



**S. SHAKETABLE - 7,137
Acres (RARE II No. 6235)**

1. Description

- a. History** This area was inventoried in RARE and enlarged in the RARE II inventory Under the South Fork Planning Unit Environmental Impact Statement and RARE II Environmental Impact Statement, the area has been managed for nonwilderness uses.
- b. Location and Access** Shaketable roadless area is located on the western edge of the Malheur National Forest, approximately 12 miles southeast of Dayville, Oregon, in Grant County (T. 15 S., R. 27 E., and T 15 S., R. 28 E , of the Willamette Meridian).
- Access is available to most of the unit. Primary access is by Forest road No. 2170 on the north and Forest road Nos. 2490 and 2490090 on the east. These roads are well maintained Access is also available by jeep trail on the west and a low-standard local road on the south (Forest Service road No. 2490269)
- c. Geography and Topography** The terrain of this area varies from flat plateaus to deep canyons. Most of the area consists of steep sideslopes with streamcourses in the ravines The remainder is relatively flat upland. High points are Shaketable and Timber Mountain. The unit is dissected by several steep canyons containing Thorn, Murderers, South Fork Murderers, Bark Cabin, Crazy, Corral Gulch, and East Fork Corral Gulch creeks. Relief is approximately 1,565 feet, from 3,360 feet on Murderers Creek to 4,924 feet on Timber Mountain. See Figure C-18.
- d Geology and Soils** General underlying geologic formations are Columbia River group basalts and andesites in the west and north with Vester formation conglomerates to the east and south.
- Soil types are predominantly loamy and clayey, nonforested soils with a wide variety of characteristics. There are also some areas of deep volcanic ash soils. Most of the area is covered by Miocene-age basalt flows Some Triassic-age oceanic crustal rocks are found along the southeastern edge
- e. Vegetation** The Shaketable unit is about 31 percent forested; this Forest is scattered throughout the area. Concentrations of timber types are on Timber Mountain, the north slopes of Shaketable, and the canyons of Crazy and South Fork Murderers Creeks. Ponderosa pine is the dominant species with Douglas-fir and white fir on the more protected sites. Ground cover in forested areas is primarily pinegrass and elk sedge. The nonforested lands are occupied by juniper, mountain-mahogany, sagebrushes, wheatgrass, fescue, bluegrass, and wild onion. There are about 750 forested acres in this area that meet the Pacific Northwest Region's definition of old growth.
- f. Current Uses** Although access is good, this area does not receive a large amount of recreational use. (See Table C-2.) The principal use is big-game hunting. Horseback riding, off-road vehicle use, fishing, camping, and bird-watching are other activities that occur here to a limited extent.

Wildlife is varied and includes Rocky mountain elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, antelope, and wild horses. Birds in the area include songbirds, raptors, and game birds such as mountain quail, chukar, and mourning dove. The entire area provides winter range for elk and deer. There are native trout in the streams. Murderers Creek is an important steelhead spawning and rearing habitat for the John Day River System.

The area lies within one grazing allotment with about 700 Animal Unit Months provided annually. The principal area of livestock use is on Timber Mountain and the eastern portion of the area. The entire area also lies within the Murderers Creek Coordinated Resource Management Unit and Murderers Creek Wild Horse Territory.

The primary attraction of the area is the opportunity for solitude in undeveloped canyon country. Unusual rock formations and the creek canyons offer interesting geologic sites.

