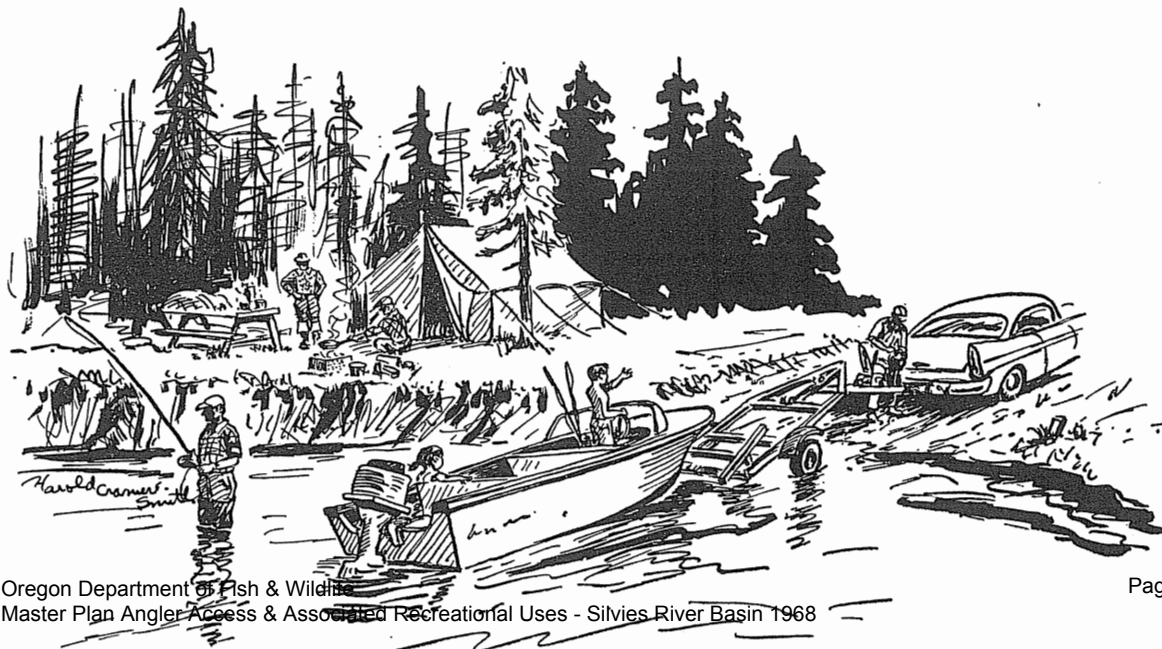


**SILVIES
RIVER BASIN**

**MASTER PLAN
FOR ANGLER ACCESS AND
ASSOCIATED RECREATIONAL
USES**



**Oregon State Game Commission
Lands Division**



SILVIES RIVER BASIN
Master Plan for Angler Access
and
Associated Recreational Uses

By

Oregon State Game Commission

Lands Section

September 1968

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SILVIES RIVER BASIN
Master Plan for Angler Access
and
Associated Recreational Uses

