



# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

## Hazardous Fuels Reduction Demonstration Project in the Wildland-Urban Interface

The Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently developing a proposal for a hazardous fuels treatment demonstration project in the wildland-urban interface in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM).

### Background

The CSNM was reserved in June 2000 by presidential proclamation in recognition of its remarkable ecology and to protect a diverse range of biological, geological, aquatic, archeological and historic objects. The BLM manages the CSNM in accordance with the direction in the 2008 Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The RMP grouped the monument into two “emphasis areas.” The grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, semi-wet meadows and meadows make up the Diversity Emphasis Area (DEA) and the mixed conifer and white fir plant communities make up the Old-Growth Emphasis Area (OGEA). The wildland-urban interface (WUI) is an area within the CSNM surrounding several thousand acres of private land in the Greensprings community.

The WUI is comprised of both OGEA conifer forests and interspersed DEA plant communities.

Effective fire suppression efforts over the past 100 years have significantly influenced the mixed conifer communities and pine forests in the OGEA, resulting in a shift toward

dense stands of white fir and Douglas-fir at the expense of sugar pine, ponderosa pine, and incense cedar. Tree growth rates have slowed, and the understory composition of stands has shifted to predominantly white fir. In the DEA, fire exclusion has influenced many of the fire-dependent plant communities, creating a preponder-



*Proposed treatment area with dense white fir understory.*

ance of older-aged shrub stands. In addition to altering the historic structure of forest stands and fire dependent plant communities, fire exclusion has created conditions that support higher fire intensities than would have been common historically. Excessive ground and ladder fuels have increased the potential for stand replacement events.

As part of the National Fire Plan, the Oregon Department of Forestry identified the Greensprings as a “community at risk” for wildland fire spreading from public to private lands. Likewise, resources in the CSNM are also at risk from fires that originate on private land.

The CSNM RMP identified treatments in the WUI to restore ecological integrity and lower fire hazard as the highest initial treatment priority in the OGEA. One of the primary management objectives identified in the RMP is to protect monument resources from fires originating on adjacent private lands and to reduce the risk of wildland fires spreading to residential properties. Part of this objective includes reinforcing fire hazard reduction activities on private lands by reducing fire hazard on adjoining monument lands. Many of the private landowners in the Greensprings community have recently completed fire hazard reduction activities on their lands.

### What is Being Proposed?

The demonstration project would reduce hazardous fuels in six different locations within the WUI in the CSNM. Treatments may include prescribed fire (hand-pile burning and underburning) and thinning. The six demonstration units total 91 acres (Table 1) and are

### Dates to Remember:

- **November 1<sup>st</sup>:** Field Tour-Pinehurst School, 10:00 a.m.
- **November 28<sup>th</sup>:** Last day to submit scoping comments to BLM.



spread throughout the WUI (Map 1), generally adjacent to private lands that have recently been treated to reduce fuels.

**Table 1. Proposed Demonstration Units.**

Unit	Location	Legal Description	Acres
1	Airport North	40S-4E-5	10
2	Airport South	40S-4E-7	10
3	Corral Creek Road	40S-3E-1	10
4	Keene Creek	40S-3E-11	40
5	Prairie Canal	39S-3E-35	10
6	Hyatt Lake	39S-3E-15	11

These demonstration units would be the BLM's first step in completing the overall community wildfire protection strategy. We are starting with small demonstration units in order to show the community and others interested in the CSNM the results of these kinds of fuels reduction treatments prior to planning these activities on a larger scale in the WUI. Results from monitoring this demonstration project will be used in designing and implementing similar projects in the future. Treatment goals include restoring forest structure; reducing seedling and pole-size tree density; reducing accumulations of downed material, removing ladder fuels; and promoting desired species by thinning around individual pine trees or groups of pines.

## How Can You Participate?

The BLM is planning a field tour of the demonstration units on November 1, 2008. Questions, suggestions and discussion on how to treat these stands to best provide conditions to withstand wildfire and reduce the intensity and harmful effects of wildfire in the vicinity of private lands are welcome and encouraged. The tour will depart from the Pinehurst School at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>. Please

wear appropriate attire for fall weather conditions and bring a lunch.

We are now in the scoping phase of the environmental analysis under NEPA. This means that any comments you have and choose to submit will be used to develop issues, mitigation measures and alternatives.

We welcome ideas on potential methods for achieving hazardous fuels reduction in the WUI. Comments that clearly articulate site-specific suggestions, issues or concerns are the most useful.

Comments, including names, street addresses, and other contact information of respondents, will be available for public review at the Medford District Office of the BLM. Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you are advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Although you will be provided with an additional opportunity to make further comments upon completion of the environmental assessment, we are requesting your input now

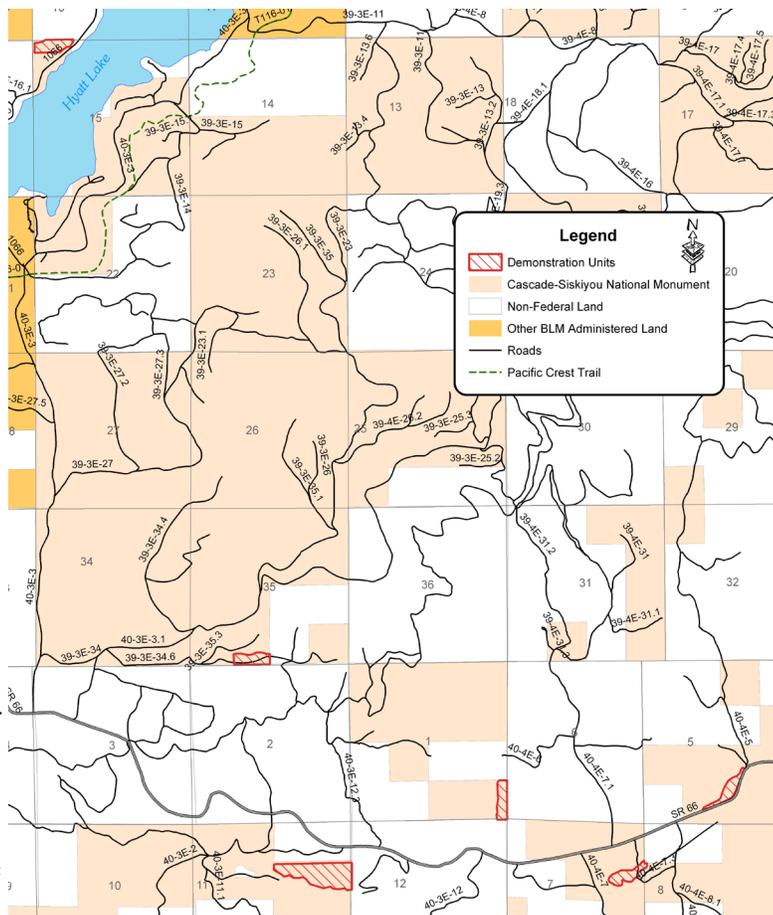
so that it can be considered early in the planning process.

Please submit your comments by Friday, November 28, 2008. Your comments should be mailed to John Gerritsma at the following address.

**Bureau of Land Management  
Medford District Office  
Ashland Resource Area  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 97504  
Attention: John Gerritsma**

## Who Should You Contact for Technical Information on this Project?

Kevin Kocarek is the Interdisciplinary Team Leader for this project. Please feel free to contact Kevin at (541) 618-2261 if you need clarification or additional information.



Map 1. Hazardous fuels reduction demonstration units in the WUI.