

**Prineville Reservoir
Resource Management Plan and Master Plan:
Finding of No Significant Impact and
Final Environmental Assessment**



**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Pacific Northwest Region
Lower Columbia Area Office**



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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT PN FONSI – 03-04

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR PRINEVILLE RESERVOIR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN & MASTER PLAN

Introduction

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has completed a multi-year planning and public involvement program to prepare a Resource Management Plan and Master Plan (RMP/MP) for Prineville Reservoir and the surrounding Reclamation lands. The RMP program is authorized under Title 28 of Public Law 102-575. Reclamation has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the plan in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The purpose of the RMP is to manage natural and cultural resources, facilities, and access on Reclamation's lands at Prineville Reservoir, including the Prineville Reservoir State Wildlife Area (SWA), for the next 10 years. This RMP will also serve as the Prineville State Park Master Plan which will guide development and management of the recreation facilities and services for the next 25 years.

Alternatives Considered

The National Environmental Policy Act requires Reclamation to explore a reasonable range of alternative management approaches and to evaluate the environmental effects of these alternatives. Three alternatives are evaluated and compared in this document, including a No Action Alternative and a Preferred Alternative.

Alternative A – No Action: Continuation of Existing Management Practices. Management would be conducted according to the priorities and projects identified in the 1992 RMP. Reclamation would continue to adhere to all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and executive orders, including those enacted since the 1992 RMP was adopted.

Alternative B – Natural Resource/Dispersed Recreation Balance. This alternative would allow for a balance between natural resource protection and dispersed recreation through formalization of camping areas with provisions for some continued dispersed camping. Several selected natural and cultural resource protection and management efforts would be increased on Reclamation lands; other such efforts would be maintained.

Alternative C – Preferred Alternative: Natural Resource Protection/Formal Recreation Emphasis. In this alternative, emphasis is placed on formalizing camping and water access, particularly on the south shore of the reservoir, to reduce the continued widespread disturbance of vegetation by dense dispersed camping and an informal road network.

Although the alternatives differ in many ways, several features are common to all:

- Continue to operate and maintain Reclamation lands and facilities.
- Improve enforcement regarding Federal regulation and County Ordinance 101 on driving vehicles off designated roads on Reclamation lands.
- Continue to adhere to existing and future Federal, State, and County laws and regulations.

- Authorize special recreation events on a case-by case basis.
- Implement restrictions on vehicle use of the shore and drawdown zone.
- Prior to any major ground-disturbing activities, the appropriate level of site-specific NEPA analysis and public involvement would be done. Required cultural resource surveys, archeological site evaluations, and necessary inventories for Traditional Cultural Properties would be completed.
- For recreation development and management aspects, follow the principles in Public Law 89-72, Federal Water Projects Recreation Act of 1965, as amended by Title 28 of Public Law 102-575. If a non-Federal public entity has agreed to manage recreation on Reclamation lands, Reclamation may share development costs for up to 50 percent of the total cost.
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) continues to manage Reclamation lands for recreation under an agreement with Reclamation.
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) continues to manage the SWA for fish and wildlife under an agreement with Reclamation. OPRD continues to manage recreation use in the SWA.
- Manage weeds through completion and implementation of the Prineville Reservoir Integrated Pest Management Plan.
- Coordinate with law enforcement regarding HR 2925, which authorizes Reclamation to enter into agreements with State, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement on Reclamation land.
- Coordinate with tribes/agencies regarding cultural resources.
- Off-road vehicle (ORV) travel below the high water line would be permitted within 500 feet of developed boat launches or other areas designated for boat launching or angling access.
- Compliance with current accessibility regulations and standards will be required at all new facilities and on retrofits of existing facilities. "Accessibility" is defined as providing participation in programs and use of facilities to persons with a disability.
- All actions are dependent upon the availability of funding and must be within the authority of the applicable agency.

Recommended Alternative

Reclamation proposes to implement Alternative C, the Preferred Alternative, which would allow for the highest level of protection and enhancement for natural and cultural resources while proposing the most formalized development scenario for recreation, often as a measure to focus recreation use areas to protect natural resources.

This alternative would maintain, and in most cases increase, current levels of protection and enhancement for native fish and wildlife and their habitat (vegetation, wetlands, riparian areas, and water quality). Generally, this would entail the continued implementation of the strategies set forth in the 1992 RMP. In some cases, however, it would go beyond this level of effort. For example, shoreline and wetland restoration efforts are proposed to decrease erosion, improve water quality, and thus enhance wildlife habitat. Several areas would become designated-site camping only, with finite use limits. A Habitat and Wildlife Management Plan would be completed for the entire RMP study area.

