

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Wilderness

Instant Study Areas

Oregon

April 1979

This report announces a proposed decision that five instant study areas (ISAs) in Oregon do not have wilderness characteristics. A final decision will be made after a 60-day public comment period.

The five areas and the district offices which administer them are:

Lost Forest Research Natural Area -- Lakeview District

Western Juniper Research Natural Area -- Prineville District

Little Sink Research Natural Area -- Salem District

Brewer Spruce Research Natural Area -- Medford District

Douglas-Fir Research Natural Area -- Coos Bay District

If you would like to submit comments, you may send them to the district office which administers the area. Addresses are:

Lakeview District Office
P.O. Box 151
Lakeview, Oregon 97630

Prineville District Office
P.O. Box 550
Prineville, Oregon 97754

Salem District Office
P.O. Box 3227
Salem, Oregon 97302

Medford District Office
310 West Sixth Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

Coos Bay District Office
333 South Fourth Street
Coos Bay, Oregon 97421

You may also submit comments at public meetings to be held at the following locations:

LAKEVIEW: May 9, 7:00 PM, Lakeview Community Center Basement, 11 North "G" Street.

KLAMATH FALLS: May 14, 7:00 PM, County Library, 126 South 3rd.

BEND: May 19, 9:30 AM, Pilot Butte Junior High School Cafetorium, 1500 NE Penn Avenue.

PORTLAND: May 16, 3:00 PM and 7:30 PM, BLM Oregon State Office basement conference room, 729 NE Oregon Street.

SALEM: May 16, 1:30 to 4:30 PM and 7:00 to 9:30 PM, Salem Heights Hall, 3505 Liberty Road South.

GRANTS PASS: May 9, 7:00 PM, Josephine County Courthouse, Room 156, 500 Sixth Street.

COOS BAY: May 16, 9:00 AM, Southwestern Oregon Community College, Tioga Hall, Empire Lakes.

What are Instant Study Areas?

When Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to report to the President on the suitability or unsuitability of BLM lands for preservation as wilderness, it set two deadlines. For most BLM lands, the Secretary has until 1991 to report to the President. For lands in instant study areas, however, the Secretary must report to the President by July 1, 1980. Instant study areas are defined by law as research natural areas and primitive areas established prior to passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act on October 21, 1976.

Contiguous Roadless Lands

The report to be submitted to Congress in July 1980 on the Western Juniper ISA and portions of the Lost Forest ISA will not constitute a final recommendation on the areas' suitability for wilderness designation. The Western Juniper ISA is part of a roadless area of almost 5,000 acres, and portions of the Lost Forest ISA are included in roadless areas of more than 5,000 acres. An inventory to determine whether these contiguous lands have wilderness characteristics will require more time than is available within the July 1980 reporting deadline for ISAs. Therefore, the Western Juniper ISA and those portions of the Lost Forest ISA which comprise parts of larger roadless areas will be reexamined in conjunction with the larger roadless areas. The proposed decision being reported at this time is that these two ISAs, when considered alone, do not have wilderness characteristics.

The other three ISAs will not be reexamined in a later wilderness review. Relatively small areas of land eligible for wilderness review are contiguous to the Brewer Spruce and Douglas-Fir ISAs, so the contiguous lands are included in the current inventory. The proposed decision being announced at this time is that these two ISAs and the contiguous lands eligible for wilderness review do not have wilderness characteristics.

The Little Sink ISA is surrounded by private land.

Determination of Wilderness Characteristics

BLM's intensive inventory process was used to make the preliminary determination of whether the instant study areas have wilderness characteristics. The process is described in a handbook obtainable from any BLM office.

Description of Instant Study Areas

Lost Forest

The area is located in Lake County, 80 miles north of Lakeview and 15 miles northeast of Christmas Valley. It contains 8,960 acres of public land.

The terrain is flat to gently rolling, with occasional bluffs and rock outcrops rising 100 to 200 feet above the general plains. Sand dunes have formed in portions of the area. Vegetation includes ponderosa pine, western juniper, sagebrush, other shrubs, and native grasses. The ponderosa pine is unique in that it is an isolated stand perpetuating itself in an area of limited rainfall. This is the primary reason why the research natural area was established.

The area is traversed by a north-south road and two east-west roads. The roads divide the area into five parcels ranging in size from 600 to 2,500 acres. Several ways also exist in the area. Logging in the early 1950's left stumps scattered throughout the ponderosa pine stands. A large outcrop in the southcentral part of the area has been scarred by off-road vehicles. Picnickers and campers have compacted the soil and left fire pits and refuse.

