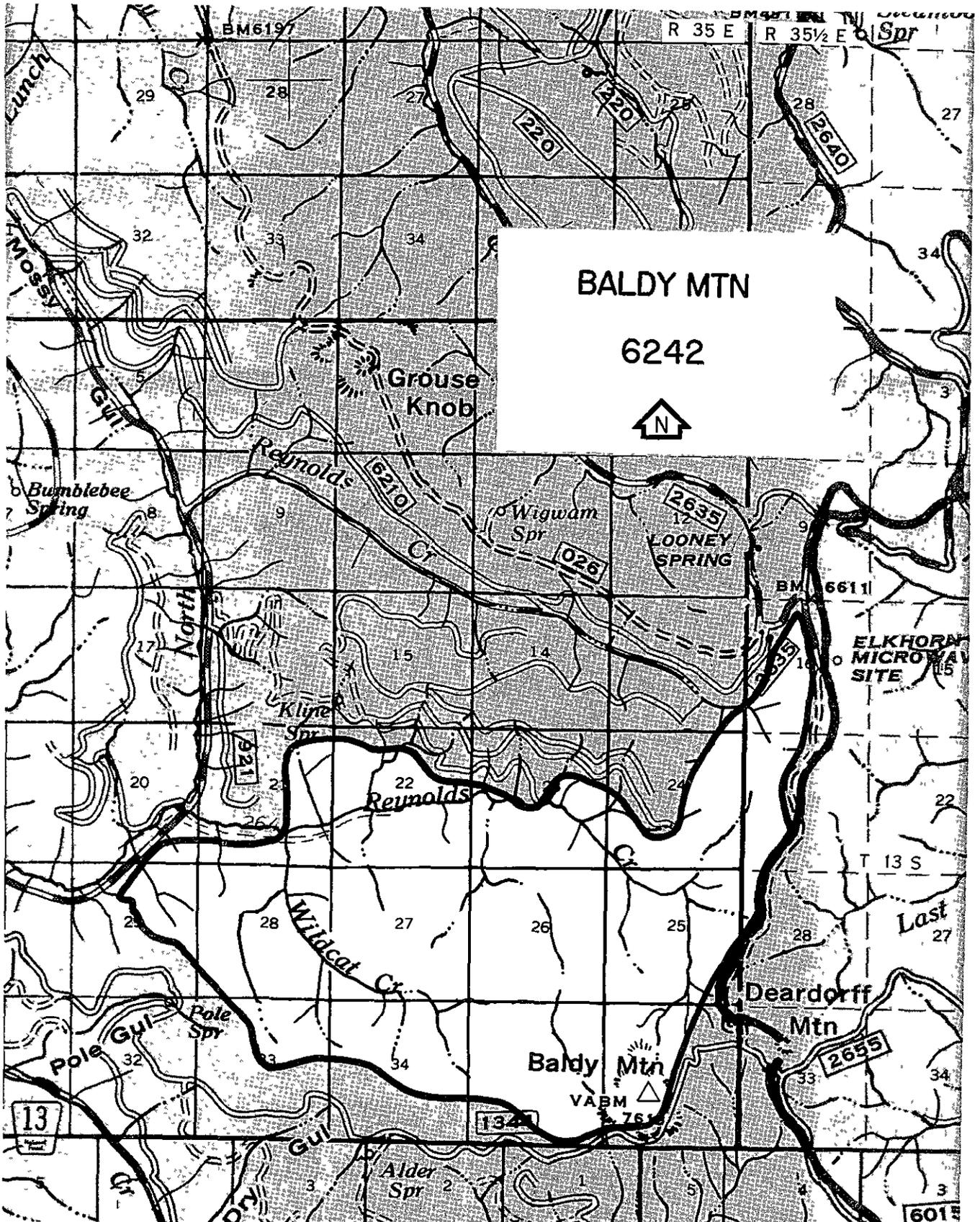


FIGURE C-3



**D. BALDY MOUNTAIN - 6,431 Acres**  
**(RARE II No. 6242)**

**1. Description**

**a. History** This area was identified in the RARE process and additional area added in the RARE II process Under direction in the John Day Planning Unit Plan and RARE II Final Environmental Impact Statement, this area has been managed for nonwilderness uses

**b Location and Access** The area is located in the northern part of the Prairie City Ranger District and bounds the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest on the east (T 15 S., R 35 E , of the Willamette Meridian)

Access is by secondary Forest roads surrounding the area Reynolds Creek Trail follows Reynolds Creek on the north edge for 1-1/2 miles.

