

**Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests,
and Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management
Office of Communications**

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For immediate release: March 13, 2008

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Salmon and Trout Habitat to be Enhanced in the Metolius River

SISTERS – Sisters District Ranger Bill Anthony signed a decision notice to place large wood in the Metolius River to restore salmon and trout habitat.

The project aims to restore habitat for Chinook salmon and improve habitat for red band and bull trout by placing large wood in 9.8 miles of the Metolius River upstream of Bridge 99. Over time the river has lost fish habitat due to a half century of wood removal and loss of access for anadromous fish at Pelton Round Butte Dams. Fish passage will be restored to Pelton Round Butte Dams in the next few years. The Upper Deschutes Watershed Council (UDWC) is a partner with the Forest Service in this project. The UDWC secured funds from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and the Pelton Round Butte Fund, which is generated by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Portland General Electric.

Approximately 920 logs will be used to provide habitat for fish. Wood will be added to the river through a variety of methods, including the use of hand crews, an excavator from the river bank, an excavator in the river bed, and a helicopter. The wood will be anchored in place by digging a slot into the bank, covering the logs with soil to retain the root wads, and placing whole trees along the river edge. Wood will be placed at 153 sites with ground-based equipment and 20 sites with a helicopter. To address the key issue of boater safety, no wood will be placed below Bridge 99.

This project includes some related trail enhancement with planting of native riparian shrubs and grasses. Placement of wood will appear natural so as to maintain the “outstanding Remarkable Values” for which the Metolius was designated a Wild and Scenic River. Sensitive plants, wildlife habitat, rare mollusk sites and heritage sites will be protected. Seasonal work restrictions will protect fish spawning and raptor nesting. Implementation will begin this year and may extend for three years.

“It’s exciting to see the broad interest in this project from people who care about recovery of salmon and trout habitat in the Metolius Watershed above Pelton Round Butte Dam,” says Ranger Bill Anthony.