

Trail changes on tap

The Sisters Ranger District wants to decommission a section of road, reroute a section of road, redesign a portion of the Lower Canyon Creek campground, and construct a new trailhead parking lot to protect the Metolius River at the popular site in the Camp Sherman area.

According to a Forest Service scoping letter, "The existing condition of the Lower Canyon Creek Campground degrades the outstandingly remarkable values of the Metolius Wild and Scenic River and impacts the federally listed threatened bull trout and bull trout critical habitat."

As part of the redesign of the campground, the West Metolius trailhead would be relocated to a new site just outside of the riparian reserve area, but within the campground. A trailhead parking lot would be constructed. A short tie trail would be constructed between the new parking area and the old trailhead; half of the trail would be on a decommissioned road. Construction of the trailhead parking lot would require the felling of about 10 trees. Felled trees would be used as in-stream wood.

Makin' smoke...



PHOTO BY CEILI CORNELIUS

Fire crews touched off a prescribed burn near Crossroads last week to improve forest health and reduce fuels.

TREES: USFS will try to sell timber from roadside trees

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"If we can, if there's value left in them, we'll sell them," she said. "I don't want to leave a bunch of trees laying on the ground along the highway."

The problem became very evident last summer.

The Forest Service and ODOT reported last month that, as the trees began showing distress and started dying they conducted a joint analysis to determine the cause. The analysis indicated that the manufacturer of the herbicide Perspective®, which ODOT applied to the road shoulders within the highway corridor, originally stated it may harm susceptible trees,

but the label did not say it specifically would harm ponderosa pine trees. However, in 2012, additional language on the manufacturer's label was added specifically stating it would damage ponderosa pine trees.

ODOT has discontinued use of Perspective® where trees are growing.

Miller said there would be no action taken regarding the nature or use of the pesticide.

"Everybody was doing what they thought was right in good faith," she said.

There is no timeline yet for the removal of trees through the corridor. The Forest Service and ODOT assert that any removal of the trees will be done in a manner to minimize ground disturbance and maintain the scenic quality of the highway corridor.

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