

Recreation Questions and Answers

Resource Management Plans for western Oregon

Question: Can you tell me more about the Recreation Alternatives in the draft EIS?

Answer: The BLM is committed to providing and managing recreation opportunities to serve a diverse set of publics. We created a range of alternatives that responded to public needs, and fits within the framework of existing laws and policies. This range varies providing a minimum level of recreation opportunities and protecting the minimum level of recreation settings within the planning area (Alternative A), to designating and developing the maximum level of recreation opportunities that the BLM could establish within the western Oregon RMP planning area, protecting the greatest amount of recreation settings (Alternative D).

The identification of areas devoted to recreation management was based on all available information, including: recent public outreach, staff observations, regional assessments and historical public use patterns.

Question: How are trails and recreation sites outside of proposed Recreation Management Areas address? Does every recreation site or trail need to be within a Recreation Management Area boundary?

Answer: There is no requirement to designate all existing recreation sites and/or trail systems as a Recreation Management Area. If existing areas (rec sites/trails) are not designated as an RMA in any given alternative, we are recognizing that recreation within this area will not be emphasized. Management actions in these areas will not be taken to produce quality recreation opportunities or beneficial outcomes for recreation participants and recreation and visitor services objective are not recognized as a resource management consideration.

Question: How will recreation be managed so that recreation sites and trails, especially those in close proximity to communities, are maintained and improved so that user conflicts are reduced, natural and cultural resources are protected, a variety of recreational opportunities are provided, and so that socioeconomic benefits are maximized?

Answer: Recreational demands and expectations related to public lands managed by the BLM in Western Oregon have dramatically changed since the current RMP (BLM 1995) was developed. Public use and enjoyment of BLM-managed public lands have been affected by intense competition among increasing numbers of people for a finite amount of resources. Recreation visitation and use are expected to increase, especially in areas near growing communities. The public continues to demand a diverse range of recreational opportunities in a variety of natural resource settings.

Public scoping showed that some people want new or improved facilities for, and improved signage and information about, recreational opportunities; while others do not. Some people want more structured recreational opportunities for specific activities; while others want the BLM to manage for dispersed recreational activities. As the result of changing regional and local economies, rapid population growth, shifting demographics, and the expansion of residential areas, recreation is the center of both conflict and opportunity.



New planning guidance requires the BLM to manage for structured outcomes within areas we identify for priority recreation management. In order to meet this requirement, the BLM must address not only recreation, but must also identify visitor desires for experiences and benefits, the character of the recreation settings. As part of the planning process, the RMPs for Western Oregon reviewed existing and proposed future recreation areas and created updated recreation management area designations in order to conform to the revised guidance and community input.

Question: What recreation decisions will the BLM be making as part of the western Oregon RMPs?

Answer: The required land use plan decisions for recreation and visitor services are:

- **Establishment of Outcome Focused Recreation Objectives:**
 - **Outcomes Focused Management:** OFM is defined as; an approach to recreation management which focuses on the positive outcomes of engaging in recreational experiences and are categorized as; individual, social, economic and environmental.
- **Designation of Recreation Management Areas:**
 - The RMA is designated as either a special recreation management area (SRMA) or an extensive recreation management area (ERMA). **SRMAs** recognize unique and distinctive recreation values and are managed to enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences, benefits and recreation setting characteristics, which becomes the ***primary management focus***. SRMA may be subdivided into recreation management zones (RMZ). **ERMAs** recognize existing recreation use, demand, or R&VS program investments and are managed to sustain principal recreation activities and associated qualities and conditions, commensurate with other resource and resource uses.
- **Identification of management actions and allowable use decisions for Recreation Management Areas:**
 - Establish Recreation Objectives for each recreation management area.
 - Establish allowable recreation activities for each area.

Question: How is the BLM dealing with Motorized recreation and public access issues during this planning effort?

Answer: While the decisions about which specific motorized routes should be open or closed won't be made until after the completion of this RMP effort, during this effort the BLM will be making decisions about how off highway vehicles (OHV) will generally be managed in different parts of the planning area. In the final plan, areas will be identified as entirely open to motorized vehicles, entirely closed to motorized vehicles, or open to motorized vehicles with some form of limitation e.g., limited to existing routes, limited seasonally.