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CHAPTER 3: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

There is no change to the affected environment as described in the FEIS for the following resources: Forest Vegetation, Soil Productivity, Recreation, Areas Without Roads, Visual Quality, Fish and Aquatic Habitat, Aspen, Fuels/Air Quality, Heritage Resources, Transportation, Non-Forest Vegetation, Economics and Social, and Range.

Water Resources

Replace in the FEIS page 78, last paragraph, (the date of the TMDL has been moved to 2006).

As part of the implementation of this act, the State of Oregon maintains an inventory of water quality limited streams, based on standards developed by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). This inventory is called the 303(d) list. Identification of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the North Fork John Day Sub basin (which contains the Rimrock analysis area) has begun. The Umatilla National Forest is cooperating with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality on the Total Maximum Daily Load, which is scheduled for completion in 2006. A Water Quality Restoration Plan (WQRP) was developed with this project to address the water temperature and sedimentation parameters that failed to meet State standards within Big Wall, Indian, Porter, and Wilson creeks. The Water Quality Restoration Plan will be included in the final Total Maximum Daily Load.

Wildlife Habitat

Insert in FEIS page 86, following the first sentence.

The quantity and quality of wildlife habitat was assessed using aerial photographs, district records, and field reconnaissance. Where quantitative information is available, it is presented. Vegetative information used in this evaluation was obtained from the District Silviculturist, either through personnel communications, specialist report, or a vegetative database

In this wildlife supplement, “analysis area” refers to management area C3 within the Rimrock Analysis Area (EIS Map 1). “Project Area”, includes the affected area of each action. When “affected area” is used it is referring to specific stand/unit or portion there of where a proposed activity or action will occur.

Insert in FEIS page 86, following third complete paragraph, before the Management Indicator Species (MIS) heading.

General Habitat

Late and Old Structure

Old Growth Habitat

Old growth (OG) tree habitat occurs in units from 75-300 acres in size and is distributed across the Forest so that each 13,000 to 2,000 acre area contains a habitat unit. Unit size and distribution are variable and depend on the vegetation type and Forest indicator species (Forest Plan 1990). Old growth units are identified in the Forest Plan as C1 – Dedicated Old Growth or C2 – Managed Old Growth. Old growth units were initially classified as suitable and/or capable habitat for a selected Forest indicator species. Units are to be maintained as old growth tree habitat for appropriate wildlife species (Forest Plan 1990).

The analysis area does not contain any C2 – Managed Old Growth areas. However, there are two C1 – Dedicated Old Growth units near the central and eastern boundary of the analysis area. They are identified as MAS-1011 (OG-1821) and MAS-1035 (OG-1821) in the GIS layers that identify management areas on the Forest (GIS coverage, mas) and “old growth” polygons (GIS coverage, og). The southern old growth unit (MAS-1035) is 145 acres in size and generally occurs south of the Wall Creek drainage. The unit to the north (MAS-1011) is 158 acres in size and occurs along a small drainage, north of Wall Creek. These two units total 303 acres and are greater than 0.8 miles apart. Other C1 units occur several miles outside of the analysis area and would not be affected by the proposed action.

Both C1 units are classified as “Pileated Woodpecker Suitable”. However, these units would not be considered suitable pileated woodpecker habitat because the vegetative composition is a dry forest type and pileated woodpeckers prefer moist forest types. In addition, the units do not meet the Forest-wide old growth standards (FP, 4-56) for pileated woodpecker because the distance between the two units is greater than the recommended maximum quarter mile identified in the Forest Plan (1990). Because these units are in a dry forest types and occur below 4,000 feet, they are also not suited for the pine marten or the northern three-toed woodpecker. These units should be re-classified in the database as “Other Inventory Old Growth” and maintained for other wildlife species (goshawk, Cooper’s hawk, white-headed woodpecker, etc.) associated with old growth habitat conditions (Forest Plan 1990).

The C1-Dedicated old growth units within the analysis area would not be affected by the proposed action because the C1 units are outside the affected area. In addition, the current composition, structure, or function of the C1 units would not be altered. Therefore, no further analysis of the environmental effects will occur for the C1 management areas within this analysis.

Late and Old Structural Stages

The wildlife standards in the Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2 (Umatilla Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment #11)(1995), requires the evaluation of late and old structural stages relative to the quantity of late and old structural stages within or outside the historical range of variability. For the purpose of this standard, late and old structural stages include old forest multi-strata and old forest single-stratum.

Late and old forest conditions in the dry forest type consisting of old forest multi-strata and old forest single-stratum, occupy about 61 percent of the Lower Wall drainage. As stated previously (FEIS page 48-51), for the dry forest type, the multi strata old forest in the Lower Wall drainage is about 36 percent above the historical range of variability and single-layer old forest is about 9 percent below the historical range of variability (FEIS Table 3-1, page 49). Approximately six stands covering about 270 acres of late and old structure could be affected by the proposed action. Other late and old structural stands in the analysis area would remain unaffected by proposed activities.

Connectivity

Other wildlife standards in the Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2 (1995), requires late and old structural stands and Forest Plan old growth areas to be connected to each other in the watershed. For this standard, connective habitat does not necessarily need to meet the same description of suitable habitat, but provide free movement, between late and old structural stands and old growth areas, for various wildlife species associated with a late and old structural condition.

For the majority of the watershed, late and old structural stands and old growth areas are connected to each other with medium (9 to 14.9 inches diameter breast height) to large trees (greater than 14.9 inches diameter breast height), stands with variable widths greater than 400 feet, and attached with 2 or more different connections. The least connected areas would include stands where the tussock moth infestation occurred, reducing the stand density. In addition, coniferous forest habitat in the analysis area is naturally fragmented by grasslands, shrub stands and juniper woodlands. These non-forest stands may provide a natural barrier to free movement for species associated with coniferous forest types. Overall, late and old structural habitat remains connected across the landscape.

Dead Wood Habitat

The Umatilla Forest Plan (1990) established standards and guidelines for dead standing and downed wood for various levels of biological potential in each management area. The plan was amended in 1995 by the Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2. This amendment requires the retention of snags and green replacement trees greater than or equal to 21 inches diameter breast height (or the representative diameter of the overstory layer trees if they are less than 21 inches diameter breast height), at 100 percent potential population levels of primary cavity excavators (Thomas 1979). Based on the amended direction, "new" snag requirements and replacement tree objectives were developed for the five vegetative working groups on the Forest and documented in the memo, "*Interim Snag Guidance for Salvage Operation*" (Umatilla National Forest 1993). Only one of these working groups is applicable to this project – South Association. Table

W-1 compares the snag standard to the existing condition of the equivalent dry upland forest, based on vegetation plot data.

