

Fiscal Year 2015

# Medford District Annual Program Summary and Monitoring Report

BLM  
Medford District Office



## *Medford District Vision*

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

## *Medford District Mission*

We are dedicated to professional management of the public lands by sustaining a wide variety of uses to serve the American people, now and in the future. We do this with a land ethic of balanced resource management in an environmentally, socially, and economically sound manner.

We are engaged, knowledgeable, informed, supported, and contributing toward solutions to current and future challenges.

We contribute to and manage toward resilient landscapes and habitats.

We effectively contribute to our communities through a diverse and flexible portfolio of goods, services, and opportunities.





# Welcome

to the Medford District  
Bureau of Land Management!

The Medford District manages 872,218 acres of public lands in southern Oregon that contain some of the most ecologically and biologically diverse areas in Oregon.

The nearly 250 employees of the Medford District manage these public lands to provide a diversity of resources, such as timber, range, wildlife habitat, and minerals, and a variety of programs, such as environmental education, roads, and recreation opportunities.

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**Table S-1. Medford RMP Planning Area  
Summary of Resource Management Actions, Directions, and Accomplishments**

RMP Resource Allocation or Management Practice or Activity	Activity Units	Fiscal Year 2014	Cumulative Practices (2005-2014)	Projected Decadal Practices (2005-2014)
<b>Forest and Timber Resources</b>				
Regeneration harvest offered	acres	8	1,376	11,277
Commercial thinning/density management/uneven age harvest offered (harvest land base)	acres	803	15,989	18,584
Other	acres	1,387	7,989	548
Timber volume offered (harvest land base)	million board feet	46.7	241.2	570.2
Timber volume offered (other)	million board feet	0.2	9.6	N/A
Precommercial thinning (harvest land base)	acres	1,106	8,764	78,000
Precommercial thinning (reserves)	acres	106	2,183	N/A
Brushfield/hardwood conversion	acres	0	0	N/A
<b>Fire and Fuels</b>				
Site preparation (prescribed fire)	acres	385	984	6,000
Site preparation (other methods)	acres	0	995	1,000
Fuels Treatments				
Slash and hand pile	acres	4,434	107,621	125,000
Burn (hand pile or underburn)	acres	1,297	61,223	80,000
Fuels Treatment (other methods)	acres	0	0	0
<b>Silviculture</b>				
Planting—regular stock	acres	417	3,392	2,700
Planting—genetically selected	acres	971	3,722	10,300
Maintenance/Protection	acres	2,590	31,159	
Fertilization	acres	0	0	57,000
Pruning	acres	0	3,074	18,600
<b>Noxious Weeds</b>				
Noxious weeds control	acres	6,000	47,641	N/A
<b>Native Plants Program</b>				
Wildland native seed collections	collections	96	530	N/A
Native seed produced	pounds	7,000	113,240	N/A
Native seed applied	acres/ # seeded	980/ 7,500	8,340/ 78,204	N/A
<b>Range</b>				
Livestock grazing permits or leases	annual leases/ 10-year renewals	5/2	N/A	N/A

**Table S-1. Medford RMP Planning Area  
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RMP Resource Allocation or Management Practice or Activity	Activity Units	Fiscal Year 2014	Cumulative Practices (2005-2014)	Projected Decadal Practices (2005-2014)
Animal unit months (actual)	animal unit months	8,239	N/A	N/A
<b>Realty</b>				
Land sales	actions/acres	10	21	N/A
Land purchase	acres	970	9,348	N/A
Land exchanges	actions/ acres acquired/ acres disposed	0	0	N/A
R&PP leases/patents	actions	1	N/A	N/A
Road easements acquired for public/agency use	acres	3	41	N/A
Road rights-of-way granted	actions	22	531	N/A
Utility rights-of-way granted (communication sites)	actions	3	60	N/A
Special use permits	actions	0	26	N/A
Withdrawals completed	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
Withdrawals revoked	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
<b>Minerals/Energy</b>				
Oil and gas leases	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
Other leases	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
Mining plans approved	actions/acres	0	1	N/A
Mining claims patented	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
Mineral materials sites opened	actions/acres	0	0	N/A
Mineral material sites closed	actions/acres	0	0	N/A



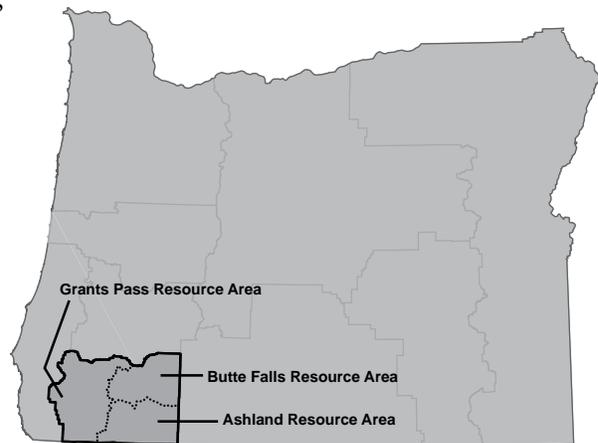
# Introduction

This Annual Program Summary is a review of the programs on the Medford District Bureau of Land Management for the period of October 2014 through September 2015. The program summary is designed to report to the public and to local, state, and Federal agencies a broad overview of activities and accomplishments for fiscal year 2015. This report addresses the accomplishments for the Medford District in such areas as watershed analysis, forestry, recreation, and other programs. Included in the Annual Program Summary is the Monitoring Report for the Medford District.

In April 1994, the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan) was signed by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior. The Medford District ROD (Record of Decision) and RMP (Resource Management Plan), approved in April 1995, adopted and incorporated the Standards and Guidelines from the Northwest Forest Plan in the form of Management Actions/Directions.

Both the Northwest Forest Plan and the ROD/RMP embrace the concepts of ecosystem management in a broader perspective than had been traditional in the past. Land use allocations covering all Federal lands within the range of the northern spotted owl were established in the Northwest Forest Plan. Analyses such as watershed analyses and Late-Successional Reserve assessments are conducted at broader scale and involve landowners in addition to BLM. Requirements to conduct standardized surveys or inventories for special status species have been developed for implementation at the regional level.

The Medford District administers more than 872,000 acres located in Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Coos, and Curry counties. Management of BLM lands on the Medford District is divided by three Field Offices, Grants Pass, Ashland, and Butte Falls, and the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument. Under the Northwest Forest Plan and ROD/RMP, management of these lands is included in three primary land use allocations: Matrix, where the majority of commodity production will occur; Late-Successional Reserve, where providing habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest related species is emphasized; and Riparian Reserve, where maintenance of water quality and the aquatic ecosystem is emphasized. Land allocations also include the Applegate Adaptive Management Area, with an emphasis on development and testing of new forest management approaches, and Congressionally Reserved Areas—Rogue National Wild and Scenic River; Wild Rogue Wilderness, Soda Mountain Wilderness, and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.



The ROD/RMP established objectives for management of 17 resource programs occurring on the District. Not all land use allocations and resource programs are discussed individually in a detailed manner in the APS because of the overlap of programs and projects. Likewise, a detailed

background of the various land use allocations or resource programs is not included in the APS to keep this document reasonably concise. Complete information can be found in the ROD/RMP and supporting Environmental Impact Statement, both available at the Medford District and Grants Pass Interagency Offices.

## Recent Court Rulings

### Survey and Manage

On February 18, 2014, the District Court for the Western District of Washington issued a remedy order in the case of Conservation Northwest et al. v. Bonnie et al., No. 08-1067- JCC (W.D. Wash.)/No.11-35729 (9th Cir.). This was the latest step in the ongoing litigation challenging the 2007 Record of Decision (ROD) to modify the Survey and Manage (S&M) Standards and Guidelines.

The remedy order contained two components. The order:

- (1) Vacates the 2007 ROD to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage S&M Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines, and
- (2) Allows for continued project planning and implementation for projects that relied on the 2011 Consent Decree and were being developed or implemented on or before April 25, 2013 (date of the Ninth Circuit Court ruling invalidating the 2011 Consent Decree).

Vacatur of the 2007 RODs has the effect of returning the agencies to the status quo in existence prior to the 2007 RODs. The status quo existing before the 2007 RODs were signed was defined by three previous rulings where:

- (1) Judge Pechman reinstated the 2001 ROD, including any amendments or modifications to the 2001 ROD that were in effect as of March 21, 2004 (CV-04-00844-MJP, 1/9/2006). This ruling incorporated the 2001, 2002, and 2003 Annual Species Reviews (ASR).
- (2) Judge Pechman ordered four categories of projects exempt from compliance with the S&M standards and guidelines (CV-04-00844-MJP, 10/11/2006, "Pechman exemptions").
- (3) the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in KSWC et al. v. Boody et al., 468 F3d 549 (9th Cir. 2006) vacated the 2001 ASR category change and 2003 ASR removal for the red tree vole in the mesic zone, returning the species to Category C throughout its range.

In summary, the current status of Survey and Manage is:

- (1) Follow the 2001 S&M ROD and Standards and Guidelines (S&G);
- (2) Apply the "Pechman exemptions;" and
- (3) Implement the 2001, 2002, and 2003 ASR modifications to the S&M species list, except for the changes made for the red tree vole.

# Budget

The Medford District receives its annual operating budget from direct congressional appropriations and other non-appropriated or indirectly appropriated revenue sources. The BLM Washington Office and BLM Oregon/Washington State Office determine the Medford District budget based on congressional appropriations and other authorities and departmental direction. In fiscal year 2015, the Medford District received a total of \$20.4 million in Oregon and California Land Grant (O&C) direct appropriations; \$2.3 million in Management of Lands and Resources direct appropriations; and \$8.7 million in other appropriated and non-appropriated funds (Table 1). These figures do not include carry-over from prior fiscal years, or fire suppression costs.

The other appropriations categories included \$3.7 million in hazard fuels reduction, emergency fire rehabilitation, and fire preparedness funds; \$ 2.1 million in land acquisition related funds; \$1.0 million in Secure Rural Schools Act funds; and \$0.4 million in deferred maintenance funds.

Permanent funds included \$0.3 million in recreation fee collections. Other funds included reimbursements for work performed for other federal agencies, appropriated funds transferred to BLM from other agencies, funds contributed from non-federal sources, and other miscellaneous collection accounts.

Total monetary resources (excluding prior year carry-over) available to the Medford District in fiscal year 2015 totaled \$31.3 million. The district had an additional \$6.6 million in prior year carry-over funds available from FY 2014, including \$0.17 million in land acquisition funds and \$1.5 million in deferred maintenance funds. Carryover also included, but was not limited to, \$1.4 million of timber sale pipeline restoration funds; \$0.7 million of forest ecosystem health and recovery funds; \$0.62 million in road use fee collections; and \$0.42 million in recreation fee collections.

<b>Appropriation Category</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
Oregon and California Land Grant	18,093,000	16,691,000	17,377,000	15,889,916	15,435,000	18,947,000	20,376,600
Management of Lands and Resources	3,840,000	2,192,000	3,698,000	4,387,682	2,937,000	3,822,000	2,258,000
Other Appropriated and Non-appropriated Funds	25,124,601	22,183,215	15,412,122	16,903,453	9,684,970	9,113,000	8,715,396
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,057,601</b>	<b>41,071,215</b>	<b>36,487,122</b>	<b>37,181,052</b>	<b>28,056,970</b>	<b>31,882,000</b>	<b>31,349,996</b>

## Land Use Allocations

Lands administered by the BLM are managed to maintain or restore healthy, functioning ecosystems from which a sustainable production of natural resources can be provided. Ecosystem management involves the use of ecological, economic, social, and managerial principles to achieve healthy and sustainable natural systems.

The building blocks for this strategy are composed of several major land use allocations under the 1995 RMP: riparian reserves; late-successional reserves; adaptive management areas; matrix, which includes general forest management areas and connectivity/diversity blocks; and a variety of special purpose management areas such as recreation sites, wild and scenic rivers, and visual resource management areas (Table 2).

**Table 2. Major Land Use Allocations on the Medford District**

Allocation	Acres
Congressional Reserves	14,267
Late-Successional Reserves	178,467
Late-Successional Reserves within Adaptive Management Areas	32,937
Marbled Murrelet Reserves	3,478
District Defined Reserves	1,290
Connectivity/Diversity Blocks	27,237
Applegate Adaptive Management Area	113,912
Reserved Habitat Area	16,732
General Forest Management Area	470,776
<b>Total</b>	<b>859,096</b>
NOTE: The allocations in this table do not have any overlapping designations. Approximately 369,200 acres of riparian reserves overlap all of these major land use allocations.	

## Late-Successional Reserves

Late-successional reserves are areas established by the NWFP and the Medford District ROD/RMP to maintain functional, interactive late-successional and old growth forest ecosystems. They are designed to serve as habitat for late-successional and old growth related species including the northern spotted owl.

The Medford District contains portions of five late-successional reserves: Elk Creek, Azalea, Galice Block, Munger Butte, and Jenny Creek. The Big Windy Complex of wildfires burned in the summer of 2013 in the Galice Block LSR. Late-successional reserve assessments were completed for all late-successional reserves.

## Aquatic Conservation Strategy

The Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) was developed to restore and maintain the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems contained within them on public lands. The ACS is composed of riparian reserves, key watersheds, watershed analysis, and watershed restoration.

The strategy is to protect salmon and steelhead habitat on Federal lands managed by the BLM. This conservation strategy employs several tactics to approach the goal of maintaining the “natural” disturbance regime. The ACS strives to maintain and restore ecosystem health at watershed and landscape scales to protect habitat for fish and other riparian-dependent species and resources and restore currently degraded habitat.

Silvicultural practices including timber harvest have been implemented within riparian reserves to control stocking, reestablish and manage stands, and acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain ACS objectives. These silvicultural practices include tree planting, commercial and precommercial thinning, and density management thinning.

Watershed analysis is required by the NWFP. Watershed analysis includes:

- analysis of the at-risk fish species and stocks, their presence, habitat conditions, and restoration needs;
- description of the landscape over time, including the effects of fire and the impacts of humans and their role in shaping the landscape;
- distribution and abundance of species and populations throughout the watershed; and
- characteristics of the geological and hydrologic conditions.

This information is obtained from a variety of sources such as field inventory and observation, history books, agency records, and old maps and survey records.

## Watershed Council Coordination

The District coordinates with and offers assistance to a number of watershed associations. This provides an excellent forum for exchange of ideas, partnering, education, and promoting watershed-wide restoration. The District is active with approximately 14 watershed associations.

## Air Quality

All prescribed fire activities conformed to the Oregon Smoke Management and Visibility Protection Plans. Prescribed burn operations are conducted in a manner to avoid or minimize smoke impacts in any populated area. Burning is conducted when ventilation conditions exist to achieve maximum smoke dispersion. Qualitative and some quantitative monitoring occurred during prescribed burning episodes in 2015. Ocular monitoring ensured smoke did not impact Smoke Sensitive Receptor Areas. Additionally, permanent nephelometer monitoring, which measures smoke particulates in the air, occurred to assure meeting smoke management guidelines.

## Water and Soils

### Restoration

Every two years, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) updates its Clean Water Act 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Waterbodies. The 303(d) List was last published and approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2010 and includes waterbodies on land managed by the BLM. DEQ and EPA revised the list in 2012. Final approval has not yet occurred and until approval happens, the 2010 303(d) List is the effective list for Clean Water Act purposes.

The Upper Klamath Subbasin and the Rogue and Umpqua Basins all have Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in place as required by the DEQ and EPA. The BLM is required to publish a Water Quality Restoration Plan (WQRP) for basins with an existing TMDL. These WQRPs address how the BLM will manage land and water so as to not further limit water quality as defined in the TMDL. The BLM has completed WQRPs for all land it manages and all have been approved by the DEQ and EPA. These WQRPs can be found at the following Web sites:

- Medford District BLM at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/activityplans.php>
- Oregon DEQ at <http://www.deq.state.or.us/WQ/TMDLs/basinlist.htm>

In general, WQRPs state that the BLM will either mitigate its land management actions by using Best Management Practices and Project Design Features and/or conduct water quality restoration activities to maintain or restore conditions detailed in the Northwest Forest Plan and its Aquatic Conservation Strategy. In coordination with other BLM personnel, the Medford District Water and Soils Program implemented the following restoration projects (Table 2) in 2015 to improve water quality and soil health on or adjacent to water quality limited streams.

**Table 3. Medford District 2015 Water Quality Restoration Projects**

Watershed	Stream Name	Restoration Project
Big Butte Creek	Rancheria Creek	Install cattle exclusion fencing on a pond to stabilize banks and increase water quality while also improving and controlling access to the pond for stock and wildlife.
Bear Creek, Iron Gate Reservoir – Klamath River, Cottonwood Creek, Jenny Creek	Emigrant Creek, Green Mountain Creek, Hutton Creek, Jenny Creek	Decommissioned 8.1 miles of roads within the Soda Mountain Wilderness and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Removed infrastructure; returned roads to adjacent contours and replanted to a natural state where appropriate.
Middle Applegate River	Thompson Creek	Decommissioned 0.2 miles of non-system road identified in the Pilot Thompson interdisciplinary planning process.

## Monitoring

BLM hydrology staff conducted 35 miles of stream surveys in the Ashland, Butte Falls, and Grants Pass Resource Areas in fiscal year 2015. These surveys ranged in purpose from timber sale support to restoration potential. The information collected is being used for project planning, updating the National Hydrography Database, long-term baseline monitoring, and effectiveness monitoring.

Water and soil resource monitoring was conducted at sites across the district for various parameters, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 4. Medford District Water Resource Monitoring in Fiscal Year 2015**

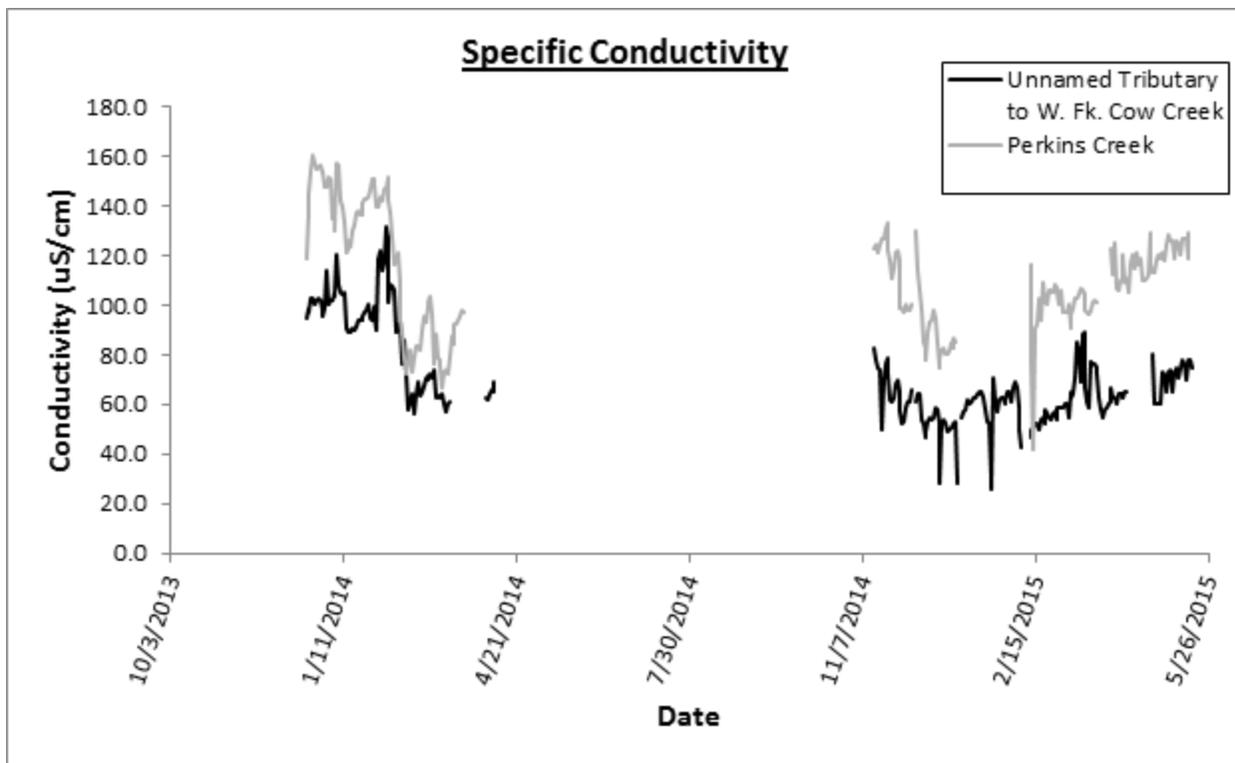
Parameter Monitored	Number of Data Points
Stream temperature (automated collection every 30 minutes)	18,255
Stream temperature (number of samples)	56
Air temperature (automated collection every 30 minutes)	2,190
Stream stage (number of sites)	10
Turbidity (automated collection, daily)	57
Conductivity (number of samples)	56
pH (number of samples)	56
Dissolved oxygen (number of samples)	5
Precipitation (automated recording, daily)	4,198
Stream discharge (number of sites)	5
Past restoration effectiveness monitoring (number of sites)	6
Soils health assessed (number of sites)	20

In addition to monitoring that our staff performs by themselves, the BLM measured 15 water quality parameters on a quarterly basis at the abandoned Almeda Mine through a contract. This data is collected to determine the extent of acid mine drainage and whether it is changing from baseline conditions.

In response to the Douglas Complex wildfires which burned over 50,000 acres in the summer of 2013, the Medford District established two water quality monitoring sites on small streams draining catchments which burned at high severity. Water quality samples were collected during the 2014 and 2015 water years. These monitoring sites were automated and collected samples four times every day throughout the winter and spring. Water sample collections were stopped when the hydrology staff deemed that baseline conditions had been reached and the chance of a storm event was low. The rationale for selecting these sites was based on the fact that while many published studies looked at the impacts of wildfires on larger stream systems, few studies had been published examining the effects of wildfire on small stream systems. The specific conductivity and turbidity of waters from Perkins Creek and an unnamed tributary to West Fork Cow Creek are displayed in Figures 4 and 5.

