



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Web Address: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay> E-mail: OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov

Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303



In Reply Refer To:

1792/9015 (ORC000)

DOI-BLM-OR-C000-2011-0006-EA

June 9, 2011

Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Coos Bay BLM has prepared a scoping document for the Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in the Coos Bay District Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA will tier to the recently completed *Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD), which addressed the use of up to 14 herbicides in western Oregon. The scoping document is now posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/index.php>.

The BLM proposes to control noxious weeds, invasive plants and other vegetation across the District to achieve landscape health objectives. Herbicides would not be applied aerially and would not be used for timber or livestock forage production. Treatments would occur on all land use allocations.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by July 11, 2010. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Please direct requests for hard copies, questions, or comments to Coos Bay District BLM, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459-2000, ATTN: Jeanne Standley; call 541-756-0100; FAX 541-751-4303, or email to OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov, ATTN: Jeanne Standley.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mark E. Johnson

Mark E. Johnson
District Manager



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June 9, 2011

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Coos Bay District is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the impacts of herbicide treatments to control noxious weeds and invasive plants. Herbicides are one of several tools used by the District to control noxious and invasive vegetation. The EA will replace the District's 1997 vegetation management EA, and will allow the District to use 14 herbicides in its vegetation treatment programs. The EA is scheduled to be completed in spring 2012.

The EA will tier to the recently completed *Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)* and Record of Decision (ROD), which addressed the use of up to 14 herbicides in western Oregon. Under the ROD, these herbicides cannot be applied aerially in western Oregon, and cannot be used for timber or livestock forage production. Because the ROD was a programmatic decision, District programs and specific projects must still be analyzed in an EA. The EA will identify and analyze the effects of actions for treating noxious weeds and other vegetation to restore ecosystem health and to maintain safety and protect structures in the Coos Bay District.

The Coos Bay District manages about 320,000 acres of public lands in Oregon, of which about 50,000 acres are infested with weeds and invasive vegetation. The District treats approximately 1,500 acres of noxious weeds each year. Of those, about 1,000 acres are treated with herbicides and the remaining acres are treated using non-herbicide methods, including manual, mechanical, and biological (insects) control methods.

Currently, the Coos Bay District uses only four herbicides approved for use on BLM lands in Oregon. Being able to use 10 additional herbicides will give the District access to herbicides that are more target-specific and effective. Used in combination with other management practices, herbicide treatments can control noxious and invasive plants to restore ecosystem health and watershed functions. Additionally, unwanted vegetation may be controlled to improve safety and protect infrastructures such as recreation and administrative sites and roads.

Public scoping for the EA planning process will occur from June 9 to July 11, 2011. Environmental Assessments are also being prepared by the eight other BLM Districts in the state as part of their planning processes for the use of herbicides. While these EAs will be done concurrently, each will be District-specific.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this project by July 11, 2011. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action. The public will also have the opportunity to comment on the proposal during public comment periods associated with the Draft EA, which should be available in spring 2012.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EA document or other related documents. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Comments on the Coos Bay District EA can be submitted by mail to: Jeanne Standley, District Weed/Invasive Plant Coordinator, Bureau of Land Management, Coos Bay District Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, Oregon, 97459; by electronic mail (email) to OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov; by facsimile to (541) 751-4303; or in person at the Coos Bay District BLM office.

Respectfully,

/s/ Mark E. Johnson

Mark E. Johnson
District Manager