For fine scale analysis, stand exam data is used at the project level. Stand exams are used to estimate current dead standing tree (snags) and replacement tree (green/live) densities in the affected area of the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area. Trees (dead and green) were tallied for diameter classes greater than or equal to 10 inches, 12 inches, and 20 inches diameter breast height, for comparison with the Forest Plan (Amended) snag standards and replacement tree objectives. All of the stand exams from the affected area occur in the dry upland forest PVG/working group. The moist and cold upland forest types will not be affected by the proposed activities in the C3 management area. Therefore, dead standing trees and replacement trees for the moist forest type and cold type will not be analyzed further because they do not occur in the affected area.

More recently, the Decayed Wood Advisor (DecAid) by Mellen et al. (2003) has become available. This information source provides guidance to land managers evaluating effects of forest conditions and existing or proposed management activities on organisms that use snags, downed wood, and other wood decay elements. DecAid is a statistical summary of empirical data from published research on wildlife and deadwood. Data provided in DecAid allows the user to relate the abundance of deadwood habitat for both snags and logs to the frequency of occurrence of selected wildlife species that require dead wood habitat for some part of their life cycle. This data is displayed at 30, 50, and 80 percent tolerance level. Tolerance levels are estimates of all individuals in the population that value a particular parameter (e.g., snag density, snag diameter, downed wood density, etc. (Mellen et al. 2003)). DecAid evaluations are best performed at the landscape, watershed, or larger scale. In this analysis, DecAid will be used to compare the current condition with each alternative for snag density.

For coarse scale analysis or when fine scale data is not available, data from current vegetative surveys (CVS) is used for the assessment. CVS data is used in this analysis to estimate snag densities at the watershed scale to compare with DecAid snag densities. In addition, downed wood evaluations use CVS data to compare Forest Plan (Amended) standards for downed wood at the watershed scale. Current vegetative surveys (Brown 2003) are permanent plots on a 1.7-mile grid that samples the vegetative condition across National Forest Lands. At each plot/point, a variety of vegetative information is collected including, plant association, live trees, dead trees, and downed wood, with diameters and heights for each species tallied. For this assessment, dead standing tree and downed wood data was collected on 70-forested CVS plots/points in the Wall Creek watershed. The C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area occurs in the southeastern portion of the watershed.

CVS plot/point data was initially collected between 1993-1995 and re-measured on selected plots in 1997 and 1999. The tussock moth outbreak occurred in 2001-2002, essentially after the 1999 re-measurement of CVS plots in the Wall Creek watershed. Potential increases in dead standing trees or downed wood resulting from the tussock moth outbreak are not necessarily reflected in the current CVS plot data. However, any potential increase in snags or downed wood resulting from the tussock moth outbreak may be insignificant at the watershed scale, because the plot/point data is averaged across PVGs to arrive at an estimated density at the watershed scale (66,780 acres). A very large amount of snags or downed wood, over a larger area, would need to occur to

significantly increase snag densities at the watershed scale. At best, snag and downed wood estimates might be slightly higher than the current CVS inventory estimate for snags and downed wood, but not significantly higher than the current estimates used in this analysis.

Current vegetative survey estimates used in this analysis are not statistically valid at the project scale or for a specific site within the watershed. Snags and downed wood tend to occur on the landscape as singles, groups, clumps, patches or piles resulting from natural tree mortality and disturbances, such as fires, insect and disease, ice storms, and drought. These random events result in an uneven distribution of snag and downed wood across the landscape or watershed. However, estimates derived from CVS inventories are appropriate at the watershed scale, providing statistically valid estimates for the entire watershed.

Dead Standing Trees

As a result of the tussock moth infestation in the analysis area, dead standing trees (snags) occur as scattered singles, clumps, and/or patches in the affected area. Snag densities will be affected in stands proposed for treatment. Dead standing trees outside treated areas will remain unaffected by the proposed action.

Based on recent stand exams in the affected area of the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area, snag densities exceed Forest Plan standards in all diameter classes for the dry forest potential vegetation group/working group. In general, snag densities in the affected area are about twelve-times higher than the Forest Plan standard.

Table W -1. Forest Plan Standards for Average Dead Standing Tree Density Compared with the Existing Condition in the Rimrock affected area.

<u>Umatilla Forest Plan (Amended 1995)</u>			<u>Rimrock Plot Data</u>		
<u>Working Group</u>	<u>Diameter Class_Groups (Inches DBH)</u>	<u>Snag Density (#/acre)</u>	<u>Potential Vegetation Group</u>	<u>Diameter Class_Groups (Inches DBH)</u>	<u>Snag Density (#/acre)</u>
South Association	≥ 10	2.25	Dry Upland Forest	≥ 10	27
	≥ 12	1.50		≥ 12	17
	≥ 20	0.14		≥ 20	1

For the DecAid evaluation, relative to Wall Creek watershed, the ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir forest wildlife habitat type (Mellen et al. 2003) was selected because it is the dominant forest type in the portion of the watershed. The structural condition class (Mellen et al. 2003), small/medium/large was selected because they represent the variety of structural stages affected in the proposed action. In addition, there is no difference in the cumulative species curves for snag density between the three structural stages. The pileated woodpecker and the white-headed woodpecker are the only two species identified on the cumulative species curve for snag density, for this habitat type and structural condition. The white-headed woodpecker will be used for the comparison because it is a better representative of the dry forest type in the project area than the pileated woodpecker.

Snag densities were derived from current vegetation survey data for the dry upland forest potential vegetation group and compared to the white-headed woodpecker cumulative species curves for snag density in DecAid in the Wall Creek watershed. Estimates for snag densities exceeded the 80 percent tolerance level for the white-headed woodpecker in the greater than or equal to 10-inch (9.85 inch) diameter group, when compared with the DecAid cumulative species curves for snag density. For the greater than or equal to 20-inch (19.7 inch) diameter group, the snag density was greater than the 50 percent tolerance levels for the white-headed woodpecker (Table W-2).