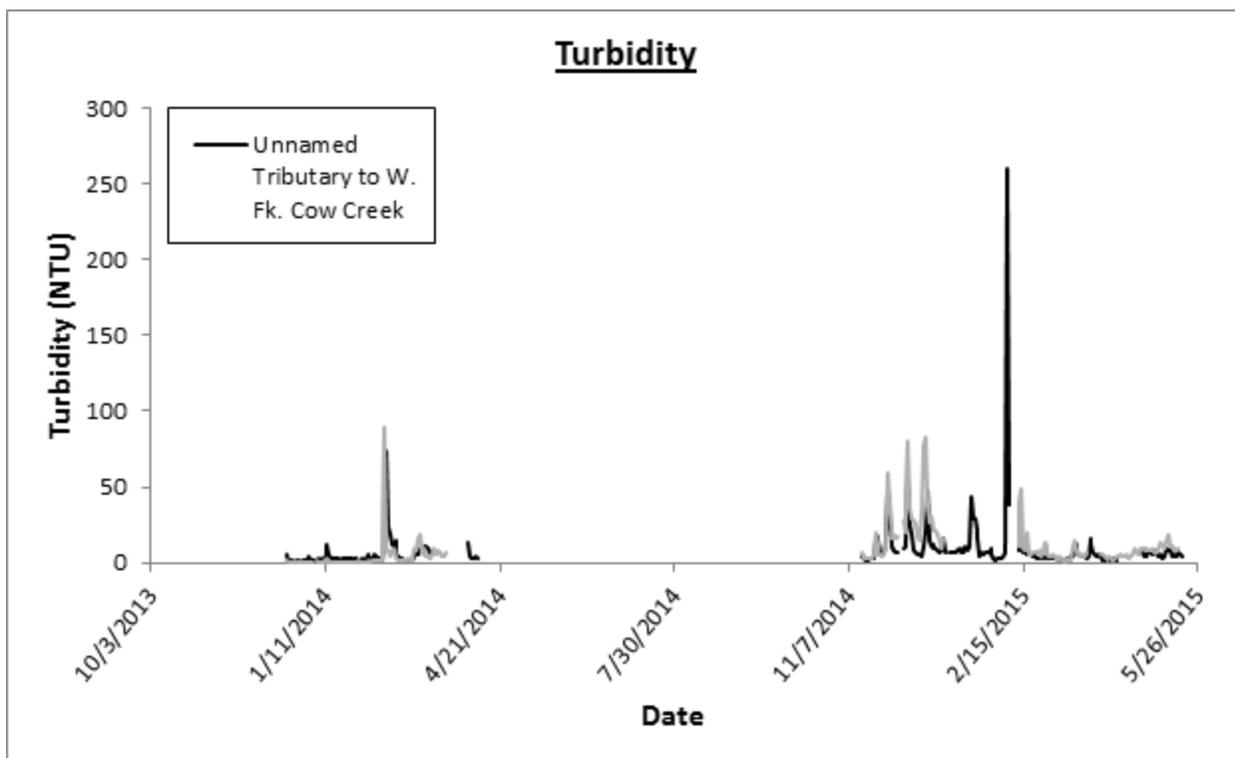
Specific conductivity measures the ability of water to conduct an electric current. Specific conductivity is measured in microsiemens per centimeter ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ ). Conductivity is dependent on the amount of dissolved solids in the water – higher conductivity values correspond to more dissolved solids. Turbidity is a measure of water clarity – how much the material suspended in water decreases the passage of light through the water – higher turbidity values correspond to poor water clarity. Turbidity is measured in nephelometric turbidity unit (NTUs).

Figure 4. Specific Conductivity Monitoring in Douglas Complex Wildfires



Note how the conductivity in both streams gradually increased in 2015 as opposed to 2014 where values steadily decreased.

Figure 5. Turbidity Monitoring in Douglas Complex Wildfires



Peak turbidity values generally relate to a disturbance in the watershed – usually a storm. Note how 2015 saw more events and larger events that raised turbidity in both streams to levels not seen in 2014. These increases could be related to more storms and larger storms, but could also be associated with soil movement and hillslope failure in the burned areas. Regardless, this figure represents standard turbidity values for the region where storm events trigger rapid rises in turbidity, but these events are short-lived and return to near baseline conditions within days of the event.

## Wildlife

### Terrestrial Habitat and Species Management

Wildlife habitat work generally occurs through implementation of other projects such as timber sales, fuels treatments, or silviculture projects. Wildlife biologists in each of Medford's three resource areas review those projects through interdisciplinary team processes. Biologists prioritize surveys for species and habitats to evaluate what species might occur in or adjacent to the project areas, assess relevant literature, and talk with species' experts to determine potential effects of proposed projects. Required surveys are accomplished with contracts or in-house personnel. Through the interdisciplinary process, biologists offer recommendations to managers to reduce impacts and minimize effects on species during sensitive periods (generally the reproductive period). Wildlife Biologists also propose projects that may improve habitat for key species or restore habitat when opportunities and funding allow.

Objectives of the land use allocations delineated in the Northwest Forest Plan and Resource Management Plan dictate the type and degree of wildlife conservation or management. Most timber harvest volume comes from matrix lands, which include GFMA (General Forest Management Areas), AMA (Adaptive Management Areas), and Connectivity/Diversity Blocks. Major habitat components are retained in timber projects through land use allocation, green tree retention, snag retention and recruitment, and coarse woody debris management. Specific measures were provided in the Northwest Forest Plan to meet the needs of most priority wildlife species found in the District.

In 2014, the Medford Wildlife program continued to work on several wildlife-related lawsuits, including project-level cases involving northern spotted owl, fisher, and Survey and Manage issues.

### Snags and Snag Recruitment

Dead wood provides important habitat components to many species of wildlife, including the northern spotted owl. The BLM leaves as many existing snags in a timber harvest unit as possible. Standing dead trees that meet RMP requirements are left in units if they do not conflict with prescribed burning or Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety guidelines.

### Connectivity

Designated connectivity/diversity blocks are spaced across the District. The BLM manages connectivity/diversity blocks on a 150-year harvest rotation and must maintain 25 to 30 percent of each block (640-acre section) in late-successional forest. Regeneration harvest areas in connectivity/

diversity blocks maintain a minimum of 12 to 18 green trees per acre. Additional connectivity is provided by the riparian management network (up to 2 site-potential tree lengths on each side of a stream) and by 250 known 100-acre northern spotted owl activity centers that are managed as late-successional reserves.

## Timber Sale Monitoring

A small core team on the Medford District developed a process to review spotted owl habitat conditions of the past-harvest acres that occurred on the Medford District since 2008. A random sample of units across each resource area was selected and included all treatment types and spotted owl effects determinations (Nesting, Roosting, Foraging (NRF) removal, NRF downgrade, NRF Treat and Maintain, Dispersal Removal, and Dispersal Treat and Maintain). The District sampled over 10 percent of the acres harvested since 2008 (604 of 5,611 acres) across the two physiographic provinces occurring on the District. The sample included 159 acres in 12 harvest units in the Oregon West Cascades Province and 445 acres in 37 harvest units in the Oregon Klamath Province.

The core team developed field monitoring standards to ensure data collection and survey method consistency. The purpose was to monitor spotted owl habitat conditions in post-harvest units. There are various stand characteristics used to determine spotted owl habitat type (e.g., canopy cover, tree diameter at breast height, number and position of canopy layers, snags, coarse woody debris). The primary habitat feature measured for this effort was canopy cover. Canopy cover is measured as the horizontal fraction of the ground that is covered directly overhead by tree canopy. The moosehorn tool was used to measure canopy cover. Additional habitat features were also recorded to document current habitat conditions and help make a current northern spotted owl habitat determination. Approximately 200 moosehorn readings were collected per unit for units greater than 6 acres in size and 100 readings for units that were less than 5 acres in size. The points were randomly generated in GIS for each unit.



Members from Coos Bay collecting canopy cover data (photo by K. Coyle)

A corporate approach was used to complete the field work. Approximately 15 employees from the Roseburg, Coos Bay, Klamath Falls, Salem, Eugene, and Spokane Districts came to Medford for two weeks assist with the field work.

## Survey and Manage Wildlife Species

The 2011 Settlement Agreement from *Conservation Northwest et al. v. Sherman et al.*, Case No. 08-1067-JCC (W.D. Wash.) went into effect July 21, 2011. A revised Survey and Manage species list was included in the settlement agreement and implemented by the BLM. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an opinion on April 25, 2013 that reversed the District Court for the Western District of Washington's approval of the 2011 Survey and Manage Settlement Agreement. The District Court issued an order on February 18, 2014 vacating the 2007 Record of Decision. As a result of the recent court ruling, BLM projects must meet the Survey and Manage direction in the *2001 Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines*.

Surveys for Survey and Manage Species, such as red tree voles, great gray owls, and mollusks, were performed for projects prior to ground-disturbing activities. The BLM applied protection buffers as needed to maintain species persistence according to species-specific management recommendations. General regional surveys are normally coordinated and funded through the BLM Oregon State Office. The Medford District did not assist with any regional surveys in fiscal year 2015.

## Special Status Wildlife Species

Wildlife biologists worked with other resource specialists and managers to implement the revised BLM Manual 6840—Special Status Species Management on rare and sensitive species (including species listed under the Endangered Species Act). Regular updates are made to the Special Status Species list (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp>). The last list was distributed on December 21, 2011.

Medford conducted work on several special status species projects during fiscal year 2015:

- **Bald eagle** (District-wide): Continued to monitor 22 known sites and conducted two mid-winter eagle counts
- **Golden Eagle** (District-wide): Monitored 12 sites
- **Peregrine falcon** (District-wide): Continued to monitor 10 known sites.
- **Fisher** (District Project): Continued surveys to help refine distributional boundaries on the District and collect genetic samples to help determine the range of the disjunct Oregon populations. Biologists surveyed 35 sample units and documented fishers at five sample unit, four of which were new locations. Thirteen genetic samples were collected and sent for analysis, but the results have not been received yet. In addition, eight camera stations were set up along the wild section of the Rogue River, but no fisher were detected.
- **Gray Blue Butterfly**: Surveys were conducted for the gray blue butterfly (*Plebejus podarce klamathensis*) in the Ashland and Grants Pass Resource Areas and Rogue River–Siskiyou National Forest under a Service First arrangement. This work was a continuation of surveys completed for this species in FY13 and FY 14, with FY15 being the final survey season associated with this project. In FY15, six areas were surveyed but unfortunately

no new detections of this species were documented. Surveys in this year focused on the western periphery of the range and therefore suitable habitat was extremely limited and this contributed to the negative survey results.

- **Mardon Skipper:** Surveys were carried out at one historic Mardon skipper (*Polites mardon*) site in the Ashland Resource Area. Multiple visits were made to this site in order to continue testing the newly developed Distance Sampling Protocol. On each visit, biologists surveyed the same transects for Mardon skippers. The Distance Sampling Protocol will be carried out again in 2016 at the same site.
- **Great Gray Owl nest site vegetation project:** An on-going effort to characterize vegetation conditions in the immediate vicinity of GGO nest sites progressed to the random control site phase this year. Vegetative data is being collected at randomly selected locations within the same regions as the GGO nest sites included in the study data set. Completion of data collection is targeted for 2016 with journal publication to follow.
- **Black-backed Woodpeckers:** Under the Northwest Forest Plan, black-backed woodpeckers are considered a Cavity Nester Requiring Additional Mitigation Measures. They were determined not to be sufficiently aided by applying mitigation measures for riparian habitat protection or other elements of the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA and USDI 2001). In the spring of 2015, the Medford District conducted broadcast call surveys for black-backed woodpeckers in the recent Oregon Gulch Fire (2014). This was the first time the Medford District had conducted black-backed woodpecker surveys. In total, there was 71 calling stations covering 547 acres of suitable habitat, each station was surveyed at least three times. This effort resulted in three black-backed woodpecker detections but no nest cavities were located.
- **Barred Owl Study:** Programmable GPS transmitters were attached to barred owls in the Grants Pass RA to test the rapidly growing technology of smaller tags and more efficient data collection.



Radio backpack attachment (photos Z. Fukuda)

## Federally-listed Species Management

The Medford District contains five species listed as Threatened or Endangered under the ESA (Endangered Species Act): northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, vernal pool fairy shrimp, Oregon spotted frog, and gray wolf. The fisher is currently proposed for listing as federally threatened. The District consults under Section 7 of the ESA on all activities proposed within the habitat of federally listed species. The District completed three Biological Assessments in fiscal year 2015 for Section 7 consultation evaluating multiple project effects to listed species and critical habitat. Wildlife

consultation documents are posted on the Medford District Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/consultation.php>.

## **Northern Spotted Owl (NSO)**

The northern spotted owl is federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in Washington, Oregon, and California. Critical habitat is designated for the species and a final recovery plan has been released.

In fiscal year 2015, the northern spotted owl Klamath Demography Study Area continued in the Grants Pass Resource Area as one of two BLM long-term owl effectiveness projects designed to rigorously monitor northern spotted population trends.

The District surveyed 188 historic spotted owl sites (not all to protocol) and 72 timber sale clearance routes (beyond historic sites) to assist with project planning.

### **NSO Recovery Plan**

In 2011, the US Fish and Wildlife Service released the Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl. The Recovery Plan contains 33 Recovery Actions, which are recommendations to guide activities needed to accomplish the recovery objectives and ultimately lead to delisting of the species. At the local level, the Medford District implemented Recovery Actions 2 and 3, by continuing demographic monitoring. Additionally, the Medford District implemented Recovery Actions 10 and 32, which aim to conserve spotted owl sites and habitat. Within the administrative units of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and the Medford District BLM, interagency/interdisciplinary teams were created to develop methodologies for identifying Recovery Action 32 habitat in the field and for implementing Recovery Action 10 for project planning.

In 2015, all three Resource Areas surveyed for Recovery Action 32/structurally complex forests for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 projects, as well as for the new Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon analysis. In 2014, the Medford District starting using the southwest Oregon interim guidance for incorporating Recovery Action 10 in planning fiscal year 2015 projects. Using both of these methodologies in BLM planning efforts has helped reduce the effects to northern spotted owls and has improved the consultation process.

## **Marbled Murrelet**

Marbled murrelets are federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in Washington, Oregon, and California. Critical habitat is designated for the species and a final recovery plan is in effect. No surveys were completed in 2015 in marbled murrelet habitat for projects within the required survey zone. No murrelets have ever been located in the Medford District, despite significant survey efforts.

## **Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp**

Vernal pool fairy shrimp are federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in Washington, Oregon, and California. Critical habitat is designated for the species and a final recovery plan has been released. Vernal pool fairy shrimp are only found on the Table Rocks in the

Medford District and the tops of the Table Rocks are designated as critical habitat for the species. The BLM continues its partnership with The Nature Conservancy to manage the Table Rocks and the associated vernal pool habitat.

Approximately 20 acres were treated within critical habitat for vernal pool fairy shrimp. Vernal pool fairy shrimp will benefit from the burning of non-native vegetation on the top of Lower Table Rock because the 20 acres of grassland that was burned was reseeded with native vegetation after removing non-native, invasive plants from around these seasonal vernal pools.

## Oregon Spotted Frog

The Oregon spotted frog was listed as threatened under the ESA on August 29, 2014 (79 FR 168:51658-51710). Designated critical habitat was also around proposed the known Oregon spotted frog locations (78 FR 168:53538-53579). On June 17, 2014, the US Fish and Wildlife Service reopened the comment period on the proposed critical habitat designation because of proposed changes to four critical habitat units (79 FR 117:34685-34695). One of these units, critical habitat unit 14, includes the one known Oregon spotted frog location on the Medford District. The Medford location is within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. The site is generally monitored annually by BLM or Southern Oregon University personnel. One egg mass was located in 2015. Plans are underway to implement a restoration project at the site with the goal being to raise the water level of one of the primary oviposition sites by augmenting a subsiding beaver dam with logs. This restoration effort also proposes the removal of emergent vegetation (e.g. cattails) in the same pond.

## Gray Wolf

The gray wolf is federally listed as endangered under the ESA in the portion of Oregon west of Highway 395 and Highway 78. Until 2011, gray wolves were only known to occur in Oregon east of these highways. In September 2011, one radio-collared male wolf (OR-7) dispersed from the Imnaha pack in northeast Oregon. Since 2011, ODFW (Oregon Fish and Wildlife Service) has been tracking OR-7's dispersal, which included some time in Northern California. ODFW has posted an Areas of Known Wolf Activity map on their Web site at <http://dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/AKWA/rogue.asp>. Since March 2013, ODFW has documented OR-7 spending the majority of his time in the southwest Cascades. In May 2014, ODFW reported that OR-7 had found a mate and then in June, pups were confirmed. In January, 2015, ODFW identified OR-7, his mate, and pups as the Rogue Pack and the known wolf activity map was updated on the ODFW website on January 13, 2015. ODFW also identified the Keno Area of Known Wolf Activity (AKWA) at this time. A portion of the Rogue Pack's AKWA overlaps the Butte Falls Resource Area and a portion of the Keno AKWA overlaps the Ashland Resource Area.

In 2015, the Medford BLM, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Forest Service biologists in southwest Oregon worked together to review literature, develop project design features, and develop a process to determine project-level effects to wolves.

## Special Habitats and Restoration

Special habitat is forested or nonforested habitat that contributes to overall biological diversity within the District. Special habitats may include meadows, seeps, cliffs, caves, and talus slopes for plants and animals.

Resource damage continues to occur in special habitats such as meadows. Mud bogging in low elevation meadows diminishes wildlife habitat suitability by creation of deep ruts and mud holes created by vehicles. BLM expends time and money to protect sensitive areas, replace vandalized road closures and gates, and educate the public on the importance of wise stewardship and prudent use of public lands. Road closures, signing, education and fencing continue to help address this issue.

## Big Game and Furbearers

Big game and mammal habitat objectives were included in fuels treatment prescriptions across much of the District that focused primarily on the Wildland-Urban Interface

## Jackson Access and Cooperative Travel Management Area

A portion of the Medford District lands are included in the Jackson Access and Cooperative Travel Management Area where ODFW restricts motor vehicle access to improve wildlife protection, reduce disturbance, and reduce resource damage. Only roads marked by a green reflector are open to motor vehicles from October 15 to April 30.

## Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Project

In the third year of a partnership with the Josephine County Chapter of the Oregon Hunters Association and ODFW volunteers, completed 51 acres of wildlife habitat enhancement in the Williams Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) Project Area near Panther Creek on the Grants Pass Resource Area. This work was accomplished using a combination of volunteer labor and a small contract paid for with funding contributions from both partner groups.

Fire suppression has resulted in over-dense forest stands and the encroachment of shrubs and trees into historically more open meadow and shrub/grass plant communities. As a result, wildlife habitat and species diversity and richness have declined and fire hazard and fire severity have increased in those communities. The purpose of the wildlife habitat restoration project is to reduce tree encroachment, stimulate browse species, and improve access for wildlife. Treatments will restore meadows, shrub/grass, and forests, particularly pine forests and oak woodlands, to conditions closer to historic levels.



OHA volunteers handpiling brush (Photo M. Main)

## Neotropical Migratory Birds

The Grants Pass Resource Area conducted fall and spring population and avian productivity monitoring in partnership with KBO (Klamath Bird Observatory). The mark-recapture data provides important spring and fall migration information for willow flycatchers, a Bureau special status species, and other Neotropical migratory birds. This data is being analyzed for long-term trends in abundance, reproduction, and survivorship, and is being compared with other similar stations from within the Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network. As part of this partnership, KBO, in cooperation with Southern Oregon University, trains college-level interns. KBO promotes monitoring efforts and its partnerships with the BLM and others by presenting at various meetings and by submitting articles and papers to be included in newsletters and technical publications.

## Bats

Biologists throughout the District collected data on bat species to contribute to regional species group evaluations. Medford BLM participated in the Oregon Grid program, a systematic sampling method across Oregon and Washington. BLM biologists throughout the District joined with Forest Service biologists to mist net and monitor eight sites in southwest Oregon as part of the long-term, interagency effort between the BLM and Forest Service to evaluate bat populations. The bat grid information is compiled by the Forest Service to establish baseline information.

Biologists, through an assistance agreement with Oregon Caves National Monument and Reserve conducted a mark-recapture study at the Cave to provide a population estimate. This study contributed to the long-term monitoring at the Cave, which began in 1958.

The Medford District received funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to reclaim abandoned mines that pose a safety hazard to people that might fall into the old mine shafts and tunnels. The open adits provide rare “cave” habitat for bats, several of which are special status species. BLM biologists have been working with other specialists to prioritize closures and design methods to make the mines safe for humans and wildlife, while also maintaining habitat for bat maternity roosts and hibernacula. Closure work started across the District in fiscal year 2012. The Abandoned Mine Lands program contracted bat survey work with BCI (Bat Conservation International) in fiscal year 2015 for preclosure surveys. The BCI team analyzed each adit for bat habitat potential and recommended proper closure procedures based on bat observations and habitat status. The BCI team surveyed 17 abandoned mine features in fiscal year 2015. The Abandoned Mine Lands program used a Forest Service Enterprise team to install bat friendly closures on 20 abandoned mine features across the Medford District.

# Aquatic Habitat and Species Management

## Watershed Council Cooperation

### District Wide

- Coordinated and attended meeting with the following watershed councils: Rogue River, Williams Creek, Illinois Valley, Seven Basins, Applegate, and the Rogue Basin Partnership.
- Coordinated with Cow Creek Tribe to look into projects that would help improve habitat for coho and Pacific lamprey.

### Grants Pass Resource Area

- Coordinated efforts with the Applegate Watershed Council for Powell Creek Restoration Project.
- Coordinated planning meeting with the Illinois Valley Watershed Council.

### Butte Falls Resource Area

- Coordinated with Rogue River Watershed Council to apply for an OWEB Grant for in-stream restoration on Sugarpine Creek.

### Ashland Resource Area

- Coordinated with Applegate Watershed Council with several projects, including donated logs and obtaining permits for in-stream restoration.

## Fish Passage

### Distict Wide

- District Fisheries Biologist and Hydrologist conducted a Stream Crossing Workshop for the Medford District.

