

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA
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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION / DECISION RECORD

Whitehorse Park Fencing and Gate Replacement

NEPA No.: DOI-BLM-OR-M000-2009-0017-CX

A. Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing to replace, repair, and install fencing around certain portions of the Whitehorse County Park boat ramp area perimeter, and to install a gate to a non-public access road adjoining the parking area. Portions of the current fencing would be removed and replaced with more durable and scenically compatible barriers (large boulders or wooden fencing) Portions of the current fencing will be repaired, and new fencing will be installed in some locations currently without fencing. A standard BLM metal gate will be installed at the entrance to a pump access road that spurs off of the parking area. The proposed fencing, boulders, and gate will limit vehicle access to areas designated for non-motorized use only, thereby preventing resource degradation along the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River. The Rogue National Wild and Scenic River was designated for protection of its Outstandingly Remarkable Values: natural scenic qualities along the river, fish, and recreation.

B. Location/Land Use Allocation:

The project is on BLM-owned lands at Whitehorse County Park boat ramp and parking area, located within the recreational section of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River corridor at T.36 S., R.6 W., Section 18 SW¹/₄, SE¹/₄ and Section 19 NW¹/₄ NE¹/₄.

C. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action:

Unauthorized motorized-vehicle use on BLM lands outside the public road and parking area near the Whitehorse County Park boat ramp area is creating resource degradation incompatible with the scenic and recreational values of the Rogue River corridor. The public is also accessing the area around a Josephine County irrigation pump. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the BLM to protect and enhance the recreational and scenic values of the river on BLM lands within the river corridor. The fencing around the boat ramp area and entrance road is damaged and no longer able to protect BLM river-corridor lands and Outstandingly Remarkable Values for which the corridor was designated from motorized access. The damaged fencing also increases the hazard for vehicles parking along an eroding bank along the river.

The purpose of this project is to prevent unauthorized motorized access by installing (or repairing) fencing, a gate, and boulders around portions of boat ramp area perimeter in a manner compatible with the scenic and recreational values of the Rogue Wild and Scenic River.

D. Description of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would remove several hundred feet of current fencing. The current fencing consists of wooden posts with a single cable between them. Following removal, approximately 900 feet of new fencing would be installed, as well as large boulders along approximately 200 feet of perimeter facing the Rogue River. Approximately 900 feet of existing but damaged fence would also be repaired.

New fencing would consist of six- to eight-inch diameter posts and two-tiers of four- to six-inch cross-railings, all constructed of naturally weathered wood obtained from a local supplier. Post holes would be dug no more than two feet deep and 10 to 12 inches in diameter, using a tractor with a rear-mounted auger attachment. Posts would be cemented into the ground.

Boulders facing the river would be large enough to be immovable without heavy machinery.

In addition, the proposed action would replace a currently existing but non-functioning gate at the entrance to a non-public road the county uses for access to a pump.

The proposed action would also install Carsonite signs along the perimeter, notifying the public that motorized vehicle access is prohibited outside the road, ramp, and parking area. Signs will be hung from the fence to inform users of the area and the purpose for the fence.

Materials used would be compatible with the existing scenic landscape to preserve the scenic values of the river corridor.

E. Project Design Features

1. Tractor would remain on the roadways, and would not enter adjacent meadows, to prevent damage to potential cultural resource artifacts and to prevent spread of weed seed.
2. The cultural resources specialist would be present during fence removal and digging of the post holes, at the discretion of the cultural resource specialist.
3. Currently there are several Yellow Starthistle sites in the southern portion of the project area. To reduce the spread of new noxious weed populations, fencing would be removed and constructed first from the north (the entrance of the park) working toward the south (towards the river) so as to not spread seeds to uninfested areas.
4. All equipment or vehicles used in the project, would be pressure washed to remove all dirt and debris prior to entering BLM lands and when moving from infested to non-infested areas within the project area. This includes a thorough cleaning of the undercarriage in a designated cleaning area.
5. Equipment and material would not be stored in known weed populations (direction from the Grants Pass Resource Area Botanist would be provided).
6. Temporary roads or trails off of permanent roads would not be constructed through known weed sites when possible.

7. Seed and straw used for restoration, replanting of bare soil, and post-project treatment throughout the project area would be native species and weed free to prevent the further spread of noxious weeds. All seeding would be contingent on seed availability.

F. Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans:

- *Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Medford District (2008)*
- *Final EIS for the Revision of the Resource Management Plans of the Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management (2008)*
- *Decision Record and Environmental Assessment for the Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan (April 1998)*

F. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Department 43 CFR 46.210(f), "Routine and continuing government business, including such things as . . . maintenance, renovations, and replacement activities having limited context and intensity (e.g. , limited size and magnitude or short-term effects)."

Title 43, Section 46.205(c) of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) requires the review of this action to determine if any of the "extraordinary circumstances" found at 43 CFR 46.215 would apply. If any of the extraordinary circumstances apply, then an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

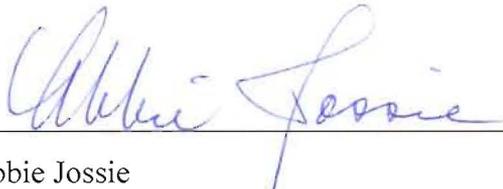
The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if extraordinary circumstances exist that would require further environmental analysis and documentation. None have been identified (see attached review).

 3/25/2009
NEPA Reviewer / Date

 3/25/2009
Preparer / Date

G. Decision

I have reviewed this CE, plan conformance and NEPA compliance review and have determined the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the project as described.


Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resources Area

3-30-09
Date

**NEPA COMPLIANCE
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW**

**Whitehorse Park Fencing and Gate Replacement
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Department of the Interior NEPA Regulations at 43 CFR 46.205(c) requires the review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (found at 43 CFR 46.215) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

1) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Yes No Remarks

2) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

Yes No Remarks: This project lies with the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Corridor. Materials used in this project will be compatible with maintaining the Outstandingly Remarkable Values, particularly the scenic values of the river corridor.

3) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].

Yes No Remarks:

4) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Yes No Remarks:

5) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Yes No Remarks:

6) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

Yes No Remarks:

7) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.

Yes No Remarks:

8) *Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.*

Yes No Remarks:

9) *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

Yes No Remarks:

10) *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

Yes No Remarks:

11) *Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).*

Yes No Remarks:

12) *Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).*

Yes No Remarks:

Reviewers:

Lara Davison 3/25/09
Silviculture, Vegetation Dynamics
& Port-Orford Cedar Date

Robert Ehr-Dawson 3/24/09
Botany Date

Steve Breen 3/24/09
Cultural Resources Date

Tom Hansen 3/23/09
Fisheries Date

Paul Reedy 3/23/09
Wildlife Date

Dave Mauer 3/23/09
Soils/Hydrology Date

J. M. Ke 3/23/09
Visual Resources / Recreation Date

Cindy Weiskel 3/23/09
Engineering Date

Jan W. L. 3/23/09
Fire and Fuels Date