

Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan

July 2011

Salem District Office

BLM

Bureau of Land Management
Salem District
Clackamas County, Oregon



Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan and Decision Record

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BLM/OR/WA/AE-11/021+1792

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Executive Summary

The Molalla River-Table Rock recreation area is located southeast of the city of Molalla, Oregon in the western Cascade Mountains and includes 27,405 acres administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Salem District. The Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan articulates a strategy for the management of recreation resources within the planning area for the next 15 years.

Incorporating scenic portions of the Molalla River as well as adjacent uplands and Table Rock Wilderness, the area provides diverse and popular recreation opportunities for northwest Oregon residents including swimming, picnicking, camping, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, whitewater boating and recreational shooting.

The most popular and accessible portion of the recreation area was acquired by the BLM in the early 1990's. In proximity to a large proportion of the state's population, the area has seen a steady growth in visitation since the acquisition. This use has resulted in impacts to natural resources and concerns over public safety that lead to the establishment of an effective management strategy.

The Management Plan establishes the following recreation 'niche' for the area, which identifies its role in the regional recreation market: *The Molalla River-Table Rock recreation area provides diverse opportunities for river-based recreation, minimally-developed camping and high quality trail activities along a forested river corridor. Rustic facilities and easy river access allow for a relatively primitive recreation experience within 10 miles of rural communities and 60 miles of urban population centers.*

The plan includes detailed direction for the management of overnight use, day use, trails, visitor information and administration. It also lays out specific development projects and management actions that may be taken during the 15 year lifespan of the plan. Major actions include:

- Construction of three small campgrounds (Cedar Grove, Three Bears and Pine Creek) providing approximately 30 overnight sites
- Prohibiting camping along the Molalla River outside of developed sites
- Improvement to day use and river access, including construction at Looney's Gate and enhancement of Ivor's Wayside
- Changes to the Molalla River Trail System including re-routes of unsustainable trail segments, up to five miles of new trail construction and modifications to trail system management
- Enhanced information for visitors, including an orientation kiosk and interpretive panels that highlight river geology

Individuals have the right to appeal this decision to the BLM, Cascades Field Manager within 30 days and thereafter appeal to the Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary. If no appeals are filed, this decision will become effective and be implemented after 30 days.

Document Organization

Decision Record documents the decision that has been made regarding management of the Molalla River-Table Rock area. It provides a rationale for the decision and responds to substantive public comments that were submitted following release of the Environmental Assessment.

Chapter 1: Introduction, Background and Area Overview provides an introduction to the planning area and background on the Molalla River-Table Rock planning process. The chapter expresses the purpose and need for management action, and describes the issues and concerns identified during public outreach efforts. It describes the natural and cultural resources present within the area and describes existing recreation use.

Chapter 2: Goals and Objectives lays out the plan's broad goals and objectives and describes the recreation 'niche' the *Molalla River-Table Rock* area will play in the regional recreation market. Chapter 2 also describes the zoning system established by the plan and the targeted benefits and settings within each zone (Developed River Zone, Dispersed River and Upland Zone, Trail Zone and Wilderness Zone).

Plan Implementation describes the priorities for completing the projects identified within this Management Plan.

Chapter 3: Overnight Use outlines management direction and specific actions to address the most pressing issue identified in this plan: the management of overnight use along the Molalla River and throughout the recreation area. Facility development plans are included within this chapter.

Chapter 4: Day Use and River Access outlines management direction and specific actions to enhance day use and river access within the planning area.

Chapter 5: Trail Access and Development outlines management direction and specific actions for management of the Molalla River Trail System and other trails within the planning area.

Chapter 6: General Management, Visitor Services and Interpretation outlines management direction and specific actions for general recreation area management, visitor services and interpretation. It provides guidance on natural resource protection, administration, regulation of certain activities such as recreational mining and the permitting of commercial activities.

Appendix A: Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update provides revised direction for management of recreation use within the Table Rock Wilderness Area. It describes management actions taken since completion of the Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan, completed in 1987. It establishes revised wilderness management goals and objectives and identifies specific management actions for visitor use, trails and visitor information.

Appendix B: BLM Decision Appeal Form contains a copy of BLM Form 1842-1 "Information on Taking Appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals".

Source material used in the preparation of this document can be found in the Bibliography.

Decision Record

The 37,487-acre Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) is located in the western Cascade Mountains southeast of the city of Molalla in Clackamas County, Oregon. It includes 27,405 acres of public land administered by the Salem District Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM has completed a planning effort in order to establish an effective management strategy for recreation resources within the SRMA. This Decision Record (DR) outlines the selected action and describes the rationale for its selection. It also summarizes public outreach efforts and contains a response to substantive public comments.

Background

The Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) offers a wide variety of recreation opportunities including dispersed camping, picnicking, swimming, angling, horseback riding, mountain biking, hunting, day-hiking, non-motorized boating and recreational shooting all within an hour's drive of the Portland and Salem metropolitan areas. Over 90 percent of visitors to the planning area come from these metropolitan centers or elsewhere in the Willamette Valley. Few rivers in the state offer such ease of access to varied recreation opportunities so close to major urban areas.

A March 1992 land exchange between the BLM and a private, industrial forest owner brought 11 miles of Molalla River frontage totaling 5,013 acres into public ownership. A considerable amount of recreational and public use including dumping, vandalism and long-term occupancy on private land precipitated the exchange.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared and released by the Salem District on June 16th, 2010 to present and analyze a range of potential management strategies for BLM-administered lands within the Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA.



60,000 to 70,000 visitors recreate in the planning area each year.

Decision

Having considered the Proposed Action, the No Action alternative and other action alternatives identified in the Environmental Assessment for the Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan (EA # DOI-BLM-OR-S040-2010-0003-EA) it is my decision to implement the Proposed Action with a set of modifications, hereafter referred to as the selected action. The decision is in substance closely aligned with the Proposed Action analyzed in the EA, with incorporated components of action alternatives B and C. The table below summarizes the final plan as identified in this Decision and Recreation Area Management Plan and compares it with the selected action.

Theme or Component	Final Plan (Selected Action)	Proposed Action from the Environmental Assessment	<i>Changes from the Proposed Plan to the Selected Action</i>
Recreation Niche Statement	Recreation Niche Statement: The Molalla River-Table Rock recreation area provides diverse opportunities for river-based recreation, minimally-developed camping and high quality trail activities along a forested river corridor. Rustic facilities and easy river access allow for a relatively primitive recreation experience within 10 miles of rural communities and 60 miles of urban population centers.	Recreation Niche Statement: The Molalla River-Table Rock recreation area provides diverse opportunities for river-based activities and minimally-developed camping along a forested river corridor. Rustic facilities and easy river access allow for a relatively primitive recreation experience close to rural communities and urban population centers.	<i>The Recreation Niche was expanded to acknowledge the trail activities enjoyed by various user groups within the Molalla River and Table Rock trail systems. More specificity was provided on the distance between the planning area and nearby communities.</i>
Overnight Use	Camping limited to three campgrounds located within the main recreational corridor with a total of thirty two overnight sites. Each campground has defined parking, registration, vault restroom, trash service and improved river access. Potable water will be provided at all three campgrounds and a single volunteer host site will be established at one campground. A fee for overnight use will be pursued.	Camping limited to three small, primarily walk-in campgrounds located within the main recreational corridor with six to ten sites each. Each campground has defined parking, registration, vault restroom, trash service, and improved river access. A fee for overnight use would be charged.	<i>In response to public comments, the amenities at the developed overnight facilities were expanded to include potable water and gray water systems. Based on additional design work completed as part of the final plan, the total number of campsites has been identified.</i>
Day Use and River Access	Majority of dispersed day use locations remain open. Approximately twenty sites with resource concerns (e.g. riparian area damage, vehicle trespass) will be closed and rehabilitated. Two day use recreation areas will be developed at Looney's Gate/Osprey complex and Ivor's Wayside. Amenities include defined parking, restrooms, trash service, and picnic sites. Based on the final amenities provided on site, BLM may pursue a day use fee for developed recreation sites.	Majority of dispersed day use locations remain open. Those with severe resource concerns (riparian area damage, vehicle trespass, etc) closed and rehabilitated. Looney's Gate and Ivor's Wayside minimally developed as a day use/river access location to facilitate day use including defined parking, restrooms and trash service. No fees would be charged.	<i>Development of day use and river access along the river is similar to the strategy under the proposed plan, but with an expansion of the Looney's Gate location to include the existing Osprey campsite. The direction for fees was adjusted to reflect the enhanced amenities that may be provided at each site.</i>

Theme or Component	Final Plan (Selected Action)	Proposed Action from the Environmental Assessment	<i>Changes from the Proposed Plan to the Selected Action</i>
Trails and Trailhead Access	Complete an overhaul of the Shared Use Trails System that fixes unsustainable segments. Streamline trailhead access. Re-route some existing trails and construct up to five miles of new trails that focus on providing user-specific opportunities in equestrian and mountain bike emphasis areas. Develop riverside trail that connects Looney's Gate to Hardy Creek Trailhead.	Complete an overhaul of the Shared Use Trails System that fixes unsustainable segments. Streamline trailhead access. Re-route some existing trails and construct up to five miles of new trails that focus on providing user-specific opportunities in equestrian and mountain bike emphasis areas. Develop riverside trail that connect primitive campgrounds.	<i>No major changes have been made to this theme, but the final plan provides additional specifics on trail segments that may be altered and how trailheads will be managed.</i>
Visitor Services and Information	Improve consistency and appearance of visitor information including signage and kiosks. Develop two interpretive stations within the main recreation corridor in the vicinity of the Molalla River canyon and rosette formation. Install and maintain new, consistent visitor information at developed campgrounds that clearly articulates rules and regulations.	Improve consistency and appearance of visitor information including signage and kiosks. Develop one interpretive station within the main recreation corridor. Install and maintain new, consistent visitor information at developed campgrounds that clearly articulates rules and regulations.	<i>An additional interpretive station along S. Molalla Forest Rd has been added to the Final Plan. The two sites will allow for a more comprehensive discussion of interpretive themes and highlight additional areas of scenic or geologic interest.</i>
Travel and Transportation Management	Complete a seasonal closure (January 1st through September 1 or the beginning of bow hunting season) of Pinecrest Road to prevent resource damage, wildlife disturbance, and threats to public safety while allowing access for fall hunting season. Monitor visitor use and evaluate the need for a permitted entry program.	Complete a seasonal closure (April 1 through September 30) of Pinecrest Road to prevent resource damage, wildlife disturbance, potential for fire start and threats to public safety.	<i>The timeframe of the Pinecrest Rd closure was shifted to allow for access during bow hunting season for elk and deer, as identified by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. A permitted entry program may be considered.</i>

Theme or Component	Final Plan (Selected Action)	Proposed Action from the Environmental Assessment	<i>Changes from the Proposed Plan to the Selected Action</i>
Fee Collection	Pursue approval for fees at developed overnight sites. All fees would be collected under authorization from and in compliance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) [PL 108-447]. Establishment of fee sites would be balanced by the provision of no-fee opportunities elsewhere in the planning area.	All fees would be collected under authorization from and in compliance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) [PL 108-447]. Establishment of fee sites would be balanced by the provision of no-fee opportunities elsewhere in the planning area.	<i>No change has been made to this theme. The final plan clarifies that the BLM's ability to charge fees at recreation facilities is contingent upon providing the minimum number of standard amenities and approval from the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee.</i>
Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site	Make Aquila Vista available as a reservable group camping area during the summer season while promoting the site for environmental education during the remainder of the year. Complete design for site modifications, with a reliance on existing infrastructure.	Pursue no large-scale site development at Aquila Vista and continue maintenance of existing infrastructure. Allow walk-in public access to the site from S. Molalla Forest Road or via the trail system without advertising it as a recreation destination	<i>The final plan identifies a new direction for management of Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site, which now will be made available for overnight group use based on the regional demand for group camping and the inability of other campgrounds to meet this demand.</i>
Equestrian Camping	Evaluate the potential for overnight equestrian facilities, consistent with its classification as a category B project. Conditions that must be met before an overnight equestrian facility is constructed are established are laid out in Chapter 3, page 60.	Based on criteria established in the Environmental Assessment (pg 41), the planning area does not offer an adequate location for an equestrian camping facility.	<i>The final plan modifies the criteria for an equestrian facility by removing the requirement that the facility be located at a previously disturbed site. It identifies the development of an equestrian camp as a Category B Project. This development would be considered upon completion of Category A projects, as identified in chapter 3. under plan implementation.</i>

Decision Rationale and Alternatives Considered

The existing recreation management situation within the Molalla River-Table Rock area, as described in the Environmental Assessment (EA), has led to a variety of issues including threats to public safety and impacts to natural resources. Scoping of partner agencies and members of the public identified these and other issues that should be remedied as part of this planning effort.

The selected action was chosen from among the alternatives because it addresses these issues by providing the most comprehensive and realistic framework for managing recreation within the Molalla River-Table Rock area. It is the most balanced in scope, enhancing a broad range of activities instead of improving the area for a select set of visitors. Whereas other alternatives would result in relatively high levels of visitor displacement, the selected action addresses the primary issues of public safety and resource degradation while retaining the qualities that draw current users to the area.

To address the issues identified during scoping, the selected action lays out concrete steps. For example, to remedy the effects of dispersed camping and river access on water quality, the selected action identifies additional sanitary facilities and concentration of visitor use at appropriate locations. In order to enhance conditions on the trail system for various user groups, the plan lays out a set of trail re-routes and new trail management policies. The selected action resolves the identified issues while establishing a unique 'recreation niche' that sets the Molalla River apart from comparable river corridors in the region.

Based on the analysis conducted by the planning team, the actions contained within this management plan will improve conditions for a wide range of resources including wildlife, fisheries and botanical species. Where projects or management actions may result in adverse impacts to these resources, project design features have been adopted to minimize or eliminate these impacts.

In addition to improving the condition of natural resources within the planning area, the selected action is expected to result in numerous benefits for the visiting public. Site development, trail enhancement, improved visitor services and other actions are expected to improve the overall visitor experience for a wide range of users.

Comparison of Alternatives in regards to the Purpose and Need	
<p>No Action Alternative (Alternative A)</p> <p><i>Relationship to Purpose and Need</i></p>	<p>Continuation of current management practices. No large-scale site development or alteration would occur. Designated, dispersed camping areas would remain and be managed under current rules and regulations.</p> <p><i>I did not select this alternative because it does not address the issue of public safety and natural resource degradation within the planning area. This alternative does not provide a framework for management recreation use and meeting future demand for activities like overnight camping.</i></p>
<p>Proposed Action (Alternative B)</p> <p><i>Relationship to Purpose and Need</i></p>	<p>Proposed concentrating overnight and day use to locations that minimize natural resource impacts. Camping would be limited to three minimally developed campgrounds. Day use would be concentrated and enhanced. An overhaul of the trail system would be completed.</p> <p><i>The paragraphs on the previous page describe how the modified Alternative B (selected action) meets the purpose and need for action and why I selected this alternative.</i></p>
<p>Centralized Camping Emphasis (Alternative C)</p> <p><i>Relationship to Purpose and Need</i></p>	<p>Construction of one developed campground with camping prohibited outside this location. Minor changes would be made to day use. An overhaul of the trail system would not be completed.</p> <p><i>I did not select this alternative because it does not provide an appropriate framework for providing the types of recreation opportunities and settings valued by visitors. May result in a higher level of visitor displacement than the selected action. For example, current visitors who value minimally developed camping in a riverside setting would be displaced to other areas within the region.</i></p>
<p>Day Use Recreation Emphasis (Alternative D)</p> <p><i>Relationship to Purpose and Need</i></p>	<p>Proposed closing all existing campsites and prohibiting camping within the main recreational corridor to protect the river's natural resources. Three day use recreation sites would be constructed and riverside activities including trail access and interpretation would be highlighted.</p> <p><i>I did not select this alternative because it does not meet current and expected visitor demand for overnight recreation. May result in an unacceptable level of visitor displacement. For example, the substantial portion of visitors who enjoy camping would have to seek out that opportunity elsewhere under this alternative.</i></p>

Public Involvement, Comments Received and Response to Comments

Public involvement played an integral part in the development of this plan and related decision. The planning process for the Molalla River-Table Rock plan has been ongoing since a scoping meeting was held October 7, 2008. This meeting contributed to setting the scope of the plan and identified issues and concerns to be addressed.

While developing the Environmental Assessment, BLM staff participated in a series of tours, meetings and focus groups to solicit stakeholder input.

The Environmental Assessment, released on June 16th, 2010 was made available for public comment for a 45 day period. A letter announcing the availability of the Environmental Assessment was sent to approximately 80 parties including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. The document was posted in a downloadable format on a dedicated BLM Salem District webpage for the entirety of the comment period.

Notices of the availability of the Environmental Assessment were published in three regional newspapers: the Oregonian, Molalla Pioneer and Salem Statesman-Journal. During the 45-day comment period, public comments were accepted via mail, e-mail and through hard copy comment forms.

An open house public meeting was held June 29th in Molalla, Oregon at the Molalla Public Library from 5 to 8 p.m. Information on the plan was presented to 31 attendees. Representatives from the planning team and agency management were made available to discuss the EA and the proposed action.

Comments Received

Approximately 90 comments were received during the EA public comment period from individuals, non-governmental organizations and government entities. Eight (8) comment forms, eight (8) formal letters and nineteen (19) e-mails were received. Approximately 65 distinct comments were recorded during the June 29th open house.

Response to Comments

Several substantive comments resulted in changes to the final Recreation Area Management Plan. According to BLM policy substantive comments are those that question, with reasonable basis, the assumptions or information used as part of an analysis. They may suggest other reasonable alternatives or present new information.

These comments revolved around several topics: campground amenities, public safety, recreation area development and equestrian camping. The manner in which these topics are addressed in the plan and the rationale for doing so is outlined below.

- ***Campground Amenities*** (Molalla River Alliance (MRA), city of Molalla, Native Fish Society, Molalla RiverWatch, others)

Several substantive comments revolved around what amenities and design features should be incorporated into the developed campgrounds. Some comments indicated that the balance of amenities found under the Proposed Action was insufficient for protection of natural resources and visitor enjoyment. These organizations and individuals felt the smaller, more rustic campgrounds from the Proposed Action should include amenities such as potable water and gray water disposal found in the more traditional, developed campground under Alternative C. Without them, commenters foresaw “obvious criticism about [the campground’s] Spartan (not rustic) facilities” (Molalla River Alliance, 7/15/2010).

In addition, several organizations and individuals expressed concern that the placement of sites within the developed campgrounds would compromise water quality and lead to a degradation of riverside vegetation. These comments recommended that a minimum setback from the river for all campsites and structures in order to “protect streamside vegetation, and reduce soil erosion, and loss of habitat” (Molalla RiverWatch, 7/30/2010).

Response → Modifications have been made to the design of overnight camping facilities based in part on these comments. Facility development plans for the three overnight campgrounds identified in this plan (Cedar Grove, Three Bears and Pine Creek) are found in Chapter 3. The designs now include potable water at each campground and provisions for gray water disposal.

In addition, a minimum setback from the river has been incorporated for campsites and structures within the developed campgrounds. Campsites will be no less than 50 feet from the river and 25 feet from the top of riverbank. Structures with foundations (restrooms, utility buildings, etc) will no less than 125 feet from the river. These setbacks will protect riparian vegetation while providing the high quality, riverside camping experience intended by the facility development plans.

- **Visitor Services and Public Safety** (Molalla River Alliance, City of Molalla, Native Fish Society, Molalla RiverWatch, others)

Another set of concerns was expressed about the public safety situation within the proposed campgrounds. The Proposed Action did not include a volunteer host site stationed within the recreation area. The comments of several organizations and individuals felt campground development without a direct administrative presence would lead to an unsafe atmosphere for visitors, and potentially result in the “revival and renewal of problems” and “renewed unruly, unacceptable and confrontational behavior” (MRA, 7/15/2010).

These comments highlighted the benefits of ongoing volunteer host patrols and recommended establishing, at a minimum, one host site within the main recreation corridor. Some comments expressed a desire for a volunteer host stationed at each campground and that the provision of volunteer hosts “is crucial and should be a priority for funding” (Native Fish Society, 7/9/2010).

Response → Modifications to the final plan have been made based in part on these comments. The BLM has strived to increase administrative presence along the Molalla River since the area came into public ownership. The presence of seasonal and permanent staff, volunteer hosts and law enforcement personnel has been gradually increased.

In combination with other law enforcement efforts by local and county officials, this presence has led to a decrease in problematic visitor behavior and improvements to public safety.

The volunteer host location described in Alternative C has been incorporated into the final plan. The site will be located at Pine Creek Campground and provide an increased level of administrative presence within the river corridor. The volunteer host site may be constructed prior to full development of the Pine Creek site, allowing for host patrols to begin as other campgrounds become open to the public. The volunteer host, once established, will be able to visit all developed sites and provide an administrative presence.

- ***Equestrian Camping Facilities*** (M. Wagner, Oregon Equestrian Trails, Molalla RiverWatch, others)

Comments from individuals, user groups and other entities raised concerns about the lack of equestrian camping provided under any of the action alternatives in the Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment, in section 2.5, outlines why an alternative including an equestrian camp was considered but not analyzed.

These comments indicated that an unmet demand for equestrian camping exists within northwest Oregon. While these comments were not consistent in their recommendations for the size, style or location of an equestrian campground, many commenters recommended that some type of facility be constructed within the planning area. The popularity of the trail system with equestrians, the contributions by these users to trail maintenance and the proximity of the Molalla River to communities with high rates of equestrian ownership were all cited as reasons for developing such a facility.

Some comments questioned the methodology and content of the visitor study used during the analysis. These responders felt that equestrians were underrepresented in the survey, leading to a skewed understanding of the visitor base by the BLM.

Response → The BLM acknowledges that equestrian camping is an appropriate and legitimate recreation activity within the planning area. Overnight opportunities are currently available for equestrians within Table Rock Wilderness, facilitated by improvements to Bull Creek Trailhead.

The final Recreation Area Management Plan takes a revised approach concerning overnight equestrian use. The final plan now identifies that an equestrian specific overnight facility fits within the sideboards of this 15 year management strategy, and will be considered for future development. This activity specific development is highlighted as a potential project in Chapter 3, based on a set of conditions. The project has been classified as a Category B project.

The prioritization of projects within this plan was based on their relationship to the issues identified during public scoping. Category A projects are those that directly contribute to addressing those issues (such as natural resource degradation and public safety), while Category B projects are those that develop new or expanded recreation opportunities for various users.

In addition, construction of an equestrian facility is hindered by minimal options for suitable sites and the resulting costs for development. For a full discussion of priorities of project implementation, see section “Plan Implementation” on page 49.

