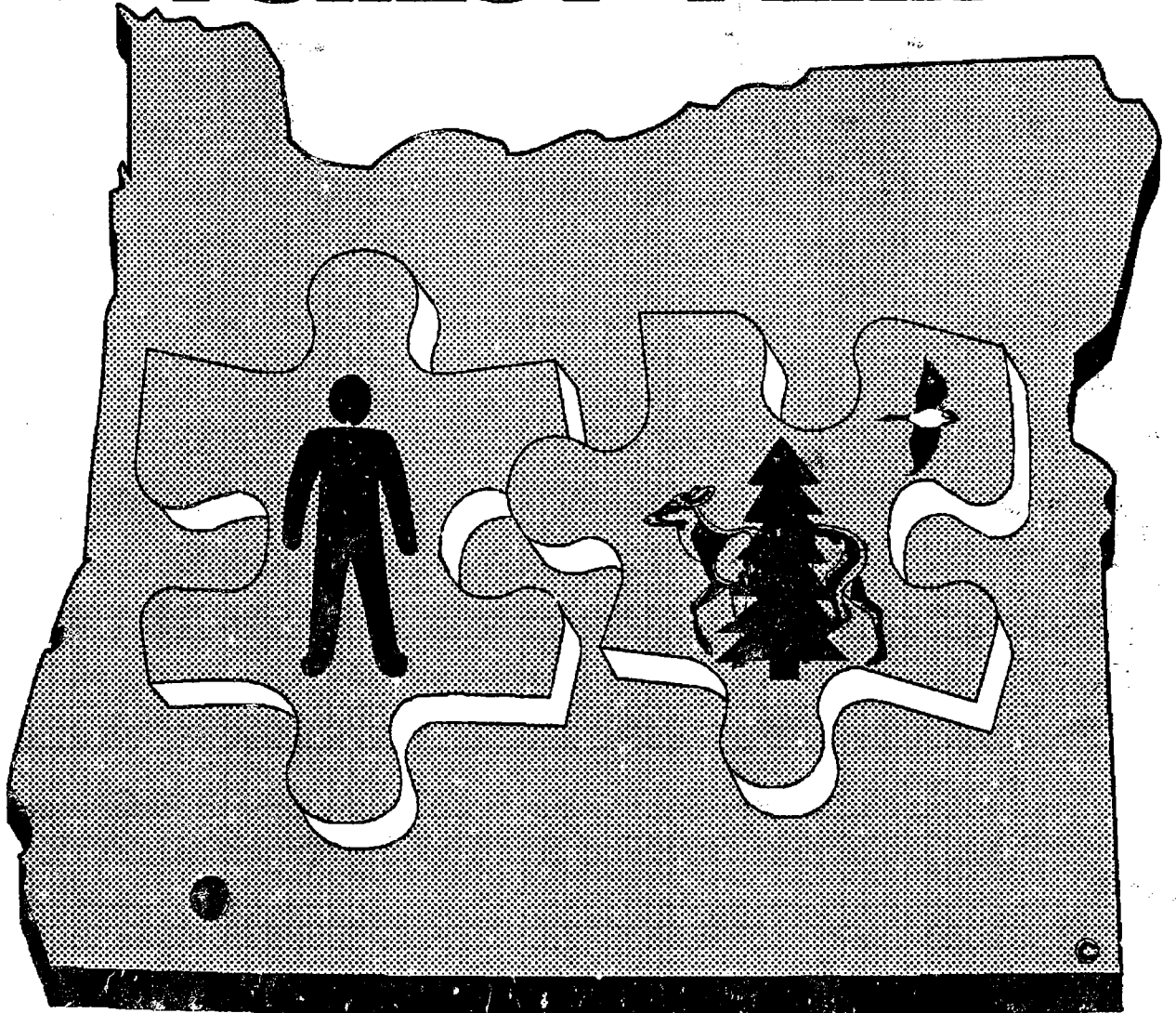


ASHLAND FOREST PLAN



CITY of ASHLAND

MAY 1992

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ECOLOGICALLY SOUND, REALISTIC AND IMPLEMENTABLE. THOSE WERE THE "MARCHING ORDERS" GIVEN US BY THE CITIZENS OF ASHLAND FOR PREPARING THIS PLAN. THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC PARTICIPATION HELPED ACHIEVE THAT OBJECTIVE.

We are especially indebted to the members of the Ashland Watershed Advisory Group who participated in both public meetings and Advisory Group work sessions. Their creativity, constructive criticism and skillful editing was invaluable.

