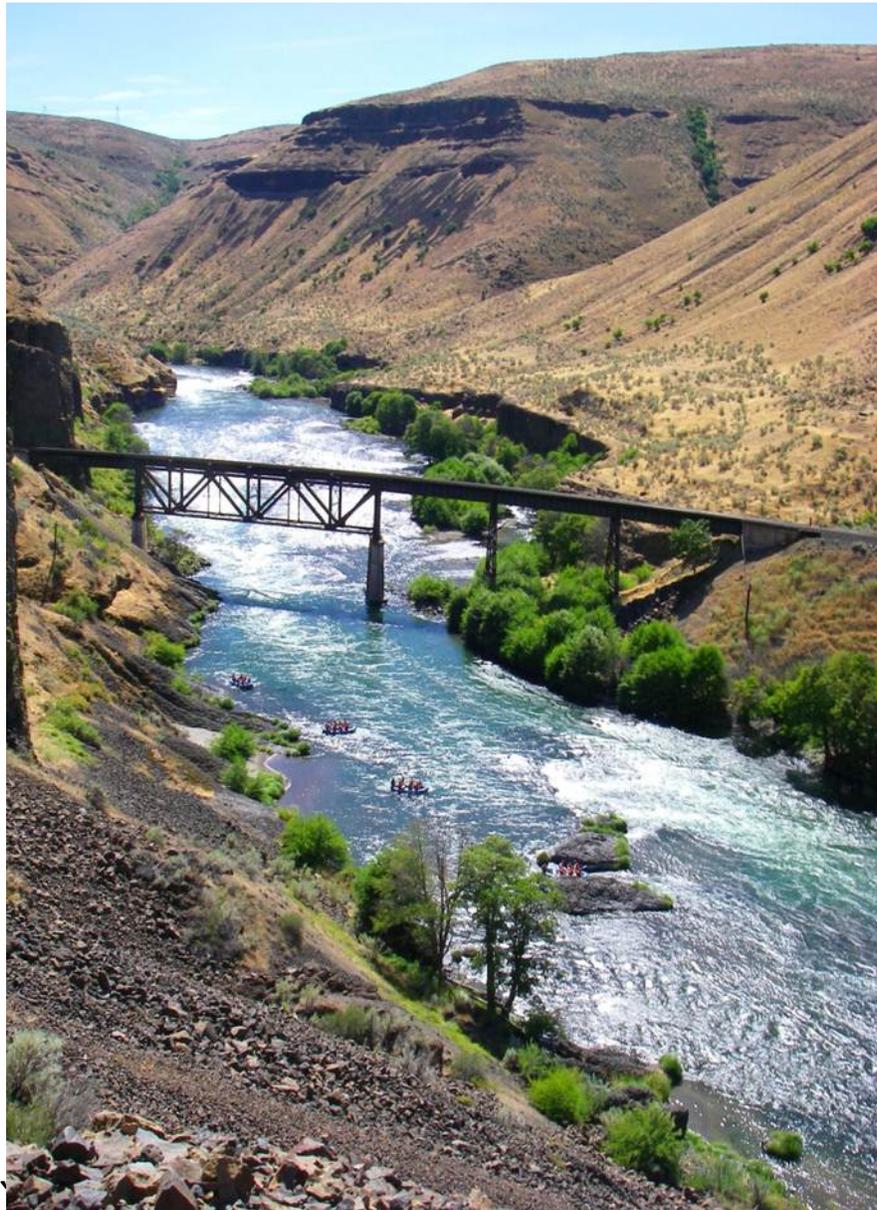


**Environmental Assessment
Segment 3 Limited Entry Adjustment EA
DOI-BLM-ORWA-P000-2013-0039**

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Prineville District
3050 NE Third Street, Prineville OR 97754
December 18, 2015**





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Prineville District Office
3050 N.E. 3rd Street
Prineville, Oregon 97754

IN REPLY REFER TO:
DOI-BLM-ORWA-P000-2013-0039-EA
8120 (ORP000)

DEC 18 2015

Dear Interested Public:

The Prineville District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is requesting input on actions it is proposing to improve the recreational experience in Segment 3 on the Lower Deschutes River. The actions considered in the EA are dividing Segment 3 into Segments 3A and 3B (division at Pine Tree boat ramp), moving the boundary between Segment 2 and 3 to Pine Tree, using Pine Tree as a “soft boundary” between Segments 2 and 3, requiring a “pass through” zone in Segment 3A for guided whitewater boaters or for all users, and changing the daily limits and seasonal targets of Segment 3. The BLM has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes the expected effects of these actions.

The Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-ORWA-P000-2013-0039-EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this proposal are available on the BLM’s website https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do (use text or map search) or you may request a copy from the BLM office at the address listed above. Business hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, excluding federal holidays.

The Prineville District BLM will accept written comments postmarked or received by February 1, 2016. Include **Attn: Segment 3 EA** on the envelope or in the subject line and send or deliver comments to the street address at the top of this letter, or email to BLM_OR_PR_Mail@blm.gov or FAX to (541) 416-6798.

To be most helpful, comments should be as specific as possible. A substantive comment identifies a different way to meet the purpose of the project; provides new information about the proposed actions or the analysis; points out a specific flaw in the analysis; suggests alternate methodologies and the reason(s) why they should be used; makes factual corrections; or identifies a different source of credible research which, if used in the analysis, could result in different effects.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have questions about the project please contact Heidi Mottl, Project Lead, hmottl@blm.gov, (541) 416-6718, or Teal Purrington, Environmental Coordinator, tpurring@blm.gov, (541) 416-6772.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kitchens
Field Manager, Deschutes Resource Area

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction	5
Actions considered in this EA.....	5
Background	5
Area Map.....	7
Need	9
Purpose	10
Issues for analysis.....	10
Decision to be made	11
Chapter 2 Alternatives	12
Alternative 1, No action	12
Alternative 2.....	12
Alternative 3.....	12
Alternative 4.....	12
Alternative 5.....	13
Conformance.....	14
Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Effects	15
Introduction	15
How would recreational values be affected by the various alternatives?	15
How would extended trip boaters be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives?	15
How would traditional boaters be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives?	18
How would roadside anglers be affected by daily boater pass limits under the various alternatives? ..	19
What would be the effect of the proposed project on other types of recreation use other than boating and angling?	20
How would the local economy be affected by the various alternatives?.....	20
How would outstandingly remarkable values, other than recreation, be affected by the various alternatives and how would managing agencies continue to protect and enhance these values?	22
Cumulative Effects	23
Chapter 4 Public and other involvement	25
Tribes, individuals, organizations, and agencies consulted	25
Preparers and reviewers	25
Appendices	26
Appendix A: Supplement to the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan.....	26

Appendix B: Settlement Agreement (guidance on limited entry): 27
Appendix C: References 27

Chapter 1 Introduction

Actions considered in this EA

The federal, tribal, state and local government managing agencies of the Lower Deschutes River¹ are considering a revision to the 1993 Lower Deschutes River Management Plan (LDRMP or the Plan) (USDI BLM 1993). This is in response to changes in the way recreational boaters are using the river between Sherars Falls and Macks Canyon, also known as Segment 3 in the Plan (See map, pg. 5). This Environmental Assessment (EA) considers how changing boating use levels in Segment 3 and/or adjusting the Segment 3 boundaries to adapt to new use patterns would affect the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV) for which the Lower Deschutes Wild and Scenic River was designated. These ORVs, as identified in the Plan are: recreational, fisheries, wildlife, cultural, geologic, scenic and botanical values. The actions considered in the EA are dividing Segment 3 into Segments 3A and 3B (division at Pine Tree boat ramp), moving the boundary between Segment 2 and 3 to Pine Tree, using Pine Tree as a “soft boundary” between Segments 2 and 3, requiring a “pass through” zone in Segment 3A for guided whitewater boaters or for all users, and changing the daily limits and seasonal targets of Segment 3. All of these actions are intended to improve the recreational experience for Segment 3 users while protecting ORVs.

