

# Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management

## Office of Communications

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News and Information  
For Immediate Release  
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### Public Input Needed for BLM Draft Management Plan

CENTRAL OREGON—The Prineville Bureau of Land Management recently released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for a planning document that provides direction for the management of over 400,000 acres of public lands in Central Oregon.

The planning document, known as the “Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan” provides strategic management direction for the public land that is bordered by Lake Billy Chinook on the north, La Pine on the south, Sisters on the west and Prineville Reservoir to the east. The plan will direct how the BLM manages these lands into the future.

The lands are best described as “high desert,” dominated by juniper woodlands, shrubs and grasslands and mixed conifer forests in the higher elevations. The area includes places that are special to many people, including the Badlands and Steelhead Falls Wilderness Study Areas.

The area is popular with both Central Oregon and west side Oregon residents, who come here to ride off-highway vehicles, mountain bike, horseback ride, hike or simply to enjoy the high desert, especially during the winter when access to National Forest lands are limited.

“Many people come out here to engage in their recreation activity of choice. If it’s important to them how we manage these lands for different types of recreation, it is in their best interest to comment on this plan,” said Recreation Planner Greg Currie. The plan will guide recreation use in this area, whether it be for special events such as competitive races, organized group outings or developed trail opportunities.

Managing recreation is only one of many issues addressed in the plan. Other land uses and concerns such as ecosystem health and scenic qualities; and land uses such as livestock grazing, forestry, military training, transportation and utility rights-of-way, land ownership, and public health and safety are covered within the extensive 1,000-page document.

“We feel it is important that people understand we are looking at a variety of issues over a large area that is adjacent to several rapidly growing communities,” said Project Manager Mollie Chaudet.

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Copies of the draft plan are currently available for public review and comment at the BLM District Office in Prineville, the Deschutes National Forest Supervisor's Office in Bend, the Deschutes Public Library branches in La Pine, Bend, Sisters and Redmond; at the BLM State Office in Portland and on the Prineville BLM website at:

[http://www.or.blm.gov/Prineville/Deschutes\\_RMP/Home.htm](http://www.or.blm.gov/Prineville/Deschutes_RMP/Home.htm)

Comment forms and project maps are also available on the website. The 90-day public comment period for the draft plan ends on January 15, 2004.

A series of informational public meetings will be held in conjunction with the release of the Draft EIS (see below). The meetings allow additional opportunities for public review, comment and questions.

**November 12**, 7-9 p.m. (Wednesday)  
La Pine Middle School cafeteria  
16360 1<sup>st</sup> Street, La Pine

**November 18**, 7-9 p.m. (Tuesday)  
Carey Foster Hall  
590 SE Lynn Blvd, Prineville

**November 19**, 7-9 p.m.(Wednesday)  
Redmond High School commons  
675 SW Rimrock Way, Redmond

**November 20**, 7-9 p.m.(Thursday)  
Highland (Kenwood) Elementary School  
701 NW Newport Ave, Bend

“It is our job to consider all of the uses and concerns, then balance the opportunities we provide while caring for the long-term health of the ecosystem and the people who depend on it,” said Deschutes Resource Area Manager Robert Towne.

For more information on the Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan, visit our website at [http://www.or.blm.gov/Prineville/Deschutes\\_RMP/Home.htm](http://www.or.blm.gov/Prineville/Deschutes_RMP/Home.htm) or contact Mollie Chaudet, Bureau of Land Management, Prineville District Office, 3050 NE Third Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754 at (541) 416-6872.

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