2. Wilderness Capability

- a. Manageability and Boundaries The present boundary primarily follows natural or human-made characteristics. There are areas where there are cross- or mid-slope locations. The nature of the surrounding locale (maintained roads, timber sales, etc.) makes expansion of the area difficult; however, a more manageable boundary would increase the size of the area by 1,760 acres.
- b. Natural Integrity About 60 percent of the area has been impacted by human activity, and natural integrity of the area is low.
- c. Naturalness Impacts include jeep trails, fences with evident clearing, wildlife guzzlers, livestock and their salt grounds and water developments. The canyons of Crazy, Thorn, and Murderers Creeks are virtually untouched. Bark Cabin and South Fork Murderers Creeks have trails along their lengths.
- d. Opportunity for Solitude The opportunity for solitude over the entire area is low because of the ability to see maintained roads and traffic from most of the unit.
- e. Primitive Recreation and Challenge There is very little vegetative screening although there is some relief provided by the topography. There is little or no opportunity for Primitive recreation. Most of the area is visually common to this physiographic type. There are distinct locations within this area which provide some challenge and scenic variety due to the steep, rugged sideslopes and changes in vegetation along the streams.
- f. Special Features There are five possible cultural resource sites (one historical, four prehistoric) within this area. There is high probability of other sites because of the travel through, and use of, the area by both American Indians and Europeans. One Sensitive plant species occurs in this area.

There is a potential for scientific study of ecological features. A candidate Research Natural Area has been identified in the area. This area is considered a good representative of low sage communities in the southern Blue Mountains.

3. Availability for Wilderness

a. Resource Potential

This area currently provides roaded modified, roaded natural and semiprimitive motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities. (See Table C-3) It can provide 10,164 Recreation Visitor Days per year (See Table C-4.)

There are 1,755 acres of forested land tentatively suitable for timber management activities. These trees are growing in multistoried stands consisting of both ponderosa pine and mixed conifer species. There is a standing volume of 8.1 million board feet (1.42 million cubic feet). With the use of intensive timber management techniques, 84 thousand cubic feet (480 thousand board feet) would be contributed to the annual allowable sale quantity in the first decade. The long-term sustained yield capacity from this area would be 100 thousand cubic feet per year.

The area has no known locatable mineral potential. One mining claim is located in the vicinity. The U S Geological Survey considers the area to be prospectively valuable for oil and gas but not for geothermal resources.

b. Management Considerations

Fire risk is moderate to high because of the flash fuels, relatively dry sites, and prevailing winds. There is a high amount of lightning activity in the area, especially in the higher elevations of Timber Mountain and Shaketable.

There is some insect damage in the area but it is insignificant. There are also inconsequential root rots present in the white fir.

There are no non-Federal lands within this area. There is a section of land managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife adjacent to the southeast corner.

4. Wilderness Evaluation

Strawberry Mountain is 24 miles to the northeast, Monument Rock Wilderness is 55 miles east, North Fork John Day Wilderness is 50 miles northeast, and Black Canyon Wilderness is 8 miles west. The ecosystems represented in this area are also represented in those wildernesses.

The nearest major metropolitan centers are Portland, Oregon (260 miles northwest), and Boise, Idaho (200 miles east).

Shaketable does not have strong support as a wilderness proposal. In the 1979 RARE II study, there were 116 comments favoring wilderness designation, 2,592 comments favoring further planning, and 3,436 comments favoring nonwilderness management. In recent Forest planning public involvement activities, the area was among those receiving a low level of comment. Of the comments received, 2.2 favored nonwilderness management for every 1 favoring wilderness designation.

The reasons supporting wilderness designation were for special management and protection of fish, wildlife, and wild horses. It was suggested that Shaketable, Dry Cabin, and Aldrich be combined.

The reasons opposing wilderness designation were the size, lack of opportunity for solitary, Primitive recreation, and the need to allow resource management activities to improve forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife, and activities which would improve wildlife habitat.

5. Environmental Consequences

Table C-22 displays various management area assignments for this area by alternative.

