

Chapter II

Response to

Issues

CHAPTER II

Response to Issues

This chapter briefly describes how this Plan responds to planning issues and outputs that will be produced (see Figure II-2). An early step in the planning process was identification of issues, concerns and opportunities (ICOs) related to management of the Oregon Dunes NRA. ICOs were identified through citizen participation, including public meetings of varying format, interagency coordination, personal contacts with individuals and groups, and comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Appendix B, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), describes the public involvement process and how public input was used to identify and verify issues.

Seventeen ICOs were identified, which provided the basis for development of the 8 alternatives presented in the FEIS. Each alternative responds differently to many of the ICOs. Some of the ICOs are responded to in the same way by each alternative. Differing responses of alternatives to ICOs results in a different mix of NRA outputs from each alternative. Complete resolution of all ICOs is not feasible because of inter-relationships among resources. A gain to one resource use (i.e., motorized recreation) may be a loss to another (i.e., wildlife habitat).

This Plan implements the FEIS Preferred Alternative, F(PA). It is the alternative the Forest Supervisor has determined will most benefit the public. Compromises were made between major issues to arrive at a mix of resource uses to satisfy the most interests. In planning terminology, the Preferred Alternative maximizes long-term net public benefit, which is the value of all benefits less associated costs. Net public benefit is derived from both quantitative and qualitative criteria.

Issues

Recreation

What mix of recreation settings and opportunities will be provided at the NRA?

Amounts, types and areas of recreation use at the Oregon Dunes NRA are to a large degree a result of the mix of recreation settings that the Forest Service provides. The mix and amounts of each setting that the land will support and the agency decides to provide will ultimately determine: levels of access and facility development that occur; types of recreation activities and opportunities that visitors can participate in; density of visitors and frequency of encounters that people experience on the area; and level of management presence and visitor control that will be exercised by the Forest Service.

The NRA has historically provided recreation opportunities in 4 of the 6 Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes: rural, roaded natural, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized. This Plan maintains that mix of ROS classes and opportunities, but changes the relative proportions (see Figure II-1 below) to achieve the following objectives:

- increase separation between competing recreation uses;
- reduce recreation impacts on other resources;
- meet current recreation demands while positioning the NRA to better meet emerging recreation trends.

Figure II-1. NRA Acres by Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class.

ROS Class	Acres
Rural	300
Roaded Natural	3,660
Semiprimitive Motorized	12,440
Semiprimitive Nonmotorized	12,500
TOTAL NRA (National Forest Acres)	28,900

**Off-Road
Vehicle
(ORV) Use**

How will ORV recreation be managed in relation to resources, nearby residents, and other recreationists?

Broad management direction for the use of vehicles off roads on national forest lands is provided in Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 261 and 295. Public issues and management concerns around ORV use on the NRA related primarily to vehicle impacts to habitats, unique geologic resources, and nearby residents and non-ORV recreationists. To address CFR direction, as well as public issues and management concerns, this Plan initiates several actions, including night-riding curfews, restricted motorized dispersed camping, limitation of ORV use to facilities with direct sand access, more stringent ORV noise emission goals, and noise-control buffers. Other actions, such as designated routes through vegetated areas, are carried over from the previous plan. Education, enforcement and monitoring will be used to ensure that ORV use patterns are changing in accordance with the above-cited actions and that changes in use patterns are producing desired results.

**Access and
Facility De-
velopment**

How much access and facility development is appropriate at the NRA?

This issue is related to the recreation settings discussed above. All new roads, trails and facilities proposed by this Plan are presented in the Implementation Schedule in Appendix B.

Approximately 2 additional miles of surfaced road, 12 ¼ miles of new trail, and several additional day-use facilities focused around angling, wildlife viewing and interpretive opportunities are planned throughout the NRA. ORV day-use staging development or expansion and additional overflow camping are planned to help improve the quality of habitats and more effectively separate competing recreation uses.

In addition, there are trail opportunities for hikers, mountain bikers and perhaps equestrians associated with the recently-acquired 2,000 acres along Tahkenitch Lake. Timing of this acquisition precluded detailed planning for these lands in this Plan, but these trail opportunities will be included in subsequent planning. Additional highway vehicle access will also be considered as part of planning for these lands.

Overnight capacity of the NRA will be increased by about 4% over the current level. Day-use facility capacity will increase by approximately 34%. Most development activity will be focused within existing corridors and will not significantly increase the overall percentage of NRA lands that are "developed".

**Education
and Re-
source Inter-
pretation**

What level of education and resource interpretation should be provided at the NRA?

This Plan provides for a broad-based education and resource interpretation program featuring both guided and non-guided structured-learning opportunities, as well as unstructured opportunities for exploration and self-guided discovery. Several small facilities (included in Appendix B) are planned that will provide additional opportunities for education and resource interpretation. The opportunity for a multi-agency developed and administered environmental learning facility at Butterfield Lake is recognized.

