



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
email address: or110mb@or.blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO  
1614(OR115)

DEC 21 2005

Dear Sir, or Madam:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Butte Falls Resource Area, is proposing forest management and hazardous fuels reduction projects in the Evans Creek and Rogue River/Sardine Creek Watersheds. The proposed project area is on BLM administered lands in Township 32 South, Range 2 West, Section 33; Township 33 South, Range 2 West, Sections 5, 7, 9, 17, 19, 29, and 31; Township 34 South, Range 2 West, Sections 5, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 26, 27, and 33; Township 34 South, Range 3 West, Section 35; Township 35 South, Range 3 West, Sections 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19 and 20; Township 35 South Range 4 West, Section 13; Willamette Meridian, Jackson County, Oregon (See attached Map 1 and 2).

## **Why is BLM developing the Musty Sardines Forest Management Project?**

Conifer forest stand densities directly affect individual tree growth, vigor and the ability to maintain a forest stand for sustained timber production. Many of the conifer forest stands in the project area are overstocked for the site capabilities (soil, aspect, moisture, etc). Competition for water and nutrients in overstocked forest stands reduces tree vigor making them susceptible to dying from insect attacks, drought, and uncharacteristic fire.

The BLM has developed a preliminary forest management proposal to meet the following objectives:

- Improve conifer forest vigor and growth.
- Reduce individual tree mortality.
- Promote development of healthy late-successional characteristics in riparian reserves.
- Improve hazardous fuels conditions.
- Provide forest products, as stipulated in the Medford District's *Resource Management Plan (RMP)*.

The BLM is considering commercial forest management on 2,386 acres and hazardous fuels reduction on 1,250 acres. "Commercial" activities have a product that can be removed and sold, such as saw logs. Hazardous fuels reduction would generally cut smaller material with little economic value. Material is typically piled and burned or removed for biomass. Biomass consists of all vegetative materials grown in forest, woodland, or rangeland environments that are the by-products of management, restoration, or fuel reduction treatments (historically non-utilized or

under-utilized material). To meet the objectives described above, the Musty Sardines forest management project will treat selected forest stands using a combination of silvicultural prescriptions, such as commercial thin, selection harvest and regeneration harvest on Matrix lands and density management in Riparian Reserves. These prescriptions are based on direction provided by the Medford District RMP (pg. 187-194) for Matrix lands within the General Forest Management Area. Prescriptions are tailored to the topography and desired long-term goals for each forest stand type present in the project area. These treatments could be accomplished through one or more commercial timber sales. Commercial forest treatments also include follow-up logging slash treatments to further reduce hazardous fuels. Three methods for removal of commercial timber are proposed: tractor/ground-based systems, cable/skyline systems, and helicopter.

A portion of BLM administered lands in the Project Area is governed by the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act). Under the O & C Act, sustainable timber production is the primary purpose for management of these lands. The Medford District Resource Management Plan (1995) incorporates this mandate for O&C lands and allocates portions of public lands in the Project Area for timber production. Timber products resulting from forest management activities on O & C lands are to be sold in support of the District's Allowable Sale Quantity to meet Timber Resource Objectives in the Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) (p.17, 72-73).

Watershed Analysis for the Evans Creek Watershed was completed in four separate Watershed Analysis documents: Mid Evans (1994), Lower Evans (1995), West Evans (1995) and East Evans (1996).

### **What Happens Next?**

At this time, the BLM would like to hear any comments, issues, or concerns helpful in shaping or further developing the project proposals. Comments clearly articulating site-specific issues or concerns are the most useful. While BLM does recognize people place different values on various resource use on public lands, opinions agreeing with or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action. Your initial comments will be most beneficial if they are received by January 23, 2005. (Comments will be accepted and reviewed up until the time a final decision is made on the project.)

Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart B, Section 1.27, all written submissions in response to this notice will be made available for public inspection including the submitter's name and address, unless the submitter specifically requests confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, submitted on official letterheads, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organization or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. The BLM will be

preparing extensive written documentation of the project proposals and the environmental effects. This will be distributed to the public through the Musty Sardines Forest Management and Fuel Reduction Project Environmental Assessment (EA). When the Musty Sardines EA has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments. We are contacting you at this stage of planning so your concerns or ideas can be considered early in the development of the project proposal. If interest is sufficient, the BLM may also schedule a field trip to the project area.

For more information concerning the Musty Sardines Forest Management and Fuel Reduction Projects, you may contact Jean Williams; (541) 618-2385 or John Bergin; (541) 618-2265, or you may send your written comments to Bureau of Land Management, Medford District, Butte Falls Resource Area, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon 97504. Comments may also be emailed to [or110mb@or.blm.gov](mailto:or110mb@or.blm.gov). Be sure to include "Attention: Jean Williams" in your email.