The 2007 Visitor Use Study completed by Arizona State University in conjunction with the Salem District is the best information available on recreation use within the planning area. A scientifically-based methodology was established to determine visitor origins, activities and preferences. The survey enjoyed an extremely high response rate (93%). This data can be compared with other information collected by BLM staff including daily visitor logs and personal observation in order to confirm or disprove survey findings. Based on this analysis, it is believed that the visitor use estimates used in this study are the best available.

Endangered Species Act and Cultural (State Historic Preservation Office) Consultation

Consultation for the implementation of proposed restoration and recreation projects will occur at the time that project specific NEPA analysis is completed.

Compliance with Land Use Plans and other Management Direction

This decision, designed under the 1995 Salem District Resource Management Plan, is also in conformance with the Salem District Resource Management Plan, December 2008 (RMP) along with other plans and policies which direct and provide the legal framework for management of BLM lands within the Salem District.

These documents are described in the *Molalla River-Table Rock Area Management Plan Environmental Assessment* (DOI-BLM-OR-S040-2010-0003-EA), pp. 118-120, which is incorporated here by reference. Management actions identified in this plan will be designed to conform to the management direction, described above.

Conclusion

Reviewing and Finding of No Significant Impact

I have determined that change to the Finding of No Significant Impact (Environmental Assessment, p. 123) for the Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Management Plan is not necessary. The comments on the EA were reviewed and no information was provided in the comments that lead me to believe the analysis, data or conclusions are in error. The selected action is a management strategy for BLM-administered lands in the Molalla River - Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area. Site-specific NEPA analyses will be required for all proposed projects described in Chapters 3 through 6 of the management plan. Effects of the selected action are similar or less than the effects described in the EA.

Therefore, I have determined that the implementation of the selected action will not have significant environmental effects beyond those already identified in the *Salem District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement*, September, 1994 (RMP/FEIS).

The selected action does not constitute a major federal action having significant effects on the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Administrative Review Opportunities

Individuals have the right to appeal this decision to the BLM Cascades Field Manager and thereafter appeal to the Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations of 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4. To appeal this decision, it must be filed in writing to Cindy Enstrom, Salem District BLM, 1717 Fabry Road SE, Salem, OR, 97306.

Implementation Date

If no appeals are filed, this decision will become effective after August 18th, 2011. For additional information, contact Zach Jarrett, Lead Outdoor Recreation Planner, (503) 375-5610 at the Salem District Office.

Approved by: *Cindy Enstrom*
Cindy Enstrom, Field Manager
Cascades Resource Area

7-13-2011
Date

Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan

Chapter 1: Introduction, Background and Area Overview

1.1 Description and Map of Planning Area

The headwaters of the Molalla River begin nearly 4,900 feet above sea level on the western slopes of the Cascade Mountains near Table Rock. The river flows undammed roughly 49 miles west and north to join the Willamette River near Canby. The planning area includes 27,405 acres of BLM-administered land and 10,082 acres of private land within the Upper Molalla watershed. Situated between the Clackamas River to the north and the Little North Fork of the Santiam River to the south, the Upper Molalla watershed exhibits traits typical of the western Cascades including dense coniferous forests, heavy precipitation and volcanic-origin geology (see Figure 1). Elevations range from 4881 feet at the top of Table Rock to 800 feet along the Molalla River.



The Molalla River-Table Rock area is characterized by steep, densely forested ridges and rocky, free-flowing rivers.

The planning area was identified as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) by the 1995 Salem District Resource Management Plan in recognition of area's value as a recreation resource. Special Recreation Management Area's are geographic areas where the BLM provides an increased level of management attention as compared with Extensive Recreation Management Areas. The designation is administrative only and is meant to identify areas where staff time should be spent and investments in recreation should be focused.

The proposed SRMA boundary identified in this document (Figure 2) is more extensive than that found in the 1995 RMP. It more accurately reflects the extent of where BLM expends its resources to manage recreation use. Delineation of the new SRMA boundary constitutes a recommendation that it be adopted in the next land use planning process.

The Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) offers a wide variety of recreation opportunities including dispersed camping, picnicking, swimming, angling, horseback riding, mountain biking, hunting, day hiking, non-motorized boating and recreational shooting all within an hour's drive of the Portland and Salem metropolitan areas. Over 90 percent of visitors to the planning area come from these metropolitan centers or elsewhere in the Willamette Valley. Few rivers in the state offer such ease of access to varied recreation opportunities so close to major urban areas.

Much of the area is accessible via paved or improved gravel roads originating from the west. The area's main access route, the South Molalla Forest Road, accounts for a large majority of administrative and recreational visits. Roads within the recreation area are also heavily used for the transport of timber and other forest products.

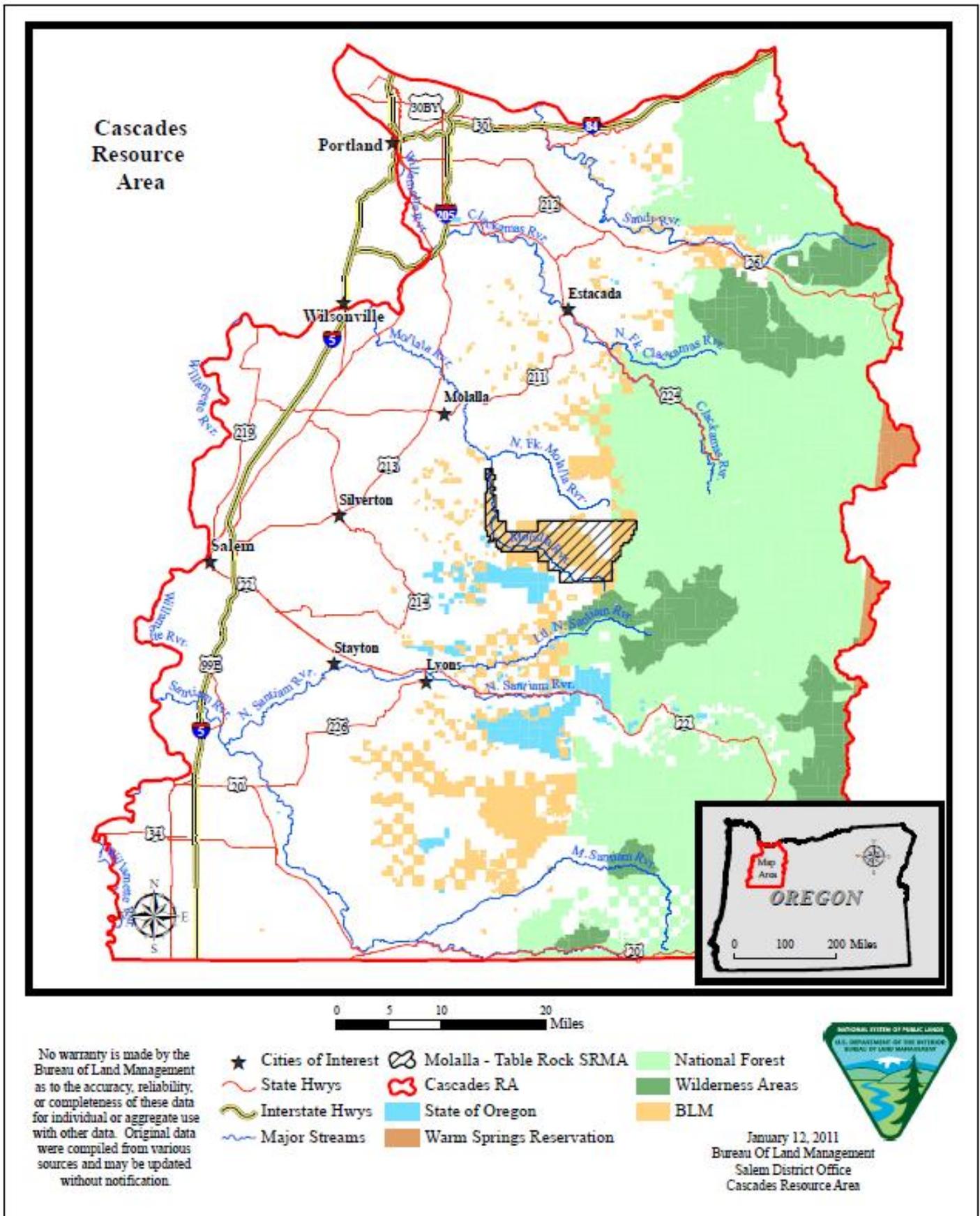
Current recreation use is primarily unstructured and dispersed in nature with limited facility development. Overnight camping is limited to 16 dispersed, designated campsites. These sites are minimally defined and provide few, if any, amenities. Day use is largely unregulated and spread over informal pullouts located along major roads. These pullouts access swimming or fishing locations, picnic spots, recreational shooting sites or other dispersed recreation sites but lack sanitary facilities, visitor information or other amenities. Three vault restrooms are located along the most popular stretch of the Molalla River between Glen Avon bridge and Copper Creek bridge (referred to as the Molalla River Recreation Corridor).

Trail-based recreation is provided for within the Molalla River and Table Rock Wilderness trail systems. The Molalla River trail system is currently accessible from five trailheads along the S. Molalla Forest Road and contains nearly 25 miles of closed forest roads and singletrack trail; it is open to hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians. The 20-mile wilderness trail system, accessible from five trailheads along secondary access routes, traverses the high ridges of Table Rock Wilderness. It is open to non-mechanized travel (hikers and equestrians only).

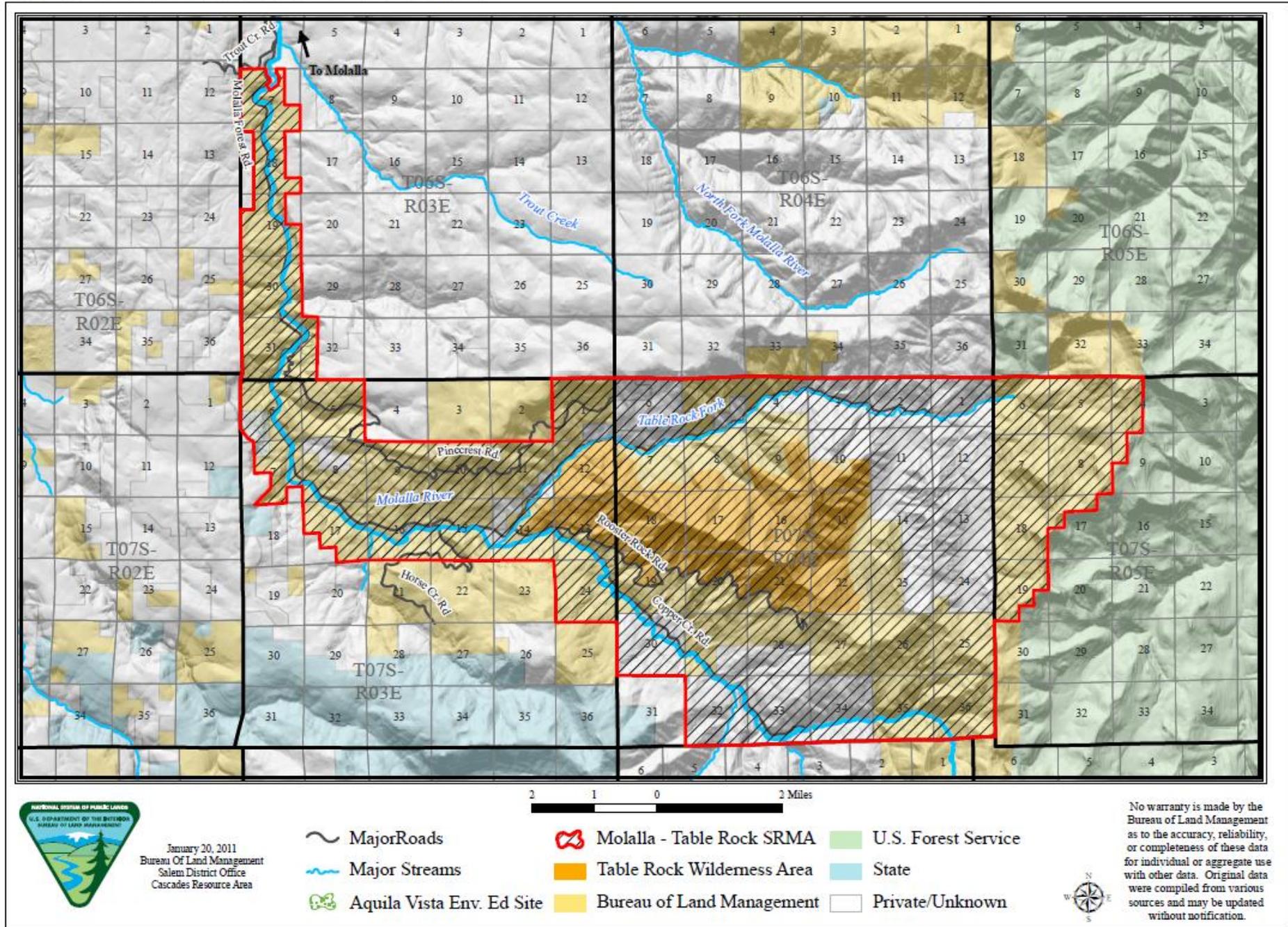
Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site is also located within the planning area. The site is utilized by classes from local school districts, youth conservation groups and other organizations. A small system of trails, bridges and boardwalks provides access to this unique wetland ecosystem.

In the 1995 Salem District Resource Management Plan (RMP), a 13.2 mile segment of the mainstem Molalla River was found 'suitable' by the BLM for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System in recognition of its outstanding recreational, scenic and geologic values. In addition, a 13.4 mile section of the Table Rock Fork of the Molalla was found 'eligible' for inclusion to protect its cultural values. The BLM is required to provide interim protection for these river segments until they are designated or released from consideration.

Figure 1. Mollalla River - Table Rock SRMA Location Map



**Figure 2. Molalla River - Table Rock
Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)**



1.2 Purpose and Need for Action

The BLM-administered Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) provides important recreational opportunities for northwest Oregon residents. Readily accessible by a large proportion of the state's population, the area has seen a steady growth in visitation over the past two decades. This use has resulted in impacts to resources and concerns over public safety that necessitates establishing an appropriate management strategy.

Unregulated recreation use along the river and its riparian areas has resulted in impacts to the area's natural resources. This includes loss of ground cover and riparian vegetation, soil compaction and riverbank erosion. These impacts not only pose a threat to ecological resources but also degrade the setting needed for high quality recreation.

The nature of use within the planning area has also created conditions that pose a threat to public safety and undermine the quality of the visitor experience. Dumping, vandalism, reckless shooting, long-term occupancy, vehicular accidents and theft take place within the SRMA.

Current actions to address these issues are taking place without a long-term and comprehensive plan in place. The purpose of the proposed action is to establish a framework that will determine how recreation opportunities are provided for and managed within the Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area for the next 15 years. This includes BLM strategies to:

- Manage recreation use in a manner that prevents resource degradation and contributes to the long-term health of lands within the recreation area
- Manage public lands for targeted recreation experiences and improved quality of life under the Benefits Based Management framework
- Provide diverse, high quality recreation opportunities that contribute to meeting current and future demand for outdoor recreation
- Resolve identified issues associated with public safety
- Establish an adaptive structure that will allow the BLM to adjust to new conditions and trends
- Comply with relevant agency goals and directives including those found in the 1995 Salem District Resource Management Plan
- Identify specific actions the BLM would take to implement these strategies
- Establish a recreation "niche" for the SRMA and effectively market this strategy to capitalize on local travel and tourism-related spending

1.3 Issues and Concerns

A planning issue is defined as a matter of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities, the environment, or land uses. The goal of this planning effort is to effectively address these issues through a comprehensive recreation management strategy.

Listed below are issues that were identified through the internal and external scoping process and the manner in which this plan addresses these issues.

Issue: *Long-term Management and Rural/Wildland Interface*

How will appropriate long-term management of the recreation area be accomplished? How will rural/wildland interface issues be addressed? How will public safety be improved?

The plan identifies a set of recreation development projects and management actions that will provide long-term management direction for the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA. These actions include a concentration of visitor use at appropriate locations and infrastructure to handle increased visitor use. The plan proposes continuing cooperative law enforcement efforts and focusing BLM administrative presence in order to improve public safety and reduce the incidence of illegal activities. A volunteer host stationed within the recreation corridor will also improve overall public safety hazards by providing a communication link and additional administrative presence.

Issue: *Community Contributions*

What 'niche' should the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA fill in the regional recreation market? How will management of the river enhance its role as a community resource? What possibilities exist for partnerships that can boost appropriate travel and tourism-related activity?

The BLM relied on stakeholder input to craft the following recreation niche statement for the Molalla River-Table Rock area: "The Molalla River-Table Rock recreation area provides diverse opportunities for river-based recreation, minimally-developed camping and high quality trail activities along a forested river corridor. Rustic facilities and easy river access allow for a relatively primitive recreation experience within 10 miles of rural communities and 60 miles of urban population centers."

Appropriate development of overnight and day use facilities, as well as improved visitor services, is likely to enhance the area's renown within local communities. The type of walk-in camping provided under this plan is unique in the region. The development of these sites and other actions will establish a foundation for increased travel and tourism promotion efforts in partnership with local entities and for enhanced recreation experiences that may lead to repeat visitation by local residents.

Issue: *Overnight Camping*

How will overnight recreational use of the area be managed? To what degree and in which locations is camping appropriate? Should a developed campground(s) be constructed within the planning area? How will recreation-related impacts to other resources be minimized?

The plan identifies a broad change in the way camping is provided throughout the planning area. Camping at the current dispersed, designated sites will be prohibited.



Camping will be restricted to three overnight facilities developed along the Molalla River: Pine Creek, Cedar Grove and Three Bears recreation sites. A total of 32 sites will be provided that accommodate primarily tent camping. The facilities will be developed at locations already impacted by recreational use and provide appropriate sanitary and trash facilities as well as BLM administrative presence.

Cedar Grove and Three Bears will feature high quality walk-in camping from a central parking area. Visitors will be able to experience the privacy and naturalness of a riverside campsite in a low-impact setting. This particular type of camping is unavailable in nearby river corridors.

The management of overnight use is a primary issue addressed by this plan.

Issue: River Access

How will river access be provided under this plan? What amenities or level of development will be provided?

As with overnight use, day use and river access will be concentrated at locations suitable for sustained recreation use. New facilities will be developed at Looney's Gate and Ivor's Wayside that feature designated parking, hardened river access, trash service, sanitary facilities and up to eight picnic sites each. Approximately 25 existing day use and overnight sites throughout the planning area will be closed and rehabilitated

River access for whitewater boaters will be enhanced by designating certain river access points as put-in/take-out locations with improved boat launch facilities, trash cans and visitor information.

Issue: Non-Motorized Trails

What actions will be taken to address demand for non-motorized trail use? How will unsustainable portions of the trail system be addressed? Will the Shared-Use or Wilderness trail systems be enhanced or expanded under this plan? How will potential user conflicts be addressed?

Management of the Molalla River Trail System will focus on addressing unsustainable trail segments and providing user-specific experiences for equestrians, mountain bikers and hikers. The plan outlines new trail construction totaling 5 miles and identifies expansion zones for trail construction based on user demand.

A comprehensive overhaul of the Molalla River Trail System is outlined that fixes or re-routes unsustainable trail segments. Certain segments will be also be improved for year-round use. These prescriptions will be consistent with emphasis areas within the trail system where trails are provided with certain users in mind.

1.4 Recreation Use in the Planning Area

This section describes existing recreation use within the planning area including visitor characteristics, activity preferences and geographic distribution of visitors. For a full analysis of recreation use within the planning area, see section 3.4 of the Environmental Assessment.

1.4.1 Recreation Settings and Opportunities

The Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA is an important recreation resource for the residents of northwest Oregon, including the Salem and Portland metropolitan areas. Few rivers in the state offer such ease of access to varied recreation opportunities so close to major urban areas.

A large majority of recreational use (75%) occurs in proximity to the river between Glen Avon Bridge and the Copper Creek Bridge, an area referred to as the Molalla River Recreation Corridor. Popular activities include swimming, picnicking, camping, trail hiking, fishing, driving for pleasure, target shooting, horseback riding, non-motorized boating and mountain biking.

Many of the roads contained in or originating from the SRMA lead to lands under private ownership. Over the past 20 years, public access to these private lands has been increasingly restricted through the installation of gates and other traffic control measures. These closures not only block entry to private lands, but public lands accessed via private roads.



Existing facility development is limited to three vault restrooms scattered along the Molalla Forest Road (located at Hardy Creek Trailhead, Ivor's Wayside and Turner Bridge), informational signage at various locations and the shelters and footbridges within Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site.

The area's natural features, like this basalt formation, draw visitors from northwest Oregon.

Recreation Opportunities and Activity Preferences

Visitor use data for the planning area was collected on-site during the summer of 2006 by Arizona State University and BLM personnel utilizing self-administered surveys. In total, 351 total questionnaires were completed; surveyors achieved a 93 percent on-site response rate. The survey provides a comprehensive picture of visitor characteristics, preferences and satisfaction

Day Use: The recreation area provides excellent opportunities for day use river access and picnicking. The majority of visitors to the Molalla River enjoy swimming and picnicking during their visit. During hot summer months, the river is the primary draw for visitors.

Nearly 70 percent of visitors engage in swimming or water play at some point during their visit with over 22 percent reporting swimming as their primary activity. These activities currently take place at dispersed, roadside pullouts that provide access to the river or other locations of interest. All of these areas have been identified informally, with little to no infrastructure or amenities. The average length of stay for day use visitors is 5.3 hours.

Overnight Use: Camping is a popular use of the recreation area; 45 to 50 percent respondents indicate camping is part of their visit. These stays averaged 4.25 nights; however, this figure may be skewed based on a relatively small number of long-term occupants. The existing system of dispersed, designated sites was chosen from historical, informal locations due to their placement between the river and adjacent roads, limiting the potential for the spread of fire. In order to further reduce this threat, each site includes a fire ring. During certain high-use summer weekends, virtually all of these campsites are taken and capacity is reached.

Trail Use: The Molalla River Trail System is presently accessible from 5 trailheads along the Molalla Forest road and contains nearly 25 miles of closed forest roads and singletrack trail open to hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians. The trail system is popular with equestrian users and to a lesser degree, mountain bikers. Hikers make up a small segment of users within the system. Roughly 10 percent of visitors identify horseback riding as the primary activity, while only 3 percent identify mountain biking. Trailhead facilities and desired trail experiences have led to some separation of users, with equestrian users primarily in the southern half of the system and cyclists more often in the northern area.

The 20-mile Table Rock Wilderness (TRW) trail system provides excellent opportunities for hiking, with minimal opportunities for equestrian use. Trail hiking accounts for 86 percent of use within TRW.

