

## Meadows plan ready

# New day lodge in proposal

by Sue Lafky  
Post editor

An expansion of the existing day lodge and a new day lodge located near Hood River Meadows are included in the Final Environmental Statement outlining future options in the Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Area Master Plan.

The plan, which has now gone to the Environmental Protection Agency for a review and final decision, was released last week by Mt. Hood National Forest Supervisor Dale Robertson.

The proposed plan was formulated from a combination of alternatives presented in the draft environmental statement and reflects comments made on the draft by individuals, organizations and agencies. There were 471 responses to the draft statement, according to the final statement.

Under the proposal, Mt. Hood Meadows will remain a day use area, eventually serving about 8600 people at one time, of which 8000 will be skiers. Current capacity is about 4500 people at one time. The plan does not call for the expansion of the present permit area.

However, the plan includes four new chairlifts, a chairlift to replace the existing beginner rope tows and an expansion of the existing day lodge.

A new secondary day lodge located near Hood River Meadows has also been proposed. The day lodge facilities will be designed to handle the skier capacity associated with chairlift No. 8 and a limited number of other winter sports users.

To accommodate the extra people, the plan proposes additional parking area, including a 4.5-5.3 acre parking lot near Hood River Meadows.

Meadows and a 2.8 acre overflow parking lot near the existing base area.

An optional parking lot to accommodate up to 800 additional other winter sports users (cross country skiers, snowshoers and snowplay) has been proposed for a spot near Hood River Meadows.

During hearings, some testifying expressed concern for traffic problems which would be associated with an increase in use. The proposed plan suggests a new overpass interchange at the junction of Highway 35 and the existing access road to Meadows to "help alleviate present congestion and safety problems."

The plan notes that construction of the interchange will depend on further engineering studies, coordination and approval by the state and federal highway departments and available funding.

"Full development of the above facilities will require alterations to the existing sewage treatment system and construction of a new treatment facility near the Hood River Meadows Lodge," the plan states. "A well will be drilled to supply water for the facilities located at Hood River Meadows. One additional maintenance building will be required at the existing base area."

The concept of having Mt. Hood Meadows as a year round recreational resort was not approved in the final environmental statement.

"We believe the Mt. Hood Meadows area has two serious limitations which would affect its success as a year round recreational resort," the statement notes.

The first limitation listed was a lack of summertime carrying capacity. The "area is a high elevation,

alpine and subalpine site with a short growing season, fragile soils and extreme weather conditions."

The plan noted that during the winter months, the area is well protected with a deep snow cover and "consequently, can withstand very heavy use with only minor environmental impacts."

In summer, however, "when the snow leaves, the area is much more susceptible to damage from overuse."

The statement continues: "It is concluded that the area can accommodate the expected increase in summertime dispersed recreation use but cannot withstand the additional heavy summertime use that would be brought about by making it a year round resort."

The second limitation noted in the Forest Service plan was a lack of diversity of summertime activities.

"Except for dispersed type activities such as hiking, climbing and viewing Mt. Hood itself, there are few other recreational activities to attract people during the summer and fall months," the plan says.

"To compensate for this natural limitation of the Mt. Hood Meadows area as a year round resort, it would require additional development for such activities as swimming, tennis, racketball, restaurants and convention facilities," the plan added.

"These kinds of nonforest type activities are viewed as having a lower priority for the use of National Forest land when conflicts result with a primary objective of the Mt. Hood Forest."

The proposed plan also rules out overnight accommodations at Mt. Hood Meadows at present.



THE MT. Hood Meadows final environmental statement is available for review at local Forest Service offices and at the Sandy Public Library.

(Post photo)

"Reconsideration of the overnight housing issue would be a major change from this plan and would require either a new environmental statement or a supplement to this statement," noted the proposal.

"A basic concept incorporated in the Mt. Hood Interagency Land Use Plan is that Government Camp should become the major center for mountain activities, providing housing and other services for all recreationists using the mountain," the plan continued.

