

2026 COMMERCIAL BOATER OUTFITTER/GUIDE PROSPECTUS

**Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Prineville District
Deschutes Field Office
October 2026**

This is an invitation to submit an application for a special recreation permit to provide river related commercial outfitter/guide services (including fishing services) on the Lower Deschutes Wild and Scenic River. Companies selected for permits will be issued a special recreation permit for the 2027 season. This packet includes the information necessary to complete an application.

Special Notes: There is no allocated use on the Lower Deschutes. Outfitters and Guides compete with the general public in a common pool system for boater passes. The common pool system for the Lower Deschutes will be administered through Recreation.gov. **This prospectus is for non-motorized use and awarded permits are not able to utilize the following boat ramps: Nena, Long Bend, and Wapinitia.** The Authorized Officer will review motorized use policies at a future time.

Submission Deadline: Applications must be received by the Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management no later than Friday, October 30th, 2026.

Submission Address: BLM - Prineville District
Attn: Katie Gosses
3050 NE 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754

Information Contacts: Katie Gosses 458-287-1786
Lead River Ranger
Outdoor Recreation Planner

**Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management
Prineville District – Deschutes Field Office
Lower Deschutes National Wild and Scenic River**



I. Introduction

The objective of this prospectus is to provide the public with additional opportunities for outfitted and guided experiences that are high-quality, safe, increase knowledge and skills of participants, promote the Leave No Trace land ethic, and meet BLM goals of land stewardship and resource protection. Through this prospectus, the BLM Deschutes Field Office seeks proposals that offer services to those recreating on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

This prospectus is soliciting for services to be provided on the Lower Deschutes River managed by BLM within the Deschutes Field Office. Use of private or other lands (including adjacent federal, state, county lands as well as Tribal lands) cannot be authorized through this prospectus with the exception of lands managed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

A. Background

The ability to conduct commercial services on BLM public lands is a privilege for which a permit is required. Section 302(b) of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate, through permits or other instruments, the use of the public lands, which includes commercial recreation use.

The BLM Prineville District currently manages an extensive and complex commercial special recreation permit (SRP) program on the Lower Deschutes Wild and Scenic River (LDR). The LDR is jointly managed by the BLM, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWSR), and State of Oregon (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department - ORPD). In 1993, a joint Wild and Scenic River Management Plan was signed by all three managing agencies (Lower Deschutes River Management Plan – LDRMP).

In 1997 a “Supplement to the Lower Deschutes River Management Plan” was signed and issued by the three managing agencies. In 1997, the managers who jointly issued the LDRMP implemented a limited entry system that would include the following criteria related to SRPs:

- The overall number of permits would not be capped.
- The number of new guide permits issued each year would not exceed 5% of the previous year's total guide numbers.
- Reduction in guide permits would be determined by market conditions.

B. Prospectus Overview

This prospectus is issued to solicit applications from individuals interested in providing commercially outfitted and guided river related activities on the Lower Deschutes River in segments one, two, three, and/or four. This prospectus is for SRPs associated with guiding and outfitting involving watercraft on the LDR.

This permit opportunity will be subject to guidelines and stipulations as outlined by the BLM Prineville District.

II. How to Apply

A. Application Materials

Please provide the required information in an easily identifiable format such as chapter headings, tabbed folder dividers, table of contents with numbered pages, etc. Unlabeled and extraneous information makes it challenging for the panel to locate pertinent information.

A complete application includes the following:

1. Cover Sheet (See included Cover Sheet).
2. SRP application, form 2930-1 (see Special Recreation Permit Application, not included in this packet).
3. Operating Plan (See included Operating Plan; additional pages may be added).
4. Business Plan (See included Business Plan Requirements).
5. Three professional reference letters (please submit **only three** professional reference letters-additional letters will not be considered. Form letters will count as one reference).
6. Written responses to the Rating Criteria.

Note: Please do not include privacy information such as copies of bank statements with account numbers, copies of tax returns and W-2 statements with social security numbers, or driver's licenses. As needed, information from these documents can be summarized in the above documents.

