



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Web Address: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay> E-mail: OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov

Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303



In Reply Refer To:

1792/1613/8367 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0003-EA

New River ACEC

December 9, 2009

Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Coos Bay BLM has prepared a Scoping Document for the “New River Educational Facility” Environmental Assessment. The Scoping document and associated maps are now posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/plans/index.php>.

The BLM proposes to analyze the construction of an environmental education facility located at the Storm Ranch area of the New River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The current building, the Ellen Warring Learning Center, has become too small to accommodate all of the educational activities occurring at the ACEC.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by January 8, 2010. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Please direct requests for hard copies, questions, or comments to Coos Bay District BLM, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459-2000, ATTN: Aimee E.B. Hoefs; call 541-756-0100; FAX 541-751-4303, or email to OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov, ATTN: Aimee E.B. Hoefs.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jill Williams

Jill Williams

Acting Myrtlewood Field Manager



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In Reply Refer To:

1792/1613/8367 (ORC040)
DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0003-EA
New River Education Facility

Scoping Document

December 3, 2009

Dear Citizen:

The following information and the enclosed maps briefly describe a Proposed Action for the development of the New River Education Facility Environmental Assessment (EA No: DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0003-EA).

The USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Coos Bay District Office is preparing an Environmental Assessment to analyze the construction of an environmental education facility located at the Storm Ranch area of the New River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

Project Summary

The BLM proposes to construct a semi-permanent yurt structure 30 feet by 30 feet in size directly across from the Ellen Warring Learning Center building. A small walkway 30 feet in length would connect the yurt to the existing driveway and vault toilets (see attached schematic). A small entrance deck with benches would be located at the entranceway and be fully handicapped accessible. The yurt is approximately 730 sq. ft. and is designed to hold a maximum of 49 people.

The yurt facility will not be restricted to school field trips, but will also meet the need for holding small meetings, interpretive and adult education programs.

The current area is grass and was the location of the cattle corral associated with the previous ranch.

Background/Need for the Project

The Ellen Warring Learning Center was dedicated in 2001 for the purpose of serving as a focal point for interpretation and educational activities for the public. The original intent of this facility was to “help meet program needs by providing space for a library and group gatherings, interpretive displays, storage of field equipment used by both naturalists and researchers...” (BLM 2004, plan update for New River, p. 88).

However, due to the layout of the building there is currently insufficient space to provide both interpretive exhibits and conduct environmental education activities or site orientation. There is also insufficient storage space for all of the equipment necessary to conduct programs and

provide multi-media presentations. The draft Interpretive Plan has identified the significant stories to be told about the ACEC as well as the adult education components. The current facility is simply too small to handle all of the current and planned activities at the Storm Ranch area of the ACEC.

Estimates from BLM engineers determined that it would be too costly to renovate the Learning Center to make it better suited for BLM's needs as identified in the management plan.

A low-cost, low-maintenance, new building structure would alleviate many of the issues described above.

Project Objectives (Purpose)

Any action alternative to be given serious consideration as a reasonable alternative must meet the objectives provided in the ROD/RMP for projects to be implemented within the planning area. The RMP defers objectives to be followed from the site-specific management plan developed for the New River ACEC. This plan, updated in 2004, gives the following applicable Objectives:

- Use environmental education and interpretation as a tool to manage visitor impacts and to broaden the appreciation and stewardship of the New River ACEC (p. 2) by:
 - Using recommendations from the draft Long Range Interpretive Plan when developing and conducting programs and interpretive materials (p. 88)
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of environmental education programs and interpretive materials on a regular basis, and make modifications as necessary (p. 89)
- Promote awareness and appreciation for New River's many resource values, especially those significant to its ACEC designation (p. 2)
 - Continue to host field trips for local elementary and middle schools at New River for students to learn about the unique natural environment of the area (p. 89)

Location

The project would be located within the New River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) at the Storm Ranch location in T. 30 S., R. 15 W., Section 11, Willamette Meridian.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by January 8, 2010. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EA document or other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying

information – may be publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold you personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

