

Medford's Messenger

Winter 2011/2012



Medford District Office

BLM

Medford BLM's Mission

*Working together to sustain and enhance resilient
landscapes and quality of life in southwest Oregon.*

**Bureau of Land Management
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504**

BLM/OR/WA/PL-12/014+1614



Medford's Messenger

a publication of

**Bureau of Land Management
Medford District Office**

Winter 2011/2012

Dear Public Land User:

Welcome to the Winter 2011/2012 edition of the *Medford's Messenger*. The purpose of our publication is to provide you with information on proposed and ongoing activities on the Medford District. It contains listings of projects by resource area that have been recently completed and identifies newly proposed projects.

We are seeking ideas and comments from those who may be affected by our multiple-use management programs. Your comments, opinions, and suggestions are appreciated and very important to us. They help us make informed decisions and sound land management actions, and improve our projects. Our intent is to increase the public's awareness of BLM issues, activities, and opportunities.

This planning update provides a brief description of activities occurring in various programs across the Medford District, as well as descriptions of new projects we are considering. Additional project information can be obtained from the contacts listed in the descriptions. These contacts are familiar with their projects and can answer your questions and provide more details. We are interested in receiving information you wish to share concerning any of the projects or project areas listed in this planning update.

Our practice is to make comments, including the names and addresses of respondents, available for public review. Unless you specifically request us to withhold your name and address, it will be made available to the public on request.

Thank you for your continued interest in our management of your public lands. We would appreciate any comments or suggestions you may have regarding this planning update including how it could be improved to make it more useful to you.

If you have any questions on information in this planning update, please stop by our office at 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon, call us at 541-618-2200, or send us an e-mail at BLM_OR_MD_Mail@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Dayne Barron
Medford District Manager

National Environmental Policy Act Analysis and Documentation

The review of the environmental effects of a proposed management action can occur in one of four ways: categorical exclusion, administrative determination, environmental assessment, or environmental impact statement.

1. A *categorical exclusion* is used when a proposed activity does not individually or cumulatively have significant environmental effects and may be exempt from requirements to prepare an environmental analysis. The purpose of a categorical exclusion is to eliminate the need for unnecessary paperwork under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Specifically, CEQ regulations for NEPA at 40 CFR 1508.4 state,

Categorical exclusion means a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency in implementation of these regulations (§ 1507.3) and for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required. . . . Any procedures under this section shall provide for extraordinary circumstances in which a normally excluded action may have a significant environmental effect.

When developing a categorical exclusion, the BLM demonstrates through rulemaking procedures how the action does not typically result in significant environmental effects and sets forth the methodology and criteria used to define the category of actions. These rulemaking procedures include extensive public involvement and input, and Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) review, regarding appropriate limits on the use of the categorical exclusion to assure that any categorically excluded action would remain within the effects of actions covered in the analysis for the rulemaking.

Departmental policy and CEQ regulations require that categorical actions be subjected to sufficient environmental review to determine whether any of the extraordinary circumstances apply, as listed in the Department of the Interior's NEPA Manual at 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, that would preclude the use of a categorical exclusion. An "extraordinary" circumstance is one that could have significant environmental effects beyond the "ordinary" circumstances already described and considered as applicable to the excluded actions in the rulemaking procedure. The Medford District/Resource Areas maintain on-site NEPA registers that list ongoing actions, and post all categorical exclusions and related decisions on the Medford District Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/index.php>.

Categorically excluded actions, by regulation, do not require the documentation necessary for an EA or EIS. No public notice of a Federal agency's use of a categorical exclusion is required. The public was provided a formal opportunity to participate in the agency's review and approval of these categorically excluded activities. Given this context, the BLM may choose to proceed with these actions as part of the ordinary course of business in land management with the posting of a notice of decision on the District Web site. This notice would advise the public of the formal administrative review process for these individual actions available under 43 CFR 4.450. Depending on circumstances, however, the BLM may invoke, by publishing a notice in a local newspaper of record, the administrative review process under 43 CFR 5003 for certain

individual forest management actions. Categorical exclusions posted on the Web site will provide the individual administrative remedy process in the document.

If you are interested in any of these types of actions, more information can be obtained from our Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford> or by contacting the Medford District office. We can give you information on current projects.