Other historic trail systems are also present within the planning area including portions of the Baty Butte/Silver King and Nasty Rock trails systems. These trails extend beyond BLM ownership to lands managed by the Mount Hood National Forest.

Boating: The Molalla River and Table Rock Fork offer high-quality whitewater opportunities for intermediate to advanced boaters. The primary run on the mainstem Molalla extends from Copper Creek Bridge downstream to Glen Avon Bridge and travels through constricted gorges and canyons with Class III rapids. This segment is widely recognized as a convenient day trip from the Willamette Valley.

Fishing: Fishing is a popular use of the Molalla River and its tributaries; 40 percent of survey respondents report fishing during their visit and 6.8 percent identify it as their primary activity. Winter steelhead has historically been the primary recreational fishery along the Molalla River.

Table 1: Recreation Area Activity Participation (Molalla River Corridor)

<i>Activity</i>	<i>% respondents who said they participated during their visit...</i>	<i>% respondents who said it was their primary activity...</i>
Swimming	68.1%	22.5%
Picnicking	56.3%	3.0%
Camping	50.3%	31.4%
Trail Hiking	39.8%	2.5%
Fishing	38.2%	6.8%
Driving for Pleasure	37.5%	3.0%
Target Shooting	19.4%	7.2%
Horseback Riding	13.8%	10.2%

1.4.2 Socioeconomic context

Population

The planning area lies adjacent to communities in Northwest Oregon and the Willamette Valley that have seen continual population growth since 1990. The region is the most densely populated in Oregon, with eight of the state’s ten most populous cities including Portland and Salem.

Clackamas County has seen significant growth in the past two decades. From a population of 278,850 in 1990, the county has grown by roughly 36 percent and added 100,998 residents. This total makes it the third most populous county in the state. Much of this growth has taken place in the urbanized cities of the county within the Portland metropolitan area including Oregon City, Wilsonville and West Linn. These communities are within a 45 minute drive of the planning area.

On a local level, rural incorporated communities near the planning area have also seen substantial growth. Molalla is one of the four fastest growing communities within the county. Since 1990 the city has added 3,893 residents and exhibited a 4.1 percent annual growth rate. Recent population estimates indicate the city has a population of 7,590. Much of this growth came in the form of new subdivisions and single family housing units in the northwestern portion of the city.

Despite a slowing of growth rates due to the 2007 to 2010 economic recession, the region’s population is expected to increase in the coming decades. By 2040, Clackamas County’s population is expected to reach 480,000. Within the city of Molalla, the recent citywide Comprehensive Plan identified a range of potential growth scenarios. Under a moderate growth scenario (2.9% annual growth) Molalla’s population will reach 10,876 by 2025.

Economic Contributions

The planning area’s contributions to the local socioeconomic conditions and health is associated with its ability to supply forest and wood products, provide a municipal water source and by offering a range of recreation opportunities that appeal to both local residents and visitors from elsewhere in the region.

An increasing level of interest has been expressed in the role the recreation area could play in diversifying the local economic base. Clackamas County has seen a steady increase in travel and tourism-related income since the early 1990's. In 2008, visitor spending totaled \$428.8 million. This represents a 45.5 percent increase from 1992. Spending on transportation, retail and dining makes up the bulk of this total. Regional economic analysis predicts overall growth of this spending to continue.

1.4.3 Visitor Characteristics and Preferences

Recreationists identified numerous motives and benefits associated with their visit. Enjoyment of the natural setting, escape from everyday stresses and responsibilities and spending time with family and friends were all highly rated by survey respondents.

Despite a slight majority of respondents citing opportunities for solitude as an attraction to the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA, the vast majority of visitors came in groups. 93 percent of visitors to the river were in groups of 2 or more, and 53 percent came in groups of 4 or more.

An estimated 55 to 65 percent of groups that visit the river are family units; nearly 47 percent report travelling with one or more individuals under age 16. Furthermore, roughly 81 percent reported that they do or would like to bring their children to the area.

Visitors to the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA expressed strong feelings regarding their connection to the area and its importance to their quality of life. While responses indicate recreation opportunities at the Molalla River were available to some degree at other places (i.e. nearby rivers), over 60 percent strongly agreed and 24 percent agreed that that river 'means a lot to them personally'. Nearly 78 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they were 'very attached' to the area.

Demographic characteristics of recreation visitors are consistent with the rest of northwest Oregon. Race identification and level of education closely align with similar statistics from Clackamas County (See Table 2).

Table 2: Selected Visitor Characteristics

94.5% of visitors to the river have a high school degree or above

94.4% self-identify their race as white

78.7% identify the river as their main destination

93% visit in groups of 2 or more

46.8% have one or more individuals under 16 years old in their group

77.4% report feeling 'very attached' to the recreation area

Visitor Origin

Nearly all visitors to the Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) come from within the state, with a large majority (roughly 90%) from either the Portland metropolitan area or the rural areas of the northern Willamette Valley that are within an hour's drive. Portland (19.1%), Molalla (14.6%), Oregon City (8.5%), Woodburn (5.6%) and Canby (5.1%) were the top five municipalities for visitor origin. The SRMA's close proximity to these urban areas plays a large part in its popularity; after the river's natural qualities and features (77%), users identified proximity to home (64%) as the top attraction of the area.

Table 3: Primary Residence of Visitors to the Molalla River	
<i>Area of Origin</i>	<i>% of Total Visitors</i>
Portland metropolitan area (including Portland, Oregon City, Wilsonville, Gresham, West Linn, etc)	42.6%
Rural northern Willamette Valley (Molalla, Canby, Woodburn, Colton, Silverton, etc)	37.6%
Salem metropolitan area	6.4%
Elsewhere in Oregon	6.1%
Outside of Oregon	2.5%

1.4.4 Use Patterns

The majority of recreation use within the SRMA takes place between May and September, coinciding with higher temperatures and rain-free days, water temperatures conducive for swimming and full access to trail systems and high elevation roads. Holiday weekends and weekend days with above average temperatures draw large numbers of visitors to the recreation area. See figure 4 for an overview of use distribution during the high use season.

Geographic Patterns and Volumes

The constricted transportation network in the SRMA, with the majority of access coming on a single road that provides little to no thoroughfare, makes accurate visitor and traffic monitoring possible. Traffic counter data collected during the 2010 high use recreation season provides valuable information on the geographic distribution, timing and volume of visitor use in the planning area. This information replaces or supplements information found in EA Section 3.4, given that data from the 2010 recreation season is now available. Previously reported information for the 2009 season is less comprehensive and accurate.

Based on the newly available data, visitation to the planning area is estimated at 60,000 to 70,000 per year. Traffic is sustained throughout the week and heaviest on the weekend. Nearly 40 percent of traffic is concentrated on Saturday and Sunday. By hour, traffic is highest in the early-to-mid afternoon from noon to 4 p.m. Not surprisingly, the lowest levels of traffic come during the overnight hours from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Seasonal variations are prominent but lower than some comparable river corridors due to year round accessibility. June, July and August are the busiest months.

Table 4 compares the monthly vehicle and visitor totals from the four counter locations that actively collected data during the 2010 recreation season:

- S. Molalla Forest Road near the entrance to the recreation corridor
- S. Molalla Forest Road near Turner Bridge
- Table Rock Road
- Rooster Rock Road

The calculation for “Total Visitors” within Table 4 assumes 2.5 visitors per vehicle. An 8% administrative access rate has already been factored in to vehicle and visitor totals.

Table 4: Monthly Vehicle and Visitor Totals, 2010				
Month	Entrance	Turner Bridge	Table Rock	Rooster Rock
<i>June</i>	3,116	1,754	143	41
<i>July</i>	6,834	3,116	195	74
<i>August</i>	3,922	2,648	215	44
<i>September</i>	3,059	1,502	139	73
<i>October</i>	3,160	1,072	Not available	Not available
<i>November</i>	2,094	1,064	Not available	Not available
<i>% of Entrance</i>	100%	51%	1.3%	4%
TOTAL VEHICLES	22,814	11,786	692	232
TOTAL VISITORS	57,035	29,465	1,730	580

Figure 3 compares the daily vehicle totals for three of the counters (Entrance, Turner Bridge and Table Rock) that collected data during the 2010 season. It illustrates the pattern of visitation throughout the main recreation corridor. The entrance and Turner Bridge counters are closely aligned, but during specific high use weekends a smaller proportion of visitors reach Turner Bridge. This can be attributed to the high percentage of visitors who stop at river access points in the northern portion of the recreation corridor.

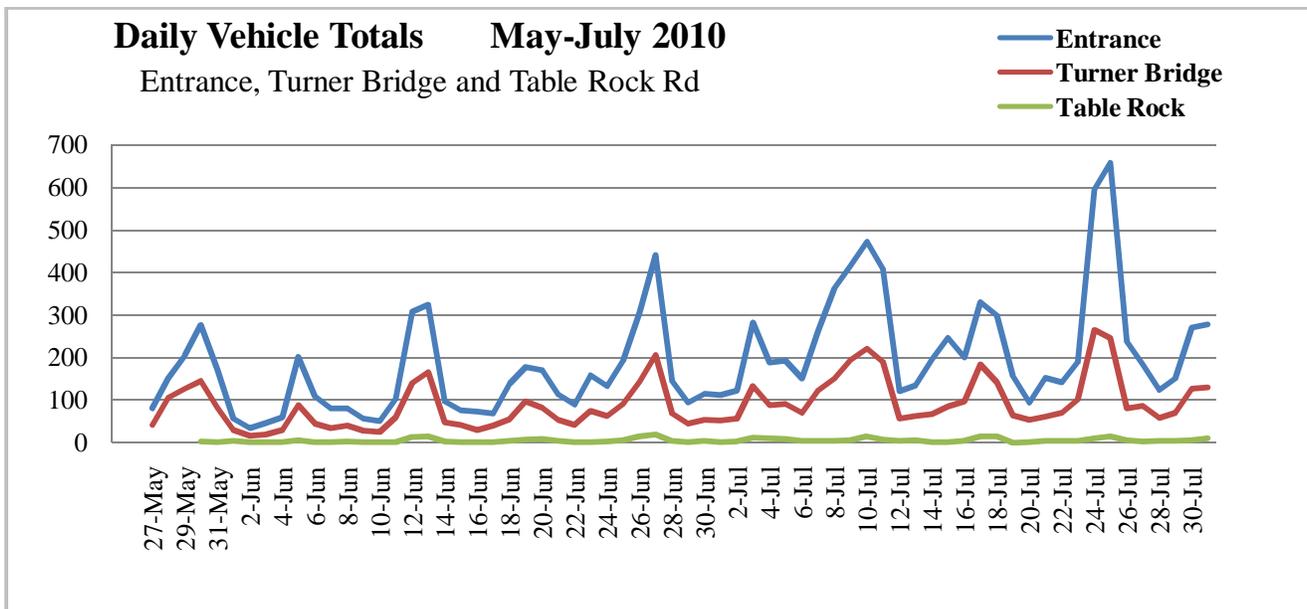


Figure 3: Daily Vehicle Totals

1.5 Resources in the Planning Area

This section describes the resource values present within the planning area. It summarizes information found in the Molalla River-Table Rock Environmental Assessment, Chapter 3: Affected Environment.

1.5.1 Visual Resources

The Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA exhibits a variety of scenic qualities ranging from large intact stands of Douglas-fir in the Table Rock Wilderness Area to scattered blocks of recently harvested mixed forest stands. The scenic qualities that exist within the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA are managed through the assignment of Visual Resource Management Classifications. Chapter 6 identifies management direction for these classifications.

Molalla River: Several significant scenic attributes distinguish the Molalla from other rivers in the area. The river's clear water and cascade and pool character add significantly to the overall visual experience. The numerous vertical and near vertical cliffs descending to the river, a constricted canyon near the middle of the segment, large moss-covered boulders, and diverse stream-side vegetation provide a variety of stream-side and foreground views.

Table Rock Wilderness: The Table Rock Wilderness (TRW) area is the last large block of undeveloped forest within the planning area. The area is characterized by steep, rugged terrain, high relief features and notable vegetative variety. This combination of scenic qualities creates a unique natural setting in an otherwise heavily manipulated forest environment. Further adding to the areas diverse scenery are exposed bedrock, talus, slide scarps, sheer cliffs, basaltic rock outcrops and numerous crags.

1.5.2 Cultural Resources

The Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA contains a variety of prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Prehistoric sites within the planning area hold the potential for improving our understanding of regional prehistory, while the historic sites typify the historical themes present in the western Oregon Cascades.

Molalla River prehistoric sites may have been inhabited by the Kalapuya people of the Willamette Valley and by the Molalla people of the western Cascades. Little is known about the origin, time depth, and culture of the Molalla people. Additional survey and site testing in the corridor can help answer questions regarding the changes in occupation and uses over time, population density, contacts with other groups, prehistoric economy, settlement, subsistence patterns, and the use of the area by the historically known Molalla Indian people.

In addition, approximately 12 possible historic resources have been identified on historic documents or from previous field inventories, but many of them have been unable to be located on the contemporary landscape. These historic sites and features represent settlement, mining, logging, and federal activities in the corridor, but none are rare, unusual, or one-of-a-kind for the region. These types of cultural resources and historical themes are typical of most major drainages in the western Cascades.

1.5.3 Hydrology/Water Quality

The Molalla River is a tributary to the Willamette River, draining a northeast section of the Willamette River Basin in Clackamas County. The headwaters of the 49-mile Molalla River are on the forested lower west slopes of the Cascade Mountains at elevations up to 4,900 feet. From its origin in Cascade volcanic deposits of andecite, basalt, and ash, the river flows northwest where it enters the Willamette River at an elevation of 70 feet (USDA-SCS 1985). The stream gradient is mild along the entire river, with the upper 28 miles of the Molalla averaging approximately 1.2 percent, decreasing to .25 percent on the lower 21 miles.

Average annual precipitation in the Molalla-Pudding Sub-Basin ranges from approximately 100 inches in the mountains to 40 inches on the valley floor, with the greatest precipitation occurring November through January and the least occurring June through September (Oregon State University 1998).

Stream-flow is typical of western Cascades streams where most runoff occurs during winter storm events. Base-flow or low-flow occurs during late summer and early fall when mean stream discharge drops below 20 percent of the mean winter flow. Many small headwater channels dry up completely during this period. Average total annual stream discharge past a United States Geological Survey gauging station on the Molalla River near the Trout Creek bridge is 386,500 acre-feet, or 125 billion gallons. The lowest average monthly discharges normally occur June through October, averaging 53 to 293 cubic feet per second (cfs).



The Molalla River provides municipal water for the cities of Molalla and Canby.

Two municipal water providers withdraw water from the Molalla-Pudding to treat and provide city residents with drinking water. The Canby Utility Board (PWS# 4100157) and the City of Molalla (PWS #4100534) take water from the Lower Molalla several miles downstream of the planning area.

The State of Oregon, through the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), has established water quality standards “not to be exceeded” for all waters of the state. These standards are provided to protect the beneficial uses of the water. Under the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), the BLM as a designated management agency must submit a Water Quality Restoration Plan (WQRP) for the Molalla-Pudding Sub-Basin which details how the BLM will implement the TMDL on federal lands. The plan is currently being completed by the BLM Salem District.

One area of potential concern identified in the ODEQ documents is bacterial contamination from recreation use within the Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). Although the available information indicates that current bacteria levels do not exceed statewide standards set by ODEQ, heightened levels of coliform bacteria at certain localized locations on the river (i.e., Ivor Davies Wayside) during periods of high swimming use may be present.

1.5.4 Fisheries

The Molalla River supports native populations of winter steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), coastal cutthroat trout (*O. clarki clarki*; Behnke 1992), mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*), largescale suckers (*Catostomus macrocheilus*), longnose dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*), redbelt shiner (*Richardsonius balteatus*), and northern pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus oregonensis*; USBLM 1999). Spring Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) are native to the Molalla Basin.

Upper Willamette River (UWR) winter steelhead trout and UWR spring Chinook salmon are listed as 'threatened' under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). Steelhead are found in approximately 78 miles of streams in the watershed, primarily using accessible tributaries for spawning and rearing, and the mainstem Molalla River for rearing and migration.

The Molalla River is a key area for UWR winter steelhead production, with about 20 percent of the Willamette Basin winter steelhead produced in the Molalla watershed. Numbers of winter steelhead



The upper Molalla River watershed is a key area for winter steelhead production.

spawning in the watershed ranged from 1,000 to 4,500 per year during the 1980's, and declined to 200 to 500 per year in the 1990's. More recently winter steelhead numbers have rebounded, with the mean of 1000 winter steelhead spawning in the Molalla basin. Hatchery releases of winter and summer steelhead in the Molalla River Basin were stopped in 1997 due to concerns about possible competition with the native winter steelhead run. Current Oregon Department Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) policy mandates catch and release of wild (non-clipped) Winter Steelhead. Rule changes in 2009 moved the fishing deadline downstream to Pine Creek Bridge to protect important spawning locations.

Upper Willamette River spring Chinook salmon are found in the mainstem Molalla River, the North Fork Molalla, and in the Table Rock Fork, using approximately 39 miles of stream within the watershed. In 1941, about 1000 spring Chinook spawned in the Molalla River Basin. Mattson (1948) estimated the run size to be 500 in 1947. Spring Chinook salmon numbers have declined since the 1940's. Most spring Chinook salmon (>95%) now returning to the Molalla River are of hatchery origin. The hatchery fish are derived primarily from native stocks from other portions of the Willamette Basin.

Most fisheries and riparian habitats on federal lands on the Molalla River are in fair to good condition. Large areas of riparian forest stands adjacent to the Molalla River are vegetated with young forest stands with low potential to supply large wood (LW) to aquatic habitats

1.5.5 Wildlife

The Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA offers rich wildlife resources and habitat in the region. Notable mammals known to occur include elk, black-tailed deer, black bear, coyote, cougar, bobcat, river otter and beaver. Some notable breeding birds include golden eagles, Northern spotted owls, harlequin ducks, and a variety of Neotropical migratory birds.

Terrestrial habitats within the Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA include mixed conifer-hardwood forests and coniferous forests in all stages of succession; dry meadows, cliffs, outcrops and talus slopes. Aquatic resources include the Molalla River, major tributary streams such as Gawley, Horse, Camp and Lost Creeks; springs, wet meadows, and wetland habitats with their associated riparian vegetation.

In general, disturbance factors in the Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA are concentrated in the Molalla River Corridor below the Table Rock/Copper Fork confluence; in some of the upland areas in Pine Rock area; and in the vicinity of the Molalla Oak Meadows potential Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Some of these areas are within home ranges of spotted owls and golden eagles, and the potential ACEC contains valuable special habitats that are in need of protection. Currently, disturbance factors from human use are high in these areas. In the vast majority of the watershed, disturbance factors are fairly low, including areas with gated road systems and steep inaccessible reaches which receive little human use.

The Northern spotted owl is the only threatened or endangered terrestrial wildlife species known to occur in the Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA. The majority of the Molalla River/Table Rock SRMA is viable for nesting and dispersing spotted owls. The one exception is the lower portion of the Molalla River Corridor north of about Bear Creek, which is not viable for nesting or dispersal due to the lack of suitable habitat and its proximity to the Willamette Valley. There are known Spotted Owl sites on BLM lands within the planning area.

1.5.6 Silviculture

Approximately 95 percent of the proposed Molalla/Table Rock SRMA is in conifer types; approximately 1 percent is in hardwood types, with 4 percent in non-forest types such as roads, rock quarries, rock outcrops, meadows, water, or other natural openings. Most of the seral stages present throughout the project area on BLM ownership is divided between the Open Sapling/Brush, Closed Sapling and Mature forests. Only 7 percent was listed as being in the Old Growth forest type.

Silvicultural treatments and timber harvest have occurred and will continue in the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and Late Successional Reserve (LSR) land use allocations throughout the planning area in accordance with the Salem District Resource Management Plan (RMP). The abundance of Open sapling and Closed sapling seral stages within the GFMA and LSR land use allocations indicate the likelihood of proposed commercial thinning or density management projects in the next several years on BLM ownership. Since 1990, approximately 10,000 acres have been treated through various means throughout the GFMA and LSR land use allocations, with additional acres proposed for future treatments. Treatments include, but are not limited to: commercial harvest, pre-commercial or young sapling thinning, manual brushing, girdling and tree planting.

The "Annie's Cabin Commercial Thinning" sale is currently proposed in the planning area. This timber sale involves 570 acres of second-growth thinning, with several units to be thinned with trees removed by helicopter. This timber sale was sold in 2007, and is scheduled for harvest within approximately the next 1-5 years.

1.6 Planning Process and Public Outreach

This plan was produced through a collaborative process with a variety of stakeholders including local government entities, elected officials, non-profit organizations, user groups, interested members of the public and BLM personnel. Input has been received in a continuous and iterative manner with numerous opportunities for comment.

The planning process for the Molalla River-Table Rock plan has been ongoing since a scoping meeting was held October 7, 2008. This meeting contributed to setting the scope of the plan and identified issues and concerns to be addressed.

While developing the Environmental Assessment, BLM staff participated in a series of tours, meetings and focus groups to solicit stakeholder input. Following the release of the Environmental Assessment, a 45-day formal comment period was observed and several opportunities for public comment were made available:

- *June 2010*: Presentation of the EA including proposed action to the Molalla River Alliance
- *June 2010*: Public Open House at the Molalla Public Library
- *July 2010*: Staffed booth at the Molalla River Wild River BBQ
- *July 2010*: Public presentation to the Molalla Community Planning Organization (CPO)

A BLM Interdisciplinary Team (see Interdisciplinary Team of Preparers on page 5) was convened during the planning process. Its role was to help refine goals and objectives, analyze the area's resources, predict the potential impacts of the management alternatives and produce planning documents.

1.7 Land Classification

This section describes the land classifications present within the planning area including land use allocations, potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System and a lease under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

The planning area is defined by the boundaries of the Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area. An SRMA is an umbrella designation for a geographic area where additional resources (labor, funds, etc) are spent to manage recreational use. An SRMA overlays land use allocations and Congressional designations and provide direction for recreation management only.

All BLM public lands not contained within an SRMA are classified as an Extensive Recreation Management Area, or ERMA. An ERMA is an area where recreational use is likely to occur, but at lower levels that do not require specific, focused management attention.

1.7.1 BLM Land Use Allocations

Land use allocations are designations that determine what land management actions are appropriate in a given area.

