

Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Management Plan

Desired Condition

The SRA fosters public use and enjoyment of the area to the level that ensures protection of its special scenic, recreational, educational, cultural, historical, natural, ecological and water quality values. Appropriate uses, activities and projects are managed to be compatible with each other, and protect resources such as ecological processes, geological features, cultural resources, and plant, fish and wildlife habitats or species including threatened, endangered and/or sensitive species. Management practices are gentle on the land and maintaining the naturally evolving appearance of the SRA.

Vegetation Management

Natural ecological processes are operating to the extent practical; however, fire suppression occurs in many areas to protect adjacent land ownerships, inholder property, recreation areas, old growth groves, and other scenic features. As the vegetation within the SRA continues to age, there is natural mortality. Many forest stands in the SRA continue to grow and develop characteristics of diverse mature and old-growth ecosystems within the next 80-100 years. Along valley bottoms, spectacular cascading streams with crystalline aqua pools and numerous waterfalls



View of SRA from Elkhorn Ridge looking north

surrounded by Opal Creek's renown old growth Douglas-fir and western hemlock ecosystems continue to attract visitors to the Scenic Recreation Area. These late-successional ecosystems continue to function as part of an interacting regional network of old-growth ecosystems. They are protected from loss due to large-scale high intensity wildfire. Visitors understand the challenges of fire management. They are informed of the need for extreme care, and are educated on safe practices in the use of fire to prevent unwanted human caused wildfires.

Timber harvesting, and cutting and selling of trees including salvage sales within the SRA are prohibited. The cutting of trees in the SRA is only occurring in cases for public safety such as eliminating hazardous trees and controlling spread of fire, and activities related to administration of the SRA.

Special Forest Products

No commercial extraction of special forest products is occurring within the SRA. Only tribal uses of non-traditional forest products and limited personal use generally associated with recreation activities takes place within the SRA. Visitor education informs visitors about the impacts of incidental use of special forest products and encourages responsible practices.

Wildlife, Fisheries & Plants

Plant communities, and fish and wildlife populations inhabiting the SRA are flourishing relatively undisturbed by human activities. Threatened, endangered and/or sensitive species continue to be found within the SRA. Mature stands and old-growth ecosystems continue to serve as habitat for species that depend on these late-successional forests. Ecological conditions of rivers, streams, wetlands, lakes and associated riparian areas are functioning effectively. High quality fish habitat contributes to a healthy resident fish population and promotes the return of adult salmon and steelhead to spawning areas. Plant communities within the SRA contribute to biological diversity at a landscape and regional scale. An effective noxious and invasive weed eradication program is aimed to control established populations and eradicate new invaders.



Cedar Creek

Water Quality

Water quality remains excellent in the SRA. It meets or exceeds state and federal standards and supports beneficial uses such as fisheries, aesthetics, domestic use and recreation. Water quality is maintained to provide quality drinking water to downstream users. No water impoundments are found in the SRA except in cases under the provisions of the Opal Creek legislation.

Air Quality

Air quality in the SRA remains good and does not endanger human health. Visitors are satisfied with the air quality, including visibility and odor. Emissions from motor vehicles and wood burning (smoke from campfires and forest-fires) have not degraded the special values for which the SRA was designated. All federal and state requirements and standards for air quality are met.

Special Uses

Compatible special uses such as research studies, educational activities, and recreation permits that support and contribute to the values for which the SRA was created are permitted.

Tribes

The SRA is part of the homeland for native Indian tribes and bands where sacred sites, cultural resources and culturally important areas continue to serve an important role in the tribes' cultural heritage. Trust responsibilities to Indian tribes are met on a continuing basis through strong government-to-government relationships. Formal consultation processes with appropriate tribes ensure compliance with applicable laws, and encourage meaningful tribal involvement in the management of the SRA. Meaningful tribal involvement is encouraged on matters including but not limited to: sacred sites; sacred or ceremonial traditions; activities that affect cultural resources; cultural studies of mutual interest; and gathering of traditional use information.

Local Communities

The economies of local communities benefit from safe, reasonable access to and use of the SRA. In addition to adequate facilities, the quality and variety of the recreational opportunities create a positive visitor experience, and encourage new and return visitation. Recreational and educational opportunities offered within the SRA, as well as the attractiveness of the area as a safe place to visit, benefit the local economy by drawing visitors many of whom will patronize local businesses. People are attracted to the natural and scenic amenities of the SRA and move to nearby communities, bringing income and new businesses.

Information is made easily available to visitors interested in opportunities to recreate in the SRA. Local communities have the opportunity to promote the area and its resource values while supporting a responsible level of tourism and visitation to the SRA.

When practical, the Forest Service and Advisory Council monitor and participate in the development of local and regional management plans to facilitate integration with the SRA management plan and identifies mutually beneficial cooperative opportunities.



Access road to Jawbone Flats

Inholders

Inholders within the SRA consist of both property owners of Jawbone Flats and mine claim holders. Inholders within the SRA provide unique and invaluable opportunities for partnership with the Forest Service. Partnerships with inholders are encouraged and provide support in management, education, historic preservation, safety, research, monitoring and stewardship within the SRA. Through formal partnerships and other more general cooperative efforts, inholders may help further the goals of the SRA management plan. Inholders help to preserve the natural and the cultural heritage of the region and to promote conscientious stewardship of the SRA. The inholder at Jawbone Flats occupies a focal geographic location in the SRA and operates a year-round educational center. The center's education, conservation, historic preservation, and stewardship activities are integrated into the management of the SRA.