2. An ***administrative determination*** is a determination by the BLM that NEPA documentation previously prepared by the BLM fully covers a proposed action and no additional analysis is need. This procedure is often used in conjunction with a plan conformance determination. If an action is in full conformance with actions specifically described in the RMP and analyzed in the RMP/FEIS or a subsequent environmental assessment, a plan conformance determination may be made and no additional analysis would be needed. This determination is documented in a ***determination of NEPA adequacy*** or DNA.
3. An ***environmental assessment*** is prepared to assess the effects of actions that are not exempt from NEPA, categorically excluded, or covered by an existing environmental document. An environmental assessment is prepared to determine if a proposed action or alternative will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In an effort to save paper and printing costs, environmental assessments will be available on our Web site for your review and comment. If you desire a paper copy please contact us and we will send you a copy by mail.
4. An ***environmental impact statement*** is prepared if a proposed action will have a significant environmental impact and was not previously analyzed in an environmental impact statement.

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Winter 2011/2012

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
		Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides EA	Medford District	Completed	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Tony Kerwin
Integrated Vegetation Management Programmatic EA	Medford District	Completed	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Summer/Fall 2012	Tony Kerwin

Ashland Resource Area

Winter 2011/2012

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Recent Decisions Signed or Projects Dropped

Map Number	Project Name and Description	Location	Status of Project	Contact
92	Rio Climax Project EA Forest management treatment for the maintenance of sustainable forest production.	Antelope and Lake Creek watersheds	Decision signed November 22, 2011	Ted Hass
101	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Howard Prairie allotment grazing lease.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Decision signed November 30, 2011	Ted Hass

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed			Contact	
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review		Decision Date
60	Timber Mountain Recreation Plan/Draft EIS Activity-level recreation plan for managing OHV use.	West of Jacksonville	Completed	Completed	Completed	Winter 2012	Dennis Byrd
76	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Lake Creek Spring, Lake Creek Summer, and Deer Creek-Reno allotments grazing leases.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Steve Slavik
83	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Lower Big Applegate allotment grazing lease.	Applegate watershed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Steve Slavik

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

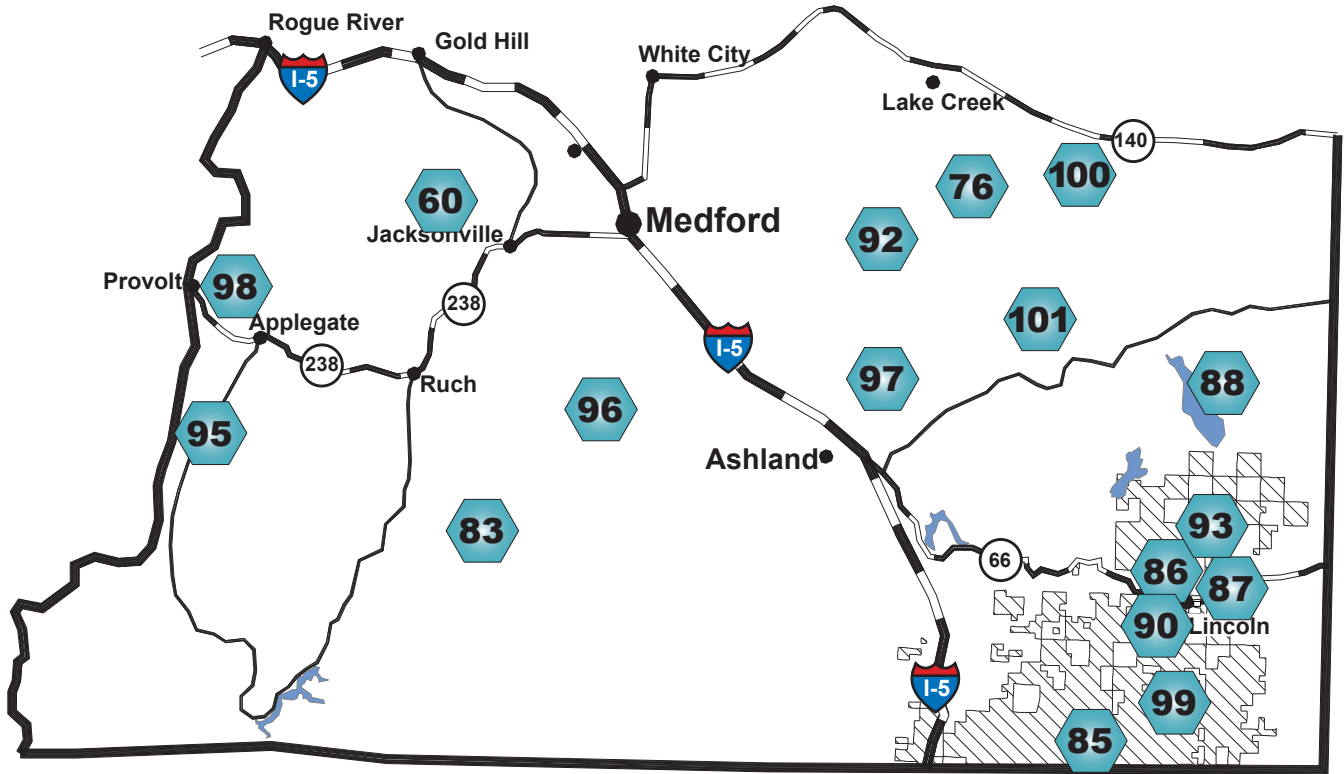
Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
85	Soda Mountain Wilderness Stewardship Plan EA Plan for managing the Soda Mountain Wilderness.	Southeast of Ashland	Completed	Completed	Completed	Spring 2012	Kathy Minor
86	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan EA Comprehensive transportation management plan to evaluate the road network within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and determine transportation, restoration, and protection needs.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland to the California border	Winter 2011/ Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Kathy Minor
87	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Land Exchange EA First of two land exchanges identified in P.L. 111-011-Land Tenure Actions.	East of Ashland, near Lincoln	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Winter 2012/13	Kathy Minor/ Mary Johnson
88	Hoxie Road Right-of-Way (OR 65809) EA Right-of-way (including new road construction) across BLM to access private property.	East side of Howard Prairie Reservoir	Completed	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Winter 2011/12	Stephanie Kelleher
90	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Land Exchange EA Second of two land exchanges identified in P.L. 111-011-Land Tenure Actions.	East of Ashland, near Lincoln	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Winter 2012/13	Kathy Minor/ Mary Johnson

