

## Conditional Use Permit Supplemental Information

OSU Research Forest

8/14/2017

### CUP Application Update Requests

OSU Research Forests would like to withdraw Phase III activities from the proposal.

OSU Research Forests requests that the timeframe for the Conditional Use Permit be five years (expiring in 2022). No phase III projects will be started in that timeframe without a new CUP application and approval.

*Justification:* The projects listed in Phase II were expected to carry over into the Phase III timeframe. The 5 year period allows the OSU Research Forests to balance workload and priorities and complete the projects within a realistic timeframe.

OSU Research Forests accept that this may lengthen the timeline associated with the Planning Commission decision schedule, and consider this extension to be necessary in developing the best possible permit conditions.

### Suggested Revisions for Conditions of Approval

Suggested changes to the Conditions of Approval are listed below.

1. No Change Suggested
2. Pursuant to BCC 53.230, since the application is for a phased development plan, this conditional use permit shall be valid for ~~ten~~ **five** years from the date of decision. The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits and maintain compliance with all conditions of approval over the ten-year life of the phased development plan. If the applicant fails to obtain required permits within the approval period, or allows approved permits to expire after the land use approval has expired, then this land use approval shall be void. Any project not completed within the ~~10-year~~ **5-year** period must be re-authorized through subsequent Conditional Use Permit approval. The approval may be extended for good cause at the discretion of the Planning Commission if a written request for extension is received by the Planning Official prior to expiration of the approval.
3. The following mitigation measures (a-d were proposed by the applicant) shall be completed within 3 years. ~~(Phase II), concurrent with proposed recreation facilities within the 0-3 year timespan.~~
  - a. Improvements to Lewisburg Saddle parking
  - b. A new vault toilet at Lewisburg Saddle
  - c. Improvements to the horse trailer parking area north of Lewisburg Saddle
  - d. Bike racks at popular trailheads (including Oak Creek and Lewisburg Saddle), of a number and type that can accommodate increased bicycle traffic as a means of transportation to the trailhead, in an effort to reduce car traffic (and accommodate reduced parking availability at Oak Creek). The number of racks to accommodate bike demand shall be reviewed periodically.

- e. Post signs at the Lewisburg Saddle and Oak Creek parking areas with contact information to report illegally parked cars, loose dogs, and other safety hazards.
  - f. Develop a strategy to encourage alternative methods of transportation to trailheads, and discourage parking. Could include webcam of parking areas on website, parking fees, required carpooling, public information campaign, transit service, bike racks, etc.
- ~~No Phase III (3 years and beyond) projects (with the exception of Peavy Arboretum projects, which are permitted outright) may be initiated until all required Phase II mitigation measures are completed.~~

Justification:

*Addressing request for OSU Research Forests to provide a number to reach a staff person with concerns (related to item e)* OSU Research Forests has a main phone line which is answered when staffing is available during business hours (no receptionist on-staff). Voicemails are responded to as soon as possible, though there may or may not be staffing available at the time to respond to concerns immediately. OSU Research Forests has a cooperative agreement with Benton County Sheriff's Department, so all after-hours calls will be directed to their dispatch number. Further refining these roles would be part of the education and enforcement strategy for Oak Creek parking development (discussed in item 4).

4. *Replace entire text with:*

The applicant shall, at their own expense:

1. By the end of 2018, develop a detailed site design for parking development at the Oak Creek Parking Area in cooperation with Benton County Public Works staff. This site design will expand parking within the physical capacity of the Oak Creek site and improve safety. The design will also identify physical measures to prohibit parking along the 1-lane portion of NW Oak Creek Drive. Any work within the Oak Creek Road right-of-way will require County permit review and approval.
2. Implementation will include:
  - a. By the end of 2018:
    - i. Improved "loop" traffic flow with appropriate markings to allow vehicles to safely circulate through the site (minimize three-point turns, keep area clear for emergency vehicles, improve visibility, etc)
    - ii. Additional safety improvements, including re-grading, re-paving, signs, markings/delineations
    - iii. Installation of boulders or other barriers at areas of neighbor concern on the west side of NW Oak Creek Dr.
    - iv. Develop strategy for enforcement and education, including education actions by OSU Research Forests staff and volunteers and enforcement through existing cooperative agreement with Benton County Sheriff's Department or alternative arrangements with Oregon State Police
    - v. Develop strategy and begin implementing complementary demand management measures to help reduce traffic at the site: examples could

include - webcam of parking area on website, parking fees, required carpooling, public information campaign, transit service, bike racks, etc.