None of the five roadless parcels in the area are of sufficient size to make practicable their preservation and use as wilderness. Because of the roads and ways and evidence of past logging and off-road vehicle use, the area does not appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude because of the roads, lack of topographic screening, and limited size of the area. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Western Juniper (Horse Ridge)

The area is located 19 miles southeast of Bend and one mile west of Horse Ridge Summit on U.S. Highway 20. It contains 600 acres of public land.

The area is located on Horse Ridge, which rises above the surrounding basalt plateau. The vegetation is comprised of western juniper, big sagebrush, threadleaf sedge, bitterbrush, bluebunch wheatgrass, and other native shrubs and grasses. The research natural area was established to preserve a nearly pristine example of the western juniper/big sagebrush/threadleaf sedge vegetative community.

Works of man within the area are limited to a way in the northeast corner and a second way in the southeast corner. The sounds of traffic on U.S. Highway 20 and off-road vehicles in the BLM-managed Millican Valley off-road recreation vehicle area can be heard in the instant study area. The recreation vehicle area is less than two miles from the ISA.

The area is not of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use as wilderness. The works of man are substantially unnoticeable within the area. However, the area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude because of its limited size and the noise from the highway and recreation vehicle area. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Little Sink

The area is located just south of Falls City and adjacent to Camp Kilowan Camp Fire Girls" Camp. It contains 80 acres of public land.

The terrain is comprised of moderate to steep slopes containing slump basins, scarps, and hummocky surface caused by frequent mass soil movements. The area contains mixed young-and old-growth Douglas-fir forests, mixed stands of Douglas-fir and big-leaf maple, cattail marshes, and skunk cabbage bogs. The research natural area was established to preserve the diversity of vegetation found in an area of considerable land-sliding.

Timber has been removed from approximately five acres in the area. Primitive foot trails extend into the area. Some adjacent lands have been logged, and the buildings of Camp Kilowan are located adjacent to the area. A county road is located 900 feet northwest of the area.

The area is not of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use as wilderness. The works of man are substantially unnoticeable within the area. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation because of its limited size and the influence of activities on adjacent lands.

Brewer Spruce

The research natural area is located 10 miles northeast of Cave Junction and 7 miles north of Oregon Caves National Monument. It contains 210 acres. It is contiguous to approximately 1,500 acres of roadless public land eligible for wilderness review.

The terrain of the research natural area and adjacent roadless lands is rugged, with steep slopes and numerous rock outcrops. The summit of a small mountain, Little Grayback Peak, is located in the research natural area. The area includes a wide variety of plants. Forest stands are intermixed with brush fields and rock outcrops. The research natural area was established because it exemplifies a high-elevation, mixed conifer forest containing large amounts of Brewer spruce and associated brush fields found in the Siskiyou Mountains. Brewer spruce and Alaska yellow cedar grow here at the extreme edge of their range. Other trees in the area include Douglas-fir, white fir, Shasta red fir, western white pine, and Port-Orford-cedar. The Pacific Yew is the dominant shrub in much of the area.

Logging roads form the boundaries on three sides of the area. A small portion of the area contains unregenerated clearcuts. Most of the surrounding land is managed for commercial timber production, and many clearcuts can be seen from the area.

The works of man are not substantially unnoticeable in most of the area. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Much of the area is less than one-half mile wide, and steep slopes restrict travel to ridgetops. Dense vegetation in some portions provides screening but precludes travel off trails. The area is not of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use as wilderness.

Douglas-fir (Cherry Creek)

The research natural area is located in Coos County, 14 miles northeast of Coquille and 9.5 miles north of Cherry Creek County Park. It contains 590 acres. It is contiguous to 50 acres of public land eligible for wilderness review; 10 of the contiguous acres are part of a lightly developed day-use recreation site.

The topography is comprised of a complex system of dissected ridges and valleys. Slopes are moderate to steep. Cherry Creek flows through the area. Stands of old-growth Douglas-fir/western hemlock forest are growing in the area. The research natural area was established because its forests typify Douglas-fir/western hemlock stands growing on soils derived from sedimentary rocks in the Coast Range.

The only evidences of man's work within the area are wood tables, trails, pit toilets, and signs in portions of the day-use recreation site contiguous to the research natural area. Some lands adjacent to the area have been clearcut, but the clearcuts are not visible from most of the area because of the dense vegetation.