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
93	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Pine Plantation Restoration EA Restoration thinning on approximately 300 acres of pine plantations within the CSNM.	East of Ashland	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Winter 2012/13	Kathy Minor
95	Middle Applegate Pilot Thompson Project EA Pilot project designed to demonstrate a forest restoration strategy developed by Dr. K. Norman Johnson and Dr. Jerry F. Franklin.	Middle Applegate watershed; Thompson Creek drainage and Ferris Gulch	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Stephanie Kelleher
96	Sterling Sweeper Timber Sale EA Forest management treatment for the maintenance of sustainable forest production.	Little Applegate watershed	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Ted Hass
97	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Grizzly allotment grazing lease.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Summer 2012	Steve Slavik
98	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Billy Mountain allotment grazing lease.	Applegate watershed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Steve Slavik

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
99	<p>Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Resource Management Plan Amendment EA</p> <p>A plan amendment to correct an inconsistency between the RMP and Presidential Proclamation 7318 by allowing for land exchanges that further the protective purposes of the monument where the Federal land to be exchanged may be located within the CSNM boundary.</p>	<p>Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland to the California border</p>	<p>Spring 2012</p>	<p>Spring 2012</p>	<p>Summer 2012</p>	<p>Winter 2011/2012</p>	<p>Kathy Minor/ Mary Johnson</p>
100	<p>Heppsie Forest Management Project EA</p>	<p>Little Butte Creek watershed</p>	<p>Winter 2011/2012</p>	<p>Spring 2012</p>	<p>Spring 2012</p>	<p>Summer 2012</p>	<p>Ted Hass</p>



**Ashland Resource Area
Winter 2011/12 Projects**

- 60** Timber Mountain Recreation Plan/Draft EIS
- 76** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Lake Creek Spring, Lake Creek Summer, Deer Creek-Reno
- 83** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Lower Big Applegate
- 85** Soda Mountain Wilderness Stewardship Plan EA
- 86** CSNM Transportation Management Plan EA
- 87** CSNM Land Exchange EA #1
- 88** Hoxie Road Right-of-Way EA
- 90** CSNM Land Exchange EA #2
- 92** Rio Climax Project EA
- 93** CSNM Pine Plantation Restoration EA
- 95** Middle Applegate Pilot Thompson Project EA
- 96** Sterling Sweeper Timber Sale EA
- 97** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Grizzly
- 98** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Billy Mountain
- 99** CSNM RMP Amendment EA
- 100** Heppsie Forest Management Project EA
- 101** Conde Forest Management Project EA

