

## Chapter 2. ALTERNATIVES, Including the Proposed Action

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the McKenzie River Boat Launch Project. This section also presents the alternatives in comparative form, defining the differences between each alternative and providing a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public. This analysis considers the reconstruction of the boat launches, the relocation of the boat launches, and the no action alternative (no change from existing design or maintenance regime).

### Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study

Federal agencies are required by NEPA to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14).

Comments were received during scoping that favored improvements to an existing boat launch at MP 52 of State Highway 126, which is the developed trailhead for the McKenzie River National Recreation Trail. The ID Team considered these comments and the suggestions to modifications this site. An alternative to carry forward improvements at the trailhead was eliminated from this analysis when the team reviewed the November 1999 Decision Memo that implemented the development of this site in 2002. The Decision Memo states that the primary uses will be as a trailhead for the National Recreation Trail, and as an interpretive site for the West Cascades National Scenic Byway.

## Alternatives

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### Alternative 1, (No Action) – The Current Management Situation

Alternative 1 does not meet the purpose and need to provide and maintain opportunities for river-oriented recreation activities on the upper McKenzie River, as directed by the amended Willamette Forest Plan. The no-action alternative would not take actions to improve the conditions of boat launches or move them from their current location. This alternative does not improve existing parking or staging areas.

Ongoing annual maintenance of the boat ramps would continue because ramps structures at all boat launches would continue to require annual maintenance to replace gravels, particularly at Frissell and Bruckart where they are more exposed to the main current of the McKenzie River.

### Alternative 2 - The Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would relocate the Frissell and Bruckart boat launches, and reconstruct the Paradise Boat Launch. Alternative 2 would meet the need to provide and maintain opportunities for river-oriented recreation activities on the upper McKenzie River, as directed by the amended Willamette Forest Plan.

### **Actions Specific to Frissell Boat Launch:**

- Relocate to a launch site on river-right, across the McKenzie River from the existing site and downstream from the Frissell-Carpenter Bridge (see Appendix F, Figure 3). A new pre-fabricated concrete ramp would be installed measuring approximately 16 feet wide by 40 feet long (640 square feet). The ramp would extend into the river approximately 10 to 15 feet from bank-full width. Up to 240 square feet of concrete pad would be in the river channel (Appendix F, Figure 4). Approximately 12 to 20 red alder trees would be removed from the floodplain where the new ramp would be placed. The cut alders would be spread in the floodplain to serve as down woody material where it is feasible to do so without creating greater disturbance.
- Construct a new paved access road with a loop at the ramp. The road would have a staging area and include a concrete pad to seasonally locate portable toilets on (see Appendix F, Figure 4). Approximately 30 Douglas-fir would be cut, 18 Western red cedar, 4 Western hemlock, 4 big leaf maple, and Pacific yew trees on the terrace would need to be felled to construct the access and loop road, staging area, and toilet pad. Those trees that are suitable for fish habitat enhancement projects would be staged in a location separate from the new launch location and used in future projects. Those trees that were not suitable would be spread out in the terrace area to serve as down woody material where it is feasible to do so without creating greater disturbance. All stumps would be flush cut. The approximate area of disturbance for the loop road, staging area, and concrete pad for the portable toilet would be 10,936 square feet.
- Improve two pull outs along Forest Road 2650 to provide parking for vehicles and trailers. Improvements would include blading the existing shoulders to ensure proper drainage and for safety, brushing, and adding aggregate surfacing.
- Decommission the existing boat launch on river-left and restore the river bank and a portion of the terrace. The existing buttress logs and cable would be removed from the site. A portion of the existing pull-out access would remain for motor vehicles along State Highway 126 (see Appendix F, Figure 5). The boat ramp location and a portion of the highway pullout would be seeded with native grasses, shrubs and conifers.  
The large pullout is along the West Cascades National Scenic Byway, and would be rehabilitated by importing topsoil and shaping it into hummocks to serve as a barrier between the highway and the river by acting as a soil filter and as a berm that diverts water into existing vegetation. The hummocks would be re-vegetated along with the old ramp site to keep vehicles from driving onto the area.

### **Actions Specific to Paradise Boat Launch:**

- Install a new pre-fabricated concrete ramp at the existing ramp site that is wide enough to serve as two ramps (see Appendix F, Figure 7). The ramps would measure approximately 40 feet by 32 feet

(1,280 square feet) and would extend into the river approximately 10 to 15 feet. Connect the existing approach road to the concrete ramp with new asphalt apron (approximately 710 square feet of new pavement).

- Relocate approximately 20 existing small boulders within the river (16 inches to 24 inches in diameter) that would block use of the extended ramp width during low flow months. An excavator would be used to place these small boulders further into the channel where the river can mobilize and relocate them.
- Pave an additional 130 feet of road-side parking in the day-use area near the ramp. The proposed location is unpaved and currently used by the public for parking on a native surface.
- Designate an additional staging area adjacent to the launch area with signing. The site is an existing historic camp site established by the CCC.
- Improve an existing user trail within the bank-full width of the river, adjacent to and downstream from the boat ramp. The trail is used to facilitate unloading large groups during “take out” activities. Actions include moving one 20” log and minor brush cutting.

