

# HELLS CANYON

State of Oregon



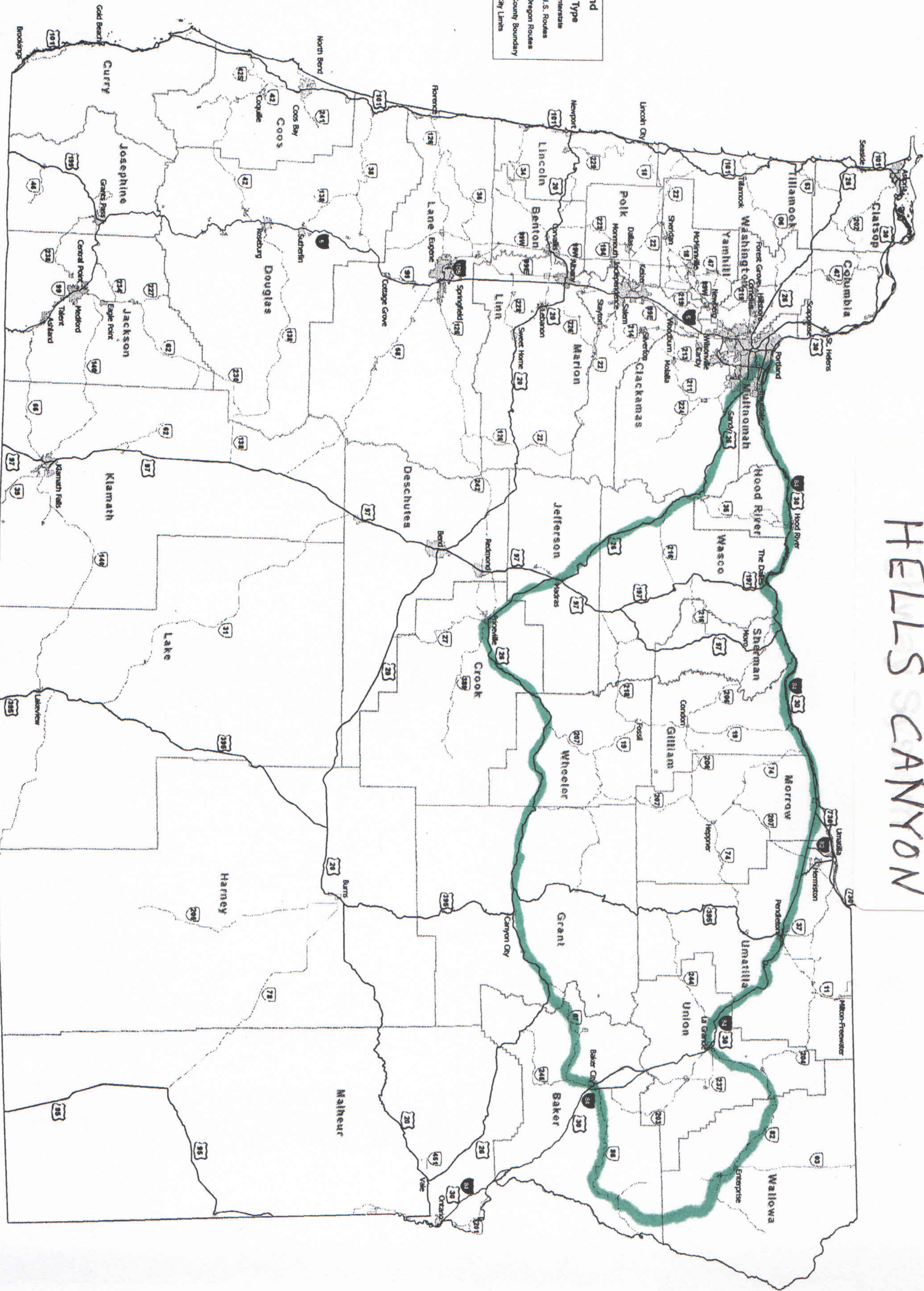
**Legend**

**Route Type**

- Interstate
- U.S. Routes
- Oregon Routes

**County Boundary**

**City Limits**



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# THE HELLS CANYON

## SCENIC BYWAY

*The Hells Canyon Scenic Byway winds through the northeast corner of Oregon, taking in the craggy 8,000 foot depths of Hells Canyon and the 10,000 foot peaks of the Wallowa Mountains. Along the way, you'll encounter exceptionally scenic country and fascinating cultural history in the ancestral homelands of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce Indians and along the Historic Oregon Trail.*

The Hells Canyon Scenic Byway is a 208-mile loop encircling the Wallowa Mountains, intersecting with Interstate 84 at La Grande and Baker City. Extremes in the land define this Byway and have likewise shaped the region's cultural history. At the eastern edge of the Byway is the Hells Canyon stretch of the Snake River, North America's deepest gorge. It boasts hair-raising rapids, awesome rock formations, and many signs of the indigenous peoples that once called this vast area home.

At the core of the Byway are the Wallowa Mountains whose jagged, snowcapped peaks are reminiscent of the Swiss Alps. Flows of plateau basalt, batholiths of granite, and layers of shale were buckled and folded to form the mountain range.

West of the Wallowas, the bountiful Grande Ronde Valley unfolds. Once a spring and summer gathering place for members of the Umatilla, Yakima, Shoshone, Walla Walla, Cayuse and Bannock Nations, the valley is now a rich agricultural center, hosting fields of hay, wheat, grass, mint, and canola as well as cattle, sheep, and horse ranches.