- a. **Vegetation/Trees** Significant changes in tree sizes, stand density, and composition will occur on the 1,939 forested acres in all alternatives except Alternatives C-Modified and I. These acres will produce about 8 1 million board feet of timber when harvested. On these acres the species mix will change from predominantly ponderosa pine to mixed conifer species in all alternatives, through either natural succession or harvest activities. These changes would not occur until the second decade for Alternative F
- b. **Vegetation/Grass and Shrubs** The greatest change in grasses, shrubs, and forbs would occur within forested areas which are harvested in all alternatives except Alternatives C-Modified and I. Native bunchgrasses, forbs, and shrubs will increase as the tree canopy is opened and tree stands are thinned. Seeding of introduced grass species will provide higher quality and quantity of palatable plants and change the species composition. In Alternatives C-Modified and I, little change in forage species is expected. Changes in Alternative F would not occur until the second decade
- c. **Wilderness** The opportunity for future wilderness consideration is foregone because of roading and timber harvest activities by the end of the first decade for all alternatives, except Alternatives C-Modified, F, and I. This opportunity will be foregone in Alternative F after the first decade.
- d. **Recreation** The recreation opportunity provided will be roaded modified in Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC. Within this setting, the effects would be increased vehicle use, including off-road vehicles, along Buck Cabin and South Fork Murderers Creek. The recreation user would see and hear vehicles on jeep tracks and new access roads, and more evidence of human activity. In Alternatives C-Modified and I, the area would provide a semiprimitive setting. Visitors would still see and hear off-road vehicle use, however, there would be fewer access roads and a more natural setting. Roaded modified recreation opportunities would be available under Alternative F after the first decade.
- e. **Scenery** In all alternatives except Alternatives C-Modified, F, and I, the visual resource appearance of the area will change from a natural appearing environment to a managed forest setting by the end of the first decade, and in the second decade for Alternative F.
- f. **Wildlife** Old growth would be retained in all alternatives. In Alternatives C-Modified and I, the forested acres will not be harvested and will add to the available old growth. Snags will also be more available in these two alternatives, however, management standards will ensure that minimum levels of snags will be maintained in all of the alternatives. The area is completely within elk winter range. In Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC, the forested habitat will be harvested, decreasing hiding and thermal cover for big game and increasing the forage available. These changes will occur in Alternative F after the first decade
- g. **Water, Riparian,** Management standards will protect these resources in all of the alternatives

Fisheries

Increased accessibility to utilize and improve these resources would occur in Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC. These changes would occur in the second decade for Alternative F, and in the first decade for all other alternatives which harvest timber.

- h. Cultural Resources** All of the alternatives will protect these resources through application of laws and management standards. Alternatives A, B-Modified, F, and NC constitute the greatest risk of inadvertent damage to the resource as well as the most opportunity for discovery. These risks and opportunities would not occur under Alternative F until the beginning of the second decade.

- i. Soils** All of the alternatives protect the soil resource through application of management standards.



TABLE C-22
SHAKETABLE MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE
(Acres)

Management Area	NC ^{1/}	Alternatives				
		A	B-Mod	C-Mod	F	I-Preferred
1. General Forest						
2. Rangeland						
3. Riparian Areas			410		382	
4A. Big game Winter Range			6,118		6,156	
4B. Big game Winter Range Enhancement						
5. Bald Eagle Winter Roost						
6A. Strawberry Mt. Wilderness						
6B. Monument Rock Wilderness						
6C. Pine Creek						
7. Scenic Area						
8. Special Interest Area						
9. Research Natural Area						375
10. Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized						6,762
11. Semi-Primitive Motorized				7,137		
12. Developed Recreation						
13. Old Growth	N/A					
14. Visual Corridors						
15. Unit Plan Wildlife Emphasis Areas	N/A	6,499				
16. Minimum Level Management		638	609		599	
17. Byram Gulch Municipal Supply Watershed						
18. Long Creek Municipal Supply Watershed						
19. Administrative Sites						
20. Wildlife Emphasis Areas with Scheduled Harvest						
21. Wildlife Emphasis Area Non-Scheduled Harvest						
22. Wild and Scenic River						
TOTAL ACRES	N/A	7,137	7,137	7,137	7,137	7,137

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