

The Ochoco Mountains Fisheries



OREGON WILD

PROTECTING CENTRAL OREGON'S WATERSHEDS AND FISHERIES WITH A NATIONAL RECREATION AREA DESIGNATION.

North Fork Crooked River © Jim Davis

The health of the North Fork Crooked River and its tributaries have implications for fish all the way down the Deschutes to the Columbia River. The North Fork Crooked River and its tributaries flow through a variety of geological formations and plant communities, ranging from broad wet prairies to narrow basalt canyons with impressive rock formations. The lower North Fork offers a remote fishing experience in a rugged, undeveloped canyon, with incredible scenic vistas. A National Recreation Area designation for the Ochoco Mountains would protect and restore the outstanding fish and wildlife habitat of this secluded region, therefore strengthening the remarkable recreational opportunities for the adventurous angler.

Deschutes River Basin



Courtesy of the Deschutes River Conservancy

CROOKED RIVER WATERSHED

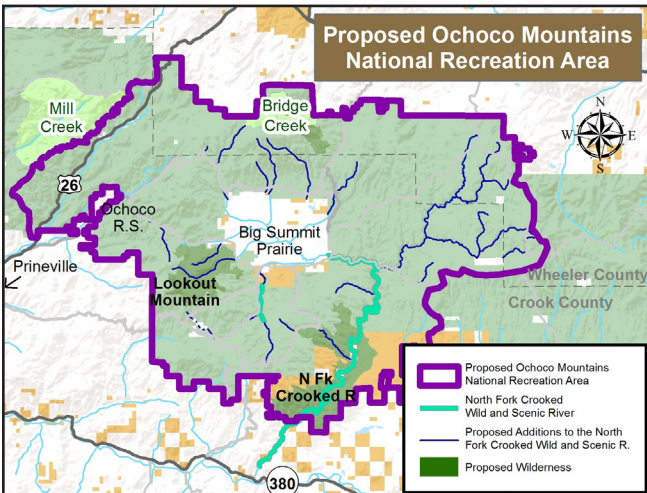
The Crooked River is the eastern-most tributary to the Upper Deschutes River, flowing approximately 155 miles from its headwaters to where it joins the Deschutes and Metolius rivers. The North Fork Crooked River and its tributaries, draining approximately 250 miles of river, are unique, rugged, picturesque, and vitally important components of the Crooked River Watershed and the entire Deschutes River Basin. Protecting and restoring the North Fork of the Crooked River and its associated tributaries with a National Recreation Area designation would encourage restoration of riparian areas. Restoration would increase and maintain shade for cooler water temperatures, encourage cold, plentiful, and consistent flows of water, reduce impacts from erosion, and so on. This would improve riparian areas, watershed health, and therefore fisheries and angling opportunities within the Deschutes River Basin.

NATIVE, WILD FISH

Native fish of the Crooked River Watershed include redband trout, mountain whitefish, and several species of non-game fish. Bull trout have historically utilized the lower main river for rearing and foraging as well. The North Fork and associated tributaries provide a quality outdoor experience for the fishing enthusiast. According to the Crooked River Basin Plan conducted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, redband trout populations appear to be surviving best in the North Fork Crooked River and its tributaries, compared with the remainder of the Crooked River Watershed. With restoration of riparian conditions, the North Fork Crooked River has a high potential to increase redband trout production and further bolster the angling opportunities.



SUPPORTING A NATIONAL RECREATION AREA DESIGNATION HELPS PROTECT AND RESTORE THE CROOKED RIVER WATERSHED, ITS NATIVE, WILD FISHERIES, AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE OCHOCOS.



This proposal would protect an additional 140 miles on 27 separate tributaries to the North Fork Crooked River with Wild and Scenic designations. The North Fork Crooked River and tributaries have significant out-of-stream water appropriation, leaving minimal in stream flow needs for aquatic habitat. Within the proposal area, beaver would be restored to a population that is sufficient to maximize water retention and watershed functions. Riparian zones and upland areas would be managed to meet state water quality standards, and habitat would be managed to improve conditions for all wildlife with emphasis on the redband trout.

Designating the Ochoco Mountains as a National

Recreation Area would protect and restore ecological, watershed, fish and wildlife and recreation values to this unique region of central Oregon.



Looking downstream from Upper Falls on the North Fork.