

Citizen advisory group to discuss travel on National Forests

by Bend Weekly News Sources

(Prineville, Oregon) A citizen advisory group will hold a series of meetings this month in Prineville to develop recommendations for designating routes and areas that will be open to motorized use by vehicle type on the Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland.

The group began meeting in December to assist federal managers implement a 2005 travel management rule for the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests, and Crooked National Grassland.

The national travel management rule mandates a designated system of roads, trails and areas for motor vehicle use on all national forests and grasslands. Once implemented, it will prohibit motor vehicle use, except on designated routes and areas.

Local working group members are now helping managers designate routes and areas on the two national forests and grassland. Their work will eventually lead to maps the public will use when traveling within the federal lands.

The first working group meeting in Prineville will be held Monday, February 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Other meetings will be held February 27 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and February 28 from 3 to 7 p.m.

All February meetings will be held in Prineville at the Brothers Family Diner, 1053 N.W. Madras Highway. The public is welcome to attend all meetings.

The local working group consists of about 30 community members with interests in recreation activities such as off-highway vehicle riding, mountain biking, hiking and horseback riding. In December, the group set its future meeting dates and times.

It will hold meetings in March to development recommendations for the Deschutes National Forest.

Information on the local effort and national management rule can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/travel-mgmt/index.shtml>

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