

Transportation and Utilities

Objective TU - 1: Provide new or modified rights-of-way for transportation/utility corridors and communication/energy sites to meet expected demands and minimize environmental impacts.

Rationale:

FLPMA (43 USC 1761 (a) (1-7) authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-way over, upon, under, or through public lands for “reservoirs, canals, pipelines, impoundment, storage, transportation, or distribution of water; systems for generation, transmission, and distribution of electric energy, systems for transmission or reception of radio, television, telephone, telegraph, and other electronic signals, and other means of communication; and roads, trails, highways, railroads, or other means of transportation or other systems or facilities which are in the public interest and which require rights-of-way over, upon, under, or through such lands.” Each right-of-way grant must “Minimize damage to scenic and esthetic values, fish and wildlife habitat and otherwise protect the environment; require compliance with applicable air and water quality standards; require compliance with State standards for public health and safety, environmental protection, and citing, construction, operation, and maintenance of or for rights-of-way for similar purposes if those standards are more stringent than applicable Federal standards...” Each right-of-way grant is subject to terms and conditions to “(i) Protect Federal property and economic interests; (ii) manage efficiently the lands which are subject to the right-of-way or adjacent thereto and protect the other lawful users of the lands adjacent to or traversed by such right-of-way; (iii) protect lives and property; (iv) protect the interests of individuals living in the general area traversed by the right-of-way who rely on the fish, wildlife, and other biotic resources of the area for subsistence purposes; (v) require location of the right-of-way along a route that will cause least damage to the environment, taking into consideration feasibility and other relevant factors; and (vi) otherwise protect the public interest in the lands traversed by the right-of-way or adjacent thereto.” (43 USC 1765 (a) and (b))

Objectives in granting rights-of-way and temporary use permits (43 CFR 2800) are to “(1) protect the natural resources associated with the public lands and adjacent private or other lands administered by a government agency, (2) prevent unnecessary or undue environmental damage to the lands and resources, (3) promote the utilization of rights-of-way in common with respect to engineering and technological compatibility, national security and land use plans and (4) coordinate, to the fullest extent possible, all actions taken pursuant to this part with State and local governments, interested individuals, and appropriate quasi-public entities.”

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. All transportation/utility corridors identified by the Western Regional Corridor Study are designated as transportation/utility corridors. Existing communications sites in the planning area are identified.
2. Areas of critical environmental concern, wilderness study areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers are designated as right-of-way exclusion areas.
3. All areas identified as having special status plant or animal species are designated as avoidance areas.
4. Designate all existing right-of-way routes as local corridors for future collocation of compatible projects.

Guidelines:

1. BLM administered lands will continue to be available for rights-of-way, including multiple use and single use utility/transportation corridors, following existing routes, and roads.

2. Corridor widths vary depending on the number of parallel facilities, but are a minimum of 1,000 feet on each side of the existing centerline, unless adjacent to exclusion areas.
3. Applicants are encouraged to locate new facilities adjacent to existing facilities to the extent technically and economically feasible and meet resource objectives.
4. All right-of-way applications will be reviewed using the criteria of following existing corridors wherever possible and to avoid the proliferation of separate rights-of-way.
5. All areas having high or sensitive (VRM classifications 1-3) visual qualities will be avoided or appropriate mitigation measures taken.
6. Each right-of-way will be limited to the area necessary for operation and maintenance. The project will consider the protection of public safety and will do no unnecessary damage to the environment.
7. Each right-of-way will contain terms and conditions requiring compliance with environmental quality standards applicable to Federal or State law.
8. Each right-of-way grant or permit will reserve to the BLM the right to issue additional rights for compatible uses on or adjacent to the project.
9. Locate and design new rights-of-way to minimize fragmentation of public lands, and only construct new projects when the use of existing alignments will have substantially less desirable environmental impacts than new construction.
10. Consolidate transportation and utility systems within existing corridors if possible to reduce habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation caused by new construction.
11. In T15S, R13E sections 1, 13, 24, 25, and 26 consult with Redmond Airport officials to ensure that Transportation and Utility decisions do not conflict with the safe operation or development of the airport.

Objective TU – 2: Provide an integrated, functional, safe, efficient, transportation system that:

- Supports approved land uses that cannot be met on private, state, or county lands
- Provides links between local communities
- Reduces or minimize conflicts with adjacent landowners
- Supports approved common guidelines of joint jurisdictions
- Balances public access needs with resource protection

Rationale:

See Rationale for TU – 1.

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. Do not allow activities in transportation corridors and airport safety zones that will not meet the requirements of these areas.
2. In all areas, construction, placement or maintenance of roads or trails without authorization, contract, or approved operating plan will be prohibited.

Guidelines:

1. Coordinate development of transportation systems with State, local, and other federal jurisdictions to provide links between communities within and outside of the region.
2. Use existing travel routes where possible to provide access and meet road density objectives; however, new alignments may be considered if they provide better resource management, reduce social conflicts, provide better recreation opportunities or if existing routes are determined to be unfeasible.
3. Apply minimum design standards for roads to accomplish transportation and resource management objectives. Manage the road system to minimize disturbance to wildlife habitat and reduce conflicts with non-motorized recreational activities.
4. Provide adequate road maintenance for safe vehicle use (which does not require passenger car or recreational vehicle standards), and minimize the proliferation of roads and braided road systems.

