



Deschutes National Forest | July 2022

Recreation Residences on the Deschutes National Forest

What are recreation residences?

Recreation residences are privately-owned homes located on National Forest lands. The land or lot is not sold by the U.S. Forest Service but is permitted for recreational use and occupancy through a federal license, most commonly referred to as a special use permit. Recreation residences are maintained by the occupant (permit holder) for personal, family, and guest enjoyment but are not approved for either commercial use or as a permanent residence.

Where are recreation residences located on the Deschutes National Forest?

Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District

- Elk Lake – 32 Recreation Residences
- Paulina Lake – 6 Recreation Residences

Crescent Ranger District

- Crescent Lake – 72 Recreation Residences
- Odell Lake – 66 Recreation Residences

Sisters Ranger District

- Metolius River – 108 Recreation Residences

No new recreation residences are being permitted on the Deschutes National Forest.

How do you own a recreation residence?

A special use permit is required to own a recreation residence on National Forest lands. Special use permits for recreation residences may be issued to an individual, spouses, or a trustee of an approved trust. The recreation residence may be bought and sold. If there is a change of ownership, the special use permit will be terminated and reissued to a new holder.

The special use permit administrator for each ranger district can provide the required form for an ownership change and discuss other requirements for reissuance. All new and reissued recreation residence special use permits on the Deschutes National Forest expire on or before December 31, 2028.

The Forest Service does not release the names and addresses of the recreation residence owners and does not maintain lists of residences on the market.

If you have purchased a recreation residence, you will be required to pay a transfer-of-ownership fee as dictated by the Cabin Fee Act (CFA) signed into law in 2014. It is the sole responsibility of the cabin owner to contact the Forest Service upon purchase to apply for a special use permit and pay the transfer of ownership fee. As of July 2022, the transfer-of-ownership fee is currently \$1329.

What is included in a recreation residence special use permit?

The recreation residence special use permit includes standard Terms and Conditions and an *Operations and Maintenance Plan* that provides guidelines, standards and restrictions for ownership and maintenance of the recreation residence and permit area.

Can I renovate a recreation residence?

Recreation residence permit holders who want to submit a new proposal for major modifications must complete an application during the annual open season window from August 15 to November 15 for potential project authorization in the next field season. Major modification proposals are not accepted outside the open season window. Please contact your local ranger district for instructions on how to submit a project proposal.

In addition, many of the recreation residences have been determined to be eligible for nomination within a historic district. Therefore, any proposed change to the exterior of all recreation residences must be approved by the U.S. Forest Service within the relevant historic guidelines.



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Each special use permit has *Design Guidelines* that provide permit holders information for planning ground disturbing activity and/or new construction or alteration to the existing recreation residence or outbuildings. All ground disturbance or changes to the appearance and/or size of the structure must be reviewed and approved through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

What are the fees?

Recreation residence permit holders must pay an annual land use fee. This fee is in addition to the one-time transfer-of-ownership fee. The Cabin Fee Act (CFA) outlines the fee schedule dictating the annual amount due. Fees increase based on yearly inflation adjustment as required by law.

Who do I contact to get more information on recreation residence special use permits?

For more information, please contact the ranger district on which you are inquiring about a recreation residence and ask to speak with their special use permit administrator:

- Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District – (541) 383-5300
- Crescent Ranger District – (541) 433-3200
- Sisters Ranger District – (541) 549-7700