They are established during district-level land use planning processes such as the Salem District Resource Management Plan (RMP). Land use allocations guide all resource management actions including timber, wildlife and fisheries. Under the 1995 Salem District RMP the BLM adheres to Northwest Forest Plan Land Use Allocations. There are three land use allocations within the planning area boundary:

Matrix: Matrix lands include both General Forest Management Area and Connectivity lands. Only General Forest Management Area lands are present in the planning area:

General Forest Management Area (GFMA): Management objectives for GFMA lands include producing a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities while providing habitat for a variety of organisms, providing important ecosystem functions, and providing early seral habitat (RMP p. 20).

Late-Successional Reserve: Late-Successional Reserves protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old growth forest-related species.

Congressional Reserve: Includes components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, National Wild and Scenic River System (WSR) and other area under special direction from Congress. Table Rock Wilderness is the only Congressional Reserve in the planning area (see below)

Table 5: BLM Land Use Allocations	
<i>Land Use Allocation</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Matrix	8,895
General Forest Management Area	8,895
Connectivity	0
Late Successional Reserve	12,808
Congressional Reserve (Table Rock Wilderness)	5,702
TOTAL BLM OWNERSHIP	27,405
Non-Federal Lands	10,082
TOTAL ACREAGE	37,487

1.7.2 Table Rock Wilderness

The entirety of 5,702-acre Table Rock Wilderness is contained within the planning area. Table Rock Wilderness was designated as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System by the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984 (PL 98-328). It remains the only BLM-managed Wilderness within the boundaries of the Salem District. Management direction for the Wilderness is found in the Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan, completed in 1987. This planning effort updates the recreation-related components of the plan in Appendix A, Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan Update.

1.7.3 Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wild and Scenic Rivers – Molalla River Segment B

A 13.2 mile section of the mainstem Molalla was found ‘suitable’ for inclusion into the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. A ‘suitable’ finding is made only after a detailed assessment by the BLM and constitutes a recommendation that the river be designated under the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The segment, referred to as Molalla River Segment B, extends from the confluence of the mainstem Molalla with the Table Rock Fork of the Molalla River downstream to Glen Avon Bridge. It includes 2,988 acres of BLM-administered lands with on both sides of the river, most of which were brought into public ownership through the exchange described previously.

Molalla River Segment B has been given a preliminary classification of **Recreational**. This indicates the river is readily accessible by road, has some shoreline development and may have undergone some impoundment or diversion. Outstandingly Remarkable Values were identified as **Scenery, Recreation and Geology**. A resource assessment for this segment was completed during the land use planning process and contained an analysis of the river’s suitability for WSR designation (it is available for review at the Salem District Office).

The following descriptions of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values are summarized from the 1992 resource assessment:

Scenery: Wide range of colors and textures. The river’s character ranges from deep clear pools to riffles and cascading whitewater. Many rock outcrops and cliffs descend directly into the river. Human influences detract slightly from the view in many areas, but the overall impact is not substantial.

Recreation: Opportunities include day hiking, fishing, dispersed camping and whitewater boating. The area attracts visitors originating from within and outside the area. Ease of access and diverse opportunities add to the value of this river corridor.

Geology: Geological value of this segment is considered unique and rare in the region. A series of horizontal columnar basalt rosettes occur near the middle of the segment. This feature is especially unusual because it has been exposed by erosion processes of the river itself.

Wild and Scenic Rivers- Table Rock Fork

A 13.4 mile section of the Table Rock Fork of the Molalla River was found 'eligible' for inclusion into the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The segment extends from its headwaters downstream to its confluence with the mainstem Molalla River. It includes 1,385 acres of BLM administered land which are a mix of Public Domain and Oregon and California grant lands. Some of this acreage already falls within the boundaries of the Table Rock Wilderness.

The Table Rock Fork was given a preliminary classification of **Recreational** during the eligibility determination process. Outstandingly Remarkable Values were identified as **Cultural**.

The following descriptions are summarized from the 1990 Eligibility Assessment:

Cultural: There is a high site density within this river corridor; five cultural sites are currently recorded. A National Register of Historic Places eligibility has not been completed.

Within the Salem District, only river segments with 40 percent public ownership or more within the preliminary river corridor were evaluated for suitability during the 1995 RMP effort. The Table Rock Fork fell below this threshold, and as a result, was not evaluated for suitability.

Interim Management of Suitable and Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

Until such time as these river segments are designated under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or released from consideration, the BLM is required to provide interim protection of the river's free flowing characteristics and potential Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

1.7.4 Other Land Classifications- Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Lease

Roughly 4,442 acres within the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA are under a Recreation and Public Purposes lease to Clackamas County. The lease was entered into by the county and the BLM on January 6th, 1995 and is set to expire in January 2020. The Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1956 authorizes the sale or lease of public lands for recreational or public purposes to State and local governments and qualified non-profits. The lease was put in place to facilitate potential cooperative recreation development and management projects.

1.8 Conformance with Land Use Plan, Statutes, Regulations, and other Plans

This decision, designed under the 1995 Salem District Resource Management Plan, is also in conformance with the Salem District Resource Management Plan, December 2008 (RMP) along with other plans and policies which direct and provide the legal framework for management of BLM lands within the Salem District. Management actions identified in this plan will conform to the following documents:

- *Salem District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*, May 1995 (RMP)
- *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*, April 1994 (the Northwest Forest Plan, or NWFP).
- *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines*, January 2001.

1.8.1 Related Plans and Reports

The following reports provided important background information for producing this management plan:

- *Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan Environmental Assessment (2010)*: Analyzes four management alternatives for management of the area including a No Action Alternative.
- *Resource Assessment of the Molalla River (1993)*: Analyzes the suitability of the mainstem Molalla River for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
- *Molalla River Watershed Analysis (1999)*: Presents a watershed-level perspective on the physical, social and environmental conditions and trends within the watershed.

The above documents are available for review in the Salem District Office. For a full overview of plan conformance, consultation and supplemental authorities associated with this document, see Chapter 5.

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Chapter 2: Goals and Objectives

2.1 Recreation Niche

Recreation Niche Statement: The Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area provides diverse opportunities for river-based activities, minimally-developed camping and diverse trail activities along a forested river corridor. Rustic facilities and easy river access allow for a relatively primitive recreation experience within 10 miles of rural communities and 60 miles of urban population centers.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

Table 6: Management Goals and Objectives

Management Goals	
Manage the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations	
Manage recreation use in a manner that mitigates impacts on the ecological integrity of the planning area	
Administer the SRMA consistent with its identified ‘niche’ in order to maximize community and economic benefits	
Adaptively manage the SRMA to enhance the area’s recreational opportunities and unique characteristics while recognizing that increased future use will trigger the need for increased levels of management	
Management Objectives	
Ensure natural resource protection by providing complimentary public access and minimizing recreation-related impacts	Provide a broad range of recreation experiences and associated benefits within the Benefits-Based Management framework
Engage in collaborative land management by working in partnership with private and public entities including local governments, non-profit organizations and recreational user groups	Protect public safety by limiting the occurrence of vehicular accidents, theft and vandalism
Supply recreation opportunities in a manner that satisfies existing and expected demand	Protect the area’s value as a recreation setting by maintaining and enhancing its scenic values
Utilize public information to effectively communicate rules, regulations and relevant natural and human history	Develop a management strategy that is reasonable, cost-effective and implementable

2.3 Benefits-Based Management Zoning

In 2006, the Bureau of Land Management formally adopted a new approach for providing and managing recreation opportunities on public lands: Benefits-Based Management. The Benefits-Based Management (BBM) approach requires public land managers to consider the broader picture of why people engage in recreation, what types of outcomes result from that engagement and what recreation providers should do to assist in that process. It attempts to identify and provide benefits that result from participation in outdoor recreation – benefits to individuals, households, economies and the environment.

Working under the BBM framework requires identifying which benefits are most suitable for the area and most valued by the stakeholders involved. All management actions, therefore, should be geared towards providing as many of these benefits as possible.

In order to meet the goals and objectives outlined in this document, a geographic zoning system has been established. The creation of these four different areas recognizes that different recreation uses and management actions are appropriate in different geographic area.

Each zone comes with its own specific management direction as well as a set of visitor activities, experiences and benefits that are being targeted. For example, the level of regulatory controls within the Developed River Zone is high in order to facilitate group recreation and family-based recreation. Farther upstream in the Dispersed River and Upland Zone, signage and management presence are notably reduced to allow for additional individual benefits such as improved self-confidence.

The BBM zoning system established for the Molalla River-Table Rock area recognizes four different recreation management zones-

Developed River Zone: Lands included within the Developed River Zone are relatively small in area, but require a higher level of development and management than other zones. These areas are managed to provide concentrated visitor access in a safe and enjoyable environment. This zone extends alongside S. Molalla Forest road from the beginning of BLM ownership to the confluence of the Molalla with the Table Rock Fork.

Dispersed River and Upland Zone: Lands included within the Dispersed River and Upland Zone have relatively low levels of development and management. These areas receive low levels of visitation and are managed to protect resource values while providing a more private, primitive experience than the Developed River Zone. No developed recreation sites are present; infrastructure is limited to secondary gravel roadways and minimal safety signage. This zone extends along the Table Rock and Copper Creek forks of the Molalla River as well as the Horse Creek road system. It also includes the high elevation areas such as Peachuck Lookout, Joyce Lake and the Baty Butte trail.



Different portions of the planning area, like this meadow near Rooster Rock, provide different activities and benefits.

Upland Trail Zone: The Upland Trail Zone incorporates the entirety of the Molalla River Trail System including Aquila Vista and any potential trail expansions southeast to Gawley Creek. These lands receive moderate visitation and require moderate levels of development and management.

Wilderness Zone: This zone is defined by the boundary of Table Rock Wilderness. It includes the entirety of the wilderness as well as four wilderness trailheads (not including Peachuck Lookout). It is managed to protect wilderness character, per the 1964 Wilderness Act, while allowing for primitive and unconfined recreation. For more information on Table Rock Wilderness, see Appendix A: Final Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update.

**Figure 4. Molalla River - Table Rock (SRMA)
Benefits-Based Management Areas**

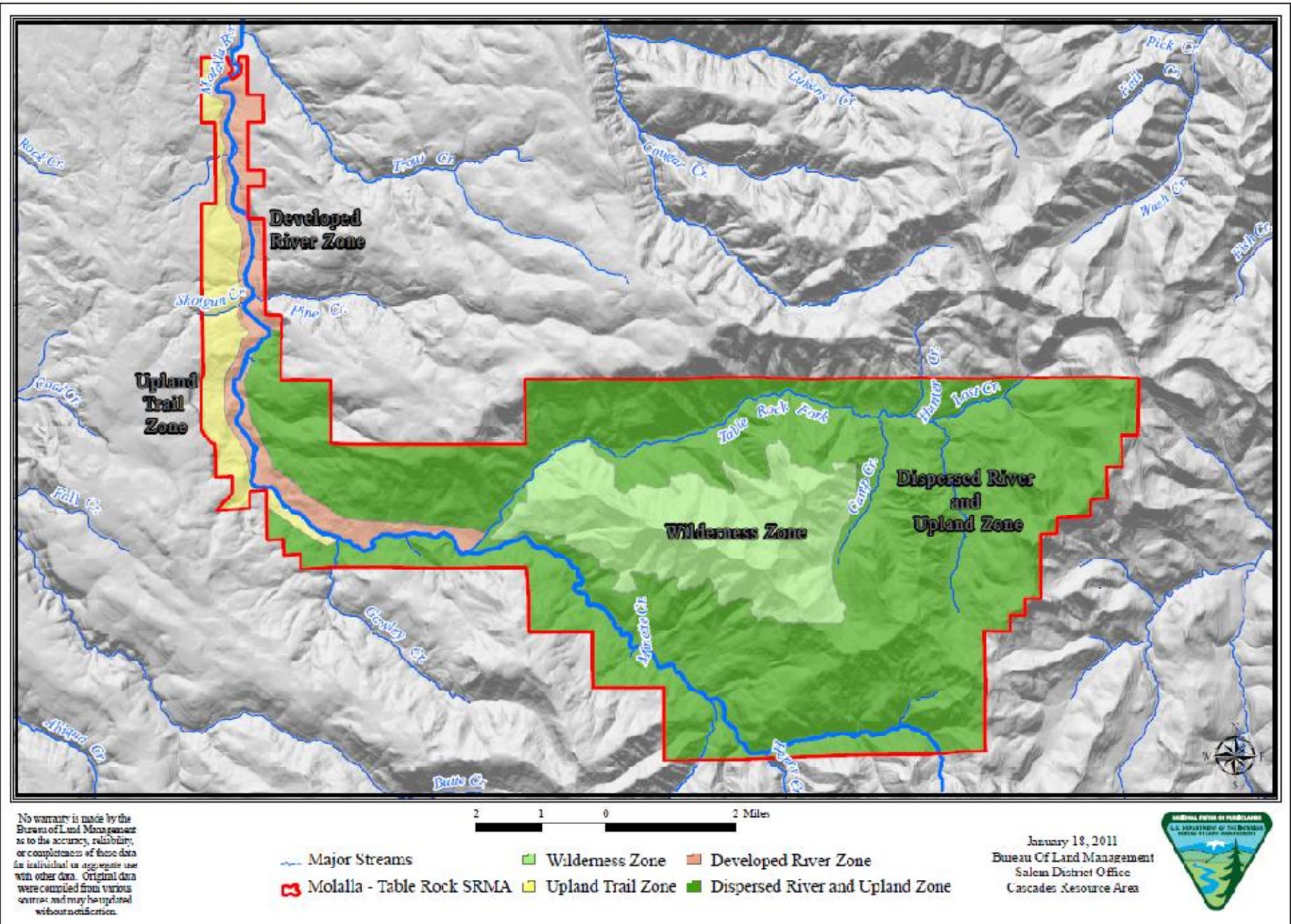


Table 7: Developed River Zone - Benefits-Based Management Framework

This zone closely follows the main recreation corridor, which includes lands in the immediate vicinity of S. Molalla Forest road from the beginning of BLM ownership to the Copper Creek Rd bridge.

Activities	Scenic driving, swimming, camping, fishing, picnicking, road bicycling, whitewater boating, nature study, photography		
Experiences	<p>Enjoying easy access to natural settings and the Molalla River</p> <p>Spending time with family and friends</p> <p>Learning about ecosystems and natural history</p> <p>Enjoying community events</p>	Benefits	<p><i>Personal</i></p> <p>Restored mind from unwanted stress</p> <p>Greater aesthetic appreciation of the Cascade Range</p> <p><i>Household and Community</i></p> <p>Improved group cohesion</p> <p>Enhanced community pride</p> <p><i>Economic</i></p> <p>Increased recognition of Molalla River-Table Rock area is high quality recreation destination for river-based recreation</p> <p>Enhanced travel and tourism related activity in gateway communities</p>
Settings		<p><i>Physical</i></p> <p>Roaded natural in appearance. Views of forested hillsides, the Molalla River and related geologic features. Highest level of infrastructure in the form of overnight and day use facilities, trailheads, restrooms and interpretation. Most roadways are paved and regularly maintained. Public safety signage and messages are common.</p>	<p><i>Social</i></p> <p>Groups ranging from small to large (up to 25) are common and interactions with other visitors are frequent. The most frequent encounters take place within developed day use and campground facilities. On high use summer weekends, up to 150 visitors may be found at certain locations. Encounters with visitors engaging in different activities are common.</p>
Major Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Construction of three overnight facilities (Cedar Grove, Pine Creek and Three Bears) with a total of 32 overnight sites o Construction and improvement of two day use recreation sites (Ivors Wayside and Looney's Gate/Osprey complex) with picnic and sanitary facilities o Riverside trail development o Visitor Services and Interpretation including two waysides o Closure and restoration of approximately 15 sites impacted by past recreation use 		

Table 8: Dispersed River and Upland Zone - Benefits-Based Management Framework

This zone includes lands along secondary access routes including Middle Fork road, Copper Creek road and Horse Creek road. It incorporates the high elevation areas in the vicinity of Joyce Lake and Baty Butte.

Activities Scenic driving, car camping, fishing, target shooting, hunting, nature study, viewing wildlife, visiting historic sites, geocaching

Experiences Enjoying easy access to natural settings and the Molalla River
Exploring new geographic areas
Enjoying increased personal space
Learning about regional human history
Visiting historic sites

Benefits

Personal
Restored mind from unwanted stress
Improved physical condition
Improved wayfinding skills
Improved self-confidence

Household and Community
Enhanced community pride

Economic
Enhanced travel and tourism related activity in gateway communities

Settings

Physical
Roaded natural in appearance. Views of forested hillsides, the Molalla River and related geologic features. Most roadways are gravel with varying levels of maintenance, some requiring a high clearance vehicle to travel. Infrequent signage, mostly in the form of road junctions and public safety messages.

Social
Individuals and small groups are the most common and interactions with other visitors are relatively infrequent. Contact with visitors engaged in other activities is uncommon and user conflict is low. Encounters with other visitors decrease as areas become more remote.

Administrative
Infrequent encounters with agency and law enforcement personnel. BLM staff and volunteers may conduct patrols between 1 and 3 times per week during the high use season. Encounters with administrative personnel decrease as visitors travel to more remote areas.

Major Actions

- Camping will be prohibited within 100 yards of the Table Rock and Copper Creek forks of the Molalla River.
- No recreation site development will take place within this zone
- Sites impacted by previous recreation use would be closed and rehabilitated

Table 9: Upland Trail Zone - Benefits-Based Management Framework

This zone includes the entirety of the Molalla River Trail System, Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site and any potential trail expansions.

Activities	Horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, nature study, viewing wildlife		
Experiences	<p>Engaging in frequent and strenuous exercise</p> <p>Developing new skills and abilities</p> <p>Testing your endurance</p> <p>Viewing unique natural environments</p> <p>Enjoying easy access to non-motorized trails</p> <p>Participating in community events</p>	Benefits	<p><i>Personal</i></p> <p>Improved physical condition</p> <p>Improved wayfinding skills</p> <p>Improved self-confidence</p> <p>Restored mind from unwanted stress</p> <p><i>Household and Community</i></p> <p>Improved interactions with community members</p> <p>Enhanced community pride</p> <p><i>Economic</i></p> <p>Enhanced travel and tourism related activity in gateway communities</p> <p>Reduced health maintenance costs</p>
Settings	<p><i>Physical</i></p> <p>Primarily roaded natural in appearance. The area is characterized by a mix of gravel roads and singletrack trail in a forested environment. High trail densities in some portions of the system. Regular signage including wayfinding, kiosks and other visitor information. More developed within Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site with shelters, restrooms and other infrastructure.</p>	<p><i>Social</i></p> <p>Individuals and small groups are the most common within this zone. Interactions with other visitors are relatively common. Contact with visitors engaged in a different activity (i.e., mountain biker and equestrian) is common and user conflict may occur.</p>	<p><i>Administrative</i></p> <p>Infrequent encounters with BLM staff and volunteers, and virtually no contact with law enforcement personnel. Work crews may be encountered. Rules and regulations clearly posted.</p>
Major Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Up to 3 miles of trail re-routes to unsustainable segments ○ Up to 5 miles of new trail construction including an extension south to Aquila Vista ○ A new trail closure policy that is dictated by trail conditions rather than rigid dates ○ Improvements to trailhead capacity and recommended access points for different user groups 		

Table 10: Wilderness Zone - Benefits-Based Management Framework

This zone is defined by the boundary of Table Rock Wilderness. It includes the entirety of the wilderness as well four wilderness trailheads (not including Peachuck Lookout). See the Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update for additional information.

Activities	Hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, nature study, photography, viewing wildlife		
Experiences	<p>Engaging in strenuous exercise</p> <p>Enjoying easy access to pristine natural environments</p> <p>Enjoying primitive forms of recreation</p> <p>Viewing unique natural features</p> <p>Engaging in self-reflection</p> <p>Experiencing solitude</p>	Benefits	<p><i>Personal</i></p> <p>Improved physical condition</p> <p>Improved wayfinding skills</p> <p>Restored mind from unwanted stress</p> <p><i>Household and Community</i></p> <p>Enhanced overall environmental awareness</p> <p><i>Economic</i></p> <p>Reduced health maintenance costs</p>
Settings	<p><i>Physical</i></p> <p>Semi-primitive in appearance, characterized by a mix of unmanaged forest, singletrack trail and doubletrack trail. Trail densities are moderate throughout this zone and substantially lower than the Upland Trail Zone. Signage is infrequent and limited to wilderness trailheads.</p>	<p><i>Social</i></p> <p>Individuals and small groups are the most common within this zone. Interactions with other visitors are infrequent on all trails except for Table Rock Trail, where interactions may be common on busy weekends. Contact with visitors engaged in a different activity (i.e., mountain biker and equestrian) is infrequent and user conflict is unlikely to occur.</p>	<p><i>Administrative</i></p> <p>Infrequent encounters with BLM staff and volunteers and virtually no contact with law enforcement personnel. Work crews may be encountered during portions of the use season. Rules and regulations clearly posted at wilderness boundaries.</p>
Major Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Modifications to wilderness management including a new 12-person group size limit and changes to visitor information o An approximately one mile trail re-route that will connect the current Table Rock Trailhead with Image Creek Trail, bypassing use of the roadbed o Monitoring and patrol to designed to protect wilderness character 		

Plan Implementation

The following chapters provide a framework for plan implementation that addresses the most pressing issues identified in this management plan. An implementation strategy has been created that focuses on four major themes: **Chapter 3: Overnight Use, Chapter 4: Day use and River Access, Chapter 5: Trail Access and Development, and Chapter 6: General Management, Visitor Services and Interpretation.** This framework provides specific direction, identifies priority actions, and establishes general guidelines for project implementation. An interactive map that provides additional spatial information on where individual actions are located can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/salem/plans/molalla/index.php>

Overall Priorities for Project Completion

Priorities for project completion are identified below. They are closely aligned with addressing the issues identified during scoping. The projects have been placed into two categories. Category A projects will receive precedence over category B projects. Immediate action to ensure public safety, maintain existing facilities and protect natural and cultural resources may be taken at any time and will be prioritized over development projects outlined in this plan.

During the 15 year timeframe of this plan, the priorities for project completion may be adjusted based on visitor behavior, partner support, budget, environmental conditions, or Department-level initiatives. These changes will adhere to the overall goals and objectives of the plan and maintain the recreation 'niche' identified in Chapter 2.

Category A Projects are those that deal with the main issues identified during public scoping

- ü Construction of overnight facilities and associated trails as outlined in the facility plans found in Chapter 3
- ü Improvement and construction of day use recreation sites
- ü Closure and rehabilitation of existing dispersed sites
- ü Improvements to the existing Molalla River Trail System
- ü Improved visitor information and interpretation

Category B Projects are those that expand upon the recreation opportunities available within the Molalla River-Table Rock area and provide enhanced experiences for specific users

- ü Construction of whitewater boating facilities
- ü Development of an equestrian camping facility
- ü Development of group camping facilities
- ü New construction within the Molalla River Trail System

Limited staff and funding will be available to implement the projects contained within this management plan. Identification of a project within this plan does not ensure resources will be available for implementation. Projects that can show non-Federal support through the formation of partnerships and agreements will be preferred.