Table W-2. **DecAid Tolerance Levels for the White-headed Woodpecker in the Ponderosa Pine/Douglas-fir Forest¹ type.**

Diameter Group (Inches DBH)	Snag Density (#/acre)			CVS Data Wall Creek Watershed
	DecAid Tolerance Levels 30%	50%	80%	
≥ 10	0.3	1.7	3.7	8
≥ 20	0.5	1.8	3.8	2

¹ For the small/medium/large trees structural condition class and snag density data from current vegetation surveys in the Wall Creek watershed

Snag Replacement Trees

As a result of the tussock moth outbreak in the analysis area, green/live trees do occur throughout the analysis area, but are more scattered or form dense patches in the affected area. Based on recent stand exams within the affected area of the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area, replacement trees (green/live) exceed Forest Plan (Amended 1995) objectives in all diameter classes for the dry forest potential vegetation group/working group (Table W-3). Overall, snag replacement trees in the affected area are about three-times higher than required in the Forest Plan. Live/green replacement trees will be affected in stands proposed for treatment. Snag replacement trees outside treated units will remain unaffected by the proposed action.

Table W-3. **Average Snag Replacement (green/live) Tree Density for the Affected Area in the C3 portion of the Rimrock Analysis Area.**

Umatilla Forest Plan (Amended 1995)			Rimrock Affected Area		
Working Group	Diameter Groups (Inches DBH)	Snag Density (#/acre)	Potential Vegetation Group	Diameter Groups (Inches DBH)	Snag Density (#/acre)
South Association	≥ 10	22.8	Dry Upland Forest	≥ 10	47
	≥ 12	15.3		≥ 12	31
	≥ 20	1.7		≥ 20	5

Dead Downed wood

Downed wood densities will not be compared to DecAid, because “no wildlife data on downed wood cover is available for the wildlife habitat type and structural condition

class” (Mellen et al. 2003) used for this evaluation. Table W-4 compares the downed wood standard to the existing condition of the equivalent dry upland forest habitat type, based on current vegetation survey data (Brown 2003).

Dead downed wood is dependent on a wind event or a snag-creating disturbance (fire, disease, insect outbreak etc.), with snags eventually falling to the ground. Downed wood will remain on site until it decomposes or is burned up in a wildfire, resulting in a potential reduction of downed wood, until snag fall occurs again. As a result of the tussock moth infestation in the analysis area, downed wood occurs as scattered individuals, clusters or piles within the project area. Stand exams conducted in the affected area did not record data on downed wood density. For this analysis, current vegetation survey data was used to provide downed wood densities in the dry forest type of the Wall watershed including the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area. When compared to the Forest Plan standard (Amended 1995) for downed wood density, current estimates, at the watershed scale, exceed the Forest Plan standard for the dry forest potential vegetation group/species group by 2 to 5 pieces per acre (Table W-4). Dead downed wood could be affected in stands proposed for treatment and downed wood outside treated areas will remain unaffected by the proposed action.

Table W-4. Forest Plan Standards for Dead Downed wood (logs) Density Compared with the Dead Downed wood Density in the Lower John Day River/Kahler Creek Watershed

<u>Umatilla Forest Plan, (Amended 1995)</u>			<u>CVS¹ Data in the Lower John Day River/Kahler Creek Watershed</u>		
<u>Species Group</u>	<u>Minimum Log Size Criteria</u>	<u>Downed wood Density (pcs per acre)</u>	<u>Potential Vegetation Group</u>	<u>Minimum Log Size Criteria</u>	<u>Downed wood Density (pcs per acre)</u>
Ponderosa Pine	Small end Diameter	3 to 6	Dry Upland Forest	Small end Diameter	8
	≥12 inches			≥12 inches	
	Piece Length			Piece Length	
	≥ 6 feet			≥ 6 feet	
	Total Length		Total Length		
	20-40 feet		20-40 feet		

¹ Current Vegetation Survey last updated in 1999.

Management Indicator Species

In FEIS, page 86, Replace the first paragraph under Management Indicator Species and replace Table 3.18.

The Forest Plan designates Management Indicator Species to represent larger groups of animals associated with the major habitat types on the Forest (Table W-5). Habitat conditions for management indicator species, as well as for all other wildlife species on the Forest must be managed to maintain viable populations (Forest Plan, p. 2-9).

Table W-5. **Wildlife Management Indicator Species on the Umatilla National Forest (Forest Plan 1990, p2-9)**

<u>Species</u>	<u>Habitat Types</u>
Rocky Mountain Elk	General forest habitat and winter range
Pileated woodpecker	Dead/down tree habitat (mixed conifer) in mature and old stands
Northern three-toed woodpecker	Dead/down tree habitat (lodgepole pine) in mature and old stands
Pine marten	Mature and old stands at high elevations (\geq 4,000 ft.)
Primary cavity excavators	Dead/down tree (snag) habitat

Insert in FEIS page 87, following Primary Cavity Excavators and before the heading Neotropical Migratory Birds.

Management Indicator Species specific to the C3 management area

Rocky Mountain elk and primary cavity excavators are the Management Indicator Species that inhabit the C3 management area of the Rimrock analysis area. Although the pileated woodpecker, three-toed woodpecker, and pine marten are designated in the Forest Plan as Management Indicator Species, preferred habitat for these species does not occur in the C3 analysis area. Therefore, no analysis of environmental effects to these species will be performed.

The pileated woodpecker will not be managed in the analysis area because; preferred habitat (foraging and nesting) includes dense moist forest types (mix conifer), in large patches of late seral stages with a high density of dead/downed wood habitat (Marshall et al 2003). The C3 analysis area primarily consists of dry forest types, predominately ponderosa pine and to a lesser extent Douglas-fir (FEIS, page 48). Dry forest types typically are dry, open stands with low densities of dead/downed wood. Dry forest types are not considered “suitable” for the pileated woodpecker. Preferred nesting and foraging habitat (suitable) for the Pileated woodpecker occurs outside the Rimrock Analysis area to the north and west. The pileated woodpecker will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the affected area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the pileated woodpecker

The northern three-toed woodpecker will not be managed in the analysis area because; preferred habitat (foraging and nesting) includes late successional, cold/moist forest types (lodgepole/mixed conifer) with high standing-wood density, generally in higher-elevations (Marshall et al 2003). The analysis area primarily consists of dry forest types, predominately ponderosa pine and to a lesser extent Douglas fir (FEIS, page 48). Dry forest types typically are dry, open stands with low densities of dead/downed wood and

generally occur at elevations less than 4,000 feet. Dry forest types are not considered suitable for the northern three-toed woodpecker. Preferred denning and foraging habitat (suitable) for the three-toed woodpecker occurs outside the C3 management area to the north and west. The three-toed woodpecker will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the affected area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the three-toed woodpecker.