B. Submitting Applications

Applications may be mailed, or hand delivered to the Prineville District, Deschutes Field Office at the address on the cover page.

Applications, or portions thereof, will not be returned. Do not send or submit original documents from your files.

Incomplete or illegible applications will not be processed or considered.

III. Selection and Award

A. Selection Process

Permittees will be selected based upon the proposals and qualifications of the applicants within the 5% allowable limit of new permits annually. If the BLM determines there are no acceptable proposals or qualified applicants, no permits will be issued. The selection of the successful applicants will be based on the written materials submitted, oral interviews, and any other relevant information derived through reference and background checks. Oral interviews will only be utilized to break rating criteria scoring ties, if applicable.

The selected applicants will be the ones who, in the judgment of BLM, are the best qualified to operate and provide these public services, based on, but not limited to evidence gathered through the prospectus process (e.g., additional information derived through reference/background checks may be considered by the Authorized Officer). The BLM Authorized Officer will make the final selection. Note: *applicants may NOT offer, advertise, promote, or run trips under the business name on the application prior to being selected for a permit. Doing any of these actions could result in an application not being considered.*

Applicants will be screened using the following process:

1. The proposal package will be reviewed for completeness.
2. Proposals will be comparatively ranked, using the rating criteria scores (see section B. Rating Criteria below).
Total points available to an applicant are 100.
3. Permits will be issued to the applicants who have the highest number of points as determined by both the written rating criteria scores, the scores of the oral interviews (for rating criteria ties only), and based on any other relevant information derived through reference/background checks.

4. Applicants not selected will receive a decision letter denying their eligibility for obtaining a permit, and upon request may receive a summary of their rating.
5. Within 30 days of receipt of the decision, the non-eligible applicant will have the right of appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with regulations in 43 CFR 4.400. If an appeal is taken, the applicant must follow the procedures outlined in Form 1842-1, Information on Taking Appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (included with the decision letter). The appellant will have the burden of showing that the decision being appealed is in error.

B. Rating Criteria

This section describes how each proposal will be reviewed and evaluated by the panel, using the information submitted by the applicant. Valid, verifiable documentation is not a simple listing of trips, river locations, dates, and types of craft, nor is it letters of referral that simply comment on character or expertise. A list of trips must be accompanied by business documents (ledgers, calendars, daily diaries, or work planners) that specifically support the number of trips, types of boats, and locations where the use occurred. Letters of referral must contain the same kind of quantifiable information. For those rivers that require an agency permit (federal, state, or county), copies of the permit for each period of use, and agency use reports will be required to verify experience.

Some criteria require separate responses in writing. Please ensure that all written responses are clearly labeled as to what section they are in response to (e.g., 3. Type and Quality of Customer Service). Information may not be found or attributed to the correct question if not clearly labeled.

The selection will be based on the criteria described below, and will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Type and Quality of Customer Service (25 Points)

This section focuses on the kind and quality of the service proposed in terms of meeting public need. Applicants will be evaluated according to items listed in the Operating Plan, including: how the proposal meets the mission of the Bureau of Land Management; how the proposal provides education and interpretation of the natural environment; how the proposed operation will provide for a quality client experience (i.e., the type of operation, type of equipment, and how guests will be cared for); and how safety is provided for and what kinds of emergency/evacuation procedures will be implemented (this includes the type of communications that will be used). The following criteria/questions also apply:

- Document guiding business experience if you were the proprietor, including business name, tax ID number, location, years of operation, and if it is your current business.
- Document the number of clients served and include a current client list from current year of operation, as documentation that you operate a valid guiding business (client lists will be kept private and secure and will be returned at the end of the process).

