

## Proposed Kapka Butte Sno-Park Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is a new Sno-Park proposed at Kapka Butte instead of Dutchman Flat?

Some members of the public believe that the Kapka Butte is not the best location for adding winter recreation parking. They would prefer Dutchman Sno-Park be expanded because it is located at a higher elevation, is an already developed site, and provides access to existing trails.

The Forest Service heard these concerns and considered expanding Dutchman Flat Sno-Park, but decided it was not viable to expand Dutchman Flat Sno-Park to meet the increasing needs of winter recreationists for the following reasons:

- **User Conflicts:** In 1996, the Sno-Park Expansions Environmental Analysis evaluated the effects of enlarging Dutchman Sno-Park and concluded that significantly increasing the capacity of the existing site or constructing a new Sno-Park near Dutchman Flat would increase the potential for user conflicts at the Sno-Park. Those conclusions are still valid and no new circumstances exist that would trigger a change to that effects analysis.

A large parking lot is practical at the Kapka Butte location and would ease congestion in Dutchman Sno-Park during most of the winter recreation season. The elevation of the proposed parking area would allow for a longer winter use season than Wanoga and Edison Sno-Parks.

- **Congestion at Dutchman Flat:** A variety of winter recreational use in the Dutchman Flat area, including Mount Bachelor ski area, Nordic skiing, and snowmobiling creates congested conditions on the snow. Increasing parking at Dutchman Flat Sno-Park to accommodate 70-110 vehicles would exacerbate the current situation.

Kapka Butte Sno-Park is centrally located and recreational use from the Sno-Park would disperse into the Edison, Wanoga, Dutchman Flat, Tumalo Mountain, and Moon Mountain and high country areas. This dispersal of use would alleviate congestion in the Dutchman Flat area.

- **Inventoried Roadless Area:** The Bend Watershed Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) includes Dutchman Flat. The IRA boundary lies between 200 and 500 feet from Highway 97.

The Kapka Butte location would not impact any Inventoried Roadless Areas.

- **Scenic Values:** Dutchman Flat offers one of the most scenic summer and winter vistas offered along the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway.

The Kapka Butte location would have vegetated screening to protect the scenic views.

### How is Kapka Butte Sno-Park different than Wanoga or Dutchman Sno-Park?

- Given the higher elevation of Kapka Butte Sno-Park (5900 ft) the winter use season would be longer than the use season at Wanoga.
- The use season at Kapka Butte Sno-Park would be slightly shorter than the use season at Dutchman Sno-Park (6350 ft).

### **If Kapka Sno-Park is not constructed will the Forest Service pursue constructing a large Sno-Park on Dutchman Flat?**

- Not at this time. The existing environmental and social issues that caused the Forest to decide against constructing a large Sno-Park at Dutchman Flat in 1996 and to pursue planning for a large Sno-Park at Kapka Butte instead of Dutchman Flat in 2005 are still valid.
- The Deschutes National Forest will continue to assess Dutchman Flat and all Sno-Parks and may recommend changes in the future to improve the efficiency, capacity and safety of facilities to the extent that it is environmentally and socially sustainable.

### **Is Kapka Butte Sno-Park a good use of the Forest's recreation funds?**

- The Deschutes National Forest received a Federal Highway Administration Forest Highway Enhancement Project grant (\$461,000) for the planning, design and construction of Kapka Butte Sno-Park to address the desires of the community for improved winter recreation opportunities. If the Deschutes National Forest had not been awarded this grant, other areas would have received the grant from the Federal Highways Administration. The Deschutes National Forest believes that receiving this funding is a benefit to recreationists and the communities of Central Oregon.
- Kapka Butte Sno-Park provides the best opportunity to provide a large Sno-Park along the Cascade Lakes Highway at a higher elevation than Edison or Wanoga. Kapka Butte Sno-Park will serve the needs of motorized and non-motorized users, including those that want to recreate with dogs off-leash.
- In 2009 the Deschutes National Forest completed a Winter Recreation Sustainability Analysis. The analysis demonstrated that there was a need for additional parking capacity in the Cascade Lakes Highway area. Along with the expansion of Meissner Sno-Park (planned for 2012) Kapka Butte Sno-Park will address this need for winter parking capacity.
- The proposed Kapka Butte Sno-Park has been approved by the State of Oregon to be included in the State Sno-Park system. The Sno-Park system uses fees collected from Sno-Park permits to fund snow removal in Sno-Parks. Funding for this program can be tight dependent on the snowfall from year to year, and approval to add Kapka Butte Sno-Park to the program demonstrates that the State of Oregon sees public demand for the Kapka Butte Sno-Park.
- Kapka Sno-Park will not be gated in the summer. The parking lot may be used by hikers to access Kapka Butte or road bikers accessing the Cascade Lakes Highway. In the future, summer trails may be connected to the Kapka parking area.

### **How will recreation access to Dutchman Sno-Park Change?**

- No changes to Dutchman Sno-Park are proposed at this time.
- Both motorized and non-motorized users would be able to utilize the site during the winter season.