

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY, STATE OF OREGON**

1520.2

In re: New BLM Resource Management
Plans for O&C and Related Lands
in Western Oregon



Resolution No.: 2007-622
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WHEREAS, The BLM is revising its land management plans for western Oregon, updating plans for an area that comprises about 10 percent of the area covered by the Northwest Forest Plan, and

WHEREAS, most of the planning area is governed by the O&C Act of 1937, which requires the BLM to manage for permanent forest production to provide economic benefit to local communities, while protecting watersheds, regulating streamflows, and providing recreation facilities. The draft plan analyzes the potential impacts of three management alternatives, and

WHEREAS, the BLM's Alternative 2 would produce about 727 million board feet of harvest annually, in perpetuity. Receipts from sales of this timber would replace about 94 percent of the revenue that will be lost when the current Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act safety net payments terminate in the near future, and

WHEREAS, the O&C lands were once in private ownership, but were taken back by the federal government, and thus removed from county tax rolls. To compensate, fifty percent of timber receipts go directly to the 18 western Oregon Counties, to be used as discretionary funds for services such as libraries, law enforcement, corrections, public health services, and recreation. O&C revenues provide a substantial and irreplaceable part of the discretionary budget for this County, and

WHEREAS, the BLM's proposed plans are the result of the most detailed and comprehensive analysis ever completed on federal lands in western Oregon. The analysis is supported by the latest biological studies, updated resource data, and new modeling tools, and

WHEREAS, the BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have ensured that the BLM's draft plans, the Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan, and the draft Critical Habitat Rule are consistent. At least 46 percent of the forested BLM lands would be reserved to perpetuate forests with old growth characteristics, and the remaining 54 percent would provide substantial additional acreage of mature and structurally complex forest, while being managed with care to insure no more is harvested than is replaced by new growth. Alternative 2 meets all the requirements of the Endangered Species Act to protect and help recover all listed species of fish and wildlife, as well as complying with all other environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, and protecting recreational opportunities and facilities.

WHEREAS, Clackamas County has asked the BLM to consider and address the following concerns during the course of finalization of the western Oregon resource management plans.

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- Concern 1:** Identification of revenue replacement for the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act safety net payments is important. Clackamas County is supportive of identifying revenues to replace the anticipated loss of Secure Rural Schools funding, but it is also important that projects be implemented in a way sustainable to both the timber harvest and the other resources the forest provides. We would ask the BLM to encourage all of the O&C counties to continue to look at other potential sources of revenue including revenue generated through tourism and recreation.
- Concern 2:** Revenues from the timber harvest on BLM land could be processed under "Stewardship Contracts" and would not be returned to the Counties. While we recognize that stewardship contracting is a good tool in the right situation, we are concerned that it would reduce the revenue generated from timber harvest and thus reduce the portion of revenue returned to the Counties. If stewardship contracting is used to implement some resource management projects, the Counties should still receive an equal amount of revenue as they would have with a traditional timber sale.
- Concern 3:** Protection of endangered species habitat and improving forest health is critical. Clackamas County supports harvesting of timber when it is balanced with science-based protection of endangered species. Managing of public forests should be conducted in a sustainable and ecologically sound manner. We strongly support and encourage focusing on thinning of plantation stands, which would help to address fuel reduction concerns in fire-prone and over-stocked plantation areas.
- Concern 4:** Adequate riparian buffer areas are important for protection of fish, water, wildlife, and soil resources. While we support Alternative 2, we are concerned that the minimum riparian widths may be applied to all projects. Each forest management project should be reviewed on an individual basis so that the appropriate riparian corridor width is applied to each site. We have particular concern in areas of unstable slopes and soils. It is important that the minimum protection width is not relied upon as the standard, but instead the appropriate protection be applied on a site-by-site basis.
- Concern 5:** Timber harvest on properties adjacent to small private landowners can be controversial. Some of the BLM-managed lands in Clackamas County are in smaller tracts scattered in the western foothills of the Cascades. Many of these tracts border properties owned by private, rural landowners. As you know, these neighbors can be very sensitive to management activities, especially timber harvest. An article in the August 16, 2007 Clackamas County Weekly section of *The Oregonian* titled

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"Living – for now – in paradise" described some of the issues arising from management of small BLM parcels in the rural landscape of eastern Clackamas County. Our Clackamas County Forest Program has made it a point to contact and work with neighboring landowners when proposing timber harvest on our county-owned forest lands. This has been a successful strategy for several years. We suggest that Salem District planners employ this strategy when proposing timber harvest on BLM-managed lands adjacent to smaller, private landowners. We would be happy to provide contact information for those adjacent landowners in Clackamas County to Salem District planners.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

Clackamas County supports Alternative 2 in the BLM's draft plans, and urges the BLM to select Alternative 2 as the BLM's final plan, and to proceed as expeditiously as possible in the completion and implementation of its plan revisions. A copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the Association of O&C Counties for submission to the BLM.

ADOPTED this 20th day of December, 2007.

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Chair
Recording Secretary