

Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan Update

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Draft Resource Management Plan Comment Period Ends, Work on Proposed Plan and Final EIS Underway

Over 1300 Comments Received

The comment period for the Draft Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement closed on January 15, 2004. The BLM received over 1300 comment letters from cooperating tribes and governments, private organizations, and individuals. While the comments are still being analyzed, key concerns involve the protection of the Badlands, providing motorized recreation opportunities, providing areas for exclusively non motorized activities, protection of wildlife, disposal or acquisition of BLM lands, and how BLM lands adjacent to private property should be managed.

Reviewing Comment Letters

The general public can review the comment letters from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM at the Prineville District BLM office. The comment letters will also be available on our website around mid-March.

People Passionate about Public Lands

Regardless of the point of view of those responding, people are passionate about public lands in Central Oregon. We are delighted with the interest expressed. We understand the responsibility we have to all for making decisions regarding public land management.

Planning Process

The BLM Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) has been working much like those who have commented on the Draft. Team members have been carefully reviewing the document for errors and ambiguities that need to be addressed before



the “Final” can be published. In addition the IDT must review all of the public comments to determine: a) which provide reasons for proposed changes, and b) which proposed changes should be incorporated into the Proposed Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan and Final EIS. These comments and the BLM response to them will be summarized in an appendix in the Final EIS. After the comments are analyzed the BLM must decide how to respond to the comments. All issues raised in the comments received will be reported in the Upper Deschutes Proposed Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. The BLM has 3 options for responding to comments.

The Team will enlist the aid of the established Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan Issue Team to resolve the difficult issues. This team consists of the BLM, representatives of tribal, local, state, and federal governments, and private stakeholders. The Issue Team is chartered by the Deschutes Provincial Advisory Committee. After resolving the issues the BLM IDT will be responsible for completing the Upper Deschutes Proposed Management Plan

and Final Environmental Impact Statement by Fall of 2004.

Issue Team Meeting March 16, 2004

The Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan Issue Team will meet on March 16 between 1 and 4 PM at the Eagle Crest Conference Center near Redmond, Oregon (call or visit our website for directions). This meeting is open to the public. Participation during all but the public comment portion of the meeting will be limited to members of the Issue Team. A period for public comments will be provided. Activities at the meeting will include:

1. Distributing a summary of public comments.
2. Identifying the issues that the Issue Team will address.
3. Reviewing the process the Issue Team will follow to address issues from the public comments.
4. Selecting members of the subcommittee that will have primary responsibility for addressing the issues.

5. Establishing a meeting schedule for the subcommittee (April-May).

More Information.

Drafts of the plan and other information are available on the Prineville BLM **web page** at: http://www.or.blm.gov/Prineville/Deschutes_RMP/Home.htm).

Questions and Contacts

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us by mail, phone or e-mail:

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