

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GLENDALE RESOURCE AREA

EA COVER SHEET

Proposed Action: Construction and maintenance of a potable water system at the Tucker Flat Campground.

Type of Statement: Environmental Assessment (EA)

Lead Agency: USDI Bureau of Land Management

Cooperating Agencies:

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Abstract: The Glendale Field Office of the Medford District BLM proposes to install a new potable water system at the Tucker Flat Campground for the enhancement and safety of the recreation experience of the public visiting the area.

The new potable water system will consist of the installation of a chain-link fence around the existing spring, the construction of a small block building, and the installation of a new water chlorination and related plumbing system into the new building.

Chapter 1 - Purpose and Need

1.0 Introduction

The Glendale Resource Area is planning to install a chlorinated potable water supply system in the Tucker Flat Campground. The existing water supply at the campground, which was not a chlorinated system, was decommissioned several years ago because it was found to be unsafe for human consumption.

1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The Tucker Flat Campground is a historical camping area located alongside Mule Creek, near the Rogue River, and serves as an entrance gate to the scenic Wild Rogue Wilderness. Historically there was a spring water system which fed the campground. Several years ago the system was decommissioned as testing of the water indicated that it did not meet Oregon State and Curry County public drinking water regulations. The hundreds of campers to the area annually were left with either hauling their own drinking water in, using water out of the river, or traveling almost two hours by car to access nearest safe public drinking water.

The purpose of the proposed installation is to provide a safe drinking water system to enhance the recreational opportunities and experience for the visiting public while complying with public drinking water regulations.

1.2 Plan Conformance

This proposal is in conformance with the Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) page 63. It is also in conformance with the Oregon State Water Resources Department regulations and Curry County Water Resources Department.

1.3 Decisions to be Made Based on This Analysis

The Glendale Resource Area Field Manager will decide:

- 1) Whether or not the impacts of the proposed action are significant to the human environment. (If the impacts are determined to be insignificant, then a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) can be issued and a decision can be implemented. If any impacts are determined to be significant to the human environment, then an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared before the Manager makes a decision.
- 2) Whether to implement the proposed action, implement another alternative to the proposed alternative, or defer to the no action alternative.

3) Determine whether the selected alternative is consistent with the Resource Management Plan.

1.4 Issues of Concern

- 1) Providing a safe drinking water system at Tucker Flat Campground.
- 2) Concerns about the sufficiency of the spring flow and undocumented flows over the years of use point to a possibility of not having water available during some periods of the camping season. Even with a water system in place, campers may not have water at the campground during periods of the camping season. Campers may not have water at the campground during periods of drought that can persist in Southwest Oregon for extended periods of time (15 to 25 years).
- 3) Continued regulatory compliance

Chapter 2 - Alternatives

2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the proposed action alternative and additional alternatives including the no action alternative. This chapter also outlines specific project design features associated with each alternative.

2.1 Action Alternatives

2.1.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action: Installation of a new public access potable water system and related facilities at the Tucker Flat Campground.

The installation would be accomplished by using an existing on-site spring box and piping water from this spring box to a chlorinator, then passing the water into a holding tank equipped with a single faucet which would supply water to the public. The area around the Spring Box would be fenced with a wire chain-link fence to minimized disturbance to the area. All pipe would be buried a minimum of 18" to minimize chance of disturbance. A small concrete block building (approximately 7ft.x 7ft. x 7ft.) would be constructed which would house the chlorinator and the water holding tank. A pipet attached to the water holding tank and mounted with a faucet on the exterior wall of the building would supply potable water to the public. The design of the chlorination system, holding tank, related plumbing and the concrete block building would be pre-approved by the State of Oregon and Curry County Water Resources Departments.

2.1.1.1 Project Design Features

Project design features (PDFs) are included for the purpose of reducing potential impacts which might stem from the implementation of the alternatives.

The following Project Design Features (PDFs) would be implemented:

- * The new water supply system would conform the Department of Oregon Health Services requirement for public water supplies.

- * Chlorine residual tests would be performed daily during the seasons of operation. Monthly tests for other bacteria would also be conducted, and reports submitted, per Oregon State regulations pertaining to operation of public potable water systems.

2.12 Alternative 2: Signs Only

No potable water system would be installed. Instead, signs would be placed in the campground informing visitors of the dangers of drinking river and surface water, and directing them to a safe nearby potable water source. The signs would be placed immediately adjacent to the road, in already disturbed ground.

2.1.3 Alternative 3: No Action.

A new potable water system would not be installed and no signs would be installed relative to water availability in the area. The campground would continue to be managed as it currently is, without potable water.

Chapter 3 - Affected Environment

3.0 Introduction

The affected environment describes the present condition within the proposed project area that would be affected by the alternatives. The information in this chapter would serve as a general baseline for determining the effects of the alternatives. Enough detail has been provided to determine if any of the alternatives would cause impacts to the environment.

3.1 Public Use

Tucker Flat Campground is visited by over 1,500 people each year. It is situated alongside Mule Creek and near the Wild and Scenic Rogue River. It also serves as one of the gateways to the Wild Rogue Wilderness. Currently it hosts 8 campsites and one double-vault toilet. Its location is almost two hours of driving time from the nearest rural town. One of the trail heads to the Rogue Wilderness is the Mule Creek Trail located at the upper end of the campground. (However, no increased visitor use is expected.) Tucker Flat Campground is within walking distance of the Wild Section of the Rogue River. It existed prior to designation of the river as Wild and Scenic. (No increased use is expected.)