Developed camping facilities would greatly increase at several locations around the reservoir. A new campground would be built near the existing State Park Campground on the north side. Camping would be formalized at Roberts Bay East with designated sites, rental cabins, and group camping sites. Juniper Point would have primitive-designated campsites. Camping in the SWA would be limited to 4 existing areas, with defined perimeters and camper registration required.

Day use facilities would be built at Antelope Creek on the north shore, at Roberts Bay East, and at Combs Flat in the SWA. A new boat ramp would be built at Powder House Cove and at Roberts Bay West, and boat ramp improvements would be made at the County Boat Ramp. Facility construction depends upon Reclamation's ability to determine or acquire legal access to Roberts Bay.

Environmental Commitments

Reclamation will implement the following environmental commitments as part of the preferred alternative.

- Complete ESA threatened and endangered species consultation with USFWS before initiating any action that would result in irretrievable and irreversible commitment of resources. This includes consultation at both a programmatic level and for site specific projects.
- Follow the best management practices (BMPs) found in Chapter 5.0 of the EA. The management actions identified in the Preferred Alternative as needed for proper stewardship of resources are also considered to be environmental commitments.
- Conduct cultural resource surveys to determine the presence of resources eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in locations that may be affected by construction or operation of the proposed Plan.
- Complete consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) if NRHP-eligible resources are found.
- Conduct surveys for listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, as needed.
- Obtain permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- Obtain State of Oregon permits for instream work.
- Initiate additional NEPA analysis as needed and for any projects that exceed the scope of the EA.

Consultation and Coordination

Public Involvement

Reclamation developed a dialogue with local stakeholder groups and agencies. The goal of the public involvement process was to make sure that all stakeholders, including the general public, had opportunities to express their interests, concerns, and viewpoints, and to comment on the plan as it was developed. By fostering two-way communication, Reclamation was also able to use the talents and perspectives of local user groups and agencies during the alternatives development process.

Reclamation's public involvement process involved four key components:

- **Newsbriefs** – A mailed newsletter was initially sent to more than 350 user groups, nearby residents, and agencies. The mailing list was continuously expanded as more stakeholders were identified.

- **Public Meetings/Workshops** – Three public meetings were included in the process, two of which were held prior to the release of the Draft EA. The final public meeting was held during the public review period of the Draft EA.
- **Ad Hoc Work Group** – This group consisted of approximately 18 representatives from interested groups, agencies, and a tribal representative. They met throughout the development process to identify issues, and assist with RMP and alternatives development.
- **Project Web Site** – The newsbriefs, draft materials, and meeting announcements were regularly updated at www.pn.usbr.gov.

Prior to the release of the draft EA, Reclamation provided five newsbriefs, held two public meetings, and held five Ad Hoc Work Group meetings. A newsletter announcing the availability of the Draft EA was sent to over 350 people. The Draft EA was mailed to 57 individuals. Thirty three responses were received; one of these responses included 192 identical form letters.

Fish and Wildlife Service Coordination

Coordination on fish and wildlife issues to meet the requirements of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was accomplished through informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Information about this consultation is provided in Appendix I. FWS concurs with the following conclusions:

Little information is known about the two bald eagle nests located near the reservoir and whether human activities may, or may not, be affecting them. The Preferred Alternative provides for a comprehensive monitoring program of bald eagle nests and winter roost areas. The Habitat and Wildlife Management Plan would include a component for a bald and golden eagle management plan. The Preferred Alternative would also define and limit areas for overnight camping in the State Wildlife Area and at Roberts Bay. We have determined that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the bald eagle.

Canada lynx is not likely to occur on Reclamation or adjacent land and implementation of the RMP would have no affect to this species. It is our finding that the proposed action will have no affect on the Oregon spotted frog.

Improved fencing would benefit riparian and wetland habitats. Additional efforts to control vehicle access would benefit all habitat types on Reclamation land, and therefore could potentially benefit Threatened & Endangered species.

National Historic Preservation Act

To date, approximately 2,945 acres of land around Prineville Reservoir have been inventoried for archaeological resources, and 126 archaeological sites and one human burial have been recorded. No traditional cultural properties (TCPs) have been recorded, but the Confederate Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (Warm Springs Tribe), has indicated that culturally important resources are present. This information will facilitate subsequent compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800). Coordination with the Oregon SHPO and the Warm Springs Tribe over cultural resources and sacred sites aspects of the RMP have occurred in conjunction with public review of the draft Environmental Assessment. It is understood that specific, future undertakings in response to RMP prescriptions will require specific consultations with the SHPO and Tribes pursuant to the 36 CFR 800 regulations.

