

**THE PROPOSED
WALLOWA FOREST RESERVE
OREGON**

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Summary of Report and Recommendations by
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THE PROPOSED WALLOWA FOREST RESERVE, OREGON

Location – Area

This withdrawal is situated in the northeastern part of Oregon, in Wallowa, Baker, and Union counties. The total area withdrawn from settlement comprises 768,000 acres, of which approximately 747,960 acres is recommended for permanent reservation.

Topography

The entire area is occupied by the Wallowa Mountains, a high, rugged, independent range crowned with peaks upon which snow is perpetual. In the central part the summits are lifted to an elevation of about 10,000 feet above the sea. There is no agricultural land, with the possible exception of small patches along Snake River. High, transverse ridges extend outward from the main range, and break precipitously to the fertile valleys of the Grande Ronde and Wallowa rivers and Pine and Eagle creeks, which surround the reserve.

Forest

The country is all forested, with the exception of those areas which lie above the normal timber line, or the steep, rocky slopes upon which there is insufficient soil to produce trees.

The greater part of the timber of merchantable value is yellow pine, which occupies the outer portions of the withdrawn area. The other species of commercial quality are Douglas spruce, tamarack, Engelmann spruce, and lodgepole pine. Forest fires have destroyed 7 per cent of the forest, and an additional 25 per cent has been more or less injured.

An estimate of the total stand, not including the alpine growth, is as follows:

Estimated Stand of Timber	
	<u>M. Feet</u>
Yellow pine	233,700
Lodgepole pine	207,000
White fir	130,500
Tamarack	68,000
Douglas spruce	88,750
All others	49,550
Total	777,500

Only a very small per cent of the timber is of first-rate quality. The greater part is in open stands, scrubby and difficult of access.

Land Classification

The estimated amounts of land of the various classes are shown in the following table:

Character of Land	Area in Acres	Per Cent
Forested	545,580	71.61
Burned	48,700	6.51
Grazing	52,800	7.06
Barren	100,880	14.82
Total	747,960	100.00

A part of the burned area is here counted as grazing land.

Industries

Grazing is the leading industry identified with the reserve. In the surrounding valleys farming and stock raising are of first importance. In the east-central part of the withdrawal is an extensive mineral belt, in which considerable development work is in progress; and at Cornucopia well-developed mines are in operation. There has been no lumbering within the proposed reserve, nor is there likely to be for some time to come.

About 260,000 sheep and 3,000 cattle and horses use the range during a part of the summer. Electric light plants, flouring mills, etc., utilize the water power of various streams.

Sentiment

There has been no organized opposition to the reserve. About 70 per cent of the people favor it, 10 per cent oppose it, and 20 per cent are indifferent. Some objection was made by Baker City people, who are interested in the mineral development of the Cornucopia district, but the opposition, like that of other affected sections, has disappeared since the policy has become better understood.

The principal argument used against the reserve is that it will be administered in the interest of the friends of the politicians in power.

Recommendations

The creation of this reserve is urged for the reason that the timber supply should be protected from fire for the use of the miners and the people; the discharge of the streams should be regulated as far as possible in the interest of the farmers whose crops depend upon irrigation; the range should be controlled in the interest of the stockmen.