The area is not of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use as wilderness. The area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. Because of its limited size, the area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

LOST FOREST INSTANT WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

LEGEND

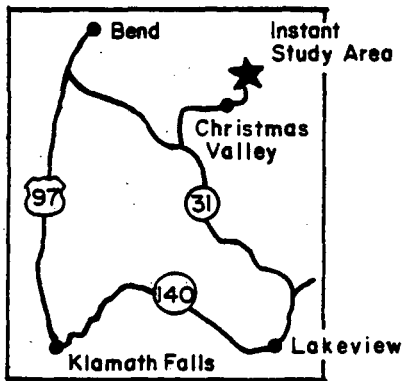
●—●—●— Research Natural Area

~ Road

SCALE: 1/2 Inch = 1 Mile

20 Miles to
Christmas Valley

GENERAL LOCATION MAP



15 Mile to
Christmas
Valley

County Road

15-4F

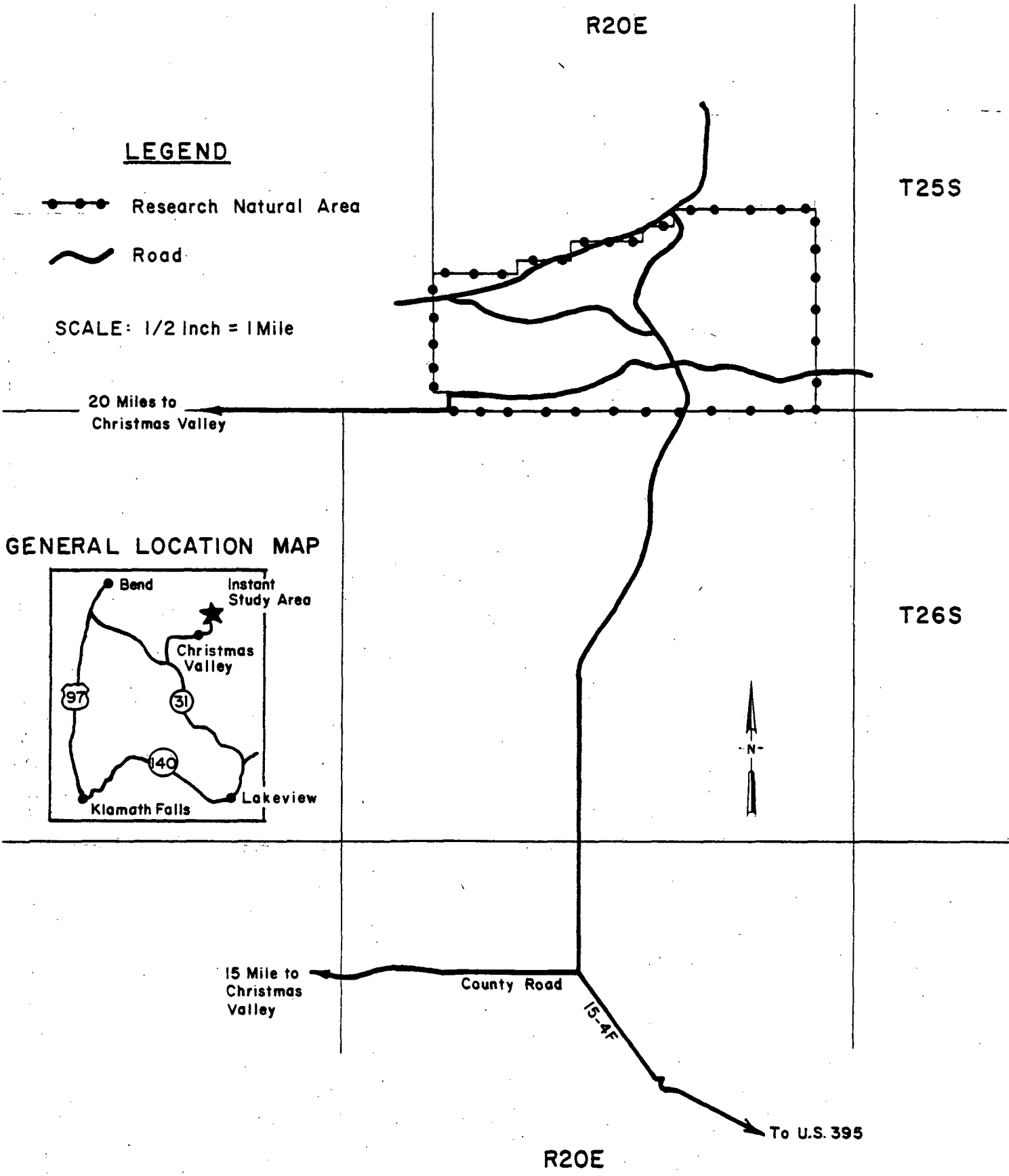
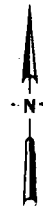
To U.S. 395

