

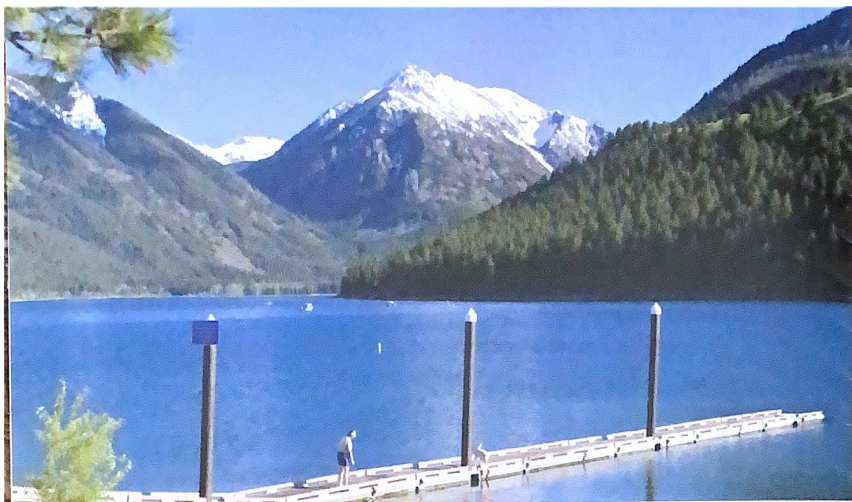
DRIVE A NORTHEAST
OREGON ADVENTURE

Hells Canyon

SCENIC
BYWAY

DESIGNATED AN ALL-AMERICAN ROAD

*One of America's Premier
Scenic Routes*



Wallowa Lake is the jewel of *The Wallowas*, one of the Seven Wonders of Oregon.

For more information about maps, camping, recreation sites, trails, Nordic skiing, hiking, snowmobiling, and road conditions in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest or the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, contact:

**EASTERN OREGON
VISITORS ASSOCIATION**
1-800-332-1843
www.visiteasternoregon.com

**WALLOWA COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**
309 South River Street
Enterprise, Oregon 97828
1-800-585-4121 or 541-426-4622
www.wallowacountychamber.com

**BAKER COUNTY CHAMBER
& VISITOR CENTER**
490 Campbell Street
Baker City, OR 97814
1-800-523-1235 or 541-523-3356
www.visitbaker.com

**UNION COUNTY CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE & VISITOR
INFORMATION**
207 Depot Street
La Grande, OR 97850
541-963-8588 or 1-800-848-9969
www.unioncountychamber.org

**USDA-FS LA GRANDE
RANGER DISTRICT**
3502 Highway 30
La Grande, OR 97850
541-963-7186

**WALLOWA-WHITMAN
NATIONAL FOREST
SUPERVISORS OFFICE**
1550 Dewey Ave
Baker City, OR 97814
541-523-1205
www.fs.usda.gov/hellscanyon/

BAKER COUNTY TOURISM
www.basecampbaker.com

**HELLS CANYON NATIONAL
RECREATION AREA, EAGLE CAP
AND WALLOWA VALLEY
RANGER DISTRICTS**
201 Second Street
Joseph, OR 97846
541-426-4978 or 426-5546

**USDA-FS HELLS CANYON
CREEK VISITOR CENTER &
BOAT LAUNCH**
Hells Canyon Dam
Oxbow, OR 97840
541-785-3395

**NATIONAL HISTORIC OREGON
TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER**
22267 OR Highway 86
Baker City, OR 97814
541-523-1843
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www.hellscanyonbyway.com

This brochure was funded in part by the USDA-Forest Service, the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association, Union County Chamber of Commerce, Baker County Tourism and Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce. EOVA is a partner with the USDA Forest Service, and is an equal opportunity provider.

Grande Ronde Valley to Wallowa Valley

Eighty-four miles via OR Highway 82 and county road 350, allow two hours for travel and another one to two hours for stops. Road may be snowy and icy in winter.

Beginning in the patchwork farm lands of the broad Grande Ronde Valley, the first leg of the Byway follows numerous rivers through ever-higher valleys to the glacier carved Wallowa Mountains. Each small town along the way offers a different character and combination of services.