Inholders continue to have the right to reasonable access to and use of their property as provided by law. Inholder access along the 2209 Road occurs in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of the Opal Creek Act. Forest administration, Inholder activities, and public use harmoniously co-exist along this road. Vehicular traffic on the 2209 Road is minimized to enhance visitor experience while not compromising access needed by inholders and the Forest Service.

Mining

With the exception of panning, sluicing and dredging as recreational activities, and subject to valid existing rights as stipulated in the Opal Creek legislation, no mining takes place within the Scenic Recreation Area.

Scenery

The landscape is naturally evolving and appearing, which is composed of several rustic historic mining sites representing important events and periods of human activity in the SRA (see *Appendix A*). The valued landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible



Recreational panning at the Little North Santiam

level. To the average visitor, the landscape appears as an unaltered and intact natural setting, and is characterized as having high scenic integrity along travel corridors and around recreational use areas, and very high scenic integrity within the Elkhorn drainage (see Appendix A). Deviations may be present but repeat the form, line, color, texture and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such a scale that they are not evident. It reflects the diversity, beauty, ecology and historic human activity of a unique low elevation west Cascades temperate forest.

Management activities are conducted in such a way that they are completely subordinate to the character of the natural landscape and not evident to the casual Forest visitor. Sensitive forest foregrounds along travel corridors maintain a natural setting. Facilities are designed for the enjoyment of the SRA's natural and cultural resources while preserving the focal points of interest, rather than serving as attractions in themselves. Developments harmonize with the natural environment. Disturbance by human activity and development is managed to mitigate and reverse impact on scenic resources.

Education, Interpretation and Research

The SRA offers a wide range of high quality educational and interpretive experiences to all people as well as unique and significant research opportunities. Interpretive and educational activities are available and include a balanced and factual interpretation of the cultural, ecological and industrial history of forestry and mining in the SRA. Since native Indian tribes have a unique relationship with the natural world, coordinating with



Environmental education tour

local tribes enhances the educational and scientific value of interpretive projects, cultural studies and research. Organized educational activities provide people with opportunities to learn about the virtues and values of the area.

Interpretive activities enhance the understanding that the human species is part of an interdependent web of life as exemplified by the complex relationships among the natural features, processes, and living organisms of the Opal Creek forest ecosystem. Educational

experiences promote respect for and stewardship of these interconnected relationships upon which all life depends. Watershed perspectives also receive emphasis.

Effective, engaging interpretation inspires visitors' curiosity and wonder, increases their understanding of forest ecosystems and instills a sense of stewardship. Visitors are motivated to respect the natural and cultural resources and protect the area's special features. Interpretive facilities and signs are aesthetically compatible and durable in

design, maintained in an undamaged state, and are engaging and easily understood by all visitors.

Visitors gain knowledge and respect of the geologic history of the SRA and have come to understand the importance of geology to ecology, archaeology and the landscape, and historical mining tradition. Representative features of historic mining activities are preserved to maintain the local historical integrity of the area and are a significant part of the education and interpretive activities within the SRA. Some mines continue to provide bat habitat.

Scientific research projects aid in public understanding of forest ecosystems and watersheds, and how these natural processes function. Student and public participation in research is encouraged and contributes to high quality educational experiences. Research results are widely and publicly accessible.

Organizations, interest groups, watershed councils, municipalities, academic community, Tribes and local communities, including schools are involved in developing interpretive and education programs. Strong partnerships and mutually benefiting cooperative opportunities between the Forest Service and local, state and national organizations and agencies support and generate both education and research activities.

Recreation, Access and Facilities

Visitors to the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area can participate in a wide range of year-round activities in a safe and natural appearing setting. Both developed and dispersed recreational opportunities are available that range from Roaded Natural to Primitive within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS – See Appendix B).

Activities within the SRA are generally non-motorized in nature such as: hiking, picnicking, camping, fishing, swimming,

boating, horseback-riding, scenic viewing, nature study, mountain-biking, hunting,

snow-shoeing, Nordic skiing, and recreational panning and sluicing. Motorized activities may include vehicles on designated open roads and recreational dredging.

Use and occupancy are managed to protect natural and cultural resources, minimize depreciative behavior, prevent conflicting uses, and to ensure healthy, safe and enjoyable recreational experiences. Resource destruction, vandalism and disturbances to visitors are minimal. A higher degree of regulation and management presence occurs in management zones of intensive use. Recreation activities are permitted at a level not less than those that existed on the date of enactment of the Opal Creek legislation. The SRA accommodates increasing numbers of visitors while ensuring that



Opal Creek Trailhead

ecosystem values are protected, and quality of recreational experiences and objectives for which the SRA was established are maintained.

Information and education enhance visitors' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the SRA, and encourage appropriate and safe use. Innovative programs such as partnerships, volunteers, and co-operative agreements assist in reducing Forest Service operational costs and maximizing visitor educational opportunities. Visitors have an understanding of imposed limitations to protect ecological processes and how individual behavior affects the natural environment, and safety and enjoyment of other visitors. They comply with regulations and follow "leave no trace" practices.

Recreationists are informed of appropriate panning, sluicing and dredging practices, and comply with State and Federal laws and regulations. The riverbed and bank remains largely undisturbed, which allows natural processes to continue.