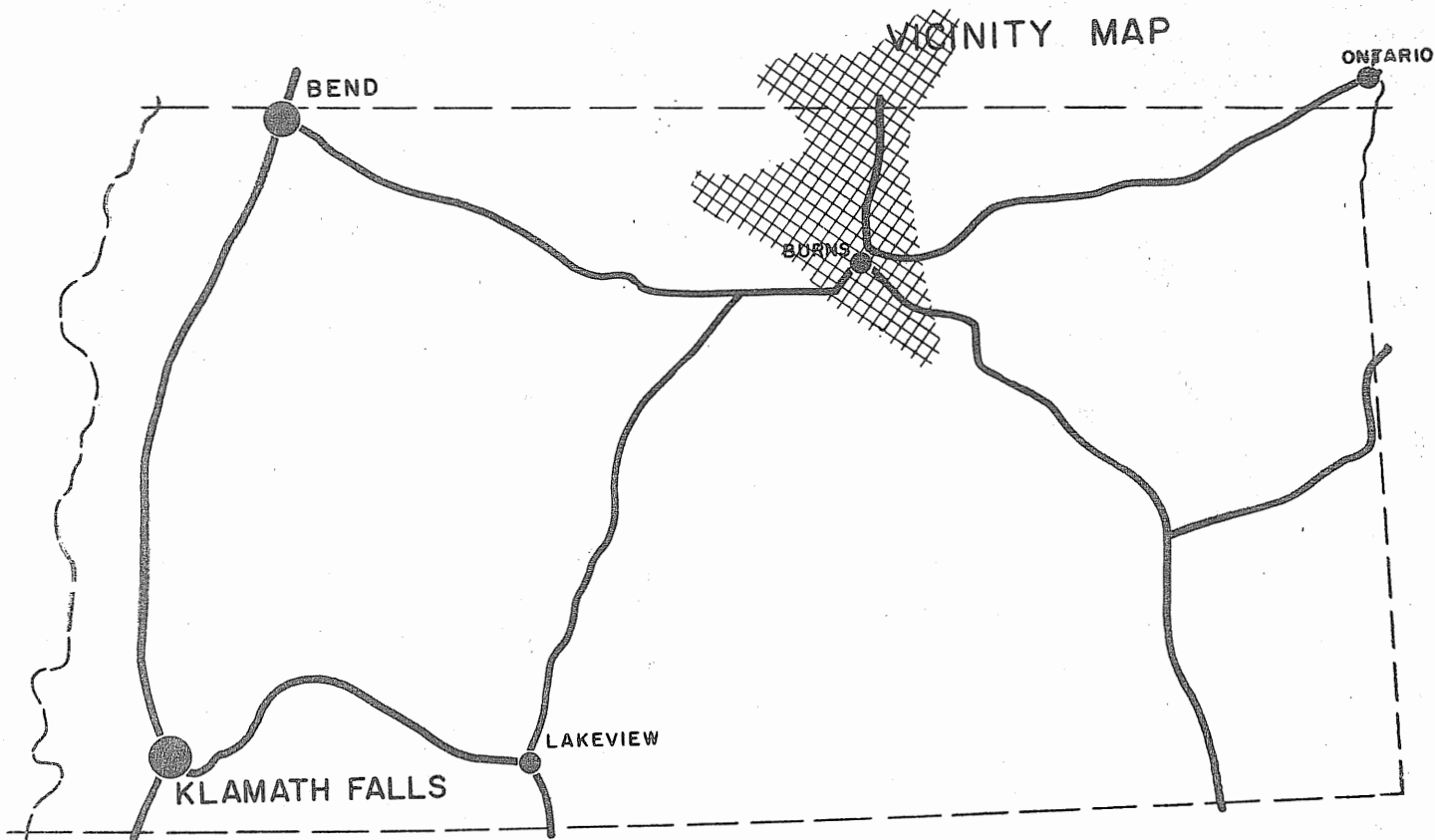
This report details a plan that we hope can be followed to solve the access problems of the Silvies River Basin. Too, we hope that all agencies that are interested in retaining existing water access as well as providing additional facilities, whether they be municipal, county, or state, will all join in a cooperative effort to carry out this plan in an orderly manner. It is probable that Land and Water Conservation Funds will be available on a 50-50 matching basis. In order to acquire these funds, it will be necessary to apply through the Oregon State Highway Department.

The Silvies River located in the southeastern part of the state originates in the Malheur National Forest. It flows southward through Bear, Silvies and Harney Valleys and trickles into Malheur Lake. There is an adequate flow in the headwater streams, but as the river passes through the valleys the water is diverted for irrigation. Except during exceptionally wet years, very little water ever reaches Malheur Lake.

The fishery in the basin is confined to the headwaters of the Silvies River and Bear Creek, a major tributary of the river. These headwater streams are within the national forest and are not affected by irrigation diversion. The flows and temperatures remain fairly constant throughout the summer. Resident brook trout and planted rainbow trout inhabit these waters. The main river, due to the irrigation diversion throughout its length, does not have enough water to sustain a trout fishery. There is, however, a light warm-water fishery in a section of the main river above the Fivemile Dam north of Burns.

Under present conditions access on the Silvies River is not a problem, as most of the angling waters are on public lands. Unless a fishery can be established in the lower river through a water storage and release program, additional access is not needed at this time.

The basin has been divided into two areas. The following sections describe these areas more fully and the access is described in detail.



The Silvies River heads in the Malheur National Forest in southeastern Oregon and flows south into Malheur Lake 31 miles south of Burns.

Major routes to the basin are U. S. Highway 20 from the West and U. S. Highway 395 from the north. State Route 78 enters the basin from the south.

LOWER SILVIES RIVER

This area includes the Silvies River from the confluence of Bear Creek downstream to Malheur Lake. This lower 81 miles of the river flows through both Silvies and Harney Valleys, which are relatively flat and interspersed with numerous irrigated meadows. The streamside cover throughout the river is predominately willow and dogwood.