Frameworks such as memoranda of understanding, assistance agreements, cooperative management agreements and other mechanisms may be utilized to formalize these partnerships.

All of these actions will require some level of additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance before implementation. This may include a Determination of NEPA Adequacy, Categorical Exclusion or Environmental Assessment.

Chapter 3: Overnight Use

This chapter outlines management direction and specific actions to address the most pressing issue identified in this plan: the management of overnight use along the Molalla River and throughout the Special Recreation Management Area.



Overnight use will shift from dispersed riverside sites to three rustic, designated campgrounds

It is expected that overnight camping will remain one of the primary attractions of the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA. The proximity to rural and urban populations and the quality of the recreation setting will continue to draw visitors. As facilities are developed, the dispersed nature of overnight use will become concentrated at the identified locations. Overnight facilities are intended to provide safe, pleasant and low-impact camping experiences for a broad range of the visiting public.

3.1 Management Direction and Actions – Overnight Facility Development

The management direction below describes BLM’s overall approach to managing overnight use. Each statement is accompanied by a set of specific management actions the BLM will complete. The actions are listed as either Category A or Category B projects, based on the priorities and funding limitations discussed above.

3.1.1 DIRECTION: *Develop overnight facilities in a manner that controls visitor use while providing a high quality camping experience, focusing construction on locations impacted by previous recreation use or road construction.*

ACTIONS

- A. Designate three locations as BLM Recreation Sites (Three Bears, Cedar Grove and Pine Creek). Design and construct Three Bears and Cedar Grove **overnight facilities during phase one of site development.**
- A. Establish an administrative presence within the recreation area by developing a **volunteer host site** at Pine Creek Campground. This host site will be developed prior to full completion of the Pine Creek Campground (see below). This phase of development may include a photovoltaic system, potable water and a septic tank for waste disposal. The site will be secured with a main entrance gate.
- A. Pursue Recreation Resource Advisory Council approval to charge **recreation user fees**. BLM will propose expanded amenity fees, or fees for overnight campgrounds and other unique facilities, at a level commensurate with the availability of amenities at each site. A **Business Plan** will be developed to outline this fee proposal.

- A. Complete engineering and design of an **overnight facility at Pine Creek**. Begin site restoration through planting of native vegetation in a manner that improves the recreation setting and supports site development.

Facility Development Plan: Three Bears Campground

The existing Rabbits Tail campsite will be developed to provide walk-in tent camping and will be designated as the “Three Bears Campground”. The campground will be located in the Developed River Zone and provide 9 campsites in total, with a complimentary mix of group sites (3) and single sites (6) that provide for varying group sizes and preferences. The site has been designed to balance user privacy with public safety and access to amenities such as potable water, trash facilities and restrooms.

The campground will be located in a mixed conifer and hardwood stand along the S. Molalla Forest Rd at mile post (MP) 3.3 and provide a relatively rustic camping experience in a natural setting.



Campgrounds were located to take advantage of suitable river access points.

Visitors will enjoy easy access to the Molalla River and time spent with family and friends. The campground will be connected via riverside trail with the Looney’s Gate/Osprey day use complex and Hardy Creek trailhead. An improved

system of pathways and stairs will provide a central river access point for campground visitors.

The setting will be characterized by primarily natural features, with limited infrastructure such as restrooms, kiosks, regulatory signage and trash facilities that blend with the natural environment. The highest level of development will be within and near the parking area. Small and medium sized groups will be common, but interactions will be frequent. No more than 48 individuals will likely be within the site at one time. Contact with administrative staff will be common, with daily patrols by staff and volunteer hosts.

Site Specifications – Three Bears Campground

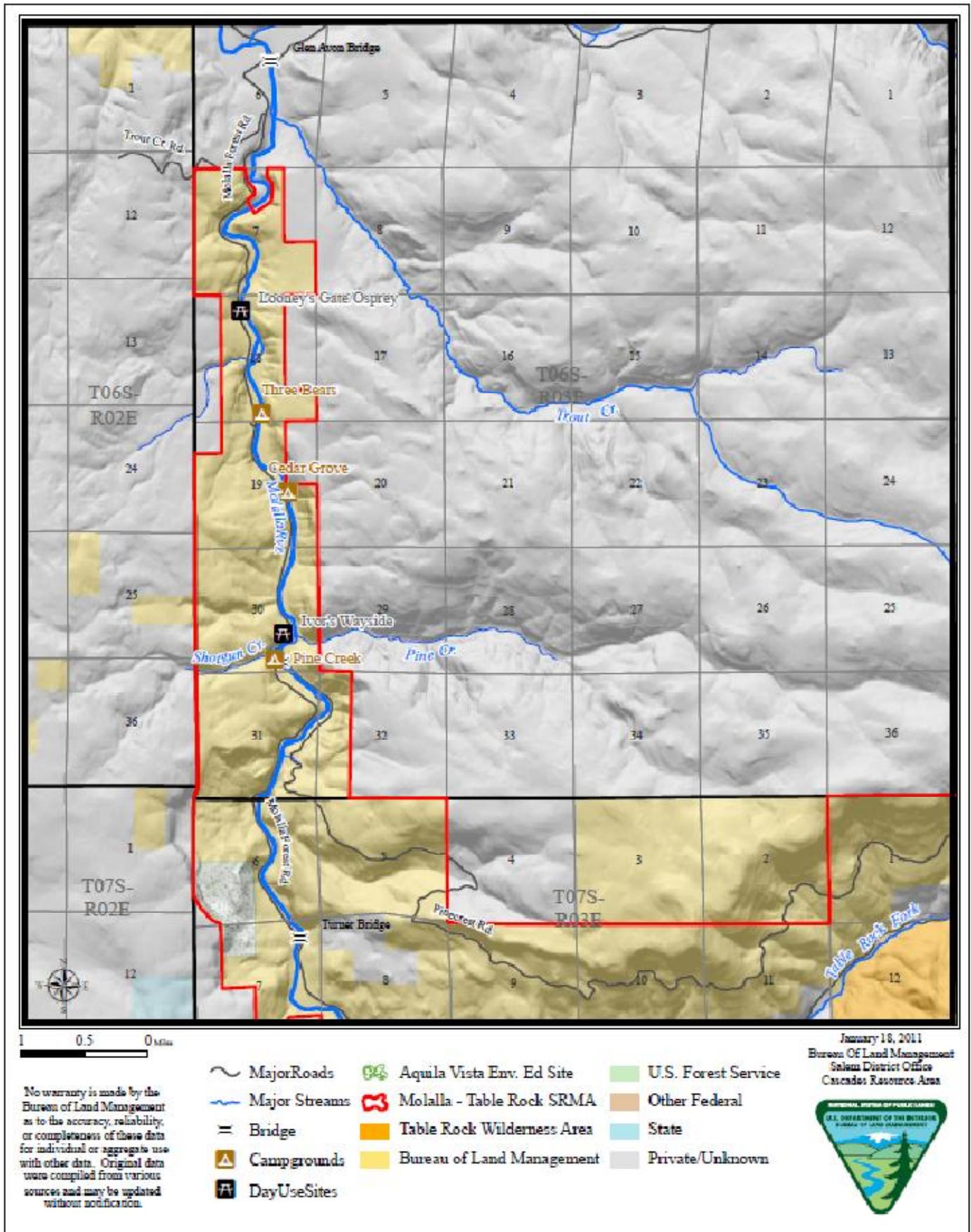
Amenities: On-site amenities will include two single unit vault restrooms, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service, picnic tables and BBQ grills. Native materials (basalt rock, etc) will used where possible for landscaping and construction of fences, kiosks and other features.

Vehicle Parking: Vehicles spaces will be assigned to specific campsites- 16 striped vehicle spaces in the main parking area and 10 vehicles spaces in a designated overflow lot.

Site Placement: To protect riparian resources, all sites will be a minimum 50 feet from the river and 25 feet from the top of riverbank. Restrooms will be no less 125 feet from the river.

Group sites will have a larger footprint than single sites, accommodating up to 4 tents and providing a small approximately 10x12 foot shelter for visitor use. Sites will be defined with fencing and natural features to prevent the creation of user-created trails. Native vegetation will be planted where needed for visual screening and privacy.

Figure 5. Molalla River - Table Rock (SRMA) Facility Development Plan



THREE BEARS CAMPGROUND

Molalla River: - Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan

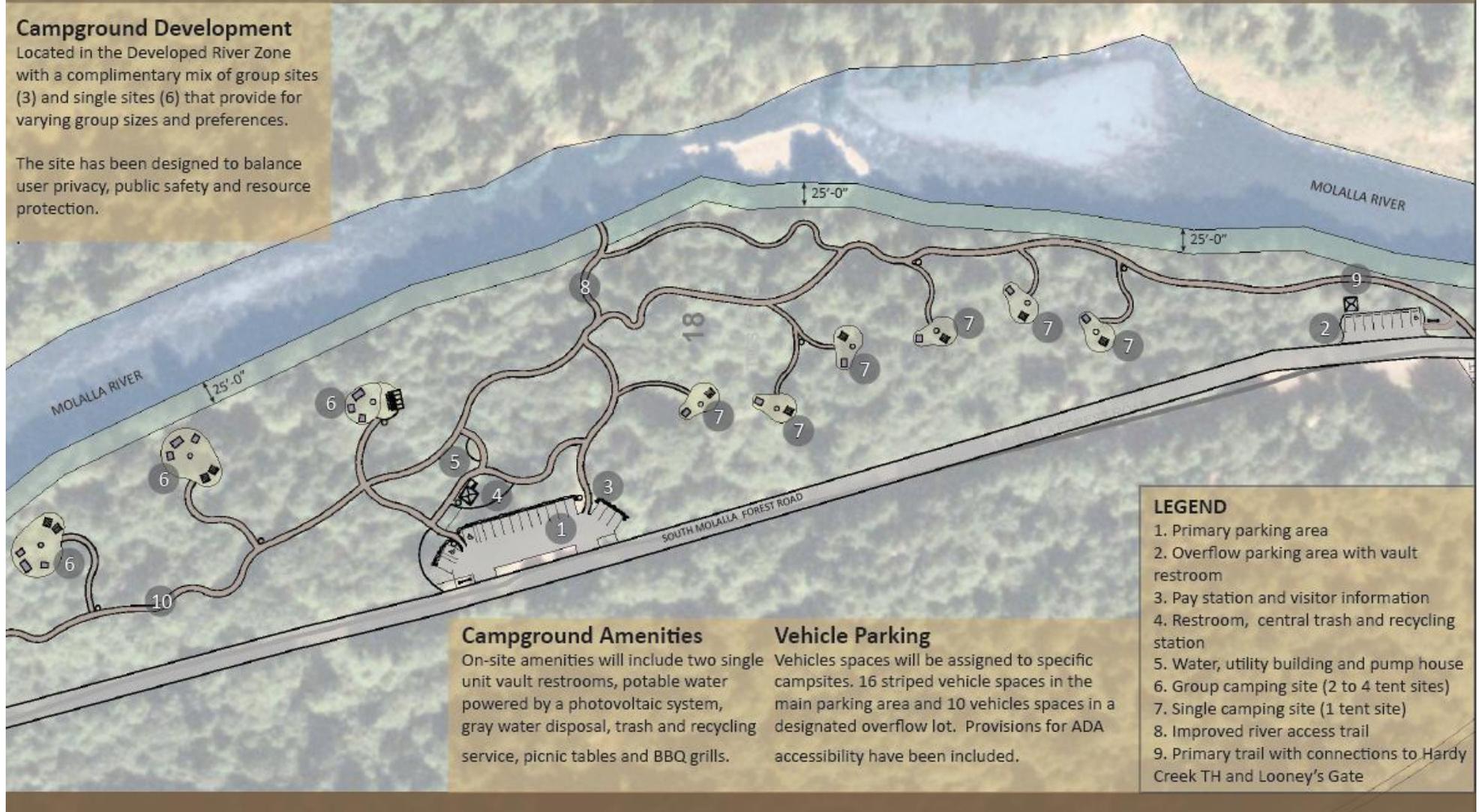
** NOTE:
NO CAMPING DEVELOPMENT
WITHIN THE 25'-0"
FROM TOP OF STREAM BANK



Campground Development

Located in the Developed River Zone with a complimentary mix of group sites (3) and single sites (6) that provide for varying group sizes and preferences.

The site has been designed to balance user privacy, public safety and resource protection.



Campground Amenities

On-site amenities will include two single unit vault restrooms, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service, picnic tables and BBQ grills.

Vehicle Parking

Vehicles spaces will be assigned to specific campsites. 16 striped vehicle spaces in the main parking area and 10 vehicles spaces in a designated overflow lot. Provisions for ADA accessibility have been included.

LEGEND

1. Primary parking area
2. Overflow parking area with vault restroom
3. Pay station and visitor information
4. Restroom, central trash and recycling station
5. Water, utility building and pump house
6. Group camping site (2 to 4 tent sites)
7. Single camping site (1 tent site)
8. Improved river access trail
9. Primary trail with connections to Hardy Creek TH and Looney's Gate

Figure 6: Facility Development Plan for Three Bears Campground

Facility Development Plan: Cedar Grove Campground

The existing Sleepy Hollow campsite will be developed to provide walk-in tent camping and will be designated as the *Cedar Grove Campground*. The campground will be located in the Developed River Zone and provide 9 campsites, all of which will provide single or double tent sites. The site has been designed to create a quiet and natural camping experience, while preserving public safety and access to amenities.

The campground will be located at mile post (MP) 4 in a conifer stand dominated by western red cedar with little understory. The site will have no trail thoroughfare and will be located away from other developments, resulting in a quieter atmosphere than Three Bears. Visitors will enjoy easy access to the Molalla River and access to the natural environment.



The setting will be characterized by primarily natural features, with limited infrastructure such as restrooms, kiosks, regulatory signage and trash facilities that blend with the natural environment. The highest level of development will be within and near the parking area. Small group sizes (less than 6) will be normal, but interactions will be frequent. No more than 32 individuals will likely be within the site at one time. Contact with administrative staff will be common, with daily patrols of staff and volunteer hosts.

Individual sites will be situated to take advantage of natural screening.

Site Specifications – Cedar Grove Campground

Amenities: On-site amenities will include a double unit vault restroom, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service and picnic tables. Native materials (basalt rock, etc) will used for landscaping and construction of fences, kiosks and other features.

Vehicle Parking: Vehicles spaces will be assigned to specific campsites- 17 striped vehicle spaces in the main parking area.

Site Placement: To protect riparian resources, all sites will be a minimum 50 feet from the river and 25 feet from the top of riverbank. Restrooms will be no less 125 feet from the river.

Sites will be defined with physical barriers and natural features to prevent the creation of user-created trails. Native vegetation will be planted where needed for visual screening and privacy.

CEDAR GROVE CAMPGROUND

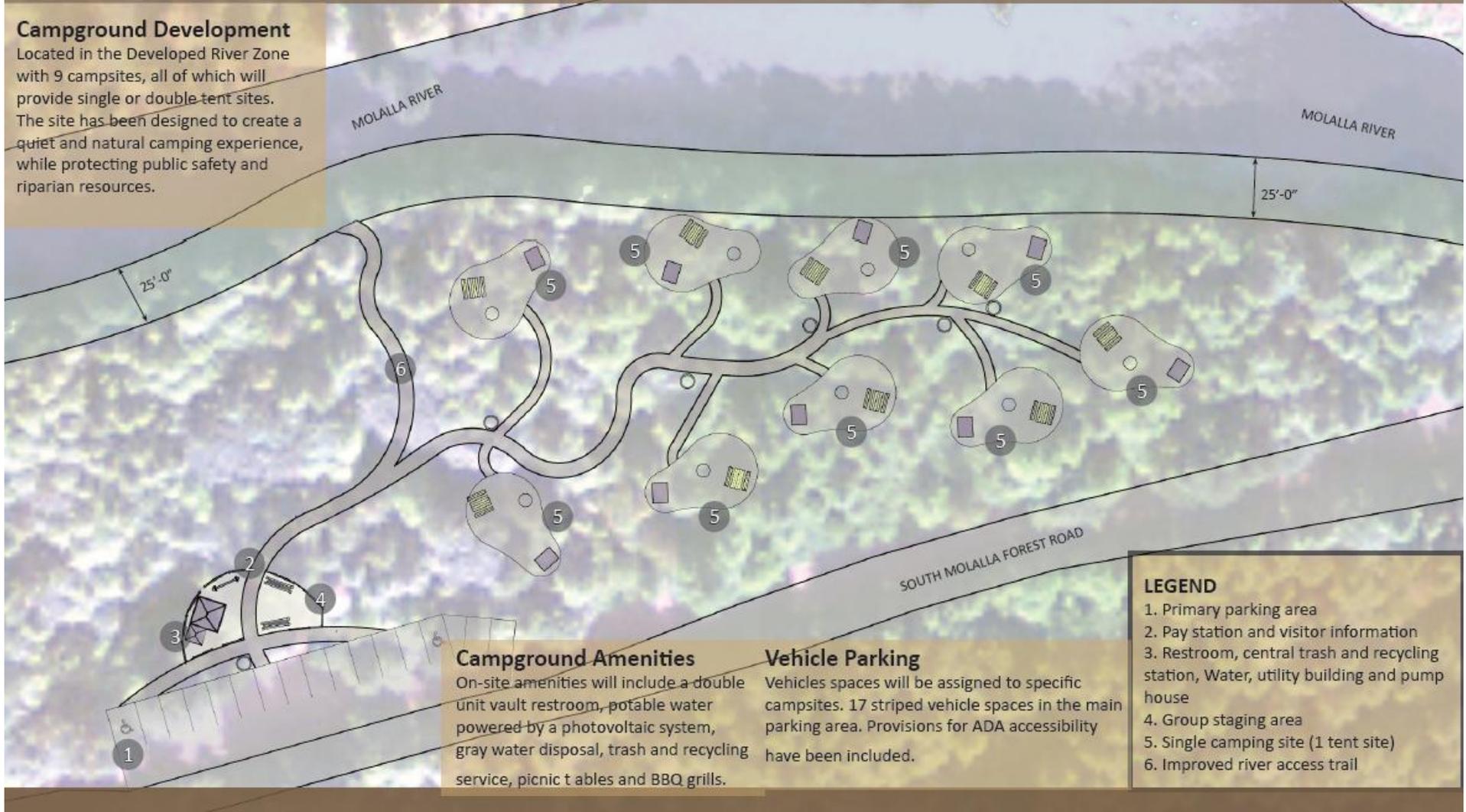
Molalla River: - Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan

**** NOTE:**
NO CAMPING DEVELOPMENT
WITHIN THE 25' BUFFER
FROM TOP OF STREAM BANK



Campground Development

Located in the Developed River Zone with 9 campsites, all of which will provide single or double tent sites. The site has been designed to create a quiet and natural camping experience, while protecting public safety and riparian resources.



Campground Amenities

On-site amenities will include a double unit vault restroom, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service, picnic tables and BBQ grills.

Vehicle Parking

Vehicles spaces will be assigned to specific campsites. 17 striped vehicle spaces in the main parking area. Provisions for ADA accessibility have been included.

LEGEND

1. Primary parking area
2. Pay station and visitor information
3. Restroom, central trash and recycling station, Water, utility building and pump house
4. Group staging area
5. Single camping site (1 tent site)
6. Improved river access trail

Figure 7: Facility Development Plan for Cedar Grove Campground

Facility Development Plan: Pine Creek Campground

An existing material stockpile at the western end of Pine Creek Bridge will be developed to provide vehicle-based camping and will be designated as the “**Pine Creek Campground**”. The site will provide 14 campsites in total, with a complimentary mix of back-in (12) and pull-through (2) campsites that will accommodate passenger vehicles and recreational vehicles (RV’s) under 28 feet in length. The site has been designed to provide a more traditional, vehicle-based camping experience with a higher degree of proximity to other visitors.

The campground will be located in this impacted area at MP 5.5. Sites will be tucked into intact riparian vegetation, which are primarily young conifers with a shrub understory. Prior to site development, the existing material stockpiles will be relocated. Restoration actions will be taken to re-establish native vegetation and facilitate site development.

The setting will be characterized by a mix of natural and constructed features. A high level of development will be present throughout the site in the form of parking spaces, buildings, regulatory signage and other facilities. Small to medium groups will be normal, but interactions will be frequent. Up to 75 visitors may be in the site at one time. A volunteer host will be stationed at the site, so interactions with visitors will be frequent.

Site Specifications – Pine Creek Campground

Amenities: On-site amenities will include a double unit vault restroom, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service, picnic tables and BBQ grills.

Vehicle Parking: Vehicle spaces will be associated with specific campsites. A mix of pull-through and back-in sites will be provided. Expected total vehicle capacity is 32 vehicles.

Site Placement: To protect riparian resources, all sites will be a minimum 50 feet from the river and 25 feet from the top of riverbank. Restrooms will be no less 125 feet from the river. Sites will be defined with fencing and natural features to prevent the creation of user-created trails. Native vegetation will be planted where needed for visual screening and privacy.

Connectivity: The site will be linked with the adjacent Ivor Davies wayside and Pinecrest Rd, which will be gated but allow non-motorized access.