The SRA is easily and safely accessed by Forest Roads 2209 and 2207, and provides pleasurable scenic driving experiences. Access to recreation sites and facilities in existence on the date of enactment of the Opal Creek legislation is maintained. Motorized use is managed to meet recreational and resource objectives. The roads provide safe access to recreation sites and major trailheads with minimal dust and noise around major use areas. Road congestion around recreation sites is minimal with adequate parking to



Parking congestion on the 2207 Road by 3 Pools

protect resources and aesthetics, and ensure safety. Roads are maintained to a standard appropriate for the setting they traverse, the volume of traffic and the types of vehicles commensurate with recreation and resource management objectives. Forest Road 2209 beyond the gate accommodates reasonable motorized access to private Inholder land and for Forest Service administrative purposes, and does not detract from visitor experiences. The character of this segment of the road remains as it existed at the time of enactment of the Opal Creek legislation. A system of inter-linking non-motorized trails disperses use, enhances visitors' enjoyment of the SRA, and provides various challenge levels. Persons with disabilities have access to some parts of the SRA.

Campgrounds, trails and other facilities provide opportunities to enjoy the SRA's natural and cultural resources, rather than serving as attractions in themselves. Development is at the minimum level necessary to accommodate use and provide for public enjoyment of the SRA while protecting resource values and the character of the area. Development planning considers such factors as user needs and demand patterns, specific site suitability, resource objectives and cost efficiency of installation, operation and maintenance. Facilities are kept in good condition and appear well maintained to desired standards and service levels.

High use areas meet sanitary and safety needs, and protect fragile resources. Dispersed camp areas retain the appearance of natural conditions, and are compatible with other resource values, and managed to minimize user conflicts and wildfire risk.

Recreation Management Intensity Zones

The SRA is divided into four management zones based on recreation use intensity that determine: types of experiences and relative amount of use recreationists can expect; types of recreational activities are appropriate; types and level of developments and where facilities are appropriate; and degrees to which visitors are regulated or managed by onsite controls as well as the types of information and interpretive services provided.

Very Low Intensity Zone (*This zone encompasses the Elkhorn drainage below Elkhorn Road and Ridge Trail. It includes the Wild river section of the Elkhorn Wild and Scenic River corridor on NFS lands*)

This zone is managed to provide opportunities for the most primitive recreational experiences. The area is characterized as an unmodified natural environment of very high scenic integrity, and remains undeveloped with little or no evidence of recent human activity or impacts. No roads (except existing Road 351 to State land), bridges, trails, recreation



Elkhorn Creek drainage

facilities or other resource developments are present. The area is generally inaccessible and can only be reached by cross-country travel over very rugged terrain.

Activities are exclusively non-motorized in nature. Recreation use and interaction between visitors is very low, and opportunity to experience considerable isolation from the sights and sounds of human activity is very high. The area offers visitors potential to experience a high degree of solitude and tranquility, with many opportunities to appreciate the natural environment, and learning by investigation and self-discovery. Visitors understand that a high degree of self-reliance and knowledge of primitive outdoor skills are required in order to meet the inherent challenge and risk of the natural environment. Management of the area is done in a non-obtrusive manner emphasizing minimal visible evidence of management restrictions and controls.

The wild river segment of Elkhorn Creek Wild and Scenic River is free of impoundments with no dams, diversions or water resource projects. The watershed and shoreline appear as wild to the user and represent a vestige of primitive America.

Low Intensity Zone *(This zone includes the Opal Creek general undeveloped area and transition zones into Wilderness including: Opal Creek beyond Opal Pool; Battle Axe Creek; Elkhorn Ridge and Lake; Stoney Ridge; and former Rosoboro section)*

This zone is managed to provide opportunities for dispersed semi-primitive motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences. The area is characterized as a natural environment of high scenic integrity essentially undeveloped. Recreation use varies by season but generally remains light to moderate. There are usually not more than moderate numbers of people present along roads and trails during peak use periods, particularly summer weekends. Frequency of contact with other recreationists and duration of contact is low-to-moderate. Opportunities exist to experience solitude and tranquility especially in backcountry areas, and provides opportunities for nature appreciation, and learning by investigation and self-discovery.

The area generally appears natural and unmodified with a few rustic facilities such as trails, designated dispersed camp areas, and minimum directional, informational and safety signing present. Rustic and rudimentary improvements are designed for



Elkhorn Lake

site protection. Minimal management restrictions, law enforcement presence and onsite visitor management controls such as informational and regulatory signs, are present but subtle. Interpretive services are informal through self-discovery augmented by various publications, but very limited onsite facilities.

Large portions of the area remain remote and without trails. Trails are used primarily by hikers and require a higher degree of skill and challenge to travel. Other trail segments provide some challenge, and require a moderate level of physical ability and skill. Maintenance of trails primarily focuses on protecting resources and maintaining the condition of trail-associated facilities. Mountain bike and stock use levels are low but are present on designated routes. These users find trails challenging and difficult. Some former system roads are converted and maintained as system trails. Trail segments that transition into the Wilderness are managed to protect and perpetuate wilderness character, and provide more difficult and challenging experiences that require a higher degree of skill. New trails that disperse hikers along the Little North Santiam River above the Shady Cove and west of Opal Creek near Stoney Ridge are added to this area.