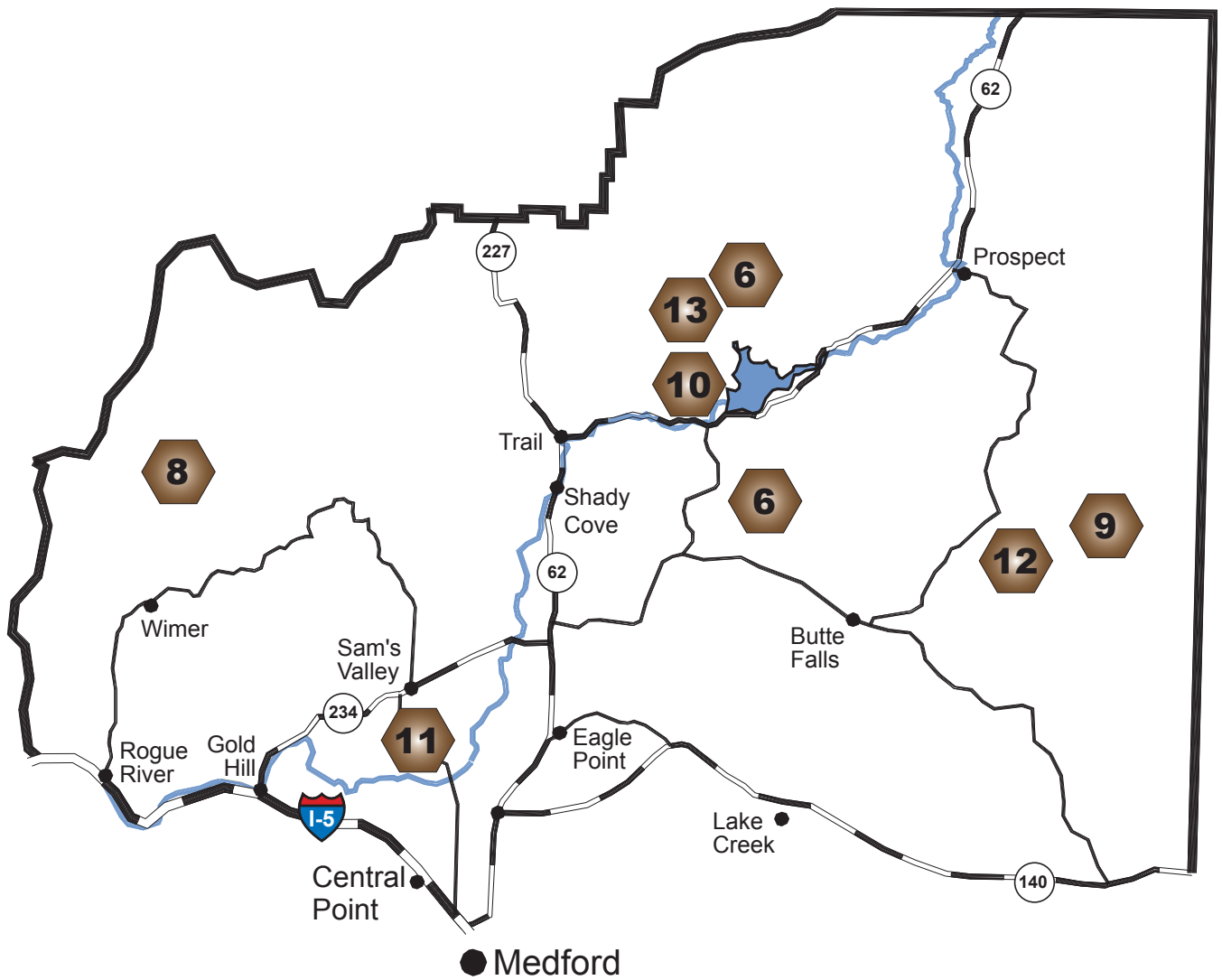
Butte Falls Resource Area

Winter 2011/12

Schedule of Proposed Actions

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
6	Flat Creek and Summit Prairie Allotments 10-year Grazing Authorization Renewal EA Proposal to authorize the grazing leases in the Flat Creek and Summit Prairie allotments.	Elk Creek, Big Butte Creek, Little Butte Creek, Lost Creek/Rogue River, and South Fork Rogue River watersheds	Completed	Completed	Completed	Spring 2012	Robyn Wicks
9	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the grazing leases in the Clear Creek, Lost Creek, and Sugarloaf allotments.	Lost Creek, Elk Creek, and Trail Creek watersheds	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Fall 2012	Jean Williams
10	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the grazing leases in the Bear Mountain, Crowfoot, Vestal Butte Moser Mountain, and Neil-Tarbell allotments.	Shady Cove-Rogue River and Big Butte Creek watersheds		Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Jean Williams
11	Table Rock ACEC Management Plan and EA Plan for managing the Table Rocks ACEC.	Gold Hill-Rogue River and Shady Cove-Rogue River watersheds	Completed	Spring 2012	Spring 2011	Summer 2012	Jean Williams
12	Friese Camp Forest Management EA Forest management treatments.	Lost Creek and Big Butte Creek watersheds	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Jean Williams
13	Flat Creek Road Relocation EA Moving existing road away from the stream channel.	Elk Creek watershed				On Hold	Jean Williams