Coordination with Tribes

Reclamation sent letters to representatives of the Warm Springs Tribe, the Burns Paiute Tribes, and the Klamath Tribes explaining the EA process during the scoping phase. Reclamation met with staff of the Warm Springs Tribe to discuss the preparation of the RMP and to identify Indian trust assets, TCPs, and Indian sacred sites. Several meetings and field trips were held and correspondence was exchanged between Reclamation and the Warm Springs Tribe. No known ITAs are present in the RMP study area and no sacred sites have been reported at the reservoir at this time. There will be no known affect to Indian trust assets or Indian sacred sites from implementation of the RMP.

A representative from the Warm Springs Tribe participated in the Ad Hoc Work Group, which facilitated close coordination with the Government and helped assure that Tribal interests were integrated with the RMP. Reclamation will continue to work with the Warm Springs Tribe in the implementation of the RMP through meetings and other specific communications.

Coordination with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Reclamation worked closely with OPRD in development of this RMP as this document will also serve as the State Park Master Plan for the next 25 years. The Prineville State Park Manager was an active participant in the Ad Hoc Work Group. OPRD area managers and master planners participated in all of RMP planning team meetings and attended the Ad Hoc Work Group Meetings.

Public Comment Summary & Changes to the Final Environmental Assessment

The comment period for the Prineville Reservoir RMP/MP Draft Environmental Assessment extended 60 days, from November 12, 2002 to January 10, 2003. The majority of comments focused on four main subject areas: camping at Roberts Bay, juniper management, recreation use, and grazing management.

Roberts Bay - Comments on Roberts Bay ranged from those who want a continuation of no restrictions and undesignated camping to those who feel there are major problems with resource damage, safety, sanitation, and law enforcement. Many expressed a desire for group camping opportunities. Some felt there were too many campsites proposed and some felt the proposed developments were too developed and formalized. Crook County felt that this development would not financially benefit Prineville and may add additional costs for emergency services. The County also cannot determine the legal status of the Salt Creek Road from Roberts to the reservoir without a court proceeding. The Friends at Roberts Cove have expressed their desire to not be regulated and to be able to continue to camp as they have been for many years with their very large group at Roberts Bay East.

The Preferred Alternative was modified to allow for over 50 campsites to be available and reservable for group camping. Camping will be regulated to designated locations in the interest of resource protection, and avoiding recreation conflicts among users. The meeting hall has been changed to a picnic shelter, and a two-phased development approach will be used. The number of proposed sites remains the same to allow for an economically viable campground, but the level of development has been reduced for a more primitive camping experience. The Preferred Alternative calls for continued enforcement-related funding for OPRD and Crook County and expanding resources as necessary and available based on annual appropriations.

All facility construction is dependent upon Reclamation's ability to determine or acquire legal access to Roberts Bay. If legal access can be determined or acquired, Reclamation, in cooperation with OPRD, will take responsibility for maintaining the road to Roberts Bay commensurate with the level of facility development. If legal access cannot be determined or obtained, and Reclamation cannot responsibly manage these lands, then it may be necessary to close this recreation area.

Juniper Management - Comments on juniper management ranged from those who were concerned with the effects of past juniper management activities on adjacent lands to those who felt some juniper management is critical to watershed health and maintaining wildlife habitat.

Reclamation considers juniper management, such as cutting, a management tool that has some limited applications, but will not be commonly employed or used on a large scale. The Preferred Alternative was modified to read as follows: As part of the Habitat and Wildlife Management Plan, perform limited juniper management on specific areas within the RMP study area. Public notice would be provided for implementation of management on areas greater than 1 acre. Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be followed for all habitat management activities. Actions would be consistent with maintaining the existing visual quality of the area.

Recreation Use – Comments were received on a range of topics related to recreation use. There was general support for the use of campground hosts, a new boat ramp at Powder House Cove, continued law enforcement support, campground full signs prior to Roberts Bay, Off-road-vehicle control, and accessible facilities. Most commenters wanted to keep camping areas small in the SWA and did not support moorage docks in this area.

All of the above supported items remain in the Plan. Moorage docks were not supported and were removed from the Plan.

Grazing Management - Comments on grazing management ranged from those who wanted solid rationale for livestock restrictions and/or no further restrictions on livestock grazing, to those who felt that livestock needed to be removed from sensitive areas. Several requested more information on cryptobiotic crust locations and encouraged ground truthing of these areas.