La Grande & Island City

EST. 1865, POP. 12,420 & 920, ELEV. 2,788'

Lodging, RV parks, restaurants, shopping, groceries & gas

From La Grande and Island City, take OR Highway 82 east. La Grande was established at an important rest stop along the Historic Oregon Trail. A wide variety of travel services and proximity to varied terrain make La Grande a popular base for all types of outdoor recreation. Watch birds and wildlife at nearby Ladd Marsh, explore the trails of the Mount Emily Recreation Area and enjoy concerts and cultural events at Eastern Oregon University. Walking tours highlight the community's historic homes and downtown Historic District. Crops thrive in the valley's deep, rich soil and relatively mild climate. Watch for orchards and fields of mint, alfalfa, wheat, barley, sugar beets, seed potatoes and turf grass seed.

Imbler

EST. 1922, POP. 305, ELEV. 2,732'

Delis, groceries & gas

Pastoral Imbler's farming heritage is deeply rooted. Known as the "Grass Seed Capital of the World," numerous Century Farms in the area have been operated by the same families for more than 100 years. The community and Mt. Harris, to the east, were named for early settlers.

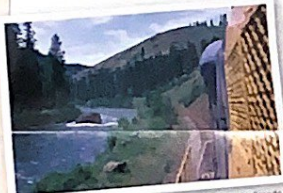


Photo by Ed Spaulding, La Grande

Elgin

EST. 1891, POP. 1,660, ELEV. 2,670'

Lodging, RV parks, restaurants, groceries & gas

The former location of Fort Baker and a trading area since the 1850s, Elgin is a gateway to outstanding outdoor recreation in the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. Home to cattle, grain and hay producers as well as mill and timber workers, this little community hosts the roaring Elgin Stampede PRCA Rodeo each July. The beautifully restored Opera House presents live musical theater. The Grande Ronde River flows through town, providing ample opportunity to raft, fish and enjoy the scenery. The Eagle Cap Excursion Train operates out of the Elgin Depot on a section of the historic "Joseph Branch" railroad, giving passengers scenic views unseen from the highway. The railroad connects Joseph with the main line in La Grande.

Minam

Lodging, cafe, boat launch & state park

The Minam and Wallowa Rivers meet here and flow into the Grande Ronde River a few miles down stream. Segments of all three rivers have been designated "Wild & Scenic." The rivers offer excellent steelhead fishing, rafting and year-round wildlife viewing. In winter, watch for bald eagles and other raptors. Pedal a Rainier beside the river from Minam to Wallowa on an unused section of track. From here, the Byway climbs through a series of valleys toward the majestic Wallowa Mountains. The ridges and high meadows are well suited for raising hay and pasture for cattle, sheep and horses. Use caution, you'll be sharing the road with livestock trailers, recreation vehicles and log trucks.

Wallowa

EST. 1899, POP. 760, ELEV. 2,923'

Lodging, cafe, RV park, groceries & gas

"Wa-lá-wah" shares its Nez Perce name with the mountains, lake, river and valley you're now entering. The Wallowa Band of the Nez Perce knew the area for its great fishing—Wallowa is the name of the tripod used to support their fish nets. The band has a small interpretive center in town and gathers here for Tamkalki, an annual Friendship Feast and Pow Wow each July. Residents depend on the land for farming, ranching, logging and milling. The Byway continues along the tumbling Wallowa and Lostine Rivers.

Hells Canyon

SCENIC BYWAY

BYWAY

BYWAY SEGMENTS

- Grande Ronde Valley to Wallowa Valley
- Wallowa Mountain Loop
- Pine Valley to Baker Valley
- Hells Canyon Overlook to 5100'