b. By the end of 2019:

- i. Physical restrictions/limitations along east side of NW Oak Creek Dr. to prevent shoulder parking (knock-down bollards, guard rails, etc). Re-evaluate effectiveness periodically and add more barriers to the length of the road if needed.
- ii. Signage as developed by OSU, Benton County Public Works and law enforcement.
- iii. Expansion at Oak Creek parking area within the physical capacity of the site (what the site can accommodate)
- iv. Installment of web-cam on-site to allow visitors to know if parking is available before driving to site.

Justification:

*To Address Oak Creek Parking:* Changes to condition 4 were developed through conversations between staff from the OSU Research Forests, Benton County Public works, Benton County Planning, and forest neighbors at Oak Creek. OSU suggests removing the requirement to complete a parking utilization study, as the site is limited by topography and existing structures in its ability to be developed. A parking utilization study will find that more sites would be needed to accommodate traffic than we have the ability to create on-site. We propose to move directly ahead with developing the parking the site can accommodate, restricting use where it isn't appropriate, and providing other creative solutions to reducing traffic at the site. This will cut down planning time and address the impacts sooner than later with similar results.

*Addressing suggestion to change hours of access from 5am to 6:30am:* The 5:00am timeframe was selected as an appropriate time to allow before work use throughout the forest in response to many requests from the local community. Aside from disturbing neighbors, which is a significant concern at Oak Creek, early morning use does not contribute toward issues on the forest more than other types of uses, and spreads out use during busy summer months. OSU Research Forests and Benton County Sheriff's Department does not have adequate staffing to effectively enforce this change.

*Addressing suggestion to develop parking at OSU Sheep Facility:* This development is not under consideration at this time.

5. No Change Suggested

6. Replace entire text with:

OSU Research Forests will follow all applicable state and federal laws, including (but not limited to) the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and the Oregon Forest Practices Act.

7. No Change Suggested

### To address concerns regarding access on Mitchel Drive

Michelle Drive is currently managed for administrative use and fire egress for the neighborhood. A neighborhood resident, who is also a member of Corvallis Fire Advisory Board, has a key and would be responsible for opening the gate in response to instructions from fire services. Oregon Department of Forestry and local emergency services have keys to the OSU Research Forests gates as well.

OSU Research Forests intend to continue managing the site as an administrative and fire egress access point, and do not intend to develop it as a trailhead. The addition of a visitor kiosk, maps, and trash bin would sanction this location as an access point and attract more visitors. This is likely to have more of an impact on neighbors, and would be an additional administrative burden. In response to this comment, OSU Research Forests intend to install No Smoking/No Fires sign, as well as a No Parking sign, and periodically clean up trash at this location. OSU Research Forests recreation staff is available to meet with neighbors to address additional concerns if desired.

### To address concerns regarding public information and fire prevention

OSU Research Forests take fire prevention very seriously. In addition to concerns for neighboring properties, long term research sites, forest resources, and recreation values are also at risk.

OSU Research Forests use our e-mail list, Facebook page, and monthly (used to be quarterly) newsletter as an avenue to reach the public regarding fire safety. This fire season, we've had special announcements via electronic methods on 6/29 and 8/2, as well as a newsletter reminder on 7/20. This is a similar level of engagement as in recent years.

