

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

Establishment Report

CUMMINS/GWYNN CREEKS RESEARCH  
NATURAL AREA

Siuslaw National Forest  
Lane County, Oregon



SIGNATURE PAGE

for

RESEARCH NATURAL AREA ESTABLISHMENT RECORD

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks Research Natural Area

Siuslaw National Forest

Lane County, Oregon

The undersigned certify that all applicable land management planning and environmental analysis requirements have been met and that boundaries are clearly identified in accordance with FSM 4063.21, Mapping and Recordation and FSM 4063.41 5.e(3) in arriving at this recommendation.

Prepared by Dick Vander Schaaf Date 2-9-98  
Dick Vander Schaaf, The Nature Conservancy

Recommended by Doris Tai Date 9/23/97  
Doris Tai, District Ranger  
Waldport Ranger District

Recommended by James R. Furnish Date 9/30/97  
James R. Furnish, Forest Supervisor,  
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Concurrence of Thomas J. Mills Date 3/23/99  
Thomas J. Mills, Director,  
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TITLE PAGE

Establishment Record for  
Cummins/Gwynn Creeks Research Natural Area  
within Siuslaw National Forest  
Lane County, Oregon

CUMMINS/GWYNN CREEKS RESEARCH NATURAL AREA  
WITHIN SIUSLAW NATIONAL FOREST  
LANE COUNTY, OREGON

INTRODUCTION

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks Research Natural Area (RNA) is in the Coast Range Mountains of Oregon and consists of two forested watersheds dominated by Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*)<sup>1</sup>, western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). Sitka spruce forests dominate the western portion of the site while Douglas-fir and western hemlock forests dominate the eastern portion. Understories in both forest series consist of swordfern (*Polystichum munitum*), salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) and salal (*Gaultheria shallon*). The riparian zones of the major drainages are dominated by red alder (*Alnus rubra*), an early seral, short lived tree, which is replaced by conifers over time. Cummins Creek flows for over 6 miles (9.6 km) and Gwynn Creek flows for 2.5 miles (4 km) through the RNA. Both streams have important anadromous fisheries. The Cummins Creek drainage lies within the designated Cummins Creek Wilderness Area and the adjoining Gwynn Creek drainage lies within the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area.

Land Management Planning

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA was proposed as a candidate RNA by the Siuslaw National Forest to meet two unfilled natural area cell needs for western hemlock forests and coastal streams (Oregon Natural Heritage Advisory Council 1993)<sup>2</sup>. It was included as a candidate RNA in the FEIS for the Siuslaw National Forest (USDA Forest Service 1990a), in the Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1990b) and in the Record of Decision (USDA Forest Service 1990c). Cummins/Gwynn Creeks includes the following RNA cell needs (or elements) in the Oregon Coast Range Physiographic Province: western hemlock/swordfern community; first to third order stream system in Coast Range in Western Hemlock zone with anadromous fish runs.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is to preserve in an undisturbed (by humans) condition the western hemlock/swordfern forest, first to third order stream system, and associated terrestrial and aquatic communities in the RNA. The RNA will serve as a reference area for

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<sup>1</sup> Nomenclature for vascular plants follows Hitchcock and Cronquist (1973).

<sup>2</sup> Author's names in parentheses refer to references cited.

study, as a baseline area for determining long-term ecological changes, and as a monitoring area to determine effects of management techniques and practices applied to similar ecosystems.

### JUSTIFICATION

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA was selected originally to meet an unfilled RNA cell need for western hemlock/swordfern forest and accompanying coastal stream system. During field surveys of the site it was determined that the entire watershed of Cummins/Gwynn Creeks contained important functional ecological values as well as a diverse spectrum of coastal forest communities. In short, the protected drainage offered a unique opportunity to designate an entire coastal watershed for research and baseline inventory. Inclusion of the forested watershed in the RNA allows for monitoring of the interactions of the forest and the aquatic system and their effects on the anadromous fisheries present. Succession of Sitka spruce and Douglas-fir forests is also an important research opportunity provided by this site.

### PRINCIPAL DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA contains the following principal features:

1. Douglas-fir/Western hemlock forest types. The middle and upper reaches of the primary watersheds at the site are dominated by Douglas-fir forests. In portions of these forests western hemlock is a canopy co-dominant while in other areas the species is only found in the understory. Most of these stands are second growth that originated from wildfires more than 150 years ago. There is a stand of old growth Douglas-fir/western hemlock forest that covers 120 acres in the Gwynn Creek drainage that may be the largest patch of old growth of this type left in the western Coast Range. Understories are varied and include swordfern as well as salmonberry and salal.
2. Sitka spruce forest types. The lower reaches of the watersheds lie within the Sitka spruce zone (Franklin and Dyrness 1973). Sitka spruce, Douglas-fir, and western hemlock dominate the overstory, with understories of salal, salmonberry, and swordfern. The forest is impressive in its mature age class (> 150 years) and has developed some attributes of an old growth ecosystem. It has been reported that the Cummins Creek watershed contains the largest remaining Sitka spruce forest in Oregon.
3. Cummins and Gwynn Creeks drainages. Cummins Creek flows for five miles and Gwynn Creek for 2 1/2 miles through the RNA. The streams and their tributaries are completely contained within the RNA, thus providing a natural laboratory for the study of aquatic communities in coastal streams. Anadromous fish runs are present in Cummins Creek and native cutthroat trout fisheries exist in both streams. The riparian zones are dominated by red alder (Alnus rubra) and conifers.

Maps 1, 2, and 3 show the location of Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA. The RNA is located in the Waldport Ranger District of the Siuslaw National Forest. The center of the RNA is at latitude 44° 15' 00" north and longitude 124° 03' 00" west. The 6530 acre site lies within sections 7-9, 15-22, Township 15 South, Range 11 West and sections 1, 10-14, Township 15 South, Range 12 West Willamette Meridian.

### Boundary

The boundary description is in Appendix I. Basis of bearing is astronomic north. Basis of elevation is mean sea level as shown on the USGS 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle maps:

Cannibal Mtn., Oreg. 1984, Revised 1991  
Cummins Peak, Oreg. 1984, Revised 1991  
Heceta Head, Oreg. 1984, Revised 1991  
Yachats, Oreg. 1984, Revised 1991

### Area

Total area for the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks Research Natural Area is approximately 6530 acres (2631 hectares).

### Elevations

Elevations range from 40 feet (12m) in the western edge of the RNA along Cummins Creek to Cummins Peak at 2400 feet (732m) in the southeast corner of the RNA.

### Access

The Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is in the central portion of the Siuslaw National Forest (Map 2) near Cape Perpetua. It is accessible directly from Highway 101, the Coast Highway, as well as from three Forest Service roads. From Yachats, Oregon proceed south on Highway 101 for four miles to where the road crosses Gwynn Creek. The highway runs within Neptune State Park at this point and access to the RNA can be made by cross country travel up Gwynn Creek. Access may also be gained by Forest Service Road #1051 located to the east of Highway 101, one half mile south of Gwynn Creek crossing. This road is near Cummins Creek and is now barricaded to prevent vehicle access, but continues as a foot trail up the ridge that separates Gwynn and Cummins Creeks.

Road access can also be had from Forest Service Road #1050, located east of Highway 101, one mile south of Cummins Creek. Road #1050 is blocked at the Cummins Creek Wilderness

Road access can also be had from Forest Service Road #1050, located east of Highway 101, one mile south of Cummins Creek. Road #1050 is blocked at the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary but continues as a footpath along Cummins Ridge for several miles. Cross country travel is required to reach the RNA which lies to the north of the ridge. Finally, access to the headwaters of both creeks in the RNA is via the Cape Ridge Road #55. This road junctions with Highway 101 in the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area three miles south of Yachats, Oregon.

### Maps

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is located on four USGS 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle maps: Cannibal Mtn, Oreg.; Cummins Peak, Oreg.; Heceta Head, Oreg.; and Yachats, Oreg. all revised 1991. The Siuslaw National Forest Recreation Map, 1996, is useful for ownership and general access information, however, this map does not delineate the RNA boundaries.

### Photos

The following aerial photos of the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA site are available in the Forest Supervisor's and District Ranger's offices:

- 1989 USDA 289: nos. 128-131 and 22-26
- 1989 USDA 1289: nos. 27-31 and 95-96
- 1989 USDA 1189: nos. 159-162 and 228-231
- 1989 USDA 2089: nos. 172-175

### AREA BY TYPES

Vegetation of the RNA has been surveyed and inventory plots have been established at the site. Map 4 depicts the Plant Association Group delineation of Cummins Creek according to a GIS-based potential natural vegetation model prepared by the Area ecology Program for the Siuslaw National Forest. Locations of the natural communities described below.

The most current information regarding the forested portion of the RNA is described in the plant association guide of Hemstrom and Logan (1986). The riparian plant community type is described in unpublished information developed and maintained by the Oregon Natural Heritage Program (1993a).

| Classification System  | Acres | Estimated Hectares |
|--|-------|--------------------|
| <u>SAF Cover Types</u> (Eyre 1980)   |       |                    |
| 225 Sitka spruce-western hemlock   | 6530  | 2631               |
| <u>Kuchler Types</u> (Kuchler 1966)  |       |                    |
| 1 Spruce-cedar-hemlock forest<br>( <u>Picea-Thuja-Tsuga</u> )  | 6530  | 2631               |
| <u>Forested Plant Association Groups</u><br>(plant associations in Hemstrom and Logan 1986)  |       |                    |
| 1) Sitka spruce/salmonberry Group<br>(Sitka spruce/salmonberry)  | 1074  | 435                |
| 2) Sitka spruce/swordfern Group<br>(Sitka spruce/swordfern)<br>(Sitka spruce/Oregon oxalis)  | 1309  | 530                |
| 3) Sitka spruce/salal Group<br>(Sitka spruce/salal)<br>(Sitka spruce/salmonberry-salal)  | 786   | 318                |
| 4) Sitka spruce/fool's huckleberry Group<br>(Sitka spruce/fool's huckleberry-red huckleberry)  | 142   | 57                 |
| 5) Western hemlock/salmonberry Group<br>(Western hemlock/salmonberry)  | 121   | 49                 |
| 6) Western hemlock/swordfern Group<br>(Western hemlock/swordfern)<br>(Western hemlock/Oregon oxalis)<br>(Western hemlock/vine maple)<br>(Western hemlock/vine maple/swordfern) | 1796  | 726                |
| 7) Western hemlock/salal Group<br>(Western hemlock/salal)<br>(Western hemlock/Oregon grape)<br>(Western hemlock/Oregon grape-salal)<br>(Western hemlock/vine maple-salal)      | 1198  | 485                |
| 8) Western hemlock/rhododendron Group<br>(Western hemlock/rhododendron-Oregon grape)<br>(Western hemlock/rhododendron-salal)<br>(Western hemlock/evergreen huckleberry)        | 14    | 6                  |
| 9) <u>Unclassified (No Data)</u>   | 90    | 25                 |
| Total  | 6530  | 2631               |



## PHYSICAL AND CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

### Physical Conditions

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA encompasses the entire watersheds of Cummins and Gwynn Creeks, two small coastal streams which flow directly into the Pacific Ocean. The streams and their tributaries flow westward through steep, dissected hills that are covered by a mix of mature forest vegetation and seral stands of red alder. The site is surrounded by ridges which separate the RNA from adjacent lands. A minor ridge which divides the two watersheds has an abandoned road running along its length to a formerly private land parcel.

Above the RNA a forest road running along a ridgeline separates the natural area from commercial forest land to the north that is dominated by second growth forest and recent clearcuts. South of the RNA is the continuation of the Cummins Creek Wilderness Area, one of only three wilderness areas in the Oregon Coast Range. The lowest reaches of the RNA are less than a mile (1.6 km) from the Pacific Ocean which provides a spectacular backdrop to the site and is occasionally seen through the dense vegetation.

### Climatic Conditions

The Oregon coast climate is characterized by mild temperatures year round, with wet winters and dry summers. Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA lies less than a mile (1.6 km) from the ocean at its western boundary and has typical coastal weather. Rainfall at the RNA varies according to elevation with the higher elevations in the eastern portion of the RNA receiving substantially more precipitation than the lower elevation western portions. Summer winds are predominantly from the northwest and are usually light to moderate. East winds may occur in the fall and spring, blowing at higher velocities and causing drying conditions that enhance the usually low fire hazard for the region. During the winter, storms come in from the southwest bringing driving rain and wind. The coast forests are susceptible to windthrow during winter storm events.

An important ecological consideration regarding precipitation is the proximity of the site to the actual coast. Near coastal sites receive significant fog during the summer months such that fog drip in coastal forests can account for increases in actual precipitation of upwards to 25%. Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA lies within one mile (1.6 km) of the coastline with the effect that the western most section of the RNA is within the fog belt. Coastal fog also can occur on the upper slopes of the tributary drainages at the RNA such that increased precipitation is realized. While it is difficult to detail the location of the fog belt at the RNA, the soil mapping units do portray soils or landtypes that are influenced by this phenomenon (Map 5).

The closest recording NOAA weather station is located in Newport, Oregon, 28 miles (45 km) to the north of the RNA. Climatic conditions at Newport are a good approximation for the low

elevation, western portions of the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA; the higher elevations at the eastern portion of the RNA receive substantially more precipitation than is recorded from the Newport, Oregon weather station. The station receives an annual precipitation of 74.62 inches (1895 mm) and the mean annual temperature is 50.3 °F (10.2 °C). (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration 1991). Over 90% of the precipitation falls between October and March, but as noted above, these precipitation amounts do not take into account the additional precipitation that is received on the ground in the form of fog drip at sites within the fog belt. Summer high temperatures rarely reach into the 80's, while winter lows only occasionally dip below freezing. The monthly climatic data for Newport, Oregon, averaged over the past 95 years, is listed below (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration 1991).

