

**Decision Record**  
for the  
**Salt Caves Management Plan**  
**Environmental Assessment - OR-014-01-07**  
Lakeview District, Klamath Falls Resource Area

**DECISION**

My decision is to implement the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) of the Salt Caves Management Plan Environmental Assessment OR-014-01-07 with two changes from the alternative as described in the environmental assessment.

This alternative would involve implementation of Management Actions 1 through 16, which address Recreation/Visitor Use, Wildlife Management, and Cultural Resource Issues (refer to the environmental assessment for details). The following management actions and monitoring activities are approved:

Proposed Actions Addressing Recreation/Visitor Use

- 1) Increase the Buffer Area - Campfires would be prohibited in the caves and within the cave buffer area throughout the year.
- 2) Extend the Salt Caves Closure Period
- 3) Closure Signs - Update the information on the closure
- 4) Permanent Closure of Primitive Access Road on the hillside on the opposite side of the river from Salt Caves
- 5) River Ranger Patrol Continued
- 6) Revise Information Sent to Rafting Permittees
- 7) Request Recreational Guide Book Revisions to drop any reference to the Salt Caves
- 8) Monitor for Physical Changes to the Cave Resource
- 9) Remove evidence of recent human activity
- 10) Environmental Education

Proposed Actions Addressing Wildlife Management Issues

- 11) Bat Population Monitoring
- 12) Vegetation Management
- 13) Monitor for Peregrine Falcons on the cliff face

Proposed Actions Addressing Cultural Resource Issues

- 14) Monitor for unauthorized digging at SC-I and SC-II - Once a year, after the closure period has ended, inspect the cave floors and general vicinity for signs of unauthorized digging.

General Proposed Actions

- 15) Implement Bureau of Land Management's Cave Safety Standards
- 16) Update the Salt Caves Management Plan as necessary

Two additional management actions specific to Alternative 1 would be implemented including:

- Monitor human entry to SC-I and SC-II,
- Conduct vegetation photo-point monitoring

Actions of Alternative 1 described in the environmental assessment that are not approved:

- Gating of SC-I and SC-II - A separate decision to gate SC-I and SC-II may be made in the future, if results of monitoring indicate the need.
- Implementation of Seasonal Visitor Use Permits, would not take place.

If you need to review the EA again, you may find it at our office web site:

[http://www.or.blm.gov/Lakeview/Planning/kfraplans/2002\\_EnvironmentalAssessments/SaltCaves\\_EA\\_03\\_06\\_02.pdf](http://www.or.blm.gov/Lakeview/Planning/kfraplans/2002_EnvironmentalAssessments/SaltCaves_EA_03_06_02.pdf).

## MITIGATION

The timing for the set-up of monitoring equipment would take place during periods that would have the least impact possible on Townsend's big-eared bats. Standard techniques for minimizing disturbance to bats would be implemented during the monitoring efforts. Donna Howell, et al. 1996, describes such standards for Townsend's big-eared bats.

## DECISION RATIONALE

The proposed alternative provides a framework for monitoring, protecting, and maintaining the significant cave resources at Salt Caves. These include the Townsend's big-eared bat, cultural, mineral, geologic, hydrologic, and scientific resources. Based on actions over the past two years, current approaches to protecting cave resources have been somewhat effective. The proposed alternative includes additional monitoring and actions needed to assess the effectiveness of implementing management prior to, as a last resort, the placement of permanent cave gates. These actions meet the purpose and are in compliance with The Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988.

This decision considered public comments regarding the installation of cave gates to provide additional protection to bats from human activity. The placement of cave gates has issues including those associated with cultural resources and Native American use. Specifically, the Klamath Tribes and Shasta Nation have expressed concerns about the gates restricting free access to these caves by Tribal members for religious or spiritual reasons. In addition, the placement of cave gates could cause potential visual impacts within a section of river designated as "scenic" under the *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act*, and the potential for increased attention and disturbance to the caves due to the presence of gates. Consequently, the decision to install cave gates is deferred until monitoring results are analyzed and management actions are assessed to determine if they are effective.

The part of the decision to not include implementation of Seasonal Visitor Use Permits is based upon many issues. These issues include impacts on adjacent private land ownership, and the confusion to the public that would be created by implementing a seasonal permitting program. The permitting program would involve narrow time periods and would not be feasible to enforce given current staffing and funding levels.