The fishery in this section of the stream consists of a very light warm-water fishery in a short section of the stream above Fivemile Dam north of Burns. In the remaining portion of the stream a fishery can not be established, because of the limited flow and more often the lack of flow. Irrigation diversion throughout the valleys and evaporation combine to deplete the water to a point where the river ceases to flow leaving pools separated by dry streambeds.

A potential reservoir site located at river mile 29, which has been proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers, would store water for irrigation of the lower valleys in the Burns area. The water released from the reservoir for irrigation purposes would be diverted from the river into the canals at river mile 12. This would create 17 miles of stream that would have adequate flows to establish a trout fishery.

If a fishery were established, angler access would need to be acquired to fully utilize the potential of this area. Ownership along the river is mainly private although some of the land is public. The road into the area is private.

Four sites have been recommended for this area. These sites are suggested for acquisition and development only if an adequate flow can be established in the river. Detailed descriptions of the sites are given on the following evaluation sheets.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Silvies River System Site No. 1
Lower Silvies River Area Priority A
Name Fivemile Dam

Location 6 miles northwest of Burns, East Bank
T 22S, R 30 E, Sec. 23 River Mile 12 County Harney
Ownership: Public U. S. (BLM)
Private _____ Tax Lot No. _____
Number of owners 1

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat valley
Cover type Willow and dogwood
Road access County, Condition Gravel
Affected by irrigation _____
Flows diversion Water quality Fair
Present stage of development 6-foot dam and mud slide ramp

ANGLER NEEDS (1)

Acquisition: 1 Acres, _____ of frontage
Type of conveyance Use agreement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type Gravel Number of lanes 1
Toilets X Trails _____ Roads _____
Parking area X; For _____ cars or 15 car-trailer units

This site would provide boat launching for people boating the stream area above the dam.

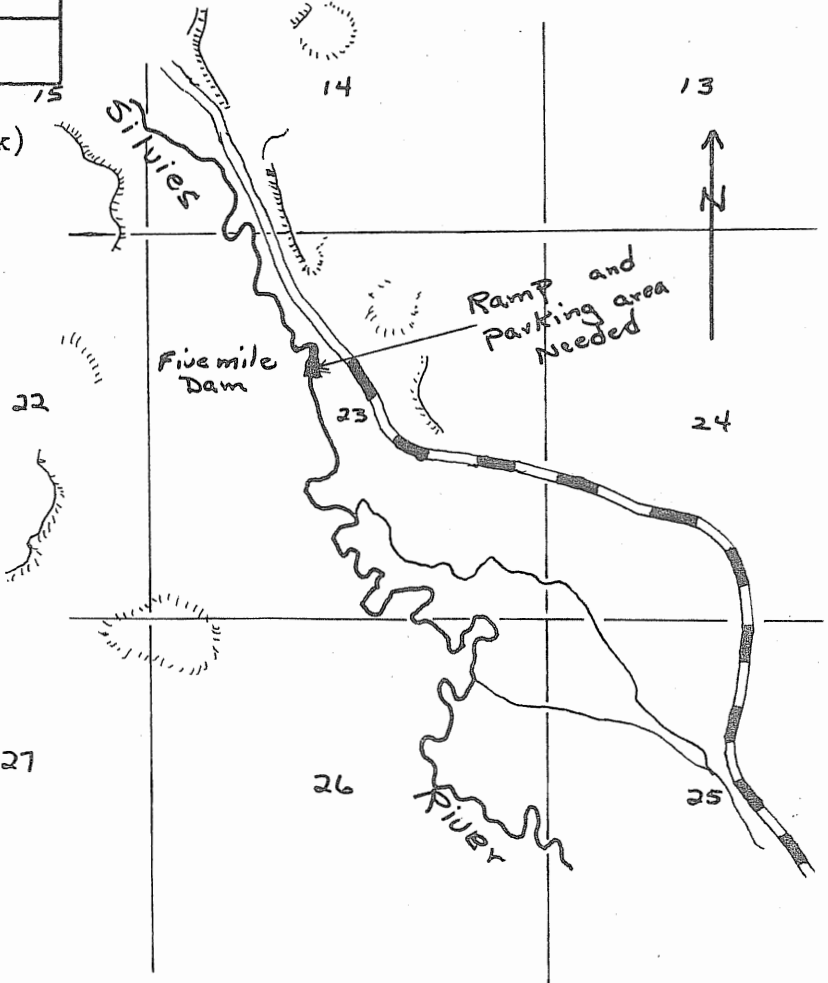
(1) If an adequate flow is established in this section of the river and a trout fishery developed, river frontage for bank angling and additional parking or camping area should be acquired.

