



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Malheur National
Forest, Emigrant
Creek Ranger
District

March 2006



Forest Service Ant Project

Preliminary Environmental Assessment

Recreation Specialist Report

DRAFT

Recreation Specialist Report

Lori Bailey

March 13, 2006

DRAFT

Abstract

The National Forest System lands encompassed within the project area have been inventoried using the ROS system to determine what recreation opportunities and settings are available to visitors. The ROS setting of a Recreation place largely determines its attractiveness and utility. Many recreation opportunities, such as viewing scenery, require a natural ROS setting; other activities, such as hunting, may not directly depend on the setting. Currently, the area meets semi-primitive non-motorized, roaded natural, and roaded modified.

Recreational opportunities within the project area are limited because there are no developed recreation facilities. Recreational use consists primarily of dispersed activities of viewing scenery or wildlife, camping, hiking, fishing and hunting.

DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

Recreational opportunities within the project area are limited because there are no developed recreation facilities. Recreational use consists primarily of dispersed activities of viewing scenery or wildlife, camping, hiking, fishing and hunting. Other activities such as snowmobiling, cross-county skiing, OHV use, horseback riding, and horn hunting are also popular pursuits. Although not commonly considered recreation activities elsewhere, many local people use firewood gathering and Christmas tree cutting as a low cost family outing. Driving for pleasure to look at scenery and wildlife, and picnicking are also popular low-cost activities practiced within the project area.

The Malheur Recreation Strategy defines the “Niche” for the Malheur National Forest as “A Traditional Way of Life”. Dispersed activities of viewing scenery or wildlife, camping, hiking, fishing and hunting on the Forest are a traditional way of life.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

The Forest Service developed the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) system to help identify, quantify, and describe the variety of recreational settings available on National Forest system lands. The ROS system provides a framework for planning and managing recreation resources. The ROS settings are classified on a scale ranging from primitive to urban. The National Forest System lands encompassed within the project area have been inventoried using the ROS system to determine what recreation opportunities and settings are available to visitors. Currently, the area meets semi-primitive non-motorized, roaded natural, and roaded modified. Management direction for recreation as outlined in the Forest Plan is to continue to maintain existing ROS settings.

- **Roaded Modified** – a natural environment that has been substantially modified by development of structures and vegetative manipulation characterizes. Sights and sounds of humans are readily evident, and the interaction between users is often moderate to high. Facilities are often provided for special activities. Moderate user densities are present away from developed sites.
- **Roaded Natural** – A predominantly natural-appearing environment with moderate evidence of the sights and sounds of humans. Such evidence usually harmonizes with the natural environment. Interaction between users may be moderate to high with evidence of other users prevalent. Resource modification and utilization practices are evident but harmonize with the natural environment. Conventional motorized use is allowed.
- **Semi-primitive Non-Motorized** - A predominately natural or natural-appearing environment of moderate to large size. Interaction between users is low, but there is often evidence of other users. The area is managed in such a way that minimum onsite controls and restrictions may be present but would be subtle. Motorized recreation use is not permitted, but local roads used for other resource management activities may be present on a limited basis. Use of such roads is restricted to minimize impacts on recreational experience opportunities.

The ROS setting of a Recreation place largely determines its attractiveness and utility. Many recreation opportunities, such as viewing scenery, require a natural ROS setting; other activities, such as hunting, may not directly depend on the setting.

Affected Environment

Developed Recreation

Developed recreation is defined as recreation that requires facilities that, in turn, result in concentrated use of an area. Examples of recreation areas are campgrounds and ski areas (Forest Plan, page VI-11). There are no developed recreation sites within the Ant project area.

Dispersed Recreation

Dispersed recreation is a general term referring to recreation use outside a developed recreation site; this includes activities such as scenic driving, hunting, backpacking, and recreation in primitive environments (Forest Plan page VI-11). Dispersed campsites are rustic in nature with common features such as meat poles and rock fire rings. Dispersed campsites are easily accessed by roads and are concentrated in flat areas off main transportation systems where water is readily available. Therefore majority of dispersed camp site are near springs or creeks. There is a wide range in size and amount of disturbance for all dispersed campsites. Use of these sites varies throughout the year, with the majority of sites showing heaviest use during the fall hunting season.

Trails

There are no maintained trails within the project area; however, much of the area consists of easy to moderate terrain for hiking due to low undergrowth, open areas, and gentle slopes.

References

DRAFT