

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region
Umatilla National Forest

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October 3, 2008

Changes in Store at Jubilee Lake Campground

Many changes are in progress at Jubilee Lake, a popular campground located on the Walla Walla Ranger District of the Umatilla National Forest, 12 miles north of Tollgate, announced Mike Rassbach, District Ranger. In addition to installing new flush toilets, vault toilets and accessible campsites, the most notable change will result from the hazard tree removal project currently underway in the campground.

“The district is taking a proactive approach to remove dead, dying and diseased trees within the campground perimeter,” said Rassbach. “We’re using the *Forest Service’s Regional Hazard Tree Abatement Program* to identify trees of imminent danger as well as those likely to die or pose a threat over the next five years.” A good number of hazard trees will be coming down this fall, opening up several of the once-shaded campsites. “The removal of numerous hazard trees will likely change the character and feel of the lakeside campground,” according to Rassbach.

The hazard trees located in and around the campground are predominantly old age sub-alpine firs. “This declining stand of trees has reached that age where they’ve become very susceptible to insects, disease, soil compaction and vandalism. We’re trying to hold on to as many trees as possible but public and employee safety is our first consideration,” said Rassbach.

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The health of the stand is also affected by the recreation use itself. Campsite use over the decades has severely impacted the soil and damaged tree roots. Each campsite sports numerous trunks with hatchet marks, initials, hearts, and other patterns carved into the bark by campers who don't realize the impact of their actions. Damaged roots and bark leave a tree susceptible to insect damage and disease, eventually leading to the death of the tree.

A contractor will be removing over 1,000 hazard trees and any resulting slash from the campground and entrance road. District officials are considering a variety of reforestation opportunities using heartier, disease resistant plant and tree species as well as campsite rehabilitation and barrier replacement.

“I think our visitors may be surprised to see the changes and openness of the campground next spring, said Rassbach adding “this project is a commitment to long-term benefits with some relatively short-term visual impacts. “

Currently, eleven of the 51 campsites are open at Jubilee Lake Campground. The water system has been shut off and garbage services have ended. The campground will close October 15 for the winter.

Similar hazard tree removal activities, though at a much smaller scale, are taking place at Target Meadows and Woodward campgrounds. For more information on the hazard tree removal project, please contact Larry Randall, Recreation Program Manager at (509) 522-6290.