

File Code: 1500

Date: September 04, 2009

Dear Reader:

This letter is to inform you that the Travel Management Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forest and the Crooked River National Grassland has been completed. Public comment is now being requested for 45 days. This letter provides a summary of the purpose and need for action, the alternatives considered in detail, and identifies the preferred alternative. For all those who returned the white response card requesting a hard copy, CD version, or email version of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we will be sending you your copy. For all others, copies of the DEIS are available upon request at the address found at the end of this letter or may be viewed in PDF format on the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests website at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/travel-mgmt/index.shtml>.

Project Location and Purpose and Need

The Travel Management Project area includes both the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and the Crooked River National Grassland¹. The purpose of the actions proposed in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement are to (1) implement the 2005 Travel Management Rule that prohibits all motorized access² off existing designated routes and outside of existing designated areas where such use is not currently prohibited by past actions; (2) change the conditions of currently designated motorized access where necessary to allow for safe access on roads allowed for motorized mixed use under Oregon State Law; and (3) establish conditions for motorized access for dispersed camping (provisions) that are consistent with the Travel Management Rule for continued and future motorized access for dispersed camping.

Alternatives Considered

There were three alternatives considered in detail in this DEIS. Alternative 1, No Action/No Change, would not implement the Travel Management Rule, and would continue current Forest Plan direction. The proposed actions (Alternatives 2 and 3) considered in this DEIS would implement the national Travel Management rule while continuing to provide for reasonable motorized access for dispersed camping, improve public safety. Alternatives 2 and 3 would prohibit motorized use off of the current existing designated road and motorized trail system, designate some areas as open to motorized access off designated routes, change the conditions for motorized access for dispersed camping, and prohibit non-highway legal vehicles on some routes that currently allow both highway legal and non-highway legal vehicles based on the results of the Forest Service mixed use analysis. Alternatives 2 and 3 vary in how they would provide for motorized access for dispersed camping. The proposed actions would amend the Ochoco Land and Resource Management Plan to eliminate Standards and Guidelines that are redundant or conflicting to the Travel Management Rule and make minor changes to the seasons of use for designated routes on the Ochoco National Forests and the Crooked River National Grassland. Alternative 2 is the Preferred Alternative. All alternatives considered in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement are

¹ Does not include the Emigrant Creek Ranger District administered by the Malheur National Forest

² Excluding over-snow vehicles

consistent with applicable local, state and national laws and regulation and with all applicable land management plans after amendment as included in the proposed actions.

Opportunity to Comment

A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the public comment period for this project will be placed in the Federal Register by the Environmental Protection Agency and the 45-day comment period will begin on the date of publication of that notice.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 45 calendar days following publication of a notice of availability for this DEIS in the federal register. A legal notice will be printed in The Bulletin, which is the newspaper of record for the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests, stating the publication date of the NOA in the federal register. The publication date in the federal register is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Written comments must be submitted to: Deschutes and Ochoco National Travel Management Project, 172 E 500 S, Bountiful UT 84010. **Electronic comments** must be submitted to: donf@contentanalysisgroup.com. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc). If no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for appeal eligibility. In cases using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification. Emails submitted to email addresses other than the one listed above, in other formats than those listed, or containing viruses will be rejected. **Facsimile comments** must be submitted to: 801-397-1605. **Hand-delivered or Oral comments** may be submitted to John P. Allen, Forest Supervisor, Deschutes National Forest, 1001 SW Emkay Drive, Bend, OR 97702; or Jeff P. Walter, Forest Supervisor, Ochoco National Forest, 3160 NE Third St., Prineville, OR 97754 via telephone (541-383-5300) or in person during regular office business hours from 7:45 A.M. to 4:30 P.M, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period and ensure that their comments have been received. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to appeal must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 215.6.

Public Meetings

To give the public a better understanding of the project and its alternatives, the Forest Service will hold several public meetings. These meetings will be "open house" settings where guests are encouraged to ask questions and give feedback on the project. Listed below are the dates for this round of open houses.

Public Open House Locations
(All events are scheduled from: 3-7pm)

October 20, 2009

Jefferson County District #1 Fire Hall
765 South Adams Drive
Madras, OR 97741

October 28, 2009

Ochoco Head Quarters Office
3160 N.E. 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754

October 22, 2009

Crescent Ranger District Office
136471 Hwy 97 N
Crescent, OR 97733

October 29, 2009

Deschutes Head Quarters Office
1001 SW Emkay Drive
Bend, OR 97702

November 3, 2009

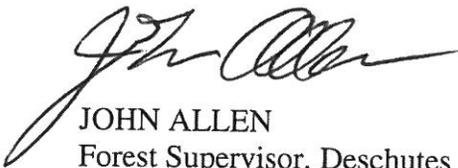
Sisters Ranger District Office
Pine St & Hwy. 20
Sisters, OR 97759

November 11, 2009

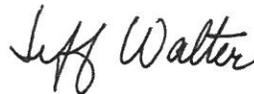
Paulina Community Hall
Paulina, OR 97751

For additional information concerning the specific activities authorized with the decision, you may contact Mollie Chaudet or Peggy Fisher at (541) 383- 5300.

Sincerely,



JOHN ALLEN
Forest Supervisor, Deschutes National Forest



JEFF WALTER
Forest Supervisor, Ochoco National Forest

Deschutes and Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland
Travel Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Comment Form

We appreciate your comments on our Draft Environmental Impact Statement. While you may comment on any aspect of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, your comments would be most helpful if they are focused in a way that helps us understand and respond to the substance of your comment as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act. This comment form is provided as a convenience to you, and is not required for submitting comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

1. Comments should be within the “scope” of the proposed action. This means that suggestions for changes or improvements to the alternatives should:
 - a. Be consistent with the Travel Management Rule and meet the Purpose and Need
 - b. Represent a reasonable alternative approach to meeting the purpose and need and to respond to the significant issues identified in the document.
2. Are there factual corrections or mistakes in the document? If so, please let us know where the error is located in the document and your suggestion for how to correct it.
3. Please be as specific as possible when providing comments, provide the rationale for why you are suggesting a change or improvement, and be as specific as possible in suggesting changes or improvements to address your comment or concern.

Thank you for your interest in this important topic, and we look forward to getting your comments!



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Deschutes National Forest
1001 S.W. Emkay
Bend, OR 97702

Ochoco National Forest
3160 NE 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754

File Code: 1500

Date: September 21, 2009

CORRECTION ON PUBLIC MEETING TIME AND LOCATION FOR CRESCENT

The time and location for the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forest Travel Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement public meeting in Crescent, Oregon has been changed.

THE NEW TIME AND LOCATION IS:

Gilchrist School Music Room

Gilchrist, Oregon

3:30 – 7:00 PM

The date remains the same – October 22, 2009