Segment 3 of the Lower Deschutes River begins at Sherars Falls at River Mile 44 and continues downstream slightly past River Mile 24 to Macks Canyon, for a total of just over 20 river miles. Segment 3 of the Lower Deschutes River begins approximately six air miles north of Maupin, Oregon.

Background

The Lower Deschutes River was designated by the Oregon Legislature as a State Scenic Waterway in 1970, with the purpose of protecting and enhancing scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values along the river. In 1988, Congress designated the lower 100 miles of the Deschutes River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) System. And in 1993, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation designated the same stretch as a Tribal WSR. Federal WSRs are assigned one or more classifications: wild, scenic, or recreational. These classifications are based on the developmental character of the river on the date of designation. Wild rivers are the most remote and undeveloped while recreational rivers often have many access points, roads, railroads, and bridges. The Lower Deschutes River was classified by Congress as a recreational river.

¹ In designating the Lower Deschutes as part of the wild and scenic river system, Congress provided that the river is “to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior through a cooperative management agreement between the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the State of Oregon...” 16 U.S.C. § 1274(a)(73)(E). The Secretary of the Interior, the State of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and local governments satisfied this requirement through an “Inter-Governmental Cooperative Management Agreement for Management of the Lower Deschutes River” dated October 7, 2002 (2002 Cooperative Agreement). Among other things, the Agreement establishes an Interagency Implementation Team, Managers’ Group, and Executive Board. The Agreement also provides that the signatories will “abide by the provisions of the [river management] plan.” The BLM, the State of Oregon, the Tribes and local governments signed the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan in 1993 (the Plan). Several partners including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Oregon State Parks & Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Oregon State Marine Board, and the City of Maupin have also signed and supported the management direction in the Plan.

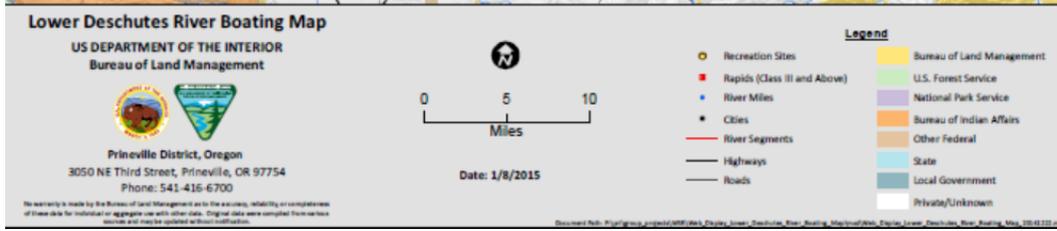
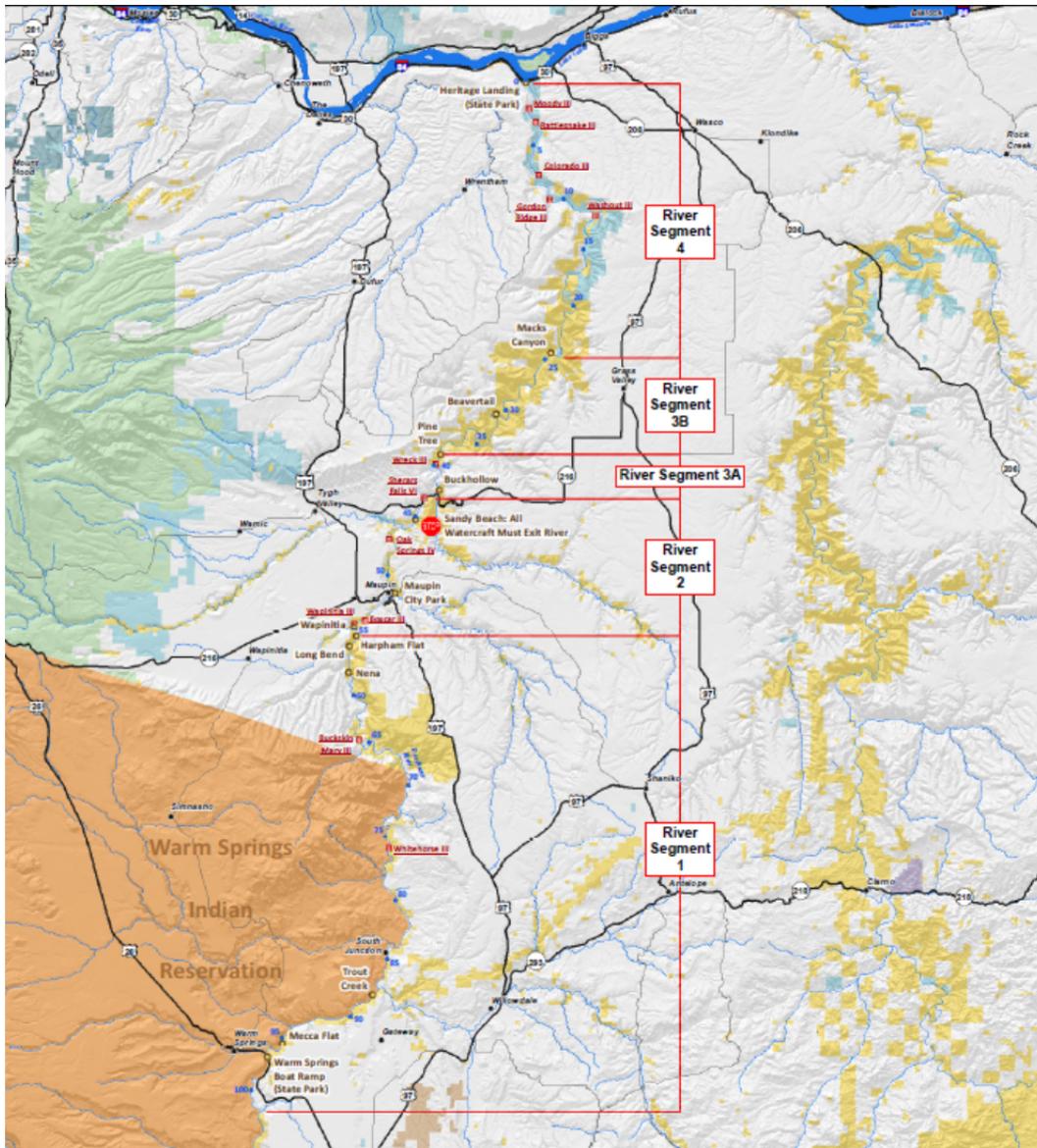
Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a cooperative management agreement with The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (the Tribes) and the State of Oregon. The governor of Oregon created the Deschutes River Management Committee to develop a plan for this new WSR, comprised of the representatives of BLM, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Tribes, the State of Oregon, the three affected counties (Jefferson, Sherman and Wasco) and the City of Maupin. The Governor also appointed a nine member committee from various user groups to participate in the planning process. The result of those efforts was the completion of the joint river management plan in 1993 that established boating limits for each river segment, and a Supplement to that plan in 1997 (USDI BLM 1997) that provided a system to manage these limits: the Lower Deschutes River Common Pool Allocation System (Limited Entry). The 2002 Inter-Governmental Cooperative Management Agreement for Management of the Lower Deschutes River established the Managers' Group and the Interagency Implementation Team and defined their roles.²

Implementation of the Plan (which includes the 1997 Supplement) is the responsibility of the Interagency Implementation Team (IIT).

The Plan direction was subject to plan maintenance in 2004 to reflect a Settlement Agreement that followed a 2003 lawsuit filed by rafting and river enthusiasts and the Tribes against BLM and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) for failure to implement the Common Pool Limited Entry System as required by the Plan.

Current management direction for boating allocation is summarized in this EA, and Appendices A and B provide additional information on the LDRMP, the Supplement and the Settlement Agreement.