### **Actions Specific to Bruckart Boat Launch:**

- Relocate the ramp to a new site downstream from Bruckart Bridge on the same side of the river (river right) (See Appendix F, Figure 8). The ramp would be made of prefabricated concrete and would be 16 feet wide by 40 feet in length (640 square feet) and would extend into the river approximately 10 to 15 feet from bank-full width (up to 240 square feet of concrete pad in river channel) (See Appendix F, Figure 9). Approximately 12 to 20 red alder trees would be removed from the floodplain where the new ramp would be placed. The cut alders would be spread in the floodplain to serve as down woody material where it is feasible to do so without creating greater disturbance.
- Construct and pave an access road, loop road, turnout, parking stalls, staging area, and concrete toilet pad at the new site. The design of the loop road minimizes the number of large trees that would be felled and moved. Approximately 33 Douglas-fir, 1 Western red cedar, 12 Western hemlock, and 1 Pacific yew on the terrace would be felled to construct the access and loop road, staging area, and portable toilet pad. Those trees that are suitable for fish habitat enhancement projects would be staged in a location separate from the new launch location and used in future projects. Those trees that were not suitable would be spread out in the terrace area to serve as down woody material where it is feasible to do so without creating greater disturbance. All stumps would be flush cut. The total approximate area of disturbance for these actions is 19,840 square feet.
- Provide additional parking along Forest Road 19. Fill material would be brought in to widen the shoulders prior to paving. One parking area on the opposite side of Road 19 would be 90 feet long

by 10 feet wide (900 square feet), and the other would be 150 long by 10 feet wide (1,500 square feet). Total area of parking expansion would be approximately 2,400 square feet.

- Decommission the existing boat launch site (see Appendix F, Figure 10), by grass seeding the old ramp site with native grasses and red alder, planting vine maple, big leaf maple, and conifers. Also decommission an existing, compacted native surfaced loop road that connects Bruckart landing to Forest Road 19. Decommissioning would include scarifying the surface layer 2 to 4 inches in depth and seeding with native grass. The length of existing loop road that would be decommissioned is approximately 861 feet. The total approximate area that would be decommissioned is 10,000 square feet.

### **Alternative 3**

Alternative 3 meets the need to provide and maintain opportunities for river-oriented recreation activities on the upper McKenzie River, as directed by the amended Willamette Forest Plan. The launch sites would remain in the same location where they currently exist, but would be reconstructed to reduce safety hazards and improve access. The reconstruction design reduces maintenance needs by reducing the amount of gravel that is placed on the current ramps. However, these designs would likely require 20 cubic yards of riprap at both Frissell and Bruckart. Alternative 3 would not implement the recommendations found in the Upper McKenzie River Management Plan (1992).

#### **Actions Specific to Frissell Boat Launch:**

- Install a pre-fabricated concrete ramp at the existing site, placing it at a downstream angle. The new ramp would be approximately 16 feet wide by 40 feet long (640 square feet) and it would extend into the river approximately 10 to 15 feet from bank-full width (up to 240 square feet of concrete pad in river channel). Approximately 20 cubic yards of rip-rap would be required to armor the upstream side of the boat ramp. The boulders would be placed on the river bank and a portion of the river bed.
- Re-grade the surface of the existing parking area to minimize sediment transport to the river and incorporate the recommendations from ODOT that revises the traffic flow pattern and makes efficient use of the pullout space.
- Provide a site at the boat launch for portable toilets.

#### **Actions Specific to Paradise Boat Launch:**

The actions at Paradise Boat Launch would be the same as in Alternative 2.

### **Actions Specific to Bruckart Boat Launch:**

- Install a pre-fabricated concrete ramp at the existing site and place it at a downstream angle. The new ramp would be approximately 16 feet wide by 40 feet long (640 square feet) and it would extend into the river approximately 10 to 15 feet from bank-full width (up to 240 square feet of concrete pad in river channel). Approximately 20 cubic yards of rip-rap would be required to armor the upstream side of the boat ramp. The boulders would be placed on the river bank and a portion of the river bed.
- Re-grade the surface of the existing parking area to minimize sediment transport to the river and incorporate the recommendations from ODOT that uses small barrier structures and signs to revise the traffic flow pattern and make efficient use of the large pullout space. Traffic control at the launch location would be designed to provide for efficient use of space and flow of traffic.
- Provide a site at the boat launch for portable toilets.

### **Mitigation Measures and Project Design Measures**

In addition to site specific measures identified in this document, this project would comply with all applicable Oregon State Water Quality statutes through compliance with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines and General Water Quality Best Management Practices (USDA Forest Service, November 1988) as per the following document signed by both parties on May 10, 2002.