BYWAY SIDE TRIPS

- 1 Hat Point Lookout to 6800'
- 2 Snake River

LEGEND

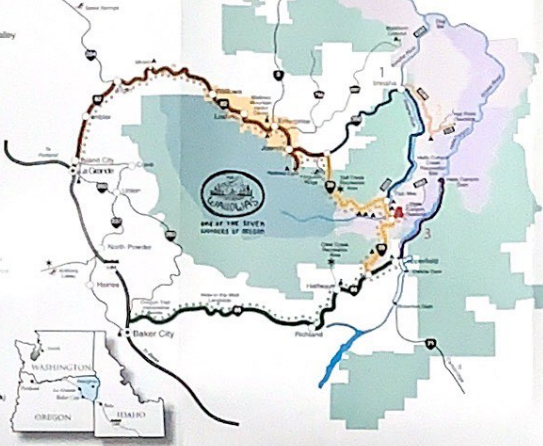
- US Highway
- Oregon State Route
- County Road
- Forest Road - Primary
- Forest Road - Secondary

LEGEND

- City/Town
- US Forest Service Office
- Wildlife
- Gas Station
- Water Recreation Trailhead

LEGEND

- Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
- Wallowa Valley
- Eagle Cap Wilderness
- Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (NRA)
- Hells Canyon NPA Wilderness



Lostine

EST. 1903, POP. 230, ELEV. 3,200'

Restaurants, drive-through express, & mercantile

At this tiny turn-of-the-century town, visit second hand stores, dine on local fare at the Lostine Tavern, rest a while on a wooden bench in front of the combination sporting goods, grocery and dry goods store. Lostine comes alive during the town's big 4th of July Flea Market. Numerous nearby Forest Service roads provide access to year-round recreation in the Eagle Cap Wilderness. A side trip up the crystal clear Lostine River leads to rustic campgrounds, trailheads, and breathtaking scenery.

Enterprise

EST. 1889, POP. 1,940, ELEV. 3,757'

Lodging, restaurants, shopping, groceries & gas

The largest of the Wallowa Valley communities, Enterprise offers an array of shops, accommodations and back country and river outfitters. Hells Canyon Mile Days and the Bowly Bash are among the town's popular events. Plays and concerts take place at the restored theater and on the lawn of the historic courthouse. The Wallowa Mountains tower above rolling ranch lands. A self-guided barn tour highlights ranching heritage.

Joseph

EST. 1887, POP. 1,130, ELEV. 4,191'

Lodging, restaurants, shopping, groceries & gas

Named for young Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce Tribe, this town is now a flourishing art community with a national reputation for its top quality bronze foundries and galleries. The summer is full of events, from art and music festivals to the Chief Joseph Days Rodeo. Most galleries and shops are open year-round, as are museums with Indian artifacts and early ranching and logging history collections. Use facilities at Joseph or Wallowa Lake as a base for extended Hells Canyon or Eagle Cap Wilderness exploration. Call ahead to arrange a foundry tour and reserve accommodations. Continue on Highway 82 to Wallowa Lake or proceed on the Byway route, at the north edge of Joseph, turn east (between the gas station and grocery store) onto Highway 350.

Wallowa Lake

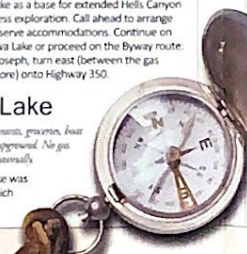
Lodging, RV park, restaurants, groceries, boat launch, state park & campground. No gas.

Many services are open seasonally.

Beautiful Wallowa Lake was

shaped by glaciers which

covered this region



Hells Canyon & the Snake

Follow Highway 86 from the junction of the Forest Road 39 to the Snake River, across the bridge and on to Hells Canyon Dam. Nearly 100 miles of backwater from three Idaho Power hydroelectric dams provide ample space for watercraft enthusiasts and anglers alike. The river is wild and scenic below the dam, and affords excellent opportunities to view Hells Canyon from waters edge up! Services at Pine, Oxbow, and at rivers edge include lodging, dining, groceries, gas, and shuttle service. Recreational opportunities include rafting, jet boat rides, camping, fishing, and hiking in the nation's deepest river gorge.

Side Trip...Cambridge, Idaho

EST. 1900, POP. 360, ELEV. 2,650'

Lodging, RV parks, restaurants, shopping, groceries & gas
Cambridge is just 24 miles to the east of the Snake River on ID State Highway 71, and 106 miles northwest of Boise, Idaho. Here, you will find river outfitters, hot springs and the award-winning Cambridge Museum.