² The 2002 Cooperative Agreement established the Managers' Group which includes representatives from BLM, Oregon State Parks, BIA, Confederated Tribes, and local governments, as well as Oregon State Police, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the Oregon State Marine Board (2002 Cooperative Management Agreement at 7, §VI. and VII). The Managers' Group considers plan amendments, reviews priorities and budget commitments and discusses implementation of the management plan. The 2002 Cooperative Agreement also established the Interagency Implementation Team (IIT), "[a]n interagency team of resource specialists" with leadership provided by Oregon State Parks & Recreation, CTWS Natural Resources Department, Bureau of Indian Affairs, BLM, a local government representative, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Other agencies can participate "to the extent available and appropriate. 2002 Cooperative Agreement at 3, §V. The IIT schedules implementation activities, prepares annual work plans, tracks and reports progress on implementation, consults internally when issues arise, reviews and proposes alternatives, coordinates with other agencies and periodically reviews the plan to determine whether amendments are needed. The Managers' Group generally oversees the operations of the IIT.



Area Map

The change in boating use patterns that prompted the Interagency Implementation Team to consider changes to the current management direction was an increase in demand for boating use on the first 3.5 miles of Segment 3 (Buckhollow launch to Pine Tree takeout).

The last 10.5 miles of Segment 2 (Harpham Flat to Sandy Beach) and the first 3.5 floatable miles of Segment 3 (Buckhollow to Pine Tree) are popular day-use stretches. In recent years, more rafting companies have offered “extended” whitewater day trips by floating Harpham Flat to Sandy Beach, then shuttling boaters around Sherars Falls by vehicle, putting back in at the first launch point in Segment 3 (Buckhollow), and taking out at Pine Tree. This allows an additional 3.5 miles of boating and an additional Class III rapid. A very small number of non-guided boaters also float the extended trip; these boaters are few due to the need to have multiple vehicles to self-shuttle and/or the need to pay for a private shuttle and the time it takes to complete the shuttle. Boaters on these extended whitewater day trips are considered “**extended trip boaters**” throughout this document.

The Plan set daily and seasonal targets for each river Segment, which if exceeded trigger a limit on the number of boater passes issued. If a boater enters multiple river segments in one day, they are counted towards the daily target for each segment they visit. In 2008, both daily (250 individual boaters) and seasonal (13,600) targets were exceeded in Segment 3, largely due to the additional Segment 3 use generated by extended trip boaters and counted toward Segment 3 targets. This change in use patterns triggered implementation of the Common Pool Limited Entry System in 2009 in Segment 3. Rather than a strict interpretation of the Limited Entry Supplement to the Plan, the Managers’ Group instituted a two year “pilot” program at the recommendation of the IIT. The pilot program counted the extended trips as part of Segment 2 rather than in Segment 3; therefore these extended trips did not count towards the limits for Segment 3. This was because of concerns that the increasing number of extended trip boaters would make it difficult for boaters participating in more traditional uses such as overnight rafting and angling trips and single day rafting and angling trips that go beyond Pine Tree, to get Segment 3 boater passes. These boaters are considered “**traditional boaters**” throughout this document.

Every boater on the Lower Deschutes is required to obtain a “boater pass.” Boater passes can be purchased for groups of up to 16 people in Segments 1, 3 & 4, and up to 24 in Segment 2. Boater pass dollars are used to enhance visitor services, including repair, maintenance, and facility enhancement. The extended trip boaters compete with traditional boaters for a limited number of boater passes on Segment 3.

The pilot program years of 2009 and 2010 resulted in everyone, guided and non-guided, who wanted a boater pass being able to get one in Segment 3. The managing agencies did not receive complaints about the inability to get boater passes, crowding, damage to resources or any other problems related to the pilot program.

The Limited Entry Supplement to the Plan (page 5) provided direction on how and when to implement Limited Entry. It set targets for the total number of boaters on a daily and seasonal basis for each of the four river segments. However, it did not implement limits on the number of boaters until one or both of the following conditions were met on a given river segment during the primary use season (May 15 to September 15 on Segments 1-3, May 15 – October 15 in Segment 4):

1. *Daily use targets are exceeded by 10 percent or more on more than 5 days.*
2. *Seasonal use targets are exceeded by any amount.*

The conditions that trigger implementing the Common Pool Limited Entry System on a given river segment are described on pages 10-11 of the Supplement and are included in **Appendix A**.

These conditions were met in Segment 1 in 2002 but the Common Pool Limited Entry System was not immediately implemented by BLM and OPRD. In 2003, private boaters including the Northwest Rafters Association and the National Organization for Rivers along with the Tribes filed a lawsuit against the BLM and OPRD for failure to implement the Common Pool Limited Entry System as required by the Plan. In the fall of 2004, the Tribes, private boaters, and State and Federal defendants signed a Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement changed the Plan's conditions that trigger implementing the Common Pool Limited Entry System in the various river segments. These conditions are included in **Appendix B**.

The current situation for Segment 3 is described below:

In 2011, the BLM and OPRD fully implemented the Common Pool Limited Entry System in Segment 3. In 2011, the Managers' Group discontinued the pilot program and called for any changes to the Plan to go through the public process (under the National Environmental Policy Act) to evaluate and analyze proposed alternatives to the boating use numbers and/or segment boundaries prescribed in the Plan. Extended trips were again counted towards the Segment 3 targets, causing targets to be exceeded in 2011.

The Plan prescribed a daily target of 250 boaters for Segment 3. The Supplement (page 11) states "If or when an allocation system is implemented, peak day use will be reduced by 10 percent per year until the seasonal target for a given segment is met." Because the seasonal target was exceeded in 2011 by 788 boaters, the Managers' Group responded by limiting the number of Segment 3 boaters in 2012 to 225, ten percent less than the 250 per day (Friday-Sunday) target as prescribed by the Plan. The seasonal target was exceeded in 2012 by 960 boaters and in 2013 by 479 boaters, and the daily limit was reduced by 10 percent each of these years in accordance with the Plan. This resulted in the availability of 203 boater passes (Friday-Sunday) for the 2013 peak season and 183 in the 2014 peak season, down from the daily limit of 250 boater passes initially prescribed by the Plan. The seasonal target was not reached in 2014, therefore a 10 percent reduction was not required in 2015. The 10 percent reduction is described in **Appendix B**.

The Plan allows the managing agencies to limit use on weekdays, if necessary, to keep seasonal use at or below targets. In December 2014, the Managers' Group decided to implement a daily limit of 250 boaters seven days a week for the 2015 season, as an interim step until the Segment 3 EA is completed and a decision is issued. In November 2015, the Managers' Group decided to keep the Segment 3 daily limit at 250 for the 2016 season.

Need

The Plan (LDRMP page 27) states "[Segment 3] will be managed primarily to provide moderate levels of dispersed use by boaters, anglers and overnight campers with vehicles." The Supplement (page 11) states "All permits will eventually be allocated from a common pool on a first-come, first-served basis. Guided and non-guided boaters will compete equally for access to the river." Since boating use targets were last adjusted in the 2004 Settlement (**Appendix A**), the popularity of commercial 'extended' whitewater trips in Segment 3 has greatly increased. This increased use has generated a need to consider changing boating use levels and/or Segment 3 boundaries to allow the extended trips to continue without displacing traditional boating use.

When the Common Pool Limited Entry System is implemented on Segment 3, the volume of extended trip boaters increases competition for the limited number of Segment 3 passes, even though these boaters only intend to use the first few miles of Segment 3. On peak weekend days between July 1st and Labor Day, extended trip boaters often obtain more than half of the available Segment 3 boater passes,

thus reducing the number of boater passes available for traditional boaters who want a Segment 3 pass or a combined Segment 3 and 4 pass. For example, from 2012 through 2014 extended trip boaters obtained over half of the available passes on 50 percent of the Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays between July 1st and Labor Day. The result was approximately 1,000 traditional boaters turned away per year.

The extended trip boaters use only the first 3.5 miles (18 percent) of Segment 3 leaving the remaining 15.5 miles (82 percent) of the segment with low use on peak weekend days. Additionally, the extended trips involve no overnight use, leaving many of the Segment 3 boat-in campsites unused on peak weekend days, because 50 percent or more of boater passes go to groups that are on an extended day trip and therefore not planning to camp. The inability for many traditional boaters to acquire boater passes because of the increase in extended trip boaters is compromising the recreational value in Segment 3 for traditional boaters.

