

# Categorical Exclusion Documentation

## A. Background

**BLM Office:** Prineville Field Office

**NEPA Log #:** DOI - BLM - OR – P060 - 2010 - 056 - CX

**Proposed Action Title:** Silver Striders Commercial Hiking Group SRP

### Location:

- Juniper Woodland Trail System (11.5 miles): T17S, R13 & 14 E, approximately 3 miles West of Alfalfa, Oregon.
- Chimney Rock Trail (1.3 miles): T17S, R16E, approximately 15 miles South of Prineville, Oregon
- Dry River Canyon Trail (2.3 miles): T19S, R14 & 15E, approximately 20 miles East of Bend, Oregon.
- Otter Bench Trail System (Otter Bench Trail-1.75 miles, Horny Hollow Trail-1.5 miles, Opal Canyon Trail-2.0 miles. Pink Trail and Lone Pine Trail are not authorized): T12 & 13S, R 12E, approximately 10 miles Northwest of Terrebonne, Oregon.
- See attached maps.

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The proposed action is to approve a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for Pam Kirk of Silver Striders. Silver Striders is a commercial hiking and interpretation outfitter specializing in hiking with senior citizens. Silver Striders has special use permits on the Deschutes, Ochoco, Willamette, and Fremont National Forests, as well as Crooked River National Grasslands and Lakeview BLM and has operated on good terms with all of these agencies. Silver Striders would like to expand hiking opportunities into the Prineville District BLM lands in order to provide low elevation hiking opportunities during the spring and fall months close to the base of Bend, Oregon.

The SRP would allow commercial, guided hikes led by Silver Striders on just over 20 miles of designated trails within the Deschutes Resource Area of Prineville District BLM lands. The maximum group size is 12 and hikers would remain on trails during the duration of the trips. All hikes would be day trips with no overnight use. No trail would be used more than ten times per year and minimum use would be at least three guided hikes on any of the authorized trails per year.

Two authorized trail systems have seasonal wildlife closures for nesting raptors that would be respected: Dry River Canyon and a portion of Horny Hollow Trail are closed from February 1 through August 31 or until the closures are lifted.

Lead guides hold Wilderness First Responder certifications and another holds First Aid and CPR. First aid kits are always carried. Silver Striders is registered with the Oregon State Marine Board as an authorized guide and outfitter.

Participants would check boots before and after hiking for noxious weed seeds, dirty boots would be cleaned with a wire brush and any plant material would be bagged and packed out.

If approved a one year permit for 2011 would be granted to Silver Striders, if the SRP is found to be in good standing after a performance evaluation the permit may be granted for a three year period and reissued every three years as long as the permit remains in good standing and at the manager's discretion.

## **B. Land Use Plan Conformance**

Land Use Plan Name: Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan

Date approved (ROD): September, 2005

The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions, objectives, terms, or conditions:

- *Provide for projects, programs, and permits that promote a diverse range of recreation opportunities. Provide for individual, group, and competitive event recreational use that could not be reasonably accommodated on private land. (Page 109)*

## **C. Compliance with NEPA**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, Effective Date June 21, 2005., H. Recreation Management., (1) Issuance of special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails or in areas authorized in a land use plan. This CX cannot be used for commercial boating permits along Wild and Scenic Rivers. This CX cannot be used for the establishment or issuance of Special Recreation Permits for "Special Area" management (43 CFR 2932.5)

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply. See attached CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation checklist. The cultural, T&E plant and T&E animal specialists have indicated they expect no unacceptable impacts to resources.

## **D. Signature**

I considered many social and environmental effects to the land and social experience by allowing this Special Recreation Permit activity. The following mitigation measures must be followed to minimize any effects.

- **Trail crowding:** This will be mitigated with a maximum group size of 12 people and by only allowing Silver Striders to use any trail 10 times or less per year.

- **Noxious weeds:** This will be mitigated by participants checking and cleaning boots before and after each hike. Plant material must be bagged and packed out.
- **Wildlife Disturbance:** This will be mitigated by strictly adhering to seasonal wildlife closures on affected trails.
- **Cultural/Historical Values Disturbance:** This will be mitigated by only allowing participants on established, designated trails.