R20E

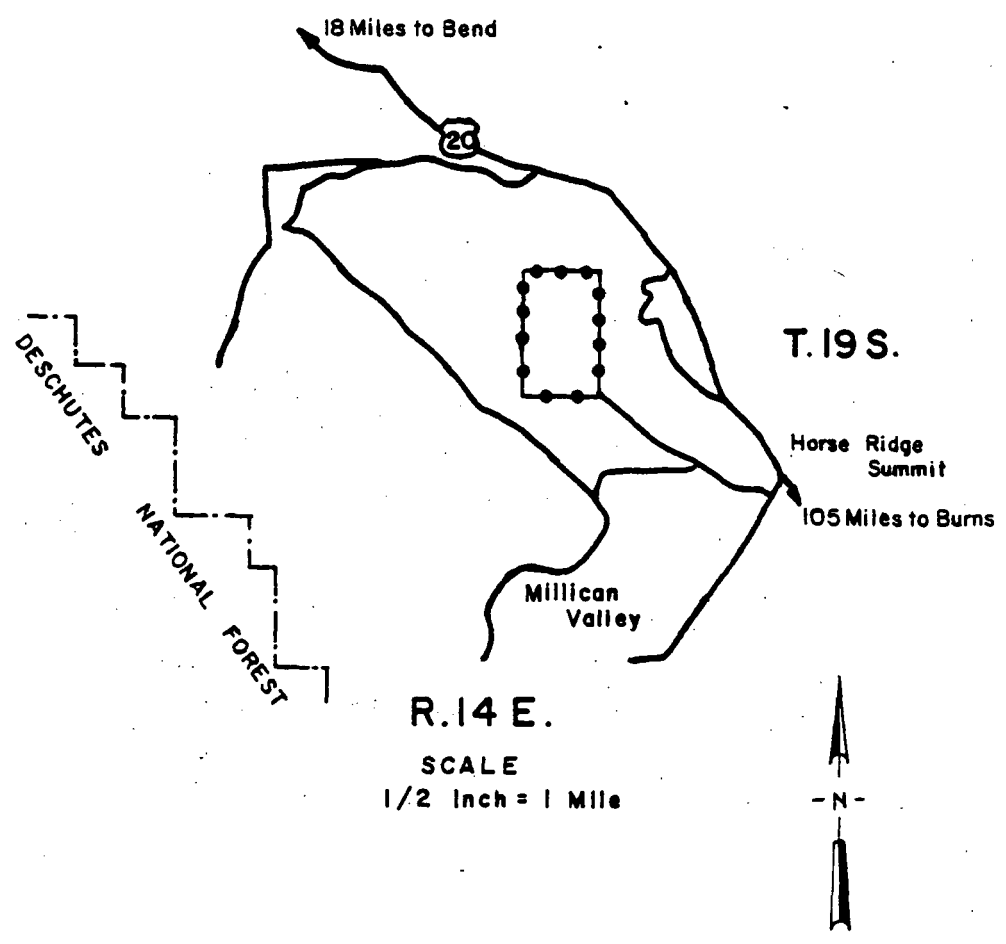
R20E

T25S

T26S





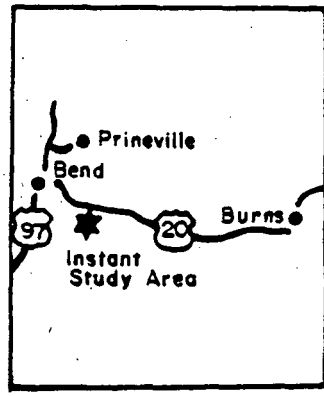
WESTERN JUNIPER INSTANT WILDERNESS STUDY AREA



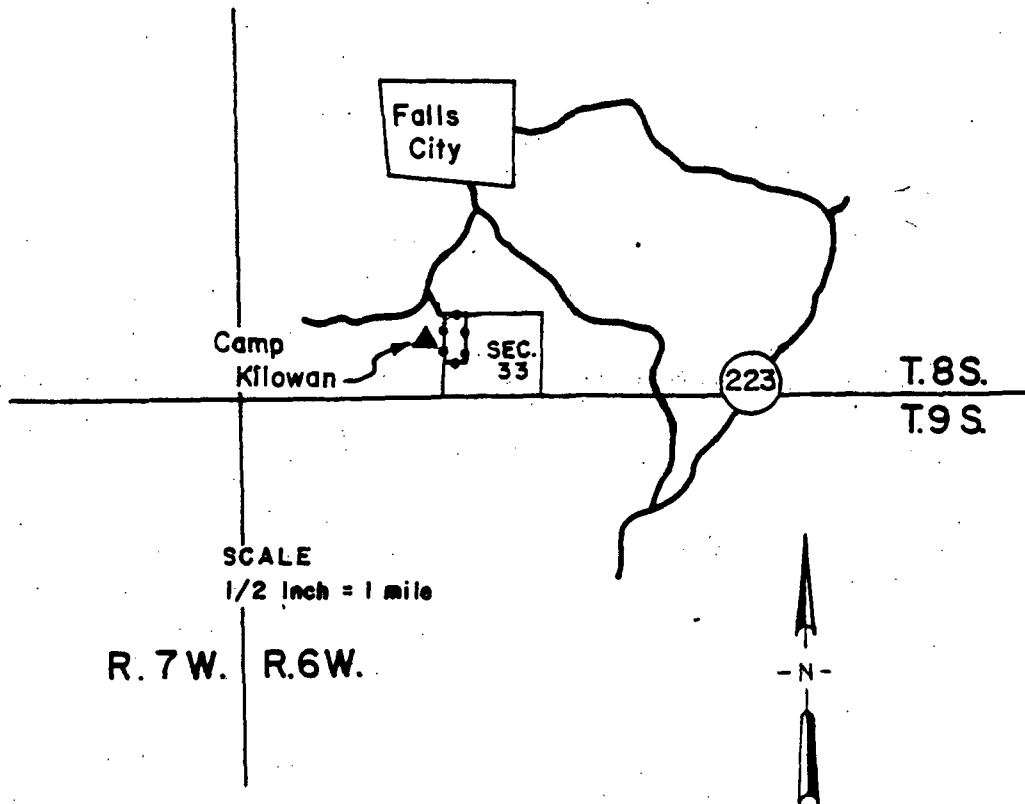
GENERAL LOCATION MAP

LEGEND

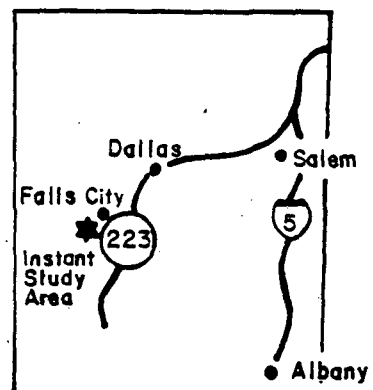
-  Research Natural Area
-  Road





LITTLE SINK INSTANT WILDERNESS STUDY AREA



GENERAL LOCATION MAP

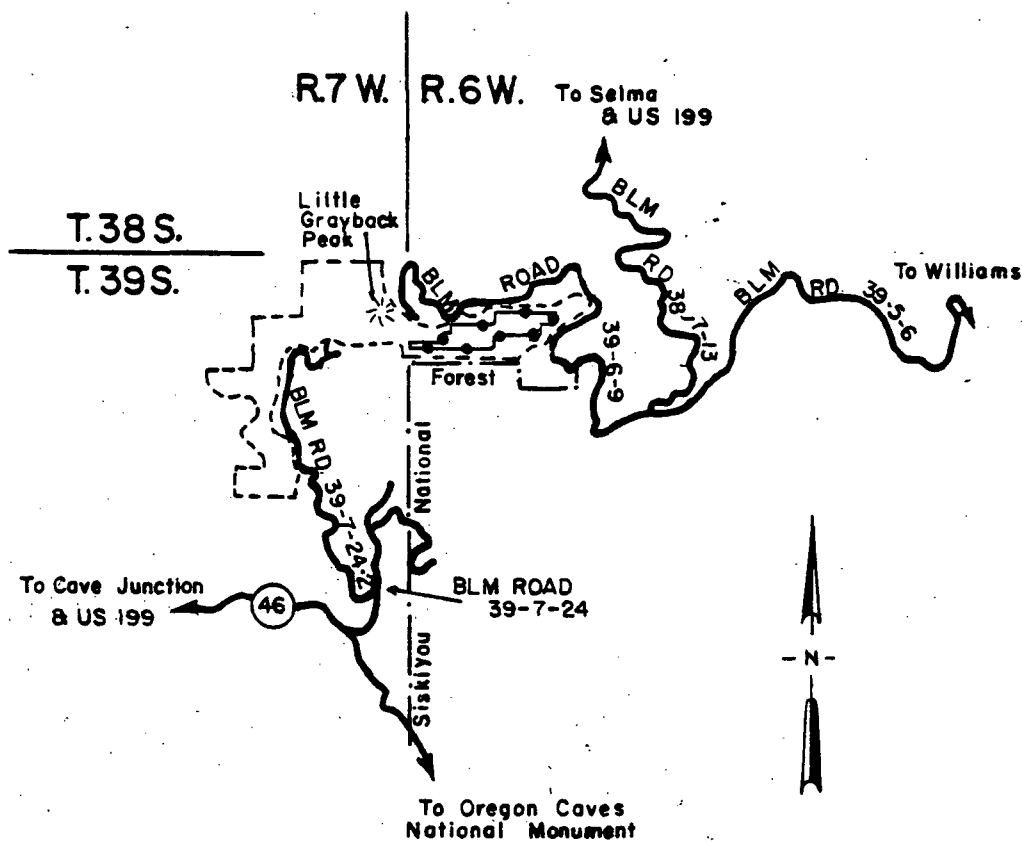