* FISHERY: There is a light fishery in the pool area of the dam on crappie, blue-gill, bullhead, perch and smallmouth bass.

| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|
| Heavy | | | | |
| Medium | | | | |
| Light | Ww | Ww | | |

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH



Seasons (Check)

| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | | | | |
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| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
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RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Picnicking, camping, parking for buses

REMARKS

* If an adequate flow were established the stream would probably be chemically treated and restocked with rainbow trout.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Silvies River System Site No. 2
Lower Silvies River Area Priority B
Name Double Spring Camp

Location 10 miles northwest of Burns, East Bank
T 22S, R 30 E, Sec. 9 River Mile 15.5 County Harney
Ownership: Public _____
Private X Tax Lot No. 7
Number of owners 1

DESCRIPTION

Land type Open valley
Cover type Juniper and sagebrush; willow along stream
Road access Private, Condition Dirt
Affected by irrigation _____
Flows diversion Water quality Fair
Present stage of development Abandoned homeseite

ANGLER NEEDS (1)

Acquisition: 3 Acres, 4 miles of frontage
Purchase camping and parking areas
Type of conveyance and road right of way.

Development: (1)

Boat ramp: Type Gravel Number of lanes 1
Toilets X Trails _____ Roads X
Parking area X; For 25 cars or 10 car-trailer units

This site has an active spring at the camp area.

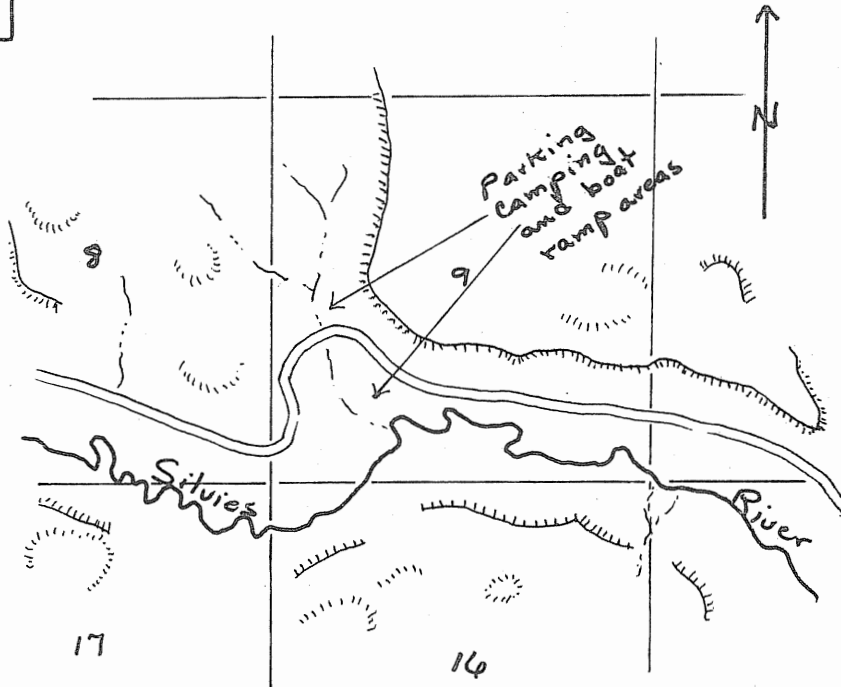
(1) These angler needs and subsequent development would apply only if an adequate flow is established in this section of the river.

FISHERY: Crappie, bullhead, bluegill, perch and smallmouth bass are available,
but the fishery is not utilized. If an adequate flow is established
in the river a trout fishery could be developed.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
| Heavy | | | | |
| Medium | | | | |
| Light | | | | |

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout,
 Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH



Seasons (Check)

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
| | | | | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | | | | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | | | X | |
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| | X | X | X | |
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* RECREATION
 (Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

* Potential if developed

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Picnic and camping if area is developed.