Climatic Records for Newport, Oregon  
Elevation 122 feet (37 m); 1896-1991  
(NOAA 1991)

| Month        | Mean Temperature |      | Mean Precipitation |      |
|--------------|------------------|------|--------------------|------|
|              | °F               | °C   | inches             | mm   |
| January      | 43.4             | 6.3  | 12.56              | 319  |
| February     | 45.5             | 7.5  | 8.53               | 217  |
| March        | 45.2             | 7.3  | 8.68               | 220  |
| April        | 47.2             | 8.4  | 5.05               | 128  |
| May          | 50.8             | 10.4 | 3.33               | 85   |
| June         | 54.8             | 12.7 | 2.37               | 60   |
| July         | 56.9             | 13.8 | 0.79               | 20   |
| August       | 57.3             | 14.1 | 1.49               | 38   |
| September    | 56.6             | 13.7 | 2.82               | 72   |
| October      | 53.1             | 11.7 | 5.92               | 150  |
| November     | 48.3             | 9.6  | 10.17              | 258  |
| December     | 44.8             | 7.1  | 12.91              | 328  |
| Mean Annual  | 50.3             | 10.2 |                    |      |
| Total Annual |                  |      | 74.62              | 1895 |

## DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

### Flora

The flora of Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is representative of the Oregon Coast forests with few numbers of taxa present. The flora has not been systematically collected or studied other than those taxa encountered during the establishment of inventory plots by the Forest Service. There are no federally listed threatened or endangered plant species known to occur within the RNA but there is one species on the Forest Service sensitive list present, the loose-flowered bluegrass (*Poa laxiflora*). Observations by Vander Schaaf (1993) have resulted in the following list of plants. The habitat-types listed below are groupings of the plant associations noted previously on page 5. Habitat-type 1 includes all of the plant associations in the Sitka Spruce Series, Habitat-type 2 includes all of the associations in the Western Hemlock Series, and Habitat-type 3 refers to the riparian community(s) that are present in the RNA. Shrub and herb species identifications were determined from Hitchcock and Cronquist (1973) and trees were determined from Little (1979).

| Scientific Name                     | Common Name         | Habitat-types |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---|---|
|                                     |                     | 1             | 2 | 3 |
| <b>TREES</b>                        |                     |               |   |   |
| <u><i>Acer macrophyllum</i></u>     | bigleaf maple       |               | X | X |
| <u><i>Alnus rubra</i></u>           | red alder           | X             | X | X |
| <u><i>Picea sitchensis</i></u>      | Sitka spruce        | X             | X | X |
| <u><i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i></u> | Douglas-fir         | X             | X |   |
| <u><i>Thuja plicata</i></u>         | western redcedar    | X             | X | X |
| <u><i>Tsuga heterophylla</i></u>    | western hemlock     | X             | X | X |
| <b>SHRUBS AND SUBSHRUBS</b>         |                     |               |   |   |
| <u><i>Acer circinatum</i></u>       | vine maple          | X             | X |   |
| <u><i>Berberis nervosa</i></u>      | small Oregongrape   |               | X |   |
| <u><i>Gaultheria shallon</i></u>    | salal               | X             | X |   |
| <u><i>Holodiscus discolor</i></u>   | oceanspray          |               | X |   |
| <u><i>Menziesia ferruginea</i></u>  | fool's huckleberry  | X             | X |   |
| <u><i>Rhamnus purshiana</i></u>     | cascara             |               | X |   |
| <u><i>Ribes bracteosum</i></u>      | stink current       |               |   | X |
| <u><i>Rubus parviflorus</i></u>     | thimbleberry        |               |   | X |
| <u><i>Rubus spectabilis</i></u>     | salmonberry         | X             | X | X |
| <u><i>Rubus ursinus</i></u>         | trailing blackberry | X             | X | X |
| <u><i>Sambucus racemosa</i></u>     | elderberry          |               |   | X |

| Scientific Name                                 | Common Name              | Habitat-types |   |   |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|---|
|   |                          | 1             | 2 | 3 |
| <u>Vaccinium ovalifolium</u>                    | oval-leaf huckleberry    | X             |   |   |
| <u>Vaccinium ovatum</u>                         | evergreen huckleberry    | X             | X |   |
| <u>Vaccinium parviflorum</u>                    | red huckleberry          | X             | X | X |
| FORBS   |                          |               |   |   |
| <u>Achillea millefolium</u>                     | yarrow                   | X             |   |   |
| <u>Actaea rubra</u>                             | baneberry                | X             | X | X |
| <u>Adiantum pedatum</u>                         | maidenhair fern          |               |   | X |
| <u>Anaphalis margaritacea</u>                   | pearly everlasting       |               |   | X |
| <u>ArunCUS syvester</u>                         | goatsbeard               |               |   | X |
| <u>Athyrium felix-femina</u>                    | lady fern                |               |   | X |
| <u>Blechnum spicant</u>                         | deer fern                | X             | X | X |
| <u>Boykinia elata</u>                           | slender boykinia         |               |   | X |
| <u>Cardamine angulata</u>                       | angled bittercress       |               |   | X |
| <u>Cardamine breweri</u>                        | Brewer's bittercress     |               |   | X |
| <u>Cardamine occidentalis</u>                   | western bittercress      |               |   | X |
| <u>Cerastium viscosum</u>                       | sticky chickweed         |               |   | X |
| <u>Chrysosplenium</u><br><u>glechomaefolium</u> | western golden-carpet    |               |   | X |
| <u>Circaea alpina</u>                           | alpine circaea           |               |   | X |
| <u>Cirsium arvense</u>                          | Canada thistle           |               |   | X |
| <u>Cirsium edule</u>                            | indian thistle           |               |   | X |
| <u>Cirsium vulgare</u>                          | bull thistle             |               |   | X |
| <u>Corydalis scouleri</u>                       | Scouler corydalis        |               |   | X |
| <u>Dicentra formosa</u>                         | bleeding heart           |               | X | X |
| <u>Digitalis purpurea</u>                       | foxglove                 |               |   | X |
| <u>Disporum hookeri</u>                         | Hooker's fairy-bell      | X             | X | X |
| <u>Dryopteris austriaca</u>                     | montane woodfern         |               | X | X |
| <u>Epilobium watsonii</u>                       | willowweed               |               |   | X |
| <u>Equisetum arvense</u>                        | field horsetail          |               |   | X |
| <u>Equisetum hymenale</u>                       | horsetail                |               | X | X |
| <u>Erechtites minima</u>                        | toothed coast fireweed   | X             | X |   |
| <u>Galium oreganum</u>                          | Oregon bedstraw          | X             |   |   |
| <u>Galium trifidum</u>                          | small bedstraw           | X             | X | X |
| <u>Heracleum lanatum</u>                        | cow parsnip              |               |   | X |
| <u>Hieracium albiflorum</u>                     | white-flowered hawkweed  | X             |   |   |
| <u>Hydrophyllum tenuipes</u>                    | waterleaf                |               |   | X |
| <u>Iris tenax</u>                               | Oregon iris              | X             |   |   |
| <u>Lysichitum americanum</u>                    | skunkcabbage             |               | X | X |
| <u>Maianthemum dilatatum</u>                    | false lily of the valley | X             |   | X |
| <u>Marah oreganus</u>                           | bigroot                  | X             |   |   |

| Scientific Name               | Common Name                | Habitat-type |   |   |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---|---|
|                               |                            | 1            | 2 | 3 |
| <u>Mimulus dentatus</u>       | tooth leaved monkey-flower |              |   | X |
| <u>Mimulus guttatus</u>       | yellow monkeyflower        |              | X |   |
| <u>Mitella ovalis</u>         | coastal mitrewort          |              |   | X |
| <u>Monotropa uniflora</u>     | indian pipes               |              | X |   |
| <u>Montia parviflora</u>      | stream bank springbeauty   |              |   | X |
| <u>Montia sibirica</u>        | candyflower                | X            | X |   |
| <u>Oenanthe sarmentosa</u>    | water parsley              |              |   | X |
| <u>Oxalis oregana</u>         | Oregon oxalis              | X            |   | X |
| <u>Oxalis trillifolia</u>     | great oxalis               |              |   | X |
| <u>Polypodium glycyrrhiza</u> | licorice fern              |              |   | X |
| <u>Polystichum munitum</u>    | sword fern                 | X            | X | X |
| <u>Prunella vulgaris</u>      | self-heal                  |              |   | X |
| <u>Pteridium aquilinum</u>    | bracken-fern               | X            |   | X |
| <u>Pyrola picta</u>           | white vein pyrola          |              | X |   |
| <u>Pyrola uniflora</u>        | woodnymph                  |              | X |   |
| <u>Ranunculus uncinatus</u>   | little buttercup           |              |   | X |
| <u>Rumex obtusifolius</u>     | bitter dock                |              |   | X |
| <u>Senecio jacobaeae</u>      | tansy ragwort              |              |   | X |
| <u>Smilacina racemosa</u>     | false solomon's seal       | X            |   |   |
| <u>Stachys mexicana</u>       | Mexican betony             |              |   | X |
| <u>Stellaria crispa</u>       | criped sarwort             |              |   | X |
| <u>Tellima grandiflora</u>    | fringecup                  |              |   | X |
| <u>Tiarella trifoliata</u>    | coolwort foamflower        |              |   | X |
| <u>Tolmiea menziesii</u>      | Young-on-age               |              |   | X |
| <u>Trientalis latifolia</u>   | western starflower         | X            | X |   |
| <u>Trillium ovatum</u>        | wake robin                 | X            | X |   |
| <u>Vancouveria hexandra</u>   | insideout flower           |              |   | X |
| <u>Veronica americana</u>     | American brooklime         |              |   | X |
| <u>Viola sempervirens</u>     | wood violet                | X            | X |   |
| <u>Woodsia oregana</u>        | western woodsia            | X            | X |   |
| GRAMINOIDS                    |                            |              |   |   |
| <u>Agrostis alba</u>          | redtop                     |              |   | X |
| <u>Agrostis exarata</u>       | spike bentgrass            |              |   | X |
| <u>Agrostis palustris</u>     | creeping bentgrass         |              |   | X |
| <u>Agrostis tenuis</u>        | colonial bentgrass         |              |   | X |
| <u>Bromus carinatus</u>       | California brome           | X            | X |   |
| <u>Bromus vulgaris</u>        | Columbia brome             |              |   | X |
| <u>Carex deweyana</u>         | Dewey sedge                |              |   | X |
| <u>Carex mertensii</u>        | Mertens sedge              |              |   | X |
| <u>Deschampsia caespitosa</u> | tufted hairgrass           |              |   | X |

| Scientific Name             | Common Name              | Habitat-type |   |   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---|---|
|                             |                          | 1            | 2 | 3 |
| <u>Deschampsia elongata</u> | slender hairgrass        |              | X |   |
| <u>Elymus glaucus</u>       | blue wildrye             |              |   | X |
| <u>Festuca californica</u>  | California fescue        | X            | X |   |
| <u>Festuca subulata</u>     | bearded fescue           | X            | X |   |
| <u>Glyceria elata</u>       | tall mannagrass          |              |   | X |
| <u>Holcus lanatus</u>       | velvetgrass              |              |   | X |
| <u>Luzula campestris</u>    | field woodrush           | X            | X | X |
| <u>Luzula parviflora</u>    | small-flowered woodrush  | X            | X |   |
| <u>Poa laxiflora</u>        | loose-flowered bluegrass |              |   | X |
| <u>Poa trivialis</u>        | roughstalk bluegrass     |              |   | X |

The RNA falls within both the Sitka spruce zone and the western hemlock zone with Sitka spruce being more prominent in the western half of the natural area and in the riparian zone and western hemlock being more prominent in the eastern half and at higher elevations. The dominant plant association in the spruce zone is Sitka spruce/swordfern and the dominant plant association in the hemlock zone is western hemlock/swordfern. Salmonberry is almost ubiquitous in the understory throughout the RNA but swordfern dominates some well drained upland sites and salal occurs along the upper ridges where conditions are more xeric. Each of the three dominant understory species characterize specific plant associations within the two forest zones. The swordfern associations are typically indicative of deeper soils in moist habitats while salmonberry is usually found in the moistest sites including most of the riparian zone (Hemstrom and Logan 1986).

The trees in the RNA are impressive as they exhibit some of the most rapid growth rates of any trees in North America. Individual Sitka spruce trees in the forest often attain diameters in excess of 48 inches (121.9cm) with the associated western hemlock (Tsuga heterophylla) usually somewhat smaller in diameter. These diameters are noteworthy as most of the stands are less than 200 hundred years old and thus have not reached true old growth status. Much of the stand apparently originated after a catastrophic fire in the mid 1800's, although pockets of old growth exist, especially in the Gwynn Creek drainage.

The red alder/salmonberry community type occurs in narrow riparian zones along the creeks in the RNA and it covers large areas of steeply sloped terrain as well. Red alder is seral to Sitka spruce and western hemlock in these stands. Typically the community is short-lived, lasting only 80-120 years at the longest. Throughout the red alder dominated zones in the RNA, spruce and hemlock seedlings and saplings are prominent indicating the successional nature of the red alder community type. Also present within the riparian zone are small pockets of red alder/skunk cabbage swamp community-type (ONHP 1993). These sites are often on low-lying floodplains and former stream channels which contain standing water for a significant period of time. The

At a few sites along the highest elevations of the Cummins Creek drainage there are basalt outcrops where seeps and associated plant habitats are found. A characteristic species from these seeps is yellow monkeyflower (Mimulus guttatus). Mosses are prominent on the outcrops and in the seeps.

### Fauna

Faunal species have not been systematically studied or inventoried in Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA. The following terrestrial vertebrates are among those most likely to be found in the RNA (USDA Forest Service 1981-1982):

| <u>Scientific name</u>         | <u>Common name</u>         |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Ambystomatidae</b>          |                            |
| <u>Ambystoma gracile</u>       | Northwestern salamander    |
| <u>Ambystoma macrodactylum</u> | Long-toed salamander       |
| <b>Plethodontidae</b>          |                            |
| <u>Aneides ferreus</u>         | Clouded salamander         |
| <u>Ensatina eschscholtzii</u>  | Ensatina                   |
| <u>Plethodon dunnii</u>        | Dunn's salamander          |
| <u>Plethodon vehiculum</u>     | Western redback salamander |
| <b>Salamandridae</b>           |                            |
| <u>Taricha granulosa</u>       | Roughskin newt             |
| <b>Dicamptodontidae</b>        |                            |
| <u>Dicamptodon ensatus</u>     | Pacific giant salamander   |
| <u>Rhyacotriton olympicus</u>  | Olympic salamander         |
| <b>Ascaphidae</b>              |                            |
| <u>Ascaphus truei</u>          | Tailed frog                |
| <b>Bufo</b>                    |                            |
| <u>Bufo boreas</u>             | Western toad               |
| <b>Hylidae</b>                 |                            |
| <u>Hyla regilla</u>            | Pacific treefrog           |
| <b>Ranidae</b>                 |                            |
| <u>Rana aurora</u>             | Red-legged frog            |
| <b>Anatidae</b>                |                            |