Medium Intensity Zone (*This zone includes the corridors from the Road 2209-2207 junction to Jawbone Flats, and along the Kopetski/Opal Creek Trail to Opal Pool*)

This zone is managed to provide visitors opportunity to recreate in a natural environment of high scenic integrity with limited facilities. The area has one scenic road and minimal developments primarily for site protection and enhancement of visitor understanding of the unique natural, cultural and historical features. This zone serves primarily as a day use destination with some overnight use occurring within this zone and in designated areas. Open campfires are restricted to designated sites.

Recreation use varies by season with usually not more than moderate numbers of people most of the time. During higher use periods on summer weekends and holidays, frequency of contact with other recreationists is moderate-to-high and low-to-moderate in duration. The best chance for solitude is during mid-week but the area remains generally quiet.



Waterfall on the Little North Santiam River near Merten Mill

The area generally appears natural and unmodified. Minimal facilities are present. They are provided to

protect resources, ensure visitor safety and disperse use including into the adjacent low use intensity zone. Recreation facilities may include trails, designated or hardened dispersed camp areas, primitive toilets, viewing platforms, boardwalks, and informational, directional, and interpretive signs or facilities. Facilities are rustic, simple and durable in design and constructed with native materials that blend with the natural landscape. Facility development is initiated in selected areas to accommodate use, minimize user conflicts; and for the enjoyment, understanding and protection of important historic, cultural and natural aspects of the area.

Management and law enforcement presence is evident. Presence of on-site visitor management controls such as informational and regulatory signs, barriers, and viewing platforms, is low to moderate. An information and education program to enhance visitors' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the SRA is apparent, and encourages appropriate and safe use. Target shooting is not allowed.

Trails are primarily used by hikers and may provide some challenge but generally require a low to moderate level of physical ability and skill to travel. Other trail segments may require limited skill or little challenge to travel, and provide some access for people with disabilities. Maintenance of trails focuses on protecting resources, and maintaining the condition of trail-associated facilities including those that are provided for user comfort/conveniences and interpretive services. Mountain bike and stock use is low but present on designated routes. Trail segments that transition into the Wilderness are managed to protect and perpetuate wilderness character, and provide more difficult and challenging experiences that require a higher degree of skill.

High Intensity Zone *(This zone follows the 2209 Road from the Forest Boundary, then continues up Road 2207 to Shady Cove Campground and eastward along Cedar Creek to the SRA boundary. It also includes a corridor following the Little North Santiam Trail)*

This zone is managed to provide visitors opportunity to recreate in a roaded natural environment of high scenic integrity with moderately but rustically developed facilities. Frequently there are numerous people present particularly during summer weekends, when contacts among recreationists are very high and may last for a moderate-to-long period of time. Most overnight use occurs in this zone and in designated areas.



Three Pools day use area

Overnight and day use developed facilities such as campgrounds, parking areas, picnic sites, sanitation facilities,

vehicle control barriers, designated hardened camp areas, kiosks, river access, viewing platforms, boardwalks, hiking trails and trailheads, are provided. Developed recreation sites are located close to the road and provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate concentrated recreation use and protect resource values. The development scale of facilities is low to moderate, and most are accessible by motor vehicle. Facility development is initiated in selected areas to accommodate increasing use, minimize user conflicts, and for the enjoyment, understanding and protection of important historic, cultural and natural aspects of the area. Where facilities exist, the view from the main road is natural appearing.



Little North Santiam River Trail

Facilities are designed for the enjoyment of the SRA's natural and cultural resources while preserving the focal points of interest, rather than serving as attractions in themselves. Facilities are subordinate to the focal attraction, are simple and durable in design, and harmonize with the surrounding natural environment. Facilities accommodate high concentrations of users, protect fragile natural resources and meet sanitary and safety needs. New and upgraded facilities comply with accessibility standards.

Management and law enforcement presence, and on site visitor management controls such as informational and regulatory signs, established parking areas, and barriers, are obvious. An information and education program to enhance visitors'

knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the SRA is very apparent, and encourages appropriate and safe use. Target shooting is not allowed.

Trails are primarily used by hikers and provide some challenge and require a low to moderate level of physical ability and skill to travel. Some trail segments may provide access for people with disabilities. Maintenance of trails focuses on protecting resources, and maintaining the condition of trail-associated facilities including those that are provided for user comfort/conveniences and interpretive services. Mountain bike and stock use is low but present on designated routes.

Standards and Guidelines

The following Standards and Guidelines are to be amended to the Willamette National Forest Land & Resource Management Plan. Terminology used for Standards identifies the type of direction and degree of compliance required.

- **“Shall”** means action is mandatory in all cases.
- **“Should”** means action is required, unless justifiable reason exists for not taking action. This direction is intended to require a practice unless it entails unacceptable hardship or expense. Exceptions to “should” restrictions are expected to occur infrequently.

Management direction statements are printed in bold. Explanatory statements displayed with regular type follow standards. They commonly use “may” and “will” to clarify the intent of the direction as an aid to implementation of the standards and are not meant to be management direction.

AREA MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

MA-2c-01

Under P.L. 104-333, so that the knowledge, expertise, and views of all agencies and groups may contribute affirmatively to the most sensitive present and future use of the SRA and its various subareas for the benefit of the public, the Forest Service shall:

- a. consult on a periodic and regular basis with the advisory council established under P.L. 104-333 with respect to matters relating to management of the SRA;**
- b. seek the views of private groups, individuals, and the public concerning the SRA;**
- c. seek the views and assistance of, and cooperate with, any other Federal, State, or local agency with any responsibility for the zoning, planning, or natural resources of the SRA; and**
- d. seek the views of any nonprofit agency or organization that may contribute information or expertise about the resources and the management of the SRA.**

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

MA-2c-02

The SRA shall be made available for public use and enjoyment, consistent with resource protection and maintenance of SRA values.