Purpose

The purpose is to promote the Outstandingly Remarkable Value (ORV) of recreation for both extended trip boaters and traditional boaters by changing the boating use targets and/or adjusting the Segment 3 boundaries in order to allow extended trips to continue while maintaining access to the river for traditional boaters.

Issues for analysis

An issue is a point of disagreement, debate, or dispute with an action based on an anticipated effect. While many issues may be identified during scoping, the BLM only analyzes issues in an EA when analysis is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives, or where analysis is necessary to determine the significance of impacts. To warrant detailed analysis, the issue must also be within the scope of the analysis, be amenable to scientific analysis rather than conjecture, and not have already been decided by law, regulation, or previous decision. Significant effects are those that occur in several contexts (e.g., local and regional) and are intense (e.g., have impacts on public health or unique areas).

The following issues were raised by the public, tribal, federal, state, or local governments, or by BLM staff or permittees, and are considered in detail in this EA:

- How would recreational values be affected by the various alternatives?
 - How would extended trip boating be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives? How would traditional boating be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives?
 - How would roadside anglers be affected by daily boater pass limits under the various alternatives?
- How would the local economy be affected by the various alternatives?
- How would outstandingly remarkable values, other than recreation, be affected by the various alternatives and how would managing agencies continue to protect and enhance these values?

While a number of other issues were raised during the scoping period, not all of them warranted detailed analysis to make a reasoned choice between alternatives or to determine the significance of impacts. Chapter 3 briefly discusses these issues.

Decision to be made

The BLM will accept public comments on this EA during a 45 day review period. The BLM will share the public comments with the IIT who will develop a recommendation and forward it to the Manager's Group for consideration. The Managers' Group will select a proposed action and make a decision. The Managers' Group decision will amend the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan. The decision may include one alternative in its entirety, or combine parts of several different alternatives.

Chapter 2 Alternatives

This chapter describes a no action alternative that would continue existing management, and several action alternatives. While EAs sometimes identify one alternative as the “proposed action” or most likely alternative, this is not required and has not been done in this EA. The action alternatives would all meet the purpose and need described in Chapter 1.

For other planned or ongoing actions occurring in Segment 3, please see the cumulative effects section. (Page 23)

Alternative 1, No action

The No Action alternative would continue to implement the Common Pool Limited Entry System as prescribed by the Plan. This means, the Managers’ Group would reduce the daily boater pass availability by 10 percent each year until the seasonal target of 13,600 is not surpassed on Segment 3. There would be a daily boater limit of 250 boaters on Segment 3. These daily limits would be implemented seven days a week.

Segment 3 would retain its existing boundary.

Alternative 2

Under Alternative 2, Segment 3 would be divided into two separate segments, 3A (Buckhollow to Pine Tree) and 3B (Pine Tree to Macks Canyon). Segment 3A would have a daily limit of 150 and Segment 3B would have a daily limit of 250. These daily limits would be implemented seven days a week.

Segment 3A would have a seasonal target of 7,000 and 3B would have a seasonal target of 10,000. If the seasonal target is exceeded in two consecutive years, a 10 percent reduction would be made to the daily limit on that segment after the second year the target is exceeded.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would divide Segment 3 into two separate segments, 3A (Buckhollow to Pine Tree) and 3B (Pine Tree to Macks Canyon). Segment 3A and 3B would each have a daily limit of 250. These daily limits would be implemented seven days a week. Both 3A and 3B would each have a seasonal target of 13,600. If the seasonal target is exceeded in two consecutive years, a 10 percent reduction would be made to the daily limit on that segment after the second year the target is exceeded.

Guided whitewater boaters would be required to “pass through” the section from Buckhollow to Pine Tree, meaning they would not be allowed to stop on public land in this section unless there is an emergency. A special stipulation would be added to the Lower Deschutes Special Recreation Permit Guidelines to reflect this change in managing Special Recreation Permits. This is to address concerns about the substantially larger number of boaters on Segment 3A under this alternative.

Alternative 4

Alternative 4 would move the boundary between Segment 2 and 3 to Pine Tree. Under this alternative, all boaters taking out at Pine Tree would count towards the Segment 2 daily limit (1,700) and seasonal target (80,300) and all boaters floating beyond Pine Tree would count towards both Segment 2 and 3 limits and targets. Boaters starting at Pine Tree would count towards Segment 3 limits and targets. The Segment 3 daily limits would be 250, seven days a week in the first year the EA is implemented, and likely be reduced to 225 in the following year, after the seasonal target of 13,600 is exceeded. A 10

percent reduction would be made to the daily limit annually until the seasonal target is no longer exceeded.

All boaters would be required to “pass through” the section from Buckhollow to Pine Tree, meaning they would not be allowed to stop on public land in this section unless there is an emergency. A special stipulation would be added to the Lower Deschutes Boater Pass to reflect this change. This is to address concerns about the substantially larger number of boaters on Segment 3A under this alternative.

Note: The boundary adjustment concept is already occurring in Segment 4. In that case, boaters that only use the section between Moody Rapids (River Mile 0.6) and the Columbia River (River Mile 0) do not count towards Segment 4 limits. Those using the river upstream of Moody Rapids count towards the Segment 4 limits.

Alternative 5

Alternative 5 would make Pine Tree a soft boundary between Segment 2 and 3. This means that those boaters who extend their trip from Segment 2 into Segment 3 and take out at Pine Tree would not be counted toward Segment 3 limits, even though they are technically boating the first 5 miles of Segment 3.

Under this alternative, boaters extending their trip from Segment 2 and taking out at Pine Tree would only be counted toward Segment 2 limits. However, those who do not extend from Segment 2 and only float from Buckhollow to Pine Tree would be counted towards Segment 3 limits. Those who extend from Segment 2 and go beyond Pine Tree would be counted towards both Segment 2 and Segment 3 limits.

The Segment 3 daily limit would be 250, seven days a week, until a time that the seasonal target of 13,600 is exceeded in two consecutive years. In that case, a 10 percent reduction would be made to the daily limit annually until the seasonal target is no longer exceeded.

This alternative would not require boaters to “pass through” Segment 3A. Only Alternative 3 and 4 have that stipulation.

Note: The soft boundary concept is already occurring in Segment 1 by a provision in the Settlement Agreement. In that case, boaters taking out at Harpham Flat (River Mile 56) only count towards Segment 1 limits. Those starting above Harpham Flat at Nena (River Mile 59) or Long Bend (River Mile 57) only count towards the Segment 2 limits.

Table 1: Summary of alternatives.

Action	Alternative				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Implement the Plan as prescribed	Divide Segment 3 into 3A & 3B	Divide Segment 3 into 3A & 3B	Move boundary between Segment 2 and 3 to Pine Tree	Make Pine Tree a soft boundary between Segment 2 and 3
Daily limit in Segment 3A	250 (no division of segment)	150	250	1,700	1,700 minus Buckhollow to Pine Tree only trips
Daily limit in Segment 3B		250	250	250	250
Seasonal target in 3A	13,600 (no division of segment)	7,000	13,600	80,300	80,300 minus Buckhollow to Pine Tree only trips
Seasonal target in 3B		10,000	13,600	13,600	13,600 including Buckhollow to Pine Tree only trips
Pass through zone in 3A	No	No	Yes, for guided trips	Yes, for all boaters	No

Conformance

Each alternative would conform to the Two Rivers Resource Management Plan guidance for the Deschutes Canyon which states, “Continue managing areas of high visual and natural quality in the canyon areas while allowing other compatible uses in the same area.” (Two Rivers RMP Page 24)

Additionally, the alternatives conform to the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan which states, “Segment 3 (Sherars Falls to Macks Canyon) Goal: This river segment will be managed primarily to provide moderate levels of dispersed use by boaters, anglers and overnight campers with vehicles” (LDRMP Page 27). Furthermore, the alternatives are in conformance with the Settlement Agreement guidance that states, “This Agreement does not preclude further adjustments, maintenance, or amendment of the Plan in accordance with the 2002 Intergovernmental Agreement. Nor shall the terms of this Agreement be construed to limit or deny the power of the Agencies to promulgate or amend regulations or to otherwise amend or revise any other planning documents.” (Settlement Agreement Page 5).

Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Effects

Introduction

The affected environment describes the present condition and trend of issue-related elements of the human environment that may be affected by implementing the alternatives. It describes past and ongoing actions that contribute to present conditions, and provides a baseline for analyzing cumulative effects. The effects are the known and predicted effects from implementation of the actions, limited to the identified issues. Direct effects are those caused by the action and occurring at the same time and place. Indirect effects are those caused by the action but occurring later or in a different location. Cumulative effects result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The cumulative effects analysis includes other BLM actions, other federal actions, and non-federal (including private) actions. Reasonably foreseeable future actions are those for which there are existing decisions, funding, formal proposals, or which are highly probable, based on known opportunities or trends.

How would recreational values be affected by the various alternatives?

Effects on extended trip boaters, traditional boaters, roadside anglers and other types of recreation use are described below, as well as effects on the Wild & Scenic River ORVs.

How would extended trip boaters be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives?

Affected environment

The analysis area is Segment 3 during the peak use season of May 15 to September 15. Extended trip and traditional boaters compete for a limited number of daily boater passes (limit has ranged from 250 to 183), resulting in some boaters being denied a boater pass on days passes sell out. Demand for traditional boating has been fairly constant (based on observed use on the river over the past 20 years) and BLM expects it to remain so in the future. Demand for extended trips ranged from 4,900 to 9,800 use days during the peak season for the years 2008 through 2014, and is expected to be similar in future years to the 9,800 extended trip boaters seen in 2010 when there were no limits in place on boating use. From 2008 to 2014, extended trip use during the peak use season made up an average of 45 percent of Segment 3 use, with much of this use occurring on peak weekend days. Under the Common Pool Limited Entry System, the users who plan the farthest ahead are most sure of obtaining a boater pass for their desired date before the passes sell out. In general, traditional boaters who are fishing for the day prefer to wait until the last minute to check fishing conditions before purchasing a boater pass, whereas, extended trip boaters are not concerned about fishing conditions and can plan farther ahead. Over the course of the 2014 peak use season, 37 percent of the available boater passes went to extended trip boaters and 63 percent went to traditional boaters. However, on 2014 peak weekend days from July 1st, extended trip boaters chose to purchase their boater passes farther in advance of their trip date than traditional boaters, thus obtaining the majority of the passes. For example on July 20, extended trip boaters accounted for 152 of the available 183 boater passes (83 percent). This left the remaining 15.5 miles of Segment 3 with only 31 boaters (17 percent).

Analytical Assumptions

The following assumptions are made for the purpose of constructing the analysis and are not design features of or restrictions on the alternatives.

- The demand for boater passes for extended (9,776) and traditional (9,264) trips is based on the demand in 2010 (when a pilot study was in effect and there were an unlimited number of boater passes available).
- Applicants for boater passes throughout peak season are 37 percent extended users and 63 percent traditional users (based on boater passes sold in 2014).
- Most extended trip boats between Buckhollow and Pine Tree are paddle rafts carrying 6-8 people, so we will assume that a boat in this stretch typically carries seven people.
- The general use hours between Buckhollow and Pine Tree are assumed to be 10am – 4pm (6 hours). This is because extended trip boaters start either at Imperial River Company or Harpham Flat and do not begin arriving at Buckhollow until 10am, and the last group of extended trip boaters has left Pine Tree by 4pm. The trip duration is one hour to raft through this 3.5 mile stretch (except when boaters are required to “pass through” in Alternatives 3 and 4; this reduces trip length by 15 minutes since boaters don’t stop along the way).
- Number of boaters denied: Total number of days that would have exceeded the 250 limit in 2010 is 26. Total number of boaters on those 26 days was 8,539. Total number of passes available for these dates in 2015 would be $26 \times 250 = 6,500$. Therefore $8,539 \text{ minus } 6,500 = 2,039$ boaters possibly denied. The estimated percentage of traditional vs extended boaters is based on boater pass sales in 2014: 37 percent between Buckhollow and Pine Tree and 63 percent downstream of Pine Tree. For example, $2,039 \times 0.37 = 754$ extended trip boaters denied and $2,039 \times 0.63 = 1,285$ traditional boaters denied.
- Boats per mile = Average # of boats per mile during general use hours, when sold out:
 - Extended Trip Passes available (250, 150, 250, 1700, 1700 in Alts 1-5, respectively) x typical trip duration (1) hour / # of miles in Segment (3.5) / # of hours trips generally occur [10am – 4pm (6)]
 - Traditional Passes available (250, 250, 250, 1700, 1700 in Alts 1-5, respectively) x typical trip duration (12) hours/# of miles in Segment (15.5)/ # of hours trips generally occur [5 am – 9pm (16)]

Effects

Alternative 1: There would continue to be competition for limited boater passes between extended trip boaters and traditional boaters and many boaters would be denied their requested boater passes.

Setting the daily limit for Segment 3 at 250 seven days a week in the peak season and considering the demand observed in 2010, the daily limit is expected to be reached on 26 days, resulting in 2,039 boaters not being able to acquire their desired boater pass in 2016. Using the relative percentages of use from 2014 during peak season, 754 boaters ($2,039 \times 37$ percent) would be denied the ability to extend their trip. Estimated boat density (which is an indicator of the potential for crowding) could at most be 1.3 boats per mile during the general use hours period (10am – 4 pm; 6 hours) on sold out days if all passes went to extended trip boaters over traditional boaters. The seasonal target was not exceeded in 2014 and although the Managers’ Group decided to implement a daily limit of 250 seven days a week for 2015 and 2016, the seasonal target remains unchanged at 13,600. Competition for boater passes would likely increase in future years as the seasonal target is expected to be exceeded annually, requiring a 10 percent reduction in daily boater passes each year from 250 to 225, 203, 183, et cetera until about 2021 when the seasonal target would not be reached.

Table 2 shows a possible outcome showing what year Segment 3 seasonal use would balance and no longer exceed the seasonal target. Based on 2010 use, a 10 percent reduction would be required for the 2017 season after the first year of exceeding the seasonal target (since 10 percent reductions have

already been taking place in Segment 3, they would simply continue without waiting to exceed the seasonal target for two consecutive years) and would be estimated to balance in the year 2021 when the daily limit has been reduced to 149 boaters, seven days a week.

Table 2: Alternative 1 – Possible implications of 13,600 seasonal target on Segment 3 daily limit (using data from 2010 unlimited use season).

Year	Daily limit with 10% annual reduction	# of days boaters expected to be denied (all boaters)	# of boaters expected to be denied (all boaters)
2016	250	26	2039
2017	225	31	2733
2018	203	38	3482
2019	183	41	4274
2020	165	48	5069
2021	149	53	5879

Alternative 2: Splitting Segment 3 into 3A and 3B and setting the daily limit for 3A at 150 the first year the EA is implemented would result in 15 days reaching the daily limit and 851 extended trip boaters being denied the ability to extend their trip in the first year the EA is implemented (based on the demand seen in 2010, and pass distribution between extended and traditional users seen in 2014). Estimated boat density (which is an indicator of the potential for crowding) would be one boat per mile during the general use hours on sold out days. The seasonal target would be set at 7,000 and the demand in 2010 during this period was 9,776 boaters. Therefore, the seasonal target would likely be exceeded in the first two consecutive years of implementation and 10 percent cuts to the daily limit would be necessary in subsequent years and competition for boater passes would increase until about 2022 when the seasonal target would not be reached.

Table 3 shows a possible outcome showing what year Segment 3A seasonal use would balance and no longer exceed the seasonal target. Based on 2010 use, 10 percent reductions would be required for the 2018 season after the second consecutive year of exceeding the seasonal target and would balance in the year 2022 when the daily limit has been reduced to 89 boaters, seven days a week.

Table 3: Alternative 2 – Possible implications of 7,000 seasonal target on Segment 3A daily limit (using data from 2010 unlimited use season).