Points will be awarded in the following manner:

- Meets multiple-use mission of Bureau to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations and BLM priorities such as creating jobs, supporting conservation and stewardship, and serving the American family (up to 3 points)
- Service interprets and educates clients about natural environment (up to 5 points)
- Provides quality client experience (up to 5 points)
- Application includes a written safety plan and trips promote a safe experience (up to 7 points)

- Documentation provided regarding business experience (up to 5 points)

2. Commercial Boating Experience (35 Points)

This section focuses on the applicant's commercial boating experience. This includes an evaluation of the applicant's response to items addressed in the Business Plan, Operating Plan and Special Recreation Application Form. In addition, include a detailed explanation of any experience relating to operation of an outfitting and guiding business and, more specifically, river operations that have included whitewater activities. Information should address the following items:

- Document the number of years that you have owned and operated a non-motorized boat for commercial operations in a river environment including the applicant's (and their staff's) experience and qualifications necessary to satisfy the proposed outfitting/guiding activity;
- Describe your whitewater outfitting and guiding operations and provide specific documentation including: business name; the number of trips made per year; dates; trip description (including class level); services provided; public served; locations (e.g. rivers and segments), and volume of business. Include the number of passengers in your boat and the months and year(s) the trips were made.
- Information regarding past performance, either through performance evaluations from agency representatives, customer survey reports, and/or letters of recommendation.
- Information demonstrating knowledge of the area, as well as educational and interpretive capacity.
- Knowledge of the river segment(s) in which the applicant is applying for (i.e., applicant must provide a description of the river segment, roads, trails, or other routes that will be used in their operation, as well as outlining pertinent rules specific to that segment, such as group size limits).
- Past permits issued by land management agencies and any violations issued by the US Forest Service, BLM, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, local law enforcement, or the Outfitter's Registration/ Licensing Board. Provide copies of any BLM/USFS/NPS permits currently held.

Points will be awarded in the following manner:

- Number of years documented that you have owned, operated, or worked for a commercial boating operation on the Lower Deschutes River (up to 10 points)
 - 5 points will be awarded for 1-3 years of experience.
 - 7 points will be awarded for 4-6 years of experience.
 - 10 points will be awarded for 7 years or more of experience.
- Number of years documented that you have owned, operated, or worked for a commercial boating operation in a river environment other than the Lower Deschutes (up to 10 points)
 - 5 points will be awarded for 1-3 years of experience.
 - 7 points will be awarded for 4-6 years of experience.
 - 10 points will be awarded for 7 years or more of experience.
- Have you held any federal or state outfitter/guide permits that have been suspended, revoked or terminated for cause in the last ten years (documented references may be checked)? 10 points if no suspensions, revocations or terminations in the last ten years. 5 points if no suspensions, revocations or terminations in the last five years.
- You have demonstrated knowledge of the Lower Deschutes River segment(s) you are applying for, as well as the rules and regulations which apply to it. (up to 5 points)

3. Financial Information, Business, and Operating Plans (15 Points)

This section focuses on the financial capability and demonstrated ability of the proponent to operate and maintain a successful outfitting and guiding business. Applicants are required to provide a complete set of all financial statements for the last three fiscal years; if possible, prepared or reviewed by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Any financial information submitted by applicants shall conform to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) or other comprehensive basis of accounting. Any previously prepared financial documents that are submitted must be un-redacted and in their original form, including footnotes. The business plan and all financial information and projections are confidential information and may not be released by the BLM, to the extent allowed in the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C 552 and 552a, respectfully.

If previous financial statements are not available, at a minimum, applicants need to answer and/or address the following statements:

- List your start-up expenses.
- List your sources of financing (cash, non-cash assets, loans, etc.) and uses of financing (working capital needs, e.g. buildings, equipment, salary, etc.).
- Develop a monthly cash flow projection (income-debt) for the first year.

Information provided within the Business and Operating plans will also be used to determine the financial capability and demonstrated ability of the proponent to operate and maintain a successful outfitting and guiding business.

