

development and management of the Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland trail system and off highway vehicle (OHV) use. Forest Service proposes to develop a framework for designating OHV routes and areas to provide a variety of motorized recreation opportunities. Regulations prescribing operating conditions for OHV use will be developed for specific areas. Regulations considered may include designated areas and/or routes, seasonal closures, and/or complete area closures.

The revised proposed action will also include: (1) Clarifying conflicting trail standards and guidelines and/or developing additional trail standards and guidelines for all Forest and Grassland lands; and (2) developing recreation trail objectives that address all user groups and acceptable intensity of use for all Forest and Grassland lands.

The purpose of the EIS is to develop a framework for providing well-designed OHV trails while protecting fish, wildlife, soils, air quality, and adjacent land owner rights; as well as mitigating conflicts between various recreation trail groups.

Changes proposed in this EIS to the current Management Allocations Standards and Guidelines in the Ochoco National Forest and Grassland Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) will result in amendments to these plans. The EIS will be programmatic in nature. Any future proposed ground disturbing activities that tier to this EIS and associated Forest and Grassland Plan amendment will have a site specific environmental analysis conducted at a later date. The Forest Service invites written comments on the scope of this project. In addition, the Forest Service gives notice of this analysis so that interested and affected people are aware of how they may participate and contribute to the final decision.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of analysis of this proposal must be received by May 20, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments and suggestions concerning the scope of analysis to Thomas A. Schmidt, Forest Supervisor, Ochoco National Forest, P.O. Box 490, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions and comments about this EIS should be directed to Susan Kocis, Forest Recreation Planner, Ochoco National Forest, P.O. Box 490, Prineville, Oregon 97754, phone 503-447-6247.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A need to address access and travel on the Ochoco

National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland became apparent from public comments and appeals to the Record of Decision for the LRMP. Increasing resource damage and public demand for OHV opportunities on the Ochoco National Forest and Grassland continues to show the need to complete this EIS process, which started in 1991 (Notice of Intent, **Federal Register**, May 22, 1991, (56 FR 23546)). Based on new issues the proposed action has been revised. This revised proposed action has led to the development of several different alternatives considered. At a minimum, alternatives being considered will include. One, Existing Condition Alternative, which will continue with existing Forest and Grassland Plan direction. Two, No Action Alternative, which will build no new motorized or nonmotorized trails. Three, Designated Trail Alternative, which would allow OHV use only on designated Forest and Grassland trails and off-trail use would not be allowed.

Currently the Forest and Grassland provide 198 miles of trail of which 8.1 miles are designated for OHV summer use, 75 miles are for winter motorized use, and 123 miles are for summer and winter nonmotorized use. The Forest and Grassland Plans call for additional construction of approximately 130 miles of OHV trail and 196 miles of nonmotorized trail by 1999. Since 1989 the Forest and Grassland have constructed 23.0 miles of nonmotorized trail. An additional 12 miles of trail were analyzed and a decision not to build them was made.

Demand for OHV trail opportunities has been increasing, as evidenced by increasing comments and letters from the public. There is a need to proceed with attaining the Desired Future Condition (DFC) for trails as stated in the LRMP.

To attain DFC, direction prescribing operating conditions for OHV use will be developed for the following areas:

- Riparian areas (including springs, seeps and meadows);
- Closed areas (identified in the existing LRMP);
- Sensitive plant communities (including high elevation sites, rare plants, and old growth);
- Sensitive soils (including erodible and/or compactable soils on moderate/steep slopes, and scablands); and
- Sensitive areas (including cultural resource sites, forest tree plantations, wild animal calving areas, and threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife use sites).

A tentative list of issues has been identified from the Forest and Grassland

access and travel meeting in 1990-1991, as well as from letter and comments received from the public through 1994. Issues can be grouped into five keys areas: Social; travel route management; multi-recreational use; resource considerations; public affairs and user education.

Since the Notice of Intent, the Forest and Grassland have held over 30 public meetings and received comments from over 40 individuals and groups. Public participation is and will be an important during this environmental analysis. The Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, Tribes, and local agencies, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the revised proposed action. Comments received regarding travel and access from 1990-1994 will also be used. This information will be used in preparation of the draft EIS. The scoping process includes:

1. Identifying potential issues.
2. Identifying issues to be analyzed in depth.
3. Eliminating insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis process.
4. Exploring additional alternatives.
5. Identifying potential environmental effects or the proposed action and alternatives (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review June 1995. EPA will publish a notice of availability of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date of the EPA notice appears in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in the management of the Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland participate at that time.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft EIS. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.)

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice, at