ASHLAND WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP

Pat Acklin
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Tim Brewley
Myra Erwin
Wes Reynolds
Ken Mickleson

Pam Barlow, Project Coordinator for the City, provided information, scheduled meetings, made arrangements and generally helped the process move along.

And finally our congratulations to both the professional and citizen leadership of the City for their vision and fortitude in deciding to prepare this plan.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Ecosystem

PROMOTE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS.

Policies: (a) Winburn parcel as ecosystem study area in conjunction with Southern Oregon State College. (b) Partnership with Rogue River National Forest and other ownerships.

Vegetation

PLAN AND MANAGE FOREST LAND VEGETATION AND OTHER RESOURCES IN A MANNER THAT EMULATES NATURAL PROCESSES.

Policies: Conduct all logging via helicopter unless analysis indicates otherwise.

Recreation

PLAN AND MANAGE RECREATION USE IN A MANNER THAT COMPLIMENTS OR IS COMPATIBLE WITH OTHER WATERSHED AND FOREST VALUES.

Policies: (a) Manage all public use. (b) Direct use to lower elevation parcels. (c) Limit to day use. (d) Emphasize non-motorized uses. (e) Limit access to Reeder Reservoir. (f) Establish an Ashland Forest-land Citizens Patrol. (g) Use services of Park and Recreation Department for interim management.

Fire

REDUCE FUELS IN A MANNER THAT ENHANCES BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND LONG TERM SOIL PRODUCTIVITY.

Policies: Retain snags in areas important for wildlife and not critical to fire control; use prescribed fire to reduce fuels and emulate ecosystem function.

**Fish and
Wildlife**

IMPROVE THE AQUATIC HABITAT IN ASHLAND CREEK BELOW REEDER RESERVOIR FOR BOTH ANADROMOUS AND RESIDENT FISH.

Policies: (a) Obtain technical assistance from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. (b) Develop agreement with Rogue Flyfisher's for project work. (c) Retain all snags along the stream and tributaries.

Community

UTILIZE THE INTEREST, ENTHUSIASM AND KNOWLEDGE OF ASHLAND RESIDENTS THROUGH COOPERATIVE PROJECTS AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS.

Stewardship

PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DEFINE THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT WILL ENSURE CAREFUL PROTECTION AND THOUGHTFUL MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY'S FOREST LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This section of the plan outlines strategies for implementing Goals, Policies and Action items effectively and efficiently.

- CHARTER AN INTER-AGENCY/CITIZEN IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
- USE VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANIZED GROUPS TO ACCOMPLISH WORK
- USE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose and Need

The City of Ashland owns 795 acres within Ashland Creek, 150 acres in Rocca Creek, and 130 acres in the Hamilton Creek watershed. The lower portions of each of these blocks is within the Urban/Wildland Interface - a critical wild-fire zone.

The community is dependent on the Ashland Watershed for its municipal water supply. This plan focuses on maintaining water quality and quantity, managing vegetation, reducing wildfire fuels, and being compatible with management plans for the adjoining Rogue River National Forest and other properties.

This is the first integrated resource management plan for City's forest lands. The City has recently updated its Comprehensive Management Plan. It contains seven goals applicable to forest lands. This plan incorporates those goals and establishes seven new goals with attendant policies and action items.

Existing Condition

Eight decades of aggressive fire suppression within both the Ashland Creek and Hamilton Creek watersheds has altered "normal" ecosystem processes that feature fire as a major agent of disturbance. The result is a change from an open grown pine/fir forest with a sparse shrub understory, to a dense fir/pine forest with brush fields occupying areas recently visited by high intensity fire. The volume of vegetation (bio-mass) has increased. water production has likely decreased.

During this same period the City has grown and residential areas have entered the heavily vegetated foothills of the Siskiyou Mountains. There has been a corresponding increase in the recreational use of the adjacent forest lands.

This combination of more vegetation, residential occupancy of the interface, and heavy recreation use has increased the risk of fire frequency and severity.

ISSUES, CONCERNS, OPPORTUNITIES

The ICO'S were developed through public meetings, interviews, and interaction with a Planning Advisory Group. The issues are interrelated and complex. Their resolution, and the utilization of opportunities are the basis for this plan's Goals, Policies and Action items.

Ecosystem Health

How to regain and maintain biological diversity and resiliency of the City's forest lands, and the surrounding watershed? This encompasses vegetative management, fuels reduction and old-growth retention.

Recreation Use

How to manage the increasing hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and sightseeing on City lands?