MA-2c-03

Recreation activities at not less than the levels in existence on the date of enactment of P.L. 104-333 shall be permitted. Levels of recreation use higher than the levels in existence on the date of enactment of P.L. 104-333 may be

provided if such uses are consistent with the protection of the resource values of the SRA.

MA-2c-04

The SRA shall be made available for a range of recreational opportunities, and will be managed to provide four recreation opportunity settings as specified for each management zone:

- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone: Primitive*
- b. *Low Intensity Zone:*
 - i. **Semiprimitive Motorized along roads and trails corridors**
 - ii. **Semiprimitive Non-motorized in areas with no motorized access.**
- a. *Medium Intensity Zone: Roaded Natural*
- b. *High Intensity Zone: Roaded Natural*

MA-2c-05

When recreation use results in effects that would not achieve desired condition or meet standards, management actions shall be taken to address the impacts or effects. The following actions, in order of priority, should be used in most cases:

- a. Informing and educating the public, and site restoration
- b. Site improvement and/or use of regulations such as limiting and designating campfires, designating campsites, hardening sites, establishing minimum setbacks from features, facility development for health and safety, or resource protection, and/or restricting types of use, group size and/or length of stay.
- c. Restrict numbers of users or timing of use such as allowing only day use, and/or restricting number of entries.
- d. Close areas to all users

MA-2c-06

Subject to applicable Federal and State law, hunting and fishing in the SRA shall be permitted. Under consultation with the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, designated zones or periods when no hunting or fishing shall be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration or public use and enjoyment of the SRA may be established.

MA-2c-07

Discharging of firearms shall be prohibited in the Medium and High Intensity Zones from Memorial Day to Labor Day to ensure the safety of other visitors.

The use of these weapons (firearms and bows) will be allowed for wildlife hunting, as established by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, during the remainder of the year.

MA-2c-08

Target shooting with firearms shall be prohibited in the medium and high intensity zone.

MA-2c-09

Information and education efforts should be oriented toward enhancing visitors' experiences, increasing their understanding of and respect for the natural processes and areas special values, and encouraging safe and appropriate use. Visitors are provided with information that encourages user behavior that is respectful of area resources and towards other visitors, and minimizes conflicts. Information topics would include visitor orientation, recreation opportunities, management goals and standards, regulations, user safety, fire prevention, enforcement and emergency services, and "leave no trace practices."

MA-2c-10

Day use recreation should be encouraged in the Medium Intensity Zone. Camping should be encouraged within the High Intensity Zone.

MA-2c-11

Partnerships, volunteer programs, and co-operative agreements shall be encouraged to assist in maximizing visitor recreational opportunities and reducing operational costs.

MA-2c-12

Non-motorized recreational mineral collecting activities shall be allowed to occur on all streams, that are not encumbered by unpatented mining claims, within the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area. All activities should remain within the wet perimeter of the stream to insure the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. Recreational mining activities, as defined in OAR 141-89-0040, includes the use of equipment such gold pans, sluices, and rocker boxes.

MA-2c-13

Motorized suction dredging shall be allowed to occur for recreation purposes

on all streams, that are not encumbered by unpatented mining claims, only within the High Intensity Zone in the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area. All activities should remain within the wet perimeter of the stream and to insure the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. Activities will comply with State permitting standards as required by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Oregon Division of State Lands (DSL). Motorized suction dredges will be limited to an intake nozzle with an inside diameter not exceeding four inches and motor not exceeding 16 horsepower. **Dredging operations shall comply with existing State (OAR 141-89-0050) and Federal regulations for streams.**

MA-2c-14

Dredging activities shall comply with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODF&W) Guidelines for Timing of In-Water Work to Protect Fish and Wildlife Resources. To provide maximum protection of potential fish habitat, recommendations will be made to ODF&W that work activities be restricted to operating only within the existing, published dates.

SCENERY MANAGEMENT

MA-2c-15

The SRA was established to protect and provide for the enhancement of the natural, scenic, recreational, historic and cultural resources, and shall be managed to meet the following visual quality objectives defined for each management zone:

- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone:* Very High Scenic Integrity/ Preservation
- b. *Low Intensity Zone:* High Scenic Integrity / Retention
- c. *Medium Intensity Zone:* High Scenic Integrity / Retention
- d. *High Intensity Zone:* High Scenic Integrity / Retention

MA-2c-16

Management practices shall result in a physical setting that meets or exceeds the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class defined within each management zone:

- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone:* Primitive
- b. *Low Intensity Zone:*
 - i. Semiprimitive Motorized along roads and trails corridors
 - ii. Semiprimitive Non-motorized in general unroaded areas
- a. *Medium Intensity Zone:* Roaded Natural
- b. *High Intensity Zone:* Roaded Natural

FOREST TRAIL SYSTEM

MA-2c-17

Trail types, difficulty level and management practices shall be consistent with

recreation settings and opportunities (ROS) identified in each management zone.