Pine Valley to Baker Valley

Fifty-nine miles on paved Highway 86, allow 1.5 hours for travel to Baker City and 1-2 hours at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center and other stops.

Pastoral views and mining history are highlights of this Byway segment. Gold strikes brought the first settlers here in the late 1800s. Mines employed large numbers of people, including many Chinese laborers. Further along the route, follow the Powder River through rolling sagebrush-covered plateaus. Oregon Trail routes cross your path. Virtue Flat, next to the route near Baker City, is the site of a popular off-highway vehicle trail complex.

Halfway

EST. 1909, POP. 333, ELEV. 2,663'

Lodging, restaurants, public museum, groceries & gas
(If traveling Baker-La Grande last gas until Joseph)

Called the "Wild Side of Oregon," Halfway is a gateway to wilderness and river-based recreation in summer, and is a popular destination for snowmobilers in winter, when a network of groomed trails connects hundreds of miles of scenic back country. As you leave Halfway, watch near mile post #52 for the marker for the Tim Goodall Wagon Train route of 1862 and the Visitor Information Kiosk.

Richland

EST. 1917, POP. 175, ELEV. 2,213'

Lodging, cafe, groceries & gas

Named in 1897 for the rich soil settlers found here, the area still supports farmers and ranchers and now hosts the fishing and boating enthusiasts who recreate on nearby Brownlee and Oxbow reservoirs. Look for the Hole-in-the-Wall Landslide, between mile posts #30 & #31. This turnout overlooks a 1984 landslide that covered the road and temporarily dammed the Powder River.

National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center

Near Baker City, 5 miles east of I-84 on Highway 86.

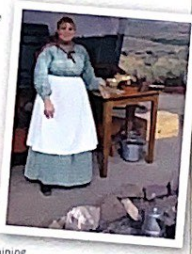
History is alive at the 23,000 square foot Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.

Marvel at the courage and hardships of pioneers on their 2,000 mile trek to Oregon.

The BLM-managed center offers extensive interactive exhibits and dioramas, living history presentations, live theater performances, demonstrations, educational programs, interpretive trails, and the Oregon Trail Shop.

Interpretive themes include exploration, mining, and settlement, natural history and Native Americans.

Open daily.



Several times. The 2,000 foot thick Bennett Glacier scoured the West Coast of the Wallowa River for almost 20 miles, creating a series of terraces and leaving nearly perfect examples of lateral moraine deposits around the lake. Mule deer wander in the vicinity of the lake. At six miles in length, Wallowa Lake is a playground to water skiers, jet skis, and paddle-boaters. Take the Wallowa Lake Tramway to spectacular views atop the 8,300 foot summit of Mt. Howard, on the edge of the Eagle Cap Wilderness. Two miles of hiking trails at the top of the trail ride provide incredible views into three states. This area was part of the ancestral homelands of the Wallowa Band of the Nez Perce. A monument to Old Chief Joseph rests at the north end of the lake. Return to Joseph and take Road 350 east. Travel on Highway 350 for 8 miles to the junction with Forest Service Road 39, also known as the "Wallowa Mountain Loop Road." It's decision time: take 39 south toward Halfway, or stay on 350 for side trips to (1) Imnaha and (2) Hat Point (gravel road), for incredible views of Hells Canyon and the Seven Devils Mountains can be seen on the Idaho side of the Snake River. It's over a mile down from the canyon rim at Hat Point to the banks of the river below. Allow 3-4 hours for this side trip or camp overnight.

Wallowa Mountain Loop

Forty-five miles of paved winding road on steep side slopes, allow 1.5 to 2 hours. No gas, no services, water at some campgrounds. The road is open to wheeled vehicles June - October; in winter the route is groomed for snowmobile travel and Nordic skiing.

The Wallowa Mountain Loop (FSR 39) offers exceptional views of the Wallows and Seven Devils Mountains. It crosses several river drainages, including the Imnaha where Snake River Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout spawn. Along the way are numerous trailheads and campgrounds as well as the Canal Fire burn, where a lightning-caused fire burned 23,000 acres in 1889. The road winds through forest along Gumbot Creek and crosses the Imnaha River.

Salt Creek Summit Recreation Park

Near mile post #5. Restrooms, no drinking water.