The pine marten will not be managed in the analysis area because; preferred habitat (foraging and denning) includes late successional, moist forest types (mix conifer) near developed riparian areas with high downed wood densities, generally above 4,000 feet in elevation (Ruggiero et al. 1994). The analysis area primarily consists of dry forest types, predominately ponderosa pine and to a lesser extent Douglas fir (FEIS, page 48). Dry forest types typically are dry, open stands with low densities of dead/downed wood and generally occur at elevations less than 4,000 feet. Dry forest types are not considered suitable for the pine marten. Preferred denning and foraging habitat (suitable) for the marten occurs outside the Rimrock Analysis area to the north. The marten will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the affected area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the pine marten.

Rocky Mountain Elk

The Rocky Mountain Elk did not inhabit the Rimrock area until the late 1960's and early 1970's (R. Krein, ODFW, personal communication). The C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area is designated as big game winter range (Management Area C3). The State of Oregon manages a herd of approximately 200 to 300 elk that winter on this portion of the winter range. Winter foraging habitat for the elk consists of a variety of grasses and shrubs in the analysis area.

Approximately, 17 percent of the Rimrock analysis area consists of Management Area C3 – Big Game Winter Range and is part of the Monument winter range. The Monument winter range is the largest winter range (about 59,800 acres) on the Forest. It generally occurs on the southern portion of the Heppner Ranger District from Tamarack Creek to east of Potamus Creek. The evaluation criteria used to measure impacts to elk and their habitat are total cover, satisfactory cover, forage, and habitat effectiveness index. Open road density will be evaluated as a component of the habitat effectiveness index. These evaluation criteria are measured and compared within the individual winter range (Forest Plan, 4-152).

Currently, in the Monument winter range, satisfactory cover is 15 percent and total cover is 44 percent of the area. There are approximately 47 miles of open road in the winter range, resulting in an open road density of 0.5 miles per square mile for the area during the winter use period. The management area C3 does not prohibit road construction. Some roads in the winter range will remain open during the winter if they are needed as through routes or to provide access to private lands.

The big game habitat effectiveness model (Forest Plan, Appendix C) was used to predict the influence of forest management on elk and other big game species. The model is biologically based describing cover-forage; cover quality, and road factors to help indicate how effective an area will be in supporting big game. A basic assumption of the model was that potential big game populations were proportional to the Habitat

Effectiveness Index (HEI) for elk and deer (Forest Plan EIS, page IV-71). The index was intended to be a relative measure of effectiveness, and does not consider many factors (such as weather, predations, diseases, hunters, and harvest, etc) that would influence the “actual number” of elk (or other wildlife species) found on an area.” (Forest Plan EIS, page IV-71)

Habitat in the Monument winter range was evaluated and analyzed. The analysis resulted in a habitat effectiveness index value of 67 for the current condition. This value is the result of cover-forage not well distributed across the C3 Monument winter range, the low natural potential of the warm-dry ponderosa pine cover type to sustain satisfactory cover in the long-term across the winter range, and 47 miles of open road.

A habitat effectiveness value of 67 (current condition) is not consistent with the Forest Plan standard which states “Elk habitat will be managed on designated big game winter ranges to achieve a habitat effectiveness index on no less than 70, including discounts for roads open to motorized vehicular traffic as described in Wildlife Habitats in Managed Forest (Thomas and others 1979). The habitat effectiveness standard will be managed on an individual winter range basis.” (Forest Plan, 4-152)

A need to re-evaluate the habitat effectiveness model and habitat index values in the forest plan has been raised as part of the Rimrock analysis. Although these issues could be analyzed in an amendment process this approach was not carried forward because the process for forest plan revision started October 2003 and conducting two parallel processes is not practical. This potential need for change has been forwarded to the team responsible for revising the Forest Plan. During forest plan revision, management direction for habitat effectiveness index in the current plan will be validated, management direction no longer relevant will be deleted, and new management direction will be added to form a balanced management strategy for the next planning period.

Currently, the big game populations and management objectives set by the State of Oregon for the Heppner Wildlife Unit, including Monument winter range, are being met (R. Morgan, personal communication). In addition, forest recreation objectives for the C3 management area are being met.

Primary Cavity Excavators

This category refers to 15 bird species on the Umatilla National Forest that create holes for nesting or roosting in live, dead, or decaying trees. Secondary cavity users such as owls, bluebirds, and flying squirrels may use cavities later for denning, roosting, and/or nesting.

Table W-6. **Potential Primary Cavity Excavators in the Rimrock Analysis Area**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Habitat Community</u>^{1, 2}	<u>Nest Tree Size</u>²
Lewis' woodpecker	Ponderosa pine, riparian cottonwood, oak woodland, and burned stands.	13"– 43" DBH.
Red-napped sapsucker	Riparian cottonwood, aspen, conifer forests. Mid-high elevations.	11" DBH. Avg.
Williamson's sapsucker	Mid-high elevation mature or old conifer forests (ponderosa pine, fir, lodgepole pine, etc.) with large dead trees present.	27" DBH. Avg.
Downy woodpecker	Riparian cottonwood, willow, aspen, mixed deciduous, and mixed-conifer.	8" DBH. Min.
Hairy woodpecker	Mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, and adjacent deciduous stands.	17" DBH. Avg.
White-headed woodpecker	Open ponderosa pine or mixed conifer, dominated by ponderosa pine.	26" DBH. Avg.
Northern flicker	All forest types with older open forests and edges adjacent to open country.	22" DBH. Avg.
Mountain chickadee	Open canopy, ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine and other conifer forests.	4" DBH. Min.
Red-breasted nuthatch	Coniferous forests with mid to late seral stages.	12" DBH. Min.
White-breasted nuthatch	Mature ponderosa pine and mixed-conifer forest. Oak woodlands	12" DBH. Min.
Pygmy nuthatch	Mature to old ponderosa pine or mixed conifer with ponderosa dominant.	12" DBH. Min.

¹ Based on Johnson and O'Neil 2001.

² From Thomas 1979, Ehrlich et al 1988, Degraaf 1991, and Marshall et al 2003.

With the dry forest types dominating the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area and the limited amount of moist forest types, 11 of the 15 primary cavity excavators have the potential to occur in the analysis area. These species include Lewis' woodpecker, red-napped sapsucker, Williamson's sapsucker, downy woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, white-headed woodpecker, northern flicker, mountain chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, white-breasted nuthatch and pygmy nuthatch (Table W-6).

In general, habitat for primary cavity excavators consists of dead and/or dying trees in various size classes. Habitat can occur in a variety of vegetative communities with various structural conditions (Thomas 1979). Typically, existing and potential habitat can be found throughout the analysis area, except for non-forest areas and forest stands in the process of regeneration (stand initiation, and stem exclusion). Habitat for primary

cavity excavators will be evaluated in the *Dead Wood Habitat* section under *Dead Standing Trees*. Dead standing trees retained in the affected area will provide suitable habitat for primary cavity excavators in the affected area.

