



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Blue Mountain  
Ranger District

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**File Code:** 1950  
**Date:** March 10, 2002

Dear Forest User:

The Blue Mountain Ranger District has completed the Blue Aquatic—Culvert Replacement Environmental Assessment (EA) enclosed in this package. The District is offering the document for a 30 day public review and comment period which begins March 12, 2003 and ends at close of business on April 11, 2003.

This EA analyzes the effects of implementing road crossing improvements within the Blue Mountain Ranger District portion of the Galena Watershed including: culvert replacement, replacing culverts with rocked fords, and installing armored drain dips. This project is being implemented to allow all life stages of threatened and sensitive fish species to pass through streams in the Vinegar Creek, Vincent Creek and Granite Boulder subwatersheds and to reduce sediment in stream channels. The project area is located approximately 30 air miles northeast of John Day, Oregon.

Alternative 2, the proposed action, would replace old culverts that are fish barriers with open bottomed arch culverts, or box culverts with open bottoms that simulate natural streambeds. The reason for this project is to remove existing fish passage barriers at 8 culvert sites in Granite Boulder Creek, Vinegar Creek, and Vincent Creeks and to address potential erosion problems at 3 other culvert sites in Vinegar Creek and Vincent Creeks. These 3 sites are being treated because they may produce damaging sediment to fish bearing portions, downstream of the locations in case floods occur. Granite Boulder Creek, Vinegar Creek, and Vincent Creeks are all tributaries of the Middle Fork of the John Day River. The EA may also be viewed at the Forest website at: [www.fs.fed.us/r6/malheur](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/malheur)

Comments on the analysis should be addressed to: Blue Aquatics—Culvert replacement, Michael Montgomery, District Ranger, and mailed to P.O. Box 909, John Day, OR 97845. Written comments must be postmarked and oral comments need to be received within 30 days of this notice, as set out in the 36 CFR 215 Appeal Regulations, effective January 3, 1994. This public notice is appearing in the Blue Mountain Eagle, John Day Oregon, March 12, 2003.

If you have any site-specific issues or concerns with this proposal, please send your response to me by **April 11, 2003**. The identification of your issues or concerns is an important step in the environmental analysis process and I welcome your input. For additional information or clarification, contact James Kelly-Project Leader, Brian Lynch-District NEPA Coordinator, or myself at (541) 575-3000.

Sincerely,

/s/Michael L. Montgomery  
District Ranger

Enclosures:  
Environmental Assessment and Appendices

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