PINE CREEK CAMPGROUND

Molalla River - Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan

** NOTE:
NO CAMPING DEVELOPMENT
WITHIN THE 25' BUFFER
FROM TOP OF STREAM BANK.

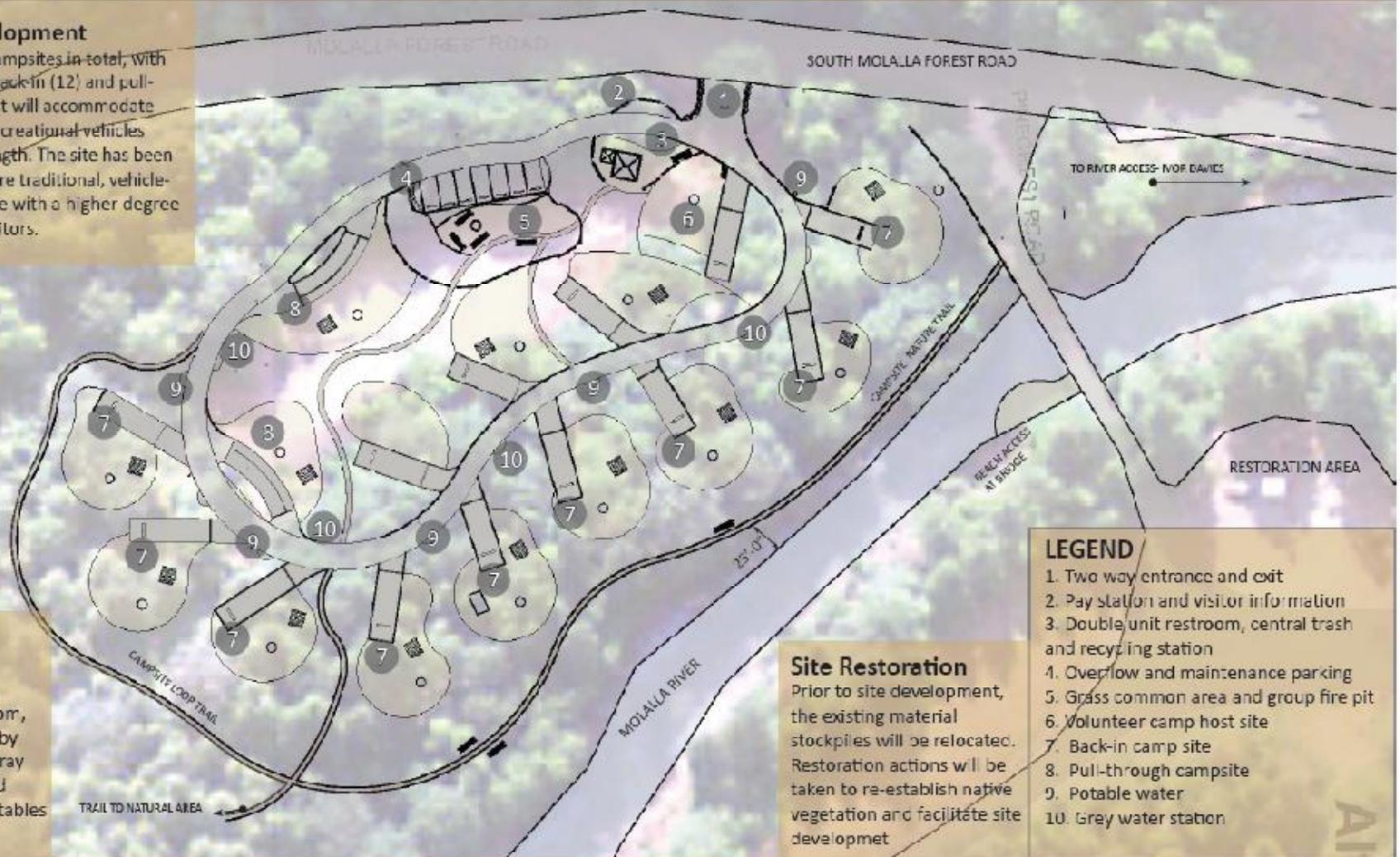


Campground Development

The site will provide 14 campsites in total, with a complimentary mix of back-in (12) and pull-through (2) campsites that will accommodate passenger vehicles and recreational vehicles (RV's) under 28 feet in length. The site has been designed to provide a more traditional, vehicle-based camping experience with a higher degree of proximity to other visitors.

Campground Amenities

On-site amenities will include a double unit vault restroom, potable water powered by a photovoltaic system, gray water disposal, trash and recycling service, picnic tables and BBQ grills.



LEGEND

1. Two way entrance and exit
2. Pay station and visitor information
3. Double unit restroom, central trash and recycling station
4. Overflow and maintenance parking
5. Grass common area and group fire pit
6. Volunteer camp host site
7. Back-in camp site
8. Pull-through campsite
9. Potable water
10. Grey water station

Site Restoration

Prior to site development, the existing material stockpiles will be relocated. Restoration actions will be taken to re-establish native vegetation and facilitate site development.

Figure 8: Facility Development Plan for Pine Creek Campground

3.2 Management Direction and Action – General Overnight Use

3.2.1 *DIRECTION: Protect and restore riparian and upland ecological resources impacted by recreation use*

ACTIONS

- A. **Prohibit camping within Developed River Zone** outside of designated campgrounds and prevent the future establishment of heavily used dispersed campsites within this zone utilizing 43 CFR 8364.1 for enforcement.
- A. **Complete rehabilitation actions at existing campsites** that have been impacted by previous recreation use where no other improvements have been planned.
- A. **Prohibit camping within the Dispersed River and Upland Zone** within 100 yards the Copper Creek and Table Rock Forks of the Molalla River and prevent the future establishment of heavily used dispersed campsites in these areas.

3.2.2 *DIRECTION: Where possible, meet existing and projected recreation demand for various types of overnight use including group and equestrian use*

ACTIONS

- B. To meet visitor demand for group camping, **make Aquila Vista available as a reservable group camping area** during the summer recreation season while promoting the site for environmental education during the remainder of the year. Additional facility development at this location will be minimal. Changes to the site will rely primarily on existing infrastructure.
- B. Upon completion of priority projects (overnight and day use facility development, trail construction, interpretive programming and restoration), **evaluate potential for an equestrian campground**. In order for such a facility to be constructed, the following conditions must be met:
 - a. The construction of such a facility will remain consistent with purpose and need for the Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan as well as the management goals and objectives
 - b. An agreement for ongoing maintenance and operations is in place, which will include participation of partner organizations
 - c. Ensure public safety for equestrians and vehicles on the surrounding transportation network, specifically S. Molalla Forest Road
 - d. Provide direct connectivity to the Molalla River Trail System
 - e. Exhibit compatibility with nearby facility development and targeted recreation activities
 - f. Remain cost effective for development, management and long-term maintenance
 - g. Reflect regional demand for activity-specific equestrian camping

3.3 Guidelines for Ongoing Management

- Provide a mix of reservable and first-come, first-served overnight sites that allow for both planned and spontaneous visitation; make sites reservable through online forums and through the Salem District Office
- Provide, at a minimum, two fully accessible overnight sites and associated parking spaces at each developed recreation facility per US Access Board guidelines – ensure ongoing access to at least two camping sites and group amenities within each campground
- Observe an operating season for developed campgrounds that is closely aligned with visitor demand, within management and staffing constraints
- Give preference to visitor education and the promotion of visitor etiquette rather than the establishment and enforcement of rules and regulations
- Limit visitor access to sensitive wetland or riparian areas through the use of fencing or other barriers as well as signage and visitor information
- Track the utilization of overnight facilities on a bi-annual basis to adjust operating seasons and reservable/non-reservable ratios as necessary.
- Allow for adaptive management by identifying expansion areas based on future recreation demand. Potential future overnight expansion sites include the current Macbeth campsite at MP 9.1 and the east side of Pine Creek bridge at MP 5.5.
- Expansion of additional overnight sites, outside of Cedar Grove, Three Bears and Pine Creek sites, will not solely depend on carrying capacity and/or related visitor demand. Expansion will only be considered if resources are available to effectively develop and manage future sites.
- Construct facilities during the dry season (June through September) where possible to avoid excess erosion and sediment inputs.
- Observe all applicable state regulations regarding the location of public water sources, wells and septic systems

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Chapter 4: Day Use and River Access

This chapter outlines management direction and specific actions to enhance day use and river access within the planning area. Access to the Molalla River and its tributaries for swimming, picnicking, angling and boating will continue to be popular among visitors to the area. The unique character of the river and the wide array of activities available will continue to draw visitors at a rate consistent with regional population growth. The development outlined in this plan will concentrate use in the main recreation corridor, while preserving some degree of dispersed access elsewhere in the planning area. Day use facilities will be rustic in nature, but allow for a safe, pleasant and low impact day use recreation experience.



Day use and river access will be focused at appropriate locations.

4.1 Management Direction and Actions

The management direction below describes BLM's overall approach to managing day use and river access. Each statement is accompanied by a set of specific management actions the BLM will complete. The actions are listed as either Category A or Category B projects, based on the priorities and funding limitations discussed above.

4.1.1 DIRECTION: *Concentrate day use recreation in suitable locations that minimize resources impacts and reduce sanitation issues, while allowing access to high quality river segments*

ACTIONS

A. Complete design and **implement improvements to Ivor Davies Wayside**

The site will be located in the Developed River Zone and provide improved river access, picnic sites and sanitary facilities for visitors. The Wayside currently experiences high levels of day use visitation and serves as the hub of visitor activity in the main recreation corridor. Improvements will funnel use to appropriate areas and improve the visitor experience.

The site is located at milepost 6 directly downstream of Pine Creek bridge and offers excellent views of the river and geologic formations exposed by construction of S. Molalla Forest Road. Visitors will enjoy time spent with family and friends, learning about Molalla River geology and excellent access to a swimming and picnicking.

The setting will be characterized by primarily natural features, with limited infrastructure such as restrooms, kiosks, regulatory signage and trash facilities that blend with the natural environment. The highest level of development will be within and near the parking area.

Small group sizes (less than 6) will be normal, but interactions will be frequent. No more than 32 individuals will likely be within the site at one time. Contact with administrative staff will be common, with regular stops by staff and volunteer hosts.

Based on the final amenities provided at the site, BLM may pursue approval from the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee to charge day use fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

Site Specifications – Ivor’s Wayside Day Use Area

Amenities: On-site amenities will include the existing (or comparable if replaced) vault restroom, trash and recycling service and picnic tables. River access point will be improved with stairs and hardened trails.

Vehicle Parking: The existing parking areas will be defined and formalized. Gravel surfacing may be replaced with asphalt. Expected total vehicle capacity is 18 spaces.

A. Construct a day use recreation site at the current **Looney’s Gate and Osprey campsites.**

Looney’s Gate and Osprey campsites are located in the Developed River Zone and will be developed to serve a wide range of functions. The combined site, referred to as “Looney’s Gate Recreation Site” will be a visitor portal, trailhead for access into the northern Molalla River Trail System and picnic site with improved river access. The area has excellent features for a day use area including hardrock beaches with swimming holes, mature forest and views of the Molalla River.



The site will be located between MP 1.6 and MP 1.9 near the beginning of BLM ownership. Two separate parking areas will be constructed, both at the current locations of gravel pullouts. Expected total vehicle capacity is 20.

Development at Looney’s Gate will center on existing pullouts like this one.

The setting will be similar to Ivor’s Wayside in terms of development, social interactions and administrative presence.

Based on the final amenities provided at the site, BLM may pursue approval from the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee to charge day use fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

Site Specifications – Looney’s Gate Recreation Site

Amenities: On-site amenities will a single unit vault restrooms at each parking area, trash and recycling service, and 6 to 8 picnic sites.

A large, three panel kiosk will provide an overview of the recreation area, an introduction to the area's natural history and posted rules and regulations. Native basalt rock will be used for landscaping and construction of fences, kiosks and other features.

Vehicle Parking: Two separate asphalt parking areas will be constructed, both at the current locations of gravel pullouts. Expected total vehicle capacity is 20.

Trails: The site will act as a trailhead for a riverside trail that connects Looney's Gate, Three Bears Campground and Hardy Creek Trailhead.

A. Out of existing day-use sites, **implement low-level development at two sites to adequately manage visitor use:**

- Day use pull-out (currently day use site #3) south of Osprey
- Pine Creek Flats/Pinecrest Gate

These sites are popular river access points and pose few if any resource concerns. Development may include definition and improvement of parking, hardening of trails and trash service.

4.1.2 DIRECTION: Protect and restore riparian and upland ecological resources impacted by recreation use

ACTION

- A. **Complete rehabilitation actions at existing day use sites** that have been impacted by previous recreation use.

4.1.3 DIRECTION: Enhance the whitewater boating experience while protecting public safety and minimizing user conflict

ACTIONS

- B. Provide a **system of designated river put-in and take-out locations** to improve visitor experience and boater safety. Design and develop **river access points at Turner Bridge and Old Bridge** to facilitate boater put-in and take-out.

Located at MP 8.2, **Turner Bridge** is a suitable put-in location for the Three Bears whitewater run but lacks good river access. The current parking area (including vault restroom and kiosk) on the east side of bridge will be retained and an adjacent site approximately 100 yards upriver will be enhanced to provide complimentary river access.

The upriver site, an existing pullout, will be developed to provide a drop-off location large enough for a truck and trailer. A six to eight foot wide pedestrian "ramp" will be constructed to allow for access to a cobble beach and pool.



Directions to specific put-in and take-out locations will be provided for whitewater boaters.

At the confluence of the Table Rock Fork and the mainstem Molalla, ***Old Bridge*** will be enhanced to provide the farthest upstream access for whitewater boaters. The site is currently designated for overnight use.

The site will provide parking for several vehicles and will include a turnaround for a truck/trailer combination. A pedestrian trail will be developed to the river and a visitor information kiosk will be constructed to provide river-specific information.

- B. Produce a **basic water trail guide for the Molalla River** that provides whitewater boating information such as put-in and take-out locations, river segment characterization, recommended river flows and safety guidelines. The document will be made available online.

4.2 Guidelines for Ongoing Management

- Provide, at a minimum, two fully accessible picnic sites and associated parking spaces at each developed recreation facility (Looney's and Ivor's Wayside) per US Access Board guidelines
- Implement lower levels of development and management within the Developed River Zone beyond Turner Bridge in order to target lower visitor densities and an experience of relative solitude
- Provide only the level of development and management necessary for the protection of public safety and natural resources rather than visitor comfort or convenience within the Dispersed River and Upland Zone
- Evaluate the suitability and feasibility of charging recreation user fees at these locations as day use facilities are constructed and amenities are provided
- Utilize physical barriers that mimic the natural environment (boulders, etc.) to minimize or prevent vehicle access to sensitive areas

Chapter 5: Trail Access and Development

This chapter outlines management direction and specific actions for management of the Molalla River Trail System and other trails within the planning area.

The Molalla River Trail System is expected to remain a popular regional destination for equestrians, with moderate use by other non-motorized trail users. Trail re-routes and new trail management policies will lead to better conditions and reduced long-term maintenance costs. Modifications to the existing system of trailheads are expected to enhance capacity and reduce potential user conflicts. The area will be managed to realize the experiences, benefits and setting prescriptions for the Upland Trail Zone identified in Chapter 2.



The Molalla River Trail System is made up of approximately 25 miles of singletrack and doubletrack trails.

5.1 Management Direction and Actions

The management direction below describes BLM's overall approach to managing the Molalla River Trail System and other non-motorized trails within the planning area. Each statement is accompanied by a set of specific management actions the BLM will complete. The actions are listed as either Category A or Category B projects, based on the priorities and funding limitations discussed above.

5.1.1 DIRECTION: Improve overall trail conditions within the Molalla River Trail System through trail reconstruction and management

ACTIONS

- A. **Re-route priority trail segments** that have been identified as unsustainable by the trails assessment. Trail re-routes will be designed to achieve appropriate trail grade, incorporate proper drainage and avoid wet or sensitive areas.

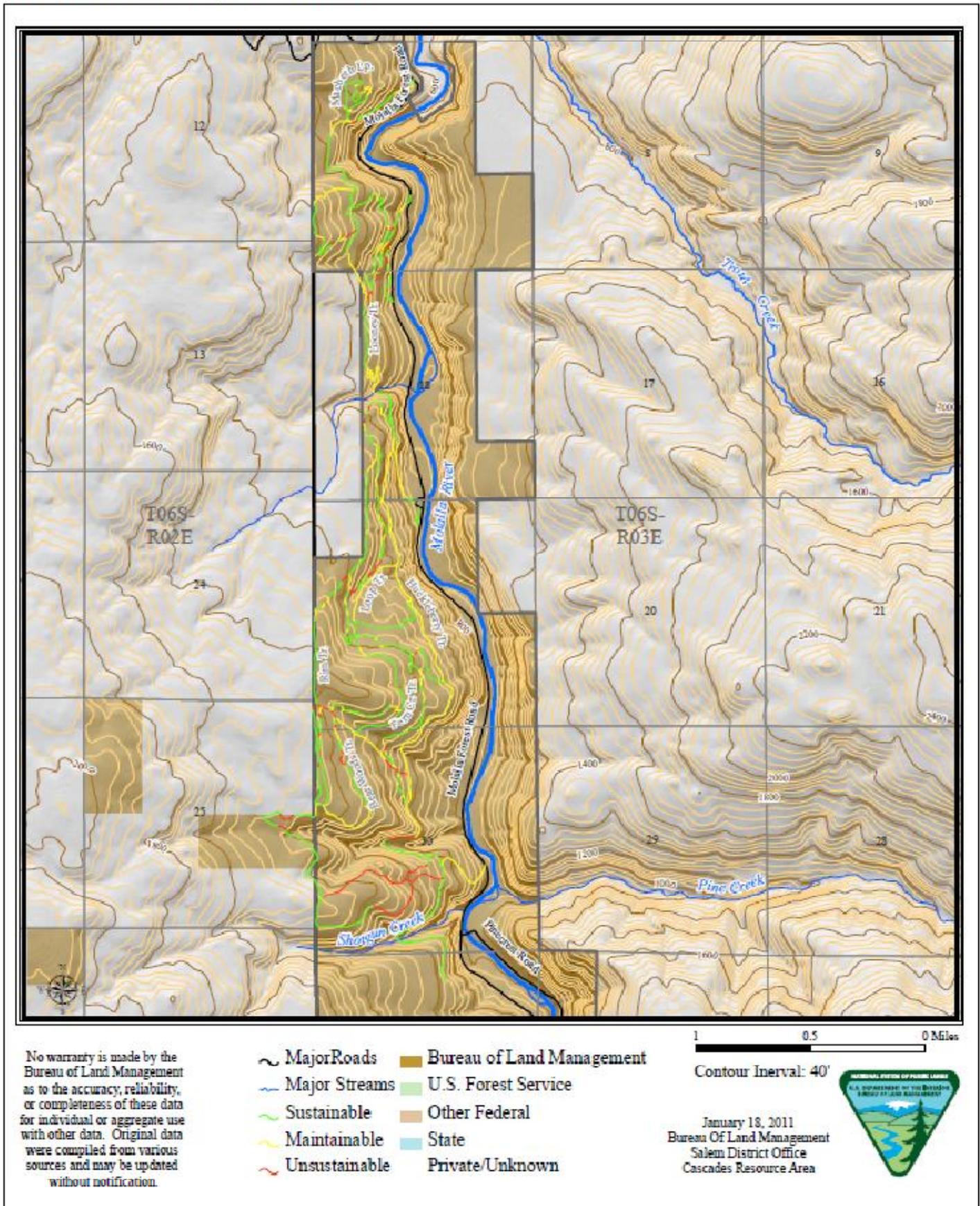
Total modified trail length may be up to 3 miles. Re-routes longer than 50 yards will occur on the following trails:

South End: Rim Trail, Rim Tie, Deer Skull and Bear Woods
North End: Looney's, Leapfrog Loop, Sandquist

- A. **Implement a new seasonal trail closure procedure** that is determined by monitoring trail conditions rather than closing on a fixed schedule. Singletrack trails will be closed to all users when excessive trail damage is probable during the fall, winter and spring (approximately 6 to 8 months annually). Trail closure will be dependent on soil moisture and plasticity, expected and observed rates of visitor use and anticipated weather conditions.

Converted forest roads will remain open for use throughout the year. As improvements are made to specific trail segments (see below), these segments may be opened to year-round use. Trail closure will be communicated via kiosks, BLM's website and other venues.

**Figure 9. Molalla River - Table Rock (SRMA)
Trail Sustainability Assessment**



5.1.2 DIRECTION: Provide a mix of trails that offer targeted experiences for equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers

ACTIONS

- B. In the southern portion of the Molalla River Trail System, **create an equestrian emphasis area** and complete trail projects that enhance the system for these users (trail hardening, hitching post installation, etc). Fully **gravel Fern Creek Trail and allow for year-round use** by all user groups.
- B. In the north portion of the Molalla River Trail System, **create a mountain biking emphasis area** and complete trail projects that enhance the system for these users. Projects may include connection of existing loop trails (i.e., connecting Leapfrog and Macbeth Loops) and installation of optional features such as berms, table tops and grade reversals. Trails that favor directional travel within this area will be considered.
- B. **Construct a new singletrack trail approximately 3 miles long** that connects the southern end of the existing trail segment with Aquila Vista Environmental Education Site. The trail will be designed for shared use and allow for a long loop in combination with Huckleberry Trail.

Additional trail expansion areas could potentially include a riverside trail from Aquila Vista to Gawley Creek utilizing portions of 7-3E-7.2. A trail through this area has experienced sporadic maintenance and use since the trail system was constructed.

- B. Continue **basic maintenance of the historic Baty Butte and Nasty Rock trails** without promoting their use to the public. Make information about these trails available upon request.

5.1.3 DIRECTION: Re-configure trailhead access to maximize existing capacity and improve visitor experience

ACTIONS

- A. Complete modifications and **improvements to Hardy Creek Trailhead** that increase capacity and improve circulation. The current trailhead configuration provides a single parking area for both large vehicles with trailers (typically equestrians) and smaller passenger vehicles (typically mountain bikers and hikers). This situation leads to inefficiency and crowding when passenger vehicles reduce the space available for equestrian trailers. In order to provide for increased capacity, a small parking area will be developed on the east side of South Molalla Forest Road that will provide 8 to 10 parking spaces for passenger vehicles. Use of these spaces by hikers and bikers will be encouraged.
- A. Promote the **Looney's Gate Recreation Site as the primary trailhead for mountain bikers and hikers**, particularly those accessing the northern portion of the trail system.
- A. **Close and rehabilitate Americorps Trailhead**. This existing trailhead receives low rates of use and has poor sight lines for crossing the roadway. The site will be reduced in size to allow parking for two to three vehicles at one time.

5.1.4 DIRECTION: Utilize non-motorized trails to connect overnight facilities with other overnight facilities, day use areas and the Molalla River Trail System

- A. Construct a **new riverside trail** that connects the Looney's/Osprey day use complex with Three Bears Campground and Hardy Creek trailhead. The trail, approximately one mile in length, will create connectivity between some of the major sites within the corridor and allow for scenic views of the Molalla River. The trail may be surfaced with gravel.