Neotropical Migratory Birds

Insert in FEIS page 87 following the first paragraph under the heading Neotropical Migratory Birds and before the section Dry Forest.

Neotropical migratory birds are those that breed in the U.S. and winter south of the border in Central and South America. Continental and local declines in population trends for migratory and resident landbirds have developed into an international concern. Partners in Flight (PIF) led an effort to complete a series of Bird Conservation Plans for the entire continental United States to address declining population trends in migratory landbirds. The primary goal of Partners in Flight Landbird Conservation Planning is to ensure long-term maintenance of healthy populations of native landbirds. Partners in Flight Conservation Planning provide the framework to develop and implement landbird conservation strategies by recommending conservation actions on the ground that may prevent the need for future listings. These plans include priority setting, establishment of objectives, conservation actions, and evaluation criteria necessary for bird conservation in the western hemisphere.

The Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan is used to address the requirements contained in Executive Order (EO) 13186 (January 10, 2001), *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*. Under Section 3(E) (6), through the National Environmental Policy Act, the Executive Order requires that agencies evaluate the effects of proposed actions on migratory birds, especially species of concern. Partners in Flight Conservation Planning allow the analysis of effects of proposed projects on neotropical migratory birds through the use of guidelines for priority habitats and bird species of concern (landbirds and migratory birds) for each planning unit. The conservation strategy does not directly address all landbirds species of concern, but instead uses “focal” species as indicators to describe the conservation objectives, and measures project effects in different “priority” habitats for the avian communities found in the planning unit. The conservation strategy identifies “priority” habitats and “focal” species for each planning unit in the nation. The Umatilla National Forest occurs in the Northern Rocky Mountain Landbird Conservation Planning Region, which includes the Blue Mountains sub-region and the Blue Mountains sub-province. Conservation planning for the Blue Mountains, Ochoco Mountains, and Wallowa Mountains sub-provinces is addressed in the *Conservation Strategy for Landbirds* in the Northern Rocky Mountains of Eastern Oregon and Washington (Altman 2000), hereafter referred in this section as the Strategy.

Table W-7. Priority Habitat Features and Associated Landbird Species for Conservation in the Northern Rocky Mountain Landbird Conservation Region of Oregon and Washington (Altman 2000)

<u>Habitat Type</u>	<u>Habitat Feature/Conservation Focus</u>	<u>Focal Species</u>
Dry Forest	Large patches of old forest with large trees and snags	White-headed woodpecker
	Old forest with interspersion of grassy openings and dense thickets	Flammulated owl
	Open understory with regenerating pines	Chipping sparrow
Mesic Mixed Conifer	Large snags	Vaux's swift
	Overstory canopy closure	Townsend's warbler
	Structurally diverse; multi-layered	Varied thrush
	Dense shrub layer in forest openings or understory	MacGillivray's warbler
	Edges and openings created by wildfire	Olive-sided flycatcher
Riparian Woodland	Large snags	Lewis' woodpecker
	Canopy foliage and structure	Red-eyed vireo
	Understory foliage and structure	Veery
Riparian Shrub	Willow/alder shrub patches	Willow flycatcher
Subalpine Forest	Subalpine Forest	Hermit thrush
Montane Meadow	Wet/dry meadows	Upland sandpiper
Steppe Shrublands	Steppe shrublands	Vesper sparrow

The Strategy discusses the migratory and landbird species of concern for the Northern Rocky Mountain Region and the Blue Mountain sub province. "Focal" species were selected and used to represent species of concern and priority habitats identified in the Strategy. Table W-7 identifies priority habitat, habitat features, and focal species identified in the Strategy (Altman 2000).

Habitat types and features will be used to evaluate affects of the proposed actions on migratory and landbird species. Those habitat types affected by the proposed action in the Rimrock analysis area include Dry Forest and Riparian Shrub. The remaining habitat types would not be affected because they do not occur in or adjacent to stands proposed for treatment, therefore, stand structure or composition would not be altered by the proposed actions. No further analysis of the environmental effects will occur for the mesic mixed conifer, riparian woodland, subalpine fir forest, montane meadow, steppe shrublands, aspen and alpine habitat types.

Insert in FEIS page 88, following the second sentence and before the Mesic Mixed Conifer (late successional) section.

Dry Forest Habitat

Dry forest habitat generally occurs throughout the C3 analysis area and would be specifically affected by the proposed actions. Habitat criteria for the dry type includes,

old forest single stratum stands, a mosaic of forest structural stages, openings and burned areas, Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines for snags with 0.7 to 20 inches diameter breast height, and 350-acre patches of old forest single stratum connected to another old forest single stratum patch. The habitat criteria listed here summarizes the biological objectives in Altman 2000, for the focal species representing the dry forest habitat type.

In general, the project area meets the dry forest habitat criteria. The late and old forest condition, old forest single stratum, is below the Historical Range of Variability (FEIS page 49) in the Lower Wall drainage. Approximately, 80 acres (3 units) of old forest single stratum stands would be thinned and maintained as old forest single layered after harvest. Three units (about 192 acres) of old forest multi-strata would be affected by the proposed action. Eventually, the multi layered stands will move into an old forest single story condition. The recent tussock moth outbreak has increased snag levels and resulted in little structural diversity. The analysis area has a variety of vegetative communities, interspersed among forest conifers, providing a natural mosaic, but also limiting the vegetation patch size. This condition also tends to naturally fragment the conifer vegetation in the analysis area, reducing the potential for connectivity to late and old structural stands. Potential habitat for the white-headed woodpecker, flammulated owl, chipping sparrow, and Lewis' woodpecker occurs in scattered locations throughout the C3 analysis area. All four species have been observed on the District. However, the white-headed woodpecker, flammulated owl, and Lewis' woodpecker are seen infrequently. The chipping sparrow is observed more often.

Insert in FEIS page 88, following the Unique Habitats section and before the Threatened and Endangered Species heading.

Riparian Shrub Habitat

This habitat type includes riparian shrubs (willow, alder, etc.) that occur along bodies of water (e.g., streamside, lakeside) or in association with wet meadows and wetlands (Altman 2000). The riparian habitat type generally occurs along creeks and streams in the analysis area and may occur adjacent to or within proposed actions. Riparian shrub habitat in the project area is more than 0.6 mile from residential areas and greater than 3 miles from high use cowbird areas. Habitat criteria for the riparian shrub type includes, shrubs occupy greater than 40 percent of the site, shrub cover is interspersed with open (herbaceous) areas, tree cover is less than 30 percent, and patch size is greater than 5 acres in size. The habitat criteria listed here summarizes the biological objectives in Altman 2000, for the focal species representing the riparian shrub habitat type.