**c. Geography and Topography** The area is a moderately steep to very steep, heavily forested north slope of Baldy Mountain and adjacent ridges and subridges broken by two streams--Reynolds Creek and Wildcat Creek (a tributary to Reynolds Creek) which drain into the John Day River. See Figure C-3

**d. Geology and Soils** The geology consists of hard-rock formations covered with a thin mantle (typically less than 24 inches) of volcanic ash from historic Mount Mazama (present day Crater Lake) The bedrock is primarily from the Columbia River Group which consist of hard basalt and andesite with soft to moderately hard tuffaceous rhyolite interflows. There is a small area near Baldy Mountain where the bedrock has not been identified.

The soil is typically a silt loam textured volcanic ash over a gravelly and cobbly loam subsoil. The ash surface soil typically ranges in depth from 6 to 24 inches.

**e Vegetation** About 98 percent forested, the area supports extensive stands of mixed conifers with inclusions of ponderosa pine on the open, less steep benches Steep northern exposures hold dense mixed conifers Riparian vegetation exists intermittently along Reynolds Creek About 1,800 acres meet the Pacific Northwest Region's definition of old growth.

**f. Current Uses** Hunting and fishing are the primary activities in this area which receives only light recreation use (see Table C-2)

The area provides summer habitat for deer and elk, old growth within the area is habitat for the pine marten and pileated woodpecker Reynolds Creek provides spawning habitat for steelhead trout

The area provides 104 Animal Unit Months of forage for livestock in the Reynolds Creek allotment. However, cattle rarely, if ever, utilize this portion of the allotment due to dense tree vegetation and lack of access, except that the Reynolds Creek riparian area receives heavy use along its lower portion.

The major attraction of the area is the opportunity for hunting and fishing in an unroaded area with old-growth forest

## 2. Wilderness

### Capability

- a. Manageability and Boundaries      The current RARE II boundaries would be difficult to manage, the former RARE boundaries follow more clearly defined topographic features
- b. Natural Integrity      All ecosystems in the area are intact. However, lack of fire has encouraged fir encroachment under the ponderosa pine stands. Under natural conditions, low-intensity wildfires would have selectively maintained ponderosa pine understories
- c. Naturalness      The area appears very natural to users. The effects of fire exclusion are too subtle to be noticed by most users
- d. Opportunity for Solitude      The opportunities for solitude are good particularly near the center of the area and in the lower elevations and within the draws
- e. Primitive Recreation and Challenge      The Primitive recreation opportunities are very limited due to the small size of the area. Opportunities for challenge are limited to an area on the north side of Baldy Mountain where mountaineering is a potential activity
- f. Special Features      Threatened, Endangered, or Sensitive plant or animal species are not known to exist in the area. No surveys have been conducted in this area. There is a low probability of occurrence of cultural sites as verified by a cultural resource inventory survey along Reynolds Creek

### 3. Availability for Wilderness

- a. Resource Potentials      The area currently provides roaded natural and semiprimitive motorized recreation opportunities (see Table C-3), and has a capability of providing 12,916 Recreation Visitor Days per year (See Table C-4)

There are 5,000 acres of forested land which are tentatively suitable for timber management activities. These timber stands are primarily mixed conifer with some ponderosa pine and lodgepole pine. The average overstory age is 140 years, the average understory age is 65. There is a standing volume of 65.89 million board feet (11.52 million cubic feet). With the use of intensive timber management techniques, 240 thousand cubic feet (1,373 thousand board feet) would be contributed to the annual allowable sale quantity in the first decade. The long-term sustained yield capacity from this area would be 285 thousand cubic feet per year.

The area has no known locatable mineral potential and contains no mining claims. The U.S. Geological Survey does not indicate a potential for oil and gas or for geothermal resources.

