



Request for Input & Meeting Notice
for the
Timber Mountain/Johns Peak
OHV Management Plan/EIS

Medford District BLM
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE
 3040 Biddle Road
 Medford, Oregon 97504
 email address: or110mb@or.blm.gov

JAN 09 2003

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1792(116)
 Timber Mountain/Johns Peak
 OHV Management Plan/EIS
 A6993(KM:jl)

The Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is beginning the development of an Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area. The 1995 Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan designated the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak area specifically for OHV use.

The Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Area is situated generally to the west of the City of Jacksonville in southwestern Oregon. The Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area involves approximately 13,865 acres of BLM administered lands. OHV enthusiasts from the local communities and out-of-state have recreated in the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak area for over 40 years, and use has increased in recent years.

How can you help?

Preliminary work towards the development of the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Management Plan began in 1998. The following preliminary list of issues are identified to be associated with the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area: protection of sensitive soils; maintenance of water quality and riparian conditions; protection of threatened or endangered species; management of unauthorized vehicle access and trail development on public and private lands; and providing for public health and safety.

BLM is requesting your input concerning this list of issues. Through public scoping and specialist review, this list of issues will be further developed and significant issues will be identified. Issues determined to be significant to the planning process will be used to develop a range of alternatives for managing OHV use in the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area.

A public meeting is scheduled for **January 25, 2003 from 9:00 to 11:30 AM, at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center Auditorium located at 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Oregon.** The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with information about the planning process and to receive input from those who are interested or affected.

In order for your input to be incorporated early in the planning process, written comments should be sent by February 14, 2003. Send written comments to: Richard J. Drehobl, Ashland Field Manager, Medford District Bureau of Land Management, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford Oregon, 97504, or email to Kristi_Mastrofini@or.blm.gov.

For those who want to remain on the mailing list, please take a moment to fill out and mail in the interest response form (enclosed). For information about the planning process please contact Kristi Mastrofini at (541) 618-2384 or Don Ferguson at (541) 618-2292. Fax or E-mail can be sent to the attention of Kristi Mastrofini at (541) 618-2400, or Kristi_Mastrofini@or.blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Drehobl
 Field Manager, Ashland Resource Area

Preliminary Issues Associated with the Development of an OHV Management Plan

Scoping is conducted early in the planning process to identify issues associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action and depth of analysis needed. Preliminary work towards the development of the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Management Plan began in 1998.

The following list of issues were identified to be associated with the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area:

Sensitive Soils: Granitic soils occur in portions of the planning area. These soil types are very susceptible to erosion when the soil surface has been disturbed. OHV use on natural surface roads and trails in the area can increase soil erosion.

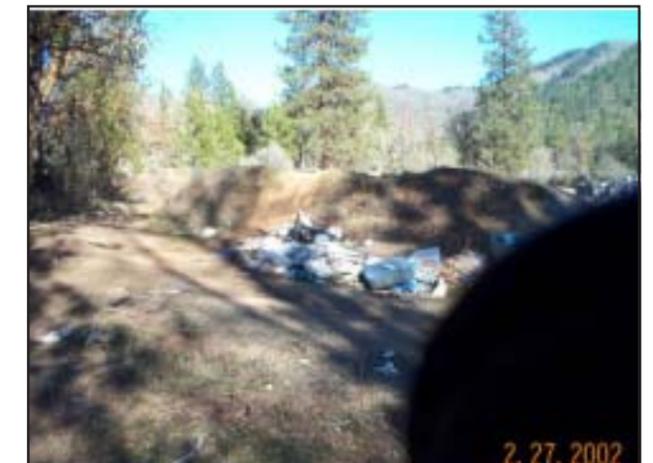
Water Quality And Riparian Conditions: OHV use within stream channels and riparian areas can destabilize stream banks, increase erosion and sediment delivery to stream channels, and impact riparian vegetation.

Threatened Or Endangered Plant, Animal, And Fish Species: There is a potential for impacts to species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. *Fritillaria gentneri*, a plant species listed as endangered; the northern spotted owl, listed as threatened; and Southern Oregon/Northern California coho, listed as threatened, are known to exist within, adjacent to, or downstream of the planning area.