In general, some stands in the project area meets the riparian shrub habitat criteria mentioned above. Generally, riparian shrub habitat is found adjacent to affected areas and or outside the affected area along streams and creeks in the project area. At most locations shrub cover occurs in scattered clumps, occupying less than 50 percent of the area. Shrubs are typically intermixed with open areas. As a result of the recent tussock moth outbreak, tree cover has decreased to less than 40 percent along streams in some locations; in other locations it remains greater than 40 percent. Generally, patch size is greater than 2 acres in size. Potential habitat for the willow flycatcher occurs along streams, at scattered locations throughout the analysis area. The flycatcher has not been documented but could occur, based on the vegetative composition and structure in the analysis area.

Insert in FEIS, page 88, before the heading Threatened and Endangered Species.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED, CANDIDATE, and SENSITIVE SPECIES

Federally listed species includes those identified as Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, or Candidate species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1999 and 2001). Sensitive species are those identified on the Regional Forester's (R6) Sensitive Animal List (USDA 2000) that meets National Forest Management Act obligations and requirements.

Sensitive species addressed on the Umatilla National Forest include those that have been documented or suspected (likely to occur, based on available habitat to support breeding pairs/groups) and occurring within or adjacent to the Forest boundary. Federally listed and sensitive species with the potential to occur on the Umatilla National Forest are found in Table W-8.

Based on District records, surveys, and monitoring, as well as published literature about the distribution and habitat utilization, federally listed species that may occur and the regionally sensitive species with the potential to occur in the analysis area include the Northern bald eagle, gray wolf and the gray flycatcher.

The painted turtle, peregrine falcon, upland sandpiper, yellow-billed cuckoo, California wolverine, Canada lynx, and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, have not been observed in the analysis area; and their preferred habitat does not occur in the affected area. None of these species would be affected by the proposed activities or alternatives. Therefore no further analysis of the environmental effects on these species will be performed.

Table W-8. **Status of Potential Threatened and Sensitive Species in the Rimrock analysis area.**

<u>Species</u>	<u>U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service</u>	<u>Regional Forester's Sensitive Animals</u>	<u>Umatilla NF Occurrence¹</u>
Painted turtle (Chrysemys picta)	-	Sensitive	S
Northern bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)	Threatened	-	D
American Peregrine falcon (Falco peregrine anatum)	-	Sensitive	S
Upland sandpiper (Bartramia longicauda)	-	Sensitive	S
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Coccyzus americanus)	Candidate	(Sensitive)	-
Gray flycatcher (Empidonax wrightii)	-	Sensitive	S
Gray wolf (Canis lupus)	Threatened	-	-
California wolverine (Gulo gulo)	-	Sensitive	D
Canada lynx (Lynx canadensis)	Threatened	-	-
Rocky Mtn. bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis)	-	Sensitive	D

¹ S = Suspected, likely to occur based on habitat availability to support breeding pairs/groups within Forest boundary.

D = Documented, reliable, recorded observation within the Forest boundary.

Threatened and Endangered

Insert in FEIS, page 88, after the third paragraph under the heading Threatened and Endangered Species.

Northern Bald Eagle - Threatened

Nest sites are typically, near a large body of water (rivers, lakes, etc.) that supports an adequate food supply (NatureServe Explorer 2002 and FWS 1986). In the Pacific Northwest recovery area, preferred nesting habitat for bald eagles is predominately an uneven-aged, mature, coniferous stands (ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir) or large black-cottonwood trees along riparian corridors (NatureServe 2002 and FWS 1986). Eagles usually nest in mature conifers with gnarled limbs that provide ideal platforms for nests.

The nest tree is characteristically one of the largest in the stand and usually provides an unobstructed view of a body of water (FWS 1986). In Oregon, the majority of nests are within 0.5 miles of the shoreline (Anthony and Isaacs 1989). Important prey species include fishes, birds, mammals, and carrion (NatureServe Explorer 2002 and FWS 1986).

An active bald eagle nest (Dry Creek bald eagle nest site) was found in May 1994, south of the Ant Hill Lookout. This is the only known active northern bald eagle nest on the Umatilla National Forest, and is one of three known recently occupied bald eagle nest sites in the Blue Mountains. The Dry Creek bald eagle nest site is outside the Rimrock analysis area but a portion of the C3 analysis areas occurs in the Bald Eagle Consideration Area (BECA). Wintering bald eagles are observed within the analysis area typically from December through mid-March each year. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the northern bald eagle is present in the analysis area (Anthony and Isaacs 1981). The North Fork John Day River is within easy access and could provide additional feeding and nesting habitat for eagles (Anthony et al. 1982).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved a Site-Specific Management Plan for the Dry Creek Bald Eagle Nest in December of 1999. This management plan allows harvest activity as close as one-half mile from this nest site. For more information on the bald eagle and the nest site see the Site-Specific Management Plan for the Dry Creek Bald Eagle Nest Site (Van Winkle 1999).

Insert in FEIS, page 88, following the last paragraph.

Canada Lynx – Threatened

Lynx occur in mesic coniferous forest that have cold, snowy winters and provide a prey base of snowshoe hare. Primary vegetation that contributes to lynx habitat is subalpine fir habitat types, where lodgepole pine is a major seral species, generally between 4,100-6,600 feet in elevation (NatureServe Explorer 2003, Ruediger et al 2000, Ruggiero 1999, and Verts and Carraway 1998). Secondary vegetation, when interspersed within subalpine forest may also contribute to lynx habitat; include (cool) moist grand fir and moist Douglas-fir habitat types (Ruediger et al 2000 and Ruggiero 1999). The nearest block of potential lynx habitat is about 35 miles east of Rimrock analysis area. Snow tracking surveys conducted across the District, since 1991, for wolverine, fisher, American marten and lynx did not identify lynx tracks on the District. Lynx have been observed rarely on the District, primarily near Arbuckle Mountain, about 20 miles northeast of the analysis area. Lynx have not been observed in the analysis area. The lynx will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred foraging and denning habitat does not occur in the analysis area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the lynx.

Insert in FEIS page 89, after the first paragraph.

