

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Klamath County Transportation System Plan (TSP) will help to guide the development of existing transportation facilities and the funding of transportation facilities over the next 20 years. This TSP constitutes the Transportation Element of the County's Comprehensive Plan and satisfies the requirements of the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) established by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) upon adoption by Klamath County. This TSP identifies and prioritizes transportation projects for inclusion in the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Klamath County Capital Facilities Plan.

PLANNING AREA

This 2009 Klamath County TSP includes plans for maintaining and upgrading the primary transportation modes in the county. The planning area for the Klamath County TSP is generally outside the Klamath Falls Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and is shown on **Error! Reference source not found.** Transportation facilities included in this TSP fall under several jurisdictions, including the County, the State of Oregon, the United States Forest Service (USFS), the National Park Service (NPS), the National Wildlife Service (NWS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR).

Klamath County is located in south-central Oregon; it is the fourth largest county in the state, encompassing 6,135 square miles in total area, with a population in 2004 of approximately 64,800.¹ Klamath Falls is the largest city in the county, with a population of 20,190; other incorporated communities include Bonanza, Chiloquin, Malin, and Merrill. The county is bordered by Deschutes County to the north; Lake County to the east; California to the south; and Jackson, Lane and Douglas Counties to the west.

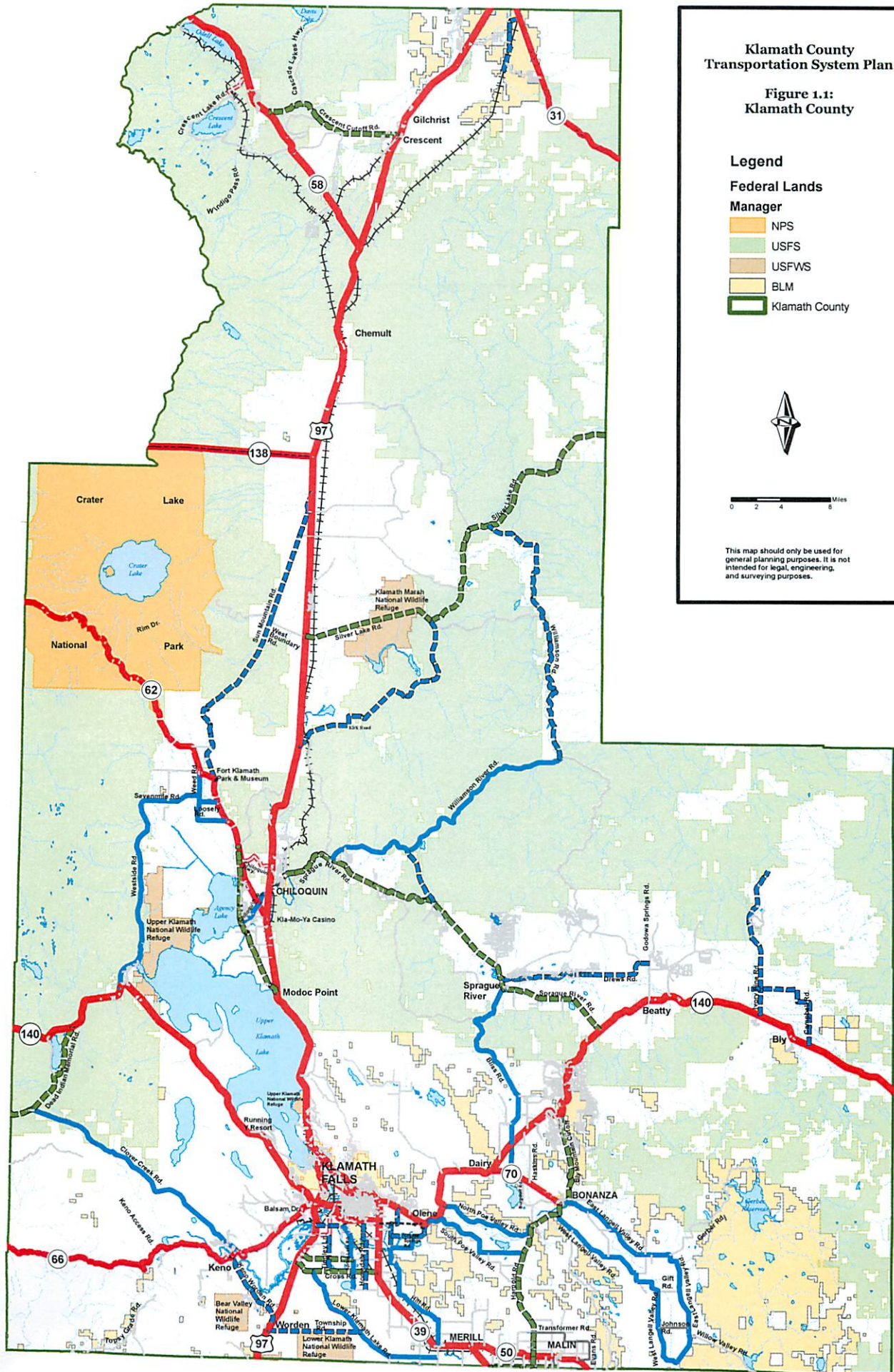
The Klamath Basin supports substantial agricultural and ranching industries. The wood products industry, and manufacturing, service, and technology sectors have helped diversify the local economy. Tourism is an emerging industry in the county due to the region's natural beauty and the proximity of attractions such as Oregon's only national park, Crater Lake National Park, plus Lava Beds National Monument, three national wildlife refuges, and area resorts.

