

Deschutes & Ochoco National Forests Crooked River National Grassland

- ▶ Deschutes & Ochoco National Forests Home
- ▶ About Us
- ▶ Contact Us
- ▶ Current Conditions
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ FAQ'S
- ▶ Fire & Aviation
- ▶ Maps & Brochures
- ▶ Newsroom
- ▶ Passes & Permits

▼ **Projects & Plans**

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Project Information

Plans, Analyses, Assessments

- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Recreational Activities
- ▶ Volunteering

▶ Newberry National Volcanic Monument

- ▶ Conservation Ed.
- ▶ Contracting
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Forest Products
- ▶ Geology
- ▶ Heritage
- ▶ Partnerships
- ▶ Plantlife
- ▶ Water/Fisheries
- ▶ Wildlife

Projects & Plans **Project Documents**

DECISION NOTICE

AND

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

State Correction Crew Camp Relocation Project

Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District
Deschutes National Forest
Deschutes County, Oregon

Introduction

Home 

SCHEDULE OF PROJECTS

PROJECT INFORMATION

- ✦ **By Administrative Unit**
 - Deschutes SO
 - Bend/Fort Rock
 - Crescent
 - Sisters
 - Ochoco SO
 - Lookout Mtn.
 - Paulina
 - Crooked River NG
- ✦ **Forest Health, Fire, Fuels, Vegetation Management**
- ✦ **Wildlife**
- ✦ **Recreation**
- ✦ **Land Acquisition**
- ✦ **Miscellaneous**

PLANS, ANALYSES, ASSESSMENTS

▶ **Links**

▶ **Evaluate Our Service**

We welcome your comments on our service and your suggestions for improvement.

Forest

Deschutes National Forest

1001 SW Emkay Drive
Bend, OR 97702

(541) 383-5300

Ochoco National Forest

3160 N.E. 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754

(541) 416-6500

**Crooked River National
Grassland**

813 S.W. Hwy. 97
Madras, OR 97741

(541) 475-9272



An Environmental Assessment (EA) that describes a range of alternatives to relocate the State Correction crew camp on the Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest was available for public review. The document, which includes a no action alternative, may be reviewed in the Bend/Fort Rock District Ranger's Office located at 1230 N.E. Third Street, Suite A-262, Bend, Oregon.

Location

The project is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Bend, Oregon, in the south-central portion of the Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest. The project lies within portions of T21S, 11E, Section 28 (Ogden Group Campground) Willamette Meridian. The area is located east of the Northwest Forest Plan boundary line, and lies outside the range of the northern spotted owl.

Decision

Alternative 2 is the preferred alternative that was identified in the 30-day public review and comment period notice, published November 22, 2004 in *The Bulletin*. However, based on comments received I have decided to authorize implementation of **Alternative 4** which would relocate the camp to Deschutes Bridge Campground. The area is located entirely within the Management Area 11 Intensive Recreation in the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

Rationale for the Decision

In making this decision, I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment and associated specialist information has been disclosed in the analysis to make a reasoned choice and no significant impacts on the quality of the human environment have been identified. Based on my review of the above documents, I have decided that implementing an action alternative is preferred rather than not providing a locale for the State Corrections camp. Rationale for the decision to implement Alternative 4 is presented below.

Of the four alternatives evaluated, Alternative 4 provides the best solution for meeting the needs of the LaPine and recreation communities while providing for a camp for the seasonal Corrections program. Though Alternative 4 isn't the best choice in regards to logistics, it is particularly responsive to the issue of loss of public access to Ogden Group site. This alternative eliminates the need for the Bend Bowmen to relocate or reschedule their annual event, an event that is economically important to the LaPine community.

Alternative 4 also eliminates any risk or concern to public safety, as conveyed in scoping and comments received to the environmental assessment, as Deschutes Bridge Campground is a stand alone facility, with no trailhead or other recreation site adjacent.

A variety of standard mitigation measures have been included in order to ensure consistency with the Forest Plan (EA Section IV, Mitigation and Monitoring, page 7).

Additional Alternatives Considered in Detail

In addition to Alternative 4, three other alternatives were developed and analyzed for the State Correction Crew Camp Relocation Project Environmental Assessment, but not selected for implementation.

Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. Under this alternative, the proposed project would not take place. There would be no camp as the current site would not be available because of the need to use the rock pit for scheduled road improvement projects in 2005 and 2006. A new site would not be developed at Ogden Group Camp or any other location.

I did not select this alternative because it does not address the objective of reducing fuels and fire hazard for the Deschutes National Forest. For the past five years, the crews have piled a total of 23,000 acres of hazardous fuels on the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests. These crews are playing a key role to help meet the goals of treating hazardous fuels in the urban interface areas and communities in central Oregon. Without their assistance, the Deschutes National Forest would not be accomplishing as much fuel reduction annually.

Alternative 2, as alluded to above, is the preferred location and met the purpose and need overall in regards to logistics and availability of the crew to work longer hours in the day as well as less travel time each day through the season. However, this alternative was not selected based on comments received from the public and their concern for safety and loss of Ogden Group Camp for the recreating public and specifically for the Bend Bowmen event and its economic impact on the LaPine community area.

Similarly to Alternative 3, this alternative addresses the purpose and need similarly to Alternative 2 but was infeasible to implement as no facilities currently exist at this locale.

Consultation with Others

Contact with private individuals, organizations and public agencies was made by letter, phone or in person to solicit oral and written input into project area design and analysis. Public scoping was conducted from fall of 2003 through summer of 2004 on the proposed action (Alternative 2). Ten individuals and organizations responded to the scoping, public meetings and/or comments to the environmental assessment via letters, phone calls and e-mail. The following is a brief summary of the some of the input received and how it was incorporated (*italics*) into the alternatives.