**Anatidae**Aix sponsa

Wood duck

**Cathartidae**Cathartes aura

Turkey vulture

**Alcidae**Brachyramphus marmoratus

Marbled murrelet

**Accipitridae**Accipiter striatus

Sharp-shinned hawk

Accipiter cooperii

Cooper's hawk

Accipiter gentilis

Northern goshawk

Buteo jamaicensis

Red-tailed hawk

**Phasianidae**Dendragapus obscurus sierrae

Blue or sooty grouse

Bonasa umbellus

Ruffed grouse

Callipepla californica

California quail

Oreortyx pictus

Mountain quail

**Columbidae**Columba fasciata

Band-tailed pigeon

Zenaida macroura

Mourning dove

**Tytonidae**Tyto alba

Barn owl

**Strigidae**Otus kennicottii

Western screech-owl

Bubo virginianus

Great horned owl

Glaucidium gnoma

Northern pygmy-owl

Strix occidentalis

Northern Spotted owl

Asio flammeus

Short-eared owl

Aegolius acadicus

Northern saw-whet owl

**Caprimulgidae**Chordeiles minor

Common nighthawk

**Apodidae**Chaetura vauxi

Vaux's swift

**Trochilidae**Calypte anna

Anna's hummingbird



Selasphorus rufus

Rufous hummingbird

**Alcedinidae**

Ceryle alcyon

Belted kingfisher

**Picidae**

Sphyrapicus ruber

Red-breasted sapsucker

Picoides pubescens

Downy woodpecker

Picoides villosus

Hairy woodpecker

Colaptes auratus

Northern flicker

Dryocopus pileatus

Pileated woodpecker

**Tyrannidae**

Contopus borealis

Olive-sided flycatcher

Contopus sordidulus

Western wood-pewee

Empidonax traillii

Willow flycatcher

Empidonax difficilis

Western flycatcher

**Alaudidae**

Eremophila alpestris

Horned lark

**Hirundinidae**

Progne subis

Purple martin

Tachycineta bicolor

Tree swallow

Tachycineta thalassina

Violet-green swallow

Stelgidopteryx serripennis

Northern rough-winged swallow

Hirundo pyrrhonota

Cliff swallow

Hirundo rustica

Barn swallow

**Corvidae**

Perisoreus canadensis

Gray jay

Cyanocitta stelleri

Steller's jay

Corvus brachyrhynchos

American crow

Corvus caurinus

Northwestern crow

Corvus corax

Common raven

**Paridae**

Parus atricapillus

Black-capped chickadee

Parus rufescens

Chestnut-backed chickadee

**Aegithalidae**

Psaltriparus minimus

Bushtit

**Sittidae**

Sitta canadensis Red-breasted nuthatch

**Certhiidae**

Certhia americana Brown creeper

**Troglodytidae**

Thryomanes bewickii atrestus Warner valley bewick's wren

Troglodytes aedon House wren

Troglodytes troglodytes Winter wren

Cistothorus palustris Marsh wren

**Cinclidae**

Cinclus mexicanus American dipper

**Muscicapidae**

Regulus satrapa Golden-crowned kinglet

Regulus calendula Ruby-crowned kinglet

Sialia mexicana Western bluebird

Catharus ustulatus Swainson's thrush

Catharus guttatus Hermit thrush

Turdus migratorius American robin

Ixoreus naevius Varied thrush

Chamaea fasciata Wrentit

**Motacillidae**

Anthus rubescens Water pipit

**Bombycillidae**

Bombycilla cedrorum Cedar waxwing

**Vireonidae**

Vireo solitarius Solitary vireo

Vireo huttoni Hutton's vireo

Vireo gilvus Warbling vireo

**Emberizidae**

Vermivora celata Orange-crowned warbler

Dendroica petechia Yellow warbler

Dendroica coronata Yellow-rumped warbler

Dendroica nigrescens Black-throated gray warbler

Dendroica townsendi Townsend's warbler

Dendroica occidentalis Hermit warbler

Oporornis tolmiei Macgillivray's warbler

Geothlypis trichas Common yellowthroat

Wilsonia pusilla  
Piranga ludoviciana  
Peuecticus melanocephalus  
Passerina amoena  
Pipilo erythrophthalmus  
Spizella passerina  
Poocetes gramineus  
Passerculus sandwichensis  
Passerella iliaca  
Melospiza melodia  
Zonotrichia atricapilla  
Zonotrichia leucophrys  
Junco hyemalis  
Agelaius phoeniceus  
Sturnella neglecta  
Molothrus ater  
Icterus galbula

#### **Fringillidae**

Carpodacus purpureus  
Carpodacus mexicanus  
Loxia curvirostra  
Carduelis pinus  
Carduelis tristis  
Coccothraustes vespertinus

#### **Petromyzontidae**

Lampetra ayresi  
Lampetra pacifica  
Lampetra richardsoni  
Lampetra tridentata

#### **Salmonidae**

Oncorhynchus clarki  
Oncorhynchus mykiss  
Oncorhynchus kisutch  
Salvelinus malma

#### **Cyprinidae**

Richardsonius balteatus

#### **Catostomidae**

Catostomus macrocheilus

Wilson's warbler  
Western tanager  
Black-headed grosbeak  
Lazuli bunting  
Rufous-sided towhee  
Chipping sparrow  
Vesper sparrow  
Savannah sparrow  
Fox sparrow  
Song sparrow  
Golden-crowned sparrow  
White-crowned sparrow  
Dark-eyed junco  
Red-winged blackbird  
Western meadowlark  
Brown-headed cowbird  
Northern oriole

Purple finch  
House finch  
Red crossbill  
Pine siskin  
American goldfinch  
Evening grosbeak

River lamprey  
Pacific brook lamprey  
Western brook lamprey  
Pacific lamprey

Cutthroat trout  
Steelhead trout  
Coho salmon  
Dolly varden

Redside shiner

Largescale sucker

**Gasterosteidae**Gasterosteus aculeatus

Threespine stickleback

**Embiotocidae**Cymatogaster aggregata

Shiner perch

**Cottidae**Clinocottus acuticeps

Sharpnose sculpin

Cottus aleuticus

Coastrange sculpin

Cottus asper

Prickly sculpin

Cottus gulosus

Riffle sculpin

Cottus perplexus

Reticulate sculpin

Cottus rhotheus

Torrent sculpin

Leptocottus armatus

Pacific staghorn sculpin

**Soricidae**Sorex vagrans

Vagrant shrew

Sorex monticolus

Dusky shrew

Sorex pacificus

Pacific shrew

Sorex bendirii

Pacific water shrew

Sorex trowbridgii

Trowbridge's shrew

**Talpidae**Neurotrichus gibbsii

Shrew-mole

Scapanus townsendii

Townsend's mole

Scapanus orarius

Coast mole

**Verpertilionidae**Myotis lucifugus

Little brown myotis

Myotis yumanensis

Yuma myotis

Myotis evotis

Long-eared myotis

Myotis thysanodes

Fringed myotis

Myotis volans

Long-legged myotis

Myotis californicus

California myotis

Lasionycteris noctivagans

Silver-haired bat

Eptesicus fuscus

Big brown bat

Lasiurus cinereus

Hoary bat

Plecotus townsendii

Townsend's big-eared bat

**Leporidae**Sylvilagus bachmani

Brush rabbit

Lepus americanus

Snowshoe hare

**Aplodontiidae**Aplodontia rufa

Mountain beaver

**Sciuridae**

|                               |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>Tamias townsendii</u>      | Townsend's chipmunk        |
| <u>Spermophilus beecheyi</u>  | California ground squirrel |
| <u>Sciurus griseus</u>        | Western gray squirrel      |
| <u>Tamiasciurus douglasii</u> | Douglas' squirrel          |
| <u>Glaucomys sabrinus</u>     | Northern flying squirrel   |

**Castoridae**

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| <u>Castor canadensis</u> | Beaver |
|--------------------------|--------|

**Muridae**

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Peromyscus maniculatus</u>     | Deer mouse              |
| <u>Neotoma fuscipes</u>           | Dusky-footed woodrat    |
| <u>Neotoma cinerea</u>            | Bushy-tailed woodrat    |
| <u>Clethrionomys californicus</u> | Western red-backed vole |
| <u>Arborimus albipes</u>          | White-footed vole       |
| <u>Arborimus longicaudus</u>      | Red tree vole           |
| <u>Microtus townsendii</u>        | Townsend's vole         |
| <u>Microtus longicaudus</u>       | Long-tailed vole        |
| <u>Microtus oregoni</u>           | Creeping vole           |
| <u>Ondatra zibethicus</u>         | Muskrat                 |

**Zapodidae**

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Zapus trinotatus</u> | Pacific jumping mouse |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**Erethizontidae**

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| <u>Erethizon dorsatum</u> | Porcupine |
|---------------------------|-----------|

**Canidae**

|                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| <u>Canis latrans</u>            | Coyote   |
| <u>Vulpes vulpes</u>            | Red fox  |
| <u>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</u> | Gray fox |

**Ursidae**

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| <u>Ursus americanus</u> | Black bear |
|-------------------------|------------|

**Procyonidae**

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| <u>Procyon lotor</u> | Raccoon |
|----------------------|---------|

**Mustelidae**

|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Martes americana</u> | Marten             |
| <u>Mustela erminea</u>  | Ermine             |
| <u>Mustela frenata</u>  | Long-tailed weasel |
| <u>Mustela vison</u>    | Mink               |
| <u>Gulo gulo</u>        | Wolverine          |

|                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Spilogale gracilis</u>      | Western spotted skunk     |
| <u>Mephitis mephitis</u>       | Striped skunk             |
| <u>Lutra canadensis</u>        | River otter               |
| <b>Felidae</b>                 |                           |
| <u>Felis concolor</u>          | Mountain lion             |
| <u>Felis rufus</u>             | Bobcat                    |
| <b>Cervidae</b>                |                           |
| <u>Cervus elaphus</u>          | Elk                       |
| <u>Odocoileus hemionus</u>     | Black-tailed deer         |
| <b>Anguidae</b>                |                           |
| <u>Elgaria coerulea</u>        | Northern alligator lizard |
| <b>Iguanidae</b>               |                           |
| <u>Sceloporus occidentalis</u> | Western fence lizard      |
| <b>Colubridae</b>              |                           |
| <u>Contia tenuis</u>           | Sharptail snake           |
| <u>Thamnophis ordinoides</u>   | Northwestern garter snake |
| <u>Thamnophis sirtalis</u>     | Common garter snake       |

Several of the species listed above are species of concern in the state of Oregon. There are recent sightings of marbled murrelets, a federally listed Threatened species, from several locations in the RNA as well as northern spotted owls, another federally protected Threatened species. Both species require old growth forests which occur to a limited extent in the RNA.

### Aquatic

Aquatic habitat types are represented on Cummins and Gwynn Creeks and their tributaries. Cummins Creek is a large second order stream that flows for approximately six miles (9.6 km) before reaching the Pacific Ocean. Gwynn Creek is also a second order stream, approximately 2.5 miles (4 km) long and flows directly into the ocean. The entire watersheds of both streams are within the boundaries of the RNA except for their outflows which lie just to the west of the RNA. The streams flow through steep dissected drainages and generally have riparian zones dominated by red alder and salmonberry. The stream channels contain small boulders, cobbles, and gravels. Upper reaches of Cummins and Gwynn Creeks and their tributaries are steep and may contain intermittent stretches but lower reaches have lower gradients and are perennial in nature. Anadromous fisheries are present in Cummins Creek which has significant runs of coho salmon, searun cutthroat trout and steelhead. Gwynn Creek probably has a few searun cutthroat. Resident cutthroat trout are present in the streams as well.

## Geology

The geology of the Coast Range had its beginnings in the Eocene when shallow inland seas began to be uplifted in the south (Baldwin 1964). In the northern Coast Range the Astoria formation, a thick formation of sandstone and shale, covers much of northwestern Oregon. The Astoria formation dates from the mid-Oligocene to mid-Miocene. Interfingering in the Astoria formation is Columbia River basalt which consists of a series of flows that covered nearly half of the state of Oregon and originated from a number of vents in the central portion of the state. Columbia River basalt grades into submarine basalts which date from the Eocene. The basalt has been more resistant to weathering than the sandstone and shales of the Astoria formation, thus soils have been primarily derived from the Astoria formation.

Cummins and Gwynn Creeks drain areas of intrusive basalt headlands. The terrain is steep and moderately dissected with most of the tributaries being small and lying nearly perpendicular to the mainstems of the creeks. The tributaries carry debris torrents of soil, cobbles, boulders and large woody debris down to the mainstems resulting in alluvial fans being built-up at the confluences.

## Soils

Soil characteristics are based on the Soil Series Descriptions prepared by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service 1997). The Soil Series Descriptions describe the soils, landforms, and geology of the soil mapping units mapped on the Siuslaw National Forest. The Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA soil mapping units have various combinations of 13 soil series which are listed below and color coded on Map 5. Several soils are listed as "complexes". Soil complexes are areas where one or more soil series are intermingled with each other making mapping of individual soil series very difficult. Soil complexes are described in terms of their individual soil series components.

There are 13 soils mapped in the Cummins/Gwynn RNA.

| <i>Soils in Cummins/Gwynn RNA</i> | <i>Percent of area</i> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Preacher/Bohannon Complex         | 56%                    |
| Formader Loam                     | 12                     |
| Neskowin/Salander Complex         | 11                     |
| Peavine Silty Clay Loam           | 8                      |
| Klickitat Gravelly Clay Loam      | 4                      |
| Lint Silt Loam                    | 3                      |
| Neskowin Silt Loam                | 2                      |
| Formader/Klistan/Hemcross Complex | 1                      |
| Minor soils                       | 2                      |
| Untyped                           | 1                      |

(Minor soils include, , Klichis Very Cobbly Loam, Neskowin/Rock Outcrop Complex, Hembre/Klickitat Complex, Blachly Silt Loam, and Klistan Very Gravelly Loam.)

Preacher Clay Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in colluvium and residuum weathered from sandstone. These soils are usually moist with dry periods less than 45 consecutive days, and have a mean summer temperature range from 47 to 54 degrees F. They occur on ridgetops, slump benches and side slopes. Typical vegetation includes Douglas fir, western hemlock, vine maple, salmonberry, salal, and red huckleberry.

Bohannon Gravelly Loam - Deep, very well drained soils developed from colluvium weathered from marine sandstone. These soils are usually moist with dry periods less than 45 consecutive days, and have a mesic temperature regime that ranges from the mid 40's to mid 50's. They occur on mid and higher elevations on steep, often highly dissected slopes. They are often quite unstable, easily eroded when bare, and easily compacted by heavy equipment. The native vegetation includes Douglas-fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, huckleberry, salmonberry and swordfern.

Formader Loam - Moderately deep well drained soils developed from colluvium weathered from igneous rocks. These soils are usually moist with dry periods less than 45 consecutive days, and have a mean summer temperature that ranges from the mid 40's to mid 50's. They occur on moderately steep to steep midslopes and ridges. They are usually stable, though easily eroded when bare, and easily compacted by heavy equipment. The native vegetation includes Douglas-fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, huckleberry, salmonberry and swordfern.

Neskowin Silt Loam - Moderately deep, well drained soils formed in moderately fine textured colluvium from basic igneous rock. These soils are on hills and mountains adjacent to the Pacific Ocean from 50 to 1100 feet in elevation. Mean annual soil temperature ranges from 50 to 54 degrees F. The soil is usually moist, and is dry for less than 45 consecutive days during summer. Native vegetation includes Sitka spruce and western hemlock with swordfern, salal, salmonberry, and red and evergreen huckleberry.

Salander Silt Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in mixed colluvium. These soils are on gentle to moderate slopes on hills, mountains, and headlands. Soils are udic, but have a short dry period less than 45 consecutive days during summer. Native vegetation includes Douglas fir, western hemlock, western redcedar, Sitka spruce, vine maple, evergreen huckleberry, salmonberry, and swordfern.

Peavine Silty Clay Loam - Moderately deep, well drained soils formed in fine textured colluvium and residuum from siltstone and shale. The soils are on low hills and mountains from 200 to 2800 feet elevation in the Coast Range and along the Willamette Valley. They are usually moist and dry for less than 60 consecutive days during the summer. Native vegetation includes Douglas fir, Oregon white oak, poison oak, snowberry, bracken fern, sword fern, and California hazel.



Klickitat Gravelly Clay Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in colluvium and residuum weathered from basalt. These soils are usually moist and are dry for less than 45 consecutive days. The soils are on dissected slopes in mountainous uplands. Native vegetation includes Douglas fir, western hemlock, salal, swordfern, vine maple, and oceanspray.