5. Maintain roads providing access to trailheads, staging areas, picnic areas, campgrounds or other developed sites to a standard that provides safe access for passenger cars and recreational vehicles (campers, trailers, etc.).
6. Where grantees have alternative existing rights-of-way in the area of a new proposal, they will vacate the existing right or provide other reasonable compensation as a condition of the new authorization, if it is determined to be in excess of access needs.
7. Public access along transportation and utility corridors will be managed to meet recreational and travel management objectives.

Access

8. Designation of access points to public lands will provide safe ingress and egress from state highways and county roads. The network of local roads through public lands will be dependent upon administrative needs, recreational use and travel management objectives.
9. For areas where motorized use is designated as Limited or Closed, access points/trailheads/and staging areas will be identified and developed based on the following criteria:
 - a. Access points off paved public roads (arterials, not expressways) as a first priority.
 - b. Second priority will be given to developing access points from collector roads.
 - c. Low priority will be given to developing motorized access points from local or subdivision roads.
10. Designated motorized access points/staging areas will be located away from residences or other sensitive land uses, to the extent practicable. Authorized rights-of-way may be designated as the primary public access point, or in an effort to reduce social conflicts, could be closed to general public use.
11. Obtain permits from respective jurisdictions for all designated access points.
12. Retain public use of rights-of-way that provide access to the Middle Deschutes and Crooked River.
13. Minimize conflicts between landowners and users of public lands by relocating trails and parking areas away from private property boundaries, wherever feasible.
14. Plan cooperatively with the Oregon Department of Transportation, County Road Departments, and other agencies to designate grade-separated crossings for recreation trails on public lands. Emphasis will be placed on the need for safe trail crossings of Millican/West Butte Road/Highway, State Highway 126, State Highway 20, O'Neil Highway, Johnson Market Road, and the Powell Butte Highway.
15. In consultation with Deschutes County Road department and Crooked River Ranch, upgrade and provide maintenance for the emergency exit route. Consider realigning this route and exit point onto Lower Bridge Road if it provides a safer route and improved resource and recreation management on BLM administered lands.

Roads

16. See Objective R—3, Guidelines 10-15 for Interim use of Existing Roads and Trails. Also see RMP Maps 11-24.
17. All local roads that are not needed to meet specific management objectives are available for designation as system roads or for closure following site specific analyses.
18. Roadways may be closed that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Repeated law enforcement violations exist.
 - b. Extremely difficult to maintain at prescribed maintenance levels.
 - c. Public safety hazards exist.
 - d. Resource damage cannot be mitigated.
 - e. Necessary to accomplish other resource objectives.

- f. User created roads (unauthorized travel ways created though public lands since passage of FLPMA, based on evidence found on aerial photos and maps of that period) not designated for use as a trail or needed for administrative access.
 - g. Local roads (defined as minimum standard roads that existed through public lands prior to passage of FLPMA, based on evidence found on aerial photos and maps of that period) that “dead end” or do not provide connectivity with the designated transportation system.
19. Existing road systems will be designated to create loop routes that return to the same access point. BLM may develop new roads to create understandable loops that rely on fewer access points.
 20. Motorized routes not selected for designation, but required for other uses, may have locked gates installed. Examples may include utility access roads, grazing access roads, or local roads needed for administrative access.
 21. Motorized routes may have gates or cattle guards installed to allow for continued grazing activities and to insure visitor safety.
 22. Rights-of-way determined not to be a necessary component of the transportation system may be closed to the general public to reduce dumping, illegal activities, and cross-country travel.
 23. During planning provide affected tribes the opportunity to review all proposed road closures to determine if opportunities for cultural uses will be adversely affected.

Objective TU - 3: During the design and application process for proposed new or expanded rights-of-way, incorporate mitigating measures in the plan of development for land restoration, habitat improvement, recreation opportunities, and visual resources.

Rationale:

The planning area contains a high density of roads, railroads, canals, power line, and pipelines. As Central Oregon continues to develop, requests for rights-of-way across public land is expected to continue. The presence of these facilities may impact natural resource and scenic values. Appropriate mitigation during design and development of new or expanded rights-of-way will help compensate for long-term and cumulative impacts to natural resources. Also see Rationale for Objective TU – 1.

Guidelines:

1. An environmental analysis will determine cumulative effects of the proposed project and appropriate mitigating measures.
2. BLM's contrast rating system will be used to assess visual resource impacts and develop appropriate mitigation measures or project design changes (see also Visual Resources Section).
3. Treatments or mitigations should normally occur adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of the development.
4. Treatments or mitigations may include activities such as seeding, planting, thinning, fencing, and road closures, road and trail realignment, road and trail development, provision of grade-separated crossings, placement of signs, volunteer agreements, etc.
5. Specific mitigation requirements should be determined and mutually agreed upon between the applicant and BLM during the design and application phase.