## APPEAL PROCESS

A protest period was provided for the public to review the proposed decision prior to finalizing and publishing a decision record. That protest period was January to February 2003. No comments were received during the protest period.

Any party that feels they may be adversely affected by this decision may file an appeal. See the attached form (1842-1) for procedures that must be followed to take an appeal to the Department of Interior Board of Land Appeals.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Raby, Manager  
Klamath Falls Resource Area

9/4/03  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attachment

Form 1842-1 (April 2002)	<b>UNITED STATES</b> <b>DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR</b> <b>BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT</b>
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**INFORMATION ON TAKING APPEALS TO THE BOARD OF LAND APPEALS**

*DO NOT APPEAL UNLESS*

1. This decision is adverse to you,  
*AND*
2. You believe it is incorrect

*IF YOU APPEAL, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES **MUST BE FOLLOWED***

1. NOTICE OF APPEAL _____	Within 30 days file a <i>Notice of Appeal</i> in the office which issued this decision (see 43 CFR Secs. 4.411 and 4.413). You may state your reasons for appealing, if you desire.
2. WHERE TO FILE NOTICE OF APPEAL _____	<b>U.S. Department of the Interior</b> <b>Bureau of Land Management</b> <b>Klamath Falls Resource Area Manager,</b> <b>2795 Anderson Ave., Building 25,</b> <b>Klamath Falls, OR 97603</b>
ALSO COPY TO SOLICITOR _____	<b>Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region</b> <b>U. S. Department of the Interior</b> <b>500 N. E. Multnomah Street, Suite 607</b> <b>Portland, OR 97232</b>
3. STATEMENT OF REASONS _____	Within 30 days after filing the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , file a complete statement of the reasons why you are appealing. This must be filed with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Board of Land Appeals, 801 N. Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, Virginia 22203 (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.412 and 4.413). If you fully stated your reasons for appealing when filing the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , no additional statement is necessary.
ALSO COPY TO SOLICITOR _____	<b>Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region</b> <b>U. S. Department of the Interior</b> <b>500 N. E. Multnomah Street, Suite 607</b> <b>Portland, OR 97232</b>
4. ADVERSE PARTIES _____	Within 15 days after each document is filed, each adverse party named in the decision and the Regional Solicitor or Field Solicitor having jurisdiction over the State in which the appeal arose <b>must</b> be served with a copy of: (a) the <i>Notice of Appeal</i> , (b) the Statement of Reasons, and (c) any other documents filed (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.413). Service will be made upon the Associate Solicitor, Division of Energy and Resources, Washington, D.C. 20240, instead of the Field or Regional Solicitor when appeals are taken from decisions of the Director (WO-100).
5. PROOF OF SERVICE _____	Within 15 days after any document is served on an adverse party, file proof of that service with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Board of Land Appeals, 801 N. Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, Virginia 22203. This may consist of a certified or registered mail "Return Receipt Card" signed by the adverse party (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.401(c)(2)).

*Unless these procedures are followed your appeal will be subject to dismissal (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.402). Be certain that all communications are identified by serial number of the case being appealed.*

**NOTE:** *A document is not filed until it is actually received in the proper office (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.401(a))*

SUBPART 1821.2--OFFICE HOURS; TIME AND PLACE FOR FILING

<p>Sec. 1821.2-1 <i>Office hours of State Offices.</i> (a) State Offices and the Washington Office of the Bureau of Land Management are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records during the hours specified in this paragraph on Monday through Friday of each week, with the exception of those days where the office may be closed because of a national holiday or Presidential or other administrative order. The hours during which the State Offices and the Washington Office are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., standard time or daylight saving time, whichever is in effect at the city in which each office is located.</p>		<p>Sec. 1821.2-2(d) Any document required or permitted to be filed under the regulations of this chapter, which is received in the State Office or the Washington Office, either in the mail or by personal delivery when the office is not open to the public shall be deemed to be filed as of the day and hour the office next opens to the public.</p> <p>(e) Any document required by law, regulation, or decision to be filed within a stated period, the last day of which falls on a day the State Office or the Washington Office is officially closed, shall be deemed to be timely filed if it is received in the appropriate office on the next day the office is open to the public.</p>
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See 43 CFR Sec. 4.21 for appeal general provisions.