Authorizing official: Steve Robertson  
 Steve Robertson, Acting Deschutes Resource Area Field Manager

12/1/10  
 Date

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Jim Beaupre, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754. Telephone: (541) 416-6776. Email: jbeaupre@or.blm.gov.

| <b>CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| The proposed categorical exclusion action will:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 2.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Have significant impacts on public health or safety.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            | X         |
| Rationale: There are no impacts on public health or safety.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |
| 2.2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 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. |            | X         |
| Rationale: The trail locations are in areas where no wilderness values have been identified. The proposed action would not have significant impacts on any resource. Two trails (Chimney Rock and the Otter Bench System) have portions within Wild and Scenic River Corridors; however, neither authorized trail reaches the river level or has any effect on the Wild and Scenic qualities of the corridor or other recreation activity occurring on the rivers. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |
| 2.3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |            | X         |
| Rationale: There are no known controversial environmental effects and this action does not involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |
| 2.4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |            | X         |
| Rationale: There is no evidence that this action has potentially significant environmental effects. The action does not include any unique or unknown environmental risks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |
| 2.5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |            | X         |
| Rationale: Authorizing a Special Recreation Permit does not set any precedent for future action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |           |

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| or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. Special Recreation Permits are issued at the manager's discretion and could be revoked for violations of the permit.                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.                                                                                                                                                                         | X |
| Rationale: Similar past activities had no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effect                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 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.                                                                                                                                       | X |
| Rationale: The project area does not include any property listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 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.                                                                                                    | X |
| Rationale: Consultation with a district wildlife biologist and fisheries biologist has occurred on this project. The scope of the proposed action would not affect any Endangered or Threatened Species or have significant impacts or result in the loss of critical habitat.                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.                                                                                                                                                                                   | X |
| Rationale: The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Prineville District which complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and others.                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.10                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).                                                                                                                                                                                        | X |
| Rationale: The proposed action has no adverse effect on any low income or minority population.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 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).                                                                                     | X |
| Rationale: Hikers will remain on existing roads and trails. No sacred sites exist on the existing roads and trails.                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |
| 2.12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 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). | X |
| Rationale: The proposed activity would not measurably change the rate of introduction, continued existence or spread of noxious weeds or invasive species. Vehicles would remain on established roads or parking areas and hikers would remain on trails. Cross country hiking is not authorized. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |

# Silver Striders Special Recreation Permit

DOI-BLM-OR-PO60-2011-0004-CX

## Dry River Canyon Trail



Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Prineville District  
3050 NE Third Street  
Prineville, Oregon 97754  
Phone: 541-416-6700



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. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

MXD: P:\pr\gis\_projects\recreation\Special\_Recreation\_Permits\Individual\_SRP\Silver Striders\_SRP\_CX\mxd\Dry\_River\_Canyon\_Trail\_Silver\_Striders\_SRP\_CX.mxd

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**Legend**

- Cities
- TH** Trailhead
- Silver Striders Permit Trail
- Highways
- Roads
- Seasonal Wildlife Closure
- County Boundaries
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private

Contour interval 100 feet (shown in brown)



# Silver Striders Special Recreation Permit

DOI-BLM-OR-PO60-2011-0004-CX

## Otter Bench Trails



Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Prineville District  
3050 NE Third Street  
Prineville, Oregon 97754  
Phone: 541-416-6700