Objective TU – 4: Identify and develop a long-term transportation system for military training use that meets specific training objectives, maximizes benefits to other users, including recreation use of public lands, and minimizes impact to natural resources.

Rationale:

Repeated use of a road or other staging area by tanks and other heavy equipment can damage the facilities. Site hardening and surfacing or grading roads can minimize the damage caused by this equipment.

Guidelines:

For repeated activities involving heavy equipment (greater than 10,000 GVW), provide surfacing and maintenance that protects the roadbed.

Objective TU - 5: Consolidate transportation and utility systems with consideration for ecological and recreational values, while providing for regional transportation systems and meeting regional objectives.

Rationale:

See Objective TU - 1.

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. Designate the collector road network and transportation/utility corridors as shown on RMP Map 2.
2. Designate a transportation corridor, approximately ½ mile wide and extending from approximately the end of 19th Street in Redmond to Deschutes Market Road. This includes a corridor connection to Quarry Avenue that will allow for a future Federal Highway interchange.
3. Designate a corridor between the existing Antler road north of State Highway 126 and connecting with the existing State Highway 126 outside of the Redmond Airport runway protection zone for future realignment of Highway 126.

Objective TU - 6: Provide motorized access to facilitate reasonable entry and operations for administrative purposes.

Rationale:

To meet BLM administrative needs for land and resource management activities, public access restrictions may not apply or may be temporarily modified (see RMP Map 3 for Travel Management Designations). Administrative access will be required in cases of access required by law or regulation, to provide a more cost-effective means of protecting, restoring, or studying natural resources, and to construct, maintain, and access private property or facilities. Examples of such administrative and management activities include but may not be limited to: emergency access (i.e. fire suppression, hazmat clean-up, law enforcement), rights-of-way and facilities construction/maintenance and ingress/egress to private in-holdings, research/education, monitoring/inventory, military training, land treatments, authorized mineral material sites, traditional cultural uses, and other activities allowed under written authorization.

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. Vehicle use off of designated roads/trails is not allowed:
 - a. In WSAs and ISAs (Instant Study Areas) at any time of the year (access on designated roads in the Badlands WSA only for approved activities).
 - b. In the Peck's Milkvetch ACEC during March 1 - August 15.

Guidelines:

1. Groups and personnel granted administrative access will be guided by provisions and requirements in the specific contract, permit, or agreement which will stipulate what types of activities and travel will be allowed, and under what conditions.
2. Administrative access includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Access to designated Closed areas (seasonally or year-round).
 - b. Access on designated or existing road systems that are closed (seasonally or year-round).

- c. Access off designated roads and trails.
3. Administrative access authorization will include mitigation measures to protect resources and to rehabilitate impacts caused by temporary motorized access or activities. Some of these mitigations could include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Closure and rehabilitation of temporary access routes.
 - b. Activities/travel over snow or frozen ground.
 - c. Activities/travel limited by season or soil moisture conditions.
 - d. Use of low-impact equipment and techniques.
 - e. Use of gates and signs to preclude general access.
4. Decisions regarding access authorization and special requirements will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The authorizing officer will consider the resource values involved, potential effects of the activity, cost vs. benefit, and appropriate/ reasonable mitigation measures to be applied. Access recommendations will normally be made during project planning through an interdisciplinary team process and with the appropriate level of NEPA analysis.
5. Grazing permittees/lessees must apply for a permit to provide supplemental livestock feed, salt, or nutrients, or to construct new fences or other range improvements. The BLM will decide during the permit process whether or not off-road vehicle use will be allowed for these activities. If allowed, written authorization and conditions will be included in the permit/lease. The annual grazing billing process will also provide an opportunity to include or change written access authorizations prior to turnout. Motorized vehicle use off of designated roads/trails will generally be approved when:
 - a. Moving cattle in to or out of a pasture, and checking for stragglers a day or two later.
 - b. Checking/repairing fences prior to turnout.
 - c. Checking for breaks in fence or open gates after finding strays.
 - d. Checking all perimeter fences/gates once per month (special authorization will be required for more frequent access).
 - e. Hauling water to troughs that are off-road.
6. If road closures eliminate access to sites used for traditional cultural uses, tribal members may be granted administrative access for purposes of those uses.

Land Ownership

Public lands have been classified for retention or disposal pursuant to the Section 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act (43 U.S.C. 315f) and other authorities described in Appendix A.

Objective LO – 1 (Z-1): Identify lands for retention based on resource values and overall management objectives. Lands allocated for retention are identified as having high public resource values. They include areas that will generally be retained in public ownership, and where emphasis will be placed on increasing public land holdings.

Rationale:

Public lands in Central Oregon provide a variety of resource values. These include but are not limited to native or natural species dominance, archaeological values, special or unique plant and animal habitats, support for wildlife populations, recreational opportunities, solitude and open space, and providing undeveloped space between burgeoning population areas. Underlying the objectives for land ownership is the assumption that retention of large blocks of public lands best serves these diverse values.

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. Those public lands in Wild and Scenic River areas, identified for retention in the Middle Deschutes/Lower Crooked River (Chimney Rock Segment) Management