Management of Travel and Access on Public Lands: With the complex land ownership pattern of BLM lands intermingled with privately owned lands, there is a high incidence of unauthorized access onto private lands. Vegetation management that creates more open areas (timber harvest and fuel hazard reduction) can lead to OHV use in areas previously not used. With an increase of OHV use, there has been an increase of unauthorized trails

built or created on public and private lands. Public education and signing are needed to reduce the occurrence of unauthorized use.

Public Health And Safety: Although the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak area was designated for OHV use, a site-specific activity plan that would guide activities in the OHV area was not developed. Some poorly designed and unmanaged trails in the area create safety hazards for OHV riders and others who use or recreate on public lands in the area. Additionally, trash dumping from uncontrolled vehicle access can create health and safety hazards for the public.



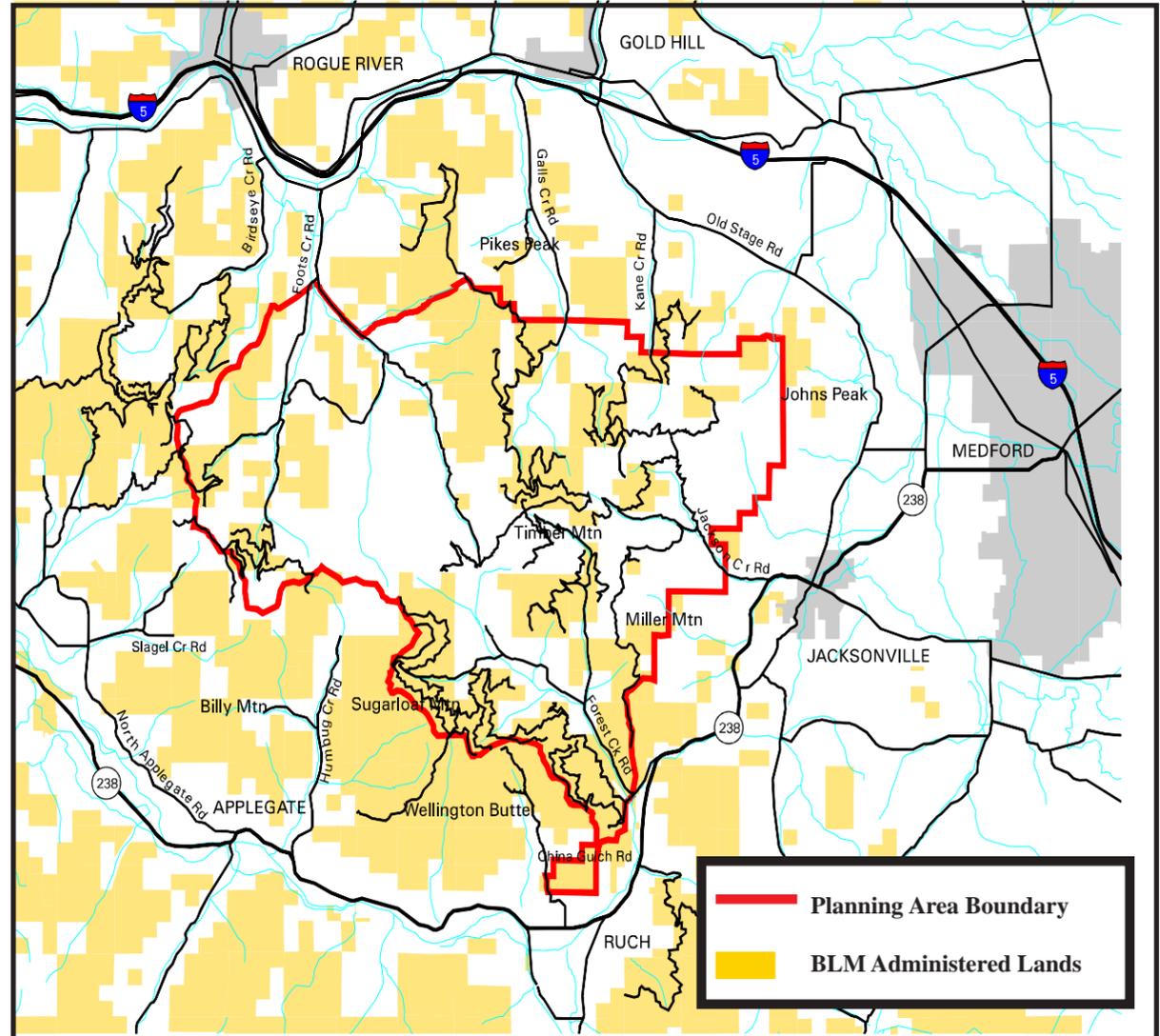
Trash dump along forest road



Unauthorized user-built trail in area opened up as a result of vegetation management for fire hazard reduction