NFS 02-MU-11060000 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING between USDA FOREST SERVICE and OREGON DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TO MEET STATE AND FEDERAL WATER QUALITY RULES AND REGULATIONS.

The General Water Quality Best Management Practices (USDA Forest Service, November 1988) requires an Erosion Control Plan. Prior to starting work, the Contractor submits a plan which sets forth erosion control measures to be used. Operations would not begin until the Forest Service has made written approval of the plan. The plan recognizes mitigation measures required in the contract. All contracts specify that operations be scheduled and conducted to minimize erosion. These measures address Forest Wide Standard and Guideline (S&G) FW-089.

Approval of the erosion control measures plan would be conducted using an interdisciplinary approach. The measures approved by the interdisciplinary team will be reflected in the contracts specifications and provisions. Monitoring and enforcement of the erosion control plan would be the responsibility of the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). Watershed and fisheries specialists would be on the work site during in-river work.

In the case of a hazardous spill, the Willamette National Forest has a Hazardous Spill Control and Emergency Response Plan, which is consistent with S&G FW-091 (USDA Forest Service, Willamette NF, February 17, 2004). The plan contains specific information and requirements on the following:

- Emergency Notification
- Quick Response Checklist
- Hazardous Spill Coordinators & Key District Personnel
- Federal Emergency Response – U.S. Coast Guard & EPA
- Forest Service - Scope & Purpose
- Elements of the Emergency Response Plan
- Pre-emergency Planning and Coordination with Outside Parties
- Personnel Roles, Lines of Authority, Communication and Training
- Emergency Recognition and Prevention
- Safe Distances and Places of Refuge
- Site Security and Control
- Evacuation Routes and Procedures
- Decontamination
- Termination, Critique of Response and Follow Up

The plan requires the contractor to have two *Spill Response Kits* on the project site whenever equipment is operating. One spill response kit shall be sufficient to absorb 34 gallons of oil, and designed to float on the surface while absorbing oil and repelling water. Equipment shall be furnished on a fully operational basis, of modern design and in good operating condition with no fuel or oil leaks.

#### **Specific Project Design Features for Activities In-stream or Adjacent to Streams:**

- During construction activities, silt barriers will be placed as needed to prevent movement of sediment from the worksite to the river. Fisheries or watershed personnel will be consulted on the need for, and the specific locations for placement of these barriers.
- Upon completion of construction activities areas of exposed soil will be seeded or planted with native species. Areas will be mulched with weed free straw to prevent erosion and potential sediment transport.
- All equipment that will be used for instream work in the McKenzie River will be free of leaks and cleaned of grease, oil, and other solvents prior to use, and will be equipped with drip pans or diapers and water friendly fluid systems (i.e. non-petroleum based fluids).
- Fuel storage will not be permitted within Riparian Reserves (within 320 feet of fish bearing streams). Fueling sites will be designated by the COR and will not be within 150 feet of water.

- New ramps and roads will be designed to shed water into vegetation. The areas where new construction would take place are composed of glacial/fluviol material and soils are very porous and permeable. Due to these conditions no surface runoff to the river is expected. The exception to this is the ramp itself where rain water would shed to the river.
- Any trees that need to be removed for the project would be spread in the Riparian Reserve in a fashion that does not cause too much disturbance; trees that are suitable for fish habitat projects will be staged for use at a future time.
- The project will minimize the need to cut big trees would utilize previously disturbed areas.

#### **Specific Project Design Features for Wildlife:**

- Work in the McKenzie River can take place during the instream work period (July 1 – August 15). It is likely that work would occur between July 16 and August 15 due to wildlife seasonal operating periods.
- Implementation of any action alternative will have no effect to the northern spotted owl. A seasonal operating restriction from March 1-July 15 would protect nesting owls which may be present during the critical breeding season. However, the project is adjacent to highway 126 and or the McKenzie River and ambient noise levels are continually high.
- Because project activities would occur near bald eagle foraging and nesting habitat along the McKenzie River, a seasonal restriction from January 1-August 30 would be required. This restriction may be lifted if non-nesting is verified within the area.
- Project activities would occur in the riparian areas adjacent to the McKenzie River that may provide nesting habitat for harlequin ducks. Therefore, a seasonal restriction from April 1-June 30 would be required. The felling and leaving on site of individual trees for safety and parking in riparian areas would benefit this species by supplementing down woody material in their habitat. Flush cut any stumps (S&G MA 6c-12).

#### **Specific Project Design Features for Noxious Weeds**

- All equipment shall be power washed to remove all foreign or noxious seeds/weeds prior to entering Forest Service lands. Equipment will be free of all seed and debris that may contain plant seeds (i.e. soil and vegetation). Material brought in to reconstruct the boat launches, such as fill soil or gravel, will be free of weeds and weed seed.

