



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Prineville District Office  
3050 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Prineville, Oregon 97754



**AUG 30 2017**

In Reply Refer To:  
1210 (ORP000)

Arthur Pope  
Executive Director  
Wilderness Report  
33190 Bloomberg Road  
Eugene, OR 97405

Dear Mr. Pope:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the use of drones, off-highway-vehicles and aircraft within the boundary of the John Day Wild and Scenic River (WSR). I apologize for the delayed response to your letter.

First, please allow me to clarify that the Prineville District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages public lands along the John Day and the South Fork John Day (WSRs), each of which are designated as Recreational. Several sections of the North Fork John Day River, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, are designated as Wild.

The BLM manages the use of drones when they are on or immediately above BLM administered land. The use of drones is considered to be a type of motorized use and is managed according to BLM Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) regulations. Please see BLM Manual 1626 Travel and Transportation (TTM), Sep 27, 2016, Section 6.10, page 6-5 (excerpted below).

The 2015 John Day Basin Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) designated BLM administered lands within the John Day Basin as either Open, Closed or Limited to OHV use. (See Map 8, page 95.) Within the boundaries of the John Day WSR, the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are designated as Closed to OHV use, meaning motorized vehicle use is not permitted off of designated roads and trails. The RMP designated the non-WSA lands within the John Day WSR as Limited to designated roads and trails, some with additional seasonal restrictions.

Designated roads and trails within the John Day WSR were identified in the John Day Basin RMP Interim Travel Management Plan, Maps 9 and 10 (see links below). These maps show the designated roads or trails open or open seasonally to motorized vehicle use; these being the only locations where motorized vehicle use may occur. The river is not a designated route, therefore

the use of drones is not permitted on or immediately above the river itself. When on BLM administered land, aircraft are required to abide by restrictions governing motorized vehicles. The John Day Basin RMP prohibits the landing of aircraft on BLM-administered lands, other than designated routes, without prior BLM authorization.

The BLM requires a filming permit for individuals interested in filming commercial videos or motion pictures on public land. Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) informed the BLM that they were planning to film a news story for television and would not sell the footage. The District was unaware a drone would be used until we viewed the presentation on television.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



*Acting for*

Dennis C. Teitzel

Manager, Prineville District

Enclosure