In summer this is a hiking trailhead area. In winter, it's the end of the paved road and the entrance to a snowy playground. Ahead are Lick Creek Campground and Guard Station, listed on the National Historic Register, and Olokot Campground, a site historically used by the Nez Perce Tribe and named after Young Chief Joseph's brother. Side trips off this segment include (3) Hells Canyon Overlook, at mile post 29 for expansive views of canyon country and interpretive signs.

Baker City

EST. 1874, POP. 9450, ELEV. 3,499'

Lodging, RV parks, restaurants, shopping, groceries & gas

Known early on as the "Queen City of the Mines," Baker City sits along the Powder River between the dramatic Elkhorn Ridge of the Blue Mountains and the Wallowa Mountains. Turn of the century Victorian architecture dominates the commercial and residential buildings of the city's downtown, earning it distinction as a National Historic District. Many buildings have been carefully restored, including the famous Geiser Grand Hotel. The Baker Heritage Museum highlights the area's history and houses a fantastic rocks and minerals collection. The Adler House Museum preserves the home of an early local businessman and philanthropist.

The Journey

Leave the fast pace and fenced-in views of Interstate 84 and follow the contours of the land into slower times and wilder places. Travel this 218 mile journey from river's edge to mountaintop and down to valley floor. The byway is best enjoyed at a leisurely pace so allow 2 days to complete your trip. Have lunch overlooking a wild and scenic river; share a canyon road with a cattle drive. Pass through lush valleys, rimmed by the snow-

tipped Wallowa Mountains. Savor the scent of pine on the fresh mountain air. Enjoy panoramic views of rugged basalt cliffs and

grassy open ridges. Stand next to the majestic Snake River as it begins its tumbling course through North America's deepest canyon. Place your hand in the weathered track of a wagon wheel; hear the wind rushing through the forest. You are surrounded by the music of birds and bubbling streams. Stars seem brighter, smiles friendlier.



The Road

The route of the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway is a loop that encircles the Wallowa Mountains, intersecting with Interstate 84 at La Grande and Baker City. Small towns, scattered along the drive, offer visitor services. The entire route is on a paved highway. Plan ahead—you'll find stretches of more than eighty miles without gas and with few services. A segment of the Byway between Joseph and Halfway closes with snow in winter, but allows access to winter recreation areas, offering a whole other kind of Northeast Oregon Adventure.

There are five ports of entry into the Byway: La Grande from I-84, Elgin via OR Hwy. 204, Enterprise via OR Hwy. 3, Oxbow via Idaho Hwy. 71, and Baker City from I-84. To encompass the entire route, this itinerary follows the Byway traveling from La Grande to Baker City, but driving the route in reverse is just as appealing.

Byway Travel Savvy

- You can drive the Byway in about four hours, but to really enjoy it, you will need a few days.

We recommend you reserve lodging accommodations prior to your trip.

- Before starting out, take notice of the travel times as well as mileage between stops and keep your fuel tank as full as possible.
- If you plan to hike, ski, snowmobile or otherwise explore off the main Byway routes, pick up detailed maps and additional information from the offices listed on the back panel.
- Be prepared for temperatures that vary as much as fifty degrees as the day wears on.
- Remember to take along your camera, binoculars, a picnic or snack foods, plant and wildlife guides, first aid kit, drinking water, blanket and jackets. Note: Cell service is very spotty in remote areas.