**Vegetation
Manage-
ment**

How will vegetation and special forest products be managed to maintain or enhance unique scenic, ecological, and recreational qualities associated with dunes ecosystems?

This Plan designates about 5,000 acres of NRA lands as high priority vegetation treatment areas and an additional 6,000 acres as secondary vegetation treatment areas (see Potential Vegetation Management Areas Map at back). It identifies and prioritizes a series of resource objectives to be addressed through vegetation treatment. Site-specific projects will be subsequently developed and analyzed to meet the objectives identified in this Plan. These projects will provide opportunities to experiment with, and monitor effectiveness and cost, of a variety of potential treatment methods.

This Plan establishes criteria for recreational and commercial uses of special forest products. It designates areas of the NRA that are open, restricted or closed to such uses.

Plants, Fish and Wildlife

How will plant, fish and wildlife habitat including that for proposed, endangered, threatened, and sensitive (PETS) species be managed at the NRA?

This Plan designates three management areas (10E, 10F and 10G) within the NRA that primarily emphasize maintenance and enhancement of habitat for plants, fish or wildlife. The three areas total approximately 7,000 acres. They include habitat for threatened snowy plover, globally significant plant communities, warmwater and anadromous fish species; and a variety of special habitats that are of limited extent on the NRA, such as upland forest and meadows, or are important contributors to regional biodiversity, such as wetlands and beach strand.

Research Natural Areas (RNAs)

Which areas at the NRA will be recommended for establishment as RNAs?

Decision on two proposed RNAs located on the NRA, Umpqua Spit and Tenmile Creek, was deferred from the Siuslaw Forest planning effort to the NRA planning effort. This Plan recommends establishment of the Tenmile Creek RNA (Management Area 10K) with boundaries modified to accommodate high semi-primitive non-motorized recreation values, potential conflicts arising from proximity to Eel Creek Campground, and existence of a popular trail in the southern portion of the originally-proposed area. The Regional Forester will make final determination as to whether or not the area is designated an RNA.

The Umpqua Spit area is not recommended for establishment because it has high wetlands management potential and because during the NRA planning process 770 acres of the area passed from federal to private ownership under provisions of the 1872 Mining Law.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Which streams at the NRA will be recommended to Congress for inclusion into the national Wild and Scenic River system?

Segments of three streams at the NRA (Tenmile and Tahkenitch creeks and the Siltcoos River) are eligible and were considered for addition to the Wild and Scenic River system. This Plan recommends that the portion of Tenmile Creek within the RNA boundary be added to the system as a scenic river. It recommends that Tahkenitch Creek within the NRA boundary be added as a wild river. Congress will determine if these streams are finally added to the Wild and Scenic River system. The outstandingly remarkable values identified for these streams will be protected until Congress decides their final status.

This Plan does not recommend Siltcoos River for addition to the Wild and Scenic system. It will be managed for a combination of recreation and habitat objectives.

Compliance

How will enforcement, education and other techniques be used to ensure compliance with regulations at the NRA?

This Plan prescribes program levels for enforcement and education/interpretation that are intended to encourage compliance with Forest Service regulations. Facility designs and management standards are also used to encourage visitor compliance. Citations will be used to discourage non-compliance. This Plan acknowledges that the agency has finite resources available and that compliance relies heavily on self-policing by NRA visitors and groups.

Monitoring of violations and resource impacts resulting from non-compliance will assess effectiveness of enforcement, education, facility design, and management in promoting desired resource conditions and visitor behaviors. If violation frequencies or levels of impact on resources exceed monitoring thresholds, management of the NRA will be changed to bring them back within acceptable levels.

Biodiversity

How will diversity of plant and animal communities (biodiversity) be maintained at the NRA?

This Plan establishes several management areas at the NRA (10E, 10F and 10G) where maintenance or enhancement of plant, fish, and wildlife habitats is the primary objective. In addition, there are numerous management standards and guidelines included in Chapter III that are intended to protect plant, fish and wildlife resources in other NRA management areas, where habitats are not the primary objective. Taken together, overall intent of management area designations and S&Gs is to ensure continued existence of a broad and varied array of plant, fish and wildlife habitats so that the NRA may remain biologically diverse internally, as well as an important contributor to Oregon coastal-region biodiversity.

Local Communities

How will NRA management affect local communities?

The NRA is an important contributor to the quality of life for residents of local communities in two ways. It contributes directly by providing them nearby, natural-appearing open space with numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation, solitude, quiet, and scenic views. These are increasingly scarce attributes that many people in American society value and benefit from. The NRA contributes indirectly by attracting visitors and economic input into the communities from outside the area. This visitation provides business and economic benefits which in turn may directly or indirectly benefit community residents.