"If this concept is followed, any future development of overnight accommodations at Mt. Hood Meadows should complement existing or potential development on private land."

The plan also lists impacts to soils, vegetation, wildlife, air quality and geology if the proposal is adopted.

The Forest Service environmental impact statement says soil impacts from lift and road construction will generally range from slight to moderate.

"Only a short portion of

Lift 15 reaches into a critical soil and may require extra attention to post-construction stabilization," the plan says. The proposal says the construction of proposed lifts and access roads could have "slight to low additional impacts on water quality and quantity."

"Construction of parking lots and other base facilities are expected to have moderate to high impact on water quality or quantity."

The construction of facilities as proposed in the master plan is "generally considered to have low to moderate impact on vegetation."

"The greatest potential for high impact to vegetation is in the Hood River base

are," the plan said.

For wildlife, the Forest Service predicted that impact to wildlife under the proposed plan would include displacement of elk use from Hood River Meadows area; significant impacts to sensitive wildlife such as cavity users, felids (cats) and specially classified species; significantly impact wintering fauna; and loss of wildlife diversity and natural ecosystem dynamics which would reduce the "value of the area for wildlife viewing and natural history study."

Copies of the proposals are available at the Sandy Public Library, Mt. Hood Forest Supervisor's Office in Gresham or at the Zigzag Ranger District Office.

## Sandy receives PGE check

The City of Sandy will receive \$18,217 this month from Portland General Electric Company for franchise fees paid for conducting business within the city during 1977.

Sandy is one of 13 Clackamas County cities receiving checks totalling \$5,701,482. Payments were due April 1.

PGE pays franchise fees to 55 cities in the seven counties in which it operates. Total payments to cities for this year is \$4,362,352. Base for

the total payment is 3 1/2 percent of PGE sales in those cities minus large industrial accounts and small percentage for uncollectibles.

Cities receiving franchise checks in Clackamas County include River Grove - \$1,808; West Linn - \$54,337; Wilsonville - \$22,896; Barlow - \$453; Estacada - \$17,838; Gladstone - \$46,159; Happy Valley - \$6,236; Johnson City - \$2,485; Lake Oswego - \$135,271; Milwaukie - \$135,178; Molalla - \$25,626; Oregon City - \$103,978.

## SUHS meeting postponed

The regular meeting of the Sandy Union High School Board has been postponed until Monday, April 17.

The regular meeting would have been held on Monday, April 10.

## Police led on wild chase

Police apparently were led on a wild goose chase through the Rhododendron area Tuesday after a Beaverton man reported being kidnapped to create an excuse for not showing up at work.

A Sandy police car, three Oregon State Police cars and a Clackamas County Sheriff's car were sent to the

area to find the car supposedly carrying a man who is said to have called a telephone operator to say he had been kidnapped.

The man was alone in his car when he was stopped three hours after the report was made.

State police said the man

claimed he had an argument with his girlfriend that delayed his leaving for work and that he reported the kidnapping to provide an excuse for his employers.

The man was not arrested, but police said he may be charged with filing a false police report.

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## Hoodland may issue permits

The possibility of issuing burning permits for residents of the Hoodland Fire District will be discussed by the Hoodland Fire Department Board of Directors at its 7:30 p.m. meeting on Monday, April 10.

Burning permits for the area are currently issued by the State Forestry Department.

Fire Chief Don Armintrout said the board directed him to prepare a proposal for the board's consideration. He said he's suggesting that the district issue permits for an indefinite period of time which would be subject to the daily burning regulations as set forth by the Department of Environmental Quality and the Oregon State Fire Marshall's office.

"These would be issued to permanent residents," he said. "We would issue 30 day permits to part-time residents."

The Oregon State Department of Forestry would handle permits needed for stump burning and land clearing, according to the chief.

## Correction

In last week's Post, a story on the high school budget said the budget includes \$49,500 for the purchase of a new school bus.

That money would be used to buy two buses and two other pieces of equipment for the district's transportation department, instead of just one bus.