Gray Wolf - Threatened

Habitat preference for the gray wolf is more prey dependent than cover dependent. The wolf is more of a habitat generalist inhabiting a variety of plant communities, typically containing a mix of forested and open areas with a variety of topographic features (NatureServe Explorer 2002, Ballard and Gipson 2000, Verts and Carraway 1998, and Witmer et al 1998). Wolves are strongly territorial, defending an area of 75-150 square

miles. Territory size and location is strongly related to prey abundance. Wolves prey mainly on large ungulates, such as deer and elk and to a lesser extent on small mammals. The gray wolf does prefer areas with few roads, generally avoiding areas with an open road density greater than one mile per square mile (NatureServe Explorer 2002, Ballard and Gipson 2000, and Witmer et al 1998). Natal dens typically occur as underground burrows, but can also be caves, or other types of shelter. Rendezvous sites are generally open areas. (FEIS 1998 and ABI 2000)

Habitat for this species does occur throughout the Umatilla National Forest and within the analysis area. Habitat quality is considered good because of the low open road densities and moderate ungulate population. Openings for potential natal dens or rendezvous sites occur throughout the analysis area.

The Gray wolf could occur in the C3 portion of the Rimrock analysis area, although use has not been observed or documented. In March 1999, a radio-collared female wolf, from the experimental, non-essential Idaho population, was captured near John Day and returned to Idaho (Cody 1999). In May of 2000, a collared wolf was struck and killed by a vehicle on Interstate 84 south of Baker City, and in October 2000, an uncollared wolf was found shot to death between Ukiah and Pendleton. All three animals were confirmed to be migrants from Idaho (USFW). Numerous other observations of wolves have occurred throughout the Forest over the last few years.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo - Candidate

Preferred habitat for the yellow-billed cuckoo includes thick, closed-canopy riparian forest (cottonwood) with an understory of dense brush (Csuti et al. 1997, NatureServe Explorer 2003, and Marshall et al 2003). Riparian habitat is usually composed of willows and cottonwoods, especially black cottonwood, along rivers, sloughs or marshes (Csuti et al. 1997, NatureServe Explorer 2003, and Marshall et al 2003). Studies in California suggest that patches of suitable habitat must be at least 37 acres in size but preferably 62 acres and include over 7.5 acres of closed canopy riparian forest (Csuti et al 1997 and Marshall et al 2003). Major rivers that sustain large blocks of cottonwood-willow habitat for breeding and /or foraging do not occur in the analysis area. The nearest river system capable of providing potential habitat occurs about 6 miles to the south along the North Fork of the John Day River. Habitat potential along the river is marginal, because of the limited amount and size of riparian blocks of cottonwood-willow habitat. In addition, the yellow-billed cuckoo has not been observed in the analysis area or on Umatilla National Forest. The yellow-billed cuckoo will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the analysis area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the yellow-billed cuckoo.

Region 6 Sensitive Species (Terrestrial)

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the second full paragraph.

California Wolverine - Sensitive

The **wolverine** prefers high elevation, conifer forest types, with a sufficient food source, and limited exposure to human interference (Forest Service 1994, Wolverine Foundation

(TWF) 2003). Natal denning habitat includes open rocky slopes (talus or boulders) surrounded or adjacent to high elevation forested habitat that maintains a snow depth greater than 3 feet into March and April (Forest Service 1994, TWF 2003). The wolverine is an opportunistic scavenger, with large mammal carrion the primary food source year-round. While foraging, they generally avoid large open areas and tend to stay within forested habitat at the mid and high elevations (>4,000') and typically travel 18-24 miles to forage/hunt (Forest Service 1994, TWF 2003). The analysis area does not contain high elevation forest types or open rocky slopes for natal denning habitat. Potential habitat for the wolverine could occur about 20 miles northeast of the analysis area near Arbuckle Mountain. Snow tracking surveys conducted across the District, since 1991, for wolverine, fisher, American marten and lynx has resulted in one suspected set of wolverine tracks (2/18/94) on the "Kelly Route" near the 2105 road on Ellis Creek. This was about 20 air miles east of the analysis area and about 8 miles south of Arbuckle Mountain. The wolverine has not been observed in the analysis area.

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the third paragraph.

The wolverine will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred denning habitat does not occur in the analysis area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the wolverine.

Peregrine Falcon - Sensitive

Suitable habitat for the **peregrine falcon** includes; various open habitats from grassland to forested in association with suitable nesting cliffs (NatureServe Explore 2002, Marshall 2003). The falcon often nests on ledges or holes on the face of rocky cliffs or crags. Ideal locations include undisturbed areas with a wide view, near water, and close to plentiful prey. Foraging habitats of woodlands, open grasslands, and bodies of water are generally associated with the nesting territory (FEIS 1998 and ABI 2000). Falcons are known to forage over large areas, often ten to fifteen miles from the eyrie. Suitable cliff nesting habitat does not occur in the analysis area, however, potential nesting habitat occurs near Tamarack Lookout, about 3 miles south and west of the analysis area. Potential foraging habitat occurs widely across the District and within the woodland and grassland types of the analysis area. Aerial surveys of potential nest sites were conducted on the District each year from 1991 through 1994, and again in 1997, peregrine falcon eyries were not observed. These surveys and additional ground surveys (up to and including year 2001) have failed to detect any peregrine falcons in the analysis area or on the District. Peregrine falcons have been observed foraging on the District during the fall migration (non-breeding season).

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the fourth paragraph.

The peregrine falcon will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred nesting and potential foraging habitat does not occur in the affected area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the peregrine falcon.

Gray Flycatcher - Sensitive

The gray flycatcher prefers woodland and shrubland habitats including, juniper woodland, tall sagebrush, bitterbrush, and mountain mahogany vegetative communities (Csuti et al. 1997, NatureServe Explorer 2003, and Marshall et al 2003). The gray

flycatcher also occupies open ponderosa pine and lodgepole stands with an understory of sagebrush or bitterbrush generally below 6,000 feet in elevation (Csuti et al. 1997 and Marshall et al 2003).

Juniper woodland and shrub habitat occurs as scattered patches throughout the analysis area. Habitat for the gray flycatcher, within the affected area, includes ponderosa pine with a shrubby understory. Although the habitat characteristics offer the potential for the species to occur, the gray flycatcher has not been observed in the analysis area or documented on the District.

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the fifth paragraph and before the Species of Interest heading.