This Plan maintains a broad mix of recreation settings and opportunities, so that the NRA can benefit a broad segment of local residents with a variety of recreation interests, as well as attract visitors with varied interests to the area. It focuses development activities on day-use facilities so that the private sector can provide more lucrative overnight accommodations. Many planned facilities are focused around opportunities to see and learn about plants and wildlife. Strengthening these opportunities will add diversity to the range of experiences available on the NRA and help local communities tap into the rapidly growing eco-tourism market.

Attraction of tourists to the area will benefit local communities. However, there may also be associated negative impacts, such as excessive demand on infrastructure and services, traffic congestion and increased crowding.

**Land Owner-
ship Adjust-
ments**

What land ownership adjustments will be made at the NRA?

This Plan maintains current land acquisition priorities for the NRA. Highest priority are non-federally owned lands within the Dunes Sector portion of the NRA. Second priority are lands within the Inland Sector, that may be acquired only on a willing-seller basis as long as use of these lands meets NRA compatibility criteria (see Appendix C). Beyond these priorities are lands outside the NRA boundary, but still within the Siuslaw Forest boundary that would contribute to the purposes for which the NRA was established. Lowest priority are lands outside both the NRA and National Forest boundaries that would fit well into NRA management. The NRA falls under the Siuslaw Forest Land Adjustment Plan.

**Roadless
Areas**

How much of the land at the NRA will be managed as roadless areas?

This Plan calls for development of roads into Butterfield and Beale lakes, areas that are currently unroaded. Each road will be approximately one mile in length. As a result, there will be about a 250-acre decrease in roadless area at the NRA. However, approximately 86% of the NRA will still be managed as roadless areas.

Water

How will water be managed at the NRA?

The Act creating the Oregon Dunes NRA directs the Forest Service to conserve values that contribute to public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of the area. Surface water in the form of lakes and wetlands is among the values to be conserved. The NRA Act also recognizes prior existing rights to some of the surface and underground water sources associated with the NRA. This Plan helps define NRA surface water interests and objectives. It reaffirms reliance on existing special use permits as the mechanism to ensure that the intentions of Congress as represented in the NRA Act are met.

**Mineral
Entry**

Should the mile-wide buffer of national forest lands at the south end of the NRA be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry?

These lands were intended to provide a buffer between the NRA and industrial lands on the North Spit of the Coos River. As national forest, but not NRA lands, they were not withdrawn from mineral entry. In the 20-plus years that the NRA has existed and managed these lands, resource conditions and use have changed, so that it may now be desirable to seek withdrawal of these lands from mineral entry. This Plan documents habitat and recreation values of these lands, but does not affect on-going agency considerations as to whether or not to seek a mineral withdrawal.

Cultural Resources

How will cultural resources be managed at the NRA?

This Plan does not change Siuslaw Forest Plan direction for management of cultural resources at the Oregon Dunes NRA. The Forest Plan ensures that cultural resources are managed in accordance with federal law.

Native American Religious Freedom

How will Native American religious freedom be ensured at the NRA?

This Plan does not change Siuslaw Forest Plan direction for ensuring the recognition and protection of Native American religious rights on NRA lands.