Stewardship

How should the City organize to manage the resources and uses of its growing inventory of forest lands?

Fire Management

How to further coordinate inter-department, inter-agency fire planning, prevention and suppression activities. How to provide technical assistance to urban/wildland interface residents?

Implementation

How to utilize existing programs, grants and funding sources, and engage citizen in efficient and practical implementation.

Community

An opportunity to build community cohesiveness and effectiveness. Further citizen and visitor knowledge and appreciation of City watershed and forest land values.

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FOREST PLAN

City of Ashland Forest Lands

Prepared By **R.J. McCormick & Associates**

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J. Hoffman
B. Lichlyter

May, 1992

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Ashland is an environmentally conscious community located in the foothills of the Siskiyou Mountains. Citizens primary concerns are the protection of the 14,000 acre watershed at the base of Mt. Ashland, the prevention of loss of life and property in the urban-wildland interface, and the "quality of life" in the community.

...and reflect what most citizens treasure: a community at the base of the Siskiyou Mountains, that works with rather than fights with nature.

Presently there is no forest management plan for 1075 acres owned by the City within and near the watershed. The City desires a plan with the following attributes:

- Maintains the preservation of water quality and quantity as the highest priority for resource management.
- Establishes management practices for all City owned lands outside the City limits.
- The plan be coordinated and compatible with the Rogue River National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, and other plans of the Ashland Ranger District.
- Establishes management guidance for the private lands within or adjacent to the urban growth boundary - the Urban/Wildland Interface.
- The City specifically requests this plan be based on concepts and practices pioneered by Dr. Jerry Franklin, known generally as "New Forestry".

In addition to including the above attributes. the Plan should also have the following characteristics.

- Public participation and support in the development and implementation of this plan.
- Provide for periodic review and modification, as necessary, when conditions change.

- Be practical, economical, and implementable.

The City has a unique opportunity to be a model for others in providing for both the needs of its people and the environment. As it is aptly stated in its Comprehensive Plan, "... and reflect what most citizen's treasure: a community at the base of the Siskiyou Mountains, that works with rather than fights with nature." It is hoped that this Plan is one small step toward realizing that vision.

Description of Planning Area

The City owns 1,075 acres of forest land. The vicinity map in this chapter shows their location and lists them by parcel number for reference purposes. This document will refer to these lands as forest lands. Seven hundred ninety five acres is within the Ashland watershed, mostly in small parcels adjacent to Ashland Creek. The primary use is the maintenance of water quality. Parcels 1 to 3 are granite pits or water system facilities.

There is an additional 280 acres that the City has recently acquired as part of its long range plans to establish a Siskiyou Mountains recreation park along the urban interface boundary. Its primary use is for open space.

This document also provides guidance to lands comprising the Urban/Wildland Interface, both inside and outside of the city limits. These lands will be referred to as the Interface. The Interface is, as the name implies, a transition zone between the forest lands and the city environment. It contains both the strong influences of human settlement and the natural forest ecosystem.

The Interface is also the critical Wildfire Land Zone along the city limits and the Urban Growth Boundary, as well as an area between Tolman Creek on the South, Wrights Creek on the North, the city limits on the east, and the Rogue River National Forest boundary on the west. See the vicinity map for its location.

Purpose and Need of the Plan

The City wishes to place its 1,075 acres of forest land under a workable regime of protection and management. Officials also want guidelines for dealing with the

development of the Interface, and the associated fire risk.

Other than protection from wildfire, management of forest lands has been passive. This plan establishes a pro-active management theme we believe necessary to accomplish the Action items, carry out the Policies, and attain the Goals it proposes.

The key characteristics of this management theme are:

1. Ecosystem based planning and management - Planning is done within an ecosystem context. All ownerships are involved.
2. Integrated resource management - A holistic approach to developing direction and carrying out management that considers the form, function and inter-relationships of both the forest and resource objectives.
3. Integrated administration - An interdisciplinary or management team approach to plan implementation.

The Ashland Comprehensive Plan has well-established goals for the management of lands within the city limits and for the watershed. This Plan adopts those goals that are appropriate for forest lands, and proposes seven new goals.

It is essential that common goals be established and integrated ecosystem planning be done.

