

Trail Advocates

of the Clackamas River Ranger District of the Mount Hood National Forest

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Estacada News - article on Memaloose Road

Topic: Estacada News - article on Memaloose Road

Author: Robert Koscik

Topic Started: 11/5/2008; 12:11:36 PM

Last Posted: 1/6/2009; 11:04:06 AM

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Robert Koscik : 11/5/2008; 11:11:36 AM

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Enjoying outdoors comes with responsibility to protect natural areas

By abby lietz

The Estacada News, Oct 15, 2008, Updated Oct 15, 2008



Abby Lietz

File photo / Estacada News

National Forest lands have made and continue to make an indelible impact on the lives of the millions of us who've spent time there building and hiking trails, logging timber, photographing the sights, pulling invasives, planting new trees, testing water quality, riding mountain bikes, fishing the rivers and surveying roads, among hundreds of other experiences.

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At the forefront of each of these activities is safety — safety for the people working, volunteering and recreating — and care for the land itself.

That safety and care has been compromised in one area of the Clackamas River Ranger District where irresponsible target shooters have taken up residence, turning old quarries and spur roads on the 4500 Road, known as Memaloose Road, into potentially dangerous grounds for recreationalists, motorists and others who spend time in the canyon below and on lands nearby.

The problem has escalated to such a degree that a new way to manage this area is required, and the Forest Service needs the help of the public to make this effort a success for everyone.

Resource destruction in the Memaloose Road area is phenomenal, said Robin Wiley, law enforcement officer for Mt. Hood National Forest — this destruction demonstrated by dozens upon dozens of trees used as backstops or targets and now reduced to stumps, and shooting sites used as garbage dumps and landfills — but the most timely issue is human safety. When shooters decimate trees and vegetation or choose to shoot into open spaces with no backstop, their bullets are free to fly directly into the Clackamas River canyon where many people are recreating on the water, on trails and in campgrounds.

“A bullet went through a tent in a campground; the reason we’re doing this is for public safety,” said Wiley of an incident that occurred this summer and the pending restriction of shooting along an approximate seven-mile stretch up Memaloose.

Forest law enforcement officers, along with other district staff, the Clackamas County Sheriff’s Office, Bureau of Land Management law enforcement and volunteers with Clackamas County Dump Stoppers, are partnering with the community to first clean up these areas and then limit target shooting areas to places with backstops and limited plant life so that both people and the land are better protected.

Wiley said he expects the shooting area restrictions to be enforced later this fall and that anyone discharging firearms in the signed and designated unsafe areas will be subject to a charge of reckless endangering.

“We understand people like to go to the woods to target shoot for recreation. We’re not trying to close people down from shooting, we just want them to do it in a safe manner and are suggesting they go to gravel pits where there is a backstop,” Wiley said.

While cleaning up the shooting areas is an effort already underway by groups such as Dump Stoppers and individuals like Zac Keyes, an area Boy Scout who organized a cleanup of one shooting gallery that netted 4,400 pounds of garbage, the Forest Service is still working to educate folks on the pending restrictions and why they are necessary.

Wiley says that the dangerous shooting practices of individuals on Memaloose Road are, many times, cases of unknowing individuals, which makes outreach to the public regarding safety all the more important.

“Some people don’t know where their bullets are going,” Wiley explained. “Most people don’t take time to find out where the bullet goes. I told one guy who was shooting out into nothing and he just packed up and went someplace else.”

Wiley offers the following etiquette and safety tips for target shooters:

- Know your target and what’s behind it.
- Scout the area for other people who may be in the shooting range.
- Shoot in an area with a safe backstop.
- Pack out what you bring into the forest, including spent shells and targets.
- Avoid danger to others — it is the shooter’s responsibility to know where the bullet will impact.
- Use paper targets that are easy on the land — do not use glass, electronics or appliances.
- Do not shoot trees or place targets against trees.

The Forest Service will release more information on this issue in the near future and as plans develop. If you have questions or want to assist in cleanup or public education regarding Memaloose, contact Robin Wiley at the Clackamas River Ranger Station in Estacada at (503) 630-6861.

Together we can keep the forest a safe place for everyone.

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Re: Estacada News - article on Memaloose Road**JAKE** : 1/2/2009; 4:21:01 PMReads: 751, Responses: 1 ([↩ view responses to this item](#))

One thing to remember most the shooters in these locations are not from the local area. They just hop in their car and drive out to the woods as they see it with no regard for others. Maybe because they believe there is no others, way out in the middle of nowhere.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Estacada News - article on Memaloose Road****Robert Koscik** : 1/6/2009; 10:04:06 AMReads: 722, Responses: 0 ([↩ view responses to this item](#))

I'm sure that's true. The word is out "shoot up Memaloose!!!!!"

I've never had a problem with locals. Nothing but helpful folks.

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