### Grants Pass Resource Area:

- Cooperated with ODFW on fish screen issues at a water diversion on Beech-Platter Ditch on Althouse Creek.
- Collaborated with Federal Highways Administration on passage designs for the Cow Creek Scenic Highway Improvement project and the Quartz Creek Culvert Replacement Projects.
- Coordinated field assessment of Bridgepoint Diversion with NMFS, ODFW and Williams Watershed Council.

### Ashland Resource Area:

- Permanently decommissioned over 4 miles of roads which included three perennial stream crossings in the Klamath/Iron Gate Watershed.
- Collaborated with ODFW for fish screen installation on the North Fork of Little Butte Creek.

## Butte Falls Resource Area

- Two large dam removal projects were implemented this fiscal year in Evans Creek (tributary to the Rogue River). BLM provided funds and in-kind labor to help implement project.

## Population Monitoring

### Grants Pass Resource Area biologists monitored:

- Coordinated coho spawning surveys with a volunteer for three months on three streams; Whitehorse, Quines, Hogum Creek .
- Fall Chinook spawning in the Wild and Scenic Rogue River Recreational Section, as required for the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River: Hellgate Recreation Area Management Area Management Plan (RAMP).
- Conducted Coho spawning surveys on streams with previously replaced culverts, and fish habitat projects (Crooks, Cheney, Quartz, Draper).

### Ashland Resource Area biologists

- Monitored coho, steelhead, and cutthroat trout spawning from late fall through middle spring on two Applegate River tributaries.
- Monitored effectiveness of recent passage and in-stream projects on Star Gulch and Yale, Footh, Keeler, Lost, and Ninemile Creeks.
- Conducted a sucker population study in Jenny Creek, the first of its kind, and in the process re-captured previously tagged fish to assess growth rates, and discovered a previously unknown parasite in the system.
- Assessed stream type and habitat on approximately 3 miles of small streams in numerous timber sale unit areas.
- Coordinated and assisted ODFW with steelhead spawning surveys in several tributaries on BLM lands in the Little Butte Watershed, and on the mainstem Applegate River; fish salvage was conducted on tributaries which were drying up in the Applegate watershed.
- Assisted with one spring chinook carcass survey on the mainstem Rogue River and worked with Crater Lake National Park with bull trout population monitoring in the late spring.

### Butte Falls Resource Area

- Assessed stream type, habitat and fish absence/presence on approximately 5 miles in the Big Butte timber sale unit areas.
- Conducted present/absence surveys in West Fork Evans Creek, Sugarpine Creek, West Fork Trail Creek, West Branch Elk Creek, and North Big Butte Creek.
- Assisted Ashland Resource Area in the Jenny Creek Sucker population survey.

## In-stream and Riparian Projects

### Grants Pass Resource Area

- Secured future restoration logs for Elk Valley, Farout, Cold Elk and Burnt Rattler Creek.
- Coordinated and planned West Fork Cow Creek restoration with partners and contractors.
- Implemented 1 mile of stream restoration in Powell Creek in partnership with the Applegate Watershed Council.
- Partnered with Illinois Valley Watershed Council to repair chronic sediment source to coho tributary at Studhorse Gulch.

### Ashland Resource Area

- Assisted with implementation of riparian and upland road obliterations in the Soda Mt. Wilderness Area.
- Implemented Large Wood restoration project in Ninemile Creek to improve CH for SONCC Coho.
- Met with SOU prof./ecologist and resource staff regarding potential future spotted frog habitat restoration in Parsnips Lakes.
- Applied for funds to implement a road obliteration/channel restoration/riparian project in Lincoln Creek in FY 2016.

### Butte Falls Resource Area

- Coordinated and planned with ODFW, Rogue River Watershed Council, and Cow Creek Tribe for in-stream restoration in West Fork Evans Creek and Sugarpine Creek.

## Endangered and Threatened Species (ESA)

### District Wide

- The Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho Recovery Plan launched in the fall of FY15; the Medford District began to implement recovery actions to contribute toward the recovery of this listed species.
- Representation at all Level 1 meetings with the help from the three Resource Area biologists.

### Ashland Resource Area

- Initiated and completed informal consultation with NMFS for the South Fork timber sale and received LOC for NLAA effects determination.

### Grants Pass Resource Area

- Began early consultation talks with NOAA for the Straydog Mining Plan of Operations.
- Communicated with NMFS biologist about use of Programmatic BO for fish passage improvement projects.

# NEPA Planning

## District Wide

- Analysis and meetings were conducted for the Westside Oregon BLM Restoration Prioritization Strategy.
- Review and comment on the draft Western Oregon Resource Management Plan EIS regarding fisheries/aquatic impacts due to mining, grazing, recreation, and timber.
- Involved in the Rogue Basin Partnership and the development of their Rogue Restoration Action Plan.
- Continue with NEPA documentation for ROWs, CEs, DNAs, Forest Treatments (silviculture and PCT), Recreation, and Grazing.

## Grants Pass Resource Area

- Analyses continued in the Grants Pass Resource Area for Mining Notices and Plans of Operation for claims on Quines Creek, North Fork Galice Creek, and Starveout Creek.
- Involved in the Coarse Gold ID team meetings and the Stray Dog Plans of Operation interdisciplinary team field trips, EA development and coordinated talks with NOAA.
- Involved in the Pappas notice reclamation work including field trips and meetings
- Received the Reelfoot Reclamation-Award from mining staff.
- Attended the Benton Mine Road Project field trips and meetings.
- Coordinated field trips and mining letters for the Powell Creek in-stream restoration project.
- Provided fisheries and aquatic analysis for NEPA documentation on timber sales (Upper Cow, Cold Elk) and Reeves Creek post fire salvage.

## Ashland Resource Area

- Provided input for all Resource Area Projects completed or initiated in FY 15. This included fish and aquatic habitat analysis on timber sales (South Fork, Neds Bar, Oregon Gulch post fire salvage).
- Identified and marked on the ground Riparian Reserve boundaries for several streams in the Neds Bar and SFLB areas.
- Identified and marked all RRs in the Oregon Gulch salvage project.
- Served on IDTs for CSNM and SMW planning.
- Assisted with a Watershed Analysis update and a TMO for the South Fork Little Butte Creek subwatershed.

## Butte Falls Resource Area

- Analyzed impacts from the Big Butte timber sales and began initial surveys for Bieber Salt

and Lost Rogue/Flounce Back Timber Sales

## Public Outreach

### District Wide

- Attended public outreach meeting for the Draft Western Oregon Resource Management Plan

### Grants Pass Resource Area

- Continued the educational fish tank display in the lobby as a demonstration of salmon life history.
- Participated in Envirothon training sessions for Oregon Championship Team from Logos Charter School.
- Presented riparian ecology topics to science classes in Illinois Valley schools.

### Butte Falls Resource Area

- Led a Seven Basins Watershed Youth Club outing at West Fork Evans Creek. The event gave kids the opportunity to learn and study aquatic macroinvertebrates, native fish species, watershed health and restoration, and habitat surveying.
- Assisted with the West Fork Evans Creek Family day event. Introduced parents and kids to the stream biology including macroinvertebrates, amphibians, native fish and freshwater muscles.
- Assisted with a Labor Day Weekend outreach event on the Rogue River teaching families about macroinvertebrates and salmon.
- Helped out with four outreach events at McGregor Park. Outreach Events helped instruct kids on Forest Health, Stream health, macroinvertebrates, salmon biology, and salmon life cycle.

## Native Plant Program

The Medford District manages a native plant program that produces high quality native grass and forb seeds for rehabilitation and restoration projects throughout southwest Oregon on BLM, State, and private lands. In 2015, native seeds of local and regional genotypes were selected from the Medford District inventory to rehabilitate areas burned in regional wildfires and disturbed during fire suppression on BLM and U.S. Forest Service lands. Native seeds were also planted on oak woodland restoration sites, rare plant habitat improvement projects, timber sale areas, construction sites, recreation sites, and high-value conservation sites damaged by off-highway vehicles and noxious weeds. Program staff used contracts



Annual sunflowers at J. Herbert Stone Nursery.

and agreements with several growers throughout the Pacific Northwest, including the J. Herbert Stone Nursery, in Central Point, Oregon, to grow approximately 15 acres of seed-increase fields to meet the Medford District's future native seed needs.

Other notable program accomplishments in 2015 included:

- contributed to the Seeds of Success program by completing 109 wildland seed collections from 85 species, including from 27 species not previously collected on the district;
- managed seed increase fields for 30 forb and 12 grass species;
- managed a 20,000-pound seed inventory;
- seeded approximately 600 acres of disturbed BLM lands;
- planted 700 live shrubs and herbaceous plants on decommissioned roads with help from Workforce Oregon, who learned about habitat restoration, native plants, and pollinators;
- planted 500 live shrubs and herbaceous plants to rehabilitate disturbed areas at Eight Dollar Mountain ACEC and Cathedral Hill Recreation Site;
- provided native seeds and weed-free straw to several partners for rehabilitation and restoration projects outside of BLM lands throughout the Klamath-Siskiyou region.



**Tufted poppies at J. Herbert Stone Nursery.**

## Weed Management

The Medford District uses a variety of approaches to reduce the impacts of noxious weeds and other nonnative invasive plants on natural communities and commercial forests: (1) pre-disturbance project surveys for weeds, (2) mapping and characterizing weed infestations, (3) implementing project design features to reduce the spread of weeds, (4) control treatments, (5) monitoring, (6) education and outreach, and (7) participating in collaborative efforts to prevent the spread of noxious weeds, such as the voluntary weed-free quarry accreditation program sponsored by the Jackson County and Josephine County Cooperative Weed Management Areas. The Medford District maintains other key weed management partnerships with Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and U.S. Forest Service, among others.

In 2015, Medford District botanists and contractors surveyed for noxious weeds on over 24,000 acres of proposed project areas and areas disturbed by recent wildfires, documenting 276 new significant noxious weed sites. Two newly observed species of particular concern are six-petal water primrose and parrot's feather, both of which were discovered at several locations on the Rogue River.

Medford District staff, contractors, and partners treated noxious weeds on 2,035 project acres by spot-spraying with approved herbicides. An additional 605 acres of weeds were pulled by hand, and 25 acres of weeds were mowed to reduce seed production. Frequently treated weeds included Himalayan blackberry, yellow starthistle, Scotch broom, rush skeletonweed, Dyer's woad, Canada thistle, bull thistle, meadow knapweed, spotted knapweed, and Japanese knotweed. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of weed treatments, Medford District staff conducted post-treatment monitoring on 655 treated acres. For sites with unsuccessful treatments, target weeds were retreated or scheduled for additional future treatment and monitoring.

## Special Status Plants and Fungi

In compliance with BLM Manual 6840 (Special Status Species Management), Medford District staff, contractors, and cooperators implement a program for special status plants and fungi that includes surveys, monitoring, consultation, and conservation actions. In 2015, the Medford District's botanists and contractors surveyed over 21,000 acres in order to locate and protect special status species within proposed BLM project areas. The surveys mostly occurred in areas proposed for timber sales, silvicultural treatments, fuel reduction treatments, and grazing allotment renewals. Surveyors located 588 new special status species sites, including six new Gentner's fritillary (federally listed) occurrences.

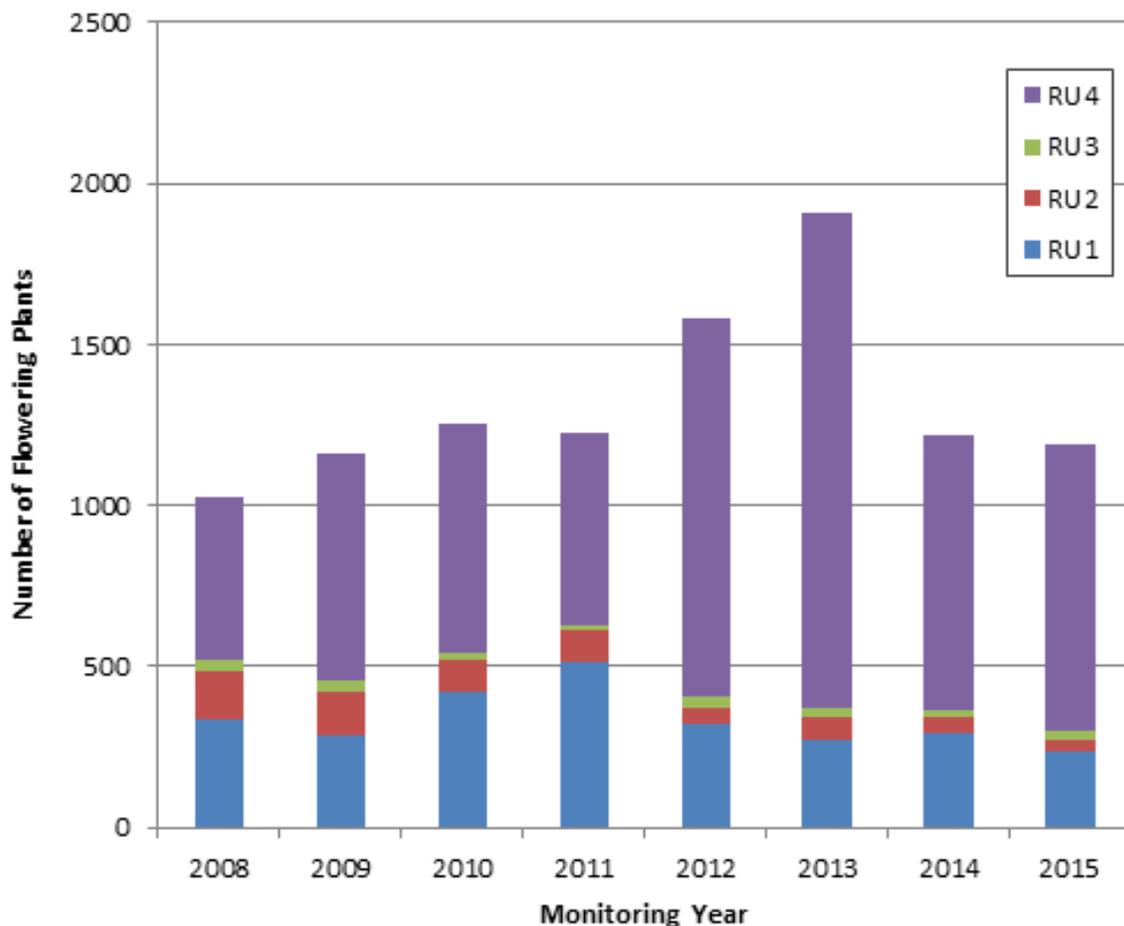
### Federally Listed Plants

In 2015, some notable conservation projects continued to support the recovery of federally listed plant species or to help prevent the need for listing candidate species:

#### **Gentner's fritillary (*Fritillaria gentneri*)—Endangered**

**Annual population monitoring:** Since 2008, BLM has been annually monitoring the number of flowering plants occurring at 58 sites on the Medford District. In 2015, we observed the lowest flowering output across all 58 sites since 2009 (figure 1). Only 1,187 flowering plants were observed, down from 1,907 flowering plants in 2013. There were 20.5 mean flowering plants per site, down from 32.9 per site in 2013. A majority of sites (78%) had fewer than 10 flowering plants, including 25 sites without flowering plants.

**Bulb collection and outplanting:** In collaboration with Oregon Department of Agriculture's Native Plant Conservation Program, BLM continued to assist with recovery actions for Gentner's fritillary in 2015. The project involves collecting bulblets (a mechanism of asexual reproduction) in the wild, growing plants in a greenhouse, transplanting to recovery sites, and monitoring the health and vigor of transplants. To date, over 42,000 bulbs have been planted at 22 sites. Survivorship of transplants has been variable across outplanting sites, with larger bulbs more likely to survive than small bulbs. In spring 2015, 101 outplanted bulbs produced flowering plants, confirming that this method is an effective way to increase population size and accelerate recovery. Future outplanting efforts will continue, primarily at sites where transplants have shown the highest survivorship, vigor, and potential for long-term success.



**Figure 1. Cumulative number of flowering Gentner's fritillary plants in 58 sites, within four Recovery Units (RUs)\*, monitored annually, 2008-2015.**

\* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Recovery plan for *Fritillaria gentneri* (Gentner's fritillary). Portland, Oregon. viii + 89 pp.

**A new Conservation Agreement:** In July, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Medford District signed a Conservation Agreement that designates eight *Fritillaria* Management Areas (FMAs) on BLM lands and establishes a framework for their future management. FMA designation allows BLM to focus its recovery actions within these sites. Within each site, BLM will complete surveys for Gentner's fritillary, map vegetation communities, assess habitat condition, monitor populations, augment populations, reduce threats from off-road vehicles, and improve Gentner's fritillary habitat. FMAs comprise 6,583 acres, but boundaries may be expanded if needed to manage adjacent populations or incorporate priority habitat.

### **Cook's desert parsley (*Lomatium cookii*)—Endangered**

**Population monitoring in the Illinois Valley:** The Institute for Applied Ecology, with assistance from the Medford District, continued to monitor populations of Cook's desert parsley in the Illinois Valley in 2015, as they have for over 20 years. Deteriorating habitat conditions from encroaching shrubs and conifers and abnormally dry winters appear to be adversely affecting these populations.

Reports documenting IAE's Cook's desert parsley population monitoring to date are available at <http://www.appliedeco.org/reports>.

**Habitat improvement in the Illinois Valley:** In response to observed population trends and habitat changes, the Medford District began implementing habitat improvement projects in Cook's desert parsley critical habitat on BLM lands in the Illinois Valley. Manual vegetation reduction treatments were completed on 61.6 acres, across four critical habitat units, and seven Cook's lomatium populations, during fiscal year 2015. Cut vegetation was lopped and scattered on 19 acres and piled for future burning on the remaining acres. The response of Cook's desert parsley to habitat treatments will be measured using IAE's long-term monitoring plots.

### **Siskiyou mariposa lily (*Calochortus persistens*)—Candidate**

**Conservation Agreement implementation:** The Medford District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Klamath National Forest collaborated on implementing the Siskiyou Mariposa Lily Conservation Agreement, which identifies actions to remove or reduce threats to this species, improving its long-term protection. To accomplish some of its tasks, the Medford District partnered with the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Native Plant Conservation Program, which made significant progress toward (1) developing a seed storage plan, (2) researching propagation techniques, (3) developing a population augmentation plan, and (4) researching the competitive interactions between Siskiyou mariposa lily and Dyer's woad, a noxious weed with allelopathic properties. On October 8, 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published its findings on the petition to list Siskiyou mariposa lily under the Endangered Species Act, concluding that listing the species as endangered or threatened, or maintaining as a candidate, was not warranted.

## **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

The Medford District currently manages 35 existing and proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), including 14 Research Natural Areas (RNAs). Medford District staff and partners monitored many designated and interim sites in 2015 for a variety of reasons, including assessing the status of rare plant and weed populations, assessing the impacts of recreation and OHV trespass, and investigating reports of illegal activity.

Unauthorized OHV use resulted in resource damage in several ACECs, particularly those located in the Illinois Valley. To reduce further impacts, the Grants Pass Resource Area constructed fences and rock barriers and installed new signs in three ACECs.

The Medford District partnered with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest to assess the condition of serpentine wetlands and associated rare plant populations at Eight Dollar Mountain ACEC, West Fork Illinois River RNA, Woodcock Bog RNA and other critical wetland sites in the Illinois Valley. The project objectives were to (1) develop and implement an efficient monitoring protocol to document the current status of five rare plant species and potential threats to priority wetlands, (2) propose appropriate management treatments, and (3) prioritize sites for management, if warranted. Fieldwork was completed at most sites and will resume in 2016.

In cooperation with the Pacific Northwest Interagency Natural Areas Network and the Western Stewardship Science Institute, the Medford District also continued to conduct long-term vegetation monitoring of RNAs following a standard protocol for natural areas throughout the Pacific Northwest. Monitoring transects and plots were resampled at Woodcock Bog RNA in 2015. Guidebooks for Grayback Glades RNA and Lost Lake RNA were finalized for publication and will be available from the Medford District Office.

## Cultural Resources

### Highlights

The cultural program started NHPA Section 110 survey of the Southern Pacific Railroad abandoned Buck Rock Tunnel. This property is very unique and presents a great opportunity for the BLM to partner with local historians and the public



**Southern Oregon Historical Society sign placed by the west portal**



**Entrance of the west portal**

to study and protect the site.

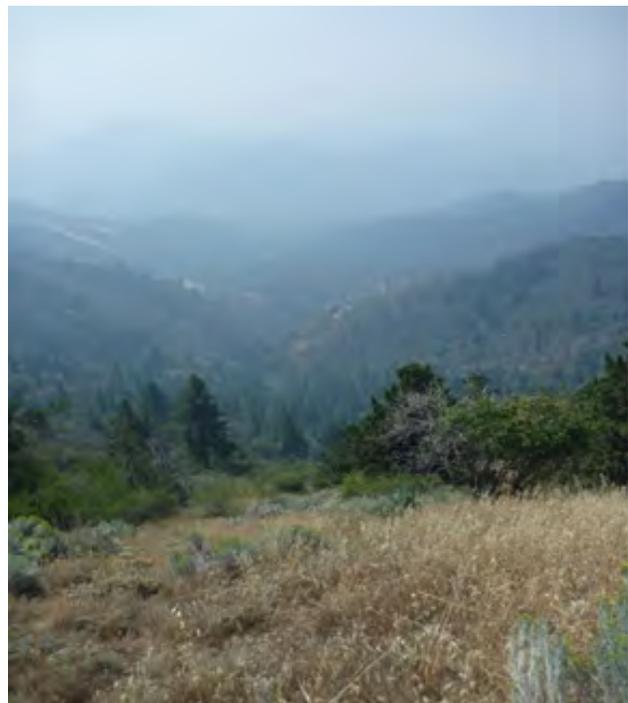
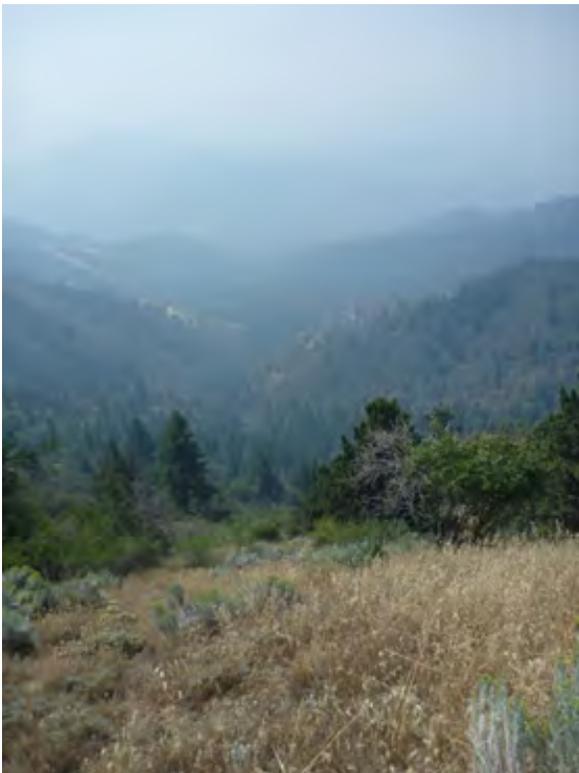
The Buck Rock Tunnel is basically the remains of the original railroad route over the Siskiyou's which was surveyed in 1863 by Simon G. Elliot and in 1864 by Col. Charles Barry. Twenty four years later in 1887, through bankruptcy and numerous changes of ownership, the Southern Pacific Railroad acquired the line and started construction. For unknown reasons, the route was changed and the Buck Rock tunnel and line was abandoned.