MA-2c-18

No trails shall be developed in the Very Low Intensity Zone. In other management zones, new trails should be considered to disperse use and provide loop travel opportunities. Provide for some barrier-free segments in compliance with accessibility standards.

MA-2c-19

Within Low Intensity Zones, trails should be maintained at a Level 2 standard, and at a Level 3 maintenance standard within Medium and High Intensity Zones.

MA-2c-20

Trails shall be closed to off-road motorized vehicle use.

MA-2c-21

Within the medium intensity zone, bicycle use shall be prohibited on the Mike Kopetski/Opal Creek trail. Bicycles will be allowed on the 2209 road beyond the gate, and the Battle Axe Trail within the SRA.

MA-2c-22

Within the High Intensity Zone, stock use shall be permitted only on existing roads.

MA-2c-23

Pets should be kept under voice control and/or physical restraint. They may be banned to decrease social and resource effects.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

MA-2c-24

The cutting and/or selling of trees including salvage sales shall be prohibited in the Scenic Recreation Area. The cutting of trees in the SRA may be allowed only for:

- a. **Public safety, such as to control the continued spread of a forest fire in the SRA or on land adjacent to the SRA.**
- b. **Activities related to administration of the SRA consistent with the Opal Creek Management Plan.**
- c. **Removal of hazard trees along roads and trails**

MA-2c-25

Stumps resulting from hazard tree falling should be flush cut to meet scenic quality objectives.

MA-2c-26

In roadside zones, vegetation management such as brush cutting for

protection of roads and public safety, controlling/eradicating noxious weeds, and removing slash associated with removing hazard trees, should employ treatment methods consistent with scenic resource management needs. Establishment of native low maintenance species through seeding or planting should be considered on bare soils. Preferred methods are manual treatments over mechanized equipment to avoid or reduce undesirable impacts to soils and damage to vegetation.

SPECIAL FOREST PRODUCTS

MA-2c-27

Special forest product collection shall be consistent with resource management needs and limited to:

- a. traditional tribal uses, and**
- b. personal non-commercial use associated with recreation activities but limited to plant cuttings without mortality, gathering of fruits, nuts and mushrooms, and firewood gathering for on-site campfires.**

FIRE MANAGEMENT

MA-2c-28

Fire prevention messages shall be integrated into information and education efforts, and public contact should be scheduled throughout the recreation use season.

MA-2c-29

Suppression practices within the Opal Creek SRA should have the least physical impact on the land consistent with other management considerations. Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) should be used during suppression efforts. Preference will be given to the use of natural firebreaks. In some cases direct attack with a minimum width of hand fire line, or wet line using power driven pumps and hose may be more cost-effective and cause the least overall damage to SRA values. (See Appendix C)

SPECIAL USES

MA-2c-30

Nothing in P.L. 104-333 shall interfere with activity for which a special use permit has been issued, has not been revoked, and has not expired, before the date of enactment of this law, subject to the terms of the permit.

MA-2c-31

Nothing in P.L. 104-333 shall be construed to interfere with the ability to approve and issue, or deny, special use permits in connection with exploration, mining, and mining-related activities in the Bornite Project Area.

MA-2c-32

Notwithstanding the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall not license the construction of any dam, water conduit, reservoir, powerhouse, transmission line, or other project work in the SRA, except as may be necessary to comply with the provisions with regard to the Bornite Project in accordance to P.L. 104-333.

MA-2c-33

Any new utility or transmission lines permitted in the SRA should be buried.

MA-2c-34

Inholders, including mine claim holders, within the SRA shall have the right of reasonable access to and lawful use of their property as provided by law and subject to valid existing rights.

MA-2c-35

Requests for special use permits shall be considered and may be issued for compatible uses if such uses are consistent with the protection of the values for which the SRA was established.

MA-2c-36

Services shall be compatible with general public use, and protect or enhance other SRA values and objectives. Outfitting and guiding services may be authorized that support the purposes for which the SRA was established. Limits on number of operational days, people served or other restrictions may be placed to preserve a quality recreation experience in the SRA.

LANDS

MA-2c-37

Subject to the other provisions of P.L. 104-333, the Forest Service may acquire any lands or interests in land in the SRA that the Secretary of Agriculture determines are needed to carry out this law.

MA-2c-38

Any lands or interests in land owned by a State or a political subdivision of a State may be acquired only by donation or exchange.

MA-2c-39

Within the boundaries of the Opal Creek Wilderness or the SRA, the Secretary shall not acquire any privately owned land or interest in land without the consent of the owner unless the Secretary finds that--

- a. the nature of land use has changed significantly, or the landowner has demonstrated intent to change the land use significantly, from the use that existed on the date of the enactment of P.L. 104-333; and**
- b. acquisition of the land or interest in land is essential to ensure use of the land or interest in land in accordance with the purposes PL 104-333 or the management plan.**

MINERALS & ENERGY

MA-2c-40

Subject to valid existing rights, all lands in the SRA are withdrawn from any form of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public lands laws; location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws (per Opal Creek Act, P.L. 104-333, Sect. 1023 (d)(7)).

MA-2c-41

Nothing in the Opal Creek Legislation (P.L. 104-333) shall be construed to interfere with or approve any exploration, mining, or mining-related activity in the Bornite Project Area, conducted in accordance with applicable laws.

MA-2c-42

Where valid claims exist, the rights of the minerals claimant shall be met with the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. All mineral prospecting,

exploration and development activities on unpatented mining claims, including the use of suction dredges, will be managed according to the terms of PL104-333 and Federal Regulations in 36 CFR Part 228.

