



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Lakeview District Office
1301 South G Street
Lakeview, Oregon 97630
www.or.blm.gov/lakeview



APR 30 2010

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (ORL050)

Dear Reader:

The Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) completed the Lakeview Resource Management Plan (RMP) in November 2003. This plan addressed the management of approximately 3.2 million acres of BLM-administered public lands in Lake and Harney Counties (see attached map) and was completed under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

After the BLM completed the RMP a lawsuit was filed in District Court challenging the RMP. A similar suit was filed against the Southeastern Oregon RMP. While the District Court ruled in favor of the BLM in both suits, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the BLM in the Southeastern Oregon RMP case (*Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Bureau of Land Management*, 531 F.3d 1114, 9th Cir. 2008) in 2008. Soon thereafter, the BLM filed a petition for panel rehearing of the Court's remedy (vacatur of the Record of Decision). The matter was stayed during settlement negotiations. The Ninth Circuit subsequently stayed the litigation regarding similar challenges to the Lakeview RMP (*Oregon Natural Desert Association v. Gammon*, No. 07-35728, 9th Cir.), pending resolution of the Southeastern Oregon RMP case, and to allow for settlement negotiations between all parties.

The BLM is now beginning to prepare an amendment to its existing Lakeview RMP along with an accompanying environmental impact statement (EIS). The primary purpose of the RMP Amendment/EIS is to address the need to:

- Consider information from wilderness character inventory updates.
- Consider a reasonable range of off-highway vehicle allocation/designation alternatives.
- Consider a reasonable range of grazing management alternatives.

In addition, the BLM has identified the following issues to address during the plan amendment process:

- Designation and management of significant caves.
- Development of a travel management plan.
- Development of a recreation area management plan for the North Lake Special Recreation Management Area.
- New utility corridor designations.

The RMP Amendment process will result in a decision determining how the above resource values and uses will be managed to best meet present and future public needs. The majority of the management direction guiding other resource values and uses will be carried forward into the plan amendment from the existing RMP and is not expected to change substantially in the final decision. In preparation for this plan

amendment process, the BLM has been updating many key datasets, including but not limited to: road inventory, wilderness character inventory, cave inventory, fire history, recreation, vegetation, and special status wildlife habitat.

Public involvement is an essential step in ensuring this plan amendment balances land uses and resource protection in a manner that best serves the public interest. There will be opportunities for public participation throughout the plan amendment's preparation and analysis process. The first opportunity is during the public scoping period. The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine if there are other relevant issues that should influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternative development, and guide the planning process.

The BLM has also identified some preliminary planning criteria to guide development of the RMP Amendment, to avoid unnecessary data collection and analysis, and to ensure the RMP Amendment is tailored to the relevant issues. These criteria may be modified and/or other criteria may be identified during the public scoping process. Preliminary planning criteria include compliance with all legal mandates of the FLPMA, the NEPA, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the Administrative Procedures Act, the BLM planning regulations in 43 CFR part 1600, and other relevant laws. The following planning criteria will also guide the planning process:

- The principles of multiple-use and sustained yield will be utilized.
- A systematic interdisciplinary approach to integrate, physical, biological, economic, and other sciences will be used.
- The best available data regarding natural resources will be used, to the extent possible.
- Present and potential uses of public lands will be considered.
- The relative scarcity of values and availability of alternative means and sites for recognizing those values will be considered.
- Long-term and short-term benefits and impacts will be weighed.
- Federal, tribal, and state environmental laws, standards, and implementation plans will be complied with, to the extent possible.

You are encouraged to submit comments on these issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at the addresses below or at any public scoping meeting. Comments should be submitted prior to the close of the 90-day scoping period (July 7, 2010) or within 30 days after the last public meeting. Written comments should be sent to:

Thomas E. Rasmussen
Lakeview Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1301 South G Street
Lakeview, OR 97630

Email: OR_Lakeview_Mail@blm.gov

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment letter, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal information, may be made publicly available at any time during the planning process. While you can ask us to withhold your personal information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will legally be able to do so.

Public meetings/open houses are scheduled for the following locations and times:

Lakeview Interagency Office
 May 25, 2010; 5:00-7:30 pm
 Lost Forest/Crane Mountain Conference Room
 Bureau of Land Management
 1301 South G Street
 Lakeview, OR

Christmas Valley Community Hall
 May 28, 2010; 5:30-8:30 pm
 87345 Holly Lane
 Christmas Valley, OR

Burns District Office
 May 26, 2010; 5:00-7:30 pm
 Conference Room
 Bureau of Land Management
 28910 Highway 20 West
 Hines, OR

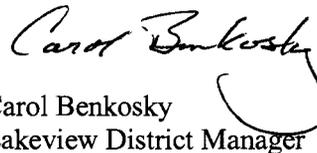
Audubon Society of Portland
 June 2, 2010; 5:30-8:30 pm
 5151 NW Cornell Road
 Portland, OR

Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District Office
 May 27, 2010; 5:00-7:30 pm
 East/West Conference Room
 U.S. Forest Service
 1230 NE 3rd Street, Suite A-262
 Bend, OR

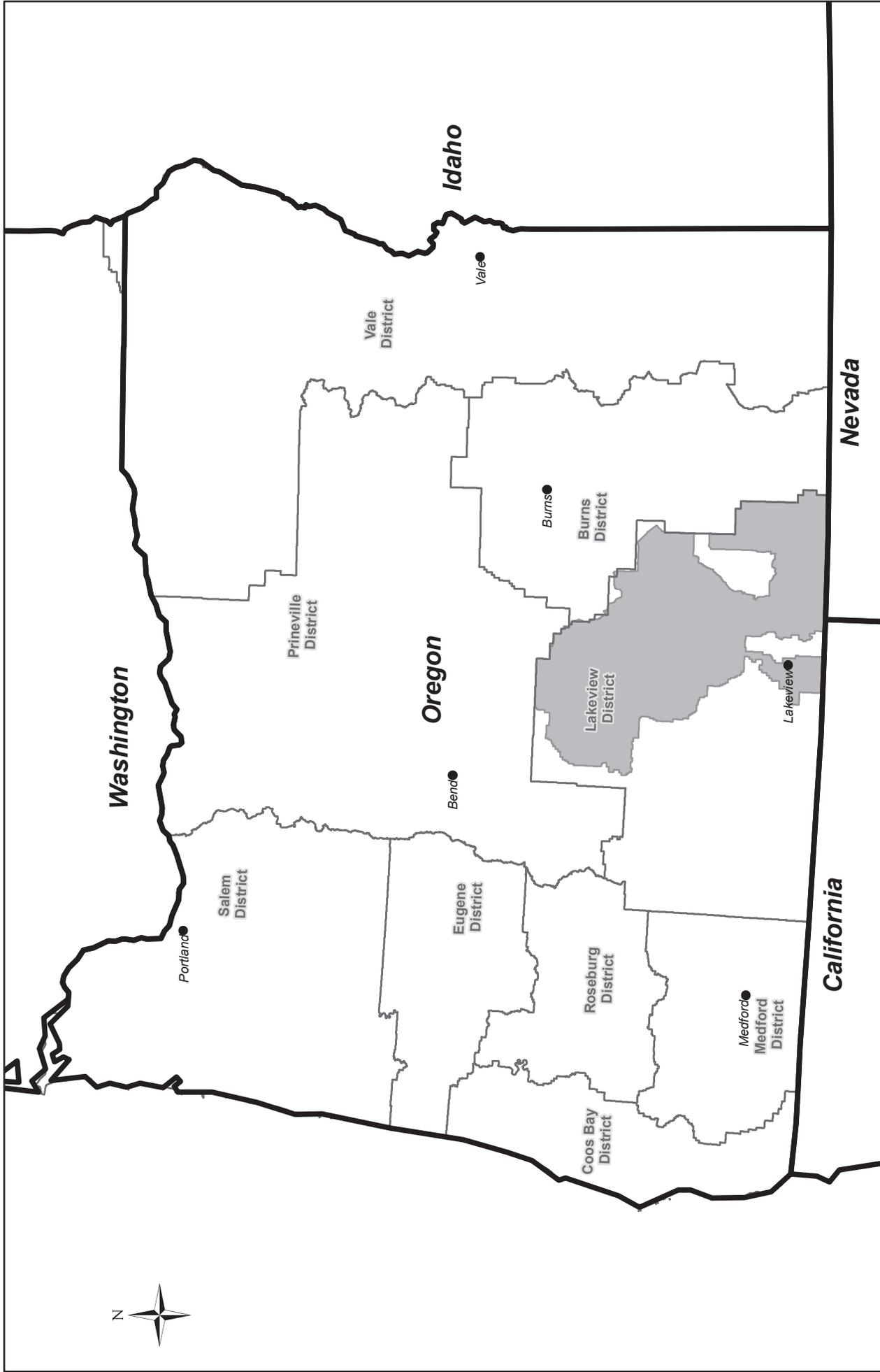
Short informal presentations will be given at each meeting location. In addition, resource specialists will be on-hand to discuss your issues and answer questions.

If you have any questions about the BLM planning process or would like to ensure that you are kept on our mailing list for this planning effort, please contact Paul Whitman (email: Paul_Whitman@blm.gov or 541-947-6110). If you do not contact us, your name will be removed from the mailing list for this planning effort.

Sincerely,


 Carol Benkosky
 Lakeview District Manager

Enclosure



Map 1 - Lakeview Resource Management Plan Amendment Area



April 28, 2010



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