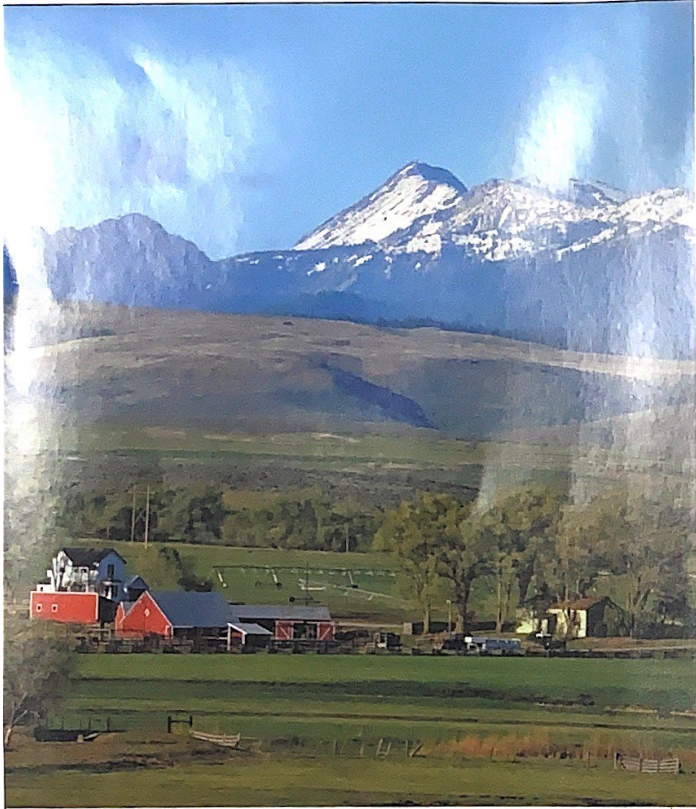
Heritage

Extremes in the land have dictated the course of the area's natural and cultural history. Relatively mild winters and abundant wildlife drew people to the area over 7,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence can be easily found in the Snake River corridor ranging from rock art to winter pit-house villages. Pictographs and petroglyphs are scattered along the river where Native Americans spent their winters. Please use care when viewing them; these national treasures have stood the test of time and will be enjoyed long into the future.

For many centuries, the Grande Ronde Valley was used seasonally by Native Americans. Covered largely by wetlands, the beautiful valley was lush with grass and filled with game. Herds of elk summered in the surrounding high country and wintered in the milder valley. Mule deer, pronghorn antelope and big-horn sheep browsed the hills and meadows. This bountiful scene was a neutral meeting place for members of the Umatilla, Yakima, Shoshone, Cayuse and Bannock Nations, who came to enjoy the hot springs, hunt, graze their horses, and gather plants for food. Every fall, when leaving the valley to winter in the milder climate along the Columbia plateau, they lit huge fires in the valleys, burning off old grass and allowing for healthy regrowth in the spring.

The picturesque Wallowa Valley was the beloved home of the Nez Perce Indians.

By winter of 1877, settlement



conflicts drove Young Chief Joseph to make a harrowing attempt to reach Canada with a group of 250 men, women, and children. They struggled to within 24 miles of safety before being captured at Montana and sent to reservations. This area remains a significant religious and cultural center for the Nez Perce, Umatilla, and Cayuse Indians.

People of European descent first entered the Byway country in late December 1811, when the Wilson Price-Hunt Expedition paused to rest and celebrate the new year at the hot springs now known as Hot Lake, near La Grande. Other explorers, trappers, and missionaries soon followed. The Powder River and Grande Ronde Valleys were important emigrant stops on the Historic Oregon Trail. Beginning in 1843 and continuing for several decades, the lure of abundant, rich farm land, clear water and seemingly endless forests brought over 350,000 Americans westward to the famed Oregon Country. Usually leaving Missouri in the spring, they walked or rode horseback over 2,000 miles of wilderness, carrying their possessions in covered wagons. Rests in the lush Grande Ronde and Powder River valleys were welcome after several months of hot, dusty travel.

Gold was discovered in eastern Oregon by 1860. Miners flocked to the southern side of the Wallowa

range, (now the Halfway/Oxbow area) and in the Elkhorn Ridge of the Blue Mountains. The valleys were later settled by farmers, ranchers and merchants who provided food to the burgeoning mining communities.

Agriculture and forestry are still important industries throughout northeast Oregon. Much of the beautiful scenery is related to expansive farms and ranches that retain the wide open spaces, lush vegetation and prevalent wildlife. Settlement was not without environmental cost. Draining the wetlands to make way for crops was a common practice. Canals were dug, rivers re-channeled, and native grasslands turned under a plow, forming some of the richest farmlands in Oregon. In the process, the swamps and wetlands were nearly obliterated, resulting in fewer migratory birds and game animals, and a lessening of the land's ability to retain moisture through the dry season.