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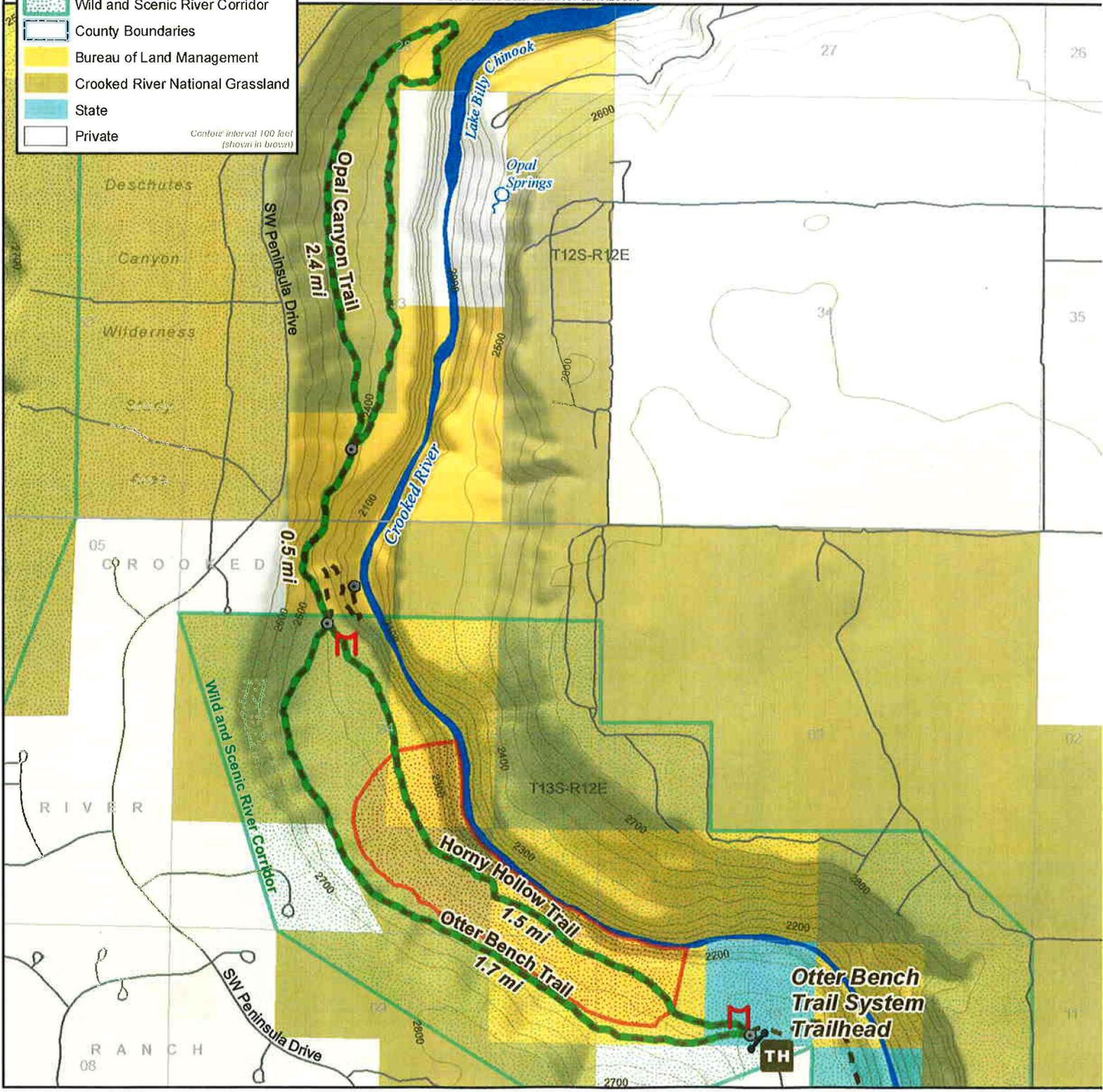
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**Legend**

- Cities
- Seasonal Barrier
- Gate
- Trailhead
- Silver Striders Permit Trails with mileage between junctions
- Trails
- Highways
- Roads
- Wildlife Seasonal Closure (February 1 - August 31)
- Wilderness Study Area
- Wild and Scenic River Corridor
- County Boundaries
- Bureau of Land Management
- Crooked River National Grassland
- State
- Private

*Contour interval 100 feet (shown in brown)*





# Silver Striders Special Recreation Permit

DOI-BLM-OR-PO60-2011-0004-CX

## Chimney Rock Trail



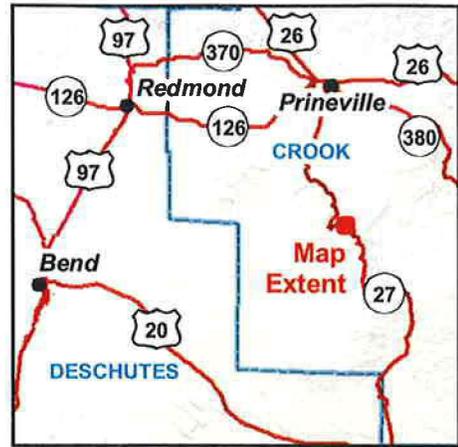
Department of the Interior  
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**Legend**

- Cities
- Trailhead
- Campground
- Silver Striders Permit Trail
- Highways
- Roads
- Wild and Scenic River Corridor
- County Boundaries
- Bureau of Land Management

Contour interval 100 feet (shown in brown)