## Jack-Ash Trail, partnership with Siskiyou Upland Trail Association (SUTA) August 2015

Survey of the Jack-Ash Trail was completed in August 2015. The Jack-Ash trail is being developed to provide a large loop trail system connecting the north and south ends of the Sterling Mine Ditch Trail (SMDT). The new trail will be built around and over Anderson Butte and will run primarily along the ridges and crests of the Siskiyou Mountains.



**Proposed trail area, showing diverse habitat and forest stands**



**Views of the Applegate Mountains and valleys from the proposed trail area**

## Sterling Mine Ditch Trail Kiosk Installation (partnership with SUTA, REI and BLM) March 2015

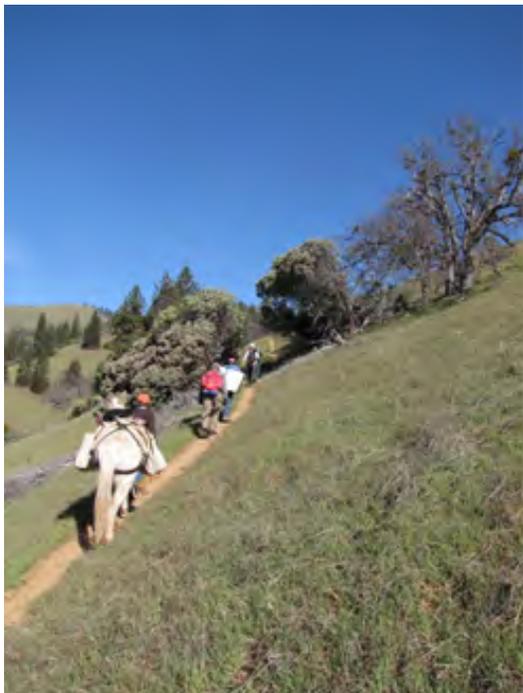
Ashland Resource Area archaeologist Lisa Rice assisted with the installation of an interpretive kiosk along the trail. The panel provides a glimpse into the history of the area and the Sterling Mine Ditch.

## Resources and People Camp (RAP Camp) June 2015

Medford District BLM archaeologists Lisa Rice and Julie Arwood brought their “Archaeology in a Box.” This educational outreach tool helps students have a better understanding of what archaeology is and what an archaeologist does. Students learn by excavating artifacts out of the portable bins, writing a description of them, and piecing together the sites story based on the artifact assemblage.

## Waldo Clean-up Day

Grants Pass archaeologist Julie Burcell organized a clean-up day at the historic Waldo Cemetery. The day was a success with over 20 members of the public in attendance. Several bags of garbage were picked up and restoration work was completed on a couple of the historic fences in the cemetery.



Pack mule used to help carry equipment



Installation of the interpretive sign is complete

## Data Reorganization/Clean-up

The cultural program made great strides this year in organizing and cleaning up the cultural databases. The data stewards have been busy attending meetings to assist the state office in launching the Oregon Cultural Resource Information System (OCRIS). This new database will streamline research work and assist archaeologists in completing cultural work more efficiently. Work has begun on organizing and filing hard copy records, reports and other cultural resource management

information at both the district and Grants Pass offices. The cultural program will move all of these records into our new storage area.

## Work with Tribes

### Reburial at Gold Nugget Wayside

Due to the inadvertent discovery of human remains, the BLM engaged with the Cow Creek Tribe of Umpqua Indians, The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community, and The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz to re-inter the remains and stabilize the site. Tribal members held ceremonies and assisted in planting native plants across the site to stabilize soils and provide protection for buried remains.

### Tribal Monitoring at Hungry Hill

Tribal monitors also assisted with reforestation efforts out at the Hungry Hill Battle site this year. Grants Pass archaeologist Julie Arwood was out with the Cow Creek tribe's monitor and discussed native plants found in the battle area. A good population of bear grass is located in the battle area, and the tribes are interested in managing the area for bear grass (a basket making material) and other native plants.

## 2015 Cultural Resources Program Annual Summary

During fiscal year 2015 the District's cultural resources program:

- Furthered work on the cultural resource databases, assisting the State Office to implement the new OCRIS database. This has included: data cleanup and organization tasks; a) digitization and organization of hard copy project reports, site records and other BLM documents, b) Collection, digitization and organization of historic maps and documents, c) Identification of spatial errors in cultural datasets, then cleanup and correction of spatial errors.
- Improved data management to more easily consolidate information across the District and track information more consistently.
- Developed and implemented a comprehensive in-house GIS geodatabase with a designed schema (structure) tailored for use in three areas of spatial data management: a) for use in the field in GPS units so that data collection is standardized; b) to store, manage and organize



**Cow Creek Tribal monitor helping to plant native plants at site**

cultural program spatial data within the context of a project/undertaking; and c) to store, manage and organize all cultural program spatial data located on the BLM network,

- Solicited tribal input on various undertakings and planning efforts from the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, The Klamath Tribes and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and kept an updated list of interested tribes and tribal officials.
- Strengthened tribal relationships through consistent communication on projects, planning, and monitoring opportunities. Conducted a number of staff to staff meetings with tribal partners to discuss cultural resources as well as other issues as they arose.
- Completed re-internment of inadvertently discovered human remains by supporting Tribes' process and worked with Tribes to stabilize site.
- Implemented the Data Sharing MOU with the Cow Creek Tribe of Umpqua Indians, transferring site information for over 500 prehistoric sites to the Tribe. The District is now in the process of creating a similar MOU with The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde.
- Provided Cultural Resource Management support to the District's Abandoned Mine Land Inventory effort.
- Communicated with individual Resource Area staff about project treatments that could affect cultural resources.
- Completed cultural resource evaluations in advance of project proposals
- Consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for proposed project undertakings and site evaluations. Strengthened the District's relationship with the SHPO through participation in mediation process.
- District archaeologist was interviewed for the mediation process and presented the findings to the District Leadership Team.
- Worked closely with SHPO on two high priority projects that required additional consultation with outside parties and documentation (Land transfer and fire recovery project).
- Made progress to monitor more sites, and complete pro-active surveys on the District in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Over 50 sites were monitored in 2015 through contract and by BLM archaeologists.
- Completed the NRHP nomination for Zane Grey Cabin, which has now gone on to the Washington Office.
- Completed the contract for the District's Mining Ditch Context, a document that will assist archaeologists in recordation and evaluation of mining ditches and other water conveyances across the district. The Context will be submitted to SHPO for review. The district will be looking to use the process and recommendations in the Context in order to streamline compliance efforts.
- Conducted inventories for projects on over 2,500 acres of previously unsurveyed lands.

- Recorded 22 previously unrecorded sites as a result of project surveys.
- Completed 39 Determinations of Eligibility for sites across the district.
- Public outreach and education goals were addressed by conducting presentations during the Oregon Archaeology Celebration Month, National Native American Month, presentations to students at Southern Oregon University, RAP Camp, and for other community outreach events. A total of eight presentations were given by cultural staff to the public reaching over 600 people.
- Recorded one new paleontological site, the district's first!
- Hired a new permanent, and a new term archaeologist for GPIO. Hired a new archaeologist for Butte Falls. The permanent position was a replacement of retiring GPIO archaeologist Merry Haydon. The term positions were due to increasing workloads.

## Rural Interface Areas

The 1995 ROD/RMP objective for the rural interface areas is to consider the interests of adjacent and nearby rural residential land owners during analysis, planning, and monitoring activities occurring within managed rural interface areas. These interests include personal health and safety, improvements to property, and quality of life.

In the past year, the BLM worked with numerous local individuals and groups such as watershed councils, fire protection groups, area citizen groups, and environmental coalitions to mitigate many features of land management that are in close proximity to private residences.

Gates and other barricades are used to stop unauthorized use of public roads and dust abatement measures mitigate impacts to neighbors. The BLM is also attempting to reduce fuels hazards on public lands adjacent to private properties (see Wildfire and Fuels Management section).

## Socioeconomics

The Medford District continues to successfully contribute to local, state, national, and international economies through monetary payments, sustainable use of BLM-managed lands and resources, and use of innovative contracting as well as other implementation strategies.

The District provides employment opportunities for local companies, contractors, and individuals through a wide variety of contractual opportunities and through the harvest of forest products. These opportunities include selling commercial timber and other timber products (e.g., poles, small diameter timber, biomass); thinning and planting trees; repairing storm-damaged roads; and collecting special forest products such as ferns, mushrooms, and firewood. The District also provides developed and undeveloped recreational facilities (such as campgrounds, hiking trails, boat ramps, and wildlife viewing facilities) that bring visitors to the area, providing indirect benefits to tourism-related businesses.

## Monetary Payments

The BLM contributes financially to the local economy in a variety of ways. One of these ways is through monetary payments. They include PILT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes), Secure Rural Schools, and O&C Payments. Payments of each type were made in fiscal year 2015 as directed in current legislation.

### Revenues (Payments to State and Counties)

Proceeds generated by the sale of timber, grazing and mineral fees, PILT, and other Federal fund sources are distributed to the state to produce revenues for schools, counties, and local taxing districts.

- \$31.4 million Payments in Lieu of Taxes for Oregon in fiscal year 2015 (Table 5)
- \$38.3 million in O&C Payments and Secure Rural Schools Funds for Oregon in 2015 (Table 5)
- \$45.3 million in grazing fees, recreation fees, timber sales, and other collections for Oregon and Washington in 2014\*
- \$256.0 million in expenditures for BLM resource management for Oregon and Washington in 2014\*

\*SOURCE: BLM Facts—Oregon and Washington 2014

### Payments in Lieu of Taxes

”Payments in Lieu of Taxes” (PILT) are Federal payments to local governments that help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable Federal lands within their boundaries. The key law is Public Law 94-565, dated October 20, 1976. This law was rewritten and amended by Public Law 97-258 on September 13, 1982 and codified as Chapter 69, Title 31 of the United States Code. The law recognizes the inability of local governments to collect property taxes on Federally-owned land can create a financial impact. (<https://www.doi.gov/pilt>)

Eligibility for the PILT program is reserved for local governments (mostly rural counties) that also provide vital services, such as public safety, housing, and transportation. These jurisdictions provide significant support for national parks, wildlife refuges, and other federal recreation areas throughout the year. PILT seeks to compensate them for their support and foregoing tax revenue from these federal lands.

Congress appropriated nearly \$405 million for PILT payments made to counties in June 2015. Congress also appropriated an additional \$37 million in PILT funding, which became available in October 2015. The Continuing Appropriations Act of 2016, (P.L. 114-53) directed these funds be applied to the fiscal year 2015 PILT program.

The \$37 million was subject to a 6.8 percent sequestration reduction – a set of automatic spending cuts required under the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA, P.L. 112-25) – leaving \$34,484,000 in additional funds available for payments to local governments. That brought the total of PILT payments in 2015 to \$439,084,000.

**Table 5. Total Payments in Lieu of Taxes and Acres by County in Oregon for Fiscal Year 2015**

County	Federal Acres	BLM Acres	Payment
Baker	1,016,236	361,342	\$844,735
Benton	74,365	58,006	\$107,204
Clackamas	629,552	79,353	\$616,512
Clatsop	1,504	42	\$11,076
Columbia	10,961	10,843	\$27,927
Coos	248,924	162,885	\$422,921
Crook	940,495	508,777	\$716,822
Curry	687,291	67,505	\$247,291
Deschutes	1,445,433	484,512	\$1,915,548
Douglas	1,682,680	654,882	\$605,438
Gilliam	34,616	56,770	\$88,083
Grant	1,766,244	173,842	\$635,504
Harney	4,462,691	3,969,145	\$1,060,415
Hood River	206,088	367	\$74,152
Jackson	905,066	460,298	\$766,509
Jefferson	303,544	42,351	\$369,375
Josephine	718,331	299,733	\$694,770
Klamath	2,233,988	239,782	\$803,801
Lake	3,692,591	2,600,859	\$1,124,693
Lane	1,744,689	288,172	\$627,749
Lincoln	193,192	20,202	\$69,511
Linn	561,614	87,079	\$202,072
Malheur	4,299,188	4,601,251	\$2,373,213
Marion	232,119	21,028	\$83,518
Morrow	150,580	3,564	\$268,154
Multnomah	83,033	4,123	\$29,876
Polk	42,060	40,081	\$103,528
Sherman	53,672	55,308	\$135,385
Tillamook	136,557	48,432	\$49,134
Umatilla	420,555	23,174	\$1,012,440
Union	624,324	6,363	\$947,764
Wallowa	1,169,368	17,038	\$420,745
Wasco	266,126	82,041	\$95,754
Washington	13,984	11,549	\$35,629
Wheeler County	301,747	140,182	\$108,570
Yamhill County	58,318	32,647	\$20,983
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,411,726</b>	<b>15,710,529</b>	<b>\$17,716,801</b>
SOURCE: * <a href="https://www.nbc.gov/pilt/counties.cfm">https://www.nbc.gov/pilt/counties.cfm</a>			
** BLM Facts—Oregon and Washington 2014			

The payments are made annually for tax-exempt federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations. (<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-announces-additional-345-million-pilt-payments-local-communities>)

PILT payments help local governments carry out such vital services as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations. These payments are one of the ways the Federal government can fulfill its role of being a good neighbor to local communities. This is an especially important role for the BLM, which manages more public land than any other Federal agency.

## Payments to Counties

Payments are currently made to counties under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-393). The purpose of the act is “To restore stability and predictability to the annual payments made to States and counties containing National Forest System lands and public domain lands managed by the BLM for use by the counties for the benefit of public schools, roads and other purposes.” The public domain lands managed by the BLM refer only to O&C and CBWR (Coos Bay Wagon Road Lands), not PD (public domain) lands. The O&C lands consist of approximately 2.5 million acres of federally owned forest lands in 18 western Oregon counties including approximately 74,500 acres of CBWR lands in the Coos Bay and Roseburg BLM Districts.

In April 2015, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act was reauthorized as a part of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-10). The new language in the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act extension will lock-in the allocation elections made by counties for Fiscal Year 2013 for the following two fiscal years.

Fiscal year 2015 is the 14th year payments were made to western Oregon counties under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. Counties made elections to receive the standard O&C payment as calculated under the Act of August 28, 1937 or the Act of May 24, 1939, or the calculated full payment amount as determined under Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. All counties in the Medford District elected to receive payments under the new legislation. Beginning in fiscal year 2001 and continuing through 2012, payments were based on historic O&C payments to the counties. The Act provided transition payments to the O&C counties through fiscal year 2010 and established another formula for calculating O&C county payments in fiscal year 2011. On October 2, 2013 Congress reauthorized the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act as part of the Helium Stewardship Act, Public Law 113-40.

The BLM provides estimated payment values to help counties make informed decisions about elections and allocations. The Secure Rural Schools Act county payment calculation uses multiple variables, including acres of Federal land within an eligible county, a county’s share of the average of the 3 highest receipt and safety net payments during fiscal year 1986 through fiscal year 1999, and

**Table 6. Fiscal Year 2015 Secure Rural Schools Act and O&C Payments to Counties (payment made February 13 and May 29, 2015)**

County	Oregon and California Land Grant				Coos Bay Wagon Road				Grand Total
	Payment to County Title I	County Election Title II	Payment to County Title III	Total	Payment to County Title I	County Election Title II	Payment to County Title III	Total	
Benton	683,250	120,574	0	803,824	0	0	0	0	803,824
Clackamas	886,036	43,376	72,968	1,002,380	0	0	0	0	1,002,380
Columbia	626,321	58,948	51,579	736,848	0	0	0	0	736,848
Coos	1,914,954	180,231	157,702	2,252,887	239,745	22,564	19,744	282,053	2,534,940
Curry	1,186,967	111,715	97,750	1,396,432	0	0	0	0	1,396,432
Douglas	8,877,639	835,542	731,100	10,444,281	34,025	3,202	2,802	40,029	10,484,310
Jackson	4,672,036	439,721	384,756	5,496,513	0	0	0	0	5,496,513
Josephine	4,779,733	449,857	393,625	5,623,215	0	0	0	0	5,623,215
Klamath	902,151	159,203	0	1,061,354	0	0	0	0	1,061,354
Lane	4,539,345	427,233	373,828	5,340,406	0	0	0	0	5,340,406
Lincoln	105,953	18,698	0	124,651	0	0	0	0	124,651
Linn	1,097,871	103,329	90,413	1,291,613	0	0	0	0	1,291,613
Marion	457,820	43,089	37,703	538,612	0	0	0	0	538,612
Multnomah	221,183	20,817	18,215	260,215	0	0	0	0	260,215
Polk	772,142	72,672	63,588	908,402	0	0	0	0	908,402
Tillamook	184,609	17,375	15,203	217,187	0	0	0	0	217,187
Washington	125,370	22,124	0	147,494	0	0	0	0	147,494
Yamhill	240,456	42,433	0	282,889	0	0	0	0	282,889
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32,273,836</b>	<b>3,166,937</b>	<b>2,488,430</b>	<b>37,929,203</b>	<b>273,770</b>	<b>25,766</b>	<b>22,546</b>	<b>322,082</b>	<b>38,251,285</b>

an income adjustment based on the per capita personal income for each county. The actual payment for fiscal year 2015 also varies depending on the number of counties nationally that elect to receive a share of the State or county payment.

The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Program provides Federal funds to counties that traditionally have been supported by timber payments. These payments make up for the loss in timber payments caused by the decline in timber harvest on Federal lands that occurred in the 1990s. The law requires that 15%–20% of these payments be used by the counties (Titles I to III of the Act) for specified purposes, in accordance with recommendations of resource advisory committees for projects on Federal lands, or returned to the Treasury.

**Title I** payments make the majority of the funds (approximately 85%) available to counties to support schools and infrastructure.

**Title II** payments are reserved by the counties in a special account in the Treasury of the United States for funding projects providing fish and wildlife habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement, and other natural resource objectives as outlined in Public Law 106-3983. The BLM is directed to obligate these funds for projects selected by local Resource Advisory Committees and approved by the Secretary of the Interior or a designee.

**Title III** payments are made to the counties for uses authorized in Public Law 106-393 such as (1) search, rescue, and emergency services on Federal land; (2) community service work camps; (3) easement purchases; (4) forest-related educational opportunities; (5) fire prevention and county planning; and (6) community forestry.

Secure Rural Schools payments authorized for the fiscal year are usually paid the following fiscal year. As publication of the Annual Program Summary often occurs prior to finalization of payments, the numbers in Table 6 reflect payments from fiscal year 2014 that were paid in fiscal year 2015. Payments authorized for fiscal year 2015 that are paid in fiscal year 2016 will be reported in subsequent Annual Program Summary Reports. As of May 29, 2015, the BLM issued payment to 18 counties in western Oregon eligible under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act extension. The amount paid to the O&C counties, including CBWR funds paid to Coos and Douglas counties in fiscal year 2015 was \$38.3 million.

## Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, directs all Federal agencies to “... make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing . . . disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities.”

New projects with possible effects on minority populations, low-income populations, or both will incorporate an analysis of Environmental Justice impacts to ensure any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects are identified and reduced to acceptable levels, if possible.

# Recreation

The Medford District’s Recreation Management Program continues to be one of the most diverse in the state. BLM recreation staff provides a variety of developed and dispersed recreation opportunities throughout the Medford District.

## Fiscal Year 2015 Highlights

This year, five National Public Lands Day events were held across the district, ranging from river cleanup, to trailhead upgrades, trail work and environmental education/youth projects.



**Volunteers at National Public Lands Day 2015**

The historic Sterling Mine Ditch Trail became the first trail in southern Oregon to earn the state designation as a State Scenic Trail. This was made possible through the hard work of the Siskiyou Uplands Trails Association, a partner group who has adopted this trail.



**Volunteers constructing bike trails at the Mountain of the Rogue Trail System.**

In 2015, the 55-mile Cascade Siskiyou scenic bikeway was designated through the state of Oregon, utilizing BLM roads and passing through several recreation areas.

Seven miles of new mountain bike trails were constructed at the Mountain of the Rogue Trail System near the town of Rogue River. Work was done using crews from IMBA, Northwest Youth Corps, the Job Council, Jackson County Community Justice, Medford District's Veteran Crew 10, and hundreds of hours donated by local volunteers. Funding sources for the project included a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant, a Travel Oregon grant, Title II dollars, and donations from the Rogue River Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Rogue River.

In June, the Big Bend Trail Skills College was held within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. This event is led by the Pacific Crest Trail Association in partnership with BLM. Approximately 45 volunteers learned and practiced new trail maintenance skills along the Pacific Crest Trail.



The BLM, along with Josephine County Parks and Clean Forest Project, facilitated the 23rd annual Rogue River Cleanup. BLM provided technical expertise, equipment, litter patrol, and trash pickup at boat ramps and along the roads leading to boat launches. Commercial outfitters donated rafts, a jet boat company donated rides for the Vets, and several scout groups participated.