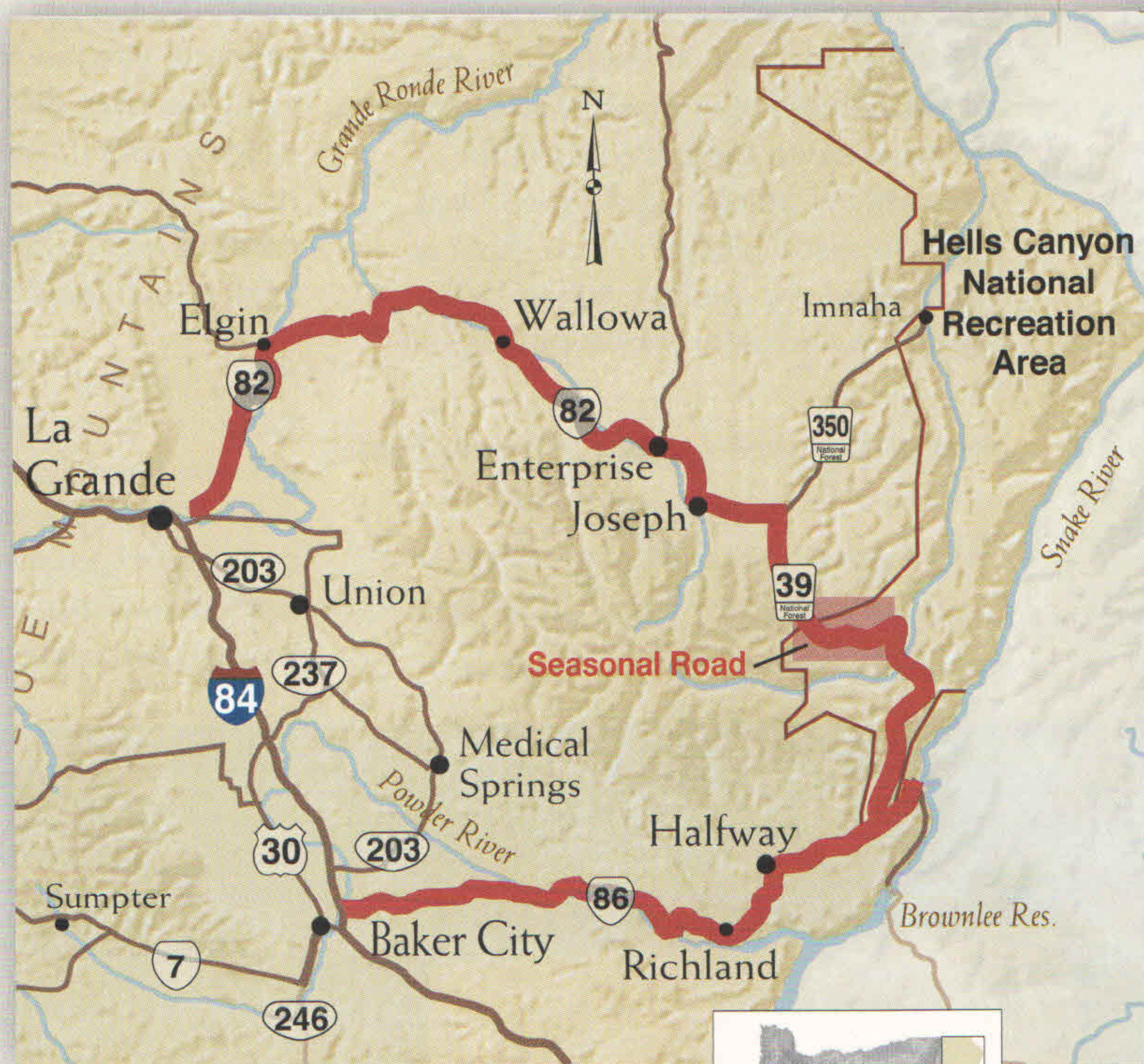
Surrounding the Byway, the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, the Eagle Cap Wilderness area, and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest offer incomparable outdoor recreational oppor-

*Photo: (opposite page) the canyon of the Imnaha River, in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area.*

tunities. Numerous campgrounds and trail systems are available. Anglers can fish the region's many rivers or Wallowa Lake. Hunters can pursue deer, elk, bear, cougar or bighorn sheep. Visitors can experience the backcountry on a pack trip or rafting adventure. When the snow falls, downhill skiing is available at area resorts, and abundant open spaces make for a snowmobiling/snowshoeing wonderland. Cultural events and attractions showcasing the region's heritage, including rodeos, powwows, music festivals, craft shows, concerts and other community celebrations, can be enjoyed all along the Byway, throughout the year.

### *Baker City*

As you travel on Interstate 84, enter the Byway's southern end by taking exit 304 and following the signs to Oregon Highway 86. Start your canyon adventure with a tour of the National Historic District in Baker City, the "Queen City of the Mines." Late 19th century Victorian architecture dominates the commercial and residential buildings of the city's downtown, where many buildings, including the famous Geiser Grand Hotel, have been carefully restored. North of town, take Oregon Route 86 east to the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center at Flagstaff Hill.



### *Trip Tips*

*Distance: 208-miles (335 kilometers), parts of it very narrow and winding.*

*Best Time: June-October. Portions closed during winter months. Please check with local visitors centers. For more information: [www.hellscanyonbyway.com](http://www.hellscanyonbyway.com) or call 1-800-332-1843. Minimum Driving Time: 7-8 hours.*

*Medical Services/Hospitals: Baker City, La Grande and Enterprise. Rest Areas: Several parks and campgrounds are located along the route. Gas: Make sure you have plenty before leaving Baker City or La Grande.*