The Preferred Alternative was modified to read as follows: Livestock grazing would be eliminated from areas where it is not compatible with natural resource or recreation resources including wetlands, riparian areas, recreation sites, and proximity to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Control or eliminate livestock grazing in areas where it may not be compatible with resources such as cultural resources sites and high occurrence of cryptobiotic soils. Reclamation would assess impacts and determine appropriate resource protection measures. Work with BLM to revise allotment management plans affecting Reclamation lands. Additionally, changes were made to the soils section to read as follows: "Areas of high occurrence of cryptobiotic soils will be more precisely identified and mapped through field verification of existing preliminary map data. Appropriate protection measures would be developed in areas where recreation or livestock grazing is causing adverse effects."

In addition to the changes discussed above, the following changes were made in the Final EA:

Threatened & Endangered Species – An eagle management plan will be developed as a component to the Habitat and Wildlife Management Plan.

Habitat & Wildlife Management Plan – A Habitat and Wildlife Management Plan will be developed and implemented for the entire RMP study area in cooperation with ODFW, OPRD, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Prineville Resort – Clarification was added to provide vehicle access to Social Security Beach for the elderly, people with disabilities, and their companions.

Dispersed Boat-in Use (north and south shore outside of SWA) – Text was changed to allow for monitoring and potential closures of some sites for cultural and natural resource degradation, if necessary.

Powder House Cove – Old boat ramp will be closed and an additional maximum of 45 parking spaces will be built, as needed, in phase 2. This makes for a new maximum total of 120 parking spaces vs. 75 in the Draft EA.

Juniper Point - Providing toilets at this location was added.

Roberts Bay, West – Amenities were changed to the following: boat ramp and parking area, non-motorized trailhead and trail to island (some facilities open year-round, depending on water level and use), maintenance yard, employee housing, entrance gate, and host sites. Twenty primitive-designated campsites were removed from Roberts Bay West as they were incorporated into the Roberts Bay East area design.

Finding

Reclamation's analysis showed that the implementation of the RMP may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bald eagles. Reclamation will work with ODFW, BLM, and OPRD to determine the status of a new bald eagle nest and an existing bald eagle nest near the reservoir, and will develop a bald and golden eagle management plan as part of the Wildlife Management Plan. Reclamation will also participate in a comprehensive monitoring program of bald eagle nests and winter roost areas. Implementation of the RMP will not affect any other threatened or endangered species listed under the ESA.

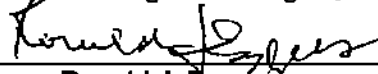
Implementation of the RMP will cause minimal short term impacts on existing resources and in the long term will enhance natural and recreation resources. Reclamation and its contractors and management partners will use best management practices as described in Chapter 5 when constructing recreation facilities or managing vegetation and habitat and all environmental commitments identified in the final EA will be implemented.

CONCLUSION

Based on thorough review of the comments received, analysis of the environmental impacts as presented in the final EA, ESA Section 7 consultation, coordination with the various agencies, and implementation of all environmental commitments identified in the final EA, Reclamation has concluded that implementation of the preferred alternative would have no significant impacts on the quality of the human environment or the natural resources of the area. Therefore, this FONSI has been prepared and is submitted to document environmental review and evaluation in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Recommended: 
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ESA Program Manager

Date: May 19, 2003

Approved: 
Ronald J. Eggers
Lower Columbia Area Manager
Portland, Oregon

Date: May 19, 2003

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

af	acre-feet
AMP	Allotment Management Plan
ARPA	Archeological Resources Protection Act
AUM	Animal Unit Month
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMP	Best Management Practice
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cfs	cubic feet per second
CRMP	Cultural Resources Management Plan
DOI	Department of Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy Management Act
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FR	Federal Register
FWCA	Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
FWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ITAs	Indian Trust Assets
KOP	Key Observation Point
kV	kilovolt
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Master Plan
MSA	Magnuson-Stevens Act
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
ODA	Oregon Department of Agriculture
ODEQ	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
ODOT	Oregon Department of Transportation
OPRD	Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
OID	Ochoco Irrigation District
ONHP	Oregon Natural Heritage Program
ORV	Off-road Vehicle
OSMB	Oregon State Marine Board

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS (continued)

OSU	Oregon State University
PAM	Planning Aid Memorandum
ppm	parts per million
PRRS	Prineville Reservoir Reallocation Study
PWC	Personal Water Craft
RBS	River Basin Survey
Reclamation	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Register	National Register of Historic Places
RM	river mile
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RV	Recreational Vehicle
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SOD	Safety of Dams
SR	State Route
SWA	State Wildlife Area
TCPs	Traditional Cultural Properties
TES	Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
U.S.C.	United States Code
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VRMS	Visual Resource Management System
WMU	Wildlife Management Unit