5.2 Guidelines for Ongoing Management

- Trail projects other than regular maintenance will not be undertaken within any unit of the Annie's Cabin Timber Sale until the timber sale has been completed.
- Solicit the input and assistance of trail user groups during trail design, construction and maintenance
- Pro-actively manage and restrict visitor access as needed to areas undergoing non-recreation related projects such as timber harvest, fuels treatments or road maintenance
- Complete trail construction with in a variety of methods including hand crew labor and small machinery including excavators, dozers and other relevant equipment
- Disallow the construction of motorized trails within the planning area
- Provide and maintain appropriate wayfinding signage within the trail system including trail names, difficulty and permitted uses
- Continue to provide vehicle access to the Molalla River Trail System for the purposes of maintenance and management by keeping access roads in a serviceable condition but designating these areas closed to public motor vehicle use

Trail Construction Guidelines

- Average trail grade will not exceed 10%
- Construct trails with grade or steepness that does not exceed half the grade or steepness of the hillside
- Design all new trails and re-routes with appropriate grade reversals to minimize trail tread erosion. Trail out slope of 5% or greater will be implemented to facilitate proper drainage
- Minimize vegetation removal through trail design; no live vegetation over 24 inches in diameter will be removed as part of the trail construction process
- Any project planned in forest stands with habitat for Survey and Manage species will comply with current Survey and Manage direction

- Suspend or restrict project implementation at any time if plant or animal populations that need protection are found
- Protect and retain coarse woody debris on the ground wherever possible - if suitable woody debris must be moved, the section of log within the trail's path will be cut and removed instead of moving the entire log.
- Retain on-site any trees or snags which are felled or otherwise knocked down that can serve as coarse woody debris if possible - all old-growth trees would be left standing and larger snags (above 12" diameter breast height) of all decay classes would be left standing to the greatest extent possible

Chapter 6: General Management, Visitor Services and Interpretation

This chapter outlines management direction and specific actions for general recreation area management, visitor services and interpretation. It provides guidance on natural resource protection, administration, regulation of certain activities such as recreational mining and the permitting of commercial activities.

6.1 Management Direction and Actions

6.1.1 *DIRECTION: Provide public information that enhances visitor experience, clearly articulates rules and regulations and protects public safety*

ACTIONS



Standard BLM signs will be used to direct visitors.

A. Improve the overall appearance and consistency of visitor information. Kiosks, maps and other information should be standardized in appearance. Durability and legibility will be primary criteria for sign selection.

A. Install and maintain visitor information at developed campgrounds and day use facilities that clearly articulates rules and regulations. Install appropriate wayfinding information that leads visitors to developed sites from S. Molalla Forest Rd.

A. Work with partners and the Oregon Tourism Information Council to install wayfinding signage to the recreation area from downtown Molalla. Signage will guide visitors along secondary county roads (Feyrer Park, Dickey Prairie) to Glen Avon bridge and the beginning of the recreation area.

6.1.2 *DIRECTION: Develop interpretive materials that give visitors a deeper understanding of the natural and human history of the Molalla River Watershed*

ACTIONS

A. Establish and communicate an interpretive theme related to the natural and human history of the upper Molalla Watershed. A basic **Molalla River Interpretive Plan** will be developed that establishes this theme and outlines objectives for interpretive efforts. The identified theme will be communicated within the Developed River Zone on kiosks and interpretive panels. These messages will be complimented by public forums such as brochures and websites.

- A. Develop **two interpretive waysides** within the Developed River Zone to highlight points of geologic and scenic interest. Waysides will be developed at two existing gravel pullouts:

- “Rosette” viewpoint
- Rapids and Molalla meadows viewpoint south of Mama Bear campsite

The waysides will feature low-lying interpretive panels that feature native materials and mimic the aesthetics of the immediate area. Development may include site definition, paving, rock wall barriers, fencing to protect public safety and trash receptacles.



This pullout will be enhanced to provide river interpretation.

6.1.3 DIRECTION: Manage vehicular travel and target shooting throughout the recreation area to protect natural resources and promote visitor safety

ACTIONS

- A. Implement a **seasonal vehicular closure (January 1st through the beginning of bow hunting season, approximately September 1st) of Pinecrest Road** to prevent resource damage, wildlife disturbance, potential for fire and threats to public safety while allowing access for fall hunting season.. A new gate will be installed on Pinecrest Road near Pine Creek bridge and information related to the closure will be posted. Non-motorized access will still be permitted.

Individuals looking for target shooting opportunities will be encouraged to utilize the Molalla Rifle Range and other nearby venues.

Based on visitor monitoring and public requests, a permitted public entry program may be instituted.

- A. Designate all BLM lands within the ½ mile of the mainstem Molalla River between Glen Avon Bridge and the Copper Creek Bridge as a no shooting “**Safety Zone.**”
- A. **Monitor vehicular traffic** on major roadways through the use of traffic counters. The monitoring program will focus on timing of visitor entrance and distribution throughout the planning area.
- A. **Close and rehabilitate unauthorized off-road trails** that develop within the planning area. Post off-highway vehicle designations as necessary.

6.1.4 DIRECTION: Participate in cooperative management and law enforcement efforts

ACTIONS



Volunteers and partnerships are vital for successful implementation of this plan.

A. Participate in **cooperative law enforcement efforts** between BLM, Clackamas County and the City of Molalla Police Department with a focus on overnight camping infractions, underage drinking and vehicle infractions. Establish Memorandums or Memoranda of Understanding specific to the Molalla River as needed to coordinate law enforcement efforts.

A. In cooperation with non-profit and government partners, **organize and participate in special events** that target public volunteer participation. Events may include river clean-ups, trail work parties, and nationally-organized events such as Earth Day and National Public Lands Day.

A. **Establish and revise partnership agreements** with non-profit and government partner to improve cooperative management of the planning area. Mechanisms may include Assistance Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding.

6.1.5 DIRECTION: Manage commercial and competitive activities through the issuance of Special Recreation Permits

ACTIONS

- A.** Require all commercial, competitive, and vending operations to **obtain a Special Recreation Permit**. Implement BLM Special Recreation Permit policy including requirements for post-use reporting.
- A.** Monitor permitted activities and **evaluate need for permit restrictions, without establishing restrictions at this time**. Restrictions may include a limit on the total number of permitted events within the trail system or limit of permit commercial float trips on particular river segments.

6.2 Guidelines for Ongoing Management

Administration

- Recommend that the Special Recreation Management Area boundary identified in Chapter 1 be adopted during the next land use planning process

- Maintain seasonal BLM recreation staff patrols during high use season (May through September). Focus patrols on developed campgrounds and concentrated day use locations. When possible, attune the patrol schedules of seasonal staff with heavy afternoon traffic and visitor use
- Place emphasis on proactive contact with visitors by BLM staff and volunteer hosts, with a focus on low-impact recreation messages (Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly, etc)

Visual Resource Management

- Recommend during the next land use planning process that all public domain BLM-administered land in the Molalla River visual corridor in Township 6 South, Range 2 East and Township 7 South, Range 2 East, Section 31 Willamette Meridian be classified under VRM Class II.

Recreational Mining

- Require all operators of certain recreational mining equipment to obtain and carry the appropriate permits from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Department of State Lands
- Clearly post mining-related information regarding in-stream work periods, needed permits and relevant rules and regulations consistent with the area’s mineral entry withdrawal under R&PP lease
- Discourage operation of suction dredges in proximity to any developed or improved sites and establish regulatory prohibitions if necessary
- Pursue surface use withdrawals of developed recreation sites as needed to protect surface resource values



Recreational mining activities near developed sites will be monitored.

Fee Collection

- Collect all fees under authorization from and in compliance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) [PL 108-447]
- Provide the public and Recreation Resource Advisory Committee an opportunity to make recommendations and comments regarding proposed fees, consistent with FLREA,
- Balance the establishment of fee sites with the provision of no-fee opportunities elsewhere in the planning area

Cultural Resource Protection

- *Archeological pre-disturbance survey:* Conduct a Class III archeological field survey to locate any cultural resources within the project area. prior to any ground disturbing activity (including trail construction, facility development and site restoration). If cultural resources are discovered, apply best management practices by relocating proposed projects to avoid disturbing the site.
- *Cultural resource protection:* In areas with potential cultural resources, determine whether restoration activities would increase or decrease the probability of site protection compared with no action.

Natural Resource Protection

- Design the project to minimize or eliminate the removal of streamside vegetation that provides shading and stream temperature reduction
- Design facilities and parking areas to mitigate interference with hydrologic patterns
- Comply with current Survey and Manage requirements when planning a project in habitat for Survey and Manage Species.
- Retain any trees or snags which are felled or otherwise knocked down on site as coarse woody debris, as possible. Leave standing all old-growth and larger snags (above 15” diameter breast height) of all decay classes to the greatest extent possible. Avoid cutting snags during the nesting season (March 1 to July 31).
- Assist the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in posting applicable angling regulations and notifying visitors when these policies are altered

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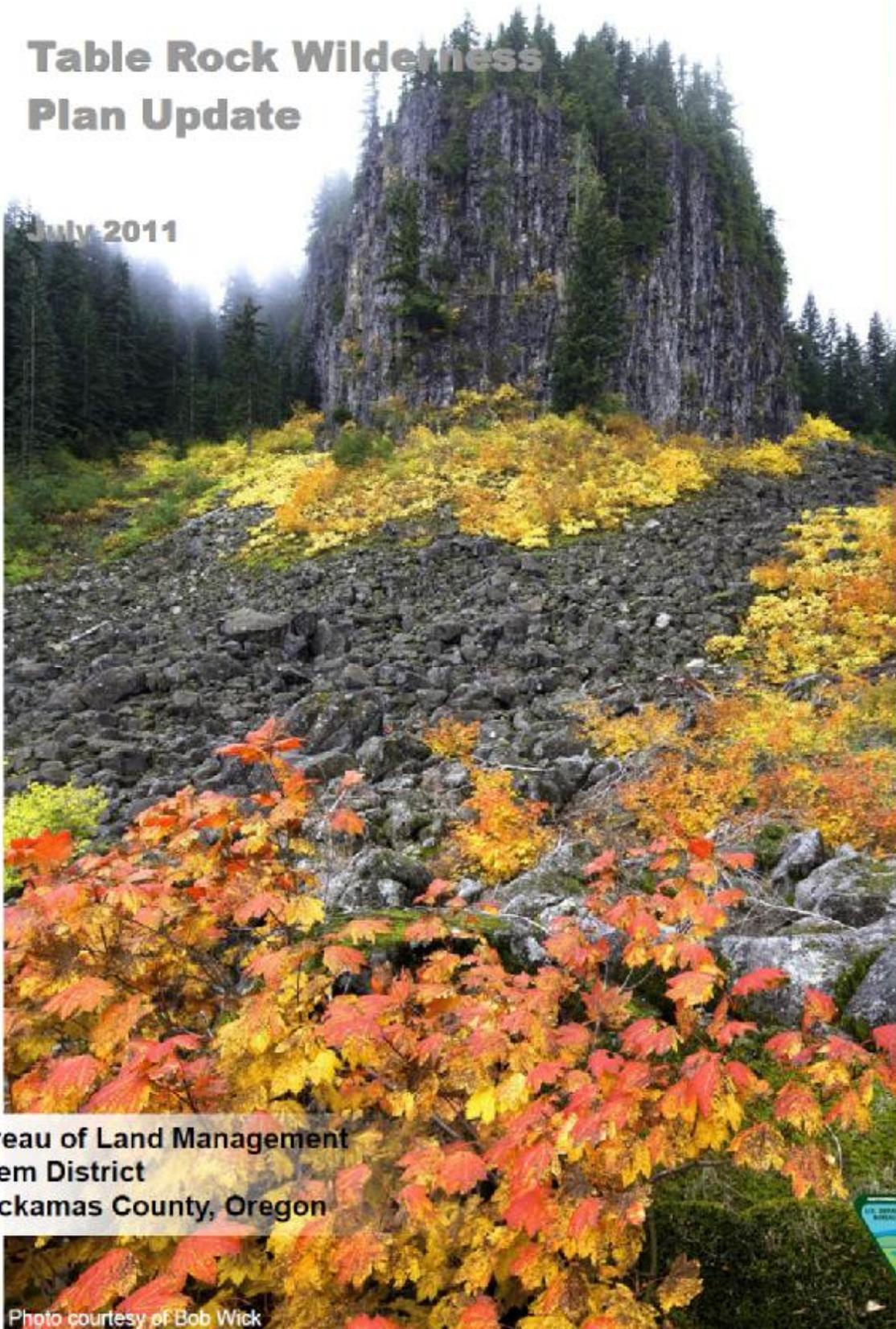
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Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update

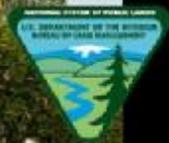
July 2011



Bureau of Land Management
Salem District
Clackamas County, Oregon

Photo courtesy of Bob Wick

BLM
Salem District Office



Plan Update Organization

Part I: Introduction provides a brief introduction to the Table Rock Wilderness and background on this planning effort. It describes the purpose and scope of the Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan, completed in 1987, as well as the purpose and scope of this Plan Update.

Part II: Current Management Situation describes the current recreation management situation within Table Rock Wilderness. It reviews the management actions outlined in the 1987 plan, revisits its assumptions and summarizes any developments that have taken place since its completion. Part II lays out the available information regarding recreation use within the Wilderness and the characteristics of visitors to the area.

Part III: Management Goals and Objectives contains revised goals and objectives for management of Table Rock Wilderness, consistent with new developments and BLM policy.

Part IV: Wilderness Management Program describes the proposed management policies and actions for the Table Rock Wilderness including trails, trailheads, signage, use authorizations and visitor services. It identifies prioritized projects, consistent with wilderness management goals and objectives.

Part I: Introduction

Background

Located in the western foothills of the Cascade Mountains and southeast of Molalla, Oregon, the Table Rock Wilderness contains 5,706 acres of rugged, heavily timbered ridges punctuated by several distinct basalt rock outcrops. Table Rock, the area's highest point, sits at 4,886 feet. The lowest point in the wilderness lies just a few miles to the west at 1,275 feet.

Table Rock Wilderness was designated as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System by the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984 (PL 98-328). It was the only BLM-administered land included in the 1984 Act and remains the only BLM-managed Wilderness within the boundaries of the Salem District.

Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan

Subsequent to its designation, a planning effort was begun to set direction for the management of Table Rock Wilderness (TRW). The Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan was completed and signed in February of 1987. The Wilderness plan took an interdisciplinary approach and provided management direction for the full range of resources contained within TRW: soil, water, vegetation, fisheries, wildlife, cultural resources and recreation.

The existing plan was completed to serve three primary purposes: provide interdisciplinary management direction by establishing clear management objectives and prescribing management actions; establish a general sequence for completing these management actions; fulfill BLM policy directing the completion of a management plan for designated wilderness areas. The intended duration of the plan was 10 years.

Plan Update

The entirety of Table Rock Wilderness has been included within the boundaries of the proposed Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) in recognition of its recreation opportunities, need for special management attention and close association with the adjacent Molalla River Recreation Area.

This Plan Update was completed as part of the larger Molalla-River Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan in order to provide comprehensive and complimentary management direction throughout the entire SRMA. The goal of the wilderness planning effort was determine how recreation management direction should be adjusted given current use patterns, visitor expectations and resource conditions. This Plan Update is not intended to review or supplant management direction found within the 1987 Wilderness Management Plan for resources other than recreation.

The primary purposes of this document include: a) review the recreation management actions taken since the 1987 Plan and their effectiveness; b) describe the current management situation including newly available data; c) update the recreation management goals, objectives and policies for TRW; and d) outline management actions that will be taken consistent with new goals and direction.

Planning Process and Public Outreach

Public outreach for the Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update has been incorporated into the process for the larger Molalla River-Table Rock planning effort. The planning process has been ongoing since a scoping meeting was held October 7, 2008. Input on management of TRW was solicited at this meeting and throughout the scoping process.

A draft version of the Table Rock Wilderness Plan Update was released as an appendix to the Environmental Assessment for the Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan. The public was encouraged to provide feedback on the proposed wilderness policies and actions during the 45-day formal comment period. Several comments with wilderness-specific input were received. These comments expressed support for the proposed direction contained within the draft plan.

Part II: Current Management Situation

LOCATION AND SETTING

Table Rock Wilderness (TRW) is located in the western Cascades Mountains approximately 20 miles southeast of the community of Molalla, Oregon (population 7,800) and entirely within Clackamas County. Table Rock Wilderness is reached by travelling south and east of the Molalla city center on a series of county roads, then along the BLM-controlled South Molalla Forest Rd. This road travels through the Molalla River Recreation Area and connects to the lowest and western-most portion of the wilderness near the confluence of the Molalla River and the Table Rock Fork of the Molalla River. From there, trailheads into TRW are accessed by travelling on high-standard gravel roads that define the wilderness area's northern and southern boundaries.



TRW includes several distinct rock outcrops and excellent views of the Cascade Range.

foothills are present within the wilderness. Typical of the western Cascades, TRW receives considerable precipitation in the form of rain and snow that may total up to 80 inches annually at higher elevations. Heavy snowfall typically prevents vehicle access to many areas above 2,500 feet during the winter and spring.

The wilderness offers opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, photography and nature study. Use is concentrated in the summer and fall when winter snows have melted and trails around Rooster Rock and Table Rock are accessible. The rugged terrain limits most recreational use to the 20-mile developed trail system. The top of Table Rock, the most popular destination for wilderness users, offers excellent views of the high peaks of the Cascade Range stretching north into Washington and south into central and southern Oregon.

Oregon's largest cities, Portland and Salem, and other population centers in the Willamette Valley are located to the east and within a two hour drive of TRW. Since the completion of the 1987 Wilderness Management Plan these areas have seen considerable population growth.

Several other wilderness areas in the western Cascade Range offer points of similarity and comparison to TRW. These include the Bull of the Woods, Middle Santiam, Menagerie, Mount Hood, Mount Jefferson and Salmon-Huckleberry areas designated alongside TRW in the 1984 legislation; Opal Creek, designated in 1996; and numerous small wilderness areas within the Mount Hood National Forest designated in 2009. All are within close proximity to the Willamette Valley region and protect remnant pieces of unmanaged forest that once covered the entire western Cascade Range.

REVIEW OF COMPLETED ACTIONS AND NEW CONDITIONS

Several developments resulting from direct management action as well as natural occurrence have influenced TRW and have a bearing on its management. This section also identifies several prominent actions identified in the 1987 plan that were not completed.

- 1) ***Acquisition of the Molalla River Recreation Corridor:*** A 1992 land acquisition between the BLM and Cavenham Industries brought 5,083 acres of land adjacent to Table Rock Wilderness into public ownership. The acquired lands lie along the mainstem of the Molalla River and the South Molalla Forest Rd. Visitors to TRW now travel through this area, referred to as the Molalla River Recreation Area, prior to entering the wilderness. The main recreational corridor is heavily used for camping, swimming, picnicking, trail use, fishing and other activities with visitation estimated at 60,000 to 70,000 annually. The exchange has resulted in increased administrative presence near TRW and changed the role of the wilderness from an isolated federal holding to part of a larger, integrated recreation area.
- 2) ***Changes to the Trail System:*** The trail system has seen two major changes since the 1987 plan, while another action item from the plan was not completed. The current extent of the trail system is shown in Figure 1.
 - a. ***Bull Creek and Image Creek Trails*** - A road, constructed in 1970 prior to wilderness designation, has been converted to full trail status and incorporated into the TRW's trail system per direction outlined in the 1987 Wilderness Management Plan. The trail, broken into two segments (the Bull Creek trail [formally the Old Jeep Trail] and the Image Creek Trail), traverses the area's main ridge and runs roughly 7 miles from Rooster Rock Rd north and east to its intersection with Summit Trail. After 30 years without vehicular use, the road has deteriorated and taken on a more trail-like appearance.

In 2004, a trailhead was developed at the south terminus of Bull Creek Trail at a wide section of Rooster Rock Rd. Signage was installed and parking was constructed, including a turnaround for horse trailers. The impacts of these actions were analyzed in Environmental Assessment OR-080-01-13.

- b. *Rooster Rock Trail and Trailhead* - Subsequent to completion of the 1987 plan, a new trailhead was developed on Rooster Rock Rd that provided trail users access to an old motorcycle trail that climbed TRW's south facing slopes and connected to the High Ridge Trail. The trail's excessive grades necessitated construction of a more appropriate trail which was completed in 2006. This project was also covered under EA OR-080-01-13.
- c. *Saddle and High Ridge Trail Re-Routes*- The 1987 plan identified 3 miles of trail in substandard condition that required new trail construction (re-routing) to address. The trails, primarily the western-most portion of the High Ridge Trail and the segment of the Saddle Trail descending the north side of Rooster Rock, exhibit excessive grades and eroding trail tread. These re-routes were never completed.
- d. *Summit Trail and access to Table Rock* - See below.

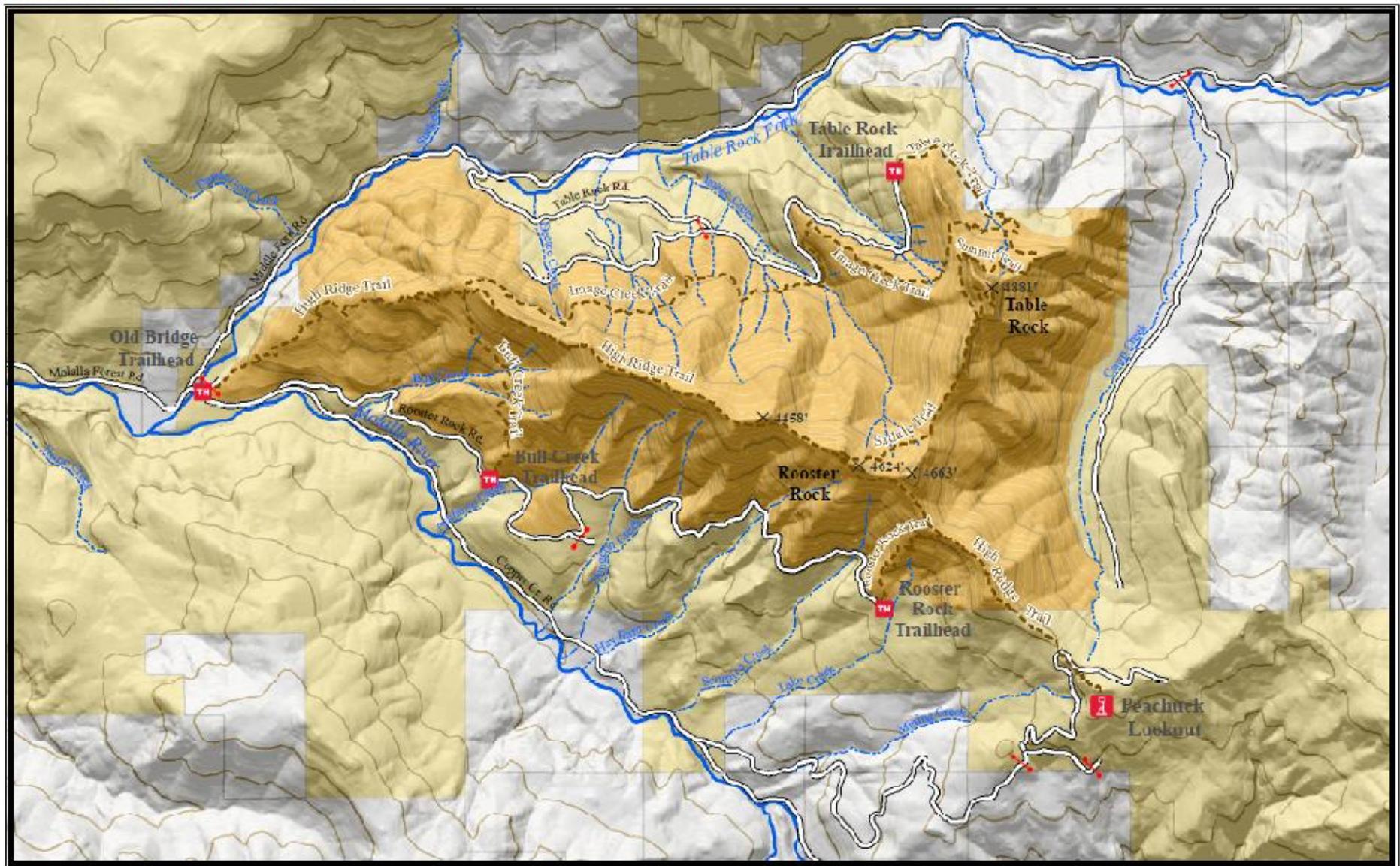
3) Changes to Transportation Network: The forest roads surrounding TRW have seen several changes since 1987.

