

**DECISION NOTICE
AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District
Deschutes National Forest
Deschutes, Oregon**

Collocation of the Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District Office, Forest Headquarters Office, and Work Center Environmental Assessment

Location

The proposed location is a 26 acre parcel located in NW Bend 2.5 miles east of the Bend Parkway. The parcel is what remains of the Bend Pine Nursery property (210 acres) of which 184 acres was sold to Bend Metro Park and Recreation District in 2004. The planning area legal description is located within T17S, R12E, Sections 22 and 23.

Management activities within the project area are guided by direction described in the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management (LRMP 1990) as amended. The entire 26 acre planning area contains one land allocation as described in the LRMP, which is Administrative Buildings and Sites (AD). The LRMP established the following goal for the AD allocation:

- AD - “to provide cost-effective, safe, functionally efficient buildings and related improvements needed for conducting the work of the Forest.”

Decision

Based on my review of the environment analysis and all alternatives, I have decided to authorize implementation of **Alternative 2** of the Collocation of the Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District (BFR), Forest Headquarters Office, and Work Center EA.

Alternative 2 would implement the following actions, in three phases:

Phase 1 - New Office

- A) Construct a new two-story collocated Forest Headquarters and BFR office. Design would include an office building to accommodate personnel from both offices (approximately 43,000 square feet);
- B) Paving surface on approximately five acres to provide employee, visitor and government vehicle parking, access roads from Deschutes Market Road and within the administrative site area, and for walkways; and
- C) Construct two entrances with signing to the site from Deschutes Market Road, a public entrance (north), and a fleet and freight (south) entry.
- D) Surround the non-public areas of the 26 acre site with an eight foot high chain link fence (approximately 4,300 ft.)

Phase 2 – Work Center

- A) Construct a new fire management building (approximately 12,000 square feet);
- B) Construct warehouse space (approximately 17,000 sq. ft.);
- C) Construct a vehicle undercarriage wash station;
- D) Pave approximately 2.5 acres for parking, roads, and walkways;
- E) Remove three existing buildings (# 2104 (Packing Shed); # 2012 (office), and # 2212 (North Pre-cooler). All of the other existing buildings would remain on site;

Phase 3 - Work Center and Crew Quarters

- A) Construct fleet and road maintenance shops (approximately 10,000 sq. ft.);
- B) Construct crew quarters for seasonal employees (approximately 5,600 sq. ft.);
- C) Pave approximately one acre for parking, roadways, and walkways during this phase.

Connected Actions

To mitigate the effects of the proposed development on local roads and traffic, it is expected that Deschutes Market Road will need to be upgraded. Current information suggests that this will require the addition of a third traffic lane to provide for a left turn lane and the addition of a third lane on the bridge over the irrigation canal. The distance affected is estimated to be approximately 1,000 feet extending from the south end of the bridge to the north. No additional road improvements are expected from the bridge south to the junction of Deschutes Market Road and Butler Market Road as that has been accomplished by previous developments south of the nursery site.

All new and existing structures would be connected to an existing City of Bend sewer line in the canal right-of-way road located immediately south of the property. Potable water would be provided from existing Avion Water System water lines located beneath Deschutes Market, Yeoman, and Purcell Roads.

New 12 inch diameter water main will be installed from the Avion Water System supply line in Deschutes Market road and extending through the site and tied to a same size line serving the Bend Pine Community Park. Additional distribution piping will be installed as needed to serve all water connections on the site. Total length of new water main will be less than 2,000 feet.

Fire protection will be coordinated with Bend Metro Park and Recreation District. A common loop fire main serving both the Bend Pine Community Park and the BPWC site is planned.

The site has an existing electrical connection; new connections/upgrades would be required for the new structures.

(Phase 1 – Item D) Approximately 4,300 feet of new security fence would be constructed to enclose all of the non-public areas of the site. Two electric gates, one located near the office building and the second on the Forest Service access road would provide access to the fenced portion of the site.

Rational for Decision

I have chosen to implement Alternative 2 because it best meets the Purpose and Need and provides the best site for the planning and implementation of facilities and improvements. In making this decision, I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment and associated specialist information that has been disclosed in the analysis to make a reasoned choice. No significant impacts on the quality of the human environment have been identified.

Alternatives Considered

In addition to Alternative 2, the no action alternative was analyzed, but not selected (EA pages 12 and EA pages 21-1 through 30). Four other alternatives were considered and eliminated from further analysis (EA pages 15 through 19).

