riparian areas have been impacted by recreational use.

The amount of dead and dying trees due to insect infestations and recent fires have created very good habitat for a variety of woodpeckers and great gray owls. The burned areas also provide a diversity of habitat which is excellent for foraging deer and elk.

Finding

The importance of the habitat and its resulting wildlife species diversity qualifies this resource to be considered an outstandingly remarkable value. The expanse of designated Wilderness provides significant high quality habitat for species which require a large area for their survival. This finding agrees with the Congressional Record.

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, or are eligible for inclusion, in the National Register of Historic Places.

Evaluation of the Present Situation

Gold mining is a long- and well-established activity along the North Fork John Day River, and continues today. It was the primary activity which first brought substantial numbers of people to the Blue Mountains in the 1860's, and evidence of this "gold rush" still exists along the river.

Gold occurs in the placer sand and gravel deposits along the river. Many of the mounds of hand-stacked boulders and thousands of feet of ditches and flumes are testimony to the 1860's gold rush that produced an estimated \$5,000,000. Additional evidence of this rich history includes various structures for habitation and use, mines, prospect holes, and other related developments. Other minerals such as silver, copper, lead, zinc, chromite and manganese have also been produced in small quantities.

Peavy Cabin, just outside the Wilderness boundary, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. It was built around 1934 by the Dean of the School of Forestry of Oregon State University who conducted experimental forestry studies on a 40-acre tract of surrounding forest. It is currently used as a Forest Service administrative site.

Finding

Much settlement of this part of the Elkhorn Mountains and surrounding valleys is tied to the gold mining activity which occurred in the North Fork John Day River corridor. It was the early settler's pursuit of this ore which makes the area so rich in history. This preliminary finding agrees with the outstandingly remarkable value determination in the Congressional Record for the (historic) cultural resource.

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

The North Fork John Day River corridor had been used by the southern Plateau Indians. In particular, ancestors of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) are said to have used this area heavily in prehistoric times for hunting, fishing, camping, root digging and berry picking. However, surveys on federal land in the river corridor have not identified more than a few prehistoric sites.

Finding

Since no extensive cultural resource inventories have been completed for the North Fork John Day River, it is undetermined what level of significance prehistoric use had in the corridor. In the meantime, known and discovered sites are protected under existing statutes, regulations and policy. The historic values in the corridor are the basis for maintaining 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

The North Fork John Day drainage is included within the ceded boundaries of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indians (Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Tribes). In response to the draft resource assessment, CTUIR provided information that they have an extensive array of documented usual and accustomed use sites for fishing, hunting, camping, root digging, berry picking, and other cultural and traditional uses. The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indians are said to have pursued "usual and accustomed" activities/sites in this area as well.

Finding

No extensive cultural resource inventory has been completed by the Forest Service on the North Fork John Day River and the tribes have not indicated there are any regionally unique sites in the corridor. 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. In particular, the significance of the anadromous fish runs in the North Fork John Day River and the CTUIR's assertion that the usual and accustomed use sites are extremely important to their tribe and others belonging to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

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 the Wild and Scenic River management plan development to see if this value meets the criteria for an outstandingly remarkable rating.

OTHER SIMILAR VALUES

Additional river-related values were considered during the assessment process, including but not limited to hydrologic, paleontologic, botanic, and ecologic resources. Preliminary information on these "other similar values" was considered as well as responses to the draft resource assessment suggesting the potential of botany and ecology having significant value(s). Botany and ecology experts were again consulted; both consider the North Fork John Day River drainage typical for the Elkhorn Range (Blue Mountains). At this time, no known sensitive, threatened, or endangered plant species exists in the corridor. Cougar Meadows, the proposed Research Natural Area, is, however, notable for its "old growth" aspen community.

Hydrologic, botanic, ecologic, and paleontologic, and other resource values, if notable in any way, are included in the discussions of the major value areas such as scenery, fisheries, etc. At this time, none have warranted an outstandingly remarkable value status, but they will continue to be evaluated throughout the management planning process.