- a. *Table Rock Rd* – A major rain on snow event in 1996 caused a landslide and related road damage that required the closure of a road segment on Table Rock Rd (BLM Rd 7-4E-1). This road provided vehicle access to the Table Rock Trailhead. The road segment affected by the landslide was evaluated and found to be too unstable for long-term repairs. The landslide removed the much of the road surface approximately 5 miles east of the road's intersection with the Middle Fork Rd. To provide continued access to the trails associated with Table Rock trailhead (Image Creek and Summit Trails), the BLM established a new trailhead at a wide point in the roadway just west of the landslide. A trail was constructed that skirts the landslide to the south. Trail users must now use this detour in combination with the intact roadway on either side of the landslide before reaching the former location of Table Rock TH. This adds roughly 1 mile to the hike each way.
- b. *Access Restrictions* – Public access BLM forest roads surrounding TRW has been progressively reduced since the 1987 Plan. In addition to the flood damage described above, gates have been installed in several other locations in the road system to reduce unwanted impacts and threats to wilderness character. These include:
 1. Quarry Rd (BLM Rd 7-4E-8) was gated at Table Rock Rd
 2. Camp Creek Rd (BLM Rd 7-4E-2), which lies just east of TRW's boundary, was gated on private property
 3. A dead end spur road off of Copper Creek adjacent to Old Bridge Trailhead was gated to prevent dumping and motorized entrance into the wilderness.

- 4) ***Pechuck Lookout-*** The historic Pechuck Lookout is located southeast of TRW and serves as a trailhead providing access to the High Ridge Trail. The lookout is a wood and stone cupola-style structure constructed in 1932 by the Clackamas/Marion Fire Protection Association. It was added to the National Historic Lookout Register in 1990. The lookout was restored by volunteers in 1997 and is now open to overnight visitors on a first-come first-served basis. Its location is listed on TRW maps, but its recreational opportunities are not prominently advertised to the public at present. Current access is through privately-owned industrial timberland.

- 5) ***Inholding Acquisition and Potential Wilderness Additions-*** The 1987 Wilderness plan identified an 80-acre inholding owned by Brazier Forest Products (located in T7S- R4E, Section 16) for potential acquisition. The parcel was acquired in 1988. Despite being surrounded by TRW, the parcel can only be designated as wilderness by Congressional action. The Salem District BLM has made a recommendation to designate this parcel as wilderness.

Table Rock Wilderness Area



Contour Interval . 100'

1 0.5 0 1 Miles



March 1, 2011
Bureau Of Land Management
Salem District Office
Cascades Resource Area

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Trailhead | Trails | Table Rock Wilderness |
| Lookout | Minor Streams | Bureau of Land Management |
| Gate | Major Streams | Private/Unknown |
| summits | Area Roads | |



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.

CURRENT MANAGEMENT SITUATION: VISITOR USE

Available Information Sources

In addition to field observation, two primary data sources are available that provide information on recreation use within Table Rock Wilderness.

A visitor survey completed in 2007 by Arizona State University for the Molalla River-Table Rock area provides useful information visitor characteristics, preferences and behavior. The survey was conducted during the summer of 2006 by providing visitors a self-administered survey questionnaire. The survey achieved a 93% on-site response rate and was completed by 51 wilderness visitors.

During the 2009 and 2010 visitor use seasons, traffic data was collected using vehicle counters deployed on Table Rock Rd, the access route to TRW's most popular trailhead. The counter collects data on an hourly basis that can be aggregated and analyzed in daily, weekly or monthly intervals. Data for October through May is unavailable at this time. Information needs have been identified for this period, as well as other main access routes adjacent to TRW.

Visitor Use Summary

Table Rock Wilderness offers opportunities for hiking, camping, horseback riding, nature study and photography. Due to the heavy winter snowfall at higher elevations, recreation activity within TRW is mostly confined to the snow-free months from May through October. The highest period of use is mid-June through late September when all wilderness trailheads and trails are accessible, wildflowers are in bloom and Cascade peaks are visible.

Field observation, available visitor survey information and traffic counter data make it clear that day-use activities are preferred over those requiring an overnight stay. Roughly 93 percent of visitors report non-overnight use. This is likely due to the wilderness area's small size and lack of suitable water sources. The average length of stay is 4.6 hours.

The most popular activities engaged in by wilderness visitors are trail hiking, photography, picnicking and nature study. The table below identifies participation rates for the most popular activities.

Equestrian use within the wilderness is limited. Only 7.8 percent of visitors to TRW reported horseback riding during their visit. Limitations on equestrian use include the scree field found along Summit Trail and steep grades that discourage beginner equestrian users.

Selected Visitor Characteristics

100% have a high-school degree or above

60.5% have a Bachelor's degree or above

100% self-identify their race as white

88% report TRW as their main destination

75% visitor in groups of 2 or more

93% have no more individuals under 16 years old in their group

74% agree or strongly agree they are 'very attached' to the wilderness

Activities Engaged in by TRW Visitors

<i>Activity</i>	<i>% reporting participation</i>
Trail Hiking	86.3 %
Taking Photographs	60.8%
Picnicking	47.1%
Studying Nature	41.2%
Wildlife Viewing/Birding	33.3%
Driving For Pleasure/Sightseeing	27.5%

Total Wilderness Visitation

The 1987 TRW Management Plan estimated visitation to be 500 annually. The Plan anticipated increases in this figure as TRW's attributes became more widely known. Relying on data collected during the 2009 and 2010 use seasons and staff observation for the remaining months of the year, total visitation to Table Rock Wilderness is now estimated at 2,200 to 2,800 visitors per year.

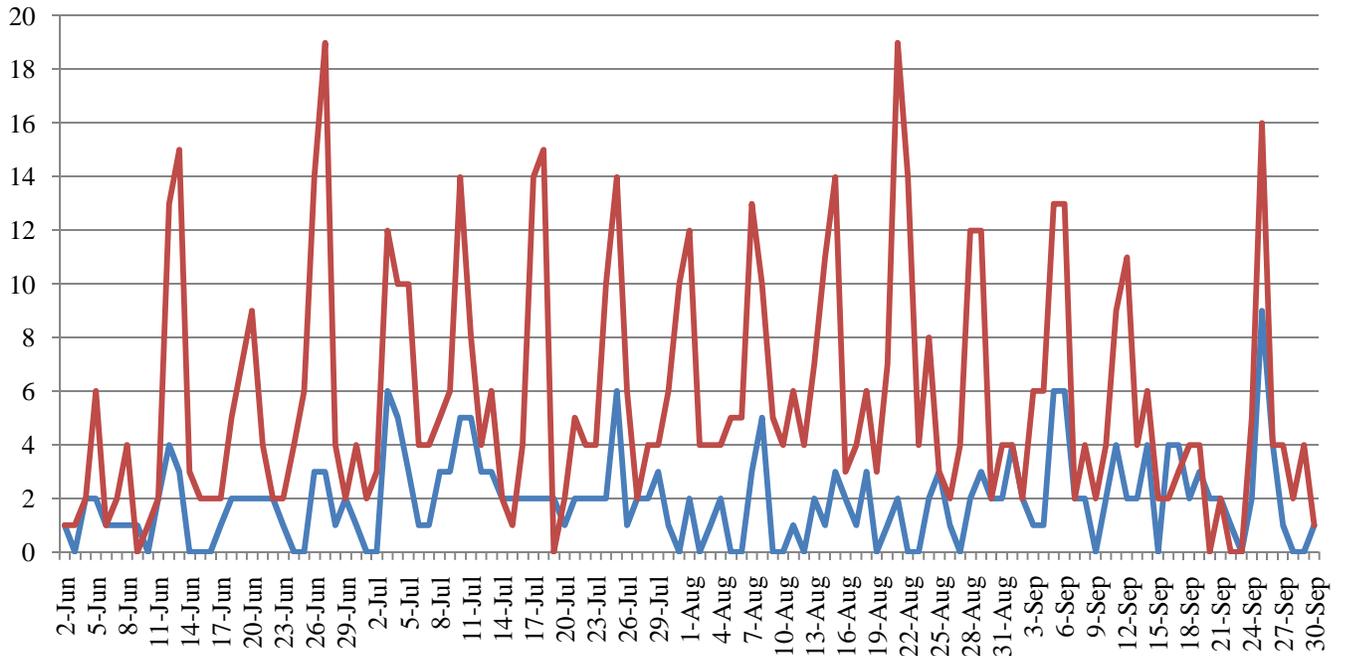
This information replaces or supplements information found in the Molalla River-Table Rock Special Recreation Management Area Environmental Assessment, Section 3.4, given that data from the 2010 recreation season is now available. Previously reported information for the 2009 season alone is less comprehensive and accurate.

This visitor use estimate is based on three assumptions:

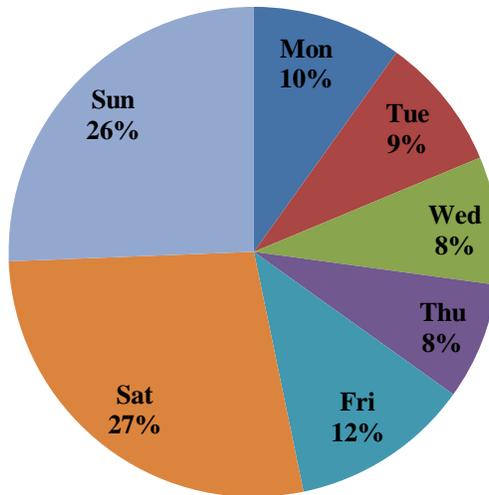
- a) visitors along the Table Rock and Rooster Rock Roads account for 95 percent of visitors to TRW
- b) administrative visits by BLM personnel make up 5 percent of recorded traffic totals
- c) each vehicle contains an average of 2.5 visitors

This visitation total represents a substantial increase from the figures estimated during completion of the 1987 Plan, indicating that usage of TRW has increased as a rate higher than overall population growth. The figures below illustrate wilderness usage trends.

Daily Vehicle Totals June - November 2010
Table Rock Wilderness Access Roads



Visitor Use by Day of the Week
Table Rock Road



Part III: Wilderness Management Goals

Bureau of Land Management Policy, as outlined in Manual 8561, identifies four primary goals for the management of designated wilderness areas. The objectives, policy and specific management actions identified in this Plan Update have been crafted with these goals in mind.

GOALS

To provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of non-degradation. The area's natural conditions, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, and any ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value present will be managed so that they will remain unimpaired.

To manage the wilderness area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness character and visitor use.

To manage the area using the minimum tool, equipment or structure necessary to successfully, safely and economically accomplish the objective. The chosen tool, equipment or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve the spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.

To manage non-conforming but accepted uses permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character.

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize recreation as a legitimate use of Table Rock Wilderness and provide opportunities for visitors to experience solitude and participate in primitive and unconfined recreation.
- Provide a developed trail system which allows visitors an opportunity to test wilderness skills and view the unique attributes of TRW.
- Preserve the primitive and spontaneous nature of recreation in the wilderness by limiting regulation, visitor information and administrative presence within wilderness boundaries.
- Reduce the effect of human activity and recreational use on the biotic communities within the wilderness and allow for natural ecosystems processes to take place.
- Reduce or eliminate the effect of human activity and recreational use on the cultural resources within the wilderness.
- Direct uses and recreational activities not dependent on wilderness to other areas.
- Limit provision of regulatory and information signs to trailheads and locations where their placement is necessary to protect specific resource values or public safety.

- Prohibit the use of mechanized equipment or construction of permanent or semi-permanent structures within wilderness boundaries.

Part IV: Wilderness Recreation Management Program

For each component (General, Trail System and Trailhead Access, Visitor Information and Signage) outline:

- **Management Assumptions** - (Anticipated trends within TRW during the 15 year timeframe of this Plan Update - ex. “Availability of maps and brochures will reduce the need for signage within TRW”)
- **Management Direction** (Broad direction ex. “Directional signage will be limited to trailheads only and will not be utilized at junctions unless substantial creation of social trails is occurring”)
- **Management Action** (Specific actions that will be taken to accomplish goals and objectives - ex. “Install routed wooden signage to indicate the wilderness boundary along each of the 5 trails that access TRW).

Note: Established timeframes for completion have been removed from the Final Wilderness Plan Update. The actions are listed

General Recreation Management

Management Assumptions

Visitation to Table Rock Wilderness will increase at a rate similar to overall population growth. Visitors will continue to access TRW by travelling along the BLM-controlled S. Molalla Forest Rd. Access to roads surrounding TRW will remain blocked with gates and other barriers to vehicle access. A regulatory or permit system limiting the number of visitors will not be needed within the next 15 year period. Proposals for research or scientific studies within Table Rock Wilderness will be infrequent. Responsibility for wilderness search and rescue operations will reside with county law enforcement personnel.

The current make-up of visitors (including place of origin and demographics) will continue. Visitor preferences and satisfaction will continue similar to their current levels. Winter recreation will remain an extremely small portion of overall wilderness recreation. Overnight use will remain an extremely small portion of overall wilderness recreation and the establishment of hardened camp areas will be limited in number and extent. The summit of Table Rock and its southern saddle will continue to experience the highest levels of overnight use.



BLM's management strategy will focus on preservation of wilderness character.

Management Direction

- Gather sufficient traffic and visitor data to monitor use trends within and adjacent to TRW.
- Prefer the use of data collection methods (i.e. trail counters) that do not require direct visitor engagement.
- Establish a group size limitation to protect trail conditions and visitor experience
- Utilize voluntary, on-site visitor registration only to collect specific user data for short, set periods
- Establish regulatory controls on the number of visitors to TRW only after other direct and indirect control measures have been successful
- Provide facilities and improvements to protect wilderness resources and public safety, rather than for user comfort and convenience
- Permit use of the wilderness for monitoring, research and scientific study so long as planned activities are compatible with overall wilderness goals and objectives
- Ensure that any permitted monitoring, research or scientific studies are conducted without the use of mechanized equipment or construction of permanent structures
- Minimize the establishment of new hardened camp areas within sight of the developed trail system.
- Monitor established camp areas for rate of spread and loss of native vegetation.
- Encourage visitors wishing to camp on Table Rock summit to utilize established sites west of the developed trail system.

Management Actions

1. Establish and post a 12-person group size limit for all activities within TRW
2. Implement a three-year traffic monitoring program on Table Rock and Rooster Rock Roads and evaluate need for longer term study.
3. Annually complete BLM's revised Wilderness Monitoring protocol. Monitor wilderness boundaries for vehicle incursion and threats to wilderness character; monitor the type, location and size of established campsites with TRW to determine need for management action.

Trail System and Trailhead Access

Management Assumptions

Use of the developed trail system will continue to be dominated by day use trail hiking. The area's rugged terrain and steep slopes will limited the vast majority of wilderness use to the developed trail system. Trail use will continue to focus on the high elevation trails that access Table Rock and Rooster Rock available from early summer through mid-fall. Other portions of the trail system will experience low rates of use. Wilderness visitors will continue to rely on the developed trail system and prefer its use over cross country travel. Equestrian use will continue to be limited within wilderness boundaries. No new trailheads will be required, unless access is restricted to existing trailheads.

Management Direction

- Develop and maintain trails in a manner consistent with TRW's wilderness character.
- Regularly patrol and maintain TRW's 5 wilderness trailheads.
- Rely on direct control methods such as visual screening and blockages rather than on-site signage or visitor information to prevent the establishment of unauthorized user-created trails
- Focus trail maintenance on minimizing resource impacts and assuring public safety rather than user comfort or convenience
- Complete primary maintenance tasks including downed tree removal and brushing, with lower emphasis on tread maintenance
- Solicit assistance from volunteer group and individual volunteers in the prioritization and completion of trail maintenance.
- Utilize minimum tool as a guiding principle in completing trail construction and maintenance projects
- Trail construction will not be undertaken without an approved trail project plan.
- Trail design standards in line with wilderness character will serve as the basis for project design
- Available resources for trail maintenance will be focused, in priority order, on the following trails:
 - Table Rock and Summit Trails
 - Rooster Rock Trail and High Ride Trail from Rooster Rock to Pechuck Lookout
 - Saddle Trail
 - High Ridge Trail from Old Bridge Trailhead to Rooster Rock
 - Image Creek Trail
 - Bull Creek Trail

Management Actions

1. Construct a new trail segment (up to 3500') that would connect the existing Table Rock Trailhead to Image Creek Trail, bypassing the need for wilderness visitors to hike on the abandoned Table Rock Rd
2. Evaluate need to construct re-route of Saddle Trail to address ongoing erosion and visitor experience concerns and complete as necessary
3. Complete enhancements to Old Bridge Trailhead including defined parking and visitor information, consistent with its status as TRW's most accessible trailhead
4. Complete a bi-annual review of trail conditions in order to identify and prioritize needed maintenance
5. Establish volunteer agreements with wilderness user groups and/or individuals to complete priority trail maintenance and wilderness monitoring tasks. Regularly renew and update these agreements as they are established

Visitor Information and Signage

Management Assumptions

Maps, brochures, guidebooks and online information will reduce the need for posting some signs within TRW. Signage elsewhere in the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA will guide visitors towards recreation opportunities within Table Rock Wilderness. Sign vandalism, particularly at high visibility trailheads such as Old Bridge, will continue. The need for regulatory and directional signage within the wilderness will remain minimal.

Management Direction

- Preserve the spontaneity of recreation by purposefully limiting the type and extent of information dispersal
- Make information about TRW available without advertising its use
- Directional signage will be limited to wilderness trailheads and their immediate vicinities and will not be utilized at trail junctions other than Summit Trail
- No interpretive information will be placed within TRW's developed trail system
- Trailhead information will focus on providing wilderness etiquette information and maps, rather than interpretive information
- Information interpreting TRW's resources and character will be limited to brochures and developed settings within the Molalla River-Table Rock SRMA
- Transportation signage program to the wilderness will guide visitors equally to the northern and southern portions of the wilderness

Management Actions

1. Install routed wooden wilderness boundary signs at each TRW trailhead
2. Streamline trailhead visitor information, with a focus on providing wilderness etiquette information and trail maps
3. Create a basic website for Table Rock Wilderness that provides a brief description of the area's attributes, an electronic map and directions.
4. Continue brochure re-production and make available at Salem District Office and regional outlets without providing on-site at wilderness trailheads.
5. Update visitor information including brochures, website and on-site signage as information or conditions change.

Appendix B: BLM Decision Appeal Form

Form 1812-1
(September 2006)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

INFORMATION ON TAKING APPEALS TO THE INTERIOR BOARD OF LAND APPEALS

DO NOT APPEAL UNLESS

1. This decision is adverse to you,
AND
2. You believe it is incorrect.

IF YOU APPEAL, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED

1. NOTICE OF APPEAL.....	A person who wishes to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals must file in the office of the officer who made the decision (not the Interior Board of Land Appeals) a notice that he wishes to appeal. A person served with the decision being appealed must transmit the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> in time for it to be filed in the office where it is required to be filed within 30 days after the date of service. If a decision is published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, a person not served with the decision must transmit a <i>Notice of Appeal</i> in time for it to be filed within 30 days after the date of publication (43 CFR 4.411 and 4.413).
2. WHERE TO FILE NOTICE OF APPEAL	Cindy Entrom, Concedo Resource Area Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 1717 Fabry Road SE, Salem, OR 97306
WITH COPY TO SOLICITOR...	U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Regional Solicitor, 605 SW Broadway, Suite 600, Portland, OR 97205
3. STATEMENT OF REASONS	Within 30 days after filing the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , file a complete statement of the reasons why you are appealing. This must be filed with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals, 801 N. Quincy Street, MS 300-QC, Arlington, Virginia 22203. If you fully stated your reasons for appealing when filing the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , no additional statement is necessary (43 CFR 4.412 and 4.413).
WITH COPY TO SOLICITOR	U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Regional Solicitor, 605 SW Broadway, Suite 600, Portland, OR 97205
4. ADVERSE PARTIES.....	Within 15 days after each document is filed, each adverse party named in the decision and the Regional Solicitor or Field Solicitor having jurisdiction over the State in which the appeal arose must be served with a copy of: (a) the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , (b) the Statement of Reasons, and (c) any other documents filed (43 CFR 4.413)
5. PROOF OF SERVICE.....	Within 15 days after any document is served on an adverse party, file proof of that service with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals, 801 N. Quincy Street, MS 300-QC, Arlington, Virginia 22203. This may consist of a certified or registered mail "Return Receipt Card" signed by the adverse party (43 CFR 4.401(c)).
6. REQUEST FOR STAY.....	Except where program-specific regulations place this decision in full force and effect or provide for an automatic stay, the decision becomes effective upon the expiration of the time allowed for filing an appeal unless a petition for a stay is timely filed together with a <i>Notice of Appeal</i> (43 CFR 4.21). If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Interior Board of Land Appeals, the petition for a stay must accompany your <i>Notice of Appeal</i> (43 CFR 4.21 or 43 CFR 2801.10 or 43 CFR 2881.10). A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> and Petition for a Stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted. Standards for Obtaining a Stay. Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulations, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards: (1) the relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied, (2) the likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits, (3) the likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and (4) whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Unless these procedures are followed, your appeal will be subject to dismissal (43 CFR 4.402). Be certain that all communications are identified by serial number of the case being appealed.

NOTE: A document is not filed until it is actually received in the proper office (43 CFR 4.401(a)). See 43 CFR Part 4, Subpart B for general rules relating to procedures and practice involving appeals.

(Continued on page 2)