**Butte Falls Resource Area
Winter 2011/12 Projects**

- 6** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Flat Creek and Summit Prairie
- 8** Evans Creek Forest Management EA
- 9** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Clear Creek, Lost Creek, and Sugarloaf
- 10** Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Bear Mountain, Crowfoot, Vestal Butte, Moser Mountain, and Neil-Tarbell
- 11** Table Rock ACEC Management Plan and EA
- 12** Friese Camp Forest Management EA
- 13** Flat Creek Road Relocation EA

Grants Pass Resource Area

Please Note: The Grants Pass and Glendale Resource Areas are now combined into one resource area—the Grants Pass Resource Area. Former Glendale Resource Area projects are listed as Grants Pass Resource Area actions.

Schedule of Proposed Actions

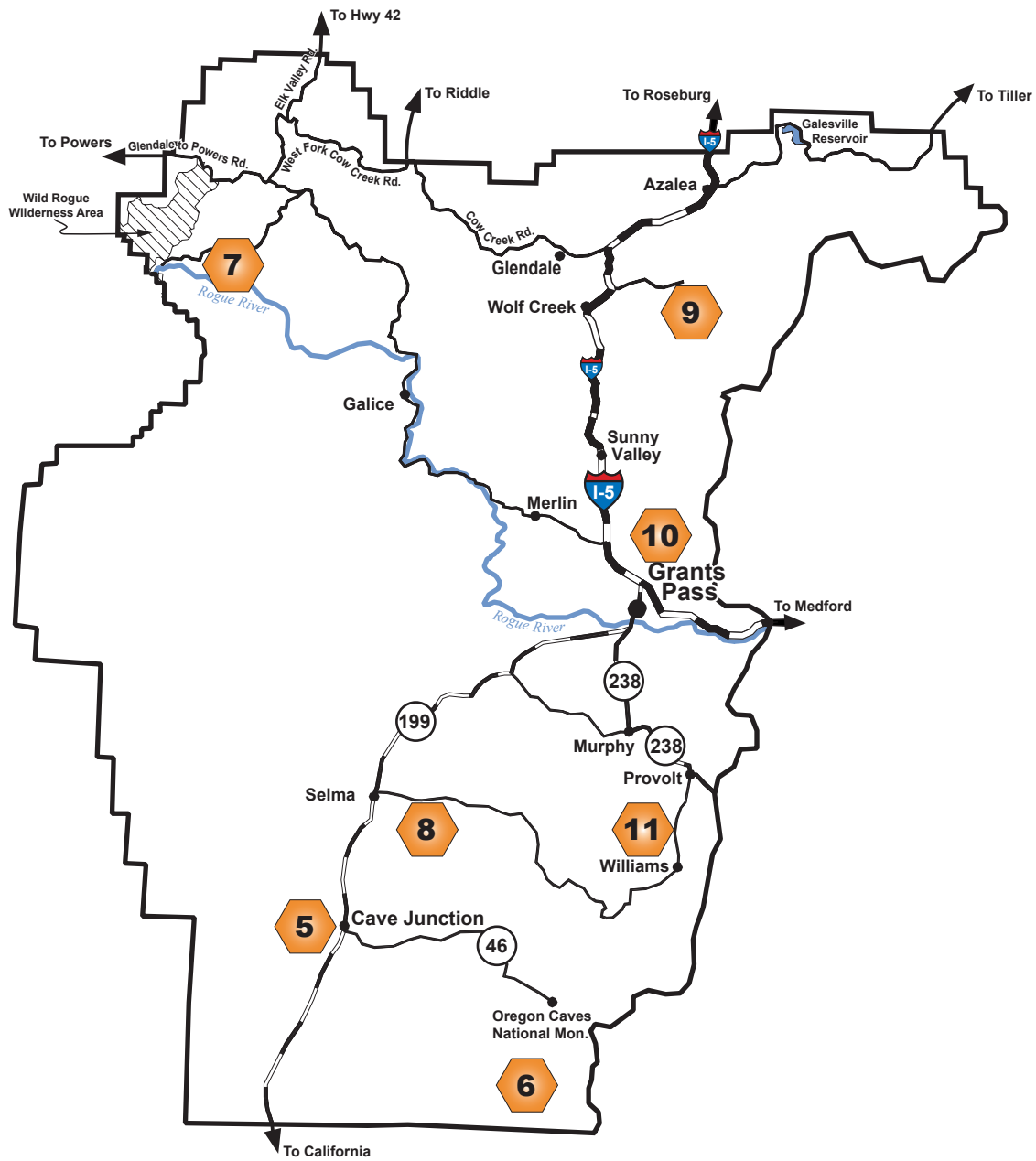
Winter 2011/12

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Project Name and Description	Location	Proposed Dates				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision	
5	East West Junction Project EA Proposed dry and moist forest restoration management and hazardous fuels reduction.	Lower Illinois River watershed	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Michelle Calvert
6	Tracy Sucker Creek Mining Plan of Operations Proposal to placer mine along Sucker Creek.	Sucker Creek watershed	Completed	Completed	Completed	On Hold	Martin Lew
7	Winkle Bar Management Plan	Rogue Wild and Scenic River	On Hold				Dave Ballenger
8	Indian Hill Right-of-Way Road Construction EA	Deer Creek watershed	Ongoing	To Be Determined			Martin Lew
9	Speaking Coyote Project Proposed commercial thinning.	Grave Creek watershed	Completed	Winter 2011/12	Spring 2012	Spring 2012	Martin Lew
10	Jumping Bean Project Proposed dry forest restoration, hazardous fuel reduction, and noncommercial thinning.	Grants Pass-Rogue River watershed	Winter 2011/12	Spring/Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Fall 2012	Michelle Calvert

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Project Name and Description	Location	Proposed Dates				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision	
11	Williams Integrated Vegetation Management Proposed dry forest restoration to create a fire-resilient landscape.	BLM lands encircling the town of Williams and within 5 miles south of the town of Murphy.	Spring 2012	Summer 2012	Summer 2012	Fall 2012	Michelle Calvert
12	Road Right-of-way Agreements and Hauling Permits Individual requests from other public agencies and private parties for access through BLM-managed lands	Throughout the Grants Pass Resource Area	Ongoing as requests are received.				Martin Lew



