



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
email address: Medford_Mail@blm.gov

FEB 12 2013

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1792(M060)

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Ashland Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management Medford District Office is proposing to implement the Howard Forest Management Project located in the Jenny Creek Watershed.

Why is BLM Proposing the Howard Forest Management Project?

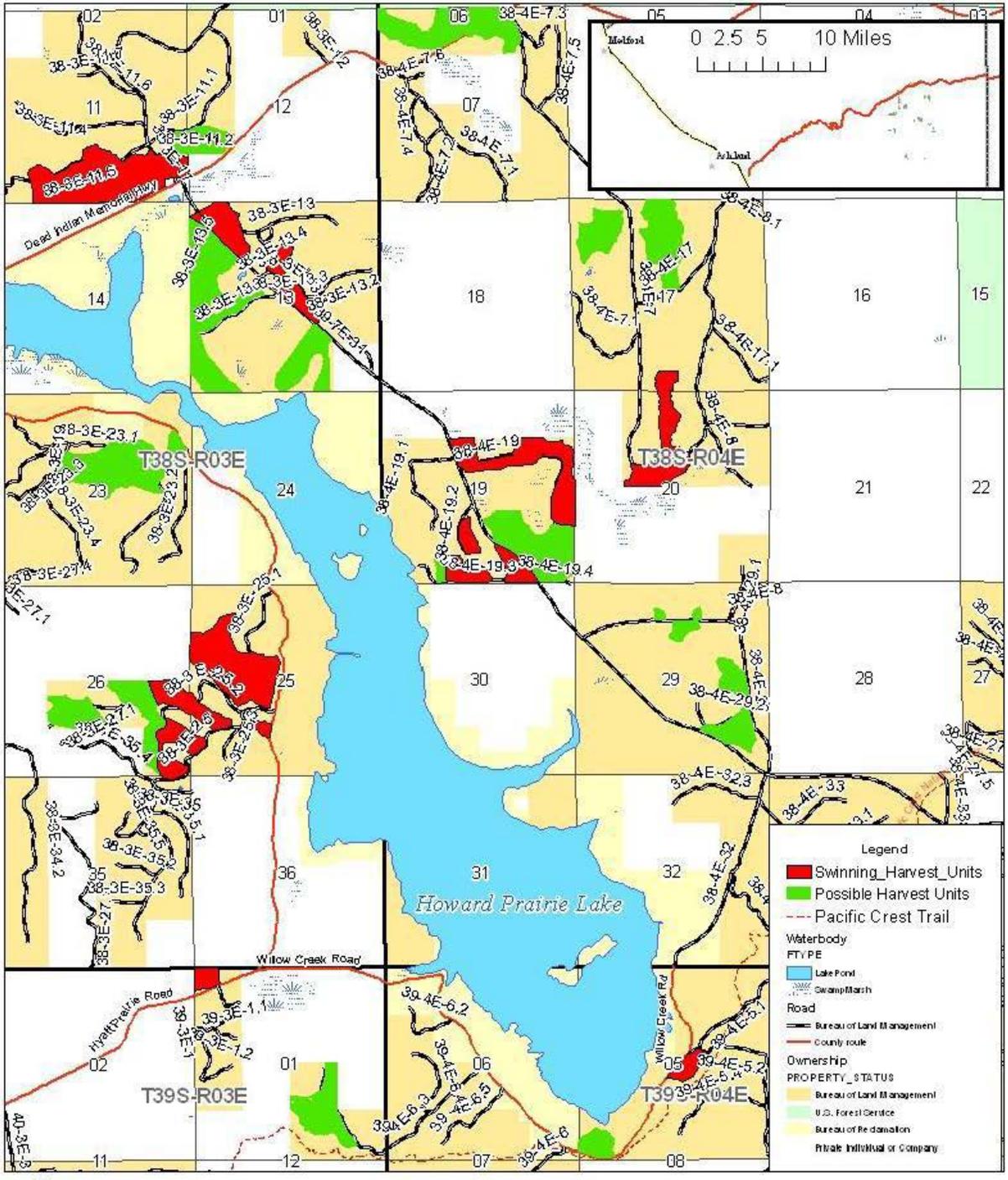
The Medford District RMP is governed by the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act), for which sustainable timber production is the primary purpose.