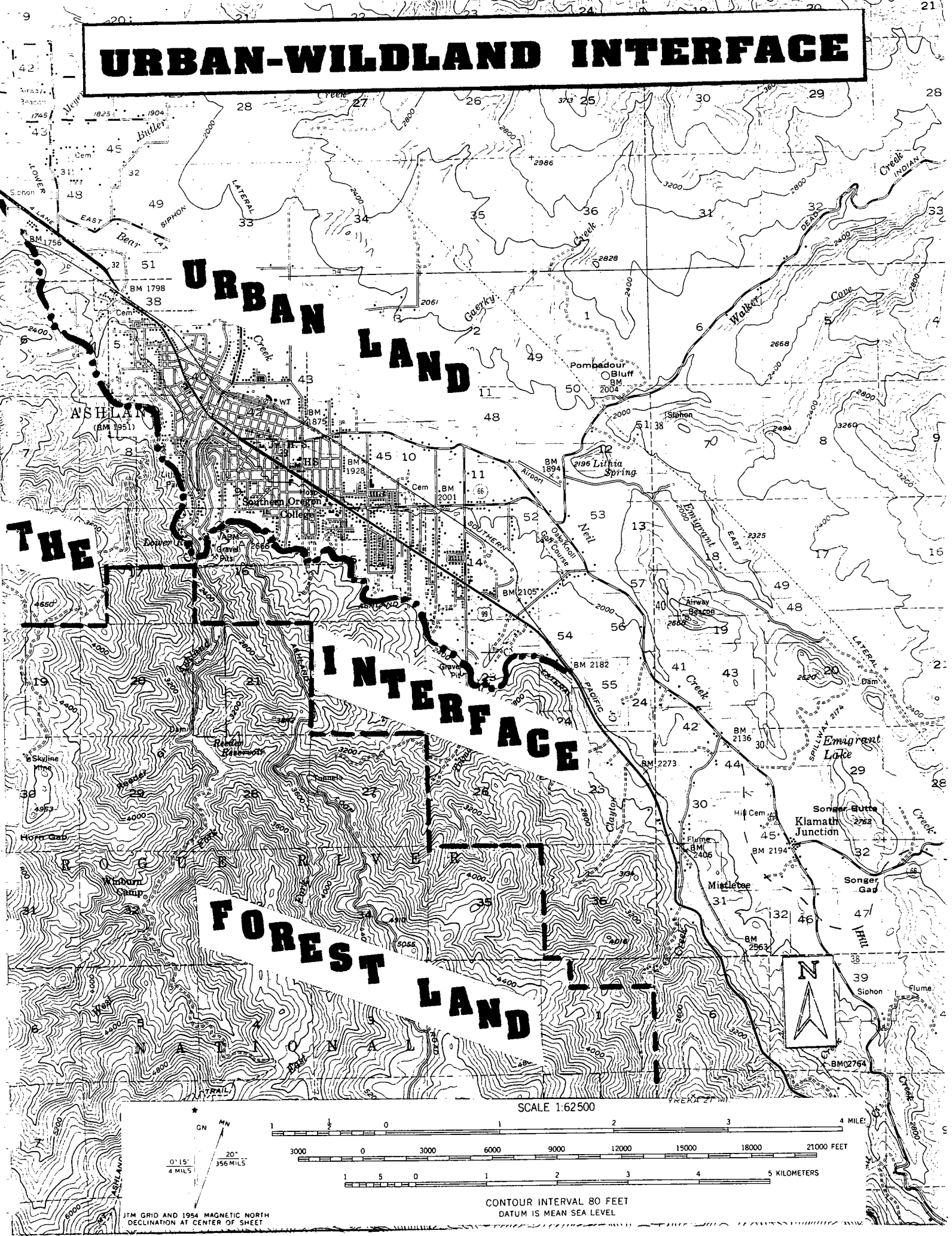
The Rogue River National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan appears to have compatible goals. However, periodic reviews by Ashland Ranger District and City personnel is suggested in order to insure consistency. Ecosystem processes operate independently of ownership boundaries. If the "New Forestry" concepts proposed in this Plan are to be successful, it is essential that common goals be established and integrated ecosystem planning be done that involves all land owners within the watershed.

Although this Plan adopts many of the existing City goals, there is a significant departure from past philosophy on how both these and the new goals should be attained. In our judgement, created disturbance that emulates natural ecological processes must be reintroduced into the watersheds. This means vegetative manipulation and prescribed fire. If this does not occur, there is a very high risk of catastrophic wild-

fire and a rapid loss of old-growth and other age classes through insects and disease.

Recreation use of these lands has grown to a point where active management is also necessary. This involves providing some minimum facilities, recreation information and appropriate regulation.

URBAN-WILDLAND INTERFACE



UTM GRID AND 1954 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:62500
CONTOUR INTERVAL 80 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

