

2.4 Alternative B: Increased Demand Emphasis (Proposed Action)

Recreation Niche Statement: The Alsea Falls SRMA provides non-motorized trail opportunities, developed camping and day-use activities, environmental education and interpretation in a forested backcountry byway corridor between the Willamette and Alsea Valleys. Developed recreation site, non-motorized trail system, and targeted interpretive information allow for a relatively natural recreation experience close to rural communities and about an hour's drive from urban population centers. Visitors will relax with family and friends while discovering the outdoors in a developed recreation site.

Intent: Provide for and improve high quality visitor experience for designated and dispersed recreation activities including camping, picnicking, swimming, fishing, non-motorized trail use, nature study, target shooting, driving for pleasure, and hunting while minimizing resource impacts. Offer self-paced environmental education and interpretation opportunities where visitors can enjoy and explore nature, experience a sense of wellbeing, and gain knowledge in a developed recreation site and designated non-motorized trail system. Promote developed facilities, recreation activities, environmental education, and interpretation by publicizing available opportunities to communities and visitors.

Alternative B proposes to cater to the existing mix of recreation users within the SRMA, continue current recreation management, and provide the following additional action items. Camping opportunities would continue in the existing Alsea Falls recreation site expanding to accommodate future demand. The Alsea Falls picnic area would remain available, with possibilities of increased facilities to accommodate future use and visitors of all abilities. An overhaul of the 17 mile non-motorized Alsea Falls Trail System would realign, reroute, restore unsustainable portions of the trail system and construct up to 20 miles of new non-motorized trail. The riparian trail in the picnic area would be decommissioned and rerouted. Develop self-guided visitor interpretive and environmental education programs based on a cohesive interpretation and sign plan.

2.4.1 Overnight Use including Dispersed Recreation

- Replace existing gray water (sink) disposal stations with accessible ones and install additional gray water units in the day-use area where camping is allowed
- Phase 1 campground actions (Figure 4)
 - ✓ 16 campsites will remain open
 - ✓ Improve existing campsites through widening the site's footprint by increasing designated parking width to accommodate more vehicles, creating tent pads, elevating some campsites out of wet areas, and planting additional privacy screening between sites
 - ✓ Expand existing parking at campsites to accommodate additional vehicles; install barriers to prevent further site expansion
 - ✓ Campsite 16 will no longer be available for group camping; group camping will move to the day-use area
 - ✓ Create 2 to 3 individual campsites in the location of the former group campsite 16

- Phase 1 day-use area actions (Figure 5)
 - ✓ Convert up to 5 underutilized picnic sites to walk-in tent campsites
 - Each new campsite would include a fire ring, barbeque grill, picnic table
 - ✓ Add 1 to 2 group tent campsites by converting 3 picnic sites
 - Central gathering area with fire ring, picnic tables, and a new group structure
 - The newly constructed structure may be rented by day-users if unoccupied by campers
 - ✓ Assigned parking for walk-in tent sites and group tent sites
 - ✓ No parking for recreational vehicles, motor homes or trailers would be provided
 - ✓ Create tent pads to regulate use
- Phase 2 campground actions
 - ✓ Expand camping to the south of campsite 14 by constructing approximately six tent sites. Options include:
 - Walk-in sites with campsite 14 as the parking location for vehicles, increased parking capacity (Figure 6);
 - Build a road to allow vehicles to access the new campsites, provide parallel parking along a cul-de-sac road (Figure 7);
 - Modify campsite 12 by shortening the driveway to allow a trail to take off between campsites 12 and 14 to allow access to these new walk-in campsites, campsite 13 would be converted to parking for these sites (Figure 8); or
 - Build a road between sites 12 and 14 to access the new campsites, provide parallel parking along a cul-de-sac road (Figure 9).
 - ✓ These campsites would accommodate tents only; no trailer access, which reduces the size of parking area or road built
 - ✓ Each new campsite would include a fire ring, barbeque grill, picnic table and designated parking for one or two vehicles, no trailers.
- Dispersed camping would continue to be allowed within the SRMA outside designated recreation sites and promoted to equestrians
 - ✓ Dispersed campsites would possibly receive a fire ring to control fire, however regulated use would still prohibit fires outside of a designated campground
 - ✓ If necessary, harden or close dispersed campsites that add to resource concerns
 - ✓ Hardening sites may include installing natural barriers to rehabilitate a site or adding riprap and gravel to improve drainage and reduce resource damage.
 - ✓ Maintain patrols during high use season with greater emphasis on regular contact

2.4.2 Day Use and South Fork Alsea River National Back Country Byway including Dispersed Recreation (Figure 5)

- 8 picnic sites would remain open
- 8 picnic sites would be converted to allow camping based on demand, funding and staffing levels
- Close 6 picnic sites near the river to provide for resource protection and reduce maintenance costs
 - ✓ Decommission the trail to these closed sites

- ✓ Visitors would be directed through the central parking lot and back to the south reconnecting to the existing trail system
- Build additional picnic sites to the west of the central parking lot away from the river
 - ✓ Each picnic site would include a barbeque and picnic table
- Provide improved day-use safety descending to and views of the falls, the existing trail would install additional handrails, upgrade steps, and remove trail obstacles like roots and rocks
- Non-designated or unauthorized trails posing a hazard to visitors would be closed and signed.
- Update traffic regulation signage and add new portal signs along the byway
- Continue to acknowledge dispersed day-use activities

2.4.3 Trail System Changes, Development, and Additional Opportunities (Figure 10)

- Create a sustainable network of non-motorized trails
- Continue to provide trail opportunities on 17 miles of non-motorized trail by modifying to increase tread sustainability and provide for differing experiences
 - ✓ Include the trail to Green Peak Falls trail, accessed through the Hull Oaks' Hubert McBee campground
- May include modifying, rerouting, or moving some the existing trail system off the closed forest roads
 - ✓ Harden tread surfaces
 - ✓ Install drainage, stairs/steps (hiking only trails), switchbacks, or retaining walls
 - ✓ Would require new trail segment construction connecting to the existing system
 - ✓ This new mileage would not be included in newly constructed non-motorized trails so there could possibly be a total of 37 miles after full implementation
 - ✓ These trails would provide an alternative to using the closed road system and increase users' experiences
 - ✓ Visitors may choose to use closed roads
 - ✓ Trails would include accessibility standards whenever feasible
- May close and rehabilitate unsustainable trail segments that can not be maintained or require more maintenance costs
- Provide safe parking to accommodate projected demand from non-motorized user groups
- Improve Fall Creek trailhead parking, off the 14-7-25 road, to provide trail user parking and turning radius for equestrian trailer set up
 - ✓ Remove debris, level and grade
 - ✓ Install fee tube and bulletin board or kiosk
 - ✓ Provide a restroom - permanency of restroom would be based on usage
- Other trailheads off the 14-6-9 road would receive grading, leveling, and hardening as necessary
- Construct up to 20 miles of new non-motorized trails for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrian
- Provide trails to points of interest, environmental education and interpretation opportunities
- Replace existing trail bridges to reduce long-term maintenance and accommodate non-motorized or provide alternative means of crossing water, i.e. low water crossing

- Install additional trail bridges as needed
- Install directional signage on all trails at junctions that may cause confusion and interpretation signage periodically throughout the trail system at key points of interest
- Use of the Alsea Falls trail system would continue to be limited to non-motorized users
- Seasonal trail closures and trail use type on specific segments would be determined in the future based usage and potential for resource damage
- Consider zoning mountain bikes from horses to reduce conflict or provide an alternate route in the same direction
- Continue to restrict public vehicular access of the trail system
- Continue to provide administrative vehicle access to the Alsea Falls trail system by keeping closed forests roads in a serviceable condition
- Move existing gates within the non-motorized trail system to facilitate visitors seeking trail experiences
 - ✓ Consider moving the Fall Creek road (14-7-25) gate to the summit
 - ✓ Or, move the gate off the 14-6-9 road where it meets the 14-7-35 road to the summit on the 14-7-25 road
 - ✓ Install new gates to as needed to continue the non-motorized recreation opportunity for visitors of all abilities while limiting public vehicle access to native surfaced roads
 - ✓ A new parking area would accompany this action
 - A grove of large trees is off the relatively flat 14-7-34 road, which has landings that could be converted to parking
- When opportunities arise within the SRMA and when roads are no longer needed for transportation needs, convert unneeded roads to non-motorized trails
 - ✓ Maintain administrative access for managing multiple-use BLM lands

2.4.4 Visitor Services, Environmental Education, Interpretation, and Information

- Facilitate safe driving and organized parking through traffic control measures such as speed bumps on roadways, striped parking spaces
- Increase the size of the central parking lot within the day-use area to accommodate assigned parking for new walk-in campsites and reduce conflicts with day-users
- Increase or enhance existing communication system, staff radio and cell phone, capabilities through upgrading towers or cell phones
- Facilitate temporary housing for potential applicants through constructing up to two designated housing sites with a concrete pad and minimal hookups for campground host and seasonal employee
 - ✓ The sites would facilitate staffing recruitment and recruitment for individuals who serve the public and provide daily site operations and maintenance at Alsea Falls recreation site
 - ✓ Minimal site amenities would include a gray and black water dump location, low scale power source near the shop, and water hookups
 - ✓ Alternative power sources would be looked into to provide low scale supply capable of running a computer allowing the park to facilitate accepting reservations
- Maintain patrols of developed and dispersed recreation locations during high use season (typically mid June to early September)

- ✓ Continue to participate in cooperative law enforcement effort between BLM and Benton County Police Department
- Develop a plan to address interpretation and environmental education provided for within the SRMA
 - ✓ Signage would flow and direct visitors in a safe and efficient manner
 - ✓ Consolidate signs and blend into the environment as much as possible
 - ✓ Update signage, kiosks, bulletin boards, websites, and brochures to reflect public information needs and help promote the site as a destination for non-motorized recreation opportunities
 - ✓ Install interpretation signage periodically throughout the trail system at key points of interest
- Develop a self-guided brochure and accessible interpretive trail through the rerouting of an existing trail or constructing a new trail segment. Install additional bulletin boards or kiosks throughout the SRMA
- Update and monitor websites periodically to provide the public with readily accessible user-friendly information about recreation opportunities within the SRMA and allow the public to better plan their vacations or recreation time
- Collaborate with local communities on events and surrounding recreational opportunities to help bring awareness to local residents and public seeking to expand their experience while visiting the SRMA and local communities
- Build recycling centers to allow visitors to reduce the amount of waste transferred to the landfill in current locations of wooden corrals with one additional recycling center near the entrance
- Seek partnerships and agreements with individuals, groups, local government and adjacent landowners to promote and expand recreational opportunities and provide better recreation experiences to visitors
- The BLM would look into efficiencies of providing recreation opportunities within and in the vicinity of the SRMA by exploring the possibility of providing recreation opportunities through nongovernmental providers such as concessionaires