## Developed Recreation

Medford District BLM provides developed campgrounds at Hyatt Lake Recreation Area, Tucker Flat, Elderberry Flat, and Skull Creek. Developed day-use sites occur along the Recreation Section of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River and at Gold Nugget, Elderberry Flat, and Hyatt Lake. Interpretive trails and sites are located at Eight Dollar Mountain, Table Rocks, Hidden Creek Loop Trail, Hyatt Lake, Gold Nugget, Rand Administrative Site, and three National Register Sites—Whisky Creek Cabin, Rogue River Ranch, and Smullin Visitor Center at Rand. A hang-gliding site is maintained at Wood rat Mountain. A winter tubing hill and a system of cross country ski and snowmobile trails are managed at Table Mountain and Buck Prairie near Hyatt Lake Recreation Area. The developed campground and facilities at Hyatt Lake Recreation Area are located within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.

## Rogue National Wild and Scenic River

The 84-mile Rogue National Wild and Scenic River, one of the eight original rivers designated in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, is jointly managed by the Medford District's Rogue River Program and the U.S. Forest Service. The BLM manages the upper 50 miles of river and the U.S. Forest Service manages the lower 34 miles. The BLM administers both commercial and private boating permits. Rafting, boat and bank fishing, motorized tour boating, river trail hiking, and all other manner of water-related activities continue to flourish and grow.

## Wilderness

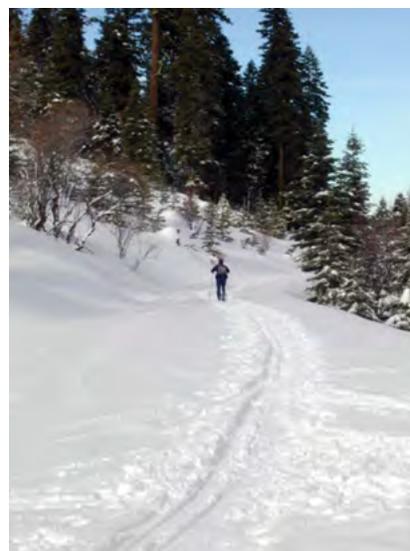
The Soda Mountain Wilderness (SMW) was created in March 2009 under the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-011). The law designated approximately 24,100 acres within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument as wilderness. The Soda Mountain Wilderness Final Stewardship Plan was approved in April 2012.



This plan provides the primary guidance for the SMW. The goal of this plan is to provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of non-degradation. Key issues addressed in this plan include restoration, visitor use, wildfire management, and valid existing rights. The plan also addresses actions outside the wilderness area, including wilderness access, trailheads, and interpretive and educational information provided to the public.

## Trails

The Medford District is home to two nationally designated trails: Rogue River National Recreation Trail and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. The Medford BLM maintains 20 miles of the 40-mile Rogue River Trail and 40 miles of the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail. Another 100+ miles of trails are managed and maintained on the district. A two-person trail crew coordinated and supervised a variety of trail maintenance projects with The Job Council Youth Crew, Siskiyou Mountain Club, Pacific Crest Trail Association, Siskiyou Uplands Trail Association, Northwest Youth Corps, Rogue RATS, as well as volunteer groups.



## Back Country Byways

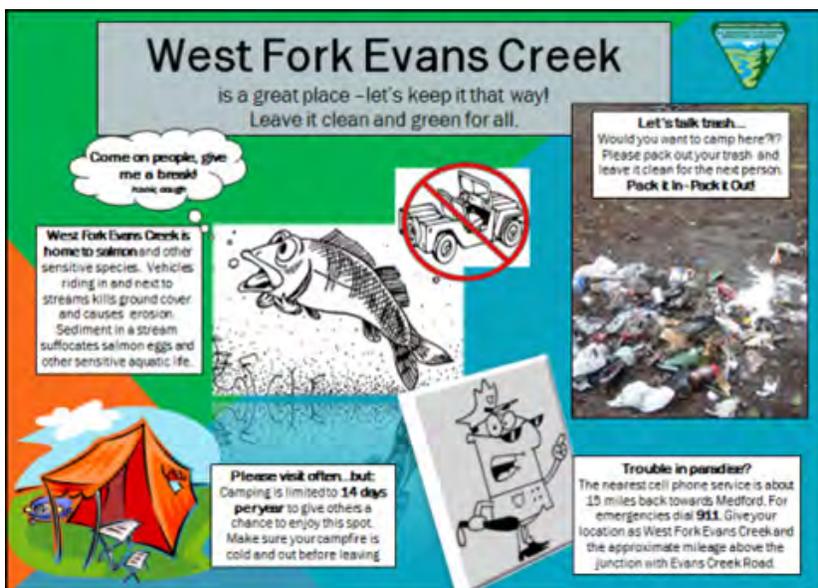
For users who enjoy driving for pleasure, the District provides three Back Country Byways and one designated off-highway vehicle area. For bicyclists, the 74-mile Glendale to Powers Bicycle Route is provided.

## Winter Recreation

Winter recreation on the Medford District continues to increase. The Table Mountain Winter Play Area is designed for snow tubing. Buck Prairie Trailheads provide access to over 20 miles of cross-country ski trails. The BLM also provides over 60 miles of snowmobile trails. The BLM continues its partnership with the Southern Oregon Nordic Club (SONC). Through grant opportunities, we were able to purchase a tracked UTV which serves to set track for Nordic trail opportunities in the Buck Prairie area. SONC continues to improve trail conditions for users in the area and promote the development of volunteer opportunities for members in its organization.

## Environmental Education

The BLM's Environmental Education program provides outstanding opportunities for the public to learn about BLM lands and resources. BLM environmental educators conducted interpretive hikes on the Table Rocks for more than 3,800 school children. Environmental education opportunities were also provided for over 3,000 children and adults during the summer and fall months at McGregor Visitor Center, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineer facility operated by the BLM. The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument's environmental education programs include the "Fall in the Field" program, as well as work with the Pinehurst School to provide environmental education to over 800 students. The West Fork of Evans Creek has been adopted by the Rogue River High School to perform restoration projects.



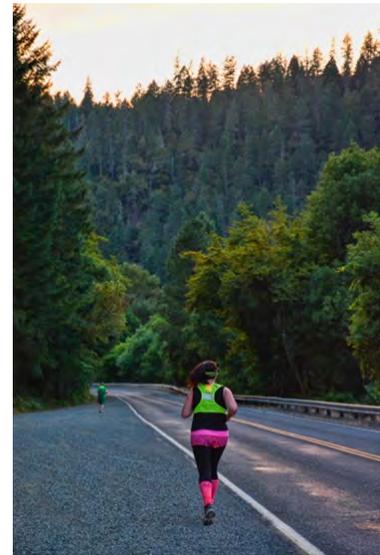
## Dispersed Use

Dispersed use throughout the District includes hunting, fishing, camping, driving for pleasure, horseback riding, hang gliding, shooting, mountain biking, water play, sightseeing, hiking, rock hounding, geocaching, off-highway vehicle use, recreational mining, and mushroom and berry gathering. The types of use increase every year as does the amount of use. As the outdoor recreation

equipment industry continues to develop new equipment, new unanticipated recreation activities emerge.

## Special Recreation Permits

The District issues approximately 150 Special Recreation Permits for commercial use, group events, and competitive activities. The majority of these permits are issued to commercial outfitters and guides on the Rogue River. Permits are also issued for archery events, hunting guides, equestrian events, swiftwater rescue classes, bicycle events, automobile road races, and off-highway vehicle events. Some of the events that were permitted in FY 15 included competitive para/hang gliding events, Enchanted Forest Wine Run, Sterling Mine Ditch Run, poker runs and hillclimbs, Salmon Derby, hydroplane races on the Rogue River, Pine to Palm 100-Mile Endurance Run, Wild Rogue Relay (a 200-mile relay race from Ashland to Gold Beach), Rac'n Dirty Run at Cathedral Hills, Tour de Fronds bike ride, Orvis flyfishing school, Moon Tree Run, Limestone Challenge Equestrian endurance ride, Rogue River Institute Disabled Camp and Raft Trip, Via Bike Tours, and Bicycle Rides NW.



## Forest Management

The Medford District manages approximately 866,000 acres of land located in Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry, and Coos counties. Under the Medford District 1995 ROD/RMP and the Northwest Forest Plan, lands administered by the Medford District were assigned specific land use allocations as part of the strategy for ecosystem management. Lands were designated as late-successional reserve, managed late-successional area, riparian reserve, adaptive management area, congressionally reserved area, administratively withdrawn area, and matrix. Matrix lands, including northern and southern general forest management areas, were anticipated to provide most of the timber harvest volume. Approximately 191,000 acres (or 22 percent of the Medford District land base) are managed for timber production.

The Northwest Forest Plan and the Medford District ROD/RMP provide for a sustainable timber harvest, known as the allowable sale quantity (ASQ), from Medford District lands of 57.1 MMBF (million board feet) annually. In fiscal year 2015, Medford was committed to offering 46 MMBF.

The Medford District held 7 public timber sale auctions in fiscal year 2015, offering a total volume of 35.3 MMBF. Additional volume from negotiated sales, stewardship contracts, and modifications to ongoing sales brought the total offered volume up to 38.3 MMBF (Table 7). Table data are for all advertised "Offered" timber sales.

**Table 7. Timber Harvest Volume Offered for Sale on the Medford District in Fiscal Year 2015 by Land-Use Allocation**

Land Use Allocation	Offered Volume Fiscal Year 2015		Decadal Projection Total Volume (MBF) 2005 to 2014
	MBF	CCF	
Allowable Sale Quantity Lands			
Adaptive Management Area	0	0	0
Matrix (Northern GFMA)	13,224	21,556	13,224
Matrix (Southern GFMA)	16,449	26,811	16,449
Matrix (Connectivity/Diversity Block)	4,961	8,086	4,961
Miscellaneous*	0	0	0
<b>Total from Allowable Sale Quantity Lands</b>	<b>34,634</b>	<b>56,453</b>	<b>34,634</b>
Late-Successional Reserve/AMR	0	0	0
Riparian Reserve	729	1189	729
Hardwood	0	0	0
<b>Total District Volume</b>	<b>35,363</b>	<b>57,642</b>	<b>35,363</b>
District Target Volume	57,100		571,000

\*"Miscellaneous" includes volume from special forest products sold as saw timber, and stewardship contract saw logs.

## Special Forest Products

In fiscal year 2015, the Medford District sold a wide variety of products under the Special Forest Products Program. Among these products were boughs, burls, Christmas trees, floral and greenery, mushrooms, seeds and seed cones and a variety of wood products (Table 8).

**Table 8. Special Forest Products Sold in Fiscal Year 2015**

Product	Quantity	Value (\$)
Biomass	5,108 Green Tons	\$13,195
Boughs-Coniferous	81,250 lbs.	\$2,460
Burls-Misc.	16,250 lbs.	\$1,625
Christmas Trees	1102 permits	\$5,510
Edibles & Medicinals	3,000 lbs.	\$90
Floral & Greenery	18,083 lbs.	\$558
Mushrooms-Fungi	1,603 lbs.	\$1,745
Seeds & Seed Cones	100 bushels	\$1
Whip Stock	2200 cubic feet	\$270
Fuel Wood	2455 Green Tons	\$8,544
Small Poles	2,167.9 linear feet	\$256
Saw Timber	8,932 cubic feet	\$9,205
Arrow Stock	407 cubic feet	\$140.00
Large Poles	10,355 cubic feet	\$2,541
Pulp Wood	25,147 cubic feet	\$5,153

# Energy and Minerals

## Energy

The Federal energy resources managed nationally by the BLM include nonrenewable resources such as oil and gas, helium, and coal, and renewable energy sources, such as geothermal, wind, solar, and biomass. The Medford District has few energy resources available and does not have any current projects for these resources.

## Mineral Materials

BLM geologists are responsible for a wide variety of activities within the minerals program. They administer the surface management and use and occupancy of mining claims, and write validity and mineral potential reports. They also monitor rock quarry use, sales, and free use permits. Two of the three Medford geologists are zoned positions for western Oregon, which means the positions are located in Medford and shared among various districts and field offices in western Oregon. A Medford geologist is also a member of the BLM's RMPs for Western Oregon team.

The geologist team completed 100 inspections of mining claims, 25 inspections of rock quarries, and four mineral potential reports, and processed one plan of operations. They completed three occupancy trespass cases, finished work on one pending patent, and processed mining notices in a timely manner. The geologists assisted the Abandoned Mine Lands remediation crew, gave presentations on surface management of mining claims, assisted with 22 rock sales or free use permits, and answered more than 500 public inquiries about mining.

The BLM manages three types of minerals, locatable, salable, and leasable.

### Locatable Minerals

The General Mining Law of 1872, as amended, opened the public lands of the United States to mineral acquisition by the location of mining claims. Mining claims are for locatable minerals, which include precious metals (e.g., gold, silver, nickel, mercury, uranium), nonmetallic minerals (e.g., fluorspar, gemstones), and uncommon variety minerals (e.g., certain limestone, silica). A mining claim gives the owner a possessory interest in the minerals and the claimant is entitled to use as much of the surface of the land as is reasonably incident to mining activities. There are more than 850 mining claims on the District; a mining claim is from 20 to 160 acres in size.

### Salable Minerals

The Minerals Materials Act of 1947, as amended (30 U.S.C. 601), provides the BLM authority to dispose of rock, gravel, and other mineral materials. The development of salable minerals is necessary to meet public, private, and governmental demands and infrastructure needs. The BLM has discretion over the development and use of aggregate sources. BLM use of aggregate included road repair and surfacing, riprap for fish weir projects, and culvert replacement. Private use included 22 permits and sales for the hand collection of decorative rock and one private lease. Jackson County uses rock from one quarry on BLM lands. No quarries were opened or closed.

## Leasable Minerals

Leasable minerals include oil, gas, geothermal, and coal. The District does not manage any leasable minerals.

## Abandoned Mine Lands

The Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program supports the BLM's core programs by mitigating physical safety risks at AML sites or on affected lands administered by the BLM, and providing solutions to degraded water quality and other environmental impacts. It supports the mission of public lands conservation and water quality reclamation through partnerships with government and nongovernment organizations.

The AML program addresses mine sites that were abandoned prior to January 1, 1981, the effective date of the BLM's surface management regulations (43 CFR 3809) that implement the "unnecessary or undue degradation" provision of FLPMA (Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1700, et seq.)). With 11,000 known sites in the entire BLM's AML inventory database (as of September 2006), thousands of sites not inventoried, and limited resources, the BLM must establish program priorities in the context of the broader BLM mission.

Many AML sites previously considered remote are now accessible to people due to population expansion and increased recreational use. According to the 2010 Census, the West—where most public land is located—is the second fastest-growing region in the nation with five of the ten fastest-growing states. Today, more than 71 million people live in the West, and growth is expected to continue. More than 22 million people live within 25 miles of public lands.

Increased population growth in the West is also reflected in higher demand for outdoor recreation on public lands (e.g., recreation areas, national byways, and campground facilities), which can be located in proximity to abandoned mine sites. As western population centers grow and recreation pressures increase on public lands, potential exposure to contamination and accidents at abandoned mine sites becomes more commonplace. For example off-highway vehicles are often used at abandoned mine sites and exposed to risks of open shafts and potential exposure to contaminated soils, water, and air. Other recreational activities can place people in proximity to abandoned mine sites. Recreational events, historic commemorations, and other organized events on public lands can expose visitors to abandoned mine risks.

The AML Program consists of the following general activities:

- Identifying sites and establishing a site inventory
- Prioritizing sites based on risk
- Remediating sites with available resources
- Conducting education and outreach activities

A **site** is a geographic area representing a grouping of adits, shafts, mills, or other features commonly associated with mining activities.

**Monitoring** consists of visiting a site where remediation has occurred to ensure the closure is still in place and has not failed due to natural (e.g., weather, land slide) or man-made causes (e.g., contractor performance, vandalism).

**Remediation** is the permanent closure of a feature at an abandoned mine site. Some of the more common closure methods are filling with materials such as dirt and polyurethane foam and installing wildlife (bat) friendly closures including gates, cupolas, and other similar closures. Fencing or posting warnings signs at a site is not considered remediation because it is temporary.

## Fiscal Year 2015 Accomplishments

- 13 new sites or features identified at previously recorded sites
- 35 features monitored
- 20 features remediated
- Continued quality assurance on data base and updated national Abandoned Mine Site Cleanup Module (AMSCM) data base. Participated in the development of the new national data base standards for AMSCM 2.0.
- Used LiDAR technology to more efficiently locate and inventory hazards
- Completed public outreach through presentations to local community organizations and participated in the youth Resources and People camp.
- Participated in the President's Youth Initiative through seasonal temporary employment of a college student and provided volunteer internship opportunities for high school students.
- Responded to public and media inquiries including response to Freedom of Information Act requests

## Support Activities

The AML program supports the Medford District Cultural program by preparing cultural site reports for the AML sites inventoried and participated in tribal consultation activities with the cultural resources program. The program also supports the BLM's Minerals program by conducting Claims Inspections. The program provides support to fire by identifying hazards associated with mine features for fire staff; this was particularly important during the active fiscal year 2015 fire suppression season.

- Conducted X-ray fluorescence analysis and report on rock art site for Eugene District
- Conducted archaeological damage assessment at mines on Galice Creek for Grants Pass Resource Area
- Completed administration of mining ditch historic context contract for Medford District
- Staff also assists planners with cultural, wildlife, hazardous material, and other NEPA elements on abandoned mine sites within timber sale areas

## Almeda Mine

- Completed the Engineer Estimate/Cost Analysis for remediation alternatives
- Continued contract administration for water quality monitoring

## Zoned Activities

- Provided support to the active fiscal year 2015 fire suppression season by identifying hazards associated with mine features for fire staff
- Supported Project Management of Formosa Mine including award of contract to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for contracting support and completion of a non-time-critical Engineer Estimate/Cost Analysis action to address the drainage at the Formosa 1 Adit.
- The Medford District AML Unit entered into a Service Level Agreement with the BLM Roseburg District and the Oregon State Office to perform AML tasks for the Roseburg District.

## National Resource Activities

- Monitored and did archaeological recordation on 34 sites (228 features) for the BLM Idaho Abandoned Mine Team. Report on Silver City AML Archaeological Survey for IAMT
- Entered into an Interagency Agreement with the US Forest Service Rogue Siskiyou National Forest to perform AML inventory and site recordation in FY2016

## Land Tenure Adjustments

In fiscal year 2015, the BLM purchased 2,890 acres of privately held lands within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Acquisition of these parcels furthers efforts to consolidate federal ownership of lands within the monument boundary and facilitates seamless management of the monuments unique resources.

## Access and Rights-of-Way

Public lands, including O&C lands, form a myriad of ownership patterns within the Medford District boundary. The District manages the demands of individuals and industry to access the Federal estate for private-residential uses, communication sites, energy transportation, timber production, management, and development to name a few. To facilitate this demand, the access and rights of way program operates through two distinct processes: FLPMA for non-timber-related actions, and the reciprocal right-of-way process for timber management.

FLPMA actions were received, processed, and issued for a variety of uses, including additions to communication sites, water pipelines, residential access, utility lines, and leases.

Timber management is a primary activity on adjacent private lands and to facilitate the demand, BLM works under its reciprocal right of way agreements. There are 103 entities operating within these agreements that provide the basis for the use, maintenance, repair, replacement, and

construction of roads. Each of the agreements is subject to regulations in effect at the time the agreement was signed. Any modification to the agreements where new lands are added, subjects those new lands to current regulatory restraints. In 2015, the Medford District facilitated the assignment of reciprocal rights of way agreements with two primary industry players, Hancock and Green Diamond. This activity involved identify all lands involved in the agreements, determining roads, outstanding balances on the amortized values on roads due under the agreements, and consolidating agreements to improve efficiency in managing the agreements.

## Transportation and Roads

During fiscal year 2015, the District continued developing Transportation Management Objectives for all roads controlled by the Bureau. The Medford District controls about 4,700 miles of road. Transportation management objectives are used to support watershed analysis and to determine candidate roads for the decommissioning process. Road inventories, watershed analyses, and individual timber sale projects identified some roads and associated drainage features that posed a risk to aquatic or other resource values.

The BLM identified the following activities to reduce the risk:

- Surfacing dirt roads
- Replacing deteriorated culverts
- Replacing log fill culverts
- Replacing undersized culverts in perennial streams to accommodate 100-year floods
- Other efforts reduced overall road miles by closing or eliminating roads.

The District decommissioned 11.8 miles of road, closed 0.7 miles of road with barricades or a gate; the District did not construct any new roads. Since the ROD/RMP was signed in 1995, approximately 454 miles of roads have been closed and 229 miles have been decommissioned.

## Wildfire and Fuels Management

### Wildfire

The 2015 fire season began June 5 and ended October 28, lasting 145 days. For the last 30 years the average fire season lasted 141 days. Wildland fire potential indicators predicted above normal activity for large fires throughout the Pacific Northwest due to the effects of the 3-year drought. Southwest Oregon ODF protected lands experienced an above normal fire season with 255 fires which is 111% of average, and below normal acres burned at 347 acres, which is 6% of average. Aircraft continued to be an excellent initial attack resource in the area by quickly engaging fires. Southwest Oregon experienced a normal year for the number of lightning days, number of down strikes, and fires caused by lightning. Human-caused fires increased in the 2015 season with ignitions at 117% above historic averages.

## Fuel Loading

Southwest Oregon, and particularly lands managed by the BLM Medford District, are densely forested with conifer, hardwood, and brush species. Decades of fire exclusion and intensive management practices have produced a complex wildland fuel profile that includes a mosaic of brush fields, multi-aged conifer plantations, commercial timberlands, and old-growth timber stands. Large areas within the District display high surface fuel loadings, low crown-base heights, and dense timber stands that provide a vertical fuel profile that supports torching and crowning. Lack of snow during the winters from 2013-2015 with below average temperatures produced an unusual fuel loading resulting from large areas of frost-killed ceanothus brush at elevations primarily above 3,500 feet. The condition is prevalent in semi-open sites and plantations. The checkerboard land ownership pattern and extensive wildland-urban interface within the Medford District further complicates area fuel loading and distribution.

## Fuel Moisture

Sustained drought conditions started at the beginning of 2013 and have persisted to the present time for the interior of southwest Oregon. The United States Drought Monitor reported severe to extreme drought conditions throughout the year in southwest Oregon, due to very dry conditions and a lack of snow.

Seasonal fuel moisture values showed the effects of drought on land managed by the Medford District BLM. The lack of winter precipitation produced abnormally low 1000-hour fuel moistures, and drought-stressed live fuels. The 1000-hour fuel moisture is the moisture content of dead fuels consisting of roundwood 3 to 8 inches in diameter and the layer of the forest floor more than about 4 inches below the surface. The dry winter sustained low 1000-hour fuel moistures at all elevations. Locally, 1000-hour fuel moistures were much lower than average and declined further as the season progressed. Herbaceous fuels were fully cured by mid-July. Fuel moisture values decreased with the seasonal trend of summer. Local field monitoring was consistent with National Fire Data Rating System values.

Locally, fuels set records for dryness, new daily Energy Release Component records, as well as number of days at 100°F or above (18 days).

## Fuels Management

The Medford District has seen a steady decrease in hazardous fuels funding, declining 75% since over the past five years. The overall District's hazardous fuels budget was reduced by 25% in fiscal year 2015. This is in part due to a new national budget allocating model that focuses priority treatments in the brush/sage vegetation types in response to the concern over the loss of sage grouse habitat. The western Oregon BLM districts and the Oregon State Office have been working diligently with the Washington Office to refine the model to more accurately depict the high fire hazards and the effects of crown fire in the western forests, which are not well represented in the current models. Despite the declining budgets, the Medford District continues as a leader in southwest Oregon in aggressive fuels management with the continued implementation of landscape-

scale projects focused on fire hazard reduction and resiliency under the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, National Fire Plan, Healthy Forest Initiative, and Healthy Forest and Restoration Act. Medford has become a leader in innovative treatment and contracting methods. Increased focus has been placed on IVM (integrated vegetation management) projects seeking opportunities for jointly funded projects meeting multiple resource objectives. Projects have been developed in a collaborative environment to create resilient landscapes and fire adapted communities. Successful collaboration with other federal agencies, local stakeholders, and private landholders has provided opportunities to leverage limited funds to complete projects across southwest Oregon. The Medford District's hazardous fuels reduction program focused treatments on lands within the wildland-urban interface in 2015.

The Medford District has completed 280,165 acres of hazardous fuels reduction (treatment acres often overlap with numerous treatments) since 1996. In fiscal year 2015, the BLM completed hazardous fuels reduction on 1,301 acres using prescribed fire and 1,421 acres using hand or mechanical methods.

## Rangeland Management

The Medford District rangeland program administers grazing leases for 48 livestock grazing authorizations on 46 active allotments and 37 vacant allotments. Two allotments have been absorbed into other allotments; these are currently active, but are represented under the larger allotments names. These grazing allotments include 266,703 acres (31%) of the Medford District's approximately 860,000 total acres.

Grazing is one of the many uses of the public lands as required under FLPMA. The primary goal of the grazing program is to provide livestock forage while maintaining or improving upland range conditions and riparian areas. To ensure that these lands are properly managed, the Bureau conducts monitoring to help managers determine if resource objectives are being met.

A portion of the grazing fees and operational funding is spent each year to maintain or complete rangeland improvement projects. These projects are designed to benefit wildlife, fisheries, and watershed resources while improving conditions for livestock grazing.

Current grazing regulations direct the BLM to manage livestock grazing in accordance with the August 12, 1997 *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington*. The fundamental characteristics of rangeland health combine physical function and biological health with elements of law relating to water quality, and plant and animal populations and communities. Assessments of rangeland health are underway and are expected to be completed on grazing allotments over a 10-year period.

Following evaluation and determination of rangeland health, lease renewals are subject to the appropriate level of environmental analysis as prescribed under the NEPA. Under existing Law (Public Law 108-108, Section 325), grazing leases that are about to expire prior to the completion of the lease renewal process will be extended and renewed. The existing terms and conditions of these leases will continue in effect until the lease renewal process is completed in compliance with all

applicable laws and regulations.

## Fiscal Year 2015 Accomplishments

### Rangeland Health Assessments

Rangeland Health Assessments are completed on each allotment prior to the environmental analysis and issuance of a grazing decision for lease renewal. These assessments are conducted by an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists that assess ecological processes, watershed functioning condition, water quality conditions, special status species, and wildlife habitat conditions on an allotment. Assessments include field visits to the allotments and evaluation of available data. The following Rangeland Health Assessments, Evaluations, and Determinations and their status for 2015 are explained in Table 9.

**Table 9. Rangeland Health Assessment and Lease Renewal Status for Fiscal Year 2015**

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	BLM Acres	RHA Field Evaluation	Determination
Conde Creek	20117	5,346	Under Revision	EA/DR Revision Pending
Lake Creek Spring	10121	4,679	Field Work Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Lake Creek Summer	10122	5,561	Field Work Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Deer Creek–Reno	10124	4,026	Field Work Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Deadwood	20106	7,928	Under Revision	EA/DR Revision Pending
Grizzly	10119	5,167	In Process	Pending NEPA Document in process
Lower Big Applegate	20206	11,712	In Process	Pending NEPA Document in process
Billy Mountain	20203	4,758	In Process	Pending NEPA Document in process
Bear Mountain	10037	1,008	Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Vestal Butte	10035	2,240	Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Crowfoot	10038	7,393	Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Moser Mountain	10041	40	Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Neil-Tarbell	10008	552	Completed	Pending NEPA Document in process
Clear Creek	10013	3,790	In Process	Pending additional field work
(Non-use)	Pending additional field work	11,518	In Process	Pending additional field work
Lost Creek	10001	11,518	In Process	Pending additional field work
Sugarloaf	10019	1,566	In Process (Non-use)	Pending additional field work
Summit Prairie	10031	30,743	In Process	Pending additional field work
Flat Creek	10002	12,421	In Process	Pending additional field work

**Table 9. Rangeland Health Assessment and Lease Renewal Status for Fiscal Year 2015**

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	BLM Acres	RHA Field Evaluation	Determination
Big Butte	10024	22,118	In Process	Pending additional field work
Lick Creek	10015	202	In Process	Pending additional field work

**Lease Renewal Status**

At this time, lease renewals are pending public review of NEPA documents (Table 10). Planned progress toward lease renewals is moving forward allowing time for the process to be completed and questions and concerns to be resolved. No lease renewal processes were completed in 2015. No Decision Records were completed in 2015.

**Table 10. Lease Renewal NEPA Status**

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	BLM Acres	RHA Status	Determination
Deadwood	20106	7,928	Done	Public review pending revised Final Decision
Conde	20117	5,346	Done	Public review pending revised Final Decision
Lake Creek Spring	10121	4,679	Ongoing	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Lake Creek Summer	10122	5,561	Ongoing	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Deer Creek Reno	10124	4,026	Ongoing	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Lower Big Applegate	20206	11,712	Ongoing	Draft EA in progress
Flat Creek	10002	12,421	Done	Draft Proposed/Final Decision
Summit Prairie	10031	30,743	Done	Draft Proposed/Final Decision
Bear Mtn.	10037	1,008	Done	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Vestal Butte	10035	2,240	Done	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Crowfoot	10038	7,393	Done	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Moser Mountain	10041	40	Done	Draft EA/Decision in progress
Neil-Tarbell	10008	552	Done	Draft EA/Decision in progress

**Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM)**

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 was signed into law on March 30, 2009. Passage of the law provides for voluntary grazing lease donations in 15 allotments both within and adjacent to the CSNM. As of year-end 2013, six lessees from the Soda Mountain, Keene Creek, Jenny Creek, and Buck Point Allotments have relinquished their grazing leases. The 2 grazing authorization renewals for the Deadwood Allotment contain approximately 32 acres of CSNM land. The Deadwood Allotment Boundary has been adjusted as part of the lease renewal effort to exclude the CSNM lands from the allotment, ending the grazing authorizations on the 32 acres. The Box R Allotment has been proposed by the lease holder for grazing lease relinquishment pending negotiations that would authorize the proposal. The Buck Mountain and Dixie Allotments managed by the Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview BLM District Office were scheduled for the

lease renewal process to begin in 2014. The lease renewal process has been postponed in the Dixie Allotment to a later date to allow recovery time needed for resources affected by the Oregon Gulch Fire. Currently, standards of Range Health Assessments are not being met in the Dixie Allotment due to the effects on resources from fire; therefore, the burned area of the allotment will have a 2-year deferral from grazing for recovery purposes. Other allotments that have common boundaries with CSNM lands remain authorized for relinquishment as defined by the 2009 Omnibus Public Land Management Act.

### 2015 Allotment Monitoring

Monitoring data for rangeland health and other assessment purposes was collected on several Butte Falls and Ashland Resource Area allotments, focusing on utilization and allotment compliance checking in 2015. BLM rangeland staff completed approximately 30 allotment compliance and utilization visits in the Ashland and Butte Falls Resource Areas to monitor effects and collect data. Information gathered will be used where applicable in evaluations to determine whether or not allotments are meeting BLM's Oregon/Washington Standards for Rangeland Health and for completion of the lease renewal process.

## Wild Horse and Burro Program

A portion of the wild horse program consists of performing compliance checks on wild horses and burros adopted by individuals residing within the Medford District. Adopters are eligible to receive a title to the animal after 1 year of care. One compliance check was completed on one adopted horse to ensure it was receiving proper care.

No adoption event was scheduled for 2015, but one is anticipated for 2016.

## Cadastral Survey

Employees stationed at the Medford District consist of a lead land surveyor, two land surveyors (crew chiefs), two term survey technicians and seasonal staff who are all part of the OR/WA Branch of Geographic Sciences which is organizationally located within the state office in Portland. Survey crews stationed in Medford not only completed work for the Medford District this fiscal year, but also performed survey work for the Lakeview District.

Crews surveyed 61.30 miles of line, monumented 105 corners, and posted and blazed 33.80 miles of line in support of the Medford District. Non-timber project work included the completion of a land exchange survey for Land and Resources, a boundary survey for the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument and the survey and platting of five road easements. Non-field work for the district included the preparation and approval of seven Boundary Risk Assessment Certificates. Work for the Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District included 13.20 miles of survey line, 41 corners monumented and 8.2 miles of line posted and blazed in support of the Oregon Gulch Fire rehabilitation effort. **Total fiscal year accomplishments include 74.50 miles of line surveyed, 146 corners monumented, and 42.00 miles of line, posted and blazed.**

Cadastral survey also responded to numerous questions and inquiries from landowners, timber companies, private land surveyors, and district personnel regarding surveying procedures, status of ongoing surveys, boundary risk assessment, and information about official plats and field notes.

## Education and Outreach

For 2015 the Medford District continued to implement its five-year strategic plan for Outreach, Youth, Environmental Education, and Interpretation. The District's outreach program was accomplished utilizing dedicated employees from the Table Rocks Environmental Education and Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) programs as well as a host of interested and passionate resource area employees from across the district. The Medford District five-year strategic plan and program contains these primary categories: Environmental Education, Public Events (fairs, family events), Life Long Learner Events, Visitor Services/Non-Personal Media, and Volunteer Events. Other categories include Soft Outreach (informal), Interpretation, Youth Employment, and Public Meetings Audiences.

The District could not have achieved such extensive outreach without our partners who complement BLM's resource management message and increase the overall effectiveness and success of the many events in which we participated. Our partners include local, state, and federal agencies; special interest groups and organizations, watershed councils, public and private schools, private businesses, service organizations, and many others. The Medford District's Outreach Program continues to be one of the most diverse in the state.

Below are highlights of the district's programs. The table includes all outreach efforts for FY15.

### Environmental Education (17 events)

The Medford District's environmental education program is a structured program where there is a clear learning objective that matches the agencies resources, mission, and interpretive themes aligned with state curriculum standards and learning objectives. Mostly hands on – field based learning. Audience age is generally K-12.

#### Table Rocks Environmental Education Program

The Table Rocks EE program was created 29 years ago through a partnership with The Nature Conservancy and has grown into one of the largest field-based EE programs in the Rogue Valley. This hands-on program addresses the diverse natural and cultural history of our area and the complexity of public land management. The program provides guided hikes for individuals, schools, and community groups during the spring season. The guided hike program consists of two components: a weekend hike series led by volunteer specialists and weekday school hikes. In addition to guided hikes, pre-hike classroom presentations and a state-standard curriculum help to further prepare students. The Table Rocks Curriculum is available in both English and Spanish on our website.

The Table Rocks was also one of ten sites chosen to host a Teacher on Public Lands (TOPL) in 2015. A teacher at Central Point Elementary developed a project his 4th and 5th grade students could do. He wanted his students to learn about noxious weeds and their impact to plant

communities on the Table Rocks so created and monitored several plots along the Lower Table Rock Loop Trail and applied different treatment methods to see which method(s) were most effective. The students monitored the plots several times throughout the school year, prescribing treatments, and recording data. Specialists at the BLM conducted classroom visits to prep the kids on how to create plots and the role of fire on the Table Rocks. The BLM burned one of the plots for the class. It was a great opportunity for the students to see the changes in the plots during the season as well as learn which treatment methods were most effective. It also instilled a sense of ownership to the students and the Table Rocks and how they can protect this resource for future generations.



### **Josephine County Forestry 26th Annual Youth Tree Plant**

Students from 10 private and public students participate every year in the 2-day Josephine County Tree Plant. Partners in this event include Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon State Extension, and several local businesses and individuals. The Event had 1,000 participants.

### **Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument *Fall in the Field* Program**

Southern Oregon University's Environmental Education graduate students, in partnership with CSNM interpretive staff, taught field-based environmental education programs to community schools. The program is designed according to state standards in science, math, English, and social sciences and follows the Monument's primary interpretive themes. In fiscal year 2014, the 7-week program hosted a total of 782 students in grades 2–12 from 16 schools.



## McGregor Park Visitor Center Environmental Education

Situated along the Rogue River, the McGregor learning Center, and its boardwalks and trails provide a dynamic setting for BLM's environmental education program. Divided into a summer series and a fall series, agency environmental education rangers hosted 1,490 classroom students this year.

### Soft Outreach - A Medford District tradition

As time and resources permit, District biologists and specialists continue to provide classroom presentations and demonstrations as requested by the community. Agency personnel apply their field experience and knowledge and provide real life lessons to students of all ages. There were 5 events with 525 participants. Events included Career Fairs, FFA competition, and RAP camp.

### Soft Outreach—A Medford District Tradition

As time and resources permit, District biologists and specialists continue to provide classroom presentations and demonstrations as requested by the community. Agency personnel apply their field experience and knowledge and provide real life lessons to students of all ages.



## Outreach, Shows, and Family Events

In fiscal year 2015, the BLM provided representation at fairs, festivals, and specialty events, such as Earth Day - Ashland, CAST for Kids, Jackson County Sportsman's and Outdoor Recreation Show, Master Gardeners' Show, and Free Fishing Day. The district continued to offer information to the public about the resources we manage in the region.

### Take It Outside

The district was able to support and participate in several events targeting youth and their families.

This year the BLM and the FS worked together as partners for the June 6th event free fishing event. The event at Fish Lake hosted over 75 people that participated in activities such as casting, drift boat tours, canoe tours and fish painting. Both FS and BLM staff were on-hand for demonstrations and Smokey Bear made an appearance as well.

Table Rocks Environmental Education Rangers participated in Medford's "Kids and Creeks" as well as numerous other outdoor activities that host youth and their families.

## Acorn Festival

The Medford District BLM archaeology program has supported this event for the past 8 years. This year the BLM loaned large scale historic photos in support of the event and showing the complete process for acorn processing, from picking the acorns to the cooking of the acorn into mush.

Approximately 50 people, including adults and children attended. A variety of booths were set-up with different activities such as making crafts from acorns, learning to crack, shell and process acorns, and learning to make traditional acorn mush from a Yurok tribal member.

The day ended with a potluck of dishes made from acorns.



## Lifelong Learning Events

Table Rocks hosted its annual “Weekend Hike Series” for its 29th year. The hikes are designed for adults as well as families and are led by volunteer specialists that share a passion for the Table Rocks’ unique ecology. A long time Rogue Valley favorite, over 200 visitors were led on 17 hikes in 2015. New hike topics this year included Camp White and a Family Fun Day with music, a puppet show, and hands-on activities.



Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument’s “Hike and Learn Series” is designed for the adult learner who wants to explore the complex diversity that the Monument was set aside for. The Friends of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument partnered with the BLM to host a series of evening lectures followed by day hikes. A total of six hikes and six lectures were led by experts in the field of botany, geology, nature sketching, and entomology.

## Volunteer Events (22 events)

The Medford District BLM hosted and/or partnered with other groups for several volunteer work events. Examples include National Public Lands Day, Trail Skills College, and annual weed pulls (Let’s Pull Together).

### Big Bend Trail Skills College at Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

Volunteers with the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) and the BLM partnered to maintain sections of the Pacific Crest Trail. This event was held as a part of a trail skills college, where 40

volunteers attended the event and learned trail maintenance and construction skills.

## National Public Lands Day Events

The Medford District hosted 5 National Public Lands Day events in fiscal year 2015.

## Mountain of the Rogue Trail Building

In 2010, the BLM was approached by a local group, the Rogue River Area Trail Stewards (Rogue RATS), interested in developing mountain biking trails near the town of Rogue River. Subsequent meetings and field trips resulted in the Mountain of the Rogue trail system. It has a wide range of experiences, featuring everything from narrow and exposed single-track on steep grassy hillsides to downhill fun and flow. Over the course of FY 15, 13 volunteer days took place with 125 volunteers logging 553 hours of work to construct the first 7 miles of the trail system. Many partners helped in this effort including the Rogue Rats, Northwest Youth Corps, the Job Council, the Jackson County Community Justice crew, and the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA).



## Pilot Rock Trailhead Maintenance

Ashland Resource Area held an event at the Pilot Rock Trailhead, with over 15 skilled volunteers in attendance. Much needed work on the Pilot Rock Trailhead parking lot as well as the Pilot Rock Trail was accomplished including, sign installation, area parking lot cleanup, gravel placement around the new bathroom facility, road rehabilitation on a previously illegal two-track route, and erosion protection maintenance performed on the newly created Pilot Rock Trail entrance into the Soda Mountain Wilderness.



## Visitor Services/ Informational Material

Visitor services include any direct contact with the public such as assisting in trip planning and answering recreation questions. Informational material includes panels, brochures, kiosks, wayside exhibits, Internet, and social media.

The largest outreach and direct visitor service efforts come from the front desks at the Medford Interagency Office, Grants Pass Interagency Office and various visitor centers in the communities in which we serve, primarily the Rand Visitor Center and McGregor Park Visitor Center. The internet

is also playing a larger role in outreach, with more services being offered every year.

## Youth Employment (11 events)

Youth employment includes paid and nonpaid work by youth 15–26 years of age. The program focuses on increasing awareness of BLM resource management issues and careers.

The BLM has employed youth crews over the past several years to accomplish projects and provide education and stewardship opportunities for youth. The crews participate in projects such as trail maintenance, noxious weed eradication, facility maintenance, construction projects, tree planting, and watershed restoration, while learning valuable lessons about land management and stewardship of public lands. Individual interns also assisted with mine and mineral site inspections, and the collection of native tree, grass, and shrub seed. Youth hires were accomplished through such organizations as The Job Council, Northwest Youth Corps, Lomakatsi Restoration Project, the Chicago Botanical Society, and Siskiyou Mountain Club.

**Table 11. Estimated Number of People Reached Through District Outreach Efforts in Fiscal Year 2015**

Outreach Category	Number of People*
<b>Environmental Education</b>	
CSNM/SOU Fall in the Field program	569
BFRA BCWEP Symposium Booth	260
Girls Rock! Program	187
Josephine County Forestry 25th Annual Youth Tree Plant	1,000
Kids and Creeks	200
McGregor Park Fall Environmental Education program	1,490
Salmon Dissection at Valley of the Rogue SP	90
McGregor Park Summer Day Camp (4):	
Forest & Range Day Camp	56
Medford YMCA Day Camp	69
GP Boys and Girls Club	9
Talent Boys & Girls Club	24
SOREEL August Institute Resource Fair (teacher training)	40
Seven Basins Youth Watershed Council Ed Day	8
Table Rocks EE Program	3,446
TR EE Pre-Hike Classroom Presentations	2,500
Salmon Watch Days at McGregor park	140
Loving the Land Program	62
<b>Environmental Education Total</b>	<b>10,150</b>
<b>Public Events (Outreach, Shows, and Family Events)</b>	
Roxy Ann Gem and Mineral Show	850

**Table 11. Estimated Number of People Reached Through District Outreach Efforts in Fiscal Year 2015**

<b>Outreach Category</b>	<b>Number of People*</b>
Rogue Valley Earth Day	1,500
Bear Creek Salmon Festival	340
Explore West Fork Evans Creek	9
Free Fishing Day	106
Jackson County Sports and Recreation Show	3,200
Acorn Festival	50
Fiesta Patrias	50
Kids and Creeks	200
<b>Public Events Total</b>	<b>6,305</b>
<b>Lifelong Learning Events</b>	
CSNM Community Research Forum	70
CSNM and Friends of CSNM Hike and Learn Series (6 events)	116
Table Rocks Weekend Hike Series (17 events)	249
<b>Lifelong Learning Events Total</b>	<b>435</b>
<b>Volunteer Events</b>	
NPLD – Illinois Valley State Park	70
NPLD – Upper Rogue River Cleanup	96
NPLD Pilot Rock Reroute	16
Mountain of the Rogue mountain bike trail construction	96
NPLD—Mountain of the Rouge Trail Building	29
PCTA Big Bend Trail Skills College	40
Rogue River Clean Up (GPIO)	246
Rogue River Trail Maintenance—Boy Scouts	17
West Fork Evans Creek restoration with Rogue River HS	77
<b>Volunteer Events Total</b>	<b>687</b>
<b>Visitor Services/ Non-Personal Media</b>	
MIO/GPIO Front Desk and Telephone Outreach	125,000
McGregor Park Visitor Center	2,309
Smullin Visitor Center at Rand	17,200
<b>Visitor Services Total</b>	<b>144,509</b>
<b>Interpretation</b>	
Stewart State Park Campfire Program (2)	80
Stewart State Park Jr. Ranger Program	16
Valley of the Rogue SP Campfire Program	15
<b>Interpretation Total</b>	<b>111</b>

**Table 11. Estimated Number of People Reached Through District Outreach Efforts in Fiscal Year 2015**

Outreach Category	Number of People*
<b>Youth Employment</b>	
Job Council : Josephine County (Trail work)	4
Job Council: Jackson County (Sterling Mine Ditch Trail)	10
Job Council: Jackson County (Hyatt Lake Repairs)	17
Job Council: Jackson County (Pilot Rock Trail Re-rout)	10
Northwest Youth Corps (Jackson and Josephine Counties)	5
Lomakatsi trail work	5
Seeds for Success – Chicago Botanical Society	1
Siskiyou Mountain Club	16
Fall in the Field (SOU EE program)	11
Job Council: Jackson County: Table Rocks Environmental Education Program	2
OYCC Jackson and Josephine County (noxious weed removal)	12
<b>Youth Employment Total</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Soft Outreach</b>	
RAP Camp	60
Tiller FFA Competition	270
Josephine County BLM Career Fair	60
Mock Interviews at GPHS	10
Engineering Class for Crater HS	125
<b>Soft Outreach Total</b>	<b>525</b>
<b>Web Sites</b>	
Medford District Web	80,600
CSNM Web	52,400
Rogue River Program Web	181,800
McGregor Visitor Center Web	2,900
Table Rocks Program Web	24,200
<b>Web Site Total</b>	<b>341,900</b>
<b>Total District Outreach</b>	<b>504,715</b>
*Includes participants and leaders.	