¹ Portland State University Center for Population Research and Census.

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Klamath County
Transportation System Plan

Figure 1.1:
Klamath County



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The primary routes through the county are US Highway 97 (The Dalles-California Highway #4) and Oregon Highway 140 (Lake of the Woods Highway #270; South Klamath Highway #424; Klamath Falls Lakeview Highway #20). US Highway 97 (US 97) runs north-south through the entire county; Oregon Highway 140 runs east-west connecting Klamath Falls to Medford and I-5 (west) and Lakeview (east). Other highways in the county are described below:

Oregon Highway 39

(Klamath Falls- Malin Highway #50 and #426) generally runs north-south connecting Klamath Falls to Merrill and connecting to California. The Klamath Falls – Malin Highway connects from Highway 39 (#50) to the community of Malin.

Oregon Highway 138

(East Diamond Lake Highway #425) connects from the junction of Oregon Highway 230 near Diamond Lake. The highway runs east-west along the north side of Crater Lake National Park and connects to US 97. **Oregon Highway 62** (Crater Lake Highway #22) begins at the southeast border of Crater Lake National Park and connects the community of Fort Klamath to US 97.

Oregon Highway 70

(Dairy – Bonanza Highway #23) begins at the Dairy junction on OR 140 east of Klamath Falls and connects to Bonanza.

Oregon Highway 66

(Green Springs Highway #21) runs east-west connecting Klamath Falls to I-5 near Ashland.

Oregon Highway 58

(Willamette Highway #18) runs east-west connecting US 97 in northern Klamath County to I-5 near Eugene.

Chiloquin Highway 422

Runs east-west connecting OR 62 across US 97 to the community of Chiloquin.

Other transportation options in Klamath County include Basin Transit Service, Amtrak passenger rail service, commercial airline service at Klamath Falls International Airport and private bus and taxi service.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Klamath County TSP establishes the county's direction in developing its transportation system for a 20-year horizon. The TSP evaluates existing and future needs, and identifies improvements to meet those needs. It is intended to serve as a master plan to guide transportation investments as development occurs in the county, to improve mobility throughout the county, and to balance transportation needs and improvements over the next 20 years. The TSP includes the necessary Comprehensive Plan amendments and supporting ordinances to implement the TSP.

The Plan includes transportation issues related to the incorporated cities of Chiloquin, Bonanza, Merrill and Malin; the TSP also addresses proposed capital investments in rural communities including:

- Beatty
- Beaver Marsh
- Bly
- Chemult
- Crescent
- Crescent Lake
- Fort Klamath
- Dairy
- Gilchrist
- Keno
- Midland
- Rocky Point
- Sprague River

Overall, the TSP includes transportation issues related to state and county facilities, and not city facilities. However, this TSP attempts to identify projects that are beneficial to all agencies.

The Klamath County TSP satisfies the planning requirements of Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 12 and the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR). The TSP follows the ODOT *Transportation System Planning Guidelines*, including development of a balanced transportation system; the TSP process has consisted of four fundamental steps:

1. Analysis of existing conditions,
2. Assessment of future needs,
3. Creation of a draft TSP document and identification of code revisions, and

4. Finalization of the TSP.

During the development of the TSP, The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) guided the planning process through five (5) meetings. The Committee consisted of county staff, ODOT Staff, Basin Transit Service, elected and appointed county officials, residents, and members of Klamath County's business community. A series of public meetings also was conducted, which allowed citizens to provide input regarding the county's future transportation network. This feedback has proven invaluable in creating a TSP that will not only satisfy the State TPR requirements, but also meet the needs of the stakeholders it supports.