

NEWS Release BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OR-10-01
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BLM to Analyze Effects of Herbicide Use on Public Lands in the Eugene District

Springfield, Oregon. Noxious and other weeds and invasive plants infest millions of acres in Oregon; spreading at a rate of 10 to 15 percent per year. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently completed a *Vegetation Treatment Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)* and issued a Record of Decision (ROD) to address the infestations. The ROD authorized the use of up to 14 herbicides in western Oregon.

Herbicides cannot be applied aurally on BLM-administered lands in western Oregon under the ROD, and may not be used for commercial timber enhancement or livestock forage production. However, because the ROD was a programmatic decision, specific projects must still undergo site-specific analysis and decision making at the field level.

The BLM is initiating scoping for an environmental assessment (EA) of the site-specific effects of herbicide use on BLM lands in the Eugene District, Oregon, as one of several tools to control weeds and invasive vegetation to achieve landscape health objectives. The proposed action in the District Environmental Assessment (EA) is to include the use of new herbicides authorized in the ROD to control weeds and invasive plants.

The District is focusing on using four herbicides; glyphosate, imazapyr, triclopyr and clopyralid to address problem species as Scotch broom, knapweeds and false brome.

The Eugene District manages about 315,000 acres of public lands in Oregon, of which about 18,000 acres are infested with noxious and other weeds and invasive vegetation. The District treats approximately 1,600 acres of weeds and invasive vegetation each year. The District has treated these acres using manual and mechanical methods.

The Eugene District has not treated vegetation using herbicides since 1983. Herbicide treatments can slow the spread of noxious and other weeds and invasive plants when used in combination with other management practices. This in turn helps to restore ecosystem health and watershed functions.



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BLM
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The BLM will be seeking public comments on this planning effort throughout the scoping period, which begins June 16 and runs through July 16, 2011. Environmental Assessments are also being prepared by the eight other BLM Districts in the state as part of their analysis process for the use of herbicides. While these EAs will be done concurrently, each will be District-specific. Comments on the Eugene District EA can be submitted by mail to:

ATTN: Vegetation EA, Michael Mascari, District Public Affairs Officer, Bureau of Land Management, Eugene District Office, 3106 Pierce Parkway, Suite E, Springfield, Oregon, 97477; by electronic mail (email) to OR_Eugene_Mail@blm.gov; by facsimile to (541) 683-6981; in person at the Eugene District BLM office; or at Eugene District BLM Office

Written comments should be received by July 16, 2011, to ensure consideration. The public will also have the opportunity to comment on the proposal during the public comment period associated with the EA, which should be available in spring 2012.

About the BLM: The BLM manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