## Hazardous Materials

The Hazardous Materials program adheres to Federal and state laws, and BLM policy set forth in Department of the Interior Manuals, BLM handbooks, and Instruction Memoranda. Program duties include emergency response operations for releases of, or substantial threats from, hazardous substances, including threats from abandoned mines; management of District hazardous materials and waste; facility environmental compliance; employee training; coordination with other agencies;

contingency planning; environmental site assessments for land acquisitions and disposal; and long-term environmental cleanup projects.

The Medford District Hazardous Materials program has had some transition in 2015. The District Hazardous Materials Coordinator that was assigned to the position retired. A Bureau of Land Management (BLM) employee was detailed into the position, and the position was filled in the middle of October.

Even though there were changes in personnel in 2015 the Hazardous Materials program continued to have many accomplishments. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Two task orders were written related to the hazardous materials program. One for the testing and removal of materials that had been located on public lands managed by the BLM and at the facility. The other was for the cleanup of garbage and other materials located in four marijuana grow sites. Both task orders are scheduled to be completed in fiscal year 2016.
- Recycled 63 tires that had been found dumped or abandoned on public lands. The tires were brought into the Medford BLM facility by various BLM crews (e.g. recreation, timber). The tires were then delivered to a local vender for recycling.
- The aerosol paint can storage was managed to ensure that the District remained under threshold of waste limits.
- Monitored contractors while conducted asbestos surveys of all of the District facilities.
- Along with the Safety Manager, conducted an inspection of all District facilities. The inspections were conducted to insure and remedy any issues that were identified.

## Coordination and Consultation

Consultation and coordination with all levels of government have been ongoing and are a standard practice in the Medford District. On the Federal level, the District consults with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries Service on matters relating to federally listed threatened or endangered species. The District coordinates its activities with the Forest Service on matters pertaining to the Applegate AMA and other land use allocations where BLM lands are adjacent to Forest Service lands, and also through development of interagency watershed analyses. State-level consultation and coordination occurs with the State Historic Preservation Office, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon DEQ, and ODFW. On a local level, the District consults with Native American tribal organizations and with Jackson and Josephine counties.

RACs (Resource Advisory Committee) are citizen-based groups that provide advice on the management of public lands and resources. Each RAC consists of 12 to 15 members from diverse interests in local communities, including ranchers, environmental groups, tribes, state and local government officials, academics, and other public land users. RACs provide local community collaboration with the BLM and the Forest Service to support projects on Federal or private lands that benefit resources on Federal lands. The RAC members review project proposals and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior or Secretary of Agriculture on spending county-designated, Title II funds. Project proposals are developed by Federal agencies, participating counties,

State and local governments, watershed councils, private and nonprofit entities, and landowners.

Title II was not authorized in fiscal year 2015; therefore, no projects were funded. Applications for a RAC were accepted for review of fiscal year 2016 projects.

## Planning and NEPA Documents

### Plan Maintenance

The Medford District ROD/RMP was approved in April 1995. Since then, the District has implemented the plan across the entire spectrum of resources and land use allocations. During the life of a plan, both minor changes or refinements and possibly major changes brought about by new information or policy may occur. The plan establishes mechanisms to respond to these situations. Maintenance actions respond to minor data changes and incorporation of activity plans. This maintenance is limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. Plan maintenance will not result in expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved resource management plan. Maintenance actions are not considered a plan amendment, and do not require the formal public involvement and interagency coordination process undertaken for plan amendments.

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#### Plan Maintenance for Fiscal Year 2015

Previous plan maintenance has been published in past Medford District Annual Program Summaries. No plan maintenance actions were completed on the Medford District in fiscal year 2015.

### Plan Amendments

Amendment actions respond to major changes such as the need to change Land Use Allocations or changes in the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved resource management plan. Amendments actions usually require formal public involvement and interagency coordination, and additional NEPA analysis prior to making these changes.

#### Plan Amendments for Fiscal Year 2015

Table Rocks and the Timber Mountain Recreation Area are two current plan amendments in process. See Appendix C for details on these amendments.

## Resource Management Plan Evaluations

No Resource Management Plan Evaluation occurred on the Medford District in fiscal year 2015. The latest report for Western Oregon Districts was finalized in August 2012. The report can be found on the Oregon BLM's planning website at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/>.

## Resource Management Plan for Western Oregon

The BLM is continuing to make progress on plan revisions for the Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for Western Oregon. The planning team held 16 public meetings in May and June of 2015. These meetings included six open houses to discuss, and receive feedback on, the alternatives and other aspects of the analysis; and nine issue-specific workshops for recreation, socio-economics, riparian management, and forest management. Reports on these meetings are posted on the RMPs website at: [http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/Public\\_Outreach\\_Report\\_Aug2015.pdf](http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/Public_Outreach_Report_Aug2015.pdf).

In April of 2015 the BLM released the Draft RMP/Draft EIS for the RMPs for Western Oregon for public comment. The BLM received approximately 4,500 comments during the comment period from April 24 to August 21, 2015. All comments received during this comment period are available on the RMP website at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/comments.php>. The Draft RMP/Draft EIS contained the analysis for resource programs within western Oregon for a No Action alternative, four action alternatives, and two sub-alternatives. The Draft RMP/Draft EIS is available on the RMPs website at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/deis.php>.

The RMP revision is on a timeline to be releasing the Proposed RMP/Final EIS in the Spring of 2016, which will have a 30-day public protest period. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS will also receive a 60-day Governor's Consistency Review. The Approved RMP/Record of Decision is scheduled to be released in the Summer of 2016. The RMPs timeline is updated as needed, and can be found on the RMPs website at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/index.php>. More information on plan revision progress, videos created for the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, an Interactive Map of the planning area, and additional documents created during the plan revisions are all available on this same website.

## Monitoring Report for Fiscal Year 2015

### Introduction

This document represents the 20th monitoring report of the 1995 Medford District ROD/RMP. This monitoring report compiles the results of implementation monitoring of the 20th year of implementation of the RMP (monitoring reports for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 were combined into the 2010–2011 Annual Program Summary). Effectiveness and validation monitoring will be conducted in subsequent years when projects mature or proceed long enough for the questions asked under these categories of monitoring to be answered.

This report compiles the results and findings of implementation monitoring for projects initiated during fiscal year 2015 as part of the Medford District RMP. It meets the requirements for monitoring and evaluation of resource management plans at appropriate intervals within BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-9). This monitoring plan does not identify all the monitoring conducted on the Medford District as activity and project plans may identify monitoring needs of their own.

## Background

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4–9) call for the monitoring and evaluation of resource management plans at appropriate intervals. Monitoring is an essential component of natural resource management because it provides information on the relative success of management strategies. The implementation of the RMP is being monitored to ensure management actions follow prescribed management direction (implementation monitoring); meet desired objectives (effectiveness monitoring); and are based on accurate assumptions (validation monitoring) (see Appendix L, 1995 Medford District ROD/RMP).

Some effectiveness monitoring and most validation monitoring will be accomplished by formal research. The nature of the questions concerning effectiveness monitoring requires some maturation of implemented projects in order to discern results. This and validation monitoring will be conducted as appropriate in subsequent years.

## Province-Level Implementation Monitoring

No Province-level monitoring was performed this past year or is planned for the next year.

## Effectiveness Monitoring

The Interagency Regional Monitoring Program continues to conduct effectiveness monitoring of the Northwest Forest Plan. Monitoring results have been evaluated and reported in 1- and 5-year intervals. The first comprehensive analysis of 10 years of Northwest Forest Plan monitoring data was published in a series of monitoring reports in 2005 and 2006. Since then, monitoring has continued, and collection of reports on the 15-year anniversary of the Northwest Forest Plan provides an analysis of monitoring data since the 1994 Record of Decision (1994-2008) with a focus on the last five years. The reports attempt to answer questions about the effectiveness of the Northwest Forest Plan from new monitoring and research results. The reports include a series of status and trends reports, and a summary report. These reports can be found at <http://reo.gov/monitoring/reports/15yr-report/index.shtml>.

## Monitoring Overview

This monitoring report focuses on the implementation questions contained in the RMP. Questions were separated into two lists, those that are project related and those that are more general, such as accomplishment reports, and appropriately reported in the Annual Program Summary. Both lists are included in Appendix B. The monitoring plan for the RMP incorporates the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan.

Monitoring at multiple levels and scales, and coordination with the Forest Service and other BLM units has been initiated through the Regional Interagency Executive Council (RIEC). At the request of the RIEC, the Regional Ecosystem Office started a regional-scale implementation monitoring program. This province-level monitoring was completed for the 15th year.

**Table 12. Fiscal Year 2015 Projects Selected for Monitoring by Resource Area**

Project Type	Resource Area				District Total
	Ashland	Butte Falls	Grants Pass	CSNM*	
Timber Sale	2	3	3	0	8
Silviculture	0	0	0	0	0
Riparian/Fish Habitat	0	0	0	0	0
Botany/ Wildlife Habitat	0	0	0	0	0
Prescribed Burns/ Fuel Hazard Reduction	0	1	0	0	1
Road Decommission	1	0	1	0	2
Road Construction	0	0	2	0	2
Grazing	0	0	0	0	0
Recreation	0	0	0	0	0
Restoration	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>

\*Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

## Monitoring Results and Findings

Monitoring during fiscal year 2015 concentrated on projects in process of implementation or that had been completed during the fiscal year.

The NEPA documents, watershed analysis files, and Late-Successional Reserve Assessments applicable to each of the monitored projects were reviewed and compared to answer the first part of the implementation monitoring question:

*Were the projects prepared in accord with the underlying ROD requirements, or NEPA, watershed analysis, or Late-Successional Reserve Assessment documentation?*

## Summary of District Monitoring

**Note:** Appendix A contains lists of all projects considered and projects selected for monitoring. These were either initiated or were implemented in fiscal year 2015 or earlier.

Projects that required environmental assessments or categorical exclusions were randomly selected for office and field review. Appendix L of the RMP generally requires a 20 percent sample to be evaluated.

For each project selected, we answered the project-specific questions included in Appendix B, as relevant for each project. Questions of a general nature (Appendix B, second list of questions) are addressed in the specific program sections found in the beginning of this document.

The Medford District is separated into three resource areas and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Projects were selected from all resource areas and answers to the monitoring questions for the individual actions were based on a review of the NEPA documentation and field review. Some questions ask for information that required field review of projects before they were started and other

questions require information gathered after projects were completed. Necessary monitoring field trips were conducted over the entire Medford District.

## Fiscal Year 2015 Monitoring Report

### Monitoring Overview

Prior to 2011, selecting projects for implementation monitoring was conducted by identifying 20% of projects approved in that fiscal year and supplementing that selection with additional individual projects needed to fulfill the 20% requirement. In fiscal year 2012, monitoring focus shifted to projects that had been implemented or were in process of implementation during the fiscal year. Implementation of projects is of interest to both external and internal audiences. To that end, this and future field monitoring efforts will focus primarily on project implementation. Monitoring during the past 20 years of silviculture and restoration projects have demonstrated consistent compliance with RMP monitoring requirements with most projects being continuations of previously monitored projects and, in most instances, contain very similar contractual requirements.

Projects selected in previous years, but not completed during that year, were carried forward into the current monitoring cycle. These projects are being monitored for actual on-the-ground implementation.

### Monitoring Results and Findings

As stated above, monitoring concentrated on projects in process of implementation or that had been completed in fiscal year 2015. Projects that were monitored in fiscal year 2015 focused on timber sales, fuel hazard reduction projects, stewardship projects, and road decommissioning.

The Medford District initiated 63 projects that required Environmental Assessments or Categorical Exclusions during fiscal year 2015. Eleven projects required Documentation of NEPA

**Table 13. Projects Initiated in Fiscal Year 2015 by Resource Area**

Project Type	Resource Area				District	District Total
	Ashland	Butte Falls	Grants Pass	CSNM*		
Timber Sale	4	3	2	0	0	<b>9</b>
Silviculture	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Riparian/Fish Habitat	1	3	7	0	0	<b>11</b>
Mining	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Prescribed Burns/ Fuel Hazard Reduction	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Road Restoration/ Decommission	1	0	0	0	1	<b>2</b>
Road Construction	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Grazing	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Recreation	6	0	5	3	0	<b>14</b>
Other	6	7	10	4	2	<b>29</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>68</b>

\*Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

Adequacy. These projects included timber sales, silviculture projects, road decommissioning, road rights-of-way, special use permits, riparian and fish habitat restoration, and recreation projects (Table 13). Road right-of-way authorizations completed under Categorical Exclusions and some other small projects are listed under other in this list. Three of these projects were completed at the District level and covered more than one Resource Area.

Many projects encompass more than one type of project (i.e., a timber sale could also construct, restore, or decommission roads, or incorporate fuel hazard reduction and other activities). The projects were sorted into the major emphasis of the project according to the following categories:

- Timber Sales
- Silviculture Projects
- Riparian/Fish Habitat
- Mining
- Prescribed Burns and Fuel Hazard Reduction
- Road Restoration and Decommissioning
- Road Construction
- Grazing
- Recreation
- Other

Several projects selected for monitoring are being implemented under stewardship contracts. These projects could include a combination of commercial timber extraction, silviculture treatments, road decommissioning, and fuel hazard reduction; therefore the number of individual projects is less than shown in Table 14. See Appendix A for project details.

## Findings for Fiscal Year 2015 Monitoring

The Medford District found a high level of compliance with the Standards and Guidelines contained in the Medford District ROD/RMP and the Northwest Forest Plan. The results of our 20th year of monitoring evaluation continues to support our earlier observations that overall the District is doing a good job of implementing the Northwest Forest Plan and the Medford District RMP. The District has planned and executed many ecologically sound management and restoration projects.

Field review of the timber sales and other projects indicates that the intent and requirements of the Standards and Guidelines were generally met for the sampled and completed projects.

Projects were found, for the most part, to be consistent with the NEPA documentation and consultation for each project. Effects appeared to generally fall within what was analyzed in the respective Environmental Assessments. As a result of the observed high compliance with management action/direction in the past 20 years, no management adjustments are recommended; however, some project implementation needs to be more closely monitored to assure consistency with the NEPA and consultation documentation.

## Synopsis of Implementation Issues

The District found some issues with implementation during FY 2015 regarding canopy retention during implementation of timber harvest projects. A few additional minor issues, detailed below, were also noted. This monitoring will help inform project design in future timber sale projects.

In some timber harvest projects, monitoring determined that stipulations from the EA and in consultation documents were not carried over into implementation. This resulted in downgrading or removal of spotted owl habitat that had not been analyzed and disclosed.

The District has informed the US Fish and Wildlife of these issues, is planning meetings with them, and released a District Instruction Memorandum (ORM-2015-001) to address these implementation issues in future projects. Project-specific issues are identified below and additional information is included in the wildlife section.

## Project Monitoring Observations

### Heppsie Timber Sale

Monitoring was conducted in timber sale units 35-3, 35-4, and 1-3. A temporary road into Unit 35-3 was ripped and well blocked; however, it was no mulched and seeded and poorly drained; the lack of draining will not cause problems as it was built across a shallow slope.

**Unit 35-3 (Treat and maintain dispersal habitat (40 percent canopy cover)):** There are very large burn decks in this unit, resulting in mortality of trees near the burn decks, creating large gaps; this unit did not maintain dispersal habitat. The upper section to the ridge was a pine site and appropriate for a lower retention level; however, it did not meet the prescription. There were some areas of denser canopy, but the function of dispersal was not maintained across the unit. Other than under the burn decks, where it burned very hot, ground cover was good. Snag retention and coarse woody debris retention met RMP requirements and EA stipulations.

**Unit 35-4, upper section (Treat and maintain dispersal habitat):** Large burn piles increased size of openings by killing nearby trees; however, greater than 40 percent canopy cover retained across the unit.

**Unit 35-4, lower section (Treat and maintain dispersal habitat):** Large burn piles increased size of openings and did not maintain dispersal habitat in this section of the unit because of these gaps.

**Unit 1-3 (Disease management; 2 acres):** Skid trail water barred and mulched; ground disturbance looked fairly high, possibly greater than the 12% RMP standard, but not measured; good snag retention.

### French Flat (*Lomatium cookii* habitat restoration)

Monitoring was conducted in several areas of the ACEC where trees were thinned and vegetation piled for burning. Thinning along edges of the meadows was completed; piles were generally spaced well and along the edges of meadows, although maybe a little close in one meadow.

## Riparian Restoration Projects

Monitoring occurred in several project areas scattered across the Ashland Resource Area. The following are project-specific observations, with project type and/or year(s) of implementation in parentheses.

**Nine Mile Creek (large wood placement in the 1980s, 2007/2008, 2013):** Approximately 12 spans installed in the 1980s. Subsequent work to supplement and improve those structures. Good density of cover, pieces well locked in place; approximately 20 structures, all appeared to be functioning well.

**Tributary to Nine Mile Creek (2013 reconnection project):** An old mining diversion was well blocked and is recovering well, the channel was reconnected with the stream and an old culvert was removed (2016). Vegetation is recovering and beginning to stabilize the area.

**Tributary to Nine Mile Creek (Decommissioned road, approximately 1.6 miles):** Road has been recontoured, grass-seeded and planted with mixed conifers. Road is well blocked with a lot of rock and some coarse woody debris. Plantings are coming in well.

**Keeler Creek (Bottomless culvert, 2012/2013):** Culvert is functioning well, moving substrate and large wood within and through the culvert. There is a weir that failed above the culvert and the stream bed is being cut back; future additional work will address this fish blockage.

**Star Gulch (Two bridge replacement projects):** Squashed metal culvert replacement appears to be functioning well. Bottomless metal culvert. Bottomless metal culvert replacement (concrete bed) also functioning well.

**Ladybug Gulch (Decommissioned road, 0.76 miles, 2010):** Road bed recontoured, well blocked and a lot of good vegetation growth (conifers, grasses, shrubs: thimbleberry, bleeding heart, other).

## Speaking Coyote Timber Sale

Monitoring was conducted across timber sale units 10-3, 11-1, 22-1, 14-1, 23-2, 23-3, 23-4, 14-2, 24-1, 21-2, and 21-1. While in the vicinity, monitoring was conducted on a Healthy Murph unit, harvested approximately 5 years ago, and a Graves Creek fuels unit. With a few minor exceptions, the project appeared to be implemented according to the prescriptions for each unit; no quantitative measurements were taken. Snow cover prevented thorough monitoring of soil conditions, but no off-site erosion is expected because of levels of coarse woody debris, undergrowth, and lack of any apparent large areas of soil disturbance. There was some damage from logging operations, but nothing excessive was noted.

Specific observations are detailed below (general prescription aspects of interest are in parentheses):

### **Unit 10-3 (11 acres; retain 40 percent canopy cover):**

- **Cable section:** Greater than 40 percent canopy cover retained, a lot of pre-harvest coarse

wood still on site, somewhat decomposed.

- **Tractor section:** Cross-slope skid trails with berms along the sides; these will be ripped next season; little chance for any off-site erosion. Good ground cover, 40 percent canopy cover retained.

**Unit 11-1 (16 acres; retain 40 percent canopy cover):** This is an old plantation with little diversity. 40 percent canopy cover was retained, coarse woody debris retained on site, but fairly small diameter; few or no snags or hardwoods in the stand. Some cull logs could have been returned or left in the unit. A short spur was ripped and well blocked with large wood and stumps.

**Unit 22-1 (1 acre; retain 60 percent canopy cover):** This ridgetop unit looked closer to 40 to 50 percent canopy cover, which is less than the prescribed 60 percent; however, the canopy cover was appropriate for this ridgetop site, where a lower canopy would historically be expected. It is adjacent to a road and ties into a Graves Creek fuels unit.

- **Graves Creek Fuels Unit:** The retained canopy cover in the fuels unit has restricted any aggressive undergrowth and would likely prevent a ground fire from climbing into the trees.

**Unit 14-1 (11 acres; retain 60 percent canopy cover; 20 foot slope distance spacing):** Canopy cover appears to be a little light for 60 percent retention; however, the 20 foot slope distance spacing appeared accurate. Large snags and pre-harvest coarse woody debris were retained. Some large cull logs could have been retained in the unit to supplement the existing coarse wood.