On-site signs are a way to reach forest visitors who are not on the mailing list. Each of our trailhead kiosks has been posted with a no smoking graphic, and the prohibition on fires is listed in on the Forest Regulations sign. This rule is also included on our two printed forest maps.

Permanent signs (12"x18" size) were installed in all parking areas during the fall of 2016 (Figures 1, 3, 4) to catch people's attention in the parking areas and as they enter the forest. Written testimony indicates that not all entry areas have these signs posted. As a result, we will review the locations of posted signs to assure that the signs are visible at each official entry point. Signs posted at the Oak Creek parking area (at the entrances to Homestead Trail and 600 Gate) are shown in Figures 4 and 5.

For the fourth of July weekend, no fireworks graphics have been posted at trailheads and major gathering points on forests. During a heat wave predicted for a weekend with high visitation expected in August of 2016, extra staffing was set on patrols throughout the forest and signs were posted at trailheads alerting people to the high fire danger (Figure 2).

Following the Peavy Arboretum Fire in 2016, an interpretive sign describing the fire, its impacts, and what to do in case of fire is being fabricated to place at the site of the fire.

During the weekend prior to the solar eclipse (8/19-8/21), significant evening staffing will be on-site throughout the weekend to prevent camping and fires, and to respond to any issues that might arise.

OSU Research Forests do not have the capacity to post each public entry point for each red flag warning issued by the National Weather Service. OSU Research Forests will continue to post signs at official entry points when fire danger is extreme.

# DURING YOUR VISIT



## Remember, NO:

- **Smoking** of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic cigarette or other device to simulate smoking (OAR Chapter 576, Division 040)
- **Possession of marijuana** (OSU Policy Sec 0800; 805)
- **Fireworks**
- **Campfires, barbecues**
- **Open flame**

Trespassing ORS 164.245

Oregon State **OSU** College of Forestry

OSU Research Forests  
(541) 737-4452

# EXTREME FIRE



# WEATHER



Hot, dry weather predicted for this weekend with temperatures reaching over 100 deg. F.

**Please help us keep the forest safe from fire!**

## Reporting:

Fire: **dial 911**

Suspicious or dangerous behavior, call: (541)766-6858

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Figure 1 (left): Signs installed at all parking areas in Fall, 2016. Figure 2 (right): Signs posted on barricades at each parking area in August 2016 in advance of heatwave. Extra staffing patrolled the forest that weekend as well.



Figure 3: No Fires sign installed at Homestead Trail entrance from Oak Creek parking area.





Figure 4: No Fires sign installed at 600 Rd entrance from Oak Creek parking area.

To address concerns during testimony regarding lack of communication with neighbors

OSU Research Forests communicate with members of the visiting public and neighbors primarily through electronic means. Forest updates are issued for each forest closure, to announce events and opportunities, and to communicate regarding issues occurring on the forest. This is our way of providing real-time information to the community, including forest neighbors.

E-mail communication is managed through Mail Chimp, and contains 530 subscribers. Some neighborhood residents and user group representatives choose to forward e-mails to their contacts, and everyone is invited to join.

Our Facebook page has 1,100 “likes” and user groups and others often “share” our posts to the larger community. In addition to Forest Updates, we also post less important or interesting information here. <http://cf.forestry.oregonstate.edu/current-activities>

We maintain a Current Activities webpage to allow people to check in at any point to see what closures or other activities to be aware of. <https://www.facebook.com/OSUResearchForests/>

A monthly newsletter contains stories about what is happening on the forest (research, timber harvests, recreation developments, etc) as well as general announcements. This is where we go into greater depth regarding forest management/timber harvest plans for the upcoming season.

Within the past 4 years, when a harvest unit or other development is located along a property boundary, the property owners of the property directly adjacent to the project have been notified, either through the mail or by a personal visit. This has not happened in the Oak Creek area, as only routine management and maintenance has occurred adjacent to private properties there.

For the Conditional Use Permit application process, official notification to neighbors was sent by Benton County to their list of residents within 750 feet of the property boundary. OSU Research Forests chose to send additional information to this same list of residents to provide additional information and context.