Alternative 1 (No Action): I did not select this alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for action. Under this alternative, the three existing Deschutes National Forest administrative use sites – the Forest Headquarters on Emkay Drive, Bend-Fort Rock Ranger Station on 3rd St., and the Scott Street Work Center – would remain and continue to be used. This would not meet Regional direction to collocate facilities when those facilities are located within 35 miles of each other. Both the Forest Headquarters and BFR offices are on contract leases, which are costing approximately \$1,000,000 per year in rental payments. Continuation of either or both leases would be expected to result in continued increases in contract lease costs. The Forest budget has steadily declined and is expected to continue to decline in the foreseeable future for all activities.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

Twelve sites were initially considered as being potential sites for the new combined office. Due to the high cost of real estate, the Regional Forester and Forest Supervisor decided to consider only sites owned by the Forest Service. That criterion eliminated seven sites from further consideration.

In addition to the BPWC site, the Forest Service evaluated four other locations using the following criteria:

- Ability to locate all Forest Service administrative functions at one site;
- Located within the Bend Urban Growth Boundary or Urban Reserve areas;
- Easy public access by major arterial roads or highways; and
- Level of complexity of development.

Cascade Lakes Highway - This site is located on National Forest System lands southwest of Bend on Cascade Lakes Highway adjacent to Entrada Lodge. There is sufficient area to locate all administrative functions at this site. However, the site is outside both the urban growth boundary and the urban reserve and it lacks city utilities. Cost of utilities to the site would therefore be high. The lack of city sewer would require construction of an on-site waste disposal system. The most direct access to the site is Reed Market Road west from the Bend Parkway (US 97) approximately four miles. Traffic is frequently backed up at the Reed Market/Bond Street roundabout making public access more difficult. This site was dropped from further consideration due to the high cost and complexity of development.

Scott Street Work Center - This site is located immediately east of the Bend Parkway at the Colorado Avenue interchange. This site is the smallest of the sites evaluated. It is not capable of supporting all administrative functions. A second site would be required to house functions not supported at the site. Approximately one half of the needed employee parking would be off-site on adjacent streets or would

require other transportation alternatives. The site is located within the urban growth boundary and all utilities are currently located at the site. Although located adjacent to the parkway, northbound traffic on the parkway would be required to make a left turn onto 2nd Street to access the site. This would likely require the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection. This site was dropped from further consideration because it would require the use of two administrative sites and does not meet the purpose and need to collocate facilities.

Knott Road – This site is located to the southeast of the Knott Road/Baker Road interchange on US Highway 97 south of Bend. It is within one mile of US Highway 97. The site is large enough to support all administrative functions. However, it is outside of the urban growth and urban reserve boundary and the site as proposed has no current road access or utilities. Access would require an easement for access road through private property. Construction costs for the access road, on-site waste water treatment system, extension of water, electrical power and phone services to the site would cost in excess of \$3 million dollars. The high cost to develop access and utilities resulted in this site being dropped from further consideration.

China Hat – This site is located east of the Knott Road site and is accessed by China Hat Road/Forest Road 18. It is approximately 2.5 miles by road from US Highway 97 and is currently accessible from US Highway 97 from the China Hat Road junction as well as the Knott Road/Baker Road interchange. However, highway improvements will eliminate southbound access to China Hat Road. The site is large enough to locate all administrative functions. Like the Knott Road site, it is located outside the urban growth and urban reserve boundaries and there are no utilities on site. There is no available sewer service; the site is outside the urban growth boundary requiring the construction of an on-site waste disposal system. The lack of utilities would result in a higher development costs. These cost were considered during the Preliminary Project Analysis (project record). The location was also inconsistent with the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) as it is located in the Deer Habitat Allocation of the LRMP, and would require additional analysis and a forest plan amendment. This site was dropped from further consideration because of greater development costs and complexities and more difficult public access.

Scoping

This project was first announced in the Spring 2007 issue of Schedule of Projects for the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and Prineville District of the BLM (April 2, 2007). Scoping for this project began on April 18, 2007 for a thirty-day period, with letters being sent to interested and affected publics.

Two letters in support of the project were received within the scoping comment period. One of the commenters suggested we consider combining with the Ochoco National Forest Headquarters located in Prineville to the BPWC with the Deschutes National Forest / Bend-Ft. Rock Ranger District. This is outside the scope of this document. The Deschutes and Ochoco National Forest completed a study in the early 2000s and determined at that time to not collocate.

Additional scoping was accomplished by posting notices for the project at BPWC office and local businesses near the project area. The notice provided a name of a contact person and phone number for commenting on the project. The Coordinator for Neighborhood Associations for the City of Bend was also provided an electronic poster and map of the project area. This notification was e-mailed to Neighborhood Associations within the City of Bend.