If you would like to be kept informed about Musty Sardines Forest Management and Fuel Reduction Projects, please fill out and return the attached "Interest Response Form" and you will be placed on the mailing list for this project.

Sincerely,



Christopher J. McAlear  
Field Manager  
Butte Falls Resource Area

**3 Attachments:**

- Attachment 1 - Location Map, Map 1 (1pp)
- Attachment 2 - Interest Response Form (1pp)
- Attachment 3 - Project Area, Map 2 (1pp)

**Attachment 2**

**INTEREST RESPONSE FORM**

**Attn: Butte Falls Resource Area Planning  
Bureau of Land Management  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 97504**

Please include me on the following project mailing list:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Musty Sardines Forest Management and Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects**  
(As described in the letter above)

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

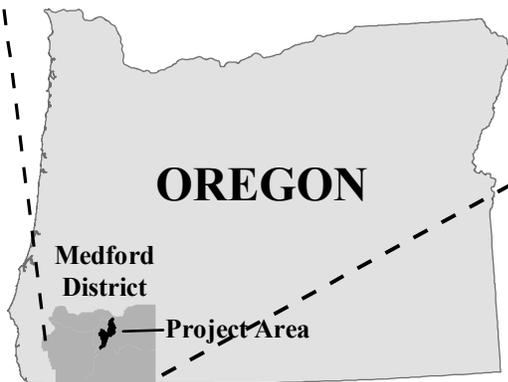
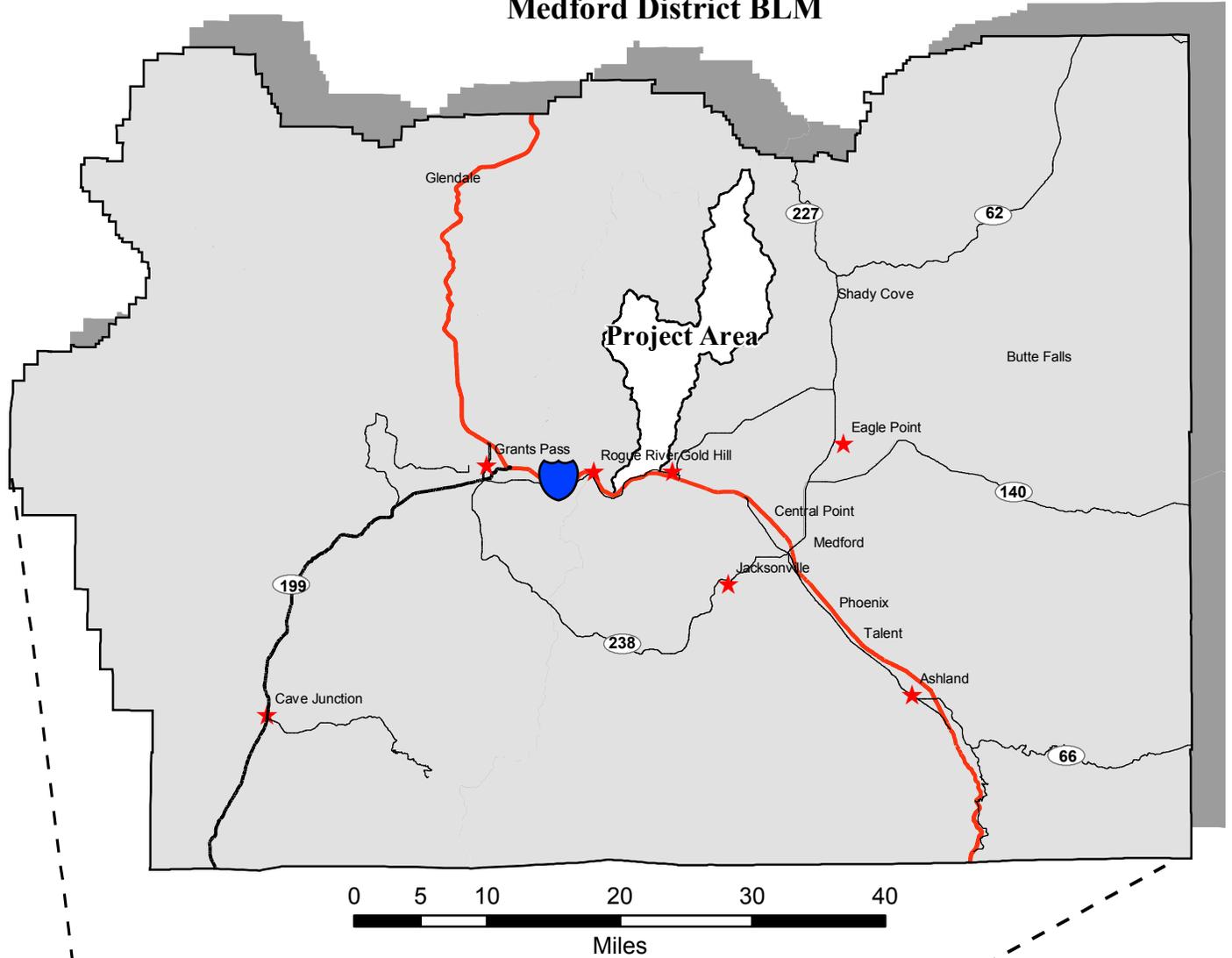
**Street:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**We are trying to save paper and conserve resources. Please respond if you wish to be kept informed and receive future mailings.**