Lint Silt Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in alluvium weathered mostly from sedimentary bedrock. These soils are on gentle to moderate slopes on terraces in the coastal area. The series has a dry period of less than 45 days during the summer. Vegetation includes Sitka spruce, Douglas fir, western hemlock, red alder, salal, swordfern, and vine maple.

Klistan Gravelly Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in colluvium from volcanic rocks. These soils are usually moist with dry periods less than 45 consecutive days, and have a mesic temperature regime that ranges from 45 to 50 degrees. They occur on convex ridges and very steep sideslopes up to 1600 feet elevation. Typical vegetation includes Douglas-fir, western hemlock, red alder, vine maple, swordfern, salal, red huckleberry, and Oregon-grape.

Hemcross Silt Loam - Deep, well drained soils formed in colluvium from volcanic rocks. These soils are usually moist with dry periods less than 45 consecutive days, and have a mesic temperature regime that ranges from 45 to 50 degrees. They occur on convex ridges and moderately steep sideslopes up to 1800 feet elevation. Typical vegetation includes Douglas-fir, western hemlock, red alder, vine maple, swordfern, salal, red huckleberry, and Oregon-grape.

## Lands

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is managed under guidelines for Research Natural Areas, Management Area 13, that are detailed in the Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1990b). However, the site is included in two other management areas as well, the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area and the Cummins Creek Wilderness (refer to Map 6), both of which have distinct management guidelines provided for in the Forest Plan. The Administratively Withdrawn Cape Perpetua Scenic Area is managed in accordance with prescriptions for Special Interest Areas, Management Area 5, and the Congressionally Reserved Cummins Creek Wilderness is managed under guidelines for wilderness detailed in descriptions for Management Area 12. Within the RNA boundaries are lands which have formerly been in private ownership including 160 acres in section 7 along the north side of Cummins Creek (Map 3). These lands were harvested approximately 25 years ago and are regrowing naturally. This parcel is accessed by a closed logging road which runs along the ridge separating Cummins and Gwynn Creeks. The roadbed is now used as a recreational trail.

The remaining lands within the RNA and lands adjacent to the RNA are mostly National Forest and managed under guidelines for Late-Successional Reserves. A small parcel on the north boundary is in private ownership. Unless trespass occurs none of the adjacent ownerships are likely to seriously affect the natural values of the RNA.

## Cultural

There have been no cultural resource inventories conducted in the RNA to date. It is likely that cultural resources may be located within the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA along the main stream channels and along the main ridgelines.

## IMPACTS AND POSSIBLE CONFLICTS

### Mineral Resources

There are no reported mining claims on Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA. Much of the area is withdrawn from mineral entry because of the wilderness designation and the remainder is proposed to be withdrawn upon establishment of the RNA.

### Timber

The entire area of the RNA consists of timbered lands which in similar watersheds have proved to contain some of the most significant timber resources in the Coast Range. While timber harvest will not occur on the RNA there is a slight potential for impact to the RNA when stands adjacent to the RNA are commercially thinned to promote late-successional characteristics. Windthrow is common in coastal forests and sites within and adjacent to thinned areas are susceptible to this event. Thinned areas may also act as sites for invasions of introduced noxious weeds, such as scots broom (Cytisus scoparius), tansy ragwort (Senecio jacobaea), and bull thistle (Cirsium edule). There are approximately 160 acres of previously harvested lands in the Cummins Creek drainage that are within the boundary of the RNA. These lands can potentially act as sites for windthrow and noxious weed invasions in the RNA.

Most of the lands surrounding the RNA are not available to timber harvest because of wilderness and scenic area designations. Therefore, these lands are less likely to result in windthrow or non-native plant species invasions in the RNA than lands which were previously harvested.

### Watershed Values

Cummins and Gwynn Creeks are small coastal drainages with essentially intact watersheds, a rarity for coastal streams in Oregon. Both watersheds were designated Key Watersheds under the Northwest Forest Plan. Watershed values are high because of the intact nature of the drainages and the protection afforded by the RNA, Cummins Creek Wilderness, and other overlapping management area designations. Cummins Creek supports anadromous fisheries in particular coho salmon and steelhead. Such runs are considerably reduced in recent years. Streams with good, stable habitat are important for ultimate recovery of the fish.

### Recreation Values

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA receives some recreation use, mostly in the form of day hikers along Gwynn Creek and hunters and fishers along Cummins Creek. Because of the adjacent and overlapping scenic area and wilderness designations it is expected that use will increase steadily in the area. Much of the site is not particularly inviting to the hiking public because it is densely forested but there are several maintained trails in the RNA and the Forest Plan includes plans for additional trails in the Cummins Creek Wilderness (USDA Forest Service 1990 b). Casual recreation use is concentrated along the trails and has not been shown to impact the RNA to date. However, mountain bikers are known to frequent trails in the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area to the north. There is a concern that mountain bike use could extend south into the RNA damaging trails and vegetation in the RNA. Recreation use in the RNA will be monitored. Should problems occur, the RNA may be closed to mountain bike use. In addition, horse and pack stock use should be discouraged due to the introduction of noxious weeds and non-native plants that often accompany such use.

Recreation in the RNA is a concern if use increases as expected in coastal forests. The Forest Plan calls for the creation of isolated campsites, if necessary, off the trail in the Cummins Creek Wilderness. This seemingly conflicts with guidelines for other RNAs where recreational use is not encouraged in order to limit site alteration. Because of the unique nature of this RNA being located in a wilderness area and the reality that the site offers the last chance to create such an RNA in the Oregon Coast Range, it is necessary to accommodate the limited recreation use present. Education of users as to the research values of an undisturbed watershed in the Coast Range should occur to promote sensitive use of the area. Even with the development of campsites within the Cummins Creek Wilderness, the overall effects of recreation on the RNA will be negligible.

### Wildlife and Plant Values

There are two federally listed threatened wildlife species, marbled murrelets and northern spotted owls, that have been reported from the RNA. Marbled murrelets are known from Cummins and Gwynn Creek drainages and Cummins Ridge. The Cummins Creek site includes old growth Douglas-fir and is a supposed nest site. Spotted owls have also been reported from the RNA with sightings along the Gwynn/Cummins Creeks divide as well as from a site approximately one mile east of the RNA boundary. The RNA provides extensive spotted owl nesting and foraging habitat in a region where such habitat is quite limited due to the influence of man. White-footed voles (Arborimus albipes), have been found at the confluence of Cummins and Little Cummins Creeks near the western edge of the RNA. There has been only one rare plant sighting discovered from the RNA; the weak stemmed bluegrass (Poa laxiflora), was found along Cummins Creek. The species is considered a List 4 species by the Oregon Natural Heritage Program, indicating it is rare but secure in Oregon but stable or more common elsewhere (NHAC 1993).

### Adjacent Private Lands

Private lands abut the RNA to the north along Cape Ridge, with a common border of approximately 1/2 mile (0.8 km). The lands are managed for timber production and have been cut within the last 25 years.

### MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

Management and protection of Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA will be directed toward maintaining natural ecological processes. No activities of man will be permitted that will disturb or modify ecological processes.

Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA is managed according to guidelines for Management Area 13 (Research Natural Areas) in the Siuslaw National Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1990b). The RNA is within the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area (Gwynn Creek drainage) and the Cummins Creek Wilderness Area (see Map 6). These areas are managed under separate management area prescriptions and have management standards and guidelines as noted in the Forest Plan. Management Area 5 pertains to Special Interest Areas such as Cape Perpetua Scenic Area and Management Area 12 pertains to the wilderness area. The management guidelines for the Scenic Area and Wilderness are, for the most part, complementary to those pertaining to the RNA.

Also applicable to RNA management are the standards and guidelines for Late-Successional Reserves as described in the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (USDA, USDI, 1994). Northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet populations will be managed to comply with recovery plans developed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Sensitive species will be managed according to Forest Service policy.

### Vegetation Management

Standards and guidelines for RNAs, Management Area 13, address vegetation management under several different headings (USDA Forest Service 1990b). The overall management direction for all RNAs is to preserve the naturally occurring physical and biological processes at the site.

Wildfire will be suppressed using suppression methods and equipment that will minimize disturbance to the special features of the area (USDA Forest Service 1990b). The desired condition of the Sitka spruce and Douglas-fir/western hemlock forests dictates that fires be aggressively suppressed. Prescribed fires are of limited ecological utility in these forested ecosystems when the goal is to promote the development of naturally sustainable old growth forests. The decision to suppress wildfires within the designated Cummins Creek Wilderness portion of the RNA will require a determination that such suppression also meets the goals of the wilderness area as identified in the Wilderness Plan.

Introduced species and weedy native species are also a concern at the RNA. Exotic species introductions are most likely to occur along the forest roads that runs along the ridge that surround the upper reaches of the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks watershed. Coastal forest ecosystems typically are less susceptible to weedy plant infestations than other ecosystems but this should not relieve managers from vigilance for exotic species.

#### Transportation Plan

No roads are planned for this area. There already exist two trails in the RNA. The Gwynn Creek Loop Trail runs along Gwynn Creek for two miles (3.2 km) before heading north up to the Cooks Ridge Trail (Map 5). The Cummins Creek Loop Trail follows Cummins Creek for approximately two miles (3.2 km) before heading north towards Cape Ridge. The latter trail is located 200 feet (61 m) upslope from the creek bottom. One additional trail is planned for the Cummins Creek Wilderness that will run from Cummins Ridge in the southeast corner of the RNA to Gwynn Creek crossing the upper reaches of Cummins Creek basin.

#### Fences and Protective Barriers

Fences are not required at the RNA. There is a closed forest road that is the trailhead for the Cummins Creek Loop Trail that should be checked periodically to insure that motorized vehicles are not using the roadbed.

### ADMINISTRATION RECORDS AND PROTECTION

Administration and protection of Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA will be the responsibility of the Siuslaw National Forest. The District Ranger, Waldport Ranger District, has direct responsibility.

The Director of the Pacific Northwest Research Station will be responsible for any studies or research conducted in the area, and requests to conduct research in the RNA should be referred to her/him. The RNA Scientist in the Research Station is designated as the lead contact person for all such requests. The Director will evaluate research proposals and coordinate all studies and research in the area with the District Ranger. All plant and animal specimens collected in the course of research conducted in the area will be properly preserved and maintained within university or federal agency herbaria and museums, approved by the Pacific Northwest Research Station.

Records for the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA will be maintained in the following offices:

Regional Forester, Portland, Oregon  
Forest Supervisor, Siuslaw National Forest, Corvallis, Oregon

District Ranger, Waldport Ranger District, Waldport, Oregon  
Director, Pacific Northwest Research Station, Portland, Oregon  
Forest Sciences Laboratory, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon

### Archiving

The Portland office of the Pacific Northwest Research Station will be responsible for maintaining the Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA research data file and list of herbarium and species samples collected. The Forest Sciences Lab is establishing a data base for maintaining research data and lists of species for all RNAs in the region. Computerized files for the RNA will be maintained at the Forest Sciences Lab.

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### CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

The Cummins/Gwynn RNA boundary was created by using a combination of digital information from the Siuslaw National Forests Geographical Information System (GIS) and recent Cadastral survey information from surveys performed under contract for the Siuslaw National Forest (SNF).

The Point of Beginning (POB) is the 1/4 corner between sections 14 & 15, T.15 S., R.12 W., as monumented by George Rigby of the General Land Office (GLO) in 1935. (This is also POB for the Cummins Creek Wilderness)

The POB coordinates were computed from a tie in CS# 27756 by Mr. Larry Bishop (RLS 896) for the SNF based on a tie to Triangulation Station "Sharkey". Mr. Bishop also subdivided Section 10 in CS# 27755. Both surveys were performed in 1987.

#### Coordinate Position Data for station "Sharkey":

Latitude: 44-14-46.149  
Longitude: 124-06-47.785

X-COORD(EAST): 1,053,329.76 (feet)  
Y-COORD(NORTH): 960,555.47 (feet)

Mapping Angle: -2-28-19  
Scale Factor: 1.0000719  
Elev. Factor: 0.9999904 (based on elevation of 200 feet)  
Grid Factor: 1.0000623

Using the Mapping Angle and Grid Factors as a base, computed State Plane Coordinates for the 1/4 corner. (Once this was computed, using CORPSCON software, computed the Latitude and Longitude and UTM Coordinates for the corner - The values for the 1/4 Corner in the Wilderness description are in error and were based on the corner in T.16 S., R.12 W.)

#### Geographic Coordinates for the 1/4 corner :

Latitude: 44-15-31.686  
Longitude: 124-06-10.386

#### State Plane Coordinates

X-COORD (EAST): 1,056,248.23 (feet)  
Y-COORD (NORTH): 965,045.65 (feet)

#### UTM Coordinates for the 1/4 corner:

X-COORD (EAST): 411,959.732  
Y-COORD (NORTH): 4,900,992.961

Conversion factor used for feet to meters: 1 meter = 3.28084 feet

All remaining control points were obtained from the Forest's Geographical Information System (GIS). All values relate to the 1927 NAD, State Plane Coordinate (South Zone) System.

CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

| QUAD SHEET(S) NAME | ANGLE BEARING POINT | DISTANCE FEET (METERS)        | DESCRIPTION  |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <hr/>              |                     |                               |  |
| YACHATS            |                     |                               |  |
|                    | 1                   |                               | 1/4 Corner between sections 14 and 15, T.15 S., R.12 W., and the Point of Beginning (same as the Point of Beginning on the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence                      |
| <hr/>              |                     |                               |  |
|                    |                     | N 3-13-17 E 2538.78 (773.820) | Along the line between sections 14 and 15,   |
|                    | 2                   |                               | to Angle Point #2 and the corner to sections 10,11,14, and 15 (same as Angle Point #2 on the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary) thence,  |
| <hr/>              |                     |                               |  |
|                    |                     | N 1-17-11 E 578.17 (176.226)  | Along the line between sections 10 and 11 and the Wilderness boundary,   |
|                    | 3                   |                               | to Angle Point #3 on the line between sections 10 and 11 which is 100 feet south of the center of Road No. 1050 (same as Angle Point #3 on the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence, |
| <hr/>              |                     |                               |  |
|                    |                     | N 1-17-11E 1965.88 (599.200)  | Leaving the Wilderness Boundary and continuing along the line between sections 10 and 11,  |
|                    | 4                   |                               | To Angle Point #4 which is the 1/4 corner between sections 10 and 11, thence,  |
| <hr/>              |                     |                               |  |

CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

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|   |             |                  |   |
|---|-------------|------------------|---|
| 5 | N 2-40-32 E | 331.37 (101.002) | along the line between section 10 and 11,<br><br>To Angle Point #5, which is the SSN 1/256 corner between sections 10 and 11 as monumented by Bishop in CS# 27756 thence, |
|---|-------------|------------------|---|

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|   |              |                  |   |
|---|--------------|------------------|---|
| 6 | N 87-42-34 W | 330.02 (100.590) | In section 10,<br><br>To Angle Point #6, which is the SESENE 1/256 corner as monumented by Bishop in CS# 27756, thence, |
|---|--------------|------------------|---|

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|   |             |                  |  |
|---|-------------|------------------|--|
| 7 | N 2-40-32 E | 800.15 (243.886) | In section 10, along the line between the SESENE 1/256 and CEENE 1/256 corners as monumented by Bishop in CS# 27756,<br><br>To Angle Point #7, which is on the top of the ridge, thence, |
|---|-------------|------------------|--|

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|  |              |                   |  |
|--|--------------|-------------------|--|
|  |              |                   | Along the ridgetop, the following courses,   |
|  | N 67-42-06 E | 1497.97 (456.581) | To Angle Point #8, thence,   |
|  | N 68-56-46 E | 1238.53 (377.504) | To Angle Point #9, thence  |
|  | S 89-58-43 E | 1216.40 (370.759) | To Angle Point #10, thence,  |
|  | N 84-10-17 E | 844.17 (257.303)  | To Angle Point #11, thence,  |
|  | N 75-14-21 E | 1575.64 (480.255) | To Angle Point #12, thence,  |
|  | N 79-44-51 E | 1663.23 (506.952) | To Angle Point #13, thence,  |
|  | S 82-19-27 E | 1002.93 (305.693) | To Angle Point #14, thence,  |
|  | S 74-55-38 E | 494.14 (150.614)  | To Angle Point #15 which is 100 feet westerly from the end of Road No. 5599, thence, |

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CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

- 16      Northeasterly 5368.00 (1636.166)      paralleling Road No. 5599 100 feet southerly from the centerline of the road,  
To Angle Point #16 which is at the intersection with the upper drainage of Cape Creek, thence,
- 
- 18      N 81-32-40 E      442.47 (134.865)      across the slope, to Angle Point No. 17 which is the 1/4 corner between sections 6 & 7, T.15 W., R.11 W, as monumented by the BLM in 1966, thence
- 
- 18      S 1-34-53 W      2579.02 (786.085)      along the north-south centerline of section 7,  
To Angle Point #18 which is the center 1/4 corner of section 7 as monumented by Ron Quimby in CS# 11234 (same as Point #98 in the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary, thence,
- 
- 19      S 87-45-35 E      2599.60 (792.358)      along the east-west centerline of section 7,  
to Angle Point #19 which is the 1/4 corner between sections 7 and 8 as monumented by James Prochnau in CS# 22560 (same as Point #99 in the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence,
- 
- 20      N 1-19-11 E      831.48 (253.435)      along the section line between sections 7 & 8,  
to Angle Point #20 which is 100 feet south of the centerline of Road No. 55, thence,
-

CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

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|               |    |                                   |   |
|---------------|----|-----------------------------------|---|
| YACHATS       |    | Southeasterly 21438.00 (6534.302) | paralleling Road No. 55, 100 feet southerly from the centerline of the road (same as the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary),  |
| CANNIBAL MTN. |    |                                   |   |
| CUMMINS PEAK  | 21 |                                   | to Angle Point #21 which is 100 feet northerly from the junction of Road No. 55 & Road No. 5694 (same Point #207 of the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence, |

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|  |    |                                 |   |
|--|----|---------------------------------|---|
|  |    | Southwesterly 2617.00 (797.662) | paralleling Road No. 5694, 100 feet northerly from the centerline of the road (same as the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary),                        |
|  | 22 |                                 | to Angle Point #21 which is 100 feet northerly of the centerline of Road No. 5694 (same Point #219 of the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence, |

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|  |    |                               |  |
|--|----|-------------------------------|--|
|  |    | S 86-42-37 W 496.23 (151.251) | descending towards the upper drainage of Cummins Creek,                                |
|  | 23 |                               | to Angle Point #23 (same Point #220 of the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence, |

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|  |    |                               |   |
|--|----|-------------------------------|---|
|  |    | N 89-42-54 W 378.49 (115.364) | descending to the upper drainage of Cummins Creek,  |
|  | 24 |                               | to Angle Point #24 (same Point #221 of the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary) on the ordinary high waterline of the west bank of Cummins Creek, thence, |

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CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

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|             |               |                   |   |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|---|
|             | S 27-00-10 W  | 1615.58 (492.429) | across the slope on the north side of Cummins Peak,   |
| 25          |               |                   | to Angle Point #25 which is 100 feet west of the junction of Roads No. 5694 and No. 5694515 (same as Point No. 260 on the Cummins Creek Wilderness boundary), thence, |
| <hr/>       |               |                   |   |
|             | Northwesterly | 2098.00 (639.470) | paralleling Road No. 5694515,   |
| 26          |               |                   | to Angle Point #26 which is 100 feet westerly from Road No. 5694515 and its intersection with Cummins Ridge, thence,  |
| <hr/>       |               |                   |   |
|             |               |                   | Along the ridgetop in a northwesterly direction,  |
| HECETA HEAD | S 71-28-57 W  | 976.17 (297.537)  | To Angle Point #27, thence,   |
|             | S 86-01-35 W  | 596.18 (181.716)  | To Angle Point #28, thence  |
|             | N 64-40-45 W  | 426.90 (130.119)  | To Angle Point #29, thence,   |
|             | N 34-54-20 W  | 933.36 (284.488)  | To Angle Point #30, thence,   |
|             | S 74-13-18 W  | 1075.30 (327.751) | To Angle Point #31, thence,   |
|             | N 56-23-18 W  | 1130.15 (344.470) | To Angle Point #32, thence,   |
|             | N 86-23-32 W  | 1003.32 (305.812) | To Angle Point #33, thence,   |
|             | N 68-52-35 W  | 907.82 (276.704)  | To Angle Point #34, thence,   |
|             | N 83-24-10 W  | 1195.92 (364.516) | To Angle Point #35, thence,   |
|             | N 52-00-26 W  | 647.64 (197.401)  | To Angle Point #36, thence,   |
|             | N 66-11-39 W  | 734.74 (223.949)  | To Angle Point #37, thence,   |
|             | N 46-32-36 W  | 1152.62 (351.319) | To Angle Point #38 thence,  |
|             | S 85-09-53 W  | 670.87 (204.481)  | To Angle Point #39, thence,   |
|             | N 60-48-16 W  | 656.35 (200.055)  | To Angle Point #40, thence,   |
|             | N 19-44-20 W  | 780.30 (237.835)  | To Angle Point #41, thence,   |

CUMMINS/GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

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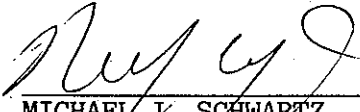
|         |              |  |
|---------|--------------|--|
|         |              | Continuing along the ridgetope,  |
|         | N 56-36-07 W | 521.49 (158.950) To Angle Point #42, thence,   |
|         | N 87-11-21 W | 1452.86 (442.832) To Angle Point #43, thence,  |
| YACHATS | N 28-36-02 W | 1462.48 (445.764) To Angle Point #44, thence,  |
|         | N 60-44-51 W | 369.56 (112.642) To Angle Point #45, thence,   |
|         | S 79-25-08 W | 2100.83 (640.333) To Angle Point #46, thence,  |
|         | N 84-29-03 W | 771.70 (235.214) To Angle Point #47, thence,   |
|         | N 78-31-31 W | 2174.95 (662.925) To Angle Point #48, thence,  |
|         | N 54-21-39 W | 964.80 (294.071) To Angle Point #49, thence,   |
|         | N 79-03-30 W | 670.57 (204.390) To Angle Point #50, thence,   |
|         | S 77-56-04 W | 1733.83 (528.471) To Angle Point #51, thence,  |
|         | N 45-44-49 W | 1161.46 (354.013) To Angle Point #52, thence,  |
|         | S 83-22-58 W | 643.16 (196.035) To Angle Point #53, thence,   |
|         | N 50-27-20 W | 651.12 (198.461) To Angle Point #54, thence,   |
|         | N 79-05-37 W | 580.85 (177.043) To Angle Point #55, thence,   |
|         | N 46-40-16 W | 653.10 (199.065) To Angle Point #56, thence,   |
|         | S 89-29-34 W | 604.80 (184.343) To Angle Point #57, thence,   |
|         | S 81-01-32 W | 544.03 (165.820) To Angle Point #58, thence,   |
|         | N 74-44-04 W | 462.30 (140.909) To Angle Point #59, thence,   |
|         | N 46-14-28 W | 347.97 (106.061) To the 1/4 corner between<br>section 14 & 15 and the Point of<br>Beginning. |

This boundary for this description is in the Forest GIS and the acreage is 6530 acres.

CUMMINS / GWYNN RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

I certify the enclosed boundary description of the Cummins/Gwynn  
Research Natural Area was prepared under my direct supervision

1922  
State Reg. No.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MICHAEL J. SCHWARTZ  
Forest Land Surveyor

9/25/97  
Date



**DECISION NOTICE / DESIGNATION ORDER  
and  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN  
RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS**

**USDA Forest Service  
Pacific Northwest Region  
Oregon and Washington**

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Chief of the Forest Service, in Forest Service Manual Section 4063, I hereby establish the Research Natural Areas listed in Table 1 and as described in their respective Establishment Records in the section entitled "Location".

**Table 1: Research Natural Area Locations**

| <b>RNA</b>                  | <b>National Forest</b> | <b>Ranger District</b>  | <b>County</b>  | <b>Acres</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>Oregon</b>               |                        |                         |                |              |
| <b>Cummins/Gwynn Creeks</b> | Siuslaw                | Waldport                | Lane & Lincoln | 6530         |
| <b>Hoover Gulch</b>         | Siskiyou               | Illinois Valley         | Josephine      | 1264         |
| <b>Lemmingsworth Gulch</b>  | Siskiyou               | Chetco                  | Curry          | 1224         |
| <b>Wildcat Mt.*</b>         | Willamette             | McKenzie and Sweet Home | Linn           | 525          |
| <b>Washington</b>           |                        |                         |                |              |
| <b>Chewuch River</b>        | Okanogan               | Methow Valley           | Okanogan       | 8500         |
| <b>Steamboat Mt.*</b>       | Gifford Pinchot        | Mt. Adams               | Skamania       | 40           |
| <b>Idaho</b>                |                        |                         |                |              |
| <b>Little Granite**</b>     | Nez Perce              | Hells Canyon NRA        | Idaho          | 6259         |

\*Additions to previously established RNAs

\*\*Administered by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Region 6

The Regional Forester recommended the establishment of these RNAs in the Record of Decision for their respective Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans). That recommendation was the result of an analysis of the factors listed in 36 CFR 219.25 and Forest Service Manual 4063.2. Results of the Regional Forester's analysis are documented in the Forest Plans and Final Environmental Impact Statements which are available to the public.

## **SELECTED ALTERNATIVE**

The Regional Forester has reexamined the RNAs to ensure that the environmental effects of establishing the areas as RNAs have not changed since the Forest Plans were adopted. In one case, Wildcat Mt., areas were recommended for addition to the proposed RNA to better accomplish the original purpose of the RNA. For the remaining RNAs no changes were found. This analysis is documented in the attached Environmental Assessment.

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment, it is my decision to adopt Alternative 2 which establishes these seven areas as Research Natural Areas. Alternative 2 is selected because it provides long-term protection of the research and educational values of these special areas and the ecosystem elements that they represent. The RNAs will be managed in compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and Forest Service Manual direction regarding RNAs and in accordance with the management direction identified in their respective Forest Plans.

Although this alternative is consistent with the management direction in each Forest Plan it does change the allocation for these areas from "Proposed RNA" to "Established RNA". This is a non-significant amendment of the Forest Plans [36 CFR 219.10(f)].

## **OTHER ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED**

The other alternative considered was Alternative 1, the "No Action" alternative which would continue management of the RNAs as "Proposed RNAs". Alternative 1 was not selected because it would provide only short-term protection of the research and educational values of the areas. Alternative 1 is consistent with the Forest Plans.

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on the environmental analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment, it has been determined that the proposed action is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This determination is based on the following factors [40 CFR 1508.27]:

### **CONTEXT**

Although this is an addition to the national system of RNAs, both short-term and long-term physical and biological effects are limited to the local area.

### **INTENSITY**

1. There are no known effects on public health and safety.
2. No significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts to the natural resources or other components of the human environment are anticipated.
3. Effects on the human environment are not uncertain, do not involve unique or unknown risks, and are not likely to be highly controversial.

4. There are no known effects on historical or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or wild and scenic rivers. Effects of establishing the RNAs is to protect ecologically sensitive areas. No significant adverse effects area anticipated to any environmentally sensitive or critical area.

5. The action is not likely to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects.

6. The proposed action will not adversely affect any federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species or Regionally listed sensitive species of plants or animals or their critical habitats.

7. The proposed action is consistent with the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (USDA, USDI 1994).

8. The proposed action is consistent with Federal, State, and local laws and requirements for protection of the environment.

## **NOTIFICATION and IMPLEMENTATION**

Legal notice of this decision will appear in The Oregonian and The Seattle Post-Intelligencer. The Forest Supervisor of each National Forest shall notify the public of this decision and mail a copy of the Decision Notice/Designation Order to all persons on their Forest Plan mailing lists.

Implementation of this decision shall not occur within seven days following publication of the legal notice of the decision in The Oregonian and The Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

## **APPEAL RIGHTS**

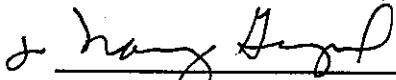
This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR Part 217. A copy of the Notice of Appeal must be in writing and must be submitted to:

Chief, USDA Forest Service  
ATTN: NFS Appeals  
14th and Independence Ave., S.W.  
P.O. Box 96090  
Washington, DC 20090-6090

Any written Notice of Appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9 (Content of a Notice of Appeal), must include the reasons for appeal, and must be submitted within 45 days from the date of legal notice of this decision in The Oregonian and The Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

**CONTACT PERSON**

For further information regarding this decision contact Sarah Greene, RNA Coordinator, Pacific Northwest Research Station, 3200 S. W. Jefferson Way, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, phone 541-750-7360.

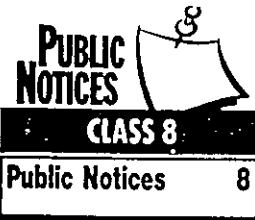


ROBERT W. WILLIAMS  
Regional Forester  
Pacific Northwest Region

May 17, 1999

Date

(For) Nancy Graybeal  
Deputy Regional Forester

**PUBLIC NOTICES**  
  
**CLASS 8**  
 Public Notices 8

**Public Notices 8**

**NOTICE OF DECISION**

On May 17, 1999, USDA, Forest Service, Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region (Portland, Oregon) made a decision to establish 7 Research Natural Areas. RNA's are part of a national network of field ecological areas designated for research and education. They also provide gene pool preserves for plant and animal species, especially rare and endangered species. RNA's also preserve a prime example of common communities that can serve as a baseline for comparison. All seven areas were previously allocated as "proposed" RNA's during forest planning. This decision formalizes their designation for that use. The RNA's established with this decision are: CUMMINS/GWYNN CREEKS (Siuslaw NF, OR, 6530 acres); HOOVER GULCH (Siskiyou NF, OR, WA, 1264 acres); LEMMINGSWORTH GULCH (Siskiyou NF, OR, 1224 acres); WILDCAT MOUNTAIN ADDITION (Willamette NF, OR, 525 acres); CHEWUCH RIVER (Okanogan NF, WA, 8500 acres); STEAMBOAT MOUNTAIN ADDITION (Gifford Pinchot NF, WA, 40 acres); and LITTLE GRANITE (Nez Perce NF, Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, ID, 6259 acres).

