

USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region
Deschutes National Forest Recreation Niche
October 5, 2006

FUN in the SUN!

“The Deschutes National Forest is the hub of incredible opportunities in diverse settings within close proximity to one another, facilitating four season day-use recreation opportunities.”

Settings, Special Places, and Values

The gem of Central Oregon is the Deschutes National Forest. Its many facets comprise three primary settings, Alpine Summit, Hub, and High Desert. Day use activities are supported by a range of lodging from rustic camping to five star resorts. Given the projected growth, strong interdependence and community relationships, partnerships will continue to grow and play a larger part in providing the developed infrastructure supporting the day use activities.

The Alpine Summit is the crest of the Cascade Range volcanoes that are the scenic backdrop of snowcapped peaks for Central Oregon visible from local communities. Many lakes nestled in alpine forests and meadows, accessed primarily by trails, afford solitude in a predominantly wilderness setting.

The Recreation Hubs are the heart of Central Oregon recreation opportunities and gateways to the Alpine Summit and High Desert. It is characterized by volcanic mountains and buttes, caldera lakes, and rushing clear rivers cutting through the high desert terrain of majestic ponderosa pine.

The High Desert is a land of dry pine forest, open space and big sky. Major highways are dotted with small rural communities, and ranches with traditional family ties.

Opportunities and Activities

Visitors are drawn to the forest because of the spectacular diverse settings that provide four seasons of recreation opportunities, from high mountain climbing to desert trail riding and from skiing to snowmobiling. A variety of activities can be had in a day (there is no way you can do it all!).

The Alpine Summit offers good access to day use and overnight activities such as hiking, backpacking, climbing and fishing.

The Recreation Hubs are Central Oregon communities where quality of life depends greatly on the forest. Hub community economies are enhanced by nature based eco-tourism, community festivals, and events that attract local, national and even international visitors. The mountains provide hiking, mountain biking, lake-side camping and fishing in the summer. In the winter, skiing, snow shoeing, and snowmobiling are primary. Both the Deschutes and Metolius rivers provide blue-ribbon fishing and the Deschutes thrills visitors with white-water boating. All of these are within easy access of the Recreation Hub communities resulting in year-round high use.

The High Desert, in contrast to the other two settings, provides a place “to get away”. Generally, low-use predominates with easily accessible activities including rock hounding, hunting, and a well managed designated OHV area.

Primary Visitors

Locals	Weekenders
30+ years old	40+ years old
Active participants with outdoor lifestyle.	Westside
From Deschutes, Jefferson & Crook counties	Urban dweller
5 to 60 minutes from activity	Active participants
	Destination users,
	2-3 hours from activity

ACTIVITY & NICHE AREA		NICHE BRIDGE for the NEXT DECADE		
		Alpine Summit	Recreation Hubs	High desert
<p>[Deschutes National Forest Recreation Niche map developed 6/15/2004 delineates niche components spatially]</p>		<p><u>Settings</u> Crest of the Cascade Range volcanoes that are the scenic backdrop of snowcapped peaks for Central Oregon visible from local communities. Many lakes nestled in alpine forests and meadows, accessed primarily by trails, afford solitude in a predominantly wilderness setting. BEIG – Rocky Mtn Province</p> <p><u>Activities & Opportunities</u> Offers good access to day use and overnight activities such as hiking, backpacking, climbing and fishing.</p>	<p><u>Setting</u> Heart of Central Oregon recreation opportunities and gateways to the Alpine Summit and High Desert. It is characterized by volcanic mountains and buttes, lakes and reservoirs, and rushing clear rivers cutting through the high desert terrain of majestic ponderosa pine. BEIG – Rocky Mtn Province</p> <p><u>Activities and Opportunities</u> The mountains provide hiking, mountain biking, lake-side camping and fishing in the summer. In the winter, skiing, snow shoeing, and snowmobiling are primary. Both the Deschutes and Metolius rivers provide blue-ribbon fishing and the Deschutes thrills visitors with white-water boating. All of these are within easy access of the Recreation Hub communities resulting in year-round high use.</p>	<p><u>Setting</u> Land of dry pine forest, open space and big sky. Major highways are dotted with small rural communities, and ranches with traditional family ties. BEIG – Rocky Mtn Province</p> <p><u>Activities and Opportunities</u> In contrast to the other two settings, provides a place “to get away”. Generally, low-use predominates with easily accessible activities including rock hounding, hunting, and a well managed designated OHV area.</p>
		<p>SITE FUNCTION (Primary Activity)</p> <p>Sites that meet the needs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active recreationists • Day use & overnight water based • Trail access 	<p>Sites that meet the needs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locals & Weekenders, destination seekers • 4-season day use and camping • water based • winter motorized & non-motorized 	<p>Sites that meet the needs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily locals • Easy access activities • Hunting • OHV • Low-use
INFRASTRUCTURE	<p>SITE TYPE/ DEVELOPMENT SCALE</p> <p>Trailheads 2-3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trailheads and horse camps—2/3 (alpine access), 4 (urban), 3/4 (snow parks and snow play) • Campgrounds and group camps—3/4 (associated with water) • Boat launches, observ. sites, interp. sites minor, info sites—3/4 • Picnic sites—2/3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trailheads 2-3, 3 (OHV staging) • Campgrounds 2-3 • Toilets only as necessary to protect the resource 	
	<p>SITE CAPACITY Low <50 Medium =50-150 High >150</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Campgrounds, group camps, picnic, boat launches, snow parks— medium/high Trailheads, observ. sites, interp. sites minor, info. sites—medium</p>	<p>Designated OHV areas— Low/medium</p>	
<p><u>Programmatic Strategies</u></p> <p>EXAMPLE: “Create a decision tree focusing on the developed overnight facilities outlining what is appropriate to support the various day use activities, the development scale, and who is best suited to provide it. The decision tree would cover a range from rustic development scale 2 campgrounds to five star resorts.</p> <p>The over-all strategy is to rehabilitate developed sites to meet changing vehicular and equipment demands. The development scale should stay aligned with the experience and values provided by the opportunity. It is important to not deliberately increase the development scale, but keep it in line with the opportunities and experience.</p> <p>For example: Some roads may stay gravel, but turning radius and pull-outs will be designed to accommodate RV’s. Toilet buildings will be vault if that’s the appropriate development scale. Water will be centrally located rather than at every site.”</p> <p>Tools & inventory are not developed to effectively use BEIG in niche conformance ranking. It will be used as guidance for any new development, and woven into the niche statement setting description.</p>				