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Bureau of Land Management ::
Western Oregon Plan Revisions Office
P.O. Box 2965 Portland, OR 97208
333 SW 1st. Avenue Portland, OR 97204

Dear BLM Folks:

Please come back to the table and participate in Forest Stewardship. I am a member of a National Forest Stewardship Group in Western Oregon and local landowner. The group is comprised of all interested stakeholders who meet monthly to collectively plan how and where the National Forest will implement its local timber harvests. BLM used to be there. These forests do need to be thinned, and many stream habitats needs to be restored. The group collectively decides on the future projects, and success runs in every direction. The BLM forests are right next to all the National Forest property. Over time, this will be a money making option for the BLM as it has proven to be for the National Forest.

Because of stewardship, timber harvest receipts are retained and spent locally. Local jobs are created, forests are thinned, habitats are restored, and local landowner trust is rebuilt. It's a very slow process in the beginning, but trust is being rebuilt through open consistent meetings with local landowners, timber companies, private restoration companies and other agencies.

Stewardship saves the government money. The National Forest saves money through "Prescription by Designation" which means the contractor marks the trees the National Forest has selected for harvesting. This saves time and money for the National Forest. Stewardship Projects on private lands have an abundance of matching funds to leverage. This saves the National Forest money too.

In Western Oregon, the BLM lands are right next to the National Forest lands. Why should BLM forests be treated differently? I know it's because of a law in 1937, but these same forests protect water and wildlife. There were plenty of salmon back in 1937. Why should the BLM lands be treated as though threatened coho and steelhead do not exist on BLM lands, and why should the BLM not follow the Oregon Plan for Salmon Recovery, when Coho are threatened in the same watersheds?

BLM staff used to attend these stewardship meetings. BLM staff even got so far as to plan a future Stewardship sale. Then in Spring 2007, without an explanation, they suddenly stopped participating in stewardship meetings. Stakeholders were very disappointed about this.

There is no reasonable excuse to walk away from the stewardship table and disregard a program that restores trust, restores jobs, restores clean water and wildlife habitat and makes money for the federal government. Most folks are deeply disappointed about this abrupt about face.

BLM forests can be thinned, and money can be made for these counties without the DEIS. I would not be in favor of any option except "No Action" on the WOPR. Then come back to the table and plan for stewardship of BLM forests.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline M. Nichols

cc Senator Ron Wyden