



Deschutes National Forest Media Release

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Forest Service Awarded Grant to Study Transportation Alternatives

The Deschutes National Forest recently was awarded a federal grant to do a feasibility study on developing alternative transportation methods to access the forest and its recreational “gems”.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded a \$367,000 “Paul S. Sarbanes – Transit in the Parks and Public Lands Grant” to the Deschutes National Forest to conduct an alternative transportation feasibility study. With the grant, the Forest Service will do transportation and visitors studies to determine how alternative transportation, like bike paths and public or private buses or shuttles, might be increased in a high-use “rural” forest.

Currently, most visitors to the Deschutes National Forest come in their own vehicle. The feasibility study will gather data that will assist public and private entities to consider opportunities to develop alternative transportation methods of accessing the forest. It is expected that alternative transportation methods would reduce traffic congestion, carbon emissions, and pressure to increase vehicle capacity at recreation sites as well as improve visitor access, visitor experiences and the forest ecosystem.

The Forest Service will begin the feasibility study this fall. Throughout the study, federal, state, city (Bend, Sisters, La Pine), and other local and community partners and the public will be engaged. Depending upon the outcome of the feasibility study, new ways to access the forest may be developed through future efforts.

The feasibility study includes the following items:

- Traffic Study
- Visitor Capacity Analysis
- Natural Resource Condition Survey
- Marketing Assessment
- Economic Analysis
- Assessment of Regional Planning Activities
- Developing a Range of Alternatives for Managing Transportation and Visitor Use

For more information, contact Peggy Fisher at the Deschutes National Forest, 541-383-5633.

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