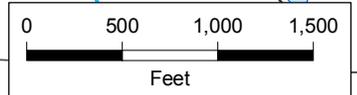
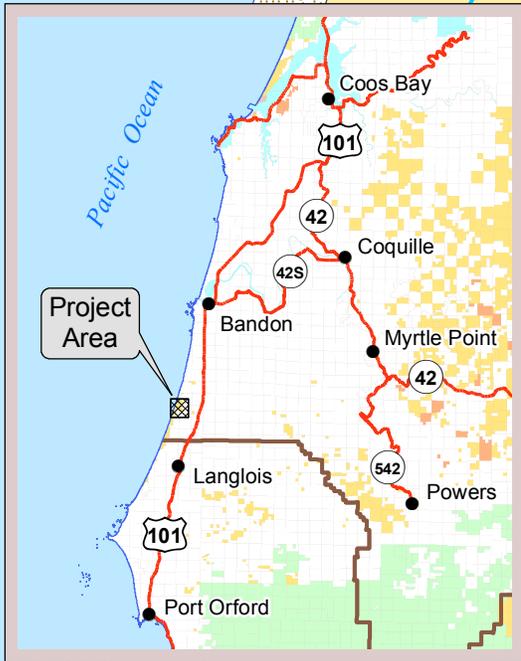
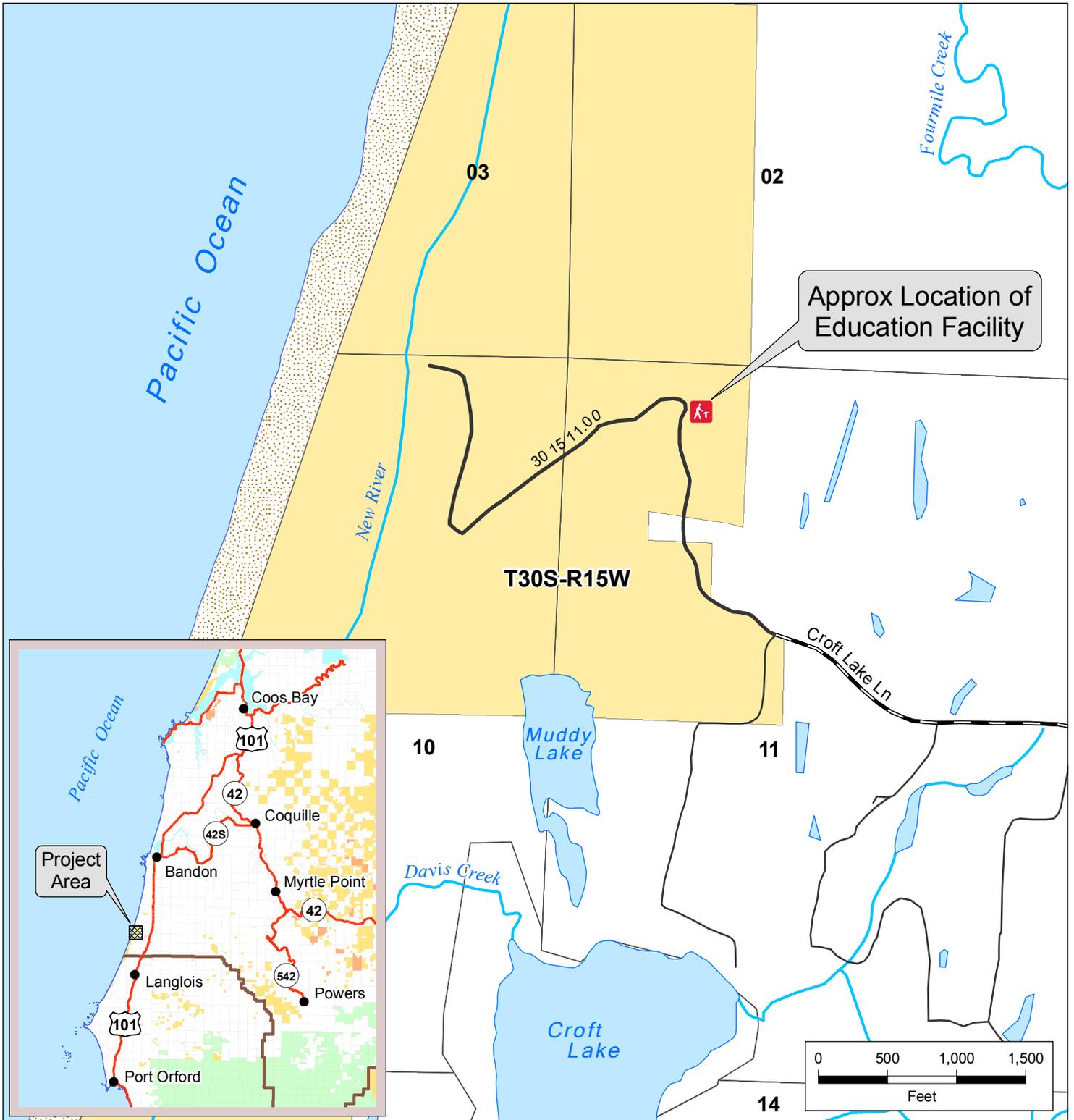
Please direct your responses or questions to Aimee E.B. Hoefs, Myrtlewood Filed Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, Or 97459, call (541) 756-0100, FAX: (541) 751-4303, or e-mail OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov, ATTN: Aimee E.B. Hoefs.

Respectfully,

/s/ Jeffrey K. Davis

Jeffrey K. Davis
Acting Myrtlewood Field Manager

Vicinity Map - New River Educational Facility



- | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Stream | | BLM Administered Land |
| | County Road | | Private/Other Ownership |
| | Paved Road | | "Wet" Sand Area |
| | Other Roads | | Education Facility |



US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management



Coos Bay District Office
Myrtlewood Resource Area
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No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data.