MA-2c-43

The operating plan referred to in FW-291 (Plan of Operations as required by 36 CFR 228.4) shall emphasize restoration of the site by minimizing, mitigating, preventing, or repairing adverse impacts within the SRA.

MA-2c-44

Extraction of common variety minerals shall be prohibited, except for the use of the Elkhorn rock quarry for enhancement, restoration, maintenance or construction projects within the SRA and Bornite Project Area.

ROAD SYSTEM

MA-2c-45

A transportation plan shall be developed for the SRA. It will evaluate the road network to determine which roads should be retained or closed, provides guidelines for transportation and access consistent with management objectives, and considers the access needs of persons with disabilities.

MA-2c-46 Roads serving recreation sites and facilities in existence on the date of enactment of P.L. 104-333 shall remain open.

MA-2c-47

Roads not needed for motorized access shall be closed or decommissioned as warranted for resource protection. Roads may be converted to recreation trails.

MA-2c-48

No new roads shall be constructed.

MA-2c-49

Motorized vehicles shall not be permitted off of open roads. ORV use on open forest system roads may occur but shall not conflict with other vehicle traffic.

MA-2c-50

Motorized use on Forest Road 2209 beyond gate at the Opal Creek Trailhead shall be permitted for emergency and administrative use, authorized research, and for access by private inholders subject to terms and conditions established within a road easement. Timing and amount of motorized use on the road should be minimized to reduce conflicts with visitors during peak use periods.

MA-2c-51

Forest Road 2209 and its bridge structures beyond gate at the Opal Creek

Trailhead shall be maintained or improved consistent with the character of the road as it existed upon the date of enactment of *P.L. 104-333*, and shall not include paving or widening.

MA-2c-52

Forest Roads 2207, and 2209 to the gate at the Opal Creek Trailhead, should be maintained for low clearance vehicles at Maintenance Level 3. All other open roads needed for dispersed recreation should be maintained for high-clearance vehicles at Maintenance Level 2.

FACILITIES

MA-2c-53

Motorized vehicles, roads, structures, and utilities (including but not limited to power lines and water lines) shall be allowed inside the SRA as needed to serve the mining related activities conducted on land within the Bornite Project.

MA-2c-54

Facilities shall be designed and constructed to provide recreation settings and experiences that are compatible with the management zone in which they occur.

MA-2c-55

Facility development and site modification shall be to a level that will cause the minimum possible impact on the natural character and provide resource protection. Design standards should be characterized by minimal size and careful integration with the area's natural character. They should facilitate interaction with the natural and cultural resources rather than serve as attractions themselves. Where facilities are appropriate, they shall be simple and durable in design and constructed with materials that harmonize with features of the natural landscape.

MA-2c-56

Development of structures and improvements shall be kept at the minimum level necessary to facilitate use, protect resource and SRA values and provide for visitor education, health and safety.

MA-2c-57

No roads, bridges, trails, recreation facilities or other resource developments shall be permitted within the Very Low Intensity Zone.

MA-2c-58

Developed recreation sites such as campgrounds and day use areas shall only be built in the High Intensity Zone.

PUBLIC SAFETY

MA-2c-59

Evacuation plans shall be developed for and posted within Medium and High Intensity Zones.

MA-2c-60

Appropriate vehicle speed shall be set and posted on the 2209 and 2207 Roads.

EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION AND RESEARCH

MA-2c-61

Research, educational and interpretive opportunities shall be consistent with protection of natural and cultural resources.

MA-2c-62

Interpretation and education activities shall be developed in consultation with state, federal, tribes, and local historic preservation organizations and include a balanced and factual interpretation of the cultural, ecological and industrial history of forestry and mining in the SRA. Interpretive and educational activities may include interpretive and information signage and exhibits, guided hikes, workshops, courses, seminars, self-directed discovery, classes, and hands on participation in research activities.

MA-2c-63

An interpretive strategy for the SRA shall be developed and include site-specific educational goals, interpretive themes and messages, direction for services and facilities development (e.g. signs, brochures, guided tours, trails), design criteria consistent with facility development for each management zone, and project implementation priorities.

MA-2c-64

Research and education activities shall be coordinated with recreation management. Size and numbers of groups should be compatible with general public use, and minimize impacts on recreational use and activities or degradation of resources and ecological processes. Research projects and educational activities deemed appropriate and compatible with SRA objectives shall be permitted.

MA-2c-65

Areas and features of particular educational interest shall be protected, if necessary with structures or facilities as deemed appropriate by management intensity zone.

MA-2c-66

Partnerships shall be encouraged to develop, support and maximize research and education opportunities.

TRIBES

MA-2c-67

Existing and future Memorandums of Understanding for individual tribes shall be followed.

MA-2c-68

Trust responsibilities to Indian tribes shall be maintained, and formal consultation processes with appropriate tribes shall ensure compliance with applicable laws, and encourage meaningful tribal involvement in the management of the SRA. Consult on a regular basis with respect to tribal resources within the SRA on matters including but not limited to: sacred sites; sacred or ceremonial traditions; activities that affect cultural resources; cultural studies of mutual interest; and gathering of traditional **use information**.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

MA-2c-69

Projects that protect and support the economy of the communities of the North Santiam Canyon shall be considered.

