

USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region
Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grassland
Recreation Niche

August 2, 2006 Niche Statement (for coming decade)

At the Edge of Solitude

Away from large populations the Ochoco NF, with its homesteaded grassland and stately ponderosa pines has quietly escaped intense recreation use; and for generations provided quality of life to nearby communities. As growing populations nestle along its boundary, the Ochoco's contribution to the rich tapestry of recreation opportunities in Central Oregon will be local history, chance for self discovery and remoteness, with rustic facilities and multi-seasonal access on roads and trails.

Settings, Special Places, and Values:

Forest-wide - Large expanses of majestic open Ponderosa pine stands, lush meadows, stunning displays of wildflowers, and oceans of grasses greet neighbors from near and far to the Forest and Grassland and provides excellent habitat for wildlife. Mountain Ranges, faulted valley and basins formed through time by volcanic activity have left some of the oldest rocks in Oregon in the Ochoco National Forest and a heyday for collectors. Remnants of this active volcanic history are scattered throughout the Forest. Stargazing on the forest is amazing due to distance from population centers. Destination nodes of special places dot the forest and include, in part, geologic wonders like Steins Pillar & Thunder Egg mines, the refreshing waters of Walton Lake, Rimrock Springs & Haystack Reservoir, desert canyons and 7,000' peaks.

Backyard – Located closest to the more populated communities, nearby neighbors and families have easy access to the Forest and Grassland, giving them the opportunity to spend an hour or spend the day.

Back 40 - Adjacent to working ranches and located further from larger population centers, it offers a remote experience and allows for self-discovery & finding your own special place on a variety of roads and trails from highway to hiking.

Activities/Opportunities/Experiences:

Forest-wide – The Forest offers close-in and remote self-discovery. Roads and trails provide opportunities for scenic driving, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and OHV use. Designated OHV routes & areas on the forest are part of a system of motorized-use providers in Central Oregon. Rustic camping provides opportunities for that “get away from it all” experience. Hunting across the forest includes big game, turkey and upland birds. A variety of information helps visitors experience & discover the rich mining, homesteading, and grazing history. Strong ties and partnerships with growing communities and other agencies are a key to providing relevant and quality recreation on the Ochoco NF.

Backyard – Day use and camping are easily accessed by short drives from local communities. This setting offers social interaction and sharing the landscape, as well as places and times for solitude. Great snow when available supports cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Homesteading and CCC history is emphasized on the CRNG while remnants of a rich mining history can be seen throughout the rest of the setting. Mill Creek Wilderness provides a wilderness experience close to home.

Back 40 – Open pine, water & its accompanying shade attract those seeking a remote, dispersed camping experience. Developed sites, offer few if any amenities and are designed to protect the resource. Remnants of a rich logging history or a week-end stay at the Cold Springs Guard Station is a step back to the earlier days of the Forest. The Bridge Creek Wilderness with no maintained trails encourages use of wilderness skills. Black Canyon boasts a trail descending along a rushing mountain stream into a narrow cliff-walled gorge.

Primary Visitors

Locals	Madras, Prineville, Paulina, Redmond, Sisters, Bend seeking solitude – a “get away from it all” experience, a sense of adventure in discovering their own place. Primarily day use activities, traditional family use activities and overnight primitive camping
Non-local	Neighbors from far seeking a longer stay and an escape from city life.
Special Eventers	Visit the Forest from all over the PNW to attend special events such as stargazing, endurance rides and dog trials.

Forest Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

Ochoco NF & Crooked River NG
Niche Bridge for Developed Recreation
Niche Emphasis: local history, chance for self discovery, remoteness, rustic facilities

SETTING NAMES:		Backyard		Back 40	
SETTING DESCRIPTION: Paraphrase from niche setting description		Grassland and open stands of ponderosa pine, stunning wildflowers, river canyons, homesteading & mining remnants, near population centers, well-roded		Ponderosa pine, lush meadows, stunning wildflowers adj. working ranches and far from populations, well-roded	
SITE FUNCTION/THEME: How sites are designed & managed to best meet the Niche		Facilitate self-discovery close to home, protect resource & provide visitor satisfaction in areas of shared activities.		Facilitate self-discovery, permit "getting away" and access to remoteness, protect natural resources, provide health & safety to visitors	
KEY ACTIVITIES: In support of the Niche for the coming decade		Day use primarily including hunting, hiking, biking, driving, OHV use, equestrian, events, dispersed camping, snow use		Multi-day visits including hunting, hiking, biking, driving, OHV use, equestrian, dispersed camping	
INFRASTRUCTURE	SITE TYPE/ DEVELOPMENT SCALE Needed to provide key activities (Sites will be the lowest dev scale possible to maintain visitor experience & protect the resource)	Site Type	Dev Scale	Site Type	Dev Scale
		Trailheads	1-3	Trailheads	1-2
		Campgrounds	1-3	Campgrounds	2-3
		Picnic Sites	2		
		Sno-parks	3		
	SITE CAPACITY Low <50 Medium 50-100 High >100	Low - Medium		All - Low	

Programmatic Strategies:

OHV trail systems are designated routes and areas established through Travel Management Planning. Partnerships with other agencies within the Central Oregon outdoor rec community are a priority for managing FS sites.

Forest Supervisor Signature and Date: