



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2008

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PAULINA RANGER DISTRICT SOUTHSIDE ALLOTMENTS PROJECT
OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

PRINEVILLE—The Paulina Ranger District recently completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Southside Allotments Project. The project is located in the southeastern portion of the Ochoco National Forest in Grant, Crook and Wheeler counties. The project proposes to continue to authorize livestock grazing in the Heisler, Wind Creek and Wolf Creek allotments utilizing new grazing management standards and an adaptive management strategy.

Standards for grazing are proposed to be implemented on a pasture-by-pasture basis, considering the resource conditions within individual pastures. Standards will be implemented based on a weighted compilation of five different resource features and one multiple resource assessment (Proper Functioning Condition or PFC). The five resource features include riparian vegetation, upland vegetation, soils, stream channel characteristics and noxious weed risk. PFC is a methodology used for assessing the physical functioning of riparian and wetland areas. These six resource factors represent resources and habitat components in the environment that may be affected by livestock grazing.

Monitoring is a key component of this adaptive management approach. Monitoring of compliance is proposed to occur during each grazing season. Monitoring to determine if the standards are effective would be conducted every 5-15 years, depending on the natural resource being considered. Pasture ratings (satisfactory, at-risk or unsatisfactory) and the associated standards are proposed to be set based on the results of the effectiveness monitoring.

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A copy of the draft EA is available for review at the Paulina Ranger District in Paulina, OR. Hard copies and CDs are available upon request or an electronic version may be viewed on the Central Oregon National Forests website at www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon

A 30-day comment period has commenced and written comments must be postmarked by the Postal Service, emailed, faxed or otherwise submitted by 11:59 p.m. on July 16, 2008. Oral comments may be scheduled during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday) with the Acting District Ranger Slater Turner. Electronic comments may be sent to comments-pacific-northwest-ochoco-paulina@fs.fed.us. Faxed comments may be sent to (541) 477-6949 or written comments may be sent to Slater Turner in care of Paulina Ranger District, 7803 Beaver Creek Road, Paulina, OR 97751. For additional information, contact Steve Gibson, Project Team Leader at (541) 416-6440.

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