Year	Daily limit with 10% annual reduction	# of days extended trip boaters would be denied	# of extended trip boaters denied
2016	150	15	851
2017	150	15	851
2018	135	22	1142
2019	122	26	1449
2020	110	32	1791
2021	99	41	2214
2022	89	47	2643

Alternative 3: Setting the daily limit in Segment 3A during the peak season at 250 in the first year the EA is implemented would result in 1 day reaching the limit and 63 boaters would be denied the ability to extend their trip (based on assumptions above), thus reducing competition for boater passes. Estimated boat density (which is an indicator of the potential for crowding) would be at most 1.7 boats per mile,

during the general use hours on sold out days. The seasonal target would be set at 13,600. This higher seasonal target would not be expected to be reached based on 2010 demand and therefore cuts to the daily limit would be less likely to occur in future years than in Alternatives 1 and 2 and we would expect the same daily limit through 2021, and the number of boaters denied a permit would remain at about 63 and occur on only one day through 2021 and beyond.

Table 2 shows the effects under Alternative 1 of continued reductions in daily limits over time. Table 3 shows the effects under Alternative 2 of continued reductions in daily limits over time. There isn't a similar table for Alternatives 3, 4, or 5 because these other alternatives would not see continued 10 percent reductions in daily limits.

Requiring guided whitewater boaters to "pass through" the section from Buckhollow to Pine Tree and not stop on public lands unless there is an emergency, would mean extended trip boaters could not stop or anchor boats in the water when passing through public lands in this area.

Alternative 4: If and when triggered, setting the daily limit in Segment 3A at 1,700 and the seasonal target at 80,300 would result in an estimated boat density (potential for crowding) of 12 boats per mile, during the general use hours on a full capacity day. This would also result in no days reaching the daily limit, no boaters being denied passes, no competition for boater passes and reductions to the daily limit would not occur because of the much higher seasonal target. Therefore, we would expect the daily limit to remain the same into the future.

Requiring all boaters to "pass through" the section from Buckhollow to Pine Tree and not stop on public lands unless there is an emergency, would mean extended trip boaters could not stop or anchor boats in the water when passing through public lands in this area.

Alternative 5: In this alternative, the small number of boaters (less than 100) that float only Buckhollow to Pine Tree would be counted towards Segment 3 limits rather than Segment 2 limits. The effects on extended boaters would be the same as described under Alternative 4, except boat density (potential for crowding) would be slightly higher since the trip duration would be longer for those rafters who opt to stop along the trip through Segment 3A.

How would traditional boaters be affected by daily limits and seasonal targets under the various alternatives?

Affected environment

The affected environment for traditional boaters is the same as previously described for extended trip boaters.

Analytical Assumptions

- Most use downstream of Pine Tree is oar rafts or drift boats carrying 2-4 people, so we will assume a boat in this stretch typically carries three people.
- The general use hours between Pine Tree and Macks Canyon are 5am – 9 pm (16 hours). Anglers and multiday trips begin launching before dawn and often stay on the water until last light. The trip duration is assumed to be 12 hours in this stretch as people start early, end late, take mid-day breaks and naps and generally take their time in this 15.5 mile stretch.

Effects

Alternative 1: There would continue to be competition for limited boater passes between extended trip boaters and traditional boaters. With the daily limit of 250 applied seven days a week and considering

the demand seen in 2010, the daily limit is expected to be reached on 26 days, resulting in 2,039 boaters not being able to acquire their desired boater pass in 2016; of these, 1,285 would be traditional boaters. Estimated boat density (which is an indicator of the potential for crowding) would be three boats per mile, during the general use hours (5am – 9pm; 16 hours) on sold out days. Ten percent reductions to the daily limit have occurred from 2011-2014 and annual reductions are expected to begin again in 2017 and continue in subsequent years until about 2021 when the seasonal target would not be reached. Table 2 shows the likely outcome of when Segment 3 seasonal use would balance and no longer exceed the seasonal target.

Alternative 2: Setting the daily limit in Segment 3B at 250 would result in zero days reaching the limit, zero boaters denied the ability to extend their trip, and no competition between traditional and extended boaters for passes based on the demand seen in 2010. Estimated boat density (potential for crowding) would be four boats per mile during the general use hours on a full capacity day of 250 boaters.

Because it takes two consecutive years of exceeding the seasonal target to trigger a 10 percent reduction to the daily limit, no reductions are predicted unless use levels rise above the demand seen in 2010.

Alternative 3: The effects would be the same as under Alternative 2 except a higher seasonal target of 13,600 would make it even less likely that 10 percent cuts to daily limits would occur in future years.

Alternative 4: This alternative would have the same effects on traditional boaters as Alternative 3, except requiring all boaters to “pass through” the section from Buckhollow to Pine Tree and not stop on public lands unless there is an emergency, would mean traditional boaters could not stop or anchor boats in the water when passing through public lands in this area.

Alternative 5: This would have similar effects to traditional boaters as Alternative 4. The only difference is that the small number of boaters using only Buckhollow to Pine Tree (84 in 2010 and 43 in 2014) would be counted towards Segment 3 limits and this would reduce the availability of passes downstream of Pine Tree by that number. This small number of boaters is not expected to influence the frequency that daily limits or seasonal targets are met, nor change boater density (potential for crowding).

How would roadside anglers be affected by daily boater pass limits under the various alternatives?

Affected environment

Between Buckhollow and Pine Tree there is a very limited amount of public land accessible to anglers from the road; specifically, there are about 0.25 miles of public land adjacent to Buckhollow and one mile of public land upstream of Pine Tree. These two areas receive little use by roadside anglers and when they are used it is usually early and late in the day, outside the general boating use hours of this area. Just downstream, between Pine Tree and Macks Canyon, there are many popular roadside angling opportunities. When traditional boaters are denied access to boater passes, some still choose to come to this area for camping and roadside angling.

Effects

Alternative 1: Some traditional boaters who are unable to obtain boater passes would continue to use Segment 3 for camping and roadside angling as a fallback.

Alternatives 2,3,4 and 5: An increased availability of boater passes between Buckhollow and Pine Tree would allow more anglers with boats to get the passes they need to access the west side of the river for angling, and to utilize and camp at one of the fifteen boat-in campsites available on the west side. This would free up more drive-in camping spaces and roadside angling opportunities on the east side of the river for use by those without boats. The increased availability of boater passes proposed in Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 would have a positive effect on roadside anglers by better distributing angling and camping use on both sides of the river.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on other types of recreation use other than boating and angling?

- Hiking – None of the actions would affect hiking opportunities because hiking as a primary activity is not limited and is generally not accessed by boat, requiring no boater pass.
- Hunting – None of the actions would affect hunting opportunities as hunting seasons do not begin in this area until after the Limited Entry period ends on September 15.

How would the local economy be affected by the various alternatives?

Affected environment

The number of boater passes available in each of the alternatives has the potential to affect the local economy, primarily in the cities of Maupin, Madras and The Dalles. Based on the number of boaters in Segment 3 in 2010, the unlimited pilot year, Segment 3 boating use contributes an estimated 3.1 million dollars in revenue to the local economy in 2015 dollars.

Currently, it is estimated that Segment 3 boater pass use contributes \$2,895,700 to the local economy annually. This estimate is based on the assumptions listed above in other sections, the assumptions below, and using the number of boater passes sold in 2010 (19,000).

Analytical Assumptions

Based on average advertised prices of local business, boater pass administrator and river ranger observations and technical team meetings the following assumptions have been made. These are in addition to assumptions listed above in other sections.

Guided trip fees

- Segment 2 raft trip (Harpham Flat to Sandy Beach) - \$60/person
- Segment 2/3 extended raft trip (Harpham Flat to Pine Tree) - \$85/person
- Segment 3 angling trip - \$300/person

Lodging, gas, supplies

- Lodging - \$45/person/night
- Gas, supplies, food - \$50/person if staying overnight, otherwise \$20/person for incidentals
- Spending occurs primarily in Maupin, Madras, and The Dalles

Other

- Of boaters on extended trips: 20 percent stay in motels, 40 percent in campgrounds, 40 percent leave town the same day.
- If unable to get a Segment 3 boater pass, 100 percent of boaters seeking extended trips will still come for the Segment 2 Harpham Flat to Sandy Beach trip.

