

A CHANCE TO COMMENT



NOTICE OF RULE MAKING HEARINGS

Proposed Amendments to Deschutes River Recreation and Boater Pass Rules

SUBJECT: The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is holding two public hearings to accept comments on proposed rules affecting camping, designated campsites, vehicle size and capacity, swimming and floating in Moody Rapids on the Deschutes River and effective dates of Annual Deschutes Boater Passes. These proposed rules affect the lower 100 miles of the Deschutes River.

DATE	TIME	PLACE
June 17, 2003	7:00 PM	Oregon Parks and Recreation Department 1115 Commercial St NE Salem OR
June 18, 2003	7:00 PM	Jefferson County Senior Center 860 SW Madison St. Madras OR

THE ISSUES: OPRD manages the lower Deschutes River jointly with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, local governments and several other state agencies. These Deschutes managing agencies have jointly identified a need to better manage boating use levels on the Deschutes River through non-permit measures, better implement the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan, address recurring safety issues and enhance the enforceability of use level controls. The proposed rule amendments to Oregon Administrative Rules 736-040-0070 and 0071, are intended to address this need.

The proposed rules establish new definitions and provisions designed to address overnight camping, group size and occupancy of campsites, designated campsites, and reservation of campsites. These regulations affect all segments and especially segment 1. The proposed rules clarify existing vehicle size and capacity restrictions and address unsafe riding conditions on vehicles and on boats being transported on vehicles. In addition, the proposed rules prohibit swimming or floating through Moody Rapids with or without a floatation device during prescribed times. And the proposed rules also modify existing definitions and add new definitions to the boater pass rules. The proposed rules invalidate the use of annual passes on Saturdays and Sundays from May 15 through September 15 in segments 1, 2 and 3 and from May 15 through October 15 in segment 4.

Most of the proposed rule changes are intended as non-permit measures designed to help control boating use levels on the Deschutes River and avoid the implementation of a limited entry permit system. If adopted, it is expected the proposed rules would result

in the displacement of some boaters from peak use times, like summer weekends, to mid-week times, or from crowded river segments to uncrowded segments. Some of the proposed rule changes are intended to improve distribution on the river of camping and boating groups by designating boat in campsites and setting occupancy limits on campsites. These rules are intended to reduce resource and social impacts.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS: Where boat in campsites are designated, boaters may no longer be able to camp in familiar or favorite sites if that site is not designated. Groups that exceed the posted camper capacity for designated sites will have to split up, find a site of adequate capacity or occupy adjoining sites. Groups that exceed the designated campsite capacity or spread camping equipment outside the designated campsite boundaries will be subject to enforcement and citation. Individuals or small groups occupying large capacity sites may also be subject to enforcement. "Reserving" or "holding" campsites for later occupancy by leaving camping equipment or other boating gear at the site will not be allowed.

Annual pass holders will no longer be able to boat on summer weekends between May 15 and September 15 on segments 1, 2 and 3 or between May 15 and October 15 in segment 4 using their annual pass. They will be required to purchase the daily boater pass for those days. This will apply to all annual pass holders, including commercial guides, and will increase the cost of their boating activity, in some cases significantly.

Proposed rules affecting passengers riding in boats while being transported on a vehicle and persons swimming through Moody Rapids with or without a floatation device should improve public safety and reduce the likelihood of personal injury and property damage from these activities.

HOW TO COMMENT: Present your comments at the hearings or send written comments to:

Attn: Jan Houck
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
20300 Empire Ave.
Bend, OR 97701

THE NEXT STEP: The department will evaluate the public comments received and revise the proposed rules as necessary. The department intends to present the proposed rules to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission for adoption at either the Commission's September 2003 or November 2003, meeting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: For a copy of the proposed rules, visit the agency's website at www.prd.state.or.us/home.php or contact Tammy Baumann (503.378.4168 ext.293) at the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department or via Email at tammy.baumann@state.or.us.

NOTE: "The services, programs and activities of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) are covered by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. OPRD intends to comply with the ADA. If you are interested and need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact OPRD ADA Coordinator at (503) 378-4168, ext. 480 at least 72 hours prior to the start of the meeting."

OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
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