Painted turtle - Sensitive

Preferred habitat for the **painted turtle** includes lakes, ponds, marshes, or low gradient, slow moving streams with a muddy or sandy substrate and aquatic vegetation (NatureServeExplore 2002, St John 2002, Csuti et al. 1997, and Johnson 1995). The painted turtle nests in soft soil in open areas up to 500 feet from water (NatureServe Explore 2002, St. John 2002, and Csuti et al. 1997). Lakes, ponds or marshes do not occur in or adjacent to stands proposed for treatment. A few stock ponds occur in the analysis area but will not be affected by the proposed activities because they are greater than 0.5 miles from the affected area. Streams in the area are generally moderate to high gradient with a very rocky, cobble substrate, making them unsuitable for painted turtles. In addition, painted turtles have not been observed in the analysis area or on Umatilla NF. The painted turtle will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the affected area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the painted turtle.

Upland sandpiper - Sensitive

Upland sandpiper habitat is primarily restricted to open tracts of grassland habitat with water or intermittent creeks nearby. This includes, large meadows and grasslands (1,000-30,000 ac), usually surrounded with trees (lodgepole pine and some ponderosa pine), or in the middle of sagebrush communities and generally at elevations from 3,400 – 5,000 feet (Csuti et al. 1997, NatureServe Explorer 2003, and Marshall et al 2003). Taller grassy areas are preferred for nesting and brood cover (NatureServe Explorer 2003). Foraging occurs in open meadows for invertebrates (Csuti et al. 1997, NatureServe Explorer 2003, and Marshall et al 2003). Relatively small to moderate sized, isolated grassy areas occur throughout the analysis area, however, sites are somewhat dry and at the lower end (3,000-4,000 ft) of the preferred elevation range for the species. The area cannot be considered potential habitat because of the dry site conditions in the analysis area. The affected areas are in forested stands and not in moist grassland habitat. In addition, the upland sandpiper has not been observed in the analysis area or on the District. Observations of the species have occurred more than 25 miles to the northeast near Ukiah and Bridge Creek State Wildlife Area. The upland sandpiper will not be affected by the proposed activities because suitable habitat does not occur in the analysis areas and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the upland sandpiper.

Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep - Sensitive

Preferred habitat for bighorn sheep consists of rugged, open to semi-open areas of coniferous grassland or grass/shrub plant communities that affords high visual contact with their surroundings. The sites should include occasional to frequent expanses of cliffrock/rimrock, and rocky outcroppings, this is especially important for lambing and escape from predators. Water is an essential requirement for bighorn sheep and in some cases may limit their distribution. Winter range generally consists of low elevation grasses and shrubs. The analysis area is primarily forested habitat with some shrub and grassland communities scattered throughout the analysis area. In addition, there is insufficient cliffrock/rimrock or rock outcrops for bighorn sheep in the limited amount of open areas of the analysis area. Potential habitat for bighorn sheep occurs about 10 miles east of the analysis area. Bighorn sheep do not occur in the analysis area. Bighorn sheep will not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the analysis area and the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

Species of Interest

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the Species of Interest heading.

These are species that are “of interest” to the public at the local or regional level, or were identified as a species of concern by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Many of these species are considered uncommon or their status is unknown in the Pacific Northwest. Table W-9 lists the species of interest that could occur, based on observations or potential habitat in the analysis area. Habitat requirement and current populations for some of these species are described below.

Table W-9. Species of Interest in Rimrock C3 Analysis Area

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Generic Name</u>	<u>Oregon Status (1998)</u>
Northern Goshawk	Accipiter gentilis	Sensitive
Olive-sided flycatcher	Contopus cooperi	Sensitive
Long-eared myotis	Myotis evotis	Sensitive
Long-legged myotis	Myotis volans	Sensitive
Yuma myotis	Myotis yumanensis	Sensitive

Insert in FEIS, page 89, after the first paragraph under the Species of Interest heading.

Northern Goshawk

Preferred habitat for the goshawk consists of coniferous forests with a mosaic of structural stages. Nesting sites typically consist of a dense cluster of large trees, surrounded by a similar forest type with a more open overstory. The understory is relatively open and the nest site is generally situated within one-quarter mile of a stream

or other water source. The best foraging habitat occurs in a mosaic of structural stages scattered across the landscape (FEIS 1998 and ABI 2000).

Potential habitat for the goshawk occurs throughout the analysis area. During unit surveys a goshawk nest was located in proposed unit #263. The unit was dropped and will be protected as identified in Eastside Screens (USDA, FS 1995).

Olive-sided Flycatcher

Preferred habitat for the flycatcher consists of coniferous forests associated with openings and edges near water, streams, and wet areas (Marshall et al 2003). This includes burned areas where snags and scattered tall, live trees remain; near water, along riparian areas where standing dead trees are present; at the edge of late and early-successional forests, like meadows or harvest units; and open or semi open forest stand with low percentage of canopy cover (Marshall et al 2003). Tall, prominent trees and snags, which serve as foraging and singing perches, are common feature of nesting habitat (Marshall et al 2003).

With the recent tussock moth outbreak in the analysis area, potential habitat for the olive-sided flycatcher occurs along streams within the project area and at sites with a defined forested-open edge and tall trees or snags in the vicinity. These habitat conditions are widely scattered throughout the C3 analysis area. The species has not been documented in the analysis area but has been observed on the District just northeast of the analysis area.

Although the olive-sided flycatcher is a species of interest that occurs on the Umatilla National Forest, this species would not be affected by the proposed activities because preferred habitat does not occur in the affected units. Habitat does occur along riparian corridors adjacent to some affected areas but no activities are proposed in riparian corridors. In addition, the species has not been observed in the analysis area. Therefore, no further analysis of environmental effects will occur for the olive-sided flycatcher.

Bats of “Interest”

Bats associated with cave or cave like dwellings (mines, buildings, etc.) for hibernation or roosting (maternity or day/night roost) are not included in this assessment because the surrounding area does not provide this key habitat feature. Available habitat for bats in the analysis area includes dry forest types that may be associated with water. Forest dwelling bats often use large-diameter snags and trees as roosts. The following species will be assessed as a group and not individually: long-eared myotis, long-legged myotis and Yuma myotis.

The current condition in the analysis area provides potential roost habitat (large-diameter snags and trees) for forest bats within the project area and affected stands. In general, bats have not been specifically surveyed (mist-net or bat detection devices) within the analysis area. Although some bats may be more rare in the Blue Mountains than others, some species have the potential to occur in the project area. For example, Whitaker et al. (1981:285) considered the long-eared bat to be “the most abundant bat in northeastern Oregon forests.” While the Yuma myotis was considered “exceeding scarce” in eastern Oregon (Whitaker et al. 1981:282).

Remove from the FEIS page 89, last paragraph.