REMARKS

This section of the river can be drifted with small boats.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Silvies River System Site No. 3
Lower Silvies River Area Priority A
Name Gravel Springs

Location 15 miles northwest of Burns, East Bank
T 21 S, R 29 E, Sec. 25 River Mile 23 County Harney
Ownership: Public U. S. (BLM)
Private X Tax Lot No. 7
Number of owners 2

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat valley with moderate to steep slopes
Cover type Ponderosa Pine; willow and sagebrush
Road access Private, Condition Dirt
Affected by irrigation
Flows diversion Water quality Fair
Present stage of development None - abandoned homestead

ANGLER NEEDS (1)

Acquisition: 4 Acres, 4 miles of frontage
Purchase river frontage and road right of way.
Type of Conveyance: Land use agreement for the camp area.

Development:

Boat ramp: Type Gravel Number of lanes 1
Toilets X Trails Roads
Parking area X; For 25 cars and 15 car-trailer units

This section of the river from this site at river mile 23 to the dam at mile
12 can be drifted with small boats or rafts.

(1) These angler needs and subsequent development would apply only if an adequate flow is established in this section of the river.

FISHERY: Crappie, bullhead, bluegill, perch and smallmouth bass are available, but the fishery is not utilized. If an adequate flow is established in the river, a trout fishery could be developed.

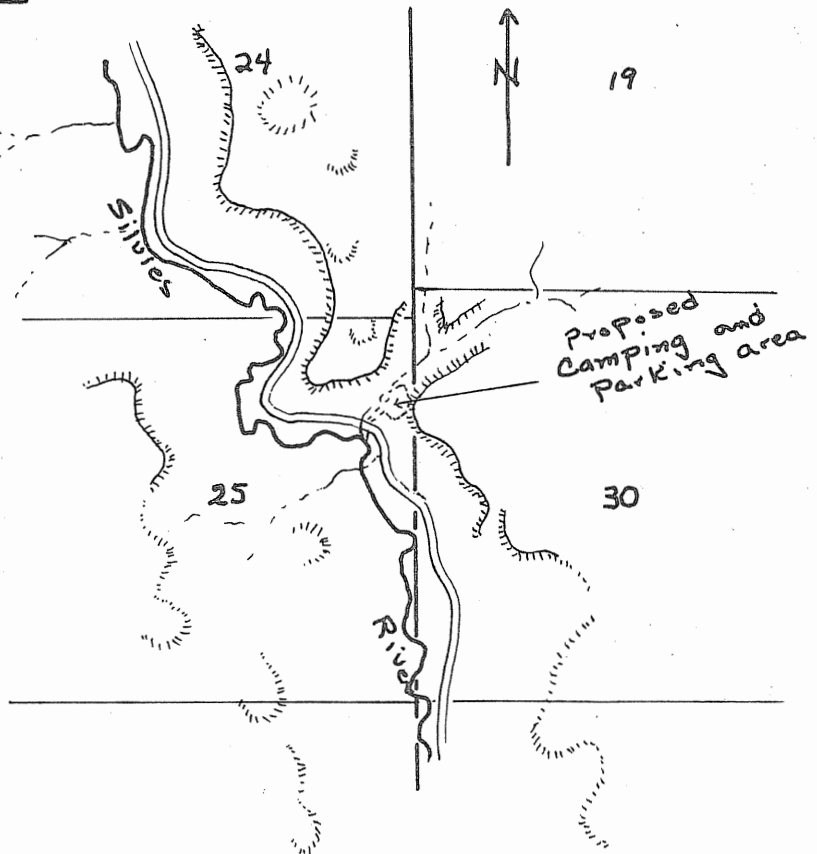
| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
| Heavy | | | | |
| Medium | | | | |
| Light | | | | |

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH

Seasons (Check)

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
| | | | | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | | | | |
| | X | X | X | |
| | | | X | |
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| | X | X | X | |
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* RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

* Potential if developed

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Picnic and camping if area is developed.

REMARKS

There is an adequate flow of water from the spring to supply the camping area with good water.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Silvies River System Site No. 4
Lower Silvies River Area Priority B
Name Long Hollow Creek

Location 20 miles northwest of Burns, East Bank
T 21 S, R 29 E, Sec. 13 & 14 River Mile 28 County Harney
Ownership: Public U. S. (BLM)
Private X Tax Lot No. 7
Number of owners 2

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat valley
Cover type Juniper, sagebrush and willows
Road access Private, Condition Dirt
Affected by irrigation
Flows diversion Water quality Fair
Present stage of development None

ANGLER NEEDS (1)

Acquisition: 1 Acres, 2 miles of frontage
Purchase parking area and road
Type of conveyance right of way

Development: (1)

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails _____ Roads _____
Parking area X; For 20 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site below the proposed dam site would provide parking and bank
access.