30-day Public Comment Period

The 30-day public review and comment period notice was published September 25, 2007 in the local Bend newspaper ***The Bulletin***. The Draft EA was also made available on the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests web site during the comment period. A letter notifying the public of the start of the comment period was sent to approximately 52 individuals, businesses, Tribes, and organizations that expressed an interest in the project. The preferred alternative was identified. Three respondents provided written comments in favor of the new collocation project. Two letters commented on the Scott Street site as a preferred location for the work center. Response to comments can be found in Appendix D of the EA.

Finding of No Significant Impact

I have determined through the environmental analysis that the activities included in my decision (Alternative 2) are not a major federal action, individually or cumulatively, that will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This determination was made considering the following factors:

In terms of context (40 CFR 1508.27 (a)):

- (1) Beneficial and adverse direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts discussed in the EA have been disclosed within the appropriate context and intensity. No significant effects on the human environment have been identified. There will be no significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects to soil, water, fish, wildlife resources, inventoried roadless areas, stands of trees that display late or old characteristics or other components of the environment (EA page 11).
- (2) No significant adverse effects to public health or safety have been identified. None are unusual or unique to this project. Implementing Alternative 2 would have beneficial effect on public health and safety (EA page 15).
- (3) There will be no significant adverse impacts to wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, prime farmlands, old growth forests, range and forestland. No significant effects are anticipated to any other ecologically sensitive or critical areas (EA page 9 and 27).
- (4) The effects of implementation of this decision do not rise to the level of scientific controversy as defined by the Council of Environmental Quality (EA pages 20 to 31).
- (5) Based on previous similar actions in the area the probable effects of this decision on the human environment, as described in the EA, are well known and do not involve unique or unknown risks (EA pages 20 to 31).
- (6) This action does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (EA page 20 to 31).
- (7) This decision is made with consideration of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions on National Forest land and other ownerships within potentially affected areas, which could have a

cumulatively significant effect on the quality of the human or natural environment. I find there to be no such cumulative significance (EA pages 20 to 31).

(8) Based on the pre-disturbance survey and record search of the project area, a determination of; No Historic Properties Affected (as defined in 36 CFR Part 800) on any listed or eligible cultural resources (EA, page 27).

(9) The biological evaluation and assessment for the area indicates that the proposed project will have no significant adverse impacts on any proposed, endangered, sensitive or threatened plant or animal species. Should any endangered or threatened species be found following the implementation of the project, the environmental analysis will be reviewed and revised, and consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service will commence immediately, if necessary (Wildlife Biological Evaluation (BE) Appendix A, and Botany BE Appendix B).

(10) This decision is in compliance with relevant federal, state and local laws, regulations and requirements designed for the protection of the environment. Effects from this action meet or exceed state water and air quality standards (EA pages 9 and 27).

Other Findings

- This decision is consistent with the goals, objectives and direction contained in the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and accompanying final environmental impact statement dated August 27, 1990 as amended by the Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2.
- This decision is in compliance with Executive Order 12898 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations". No minority or low-income populations will be disproportionately affected from implementation of the decision (EA pages 11 and 29).
- No designated roadless areas, old growth stands, Wild and Scenic Rivers or parkland would be adversely affected by the proposed activities.
- There is no habitat within the planning area that is classified as "Essential fish habitat" for anadromous fisheries.
- Wetlands, fisheries, water quality and designated floodplains will not be adversely affected by any of the proposed management activities.

Implementation Date

If no appeals are filed following publication of the legal notice of the decision within the 45-day appeal period, implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the

appeal filing period. When appeals are filed, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of the last appeal disposition.

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. Any notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

Any appeal must be filed (regular mail, fax, e-mail, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region, ATTN: 1570 Appeals, 333 SW First Avenue, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208-3623. Appeals submitted via fax should be sent to (503) 808-2255. Appeals can be filed electronically at: appeals-pacificnorthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us.

The office hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Appeals, including attachments, must be postmarked or delivered within 45 days of the publication of the legal notice for this decision in *The Bulletin*, the Bend, Oregon newspaper of record. Attachments received after the 45-day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in *The Bulletin* is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Electronic appeals must be submitted as part of the actual e-mail message, or as an attachment in Microsoft Word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf) only. E-mails submitted to email addresses other than the one listed above, or in formats other than those listed or containing viruses, will be rejected. It is the responsibility of the appellant to confirm receipt of appeals submitted by electronic mail.

Contact

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Mark Macfarlane, (phone 541-383-5572, email mmacfarlane@fs.fed.us) or Beth Peer (phone 541-383-4769, email bpeer@fs.fed.us), Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District, 1230 NE Third, Bend, Oregon, 97701.

/s/ John Allen
JOHN ALLEN
Forest Supervisor
Deschutes National Forest

Date: January 17, 2008

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