A copy of the Decision Notice/Designation Order and Finding of No Significant Impact is available upon request from the Regional Office, Environmental Coordination, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208.

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to Forest Service regulation 36 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 217. Any written Notice of Appeal must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9 (Content of a Notice of Appeal) and must include the reasons for appeal. Any written appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeal Deciding Officer, Chief Mike Dombeck, USDA - Forest Service, ATTN: NFS Appeals, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090 within 45 days of the date of this legal notice.

For further information regarding these RNAs, contact Sarah Greene, RNA Coordinator, Pacific Northwest Research Station, 3200 S.W. Jefferson Way, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, phone 541-750-7360.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Friday, May 21, 1999

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**380 Legal Notices**

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# ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Pacific Northwest Region  
USDA Forest Service  
Oregon and Washington

Lead Agency:

USDA Forest Service  
P.O. Box 3623  
Portland, OR 97208

Responsible Official:

ROBERT W. WILLIAMS, Regional Forester  
Pacific Northwest Region  
P.O. Box 3623  
Portland, OR 97208

Prepared by:

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Sweet Home Ranger District  
Willamette National Forest  
3225 Highway 20  
Sweet Home, OR 97386  
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Abstract:

This Environmental Assessment identifies the need for the proposed action, describes the analysis process and the alternatives formulated during that process. It discusses the environmental effects of each of the proposed alternatives. Two alternatives were evaluated and compared and are as follows: Alternative 1 - No Action and Alternative 2 - Finalize Establishment.

# ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

USDA FOREST SERVICE  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION  
OREGON AND WASHINGTON

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### Proposed Action

The proposed action is to establish seven Research Natural Areas (RNAs) as proposed in the Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plan) of each respective National Forest. These RNAs will be managed according to the direction provided in the management plans. This proposed action, formal designation of the RNAs by the Regional Forester, will amend each National Forest's Forest Plan. Table 1 lists the RNAs that are included in this environmental assessment and Figure 1 shows their locations.

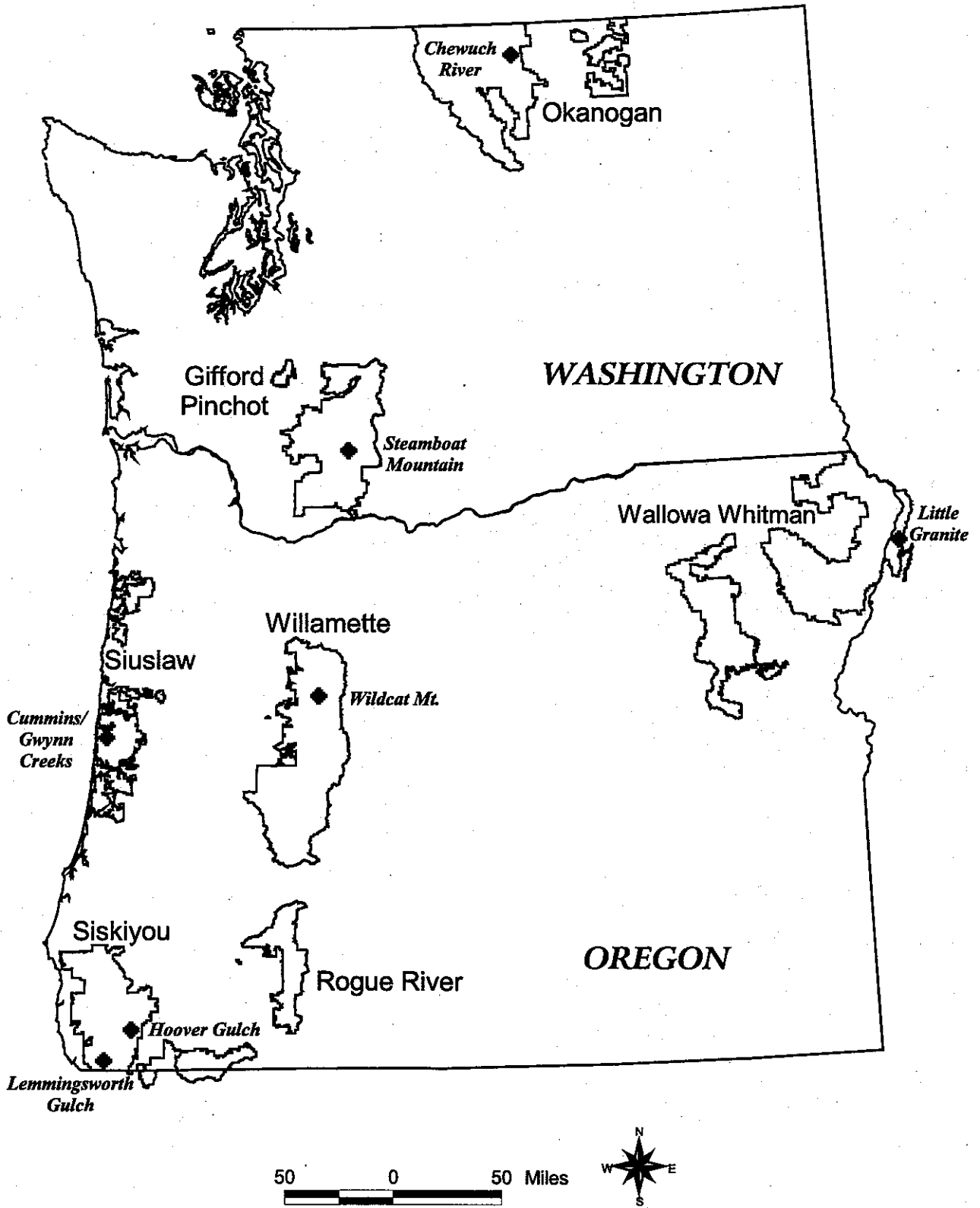
**Table 1: Research Natural Area Locations**

| RNA                  | National Forest | Ranger District         | County         | Acres |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------|
| <b>Oregon</b>        |                 |                         |                |       |
| Cummins/Gwynn Creeks | Siuslaw         | Waldport                | Lane & Lincoln | 6530  |
| Hoover Gulch         | Siskiyou        | Illinois Valley         | Josephine      | 1264  |
| Lemmingsworth Gulch  | Siskiyou        | Chetco                  | Curry          | 1224  |
| Wildcat Mt.*         | Willamette      | McKenzie and Sweet Home | Linn           | 525   |
| <b>Washington</b>    |                 |                         |                |       |
| Chewuch River        | Okanogan        | Methow Valley           | Okanogan       | 8500  |
| Steamboat Mt.*       | Gifford Pinchot | Mt. Adams               | Skamania       | 40    |
| <b>Idaho</b>         |                 |                         |                |       |
| Little Granite**     | Nez Perce       | Hells Canyon NRA        | Idaho          | 6259  |

\*Additions to previously established RNAs

\*\*Administered by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Region 6

**Figure 1: Vicinity Map**





## Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of establishing these RNAs is to contribute to a series of RNAs designated to "illustrate adequately or typify for research or education purposes, the important forest and range types in each forest region, as well as other plant communities that have special or unique characteristics of scientific interest and importance" (36 CFR 251.23). An evaluation by the Regional RNA Committee, pursuant to direction in Forest Service Manual 4063.04b, identified the vegetation types represented by these RNAs as suitable and desirable for inclusion in the national network. Establishment of these RNAs will provide long-term protection and recognition of these representative vegetation types (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Representative Vegetative Types**

| RNA                  | Physiographic Province     | Major Vegetation Types                               |   |  |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| Chewuch River        | East Slope WA Cascades     | Engelmann spruce/horsetail                           | Mid-elevation riparian with mixed conifer, hardwoods, and marshland-bog |  |
| Cummins/Gwynn Creeks | Oregon Coast Range         | Douglas-fir/Western hemlock                          | Sitka spruce  | Coastal aquatic systems                |
| Hoover Gulch         | Klamath Mountains          | Doug-fir/canyon liveoak                              | Douglas-fir-tanoak-canyon live oak                                      |  |
| Lemmingsworth Gulch  | Klamath Mountains          | Port-Orford-cedar/western azalea                     | Douglas-fir-tanoak/salal  | Douglas-fir-tanoak-canyon live oak     |
|                      |                            | Tanoak/California buckthorn on serpentine            | Jeffrey pine-western white pine/manzanita-beargrass                     | Knobcone pine                          |
| Little Granite       | Seven Devils               | Subalpine fir/grouse huckleberry                     | Douglas-fir/ponderosa pine/snowberry                                    | Spruce-subalpine fir/false huckleberry |
|                      |                            | Snake River greenbush rims                           | Ponderosa pine/bluebunch wheat-grass                                    | Low, mid and high elevation streams    |
| Steamboat Mt.        | East Slope WA Cascades     | Pacific silver fir-mountain hemlock-Engelmann spruce |   |  |
| Wildcat Mt.          | West slope Oregon Cascades | Pacific silver fir/foamflower                        | Pacific silver fir/ vinemaple/foamflower                                |  |

A more detailed description of the vegetation, wildlife, and physical and climatic conditions can be found in the Establishment Record for each RNA. Site conditions have been reviewed since these RNAs were proposed during the land management planning process and no significant changes have occurred.

## Public Involvement

Each National Forest included this project in their quarterly publication "Schedule of Proposed Actions" (FSH 1909.15, sec. 17) or sent a letter to interested parties. No comments were received from the public on continuing with the establishment process for these RNAs. The proposed RNAs were also subjected to public review and comment during the land management planning process that resulted in the Forest Plans.

## Alternatives and Environmental Consequences

**Alternative 1, No Action:** This alternative continues management according to the direction in the each National Forest's Forest Plan for "proposed RNAs". This management generally limits recreation use to non-motorized use of existing trails and prohibits timber harvest and/or other vegetation management. There are no cumulative effects generated by this alternative. Other environmental consequences are described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for each Forest Plan. For the RNA addition with a boundary change (Wildcat Mt.) there is a possible loss of research potential in the area that was not included in this RNA addition originally.

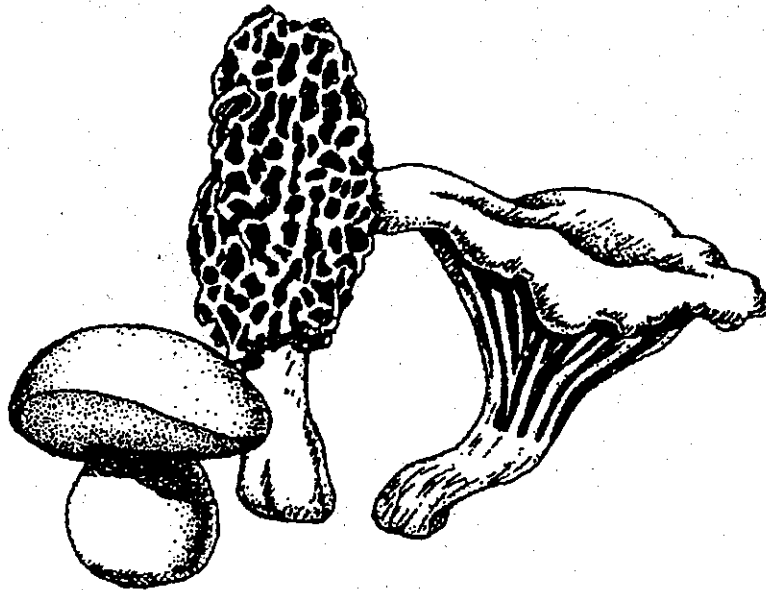
**Alternative 2, Proposed Action:** This alternative will formally establish each RNA in the location described in their respective Establishment Record. The standards and guidelines listed in each respective Forest Plan will be applied to the management of these RNAs (see Table 3). Environmental consequences of this alternative have been discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statements for each Forest Plan (Final EIS) (see Table 3). These consequences include the short-term loss of opportunities to change vegetation conditions through management. There are no significant cumulative effects from establishment of these RNAs beyond those already discussed in the Final EIS's.

The direction in the National Forest management plans for established RNAs also includes reasonably foreseeable actions such as withdrawal of the area from mineral entry. The general consequences of withdrawal are discussed in the Final EIS's. Site-specific consequences will be disclosed in more detail when the mineral entry withdrawal recommendation is implemented.

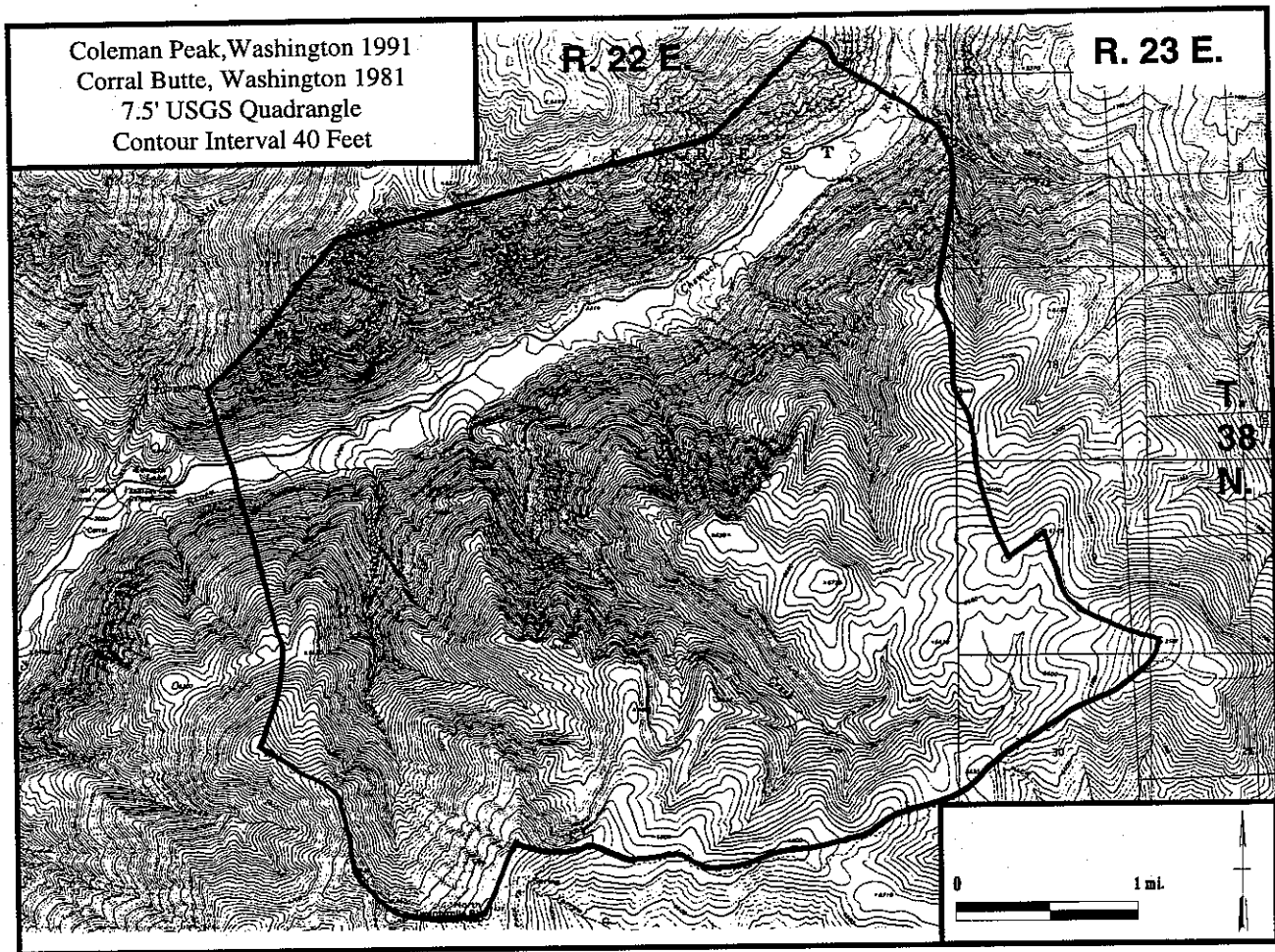
A map of each RNA follows in Figures 2 - 8. A summary of the consequences associated with a particular RNA are listed below the map for that RNA. The summary for Wildcat Mt. also discusses any additional environmental consequences not covered by the Forest Plan Final EIS for the proposed boundary changes.