Please note: The authorized officer for the BLM considers recreation conflicts in proposed use areas, the diversity of services offered to the public and whether the public land area available is sufficient to accommodate the proposed use. Therefore, some boat launches may not be authorized for new commercial use. In addition, if your business plans to use sub-contractors, you must list each sub-contractor on the Employee/Sub-Contractor/Booking Agent form and you must be familiar with all stipulations regarding subcontractors.

4. Stewardship (10 Points)

Have you participated in stewardship activities related to the river or riparian ecosystem? This can include donating time or services to get youth or people with disabilities on the water, participating in a clean-up or restoration of a river or riparian ecosystem. Reimbursed activities do not qualify (e.g., always have my clients clean up camp before we leave). Please provide examples and associated documentation which could include articles, photographs, letters of appreciation, etc. Proof of 1- 4 river-related stewardship activities will be worth five points. Proof of five or more river-related stewardship activities will be worth 10 points.

5. First Aid and Swift Water Rescue Experience/Certification (10 Points)

If responding 'Yes' to either of the following questions, include a photocopy of the dated certifications/completion certificates as documentation.

- Do you and/or your guide staff currently hold valid First Aid/CPR certification? (5 points)
- Are you and/or your guide staff currently trained in swift water rescue techniques, or hold a higher level of medical training than listed above? (5 points)

6. Increasing Access to Extended Outdoor Experiences for Youth (5 Points)

Do you currently provide programs that engage individuals 26 years of age or younger in the outdoors? If so, do you provide river related recreation/outdoor adventure opportunities for youth who might fall into the following categories:

- Students (with an emphasis on educational programs).
- Disadvantaged or Challenged youth (e.g., homeless, former offenders, etc.).
- Disabled youth.

Also provide the length/duration of the trips you offer. Increasing access to youth, especially those considered disadvantaged or under-resourced, is a priority for the BLM and Department of Interior and will be worth five points.

C. Award

Applicants awarded a SRP will be required to submit the following 30 days prior to the effective date:

1. Completed Special Recreation Permit, form 2930-2.
2. Proof of current Oregon State Marine Board Outfitter/Guide License.
3. Proof of insurance meeting BLM standards as defined in the terms, conditions, and stipulations.
4. Employee/Sub-contractor/Booking Agent list.
5. Statement of Ownership with Articles of Incorporation/Organization.
6. Advertising and Price list.
7. A signed copy of the Deschutes Field Office SRP Policy, which includes SRP Terms, Conditions, and Stipulations.
8. Payment of 2026 advance use fee in the amount of \$130.

Permits issued as a result of this prospectus shall initially be for a two-year term. The decision on whether to renew the permit after the first two years will be based on the following criteria:

1. Compliance with the terms, conditions and stipulations attached to the permit, including the annual operating plan.
2. Compliance with Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and permits.
3. Providing an adequate service to the public (i.e., meeting the minimum use requirement).
4. A record of positive contacts/relationships with other permittees and public users.

The permit is issued in probationary status for two years even if performed at an acceptable level in year one. Two consecutive years in probationary status are required by BLM policy. If the permittee operates at the “successful” level during the first and second years, a multi-year permit will be considered at the start of year three.

Please be aware that a Lower Deschutes River permit has minimum use requirements. Minimum use is a total of 10 paying client trips or 40 paying client user days per year. Awarded permittees cannot allow another entity to operate under the authorized permit to meet minimum use. Failure to meet minimum use may result in probationary status and/or cancellation of permit privileges.

DEFINITIONS

Additional Insured – A person or entity, other than the named insured, that is added to the insurance policy, often through an endorsement, and that has the same coverage as the named insured under the policy. In the case of special use authorizations, the additional insured is the United States Government or BLM.

Aggregate Limit – The maximum amount of coverage for third-party property damage or personal injury, under a liability insurance policy during the term of the policy (which is usually one year), regardless of how many separate incidents of third-party property damage or personal injury occur during that period.

Authorized Officer - Any employee of the BLM who has been delegated the authority to perform the duties described in this operating plan and related resource management regulations.