MA-2c-70

To protect an important drinking water source for communities served by the North Santiam River, the Federal General Water Quality Best Management Practices shall be used.

Appendix A: Scenic Integrity

Desired Landscape Character: Appearance of the landscape to be retained or created over time, recognizing that a landscape is a dynamic and constantly changing.

Examples of desired landscape character:

- **“Natural-evolving”** landscape character expressing the natural evolution of biophysical features and processes, with very limited human intervention (such as inadvertent plant succession through fire prevention)
- **“Natural-appearing”** landscape character that expresses predominantly natural evolution, but also human direct (e.g. fire prevention, reforestation) or indirect human intervention including cultural features and processes.
- **“Historic”** landscape character expressing valued historic features that represent events and period of human activity in the landscape.

Scenic Integrity: State of naturalness or, conversely, the state of disturbance created by human activities or alteration. Scenic integrity indicates the degree of intactness and wholeness of the landscape character.

- **VERY HIGH:** refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character **“is”** intact with only minute if any deviations. A scenic integrity level that generally provides for ecological change.
- **HIGH:** refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character **“appears”** intact. Human activities are not visually evident. Deviations may be present but must repeat the form, line, color, texture and pattern common to the landscape character.

Appendix B: Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

While the goal of the recreationist is to obtain satisfying experiences, the goal of the recreation resource manager becomes one of providing the opportunities for obtaining these experiences. By managing the natural resource settings, and the activities which occur within it, the manager is providing the opportunities for recreation experiences to take place.

Recreation Opportunity Settings are the combination of physical, biological, social, and managerial conditions that give value to a place. Thus, an opportunity includes qualities provided by nature (vegetation, landscape, topography, scenery), qualities associated with recreational use (levels and types of use), and conditions provided by management (developments, roads, regulations). By combining variations of these qualities and conditions, management can provide a variety of opportunities for recreationists.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum: For management and conceptual convenience possible mixes or combinations of activities, settings, and probable experience opportunities have been arranged along a spectrum, or continuum. This continuum is called the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). The spectrum provides a framework for defining the types of outdoor recreation opportunities the public might desire, and identifies that portion of the spectrum that any given area might be able to provide.

ROS Class	Descriptions
Primitive	Area is characterized by essentially unmodified natural environment of fairly large size. Interaction between users is very low and evidence of other users is minimal. The area is managed to be essentially free from evidence of human induced restrictions and controls. Motorized use within the area is not permitted. Extremely high probability of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans. Independence, closeness to nature, tranquility, and self-reliance through the application of outdoor skills in an environment that offers a high degree of challenge and risk.
Semi-primitive Non-motorized	A predominately natural or natural-appearing environment of moderate-to-large size characterizes area. Interaction between users is low, but there is some evidence of other users. The area is managed in such a way that minimum on-site controls and restrictions may be present, but are subtle. High probability of experiencing solitude, closeness to nature, tranquility, self-reliance, challenge and risk. Access and travel is non-motorized on trails, primitive roads, or cross-country. Vegetative alterations; sanitation salvage units to be very small in size and few in number, widely dispersed and not obvious. No on site facilities except limited signing, sanitary and safety needs in native or rustic materials. Minimal to no site modifications. Interpretation through self-discovery. Some use of maps, brochures, and guide books.
Semi-primitive Motorized	A predominately natural or natural-appearing environment of moderate-to-large size characterizes area. Concentration of users is low, but there is often evidence of other users. The area is managed in such a way that minimum on-site controls and restrictions may be present, but are subtle. Motorized use is permitted. Moderate opportunity for solitude, tranquility, and closeness to nature. High degree of self-reliance, challenge and risk in using motorized equipment. Vegetation alterations very small in size and few in number, widely dispersed and not obvious. Limited facilities for signing sanitary and safety needs in native or rustic materials. Minimal site modification for facilities. Interpretation through very limited on-site facilities. Use of maps, brochures and guidebooks.
Roaded Natural	A predominately natural-appearing environment characterizes area. Interaction between users may be low to moderate, but with evidence of other users prevalent. Resource modification and utilization practices are evident, but harmonize with the natural environment. Conventional motorized use is provided for in construction standards and design of facilities. Opportunity to affiliate with other users in developed sites but with some chance for privacy. Self-reliance on outdoor skills of only moderate importance. Little challenge and risk. Some obvious on-site control of users. Access and travel is conventional motorized including sedan and trailers, RVs and some motor homes. Moderate site modification and amount and complexity of facilities for comfort and convenience of user. Interpretation through wayside exhibits. Use of primarily native-like or rustic material with some refinement in design. Some casual interpretation from Forest staff.
Roaded Modified	A substantially modified natural environment characterizes area. Resource modification and utilization practices are to enhance specific recreation activities and to maintain vegetative cover and soil. Sights and sounds of humans are readily evident, and the interaction between users is low. Facilities may be provided for special activities. Moderate densities of use are provided for away from developed sites. Opportunity to get away from others but with easy access. Feeling of independence and freedom but with little challenge and risk. Substantially modified natural environment where roads, landings, slash, and debris may be strongly dominant from within, yet remain subordinate from distant sensitive roads and highways.

ROS Class	Descriptions
	Conventional motorized access including sedan and trailers, RVs & motorbikes. Little on-site controls of users except for some gated roads. No on-site facilities except signing at major road junctions and occasional sanitary facilities for user health protection. Interpretation by simple wayside signs of native or rustic materials may be provided.