- If unable to get a Segment 3 boater pass, 85 percent of traditional boaters who want to fish will cancel their trip, and 15 percent will still come and camp and fish from road. Of these, two thirds will camp out and one third will stay in a motel.
- If unable to get a Segment 3 boater pass, 50 percent of traditional boaters who don't fish and are looking for a multiday whitewater experience will cancel their trip (and instead go to the Rogue, John Day, Umpqua, McKenzie, et cetera), and the other half will move to another segment on the Lower Deschutes (Segment 1, 1+2 combo, or Segment 4), still spending some on incidentals (but this will not be counted in this analysis as it is not Segment 3 use).
- Segment 3A users are: 79 percent extended guided trip, 10 percent multi-day private trip, 10 percent multi-day guided trip, and 1 percent Buckhollow to Pine Tree only.
- Segment 3B users are: 35 percent non-guided anglers on one day trips, 29 percent guided anglers on one day trips, 19 percent multi-day private trips, 11 percent multi-day guided anglers, and 6 percent multi-day guided rafters.

Effects

Alternative 1: Under this alternative 6,290 extended and 10,710 traditional boaters would obtain boater passes in the first year, contributing \$2,895,700 to the local economy. An estimated 754 extended and 1,285 traditional boaters would be denied a boater pass, resulting in is \$258,700 less than what would be contributed in Alternatives 4 and 5, where no one would be denied a boater pass. This would occur in 2016 and the amount contributed to the local economy would decrease in the future, given assumptions above about static demand and a 10 percent annual reduction in the daily limit; 5,879 boaters would be denied a pass in 2021, and the amount not contributed to the local economy would be an estimated \$746,000.

Alternative 2: Under this alternative 6,193 extended and 11,995 traditional boaters would obtain boater passes in the first year, contributing \$3,128,600 to the local economy. An estimated 851 extended and zero traditional boaters would be denied a boater pass, resulting in is \$16,800 less than what would be contributed in Alternatives 4 and 5, where no one would be denied a boater pass. The amount contributed to the local economy would decrease in future years since the seasonal target is expected to be exceeded, driving down daily limits 10 percent per year; 2,624 extended boaters would be denied a pass in 2022, and the amount not contributed to the local economy would be \$51,800.

Alternative 3: Under this alternative 6,981 extended and 11,995 traditional boaters would obtain boater passes in the first year, contributing \$3,153,150 to the local economy. An estimated 63 extended and zero traditional boaters would be denied a boater pass, resulting in is \$1,200 less than what would be contributed in Alternatives 4 and 5, where no one would be denied a boater pass. This would occur the first year the EA is implemented and remain constant in the future, given assumptions above about static demand and no further reductions in daily limits.

Alternatives 4 and 5: Under these alternatives 7,044 extended and 11,995 traditional boaters would obtain boater passes in the first year, contributing \$3,154,400 to the local economy. Under these alternatives no boaters would be denied a pass. This would remain constant in the future, given assumptions above about static demand and no further reductions in daily limits.

Table 4 shows effects that would be expected in the first year the EA is implemented. These effects would be the same in subsequent years for Alternatives 3, 4 and 5. For Alternatives 1 and 2, though, the effects would be increased every year, because every year the seasonal target would be exceeded, and the daily boater pass limit would be reduced by 10 percent.

Table 4. Summary of effects the first year the EA is implemented.

	Indicator	Alternative				
		1	2	3	4	5
Extended Trip Boating	Days that meet daily limit	26	15	1	0	0
	Boaters denied	754	851	63	0	0
	Boats per mile	1.3	1	1.7	11.6	11.6
Traditional User Boating	Days that meet daily limit	26	0	0	0	0
	Boaters denied	1,285	0	0	0	0
	Boats per mile	3	4	4	4	4
Economy	Amount contributed	\$2,895,700	\$3,128,600	\$3,153,150	\$3,154,400	\$3,154,400

How would outstandingly remarkable values, other than recreation, be affected by the various alternatives and how would managing agencies continue to protect and enhance these values?

What would be the effect of the proposed project on scenic values?

None of the actions would have an effect on the scenic landscape. The potential for crowding is discussed under effects on recreational values.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on geologic values?

None of the actions would have an effect on the geologic values as the project would not cause any disturbance or changes to the geologic values of the canyon.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on botanical values?

None of the actions would have an effect on special status plants as no special status plants have been found or are expected to occur in the areas visited by foot or vehicle traffic within the project area. None of the actions would have an effect on riparian vegetation in Segment 3A, as boaters in this section of river rarely get out of their boats due to high banks and cliff faces. In Segment 3B, use levels would not be above what was analyzed in the Plan and therefore would have no increased impact on botanical values.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on wildlife values?

The Lower Deschutes River canyon provides habitat for approximately 30 different species of wildlife, with most of these utilizing riparian habitats adjacent to the river. No threatened or endangered species of wildlife are known or expected in the proposed project area between Buckhollow and Pine Tree, however, a 2011 US Fish and Wildlife Service report noted one species of special interest: the golden eagle. The golden eagle is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 and nests on the cliffs within the project area. The eagles nesting in this portion of the canyon appear to be accustomed to and not affected by the boating activity that currently occurs at the river level and the vehicle traffic that currently occurs along the adjacent road. Continuing to allow boating use at current levels (Alternative 1, no action) or allowing increased boating activity in Segment 3A at the levels proposed in Alternatives 2-5 would not be expected to have an effect on the eagles because the eagles do not appear to have been affected by the amount of boating activity occurring in recent years, including in 2010 when there were no limits on boating use. Imposing a consistent limit on boating use seven days per week may be preferable to daily fluctuations in use levels, in which the birds need to

continually adjust to changing levels of human presence. There are no expected impacts to wildlife as a result of any of the alternatives or actions.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on water quality?

The Deschutes River through the project area is currently identified by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality as being water quality impaired for:

- pH through the fall winter and spring
- Water temperature during spawning season (September through June 30)

The increased activities identified in the alternatives would not negatively affect the above water quality parameters nor further degrade the water quality of the Deschutes River, because none of the actions would add any substance to the water that could affect the pH, and boating itself does not affect water temperature.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on fisheries values?

The Deschutes River has a highly diverse aquatic community of fishes. This community includes two species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. These are bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and summer steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Bull trout use this segment of the Deschutes River for foraging and migration with spawning and rearing occur in tributaries upstream of the project area. Steelhead use this area for rearing and migration. Steelhead may use the shore lines for limited rearing from age 0 to 3+ years before migrating to the ocean in April and May. Preferred habitat conditions for rearing fish tend to be near cover, which can be provided by woody debris, boulders, riffle habitat, undercut banks, or instream or overhanging vegetation. These types of habitat tend to be away from areas that would be sought out by boaters because woody debris, boulders, undercut banks, and instream or overhanging vegetation create navigational hazards for boaters. Boats float over the surface of riffle habitat without disturbing fish because fish tend to linger in the rocks at the bottom of the river. Steelhead adults will begin migrating into the Deschutes River beginning in late June and hold in calm water areas through the winter before spawning in the mainstem and tributaries December through April.

The increased activities identified in the alternatives would occur in mid channel where the majority of the water flows. This will be away from the rearing and holding areas used by adult and juvenile fish. There is no research demonstrating negative effects of float boating to migrating fish (Fornander, D.E.2008). Because of this, no negative effects are expected with any of the alternatives.

What would be the effect of the proposed project on cultural values?

Traditionally harvested foods, pictographs and other important cultural values exist in the project area, but are not expected to be impacted by any of the alternatives. This is because most boaters between Buckhollow and Pine Tree are passing through without getting out of their boats. Use levels downstream of Pine Tree would not be above what was analyzed in the Plan and therefore would have no increased impact on cultural values.

Cumulative Effects

The following ongoing or future actions in Segment 3 contribute to the existing conditions and to future effects, when combined with the actions proposed in the alternatives.