(1) These angler needs and subsequent development would apply only if an adequate flow is established in this section of the river.

FISHERY: Crappie, bullhead, bluegill, perch and smallmouth bass are available
but the fishery is not utilized. If an adequate flow is established in the
 river, a trout fishery could be developed.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
| Heavy | | | | |
| Medium | | | | |
| Light | | | | |

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout,
 Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

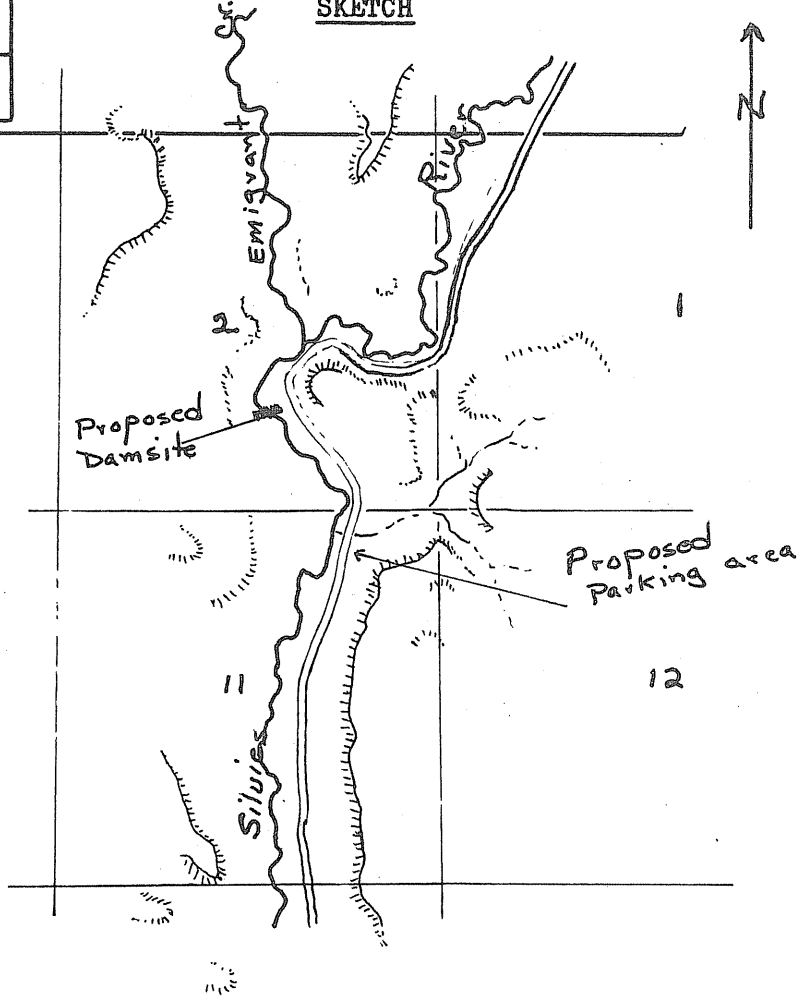
Seasons (Check)

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
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| | X | X | X | |
| | X | X | X | |
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* RECREATION
 (Check)

Boating, motor
 Boating, non-motor
 Camping, tent
 Camping, trailer
 Fishing, boat
 Fishing, shore
 Hiking
 Horseback riding
 Hunting, big game
 Hunting, upland game
 Hunting, waterfowl
 Nature study
 Picnicking
 Sightseeing
 Skin and scuba diving
 Swimming
 Water skiing

SKETCH



* Potential if developed

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Picnic and camping if area is developed.

REMARKS

UPPER SILVIES RIVER

Included in this area is the Silvies River above river mile 81, and Bear Creek, the largest tributary of the upper river system. Both the Silvies River and Bear Creek head in the Malheur National Forest and flow southward through Bear Valley. The stream gradient in the valley is gentle, but increases toward the headwaters.

Access in this area is not a problem as the waters suitable for angling are within the public lands of the national forest.

The Forest Service road along Bear Creek has many pull-off areas which provide ample parking for bank anglers. There is also a well developed campground along the stream.

The Upper Silvies River is also paralleled by a road with adequate parking along the stream, with a small camping area available for anglers.

The fishery in these streams is for small native brook trout and legal sized planted rainbow trout. The angling effort is relatively light except on holidays and some weekends.