Authorized Outfitters or Permittees - Those individuals, companies, or corporations who hold a current BLM Special Recreation Permit to conduct commercial activities in the regulated area.

Commercial Use - The use of public lands and related waters for business or financial gain.

When any permittee, employee, or agent of a permittee, operator, or participant makes or attempts to make a profit or salary, increase his capital worth, advance or promote his business or financial standing, or supports, in any part, other programs or activities from amounts received from or for services rendered to customers or participants in the permitted activity, as a result of having the Special Recreation Permit, the use will be considered commercial.

The collection by a permittee or his agent of any fee, charge, or other compensation which is not strictly a sharing of, or is in excess of, actual cost or expenses incurred for the purpose of the activity or use shall make the activity or use commercial.

Any person, group or organization seeking to qualify as noncommercial shall have the burden of establishing to the authorized officer that no financial or business gain will be derived from the proposed use.

Guide – Generally, employees who perform guiding services for an authorized outfitter. The rental of equipment alone does not constitute outfitting and guiding services.

Outfitter – see Authorized Outfitters or Permittees.

Permitted Public Lands – Those lands and related waters of the Lower Deschutes River as listed in the operating plan.

BUSINESS PLAN REQUIREMENTS

A business plan is essential in starting a business, improving a business, and giving a detailed view of the business. BLM requires each prospective permit holder to provide a business plan before a permit will be authorized. Low-cost assistance and training in preparing a business plan is available through Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) located throughout the United States. Local SBDC's can be located through the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) at www.sba.gov.

Although a complete business plan as described by the SBA is recommended the minimum requirements for the business plan being requested are as follows:

1. Documentation of the business, company, or organization.
2. Description of past business experience related to outfitting river trips (or any other business experience if none of the latter).
3. A geographical analysis.
4. A market analysis.
5. Benefits to public lands recreation.
6. A statement of financial resources.

Documentation of the Business, Company, or Organization

Applicants need to include information about the business including its purpose and goals, a description of the business, the legal structure of the business, the location of the business, and the marketing strategy of the business. At a minimum, answer and/or address the following statements:

- What is the purpose in pursuing this business (i.e. what is your mission statement)?
- Define your business goals for the next year and what you foresee five years from now.
- Briefly describe the business, your knowledge, and the services you will provide, including type of trip, length of trips, launch points/take-outs.
- Identify the designated permit agent, including their contact information.
- Describe how your company is legally organized (sole proprietorship, corporation, LLC)?
- Include any appropriate information including shareholder or partnership agreements, and a complete list of the owners.
- Describe the location of your business, and if not local, describe what your process would be in overcoming local problems that might arise in your day-to-day river operations (i.e. loss of a head guide, equipment issues, etc.).
- Describe your anticipated target market (e.g. age, income, hobbies, regional, national, international, etc.).
- Discuss your advertising campaign in terms of how, when, and where you will advertise, and estimate your annual cost.

Description of Past Business Experience related to Outfitting Services

Applicants need to provide a detailed description of their experience as it relates to outfitting and guiding of river trips. If no experience in outfitting and guiding of river trips exists, then describe any past business experience. At a minimum, applicants need to answer and/or address the following statements:

- The dates of your business experience.

- The location of the business experience.
- A description of the services provided.
- A description of the customers served.
- The number of employees supervised.
- The volume of business.
- Business references.

Financial Resources

A critical component of a business plan is a financial statement. Any financial information submitted by applicants should conform to generally accepted accounting principles or other comprehensive bases of accounting. The business plan and all financial information and projections are confidential information and may not be released by the BLM, to the extent allowed in the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C 552 and 552a, respectfully. At a minimum, applicants need to answer and/or address the following statements:

- List your start-up expenses.
- List your sources of financing (cash, non-cash assets, loans, etc.) and uses of financing (working capital needs, e.g. buildings, equipment, salary, etc.).
- Develop a monthly cash flow projection (income-debt) for the first year.

