

## Trip Report

Use this form to report on wilderness trips

Submitted by: Leslie Kent

Date: 4/8/2018

Report Title: Owyhee River, Rome to Birch Creek

Route: Where did you go? How many days were you camping?

We floated from Rome to Birch Creek in five days.

Summary: 250 word max

We did an early May trip from Rome to Birch Creek and found the river nearly empty—leapfrogged one other party a time or two and that was it.

Wilderness or Wild River: Owyhee River

Management Unit: Vale Bureau of Land Management

Administrative Location: Vale, Oregon

Head of Administrative Unit: Don Gonzalez, District Manager

Trip Report: Grade the success of the management agency with an A to F letter grade. Comments must support letter grades in each category; skip any category on which you do not want to comment.

**A** Access; is resource damage occurring at campsites, on trails and at trailheads?

User impacts on campsites are obvious but mostly related to the development of user trail and rocks used to secure tents and tarps and tie up boats. Signage requests users replace rocks used for such purposes. Campsites were clean—no signs of firerings, litter or human waste.

**B** Management; regulations, permit systems, education, enforcement actions.

Despite an elaborate and expensive office and warehouse at the launch site no management staff were in evidence and no attempts at user education were being made. However, regulations related to the use of drones within the Wild River corridor were clearly posted. This information has not been previously in evidence and is a positive step in the protection of wilderness values.

**B** Stewardship; are management actions in accord with protecting wilderness values?

Prohibiting the use of drones is reflective of good wilderness and wild river stewardship. Signage also encourages users to replace rocks used to secure tents and tarps; a practice that, when followed, leaves beaches with a clean, natural and untouched appearance for the next user.

Removal of the unmaintained fenceline located on the right bank at Ryegrass Crossing should be a priority. This highly visible and unused fence impacts wildlife and is jarringly out of place in the Wild River environment.

**B** Wilderness; how well is management protecting the wilderness resource?

During this entire trip only one fire ring was observed, tucked away in a sheltered crevice. No human sanitation problems (toilet paper, feces) were observed.

Some campsites continue to be impacted by livestock as are some riparian areas. However, it is worth noting that there has been a significant reduction in grazing impacts over time and progress is slowly being made.

**NA** Fire Management, Wildlife Management, Other