### Conflict on the OSU Research Forests

In response to requests from the Benton County Planning Commission, this text is designed to put the conflict numbers from the Needham and Rosenberger 2009 study of recreation on the OSU Research Forests into context. Additional information regarding context is located on pages iv and 14-20 of the 2009 report (full citation and link listed at end).

In 2009, 11% of visitors experienced conflict with people on foot and horseback. Approximately one-third of users (34%) experienced conflict with mountain bikers (Needham & Rosenberger, p. 22).

Comparing the level of conflict between studies is very difficult, because there are multiple ways of measuring conflict. Different studies are not directly comparable, also due to the different environments and activities evaluated (conversation with Dr. Mark Needham, 8/3/2017). To put these number in context for how conflict impacts people's experiences, this same study states that "Overall satisfaction was extremely high, as 96% of users were satisfied and only 4% were dissatisfied. The highest proportion of users was "very satisfied" (66%)." (Needham & Rosenberger, p. 9) Visitors identified the opportunity to experience nature (97% important) and the opportunity to escape crowds (95% important) as the two most important characteristics of the forest. They also reported the most satisfaction with these two characteristics (experience nature: 96% satisfied, escape from crowds: 91% satisfied) (Needham and Rosenberger, p. 10-11).

The 2017 recreation study is currently underway is a replication of the 2009 study below, with additional conflict questions regarding encounters with dogs. We intend to analyze this data by trailhead to identify any specific areas where conflicts are becoming a significant problem. Targeted management actions such as education or restrictions on specific uses/areas would be implemented as needed.

### OSU Research Forests Conflict Management Actions

OSU Research Forests carefully designs trails to be sustainable and safe, using trail design parameters created by the USDA forest service, and trail design techniques that take into account the needs of various users. On multi-use trails, careful attention is paid to designing the trails with appropriate sight-lines to allow advanced observation for encounters. The decision was made by OSU Research Forests to develop new trails leading to desired destinations for multi-use, with some potential for use restrictions based on known safety issues or seasonal maintenance considerations.

Some forest trails, in and around Peavy Arboretum primarily, are designated as hiker only for maintenance and safety reasons. These trails are beloved by hikers, family groups, dog walkers, and trail runners, and will remain hiker only. Hiker only designation for other trails is a future management tool available to address high conflict areas if needed.

The No Secret Trail is designed as a primary mountain bike trail, open also to foot traffic (though little foot traffic occurs in that area). This is intended to provide bicycle-specific trail design.

In response to concerning incidents regarding dog behavior, the Tails on Trails public information campaign was created with a group of dog walkers and veterinarians. Public information about the

impacts of unmanaged dog behavior and dog waste is shared twice a year (spring and fall), and is accompanied by a community poop pickup weekend. Additional projects associated with this campaign have included refining and sharing the definition of “voice control” and sponsoring a free professional dog training in partnership with Wonder Dogs to work on “recall.”

Starting in August, we intend to pilot test a “Bells for Bikes” program at the Oak Creek Trailhead in partnership with Peak Sports. Cyclists will be able to pick up a bell, use it for their ride, and drop it off at the box on their way out. This has been used successfully at other locations to reduce conflicts between bike users and those on foot or horseback. If this is successful at Oak Creek, it will be considered for implementation elsewhere throughout the forest.

We continue to work with our community partners to support efforts at creating a welcoming culture and friendly trail behaviors.

#### [Conflict Report from Needham and Rosenberger \(2011\)](#)

Needham, M. D., & Rosenberger, R. S. (2011). *Public support, demand, and potential revenue for recreation at the McDonald-Dunn Forest*. Final project report for Oregon State University College Forests and College of Forestry. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University, Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society.

<http://cf.forestry.oregonstate.edu/sites/cf/files/College%20Forest%20Final%20Project%20Report%20-%20Needham%20and%20Rosenberger%20-%20Final.pdf>