Operating Plan (Revised for prospectus October 2026)

Prineville District BLM Special Recreation Permit

☐ Deschutes ☐ John Day ☐ Crooked River SRP# _____

Operating Plan must accurately identify all uses and activities, areas, seasons of the operations and other details associated with proposed use of public land. Information must be complete, and all proposed services, facilities and dates described fully. Submission of incomplete Operating Plans may result in processing delays, and/or rejection of the permit.

1. Company information:

Registered Business Name or LLC: _____ Phone # _____

Name of Business Owner: _____

2. Proposed services narrative:

- ☐ New Permit Application ☐ Operating Plan is being submitted with Permit Renewal or transfer
☐ Modification of existing Operating Plan

Describe the services you propose to provide on public land. **For each proposed activity, indicate river segment, specific launch and take-out points, duration of trip, party size and average price per trip.** Use additional sheets if needed.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

3. Proposed services, river use and activities checklist.

Describe checked services in section 2 above. This is not an all-inclusive list of services that can be offered.

☐ Guided Float Trips ☐ Guided Fishing Trips ☐ Equipment Rental ☐ Motor or Jet boat trips ☐ Walk-in Trips

☐ Transportation/Shuttle ☐ Photography ☐ Instructional ☐ Services for disabled ☐ Competitive event

☐ Day Use ☐ Overnight Use ☐ Other (describe in Section 2) _____

4. What type of equipment do you own and operate?

☐ Oar Boats _____ (quantity) ☐ Paddle Rafts _____ (quantity) ☐ Drift Boats _____ (quantity)

☐ Kayaks _____ (quantity) ☐ Motor or Jet boats _____ (quantity) ☐ Catarafts _____ (quantity)

☐ Paddle Boards (SUPS) _____ (quantity) ☐ Other _____ (describe/quantity)

4. Will you use sub-contractors?

☐ YES ☐ NO If yes, you must list each sub-contractor on the Employee/Sub-Contractor/Booking Agent form and you must be familiar with all stipulations regarding subcontractors on the back of Permit Form 2930-2 and in the current “Guidelines for Use of Rivers in the Prineville District”.

5. Watercraft Identification (LOGO)

A permittee may have a maximum of one logo which represents the permitted business or

LLC. Attach a sample of graphic logos. Logo:

6. Food:

Will you set up kitchen facilities? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, will your kitchen contain: ☐ Stove ☐ Fire pan* ☐ Charcoal* ☐ Other (describe)

8. Sanitation Facilities: Describe human waste system (brand) and disposal methods*

9. Describe client “Leave No Trace” education and supervision:

10. Describe your dishwashing procedures:

11. Safety and Rescue Check items carried on each trip.

- ☐ First Aid Kit* ☐ Sounding Device/Whistle* ☐ InReach/Satellite Phone ☐ Life jackets* ☐ Pump for inflatable
☐ Throw-rope ☐ Fire Extinguisher/Shovel ☐ Extra oar/paddle ☐ Repair kit ☐ Pin Kit (webbing, pulleys, prussiks)

12. Other SRPs Held with BLM, USFS, or NPS

Business Name _____ **SRP #** _____ **TYPE** _____

Location _____

I certify the information given by me in this proposed Operating Plan is true, accurate, and complete. I acknowledge that I (we) am (are) required to comply with requirements and stipulations on Permit Application Form 2930-1, Permit Form 2930-2, and stipulations which are contained in the current “Guidelines for Commercial Use of Rivers in the Prineville District”. I understand that providing false information or failure to keep this Operating Plan or other permit requirements up to date is grounds for probation, suspension or cancellation of the permit. Operating plan must be signed by the permit representative listed on Permit Form 2930-2. This Operating Plan must be approved by BLM.

Name (print) _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

☐ **Approved** ____/____/____ **by:** _____ (Name and title of BLM Representative)

*Indicates Restricted or Required use. See current “Guidelines for Commercial Use of Rivers in the Prineville District” for details.

2026 PROSPECTUS APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone #: _____