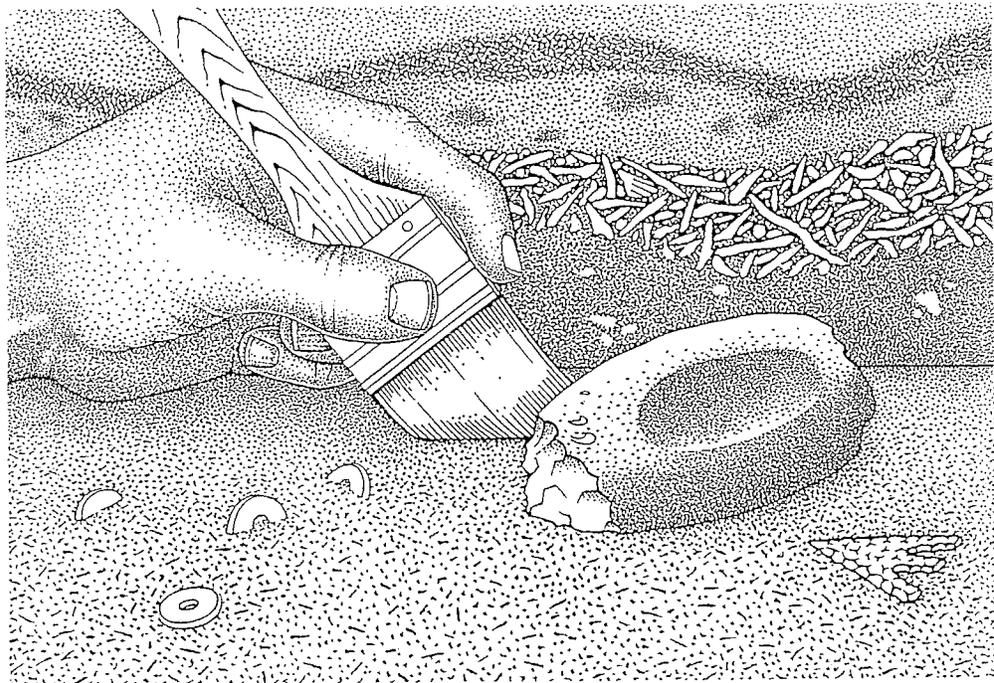


Figure II-2. Quantitative resource outputs

ISSUE/Indicator	Units	Amount
RECREATION MIX/ORV USE		
ROS Classes provided		
Semi-primitive non-motorized	Acres	12,500
Semiprimitive motorized	Acres	12,440
Roaded natural	Acres	3,660
Rural	Acres	300
MANAGEMENT OF ORV USE		
Area open to ORV use	Acres	5,930
ORVs restricted to designated routes	Acres	4,455
Area closed to all ORV use	Acres	19,055
DEVELOPED FACILITIES ¹		
Overnight facilities	Total number	16
Overnight facilities	PAOT ²	2,720
Day-use facilities	Total number	34
Day-use facilities	PAOT ²	3,650
Concessions (sand rides, etc.)	Total number	4
Average annual construction costs	Dollars	450,000
ROADS AND TRAILS		
Paved road	Total miles	23
Gravel road	Total miles	4
Trail (accessible/urban)	Total miles	4
Trail (hiking and other) ³	Total miles	33
Trail (ORV)	Total miles	0
Designated ORV routes	Miles	20
INTERPRETATION/LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES		
Visitor centers/contact stations/sites	Number	10
Capacity of interpretive sites	PAOT ²	610
REMOVAL OF NON-NATIVE AND OTHER ENCROACHING VEGETATION		
Average annual vegetation removed	Acres	100-500
Average annual cost	Dollars	350,000

¹ This is the total of all facilities even though some are included in other categories, e.g., Interpretation, Fish and Wildlife.

² PAOT is a measure of capacity which means "people at one time".

³ This is the total of all trail miles even though some are included in other categories, e.g., Fish trails

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Figure II-2. Quantitative resource outputs (continued)

ISSUE/Indicator	Units	Amount
FISH		
Fish habitat managed	Acres	290
Fish-related facilities	Number	10
Fish-related facilities	PAOT ²	470
Trails for fishing access	Miles	2.0
Trails for fishing access	Number	4
SPECIAL HABITATS MANAGED FOR WILDLIFE		
Wetlands	Acres	2,540
Upland forest	Acres	2,530
Meadows	Acres	50
Riparian	Acres	250
Aquatic	Acres	290
HABITATS MANAGED FOR PETS ⁴		
Snowy Plover	Acres	1,010
All other species	Acres	240
WILDLIFE RECREATION		
Wildlife-related facilities	Number	7
Wildlife-related facilities	PAOT ²	205
HABITATS MANAGED FOR GLOBALLY SIGNIFICANT PLANT COMMUNITIES		
Red fescue	Acres	95
Bog blueberry/tufted hairgrass	Acres	10
Shore pine/hairy manzanita-bearberry	Acres	100
Port Orford cedar/evergreen huckleberry	Acres	100
Shore pine/ slough sedge	Acres	40
RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS		
Research natural areas allocated	Number Name	1 Tenmile Creek
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS		
Streams recommended for designation	Number Classification	2 Tahkenitch-wild Tenmile-scenic
ROADLESS AREAS		
Total amount	Acres	19,045

⁴ PETS - Proposed, endangered, threatened, and sensitive species.

Figure II-2. Quantitative resource outputs (continued)

ISSUE/Indicator	Units	Amount
EFFECTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES		
Average annual payments to counties ⁵	Dollars ⁷	63,600
Average annual payments to local counties ⁶	Dollars ⁷	32,400
Average annual total income ⁸	Dollars ⁷	198,030,000 89,607,000
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CASHFLOW		
Average annual program costs	Dollars ⁷	2,100,000
Average annual vegetation removal costs	Dollars ⁷	350,000
Average annual facility construction cost	Dollars ⁷	330,000
Average annual receipts	Dollars ⁷	254,400

⁵ Payments shown are from Oregon Dunes NRA revenues only, to seven counties surrounding the Siuslaw National Forest.

⁶ Payments shown are from Oregon Dunes NRA revenues only, to three local counties: Coos, Douglas, and Lane.

⁷ All dollar estimates are in 1993 dollars.

⁸ Total income estimates are limited to visitors for whom the Oregon Dunes NRA was a primary destination.