Through additional public scoping and specialist review, this list of issues will be developed further, and significant issues will be identified. Issues determined to be significant to the planning process will be used to develop a range of alternatives for managing OHV use in the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV area. The effects of implementing the various alternatives, including a no-action alternative, will be analyzed and documented in the forthcoming Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Vicinity Map Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Area



Ways to Get Involved

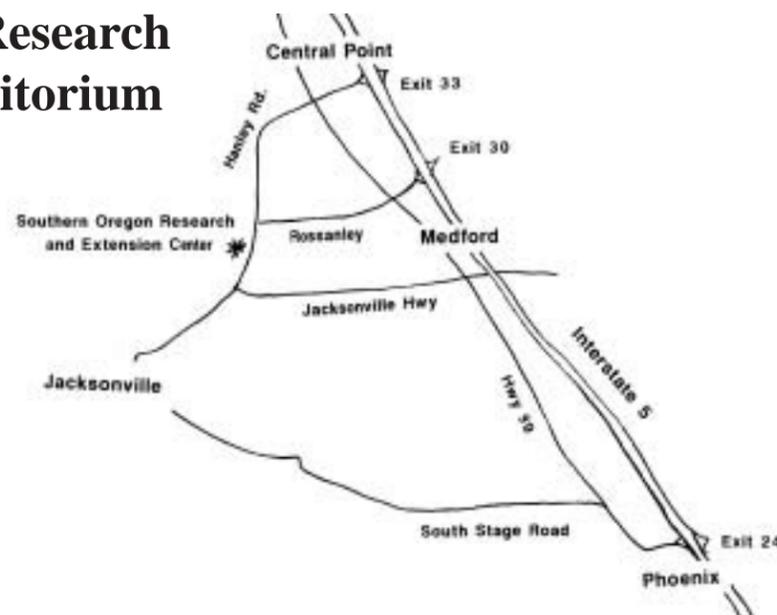
There are several ways to become an active participant in the planning process for the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Management Plan/EIS, they include (but are not limited to):

1. A public meeting is scheduled for **January 25, 2003 from 9:00 to 11:30 AM, at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center Auditorium located at 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Oregon.** The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with information about the planning process and to receive input from those who are interested or affected.
2. Upon request, the BLM will schedule additional meetings with individuals, adjacent landowners or neighborhoods, and other interested groups.
3. A field trip may be scheduled for February or March for those interested (see response form), to view areas within the Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Area.
4. Send written comments to: Richard J. Drehobl, Ashland Field Manager, Medford District Bureau of Land Management, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford Oregon, 97504, or email to Kristi_Mastrofini@or.blm.gov.
5. Provide comments to the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement when they become available for public review.

Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart B, Section 1.27, all written submissions in response to this notice, public scoping letters, and draft and final Environmental Impact Statements will be made available for public inspection including the submitter's name and address, unless the submitter specifically requests confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, submitted on official letterheads, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organization or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Map to Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center Auditorium

Note: Turn into driveway marked by Oregon State University sign, at 569 Hanley Road, Central Point



Components of an OHV Management Plan

The Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed to guide activities within the designated Timber Mountain/Johns Peak OHV Area and to provide for OHV use in accordance with the Medford District RMP. The development of this plan will not revisit whether or not to allow OHV use in this area, rather it will develop and analyze alternatives for managing designated OHV use in accordance with RMP direction.

Through Development of an OHV Management Plan:

- A system of OHV use areas would be identified for management;
- Trail design features would be established for stabilizing, reconstructing, or relocating existing trails;
- A sign plan would be developed to mark designated use areas;
- Trailheads would be designated and trailhead design features would be established;
- Objectives would be established for roads in order to manage access within the OVH area



Trail heads would be designated and designed to provide for user safety and to improve the recreation experience.



Example of well a maintained and heavily used OHV trail; adequate water drainage minimizes erosion



OHV friendly gates can be used to control passenger vehicle access while allowing for OHV access.