# Musty Sardines Environmental Assessment

## Medford District BLM



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December 2005



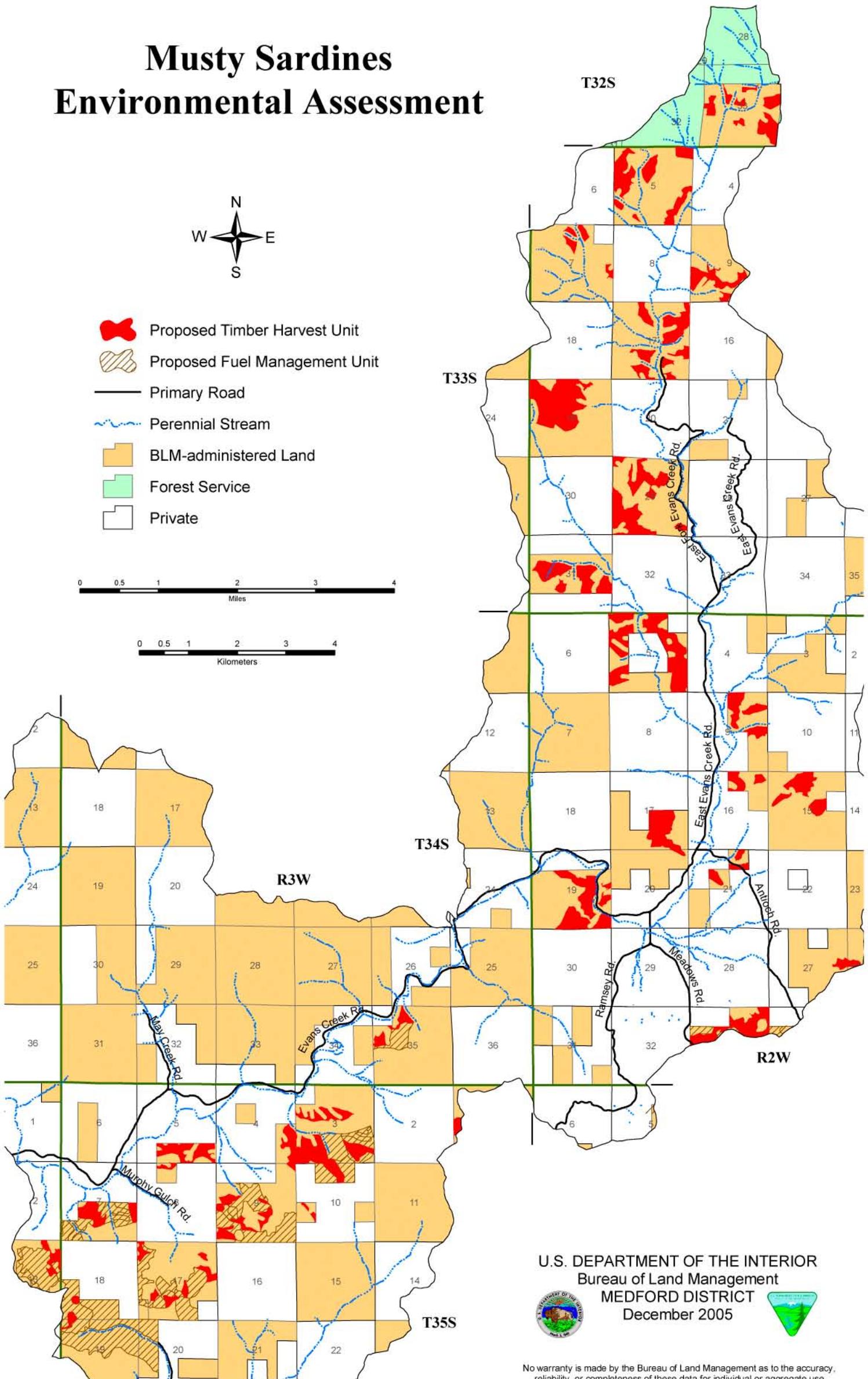
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Map 1: Location Map

# Musty Sardines Environmental Assessment



-  Proposed Timber Harvest Unit
-  Proposed Fuel Management Unit
-  Primary Road
-  Perennial Stream
-  BLM-administered Land
-  Forest Service
-  Private



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Map 2: Project Area