**Table 3: Land Management Plan References**

| RNA                             | National Forest    | Standards and Guidelines<br>In Land and Resource<br>Management Plan | Environmental<br>Consequences in<br>Final EIS           |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| <b>Chewuch River</b>            | Okanogan NF        | Chapter 4 - pages 92-93   | Chapter IV - pages 69-70                                |
| <b>Cummins/Gwynn<br/>Creeks</b> | Siuslaw NF         | Chapter IV - pages 104-107  | Chapter IV - pages 77-80                                |
| <b>Hoover Gulch</b>             | Siskiyou NF        | Chapter IV - pages 81-84  | Chapter IV - pages 9,20,77                              |
| <b>Lemmingsworth<br/>Gulch</b>  | Siskiyou NF        | Chapter IV - pages 81-84  | Chapter IV - pages 9,20,77                              |
| <b>Little Granite</b>           | Wallowa-Whitman NF | Chapter 4 - page 12, 83   | Chapter IV - pages 7,61,72,<br>78,83,85                 |
| <b>Steamboat Mt.</b>            | Gifford Pinchot    | Chapter IV - page 138   | Chapter IV - pages 6,43,53,<br>87,96,98,100,106,120,135 |
| <b>Wildcat Mt.</b>              | Willamette NF      | Chapter IV - pages 134-137  | Chapter IV - pages 166-169                              |



## Figure 2: Chewuch River RNA



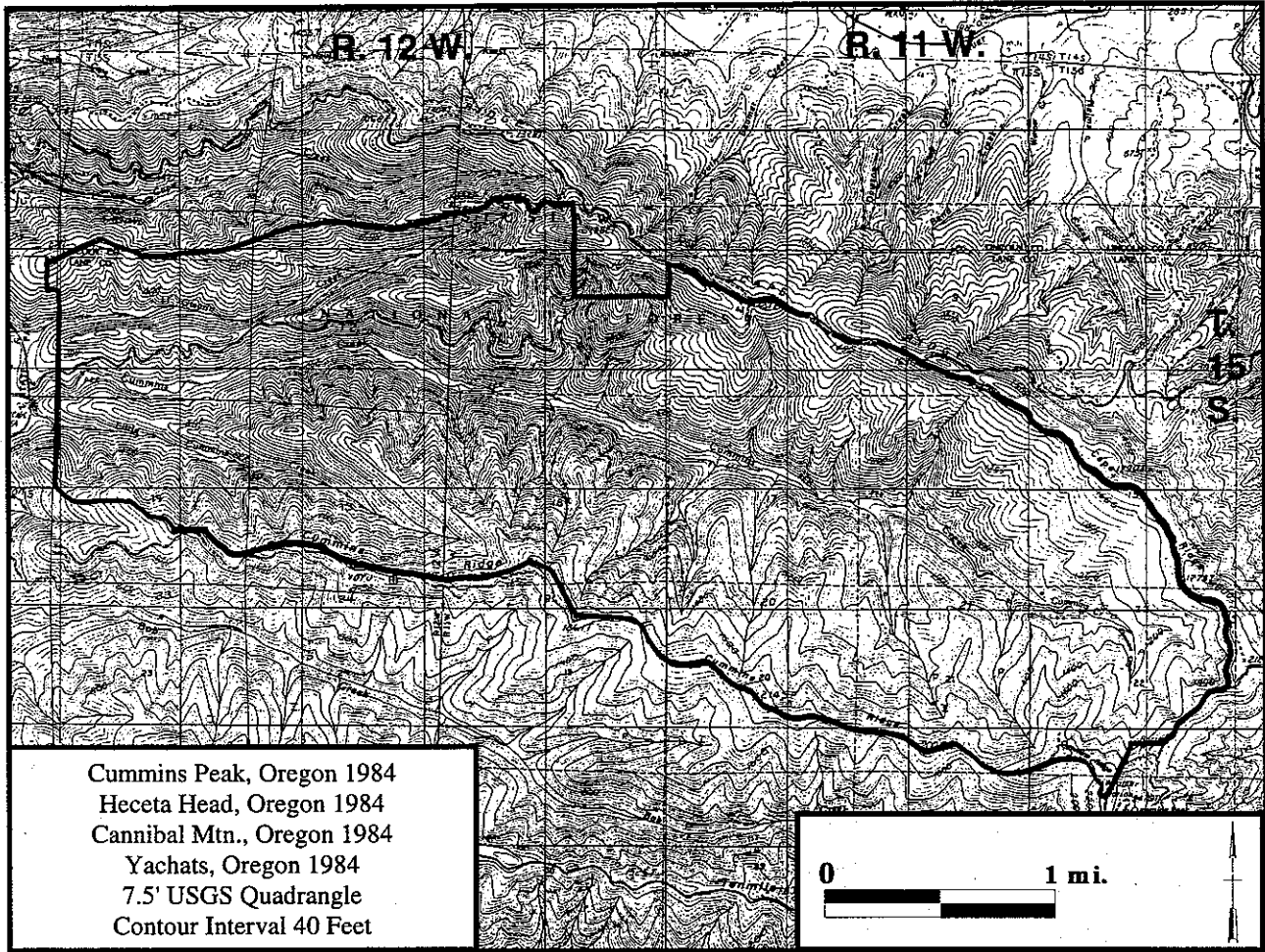
**Mineral Resources:** There are no known mineral resources in this RNA.

**Grazing:** There is currently no grazing in this RNA although there have been cattle and sheep in the area along the road in the past and there are allotments adjacent to the area.

**Timber:** Approximately 2400 acres are covered by lands that meet the productivity requirements for commercial timber harvest. This land was not included in the timber base for the Forest Plan, therefore establishment will have no effect on probable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** The RNA is adjacent to the Pasayten Wilderness. The area within and surrounding the RNA is a popular location for hiking, hunting, fishing and other recreational activities. Establishment of the RNA should not significantly impact those activities. There are a number of dispersed recreation sites along the Chewuch River Road within the RNA. This existing use will still be allowed but not encouraged.

**Figure 3: Cummins/Gwynn Creeks RNA**



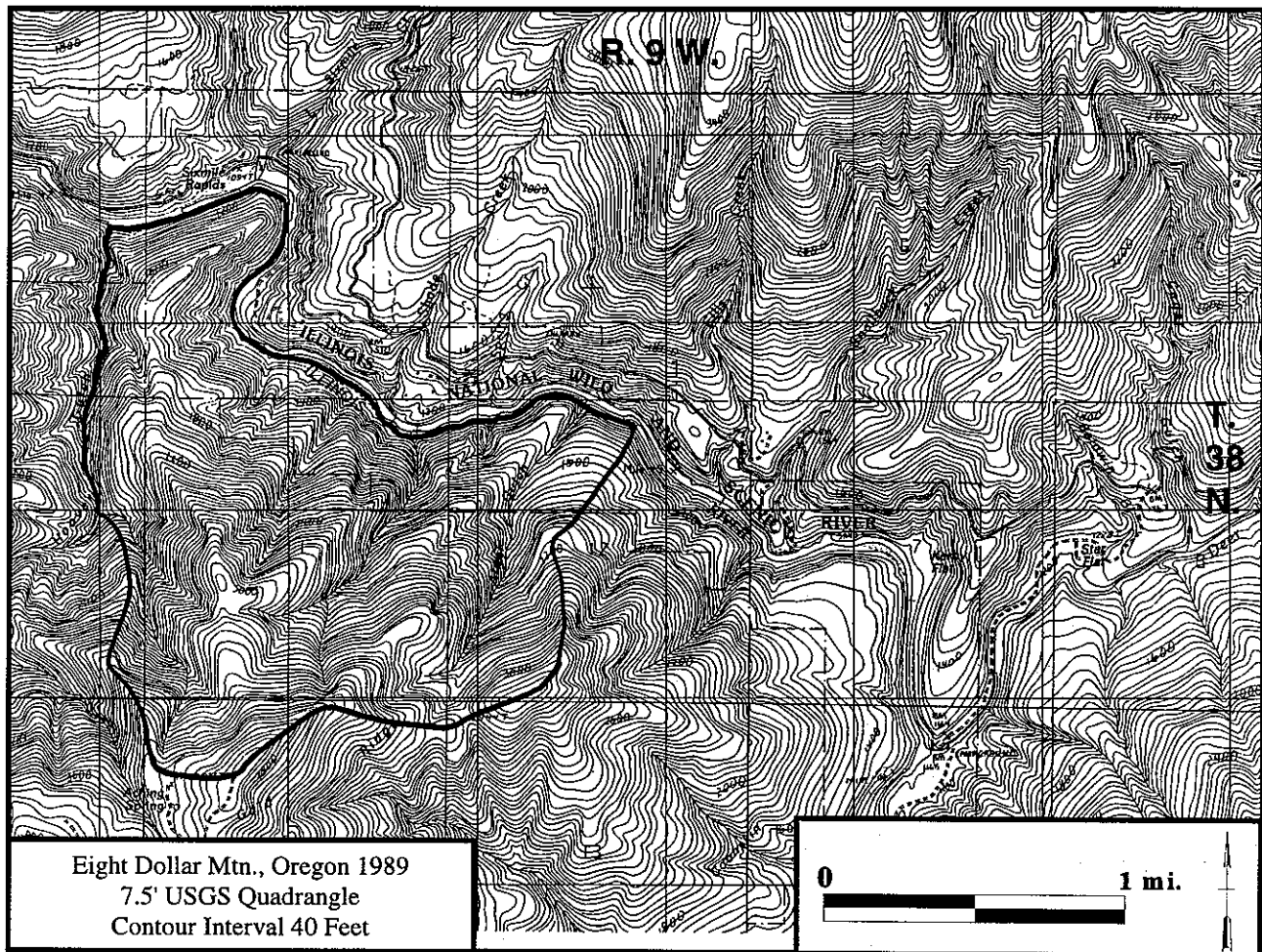
**Mineral Resources:** There are no known mineral resources in this RNA.

**Grazing:** There is no grazing in this RNA.

**Timber:** The entire area of the RNA is forested lands that exceed the productivity requirements for timber management. However, all most all the RNA is in the Cummins Creek Wilderness. This designation precludes timber harvest and these lands were not included in the timber base for the Forest Plan. Therefore, establishment will have no effect on probable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** The RNA receives some dispersed recreation such as fishing, hunting and hiking. There several trails and there are plans to build additional trails and create isolated campsites off the trails in the Wilderness. It is expected that this recreational use will increase in the future but this use is not expected to create conflicts with RNA values.

**Figure 4: Hoover Gulch RNA**



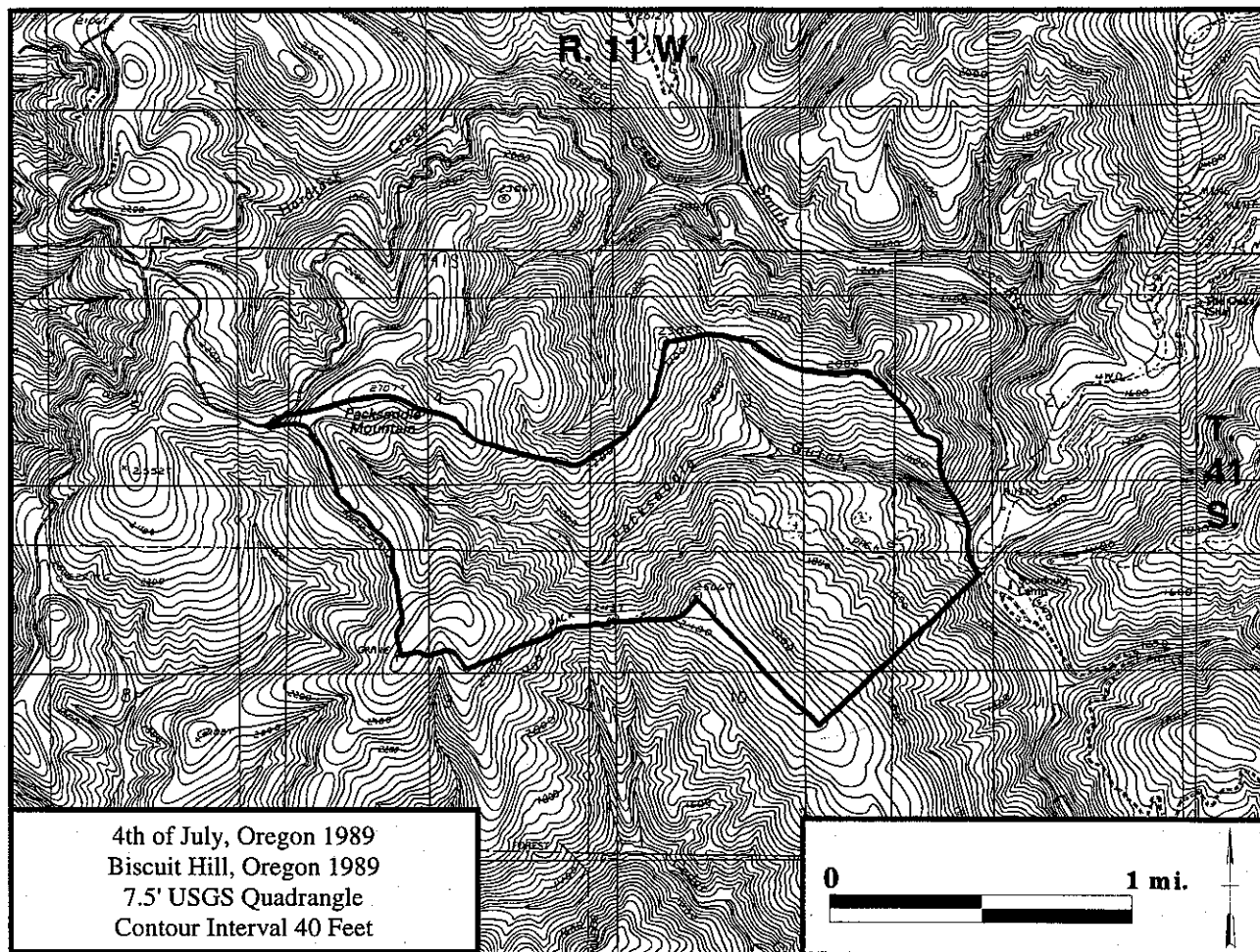
**Mineral Resources:** There are no valid mining claims in this RNA.