- **Conduct annual maintenance and make necessary improvements to the Buckhollow and Pine Tree boat ramps.** These actions may include improving and stabilizing eroding footpaths, slope stabilization, traffic flow improvements, grading, laying fresh gravel, and placing boulders to

delineate travel and staging areas, protect sensitive areas and prevent travel in unauthorized areas. BLM will complete actions that do not require further NEPA analysis prior to the 2016 boating season. Improvements that require further NEPA analysis would be considered in the future.

- **Increase allowable group size between Buckhollow and Pine Tree from 16 to 24.** This change will reduce encounters on the water since a group of 24 coming down from Segment 2 won't have to split into one group of 16 and another group of 8. This will cause less impact to anglers, reduce loading and unloading times at the launch and takeout, reduce the number of vehicles using the ramps and reduce chances that a group will encounter another group in the project area.

Cumulatively, conducting annual maintenance, fortifying sensitive areas, and adjusting group size to reduce vehicle traffic at Buckhollow and Pine Tree would prepare these sites to accommodate additional use as proposed in Alternatives 2-5 without damage to resources.

There are no other ongoing or future actions that BLM is aware of that would have an effect on Segment 3.

Chapter 4 Public and other involvement

Tribes, individuals, organizations, and agencies consulted

The BLM first requested input on this project in April, 2014 when it mailed scoping letters to 29 individuals and groups and all members of the former Lower Deschutes Working Group (which is no longer a federally chartered group), Interagency Implementation Team, and permitted guides and outfitters. Comments from this scoping period were considered in the design of alternatives.

Preparers and reviewers

BLM

Heidi Mottl – Outdoor Recreation Planner
Amy Bannon – Resource Assistant
Jimmy Eisner – Fisheries Biologist
Todd Neville – River Manager
Jim Mueller – Park Ranger
Rick Demmer (now retired) – Wildlife Biologist
Teal Purrington – Environmental Coordinator
Jeffery Kitchens – Field Manager, Deschutes Resource Area
Lisa Clark – Public Affairs

Other

Brian Cunninghame – The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
Brad Houslet – The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
Jim Morgan – Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Chris Parkins – Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Rod French – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Jason Seals – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Scott Hege – Commission Chair, Wasco County

Appendices

Appendix A: Supplement to the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan

This is guidance on the Common Pool Limited Entry System from pages 10-11 in the final Decision on the Supplement (1997) regarding Lower Deschutes River Allocation System:

1. There must be at least a 5 percent reduction overall, peak-day use in excess of the segment daily target in Segments 1 and 2 during the 1997 primary use season when compared to overall, peak-day use in excess of the segment daily target in the same segments for the 1995 primary use season. The basis for comparison of use will be boater pass data. This reduction in boating use will be attempted through non-permit measures.
2. There must be at least a 5 percent reduction in overall, peak-day use in excess of the of the segment daily target in Segments 1 and 2 during the 1998 primary use season when compared to overall, peak-day use in excess of the segment daily target in the same segments for the 1997 primary use season. This will be attempted through non-permit measures. However, if non-permit measures in 1997 are unsuccessful, the allocation system will be implemented in 1998. The first year's reduction in boating use under the allocation system will be 10 percent.
3. There must be at least a 10 percent reduction in overall, peak-day use in excess of the segment daily target in Segments 1 and 2 during the 1999 and each following year's primary use season (until the daily and seasonal targets are met in a given segment) when compared to overall, peak-day use in excess of the segment daily target in the same segment for the preceding year's primary use season. This will be attempted through non-permit measures. However, if non-permit measures in 1997 or 1998 are unsuccessful, the reduction will be achieved through implementation of the allocation system.
4. Non-permit measures will be used to manage use levels on Segments 3 and 4 to the extent daily use targets are not exceeded on more than 5 days per primary use season by a margin of 10 percent over the daily target. If daily targets for Segments 3 and 4 are exceeded on more than 5 days by more than 10 percent during the primary use season or if seasonal targets are exceeded on either segment, the allocation system will be implemented on that segment the following years. If daily and seasonal use levels fall far below target levels mandated by the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan, the allocation system may be suspended until use levels begin to approach target levels identified in the plan.
5. Failure, in any one year, to meet the requirements in 1, 2 and 3 above, for a given segment, means that boater use will be regulated through the allocation system in that given segment in the following year and all subsequent years. If daily and seasonal use levels fall below target levels mandated by the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan, the allocation system may be suspended until use levels begin to approach target levels identified in the plan.
6. If or when an allocation system is implemented, peak-day use will be reduced by 10 percent per year until the daily target for a given segment is met. Seasonal use targets for each segment will continue to be based on 1990 seasonal levels as prescribed by the plan.
7. It is the intent of the managing agencies to minimize the economic impacts on the city of Maupin from peak day use reductions in segment 2 resulting from either non-permit measures or a permit

system. Segment 2 annual reductions in peak day use described in 1, 2 and 3 above from non-permit measures, or described in 6 above from permit measures, shall only be made as long a seasonal use levels do not fall below 69,000 boater days.

Appendix B: Settlement Agreement (guidance on limited entry):

Implement Limited Entry System in Segment 1 in 2005. Implement the common pool allocation limited entry system as set forth in the Plan in Segment 1 in 2005.

Implement Limited Entry System in Segment 2 in 2007. Implement the Limited Entry System in Segment 2 in 2007, or any subsequent year, if the use numbers in 2006 or any subsequent year, are above the seasonal floor, as specified in Section 2.5 below, and either daily or seasonal boating use targets, as specified in Section 2.5 below are exceeded.

Implement Limited Entry System in Segments 3 and/or 4 in 2008. Implement the Limited Entry System in Segment 3 and/or Segment 4 in 2008, or any subsequent year, if the daily use targets specified in Section 1.5 below are exceeded in 2007 or any subsequent year by more than 10 percent on more than 5 days during the Primary Use Season, or if the seasonal targets are exceeded.

Limited Entry System Suspension/Reinstatement. If during the final two years of the phase-in of the Limited Entry System on a particular river segment, or during any consecutive two-year period thereafter the number of permits issued to boaters is below the daily target every day during the primary use season by 5 or more boaters and seasonal targets are not exceeded, the Limited Entry System will be suspended on the river segment. Thereafter, the Limited Entry System on the segment will be reinstated if the number of boater passes issued during a consecutive two-year period exceeds seasonal targets, or the daily target level is exceeded by 5 or more boaters on one or more days during the primary use season each year.

Daily and Seasonal Boating Use Targets. To more accurately reflect actual 1990s boater use levels, the seasonal boating set forth in the Plan for each river segment are adjusted as follows:

River Segment	Daily Target (Boater Days)	Seasonal Target (Boater Days)
1*	550	49,000
2**	1,700	86,200
3	250	13,600
4	325	18,300

*(To account for roll-up the number to be used for Segment 1B, as calculated by Olson Consulting Services, will initially be 500 and the number to be used for Segment 1A will be 200, until they are further refined or until such time as the current computer program is updated to accommodate the merger of Segments 1A and 1B.)

**The seasonal boating use level ‘floor’ for Segment 2 is 80,300 boater days.

Appendix C: References

Fornander, D.E. 2008. Fish Floatboats, and Feds: The Impact of Commercial Floatboating on ESA Listed Salmon, Disproportionate Regulation and Directions for Recovery throughout the Columbia

River Basin. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Geography and Regional Development. University of Arizona.

Inter-Governmental Cooperative Management Agreement for Management of the Lower Deschutes River, between the Secretary of the Interior, the State of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and local governments. 2002.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1986. Two Rivers Resource Management Plan. <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/plans/prinevillermmp.php>

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1993. Lower Deschutes River Plan Record of Decision. <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/plans/activityplans.php>

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1997. Supplement to the Lower Deschutes River Plan. <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/plans/activityplans.php>

U.S. District Court. 2004. Final Settlement Agreement in *Shuholm v. BLM*, Civ. 03-948-HA, between The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, private rafting organizations, Bureau of Land Management and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.