

Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and
Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management
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Decision Made to Expand Facilities at Meissner Sno-Park

BEND—Bend Fort-Rock District Ranger Phil Cruz, after careful consideration of many public comments, has issued the decision to expand the parking lot and make some other adjustments at Meissner Sno-Park. Those decision points are as follows:

- Expand the existing parking lot from 60 spaces to 180 spaces in two phases over the next few years.
- 7.8 miles of new trails will be constructed.
- Trail lights will not be installed.
- A Wanoga-sized shelter will be constructed.
- Additional small tree clearing will occur at parking area to better provide for staging and warm-up.
- Addition of new toilet facilities and a new information kiosk will occur.
- The current name of Meissner Sno-park will be retained.

“With this decision, I aim to balance existing and predicted recreation uses within the bounds of what the natural resources can sustain,” says Ranger Cruz. “Recreation use and population growth has dramatically increased in the Bend area and this is expected to continue to increase. I believe that Meissner is the right place to accommodate increased use due to easy access and proximity to Bend, and the fact that facilities are already present. Meissner expansion better facilitates and manages increased winter use for a sustainable quality experience in the natural environment.”

Ranger Cruz expects Meissner to see a continued increase in ski and snowshoe activity and the sno-park will also be able to host winter events such as ski racing. Central Oregon high school cross-country ski teams routinely use Meissner for practice sessions.

For Meissner Sno-Park expansion, the Tumalo Langlauf Club (TLC) contributed funding for the environmental analysis, is seeking grant funds for facility improvements, and club members will also be contributing labor. Through partner contributions, the Forest Service is able to plan, fund, build and maintain recreation developments like Meissner. The initial estimated cost of project implementation is \$140,000. Implementation may be in phases as funding becomes available.

“This is a win-win for the community,” says Karen Benson, spokesperson for TLC. I have really enjoyed working with the Forest Service on the growth and expansion that needed to occur at Meissner.”

The full environmental analysis and decision notice can be viewed on the website at www.us.fed.us/r6/centraloregon. With the signing of the decision notice on April 11, 2008, the 45-day opportunity for public appeal begins.