

Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area

Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA)

Frequently Asked Questions

The Salem District, Bureau of Land Management invites the public to comment on a proposed management plan for BLM lands within the Molalla River Recreation Area. The proposed plan is contained in an Environmental Assessment, which outlines the proposed plan as well as three other alternative strategies and analyzes their potential effects on recreation use and the area's natural resources. A public meeting to present the alternatives has been set for June 29th.

Why is the BLM preparing a Management Plan?

Public scoping identified a variety of issues including recreation-related impacts to natural resources and ongoing concerns over public safety, litter, dumping and vandalism. The plan will allow BLM to make investments in the area with a long-term vision in place.

Which areas does the proposed plan cover?

The planning area covers 27,000 acres of BLM-administered land which includes a popular 10-mile stretch of the Molalla River, the Molalla River Trail System and Table Rock Wilderness. BLM acquired 5,000 acres along the river in a 1992 land exchange. The area is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Molalla and hosts an estimated 50,000 visitors annually from the Willamette Valley and the Portland metropolitan area.

What changes would the proposed plan make to the area?

The proposed plan describes a management strategy that protects natural resource values while providing complementary public access and diverse recreation opportunities. The proposed plan identifies changes to overnight use including the development of three primitive campgrounds with 8 to 10 sites each for tents and small RVs; camping would be prohibited outside these locations. Two locations would be improved for day use recreation with designated parking, trash and sanitary facilities. Improvements would be made to the Molalla River Trails System including several miles of new trail construction. Improved visitor information would be developed. A seasonal closure would be instituted on one road system.

What phase of the process are we in?

The BLM has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) which describes the proposed plan as well as three other alternatives. It then analyzes the potential effects each alternative might have on the environment and recreation use. The EA is a way for the public and decision makers to understand the potential consequences BLM's actions may have. Members of the public will have a 30 day formal comment (from June 16th to July 15th) period to provide their feedback on the proposed plan. These comments will be considered as the BLM finalizes a Management Plan.

What other alternatives are being considered?

The Environmental Assessment analyzes four alternatives: A) The No Action alternative that would continue current management practices; B) the Proposed Plan; C) Development of a single, centralized and developed campground with minor improvements to day use; and D) Enhancement of the area for day use only, with no overnight camping allowed.

Why was the proposed plan selected from the four alternatives?

The proposed plan balances the need for recreation use with the protection of the area's natural features in a way that preserves and enhances most existing uses. The proposed plan attempts to address the identified issues while preserving the things visitors enjoy about the Molalla River



Recreation Area. Limiting use to a single developed site or prohibiting overnight use represents more drastic changes, and would likely result in visitors being displaced to other recreation areas.

Where can the public view the Environmental Assessment?

A copy of the EA will be posted on the Salem BLM (<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/salem/index.php>) website on Wednesday, June 16th 2010. Hard copies or CDs containing the EA will also be available upon request from the Salem District Office.

What opportunities are there for public input and feedback?

An open house will be held on Tuesday, June 29 from 5 to 8 PM, at the Molalla Public Library to present the proposed plan and three alternative strategies. Attendees are invited to come anytime during the three hour period to review the proposals, ask questions of BLM staff and provide their feedback. Comments will also be accepted via e-mail at Cindy.Enstrom@blm.gov, or by mail at Bureau of Land Management, Salem District Attn: Cindy Enstrom, Cascades Field Manager 1717 Fabry Rd SE, Salem, OR 97306.

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