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## **Bureau of Land Management Releases New Plan Conserving More than 400,000 Acres in Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands**

*After more than two decades of research, inventory, public comment and analysis, the Bureau of Land Management has released a new plan to protect more than 400,000 acres of public lands for wilderness values, the most ever proposed in a single BLM district.*

The new plan – the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan Amendment – will guide management of wildlands, wildlife, watersheds, recreation and multiple uses across this iconic landscape for at least the next 20 years. The area encompasses many recognizable and popular locations, including Jordan Craters, Three Forks, Leslie Gulch and the West Little Owyhee.

“The BLM’s decision to conserve more than 400,000 acres of ecologically important public wildlands is precedential – at no other time in history has a BLM district decided to manage more undesignated land for wilderness values than here in the Owyhee Canyonlands,” said Ryan Houston, Executive Director of the Oregon Natural Desert Association.

“This reflects a conservation vision well-suited to this region known for its incredibly remote and wild landscapes. Anyone who has explored the rugged canyons, wandered the endless Sagebrush Sea or marveled at the dark night skies of the Owyhee knows this is truly a national treasure worthy of the highest levels of conservation.

“We applaud the BLM for recognizing the conservation need in Oregon’s high desert and we look forward to working with the administration and Oregon’s Congressional delegation to continue conserving the Owyhee Canyonlands for generations to come.”

Spurred by decades of advocacy by Oregon Natural Desert Association, the new plan is a new precedent for the BLM for how it would manage 417,190 acres of “Lands with Wilderness Characteristics” for their wilderness values, protecting these public lands from development. This landmark result stems from ONDA’s decades of grassroots work inventorying these lands, advocating for their conservation, and pressing for strong, science-based management decisions.

Long-term conservation of this landscape will promote climate resilience, support recovery of key species like the greater sage-grouse, and provide for abundant backcountry recreation in one of Oregon’s most remote landscapes.

Last week, Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley introduced the Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act (S.1890) in the Senate, a complementary proposal that would permanently protect more than 1 million acres in the Owyhee Canyonlands.

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