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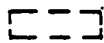


-  Research Natural Area
-  Road

This Research Natural Area is Surrounded
By Private Land.

BREWER SPRUCE INSTANT WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

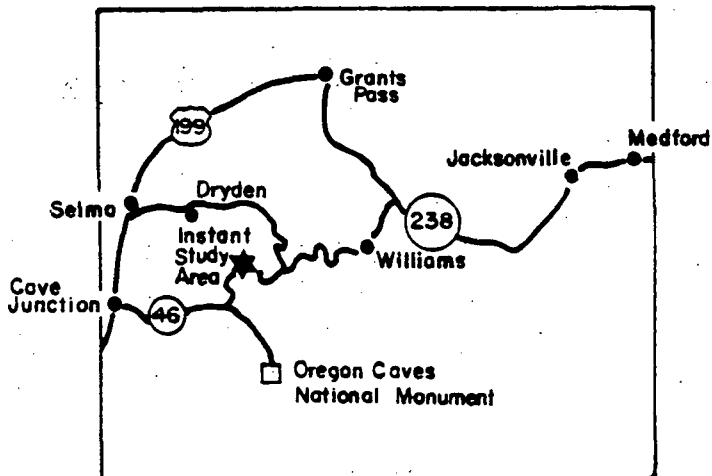


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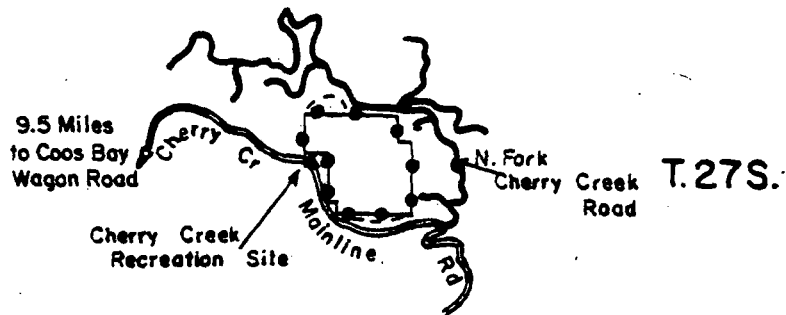
-  Contiguous Roadless Land Eligible For Wilderness Review
-  Research Natural Area
-  Road

SCALE: 1/2 Inch = 1 Mile

GENERAL LOCATION MAP

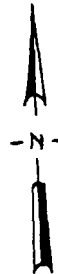


DOUGLAS FIR INSTANT WILDERNESS STUDY AREA






R.10W.

SCALE
1/2 inch = 1 mile



LEGEND

-  Contiguous Roadless Land Eligible For Wilderness Review
-  Research Natural Area
-  Road

GENERAL LOCATION MAP