- b. Management Considerations      There are no power withdrawals, irrigation systems, or impoundments within the area. There is an electronic site and powerline special-use near the area. There is one administrative withdrawal.

Indian paint fungus is present and may be found in all size classes of the fir species. Much of the Douglas-fir (especially that found on the rockier, drier soils) is infected with dwarf-mistletoe. Mistletoe patches of varying severity can be found. Root rots are present to varying degrees but are not considered a problem.

Due to high amounts of Douglas-fir and other fir species in the area, all the timber stands are highly susceptible to tussock moth and western spruce budworm. Western Spruce budworm is presently in the area, and in some cases, is quite severe. Western pine beetle can be found in the area, but is generally confined to a few old-growth ponderosa pine trees of low vigor. Mountain pine beetle outbreaks are occurring in lodgepole pine.

#### 4. Wilderness Evaluation

The Strawberry Mountain Wilderness lies 10 miles to the southwest, the Monument Rock Wilderness lies 10 miles to the southeast, the North Fork John Day Wilderness is 24 miles to the northwest, and the Black Canyon Wilderness is 55 miles to the west. The Glacier Mountain roadless area lies 5 air miles due south. Ecosystems of this area are already represented in the Strawberry Mountain and Monument Rock Wildernesses. The Baldy Mountain roadless area would provide additional recreation opportunities.

Bend and Ontario, Oregon, are the nearest minor metropolitan areas (120-150 miles). Portland, Oregon and Boise, Idaho are the nearest major metropolitan areas (180-280 miles).

In the 1979 RARE II study the area received 128 comments favoring wilderness, 2,579 comments favoring further planning, and 3,435 comments opposing wilderness designation.

In recent Forest planning public involvement, Baldy Mountain was among the group of areas receiving a low level of response. In addition, those comments on this area were 5.3 to 1 opposed to wilderness designation. Among these, there was some support for continued roadless management.

#### 5. Environmental Consequences

Table C-7 displays the various management area assignments for this area by alternative.

##### a. Vegetation/Trees

Significant changes in tree sizes, stand density, and composition are expected to occur in all alternatives except C-Modified. The predominantly mixed conifer old-growth stands would be harvested over time in Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, I, and NC, with silvicultural prescriptions for shelterwoods and clearcuts. The 760 acres of designated old growth will be retained as such in most of these alternatives. Alternative NC retains approximately 560 acres of old growth. Tree vigor and age-class distribution would be improved through understory stocking level control. Risk of loss to insects and/or diseases would be reduced. The actual acres affected by timber harvest would vary between these alternatives. These changes would not occur until the second decade under Alternative F.

Under Alternative I, timber harvests would be on a non-scheduled basis and would be used only to meet a wildlife and/or fish habitat objectives. When timber harvesting is warranted silvicultural prescriptions will be designed to meet these objectives utilizing both even-aged and uneven-aged management techniques. The environmental changes, although similar to those in Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC, as expressed in the above paragraph, would not occur as rapidly as in these other alternatives.

In Alternative C-Modified, tree stands would be managed for uses other than timber production. This would occur on the entire area in Alternative C-Modified. The old-growth trees and understory would be left in a natural state. Naturally occurring wildfires would be suppressed, further encouraging more fir encroachment under the ponderosa pine stands.

b. Vegetation/Grass and Shrubs

In all alternatives, except C-Modified, forage for livestock and wildlife is expected to increase where the overstory timber is harvested and stocking level control are achieved in the understory. Forage species such as elk sedge and pinegrass will increase as tree canopies are reduced. Changes in forage species composition are expected when introduced grass species are seeded following timber harvest. Openings created by clearcuts will increase forage production even more and improve present cover/forage ratios for big game. All of these forage increases are considered short term on transitory range such as this, since forage production will decrease as tree canopies close and shade the understory plants. Changes as a result of Alternative F would not occur until the beginning of the second decade.

In Alternative C-Modified, forage production is expected to remain at present levels, and may decrease as fir tree species increase under the ponderosa pine stands.

c. Wilderness

Alternative C-Modified would preclude timber harvest on all of the area but would permit motorized vehicle use. Future wilderness consideration would remain a possibility for the area within these boundaries. Except for motorized vehicle use, wilderness experience expectations would be met and the area would continue to appear very natural to users.

In Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, I, and NC, users would see timber harvest activities, new road construction, and increased motorized vehicle use. However, under Alternative I, road construction would be minimized with newly constructed roads being obliterated following timber harvest. Future wilderness consideration would be foregone by the end of the first decade for all alternatives except F, by the end of the second decade for Alternative F.

d. Recreation

Hunting would continue as the primary recreation activity under all alternatives. Alternative C-Modified would provide a semiprimitive motorized recreation opportunity and would offer a more natural environment to users than other alternatives, while Alternative I would provide semiprimitive nonmotorized recreation opportunity. Moreover, access during periods other than summer would be limited by the weather.

In all other alternatives, recreation experiences would be in a roaded modified setting. Road access would be available to more kinds of vehicles over a longer period of time. These changes would occur after the first decade for Alternative F.

e. Scenery

Scenic variety and the panoramic view from Baldy Mountain would be maintained under Alternative C-Modified, and to a lesser degree under Alternative I. Under Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, I, and NC, viewers would see evidence of a managed forest including clearcuts and shelterwoods. With Alternative I, harvest units would be limited in size to 10 acres or less and shaped to provide for a natural appearing setting. The effects on scenery in the long term would be less old growth to view, more access roads, and less naturalness. The effects of Alternative F would not occur until after the first decade.

In Alternative C-Modified, most of the present scenery would be maintained and no significant changes are foreseen barring a major outbreak of insects, diseases, or catastrophic fire.

f. Water, Riparian, Fisheries

The riparian vegetation, anadromous fish habitat, and water quality of Reynolds Creek would be least affected should Alternative C-Modified, or I be selected, although management standards would adequately protect these resources under all management alternatives. There would be increased accessibility and use in the other alternatives as a result of timber harvest and road construction. These effects would be seen after the first decade for Alternative F

g. Cultural Resources

All alternatives are similar in effects on cultural resources. There is no discernible difference between alternatives when considering existing regulations, laws, and management standards. Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC present the greatest risk of inadvertent damage to the resource. They also present the greatest opportunity for discovery and interpretation of cultural resources. These risks and opportunities would not occur under Alternative F until the beginning of the second decade.

h Soils

Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC present the greatest risk of inadvertent damage to the soils as well as acceptable amounts of compaction as a result of harvest activities. All of the alternatives adequately protect the resource through application of management standards. This risk would not occur under Alternative F until the beginning of the second decade.

TABLE C-7  
BALDY MOUNTAIN MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE  
(Acres)

	NC <sup>1/</sup>	Alternatives				
		A	B-Mod	C-Mod	F	I-Preferred
1 General Forest	N/A	933	4,846		4,874	873
2 Rangeland		32	40		32	5
3 Riparian Areas		285	276		240	86
4A Big game Winter Range						
4B Big game Winter Range Enhancement						
5. Bald Eagle Winter Roost						
6A Strawberry Mt. Wilderness						
6B Monument Rock Wilderness						
6C Pine Creek						
7 Scenic Area						
8 Special Interest Area						
9 Research Natural Area						
10 Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized						
11 Semi-Primitive Motorized				6,431		
12 Developed Recreation						
13 Old Growth	N/A	760	760		760	
14. Visual Corridors						
15 Unit Plan Wildlife Emphasis Areas	N/A	3,930				
16. Minimum Level Management		491	509		525	87
17 Byram Gulch Municipal Supply Watershed						
18. Long Creek Municipal Supply Watershed						
19 Administrative Sites						
20 Wildlife Emphasis Areas with Scheduled Harvest						
21. Wildlife Emphasis Area, Non-Scheduled Harvest						5,380
22. Wild and Scenic River						
TOTAL ACRES	N/A	6,431	6,431	6,431	6,431	6,431

<sup>1/</sup>The Timber Management Plan, upon which the No Change Alternative is based, was developed in 1979. The plan was not an integrated plan and, consequently, did not address all resource uses and outputs in an integrated manner. As a result, these acreages are not available.