Individual Comments: Several individuals phoned the office after the public meeting in July 2004 and eight emails or letters expressing opposition for the proposed actions location of Ogden Group Camp, not with the inmate program itself. **"Ogden camp IS NOT a suitable location", "Peter Skene Ogden Trail is heavily used by**

families", "...is too close to residential area.", "...to close to a main road", "...used by horsemen and day hikers" (Alternatives 3 & 4 address these concerns by locating the camp in lesser used areas and/or recreation sites.)

There was one phone call in support of Ogden as the location for the camp and support for the program. (Alternative 2.)

Organizational Comments: There were two letters of comment opposed to the location of the camp at Ogden, one in favor and one that is in support of keeping the camp in Deschutes County.

U.S. Representative Peter DeFazio was not opposed to the inmate camp but does not believe that Ogden Group Camp is an appropriate location for this use. He feels that it is a well used recreation site that doesn't warrant disruption through site closure during the inmate camp project use period. (Alternatives 3 & 4 address these concerns by locating the camp in lesser used areas and/or recreation sites.)

The Cascadia Wildlands Project is opposed to Ogden and would prefer the camp relocated off of National Forest lands altogether. Specifically, they note: **"Failure to take a 'hard look' at environmental impacts", "NEPA's mandate to analyze impacts to the 'human environment' should be interpreted broadly to encompass a range of social, economic and cultural effects..."** (All effects are discussed in Chapter III – Environmental Effects pps. 8-10 and Other Effects pps. 10-11.), **"Failure to disclose compliance with other laws and plans as required by NEPA", "...EA utterly fails to do this, particularly with regard to the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan..."** (Management Direction, p. 2 identifies the LRMP as the overriding plan for this analysis.), **"Failure to consider an adequate range of alternatives"** (The EA describes a no action alternative and three action alternatives that were developed to meet the purpose and need. Alternatives 3 & 4 address these concerns by locating the camp in lesser used areas and/or recreation sites. Also, Alternatives Considered But Eliminated on page 6 addresses the range of alternatives considered. Analysis of site off of Forest Service lands are outside of jurisdiction for analysis by the Deschutes National Forest.) , and **"Failure to provide an adequate economic analysis...as required by NFMA". "...the local economy of the Lapine area...must be quantified."** (Issues and Measures, p. 5, Issue 3 identifies the potential economic impact to the LaPine area as approximately \$10,000.) **"...inmate labor outcompetes and displaces civilian labor..."** (This comment is outside the scope of this project. The analysis is only for the camp relocation, not the partnership and use of the State Corrections Department to reduce fuel loads on the Deschutes National Forest.)

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the site-specific environmental analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that this is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. An analysis of the effects of the inmate camp relocation activities indicated that the combined effects are

environmentally acceptable for soil, water and recreation resources. Based on the analysis, I expect only slightly adverse, short duration impacts from implementation of this alternative. All impacts are limited in scope and intensity and can be considered minor. This determination is based on the mitigation measures (EA, page 7) designed into the selected alternative and the following factors:

(1) Beneficial and adverse direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts discussed in the Environmental Assessment 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, fisheries, wildlife resources, aquatic and terrestrial species with Survey and Manage status, roadless areas, old growth stands or other components of the environment. (EA, Chapter III, Environmental Effects, pages 8-10).

(2) No significant adverse effects to public health or safety have been identified. Proposed activities would maintain public safety within the project area as the area would be closed to public use. (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, page 9).

(3) There will be no significant adverse impacts to wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, floodplains, prime farm lands, old growth forests, range and forest land, Pacific Yew, minority groups, civil rights, women or consumers. No Riparian Reserves are found within the planning area. No significant effects are anticipated to any other ecologically sensitive or critical areas (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, pages 8-10).

(4) The effects of implementation of this decision are not highly controversial as concerns raised by the public involved only Ogden Group Camp as a location for the inmate camp. (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, pages 8-10).

(5) Based on previous similar actions in the area the probable effects of this decision on the human environment, as described in the Environmental Assessment, are well known and do not involve unique or unknown risks. (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, pages 8-10).

(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.

(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 environment. I find there to be no such cumulative significance.

(8) Based on the pre-disturbance survey and record search of the project area, the project proposal will have "no adverse effect" (as defined in 36 CFR 800.4 (b)(1)) on any listed or eligible cultural resources (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, page 10).

(9) The Biological Evaluation 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. No designated Critical Habitat for northern spotted owl (NSO) is within or near the project area. No nesting, roosting, or foraging habitat (NRF) for the NSO exists within the project area. (EA, Section III,

Environmental Effects, pages 9 & 10).

(10) This decision is in compliance with relevant Federal, State and local laws, regulations and requirements designed for the protection of the environment. As there would be no effect to water quality this action would meet or exceed state water quality standards (EA, Section III, Other Effects, page 11).

Other Findings

This decision is consistent with the goals, objectives and direction contained in the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and accompanying final environmental impact statement dated August 27, 1990 and the Northwest Forest Plan (1994) as amended by the Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines dated January 2001. (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, page 2).

This decision is in compliance with Executive Order 12989 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations". No minority or low-income populations would be disproportionately affected under any alternatives (EA, Section III, Environmental Effects, page 11).

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.7. Any written appeal must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 215.14 (Content of an Appeal). Two copies of a written notice of appeal must be postmarked and submitted to the Regional Forester, Pacific Northwest Region, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3623 within 45 days of the date the legal notice of this decision appears in *The Bulletin*. For further information, contact Les Moscoso Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District, 1230 NE Third, Bend, Oregon, 97701, (phone 541-383-4712).

WALTER C. SCHLOER, JR.
District Ranger
Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District
Deschutes National Forest

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[top](#)

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