**Grazing:** There is no grazing in this RNA.

**Timber:** That portion of the RNA within 1/4 mile of the Illinois River, approximately 3/4 of the RNA, is in the Wild and Scenic River corridor and is not included in the allowable cut base. Only 70 acres of the remainder has forest land suitable for commercial timber harvest. This land was not included in the timber base for the Forest Plan. Therefore, establishment will have no effect on probable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** Most current use is immediately adjacent to the Illinois River. The RNA itself receives a little use during the summer and this use is likely to continue without affecting the research or educational values of the RNA.

**Figure 5: Lemmingsworth Gulch RNA**



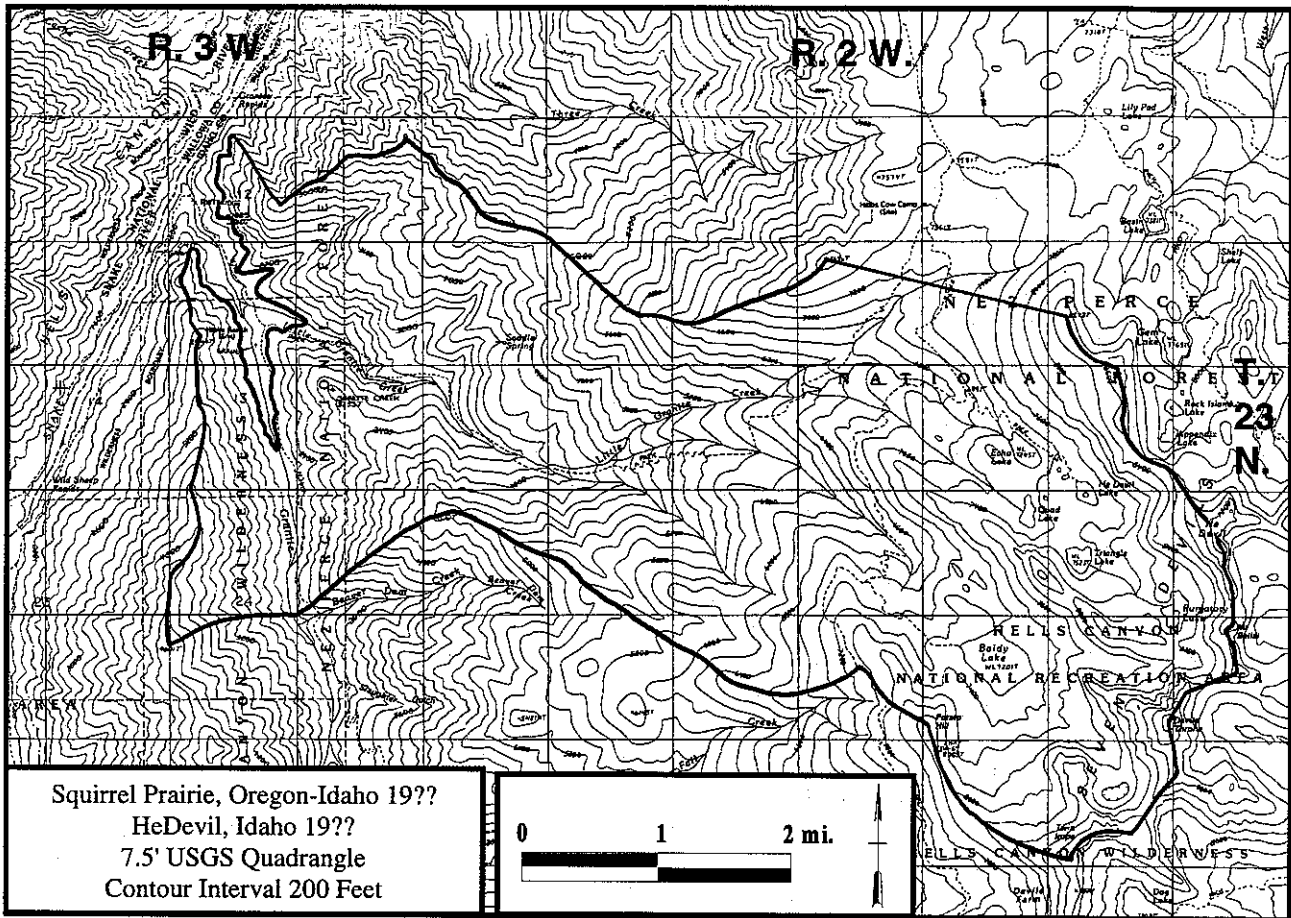
**Mineral Resources:** There are nine valid mining claims on record in this area. They are not expected to become active, but if they were to begin operations the operating plans would require mitigation measures to protect RNA values. If these mitigation measures prove inadequate then withdrawal from mineral entry may be recommended.

**Grazing:** There is no grazing in this RNA.

**Timber:** Timber resource values are low as most of the RNA has unsuitable soils for producing commercial timber. This land was not included in the timber base for the Forest Plan. Therefore, establishment will have no effect on probable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** Current use is occasional and mostly restricted to the trail corridor. This use is expected to continue unless it negatively impacts the fragile rare plant communities found in the RNA.

**Figure 6: Little Granite RNA**



**Mineral Resources:** There are no active hardrock mining claims in this RNA. There has been gold mining activity north of this RNA and is likely that some exploratory mining has taken place in the RNA in the past.

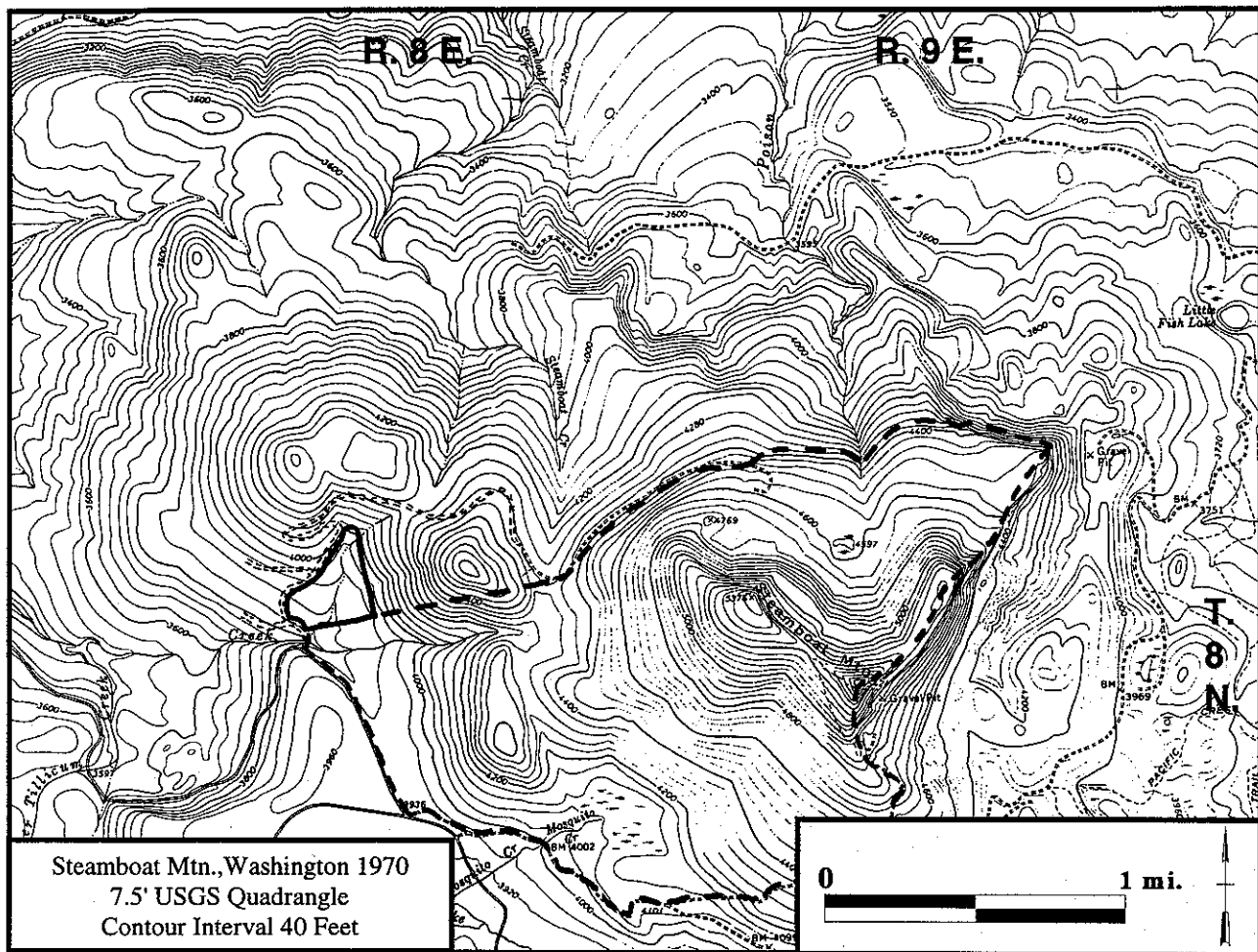
**Grazing:** There are no grazing allotments in this RNA. There is some incidental grazing from pack and saddle stock during the summer and fall. This limited use is expected to continue unless it creates unforeseen conflicts with RNA educational or research objectives.

**Timber:** This RNA is entirely within the Hells Canyon Wilderness so timber management is precluded by that designation. Therefore, establishment will have no effect on allowable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** There is substantial recreation use in the upper lakes basin from backpackers and horse packers during the summer months, with use concentrated around the lakes themselves. There are two trails through the RNA and the lower end also receives occasional use by river runners during the spring season. There is some use of the upper elevations in the fall from hunters. Increased recreational use is expected over time but it is not expected to impact RNA values and no changes in management of recreation are proposed at this time.



## Figure 7: Steamboat Mt. RNA Addition



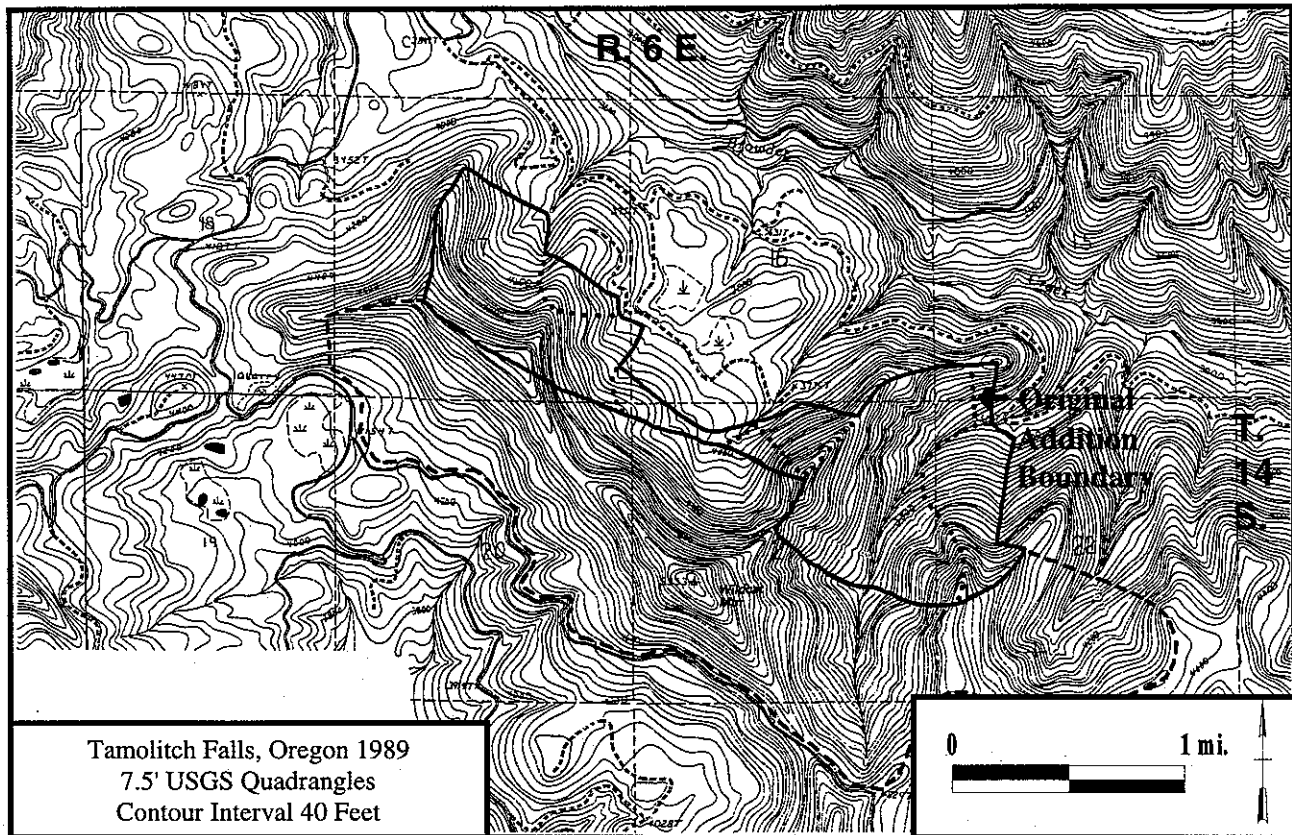
**Mineral Resources:** There are no known mineral resources in this addition to the RNA.

**Grazing:** There is no grazing in this RNA.

**Timber:** Approximately 35 acres out of 40 are within a Riparian Reserve. These lands are not available for commercial timber harvest. This land was not included in the timber base for the Forest Plan. Therefore, establishment will have no effect on probable sale quantity.

**Recreation:** Dispersed recreation such as hunting and hiking will continue unless it reduces the research or educational values of the RNA.

## Figure 8: Wildcat Mt. RNA Addition



**Mineral Resources:** There are no known mineral resources in this addition to the RNA.

**Grazing:** There is no grazing in this RNA.

**Timber:** The addition proposed in the 1990 Willamette National Forest Land Management Plan totaled 384 acres. The current proposed addition totals 525 acres. The current proposed addition to the RNA contains approximately 178 acres of forest suitable for timber management, approximately 51 acres more than the original proposed addition. Of the 178 acres only 50 are available for timber harvest due to other concurrent land management allocations such as Riparian Reserves, a Late-Successional Reserve, and Special Habitat. This reduction in suitable and available acres was accounted for in calculation of probable sale quantity during the development of the Northwest Forest Plan, therefore there will be no effect from establishment.

**Recreation:** There is very limited recreational use within the RNA due to its lack of trails or any other recreational facilities. The most likely use is some hunting which is limited by the steep slopes and Sitka alder/devil's club patches. This use is not expected to conflict with the research or educational values of the RNA or be affected by designation of this addition to the RNA.