**Grants Pass Resource Area
Winter 2011/12 Projects**

- 5** East West Junction Project EA
- 6** Tracy Sucker Creek Mining Plan of Operations
- 7** Winkle Bar Management Plan
- 8** Indian Hill ROW Road Construction Project EA
- 9** Speaking Coyote Project EA
- 10** Jumping Bean Project EA
- 11** Williams Integrated Vegetation Management Project EA

Acronyms and Definitions

ACEC/RNA—Area of Critical Environmental Concern/Research Natural Area

BO—Biological Opinion

CE (Categorical Exclusion)—Actions that do not have significant effects on the environment and for which an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

CSNM—Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

EA (Environmental Assessment)—A concise public document that briefly provides evidence and analysis of a proposed Federal action. It is used to determine whether further analysis needs to be completed in an environmental impact statement.

FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact)—A finding that explains that an action will not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be required.

GFMA—General Forest Management Area

IDT (Interdisciplinary Team)—A group of resource specialists that conducts the environmental analysis for a proposed project and whose participation is determined by the issues relating to the project proposal.

OHV—Off-Highway Vehicle

LSR (Late-Successional Reserve)—One of the seven Federal land designations set forth in the *Northwest Forest Plan*. These reserves will maintain a functional, interactive, late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystem.

Matrix—One of the seven Federal land designations set forth in the *Northwest Forest Plan*. Most timber harvest contributing to the Allowable Sale Quantity takes place on matrix land.

MBF—thousand board feet.

MMBF—million board feet

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act)—A Federal law that sets the systematic interdisciplinary analysis to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological economic, and other sciences to provide for an informed decision. The process provides for public participation in the development, review, and revision of certain activities on Federal lands.

RMP (Resource Management Plan)—A land use plan prepared by the BLM in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Scoping—An early and open part of environmental analysis that allows interested public and other Federal, state and local agencies the opportunity to provide issues, concerns, and opportunities relative to proposed project actions. Scoping is required by regulation for environmental impact statements.