3.2 Riparian

This is a long-standing campground, situated on a terrace above Mule Creek and within two tree lengths of the stream. It falls within the Riparian Reserve designated by the Northwest Forest Plan. The unnamed spring which is intended to supply water for public use currently has a spring box adjacent to the current campground on the hillside.

3.3 Discharge from spring

Local knowledge of the spring has indicated that the spring has never dried up. Discharge measurements were initiated so that a system could be designed to accommodate changing flow conditions. Measurements taken on May 11, 2002 indicated that the flow was just a little less than one gallon a minute. Measurements made on June 05 indicated that the flow was down to 0.36 gallons per minute.

Chapter 4 - Environmental Consequences

4.0 Introduction

This chapter forms the scientific and analytic basis for comparison of alternatives. Discussions include environmental impacts anticipated from implementation of the alternatives, both positive and negative. It also identifies and analyzes mitigation measures, if any, which may be taken to avoid or reduce projected impacts.

The impact analysis addresses direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on all affected resources of the human environment, including critical elements.

4.1 Critical Elements

The following elements of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation, or executive order and must be considered in all EA's.

Table 4.1 Critical Elements by Alternative (y = yes n = no)

Resource	Alternative Affected (Y or N)			Resource	Alternative Affected (Y or N)		
	1	2	3		1	2	3
Air Quality	N	N	N	Threatened & Endangered Species	N	N	N
ACEC	N	N	N	Wastes, Hazardous/Solid	N	N	N
Cultural	N	N	N	Water Quality	Y	N	N
Farmlands, Prime/Unique	N	N	N	Riparian Zones	Y	N	N
Floodplains	N	N	N	Wild & Scenic Rivers	N	N	N
Native American Religious Concerns	N	N	N	Wilderness	N	N	N
Invasive Species	N	N	N	Environmental Justice	N	N	N
Energy	N	N	N	Survey and Manage Species*	N	N	N
Public Use*	Y	Y	N				

* non-critical element

4.2 Effects Considered for Each Alternative

Direct effects are site-specific and result from the immediate action.

Indirect effects occur at a different place or time than the proposed action.

Cumulative effects result from an accumulation of effects from past, current, and reasonably foreseeable actions, whose effects may not individually be significant.

4.1 Alternative 1: (Proposed Action)

4.1.1 Public Use:

Direct effects: Visitors to the area would have a safe drinking water source.

Indirect effects: Installation of a safe water source would not be expected to increase visitor use to this remote campground.

Cumulative effects: No cumulative effects were identified.

4.1.2 Water Quality and Riparian

Direct effects Some disturbance of riparian vegetation would result from installation of fencing around the spring box. Additional riparian vegetation would be disturbed by burying a small pipe (1" in diameter) from the spring box to the chlorinator house. The chlorinator house would be constructed on existing disturbed ground (probably on road surface near other facilities already at campground) and would not cause and added impacts. Chlorine residual from the treated water would quickly dissipate as free chlorine gas so no impact from chlorination is anticipated.

Indirect effects No indirect effects were identified.

Cumulative effects No cumulative effects were identified.

4.2 Alternative 2: Signs Only

4.2.1 Public Use:

Direct effects: No direct effects were identified.

Indirect effects: The signs may not last long due to vandalism and the public would be left with no options other than those currently in place with the signs. There may be more of a demand for drinking water at the nearby Rogue River Ranch.

Cumulative effects: No cumulative effects are anticipated.

4.3 Alternative 3: No Action

4.3.1 Public Use:

Direct effects: Visitors to the area would continue to not have a safe drinking water source at this campground.

Indirect effects: No indirect effects are foreseen.

Cumulative effects: No cumulative effects are foreseen.

Chapter 5 - List of Agencies and Persons Consulted

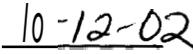
A legal notice will be placed in local newspapers to announce to the public that the Glendale Resource Area is requesting public comments on the proposed management action. In addition, notification of this proposal will be sent to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Dept. of Forestry, County Commissioners for the affected county, several environmental groups, and representatives of the timber industry to request their comments. These announcements will be made following completion of this environmental assessment and before a decision is made. The Field Manager will consider all input before reaching a finding or making a decision concerning this proposal.

List of Preparers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Primary Responsibility</u>
Loren Wittenberg	Hydrologist	Soils/Air/Water/Riparian
Marylou Schnoes	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife
Sherwood Tubman	Ecosystem Planner	NEPA
Rachel Showalter	Botanist	Plants and Fungi
Randal Fiske	Engineer	Layout and design
Vince Randall	Forester	Native American Concerns
Deston Russell	Engineer Tech	Hazmat
Sondra Nolan	ROW Specialist	Rights-of-way
Katie Wetzel	Recreation Planner	Project design/implementation
Amy Sobiech	Archeologist	Cultural resources

The Proposed Action has been screened for compliance with the Endangered Species Act, The American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Historic Preservation Act, Bureau of Land Management policies related to the ecosystem objectives and concepts in the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy of the Northwest Forest Plan. Furthermore, this action has been screened from a landscape perspective and there are no effects anticipated from this action that would foreclose future management options in relation to the watershed management objectives identified through the Ecosystem Analysis.


 Ecosystem Planner
 Reviewed for format and consistency


 Date

References

USDI-BLM. 1995. Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. Medford, Oregon

USDA-FS, USDI-BLM. 1994. Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl. Pacific Northwest

USDA-FS, USDI-BLM. 2001. Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines. Portland, Oregon