Today, farmers use conservation farming tactics, such as planting wind breaks, more efficient irrigation methods, crop rotation, and fencing waterways and wetlands to mitigate damage from earlier actions and practices. The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife has restored nearly 5,000 acres of wetlands and elk habitat south of La Grande at the Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area.

For a Closer Look

Learn more about northeast Oregon's history by visiting these nearby attractions. (*Miles from the Byway*)

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE AND HISTORY: Tamastlikt Cultural Institute of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla at Wildhorse Resort & Casino near Pendleton. (45)

RANCHING AND COWBOY HISTORY: Cowboys Then & Now Exhibit at the Union County Museum in Union. (15)

SETTLEMENT & EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY HISTORY: Eastern Oregon Museum in Haines. (9)

MINING: The Sumpter Dredge State Historic Monument and Sumpter Valley Railroad at Sumpter (20)

The Forces of Nature

Millions of years ago, the Wallowa Mountains formed the coast of what would eventually be called Oregon. Uplifted layers of limestone on the peaks harbor fossilized shells that once sat at the bottom of the ocean. Eons of volcanic action and faulting pushed the masses of rock upward and to the east while new land formed to the

west. The Coast Range, Cascade Mountains and upland desert of Central Oregon now separate the Wallowas from the ocean by hundreds of miles. Flows of plateau basalt, batholiths of granite, and layers of shale were buckled and folded to further shape the mountain range. Raging rivers and gigantic glaciers carved the peaks and canyons and formed the moraines. It took nature a long time to sculpt the dramatic beauty you see along the Byway. To learn more, carry a copy of Oregon's Roadside Geology with you while you travel.

Recreation

Recreational opportunities along the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway are seemingly endless and range from tranquil to thrilling. Four distinct seasons alter the scenery and determine the activities.

In Spring, warm sunshine carpets the hills with green grass and colorful wildflowers. The landscape becomes a patchwork quilt with fields of freshly plowed soil, sprouting crops and blossoming fruit trees. Watch the meadows for frisky new calves and wobbly foals. Along the streams, willows, dogwood and mock orange create a changing palette of yellows, pinks and vibrant greens. Fish on the Grande Ronde, Minam, Wallowa and Imnaha Rivers. Take a thrilling raft or jet boat ride

through Class III and IV rapids on the Snake or float the waters of the Grande Ronde and Minam Rivers.

Summer bursts with energy. Warm, dry weather and lots of sunshine make the outdoors impossible to resist. Micro-climates at different elevations and aspects mean you can always find a cooler or hotter spot within miles. The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, counties, and state parks department operate numerous campgrounds, trail systems, viewpoints, and picnic facilities along or near the route. Cast a fishing line on several of the rivers, lakes and streams. Hire a private outfitter to experience horseback riding and pack trips, rafting, and jet boat



adventures. Cycle the back roads or mountain trails for the amazing views. Ride a tramway to the peaks above Wallowa Lake for views into the surrounding wilderness. Watch Dragon Boats race on Wallowa Lake.

In autumn, cooler temperatures and shorter

days turn tamarack (western larch) needles to gold and leaves to jewel tones of yellow, orange and red. Canada geese are on the move, filling the air with melancholy calls. Hunt for deer, elk, bear, cougar, bighorn sheep or photo opportunities. It's the time for cattle drives, harvest and for blue-sky days crisp with the smell of winter. Catch the small town spirit by watching a high school football game in splendid, scenic surroundings. Visitors are welcome.

Winter's dry, powdery snow opens the ski resorts and turns back-country side trips and hiking trails into a giant playground for adventurers on skis, snowmobiles, and snowshoes. Enjoy winter raptor viewing in Minam and Hells Canyons, and surround yourself with spectacular scenery topped with fresh white snow. At night, relax before a crackling fire in cozy lodgings.

The Events

Cultural events and attractions honor the history and heritage of the area's residents and can be enjoyed in towns all along the Byway. Powwows, music festivals, craft shows, plays, concerts and a wide variety of community celebrations can be found throughout the year. Farmer's markets and farm stands offer fresh produce seasonally.

County Fairs and rodeos highlight the region's farm and ranch lifestyle that is still common in the wide open spaces on both sides of the Snake River. Contact the county organizations listed on the back panel for event details.