The design and development of the Howard Forest Management Project is in accordance with the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan) (USDA and USDI 1994). The Howard Forest Management Project is located on land designated under Medford District's 1995 Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP) as Matrix land. The Howard Forest Management Project is designed to implement the timber management and road objectives and direction of the 1995 RMP, which include:

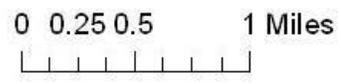
- Ensure sustainable forest production, and the renewable resources they provide, by managing forests to improve forest vigor and growth (1995 RMP, pp. 72-73);
- Provide timber products from Matrix land allocations in accordance with the direction in the Medford District's Resource Management Plan (1995 RMP, pp. 72-73);
- Maintain a transportation system within the project area that serves the management of resource program areas in an environmentally sound manner, including timber management (1995 RMP, pp. 84-88).

The project area is defined as the area where action is proposed. The Public Land Survey System description for the proposed Howard Timber Sale Project is: T. 38 S., R. 03 E., in sections 11-13, 23, and 26; T. 38 S., R. 04 E. in sections 7, 17, 19, and 29; T. 39 S., R. 03 E., in section 1; and T. 39 S., R. 04 E., in sections 5; Willamette Meridian, Jackson County, Oregon (See map).

Howard Forest Management Project



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual projects or other uses. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.



What is BLM Proposing?

The BLM is proposing to conduct commercial timber harvest on BLM-administered lands in the area around Howard Prairie Reservoir using the silvicultural prescriptions summarized below. Timber would be harvested using tractor or cable yarding systems. The slash generated from timber harvest would be treated to reduce hazardous fuels. New temporary roads may be proposed for construction in order to access some of the stands proposed for forest management. The proposed Howard Project Area is located in the Upper Jenny Creek Analysis Area and most of the proposed project area was previously analyzed in the Plateau Thin Forest Management Project. The Swinning Timber Sale was implemented as a result of the Plateau Thin Environmental Analysis and work on that timber sale was recently completed. Please refer to the map for location of possible project units and the Swinning units (see website for color map).

Summary of Silvicultural Objectives and Prescriptions

The silvicultural objectives for treatment are as follows:

- 1) Increase resistance/resilience of forests stands to wildfire, drought, pathogens, etc.
- 2) Restore more characteristic stand structure and composition for mixed conifer forest types.
- 3) Accelerate development of structural complexity (e.g., increase growing space and decrease competition for large or legacy ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, white fir and cedar).

These objectives would be achieved by implementing the following prescriptions:

Selective Thinning (ST) - Maintain Northern Spotted Owl Nesting, Roosting, Foraging Habitat (NRF):

Selective thinning would be used in stands that are currently providing for northern spotted owl nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat to accelerate the growth of large trees while maintaining a minimum of 60 percent canopy cover and associated structure characteristics in order to maintain NRF habitat function at the stand level.

Density Management (DM) - Maintain Northern Spotted Owl Dispersal Habitat (DSP):

Density Management prescriptions are designed to widen the spacing of residual trees in order to promote the establishment and growth of trees in the understory and growth of large trees in the overstory. Density management treatments would maintain 40 percent canopy cover and associate structure characteristics needed to maintain northern spotted owl dispersal habitat.

What is BLM Asking the Public?

The BLM will be preparing an Environmental Assessment that will document the estimated environmental effects of the proposed Howard Forest Management Project. In order to appropriately address issues relevant to the proposal in the forthcoming environmental assessment, we are seeking your input. Comments should be as specific as possible and provide information on potential issues or concerns that the environmental analysis should address. Your input will be most useful if they are received by March 15, 2013. However, comments will be accepted and reviewed up until the time a decision on the project is made.

Please submit your comments to Ted Hass, Howard Forest Management Project, Bureau of Land Management, Medford District, Ashland Resource Area, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon 97504, or e-mail to Medford_Mail@blm.gov (Attention: Howard Forest Management Project). Questions and comments on the proposed action should be directed to Ted Hass (541) 618-2253. If you do not have comments at this time but wish to be kept informed about the Howard Forest Management Project as planning progresses, please complete and return the enclosed "Response Form" and you will be maintained on the mailing list.

Before including address, phone number, email-address, or any other personal identifying information in your comments, please be advised that your entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While individuals may request that the BLM withhold personal identifying information from public view, the BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so. If you wish us to withhold your personal information you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,



John Gerritsma
Field Manager
Ashland Resource Area

Enclosures

Enclosure 1

INTEREST RESPONSE FORM

ATTN: Medford District BLM
Ashland Resource Area Planning
Howard Forest Management Project
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504

Please include me on the Howard Forest Management Project mailing list:

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

We are trying to save paper and conserve resources. Please respond only if you wish to be kept informed.