**Unit 23-2 (15 acres; retain 40 percent canopy cover; tractor):** Canopy cover was retained at or above 40 percent. A one acre spur was ripped and well blocked with coarse wood. Approximately 2 acres of this unit was not logged due to approximately 45 percent slopes that were not appropriate to operate on with tractor yarding; this brought the canopy cover across the unit well above the 40 percent retention level.

**Unit 23-3 (17 acres; retain 40% canopy cover):** Canopy retention at or above 40 percent. Two spur roads reopened for this project were ripped and well blocked with coarse wood. No snags inside units, but snags adjacent to the unit were retained.

**Unit 23-4 (retain 60 percent canopy cover):** Canopy retention at or above 60 percent. Retained old, legacy trees. Expected to harvest approximately 60mbf from this unit, but only harvested 8mbf to retain canopy.

**Unit 14-2 (18 acres; retain 60 percent canopy cover):** Canopy retention at or above 60 percent. Only logged yarding corridors to maintain canopy cover, resulting in approximately 60mbf extracted out of an expected 300mbf.

**Unit 24-1 (16 acres; retain 60 percent canopy cover):** Did not walk into the units, but appeared to be 60 percent plus retained below the road and closer to 40 percent above the road on the ridge; lower canopy retention on the ridge is appropriate for this mixed conifer-hardwood area.

**Unit 21-2 (27 acres; retain habitat retention areas unthinned; retain 60 percent canopy cover):** Habitat retention areas maintained as unthinned; did not walk through unit above road, but

canopy cover appeared good. The canopy cover below the road, except for the habitat retention area, was 40 percent or less; this was less than the prescribed 60 percent retention, but appropriate for this hardwood-pine habitat area. The entire unit would need to be measured to determine whether the average 60 percent was retained across the unit.

**Healthy Murph Timber Sale unit (harvest circa 2010):** Canopy cover 70-80 percent plus. Good undergrowth response. No sign of any erosion or other problems.

**Twin Ranch (Unit 1-6 post-harvest monitoring, 2012)**

This was a public field trip to demonstrate and discuss canopy cover monitoring methodology. This unit's prescription would downgrade spotted owl habitat. The unit met the prescription, had good ground cover and good coarse woody debris levels in the unit. There was some evidence of blow down since the harvest occurred.

# Appendix A. Monitoring

## Projects Available for Monitoring Initiated in Fiscal Year 2015

This list includes projects initiated or with Decision Records signed in fiscal year 2015. Some fall into multiple categories. Monitoring was also done on projects initiated in previous years, but implemented in fiscal year 2015; therefore, the Fiscal Year 2015 Monitored Projects list also includes some projects carried over from previous years.

### Integrated Vegetation Management

Many projects on the Medford District incorporate integrated vegetation management aspects into project development. The project in this category has a major focus on integrated vegetation management.

- Table Rocks Fuels and Oak Restoration

### Ecological Forestry Projects

Many projects on the Medford District incorporate Ecological Forestry principles as advocated by Doctors Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin. No new Ecological Forestry projects were initiated in 2015.

### Timber Sales

- South Fork Little Butte Forest Management Project
- Nedsbar Forest Management Project
- Oregon Gulch Fire Salvage Recovery Project
- Howard/Hyatt Blowdown Salvage
- Roadside Blowdown Salvage
- Blowdown Salvage
- Vine Maple Blow Down
- Reeves Creek Salvage
- Upper Cow LSR Forest Management Project

### Silviculture Projects

- FY2015-2018 Silviculture Practices in Ashland and Butte Falls Resource

### Riparian/Fish Habitat/Botanical Restoration Projects

- Road Repair from Storm Damage (Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads)
- Ninemile Large Wood Placement

- Conde/Griffin Road Decommissioning
- Elderberry Creek Culvert Replacement
- Upper Flat Creek Culvert Replacement
- Big Butte Boulder Placement
- Lodgepole Ditch Repair
- Grouse Ridge Pump Chance, Wildlife and Range Improvement
- Studhorse Restoration Project
- West Fork Cow Creek Instream Restoration Project
- Programmatic Water Source Maintenance
- West Fork Cow Creek Instream Monitoring
- West Fork Cow Creek Road Repair
- Applegate Riparian Restoration Project
- 2015 Powell Creek Instream Restoration Project

### **Fuel Hazard Reduction Projects**

- Trail Creek Underburn

### **Recreation**

- Orion Multimedia Filming Permit
- LL Bean Ashland and Butte Falls Pacific Crest Trail Filming Special Use Permit
- Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Trailhead Improvements
- Woodrat Mountain Hang-gliding/Paragliding MPH Sports Special Recreation Permit (SRP)
- SRP at Woodrat Mountain for Commercial Use
- Motorcycle Riders Association Ghost and Goblin Fall Poker Run
- Timber Mountain Trail Rehabilitation
- Siskiyou Sportscar Club Hill Climb
- Woodrat Mountain Hang-gliding RVHPA Event
- Tour de Fronds 2015
- BLM/USFS Shuttle Permitting
- Cabela Inc. Filming – Rainie Falls and Rogue River Trailheads

- Pilgrim Studios Film Permit

### **Mining/Mineral**

- Buzz Duck Quarry Rock Sale

### **Land Exchange, Purchase, or Sale**

- GLI Enterprises, Inc. Land Exchange

### **Other Projects**

- Qwest ROW Grants (OR 24876 and OR 34269)
- Hyatt Lake Road Clearing/Hazard Tree Removal
- Klamath Bird Observatory SRP – Bird Festival
- Hunter Communications Right-of-Way Fiber Optic Line (OR 068378)
- New Cingular Wireless (AT&T) ROW Grant Renewal (OR 48563)
- Oregon Gulch Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Fence Construction
- Table Mountain Buried Powerline Addition Right of Way (ROW) (OR 67664)
- Howard Forest Management Project DNA for Proposed Fisher Listing
- South Fork Little Butte Reciprocal ROW Agreement M-5066 (OR 067793 PT) and O&C Logging ROW Permit M-5066 (OR 067793 FD)
- Waterline Right-of-Way (OR 068367)
- Woodrat Weather Station
- Qwest/Century Link Right-of-Way (OR 036317)
- Baise Right-of-Way (OR 068410)
- Oregon Water Resource Department Stream Gage ROW (OR 068251)
- Ketsdever ROW (OR 067728)
- Rabitoy ROW (OR 068250)
- Joens ROW (OR 068175)
- Cryer ROW
- Parks ROW
- Josephine County RROW Amendment
- Schiffiler Unilateral Request

- PacifiCorp ROW OR Renewal (68390)
- Greg E. Liles Unilateral ROW
- Morrison ROW (OR 068505)

## **Fiscal Year 2015 Monitored Projects by Category**

### **Timber Sales**

- Heppsie
- Speaking Coyote
- Healthy Murph
- Twin Ranch

### **Fuel Hazard Reduction Projects**

- Graves Creek

### **Silviculture Projects**

- None

### **Road Decommission and Construction**

- Nine Mile Creek
- Nine Mile Creek tributary
- Ladybug Gulch

### **Restoration**

- French Flat (*Lomatium cookii*) Habitat Restoration
- Nine Mile Creek and tributaries
  - Large wood placement (1980s, 2007/2008, 2013)
  - Creek Reconnection Project
  - Road Decommissioning
- Keeler Creek Bottomless Culvert replacement
- Star Gulch – two bridge replacement project

## Projects Initiated in Fiscal Year 2015

The following projects were initiated in fiscal year 2015 on the Medford District::

Project	NEPA Number (DOI-BLM-OR-)	Project Type
<b>District-wide</b>		
Orion Multimedia filming permit	M000-2015-0001-CX	Recreation
LL Bean Ashland & Butte Falls PCT Filming	M000-2015-0002-CX	Recreation
ERFO Road repair from storm damage	M000-2015-0003-CX	Restoration
<b>Cascade Siskiyou National Monument</b>		
Qwest Right-of-Way Grant (OR 24876)	M040-2015-0002-CX	Right-of-Way
Qwest Right-of-Way Grant (OR 34269)	M040-2015-0003-CX	Right-of-Way
CSNM Trailhead Improvements	M040-2015-0004-DNA	Recreation
GLI Enterprises, Inc. Land Exchange	M040-2015-0005-EA	Realty
Hyatt Lake Road Clearing/Hazard Tree Removal	M040-2015-0006-CX	Timber
KBO Special Recreation Permit Bird Festival	M040-2015-0007-CX	Recreation
Hunter Communications Right-of-Way Fiber Optic Line (OR 068378)	M040-2015-0008-CX	Right-of-Way
Oregon Gulch ESR Fence Construction	M040-2015-0009-CX	Emergency Stabilization / Rehabilitation
New Cingular Wireless (AT&T) Right-of- Way Grant Renewal (OR 48563)	M040-2013-0002-EA	Right-of-Way
<b>Ashland Resource Area</b>		
South Fork Little Butte Forest Management Project	M060-2015-0001-EA	Timber
Nedsbar Forest Management Project	M060-2015-0002-EA	Timber
MRA Ghost and Goblin Fall Poker Run	M060-2015-0003-CX	Recreation
Oregon Gulch Fire Salvage Recovery Project	M060-2015-0004-EA	Timber
Howard Forest Management Project DNA for Propose Fisher Listing	M060-2015-0005-DNA	Timber
Table Mountain Buried Powerline Addition Right-of-Way (OR 67664)	M060-2015-0006-CX	Right-of-Way
Timber Mountain Trail Rehabilitation	M060-2015-0007-CX	Recreation
Siskiyou Sportscar Club Hill Climb	M060-2015-0008-CX	Recreation
Woodrat Mountain Hang-gliding RVHPA Event	M060-2015-0012-CX	Recreation

Project	NEPA Number (DOI-BLM-OR-)	Project Type
SFLB Reciprocal Right-of-Way Agreement M-5066 (OR 067793 PT) and O&C Logging Right-of-Way Permit M-5066 (OR 067793 FD)	M060-2015-0013-CX	Right-of-Way
Howard/Hyatt Blowdown Salvage	M060-2015-0014-CX	Timber
Waterline Right-of-Way (OR 68367)	M060-2015-0015-CX	Right-of-Way
Woodrat Mountain Hang-gliding/ Paragliding MPH Sports	M060-2015-0016-CX	Recreation
Woodrat Weather Station	M060-2015-0017-CX	Other
SRP at Woodrat Mtn. for Commercial Use	M060-2015-0018-CX	Recreation
Ninemile Large Wood Placement	M060-2015-0020-DNA	Restoration
Conde/Griffin Road Decommissioning	M060-2015-0021-DNA	Restoration
Qwest/Century Link Right-of-Way (OR 36317)	M060-2015-0022-CX	Right-of-Way
Baise Right-of-Way (OR 68410)	M060-2015-0023-CX	Right-of-Way
<b>Butte Falls Resource Area</b>		
Oregon Water Resource Department Stream Gage ROW OR 68251	M050-2015-0001-CX	Right-of-Way
FY2015-2018 Silviculture Practices in Ashland and Butte Falls Resource Areas	M050-2015-0002-CX	Silviculture
Ketsdever ROW OR 67728	M050-2015-0003-CX	Right-of-Way
Rabitoey ROW OR68250	M050-2015-0004-CX	Right-of-Way
Joens ROW OR68175	M050-2015-0005-CX	Right-of-Way
Roadside Blowdown Salvage	M050-2015-0006-CX	Timber
Blowdown Salvage	M050-2015-0007-CX	Timber
Elderberry Creek Culvert Replacement	M050-2015-0008-DNA	Restoration
Upper Flat Creek Culvert Replacement	M050-2015-0009-DNA	Restoration
Trail Creek Underburn	M050-2015-0010-DNA	Fuels
Big Butte Boulder Placement	M050-2015-0011-CX	Restoration
Buzz Duck Quarry Rock Sale	M050-2015-0012-CX	Minerals
Lodgepole Ditch Repair	M050-2015-0013-CX	Restoration
Salt Creek Quarry	M050-2015-0014-CX	Minerals
Grouse Ridge Pump Chance, Wildlife and Range Improvement	M050-2015-0015-CX	Restoration
Vine Maple Blow Down	M050-2015-0017-CX	Timber
<b>Grants Pass Resource Area</b>		
Plum Creek Unilateral Request	M070-2015-0001-CX	Right-of-Way
Studhorse Restoration DNA	M070-2015-0002-DNA	Restoration
Reeves Creek Salvage	M070-2015-0003-CX	Restoration

Project	NEPA Number (DOI-BLM-OR-)	Project Type
West Fork Cow Creek Instream Restoration Project	M070-2015-0004-DNA	Restoration
Hunter Communications Fiber Optic ROW	M070-2015-0005-CX	Right-of-Way
Tour de Fronds 2015	M070-2015-0007-CX	Recreation
Cryer ROW	M070-2015-0008-CX	Right-of-Way
Upper Cow	M070-2015-0009-EA	Timber
Parks ROW	M070-2015-0010-CX	Right-of-Way
BLM/FS Shuttle Permitting	M070-2015-0011-CX	Recreation
Programmatic Water source Maintenance	M070-2015-0012-CX	Restoration
West Fork Cow Creek Instream Monitoring	M070-2015-0013-CX	Restoration
West Fork Cow Creek Road Repair	M070-2015-0014-CX	Restoration
Josephine County RROW Amendment	M070-2015-0015-CX	Right-of-Way
Schiffiler Unilateral Request	M070-2015-0016-CX	Right-of-Way
Cabela Inc. Filming Rainie Falls Trailhead and Rogue River Trailhead	M070-2015-0017-CX	Filming
2015 Powell Creek Instream Restoration Project	M070-2015-0018-DNA	Restoration
Pilgrim Studios Film Permit	M070-2015-0019-CX	Recreation
PacifiCorp ROW OR 68390 Renewal	M070-2015-0020-CX	Right-of-Way
Applegate Riparian Restoration Project	M070-2015-0021-DNA	Restoration
Boundary Springs Film Permit	M070-2015-0022-CX	Recreation
Smullin Visitor Center Gate Installation	M070-2015-0023-CX	Other
Greg E. Liles Unilateral ROW	M070- 2015-0024-CX	Right-of-Way
Morrison ROW OR 068505	M070-2015-0026-CX	Right-of-Way
CX—Categorical Exclusion DNA—Determination of NEPA Adequacy EA—Environmental Assessment		

# Appendix B. Monitoring Questions

## Implementation Monitoring for Fiscal Year 2015

The following two lists of questions were used to record the Medford District Implementation Monitoring question results for fiscal year 2015. The first list, Project-Specific RMP Implementation Monitoring Questions, was used for monitoring specific projects. The second list, APS-Related RMP Implementation Monitoring Questions, is addressed in the text of this Annual Program Summary. These lists are identical to previous years.

## Medford District Project-Specific RMP Implementation Monitoring Questions

Listed below are the Implementation Monitoring Requirements and Questions as described in Appendix L of the ROD for the Medford District RMP.

### All Land Use Allocations

#### Expected Future Conditions and Outputs

Protection of SEIS special status species so as not to elevate their status to any higher level of concern.

#### Implementation Monitoring

1. Are surveys for Special Status Species (Sensitive and Survey and Manage Species) conducted before ground-disturbing activities occur as per current guidance (S&M Settlement Agreement; IM-2013-018)?

**Finding:** Surveys were completed for all projects in Appendix A as appropriate.

2. Are protection buffers being provided for specific rare and locally endemic species and other Special Status Species in habitats identified in the upland forest matrix?

**Finding:** Appropriate protection buffers were provided for species on all projects in Appendix A.

**Conclusion:** RMP requirements have been met.

### Riparian Reserves

#### Expected Future Conditions and Outputs

See Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives.

#### Implementation Monitoring

1. Are watershed analyses being completed before on-the-ground actions are initiated?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Watershed analyses were completed for all projects prior to implementation. For most projects, the watershed analysis is of an older vintage and concerns specific to the current activity are not often identified. However, the watershed analysis process is of marginal utility as a source of 'new' information. Watershed analysis was intended to form the basis for understanding ecological functions, processes, and their interactions on a watershed scale. These first iteration analyses have been completed for most watersheds. Watershed analysis was not intended to analyze information at the project scale for a proposed activity; that is the role of NEPA. Analytical questions necessary for the Decision process are being addressed in the accompanying NEPA documentation and the NEPA addresses cumulative effects at an appropriate scale commensurate with the project.

2. Is the width and integrity of the Riparian Reserves being maintained?

**Monitoring Performed:** Relevant projects in Appendix A (Speaking Coyote, Heppsie, Healthy Murph, Twin Ranch timber harvest).

**Finding:** Riparian Reserve widths were based on the established guidelines from the RMP and site-specific assessment.

3. Are management activities in Riparian Reserves consistent with Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines?

**Monitoring Performed:** No projects in Riparian Reserves were reviewed for this Annual Program Summary.

4. Are management activities in Riparian Reserves consistent with RMP management direction?

**Monitoring Performed:** Restoration projects in Riparian Reserves were monitored (Nine Mile Creek and tributaries and Ladybug Gulch road decommissioning; Keeler Creek and Star Gulch bridge/culvert replacement).

5. Are management activities in Riparian Reserves consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?

**Monitoring Performed:** Restoration projects in Riparian Reserves were monitored (Nine Mile Creek and tributaries and Ladybug Gulch road decommissioning; Keeler Creek and Star Gulch bridge/culvert replacement).

**Finding:** All projects were designed to attain and be consistent with ACS objectives.

6. Are new structures and improvements in Riparian Reserves constructed to minimize the diversion of natural hydrologic flow paths, reduce the amount of sediment delivery into the stream, protect fish and wildlife populations, and accommodate the 100-year flood?

**Monitoring Performed:** Bridge and culvert replacement projects (Keeler Creek, Star Gulch) were monitored.

**Finding:** Structures were designed and constructed to handle 100-year flood events; appropriate measures (rock placement, planting) were incorporated into project design to

reduce sediment deliver which may harm fish and wildlife..

7.
  - a) Are all mining structures, support facilities, and roads located outside the Riparian Reserves?
  - b) Are those located within the Riparian Reserves meeting the objectives of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy?
  - c) Are all solid and sanitary waste facilities excluded from Riparian Reserves or located, monitored, and reclaimed in accordance with the Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines and Medford District RMP management direction?

**Monitoring Performed:** No monitoring was performed on mining operations.

### Late-Successional Reserves

1. Were activities performed within LSR (Late-Successional Reserves) compatible with objectives of LSR plans, the Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines, RMP management direction, and LSR Assessments?

**Monitoring Performed:** No monitoring was performed on projects in Late-Successional Reserves.

### Matrix

1. Are suitable numbers of snags, coarse woody debris, and green trees being left following timber harvest as called for in the SEIS ROD Standards and Guidelines and RMP management direction?

**Monitoring Performed:** Relevant projects in Appendix A (Speaking Coyote, Heppsie, Healthy Murph, Twin Ranch timber harvest) of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Snags were generally retained where they were available except where felled for safety reasons. Felled snags were retained as coarse woody debris. Green tree retention guidelines were generally met, but not in all units in Heppsie; see wildlife section for details on post-project canopy monitoring.

2. Are timber sales being designed to meet ecosystem goals for the Matrix?

**Monitoring Performed:** Relevant projects in Appendix A (Speaking Coyote, Heppsie, Healthy Murph, Twin Ranch timber harvest) of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** All projects were designed to meet ecosystem goals for wildlife, soils, hydrology, plants, cultural resources, and other objectives. Environmental analysis addresses relevant issues for these resources at relevant temporal and spatial scales, and as applicable for each project. Green tree retention guidelines were generally met, but not in all units in Heppsie; see wildlife section for details on post-project canopy monitoring.

3. Are late-successional stands being retained in fifth field watersheds in which Federal forest lands have 15 percent or less late-successional forest?

**Monitoring Performed:** Relevant projects in Appendix A (Speaking Coyote, Heppsie, Healthy Murph, Twin Ranch timber harvest) of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** No regeneration harvests were planned in any watersheds that had 15% or less late-successional forest in them. RMP objectives were met.

## Air Quality

1. Were efforts made to minimize the amount of particulate emissions from prescribed burns?

**Monitoring Performed:** No prescribed burn projects in Appendix A were reviewed.

2. Are dust-abatement measures used during construction activities and on roads during BLM timber harvest operations and other BLM commodity hauling activities?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** The timber sales contain abatement specifications as part of the contract. Water, lignin, or other appropriate dust-abatement treatment is required to reduce dust during all phases of the contract.

**Compliance/Monitoring Results:** All projects monitored demonstrated high compliance with RMP requirements and Standards and Guidelines. All projects' implementation and observed effects were within those disclosed in the project-specific NEPA documents.

## Soil and Water

1. Are site-specific Best Management Practices identified as applicable during interdisciplinary review carried forward into project design and execution?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** In ground-based yarding operations (Speaking Coyote, Heppsie, Healthy Murph, Twin Ranch timber harvest), skid trails were less than 12% of the area and existing skid roads were used when available. Timber hauling and tractor and cable yarding were seasonally limited appropriate to site-specific conditions. Cable yarding corridors were an appropriate width for safe operations.

2. Are watershed analyses being performed prior to management activities in key watersheds?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Watershed analyses were completed for all projects prior to implementation. For most projects, the watershed analysis is of an older vintage and concerns specific to the current activity are not often identified. However, the watershed analysis process is

of marginal utility as a source of 'new' information. Watershed analysis was intended to form the basis for understanding ecological functions, processes, and their interactions on a watershed scale. These first iteration analyses have been completed for most watersheds. Watershed analysis was not intended to analyze information at the project scale for a proposed activity; that is the role of NEPA. Analytical questions necessary for the Decision process are addressed in the accompanying NEPA documentation and the NEPA addresses cumulative effects at an appropriate scale commensurate with the project.

## Wildlife Habitat

1. Are suitable diameter, length, and numbers of snags, coarse woody debris, and green trees being left in a manner that meets the needs of species and provides for ecological functions in harvested areas as called for in the Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines and ROD/RMP management direction?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Snags were generally retained where they were available except where felled for safety reasons. Felled snags were retained as coarse woody debris. Green tree retention guidelines were generally met, but not in all units in Heppsie; see wildlife section for details on post-project canopy monitoring. Existing coarse woody debris was retained in all projects. Coarse woody debris levels met or exceeded RMP standards in all projects.

2. Are special habitats being identified and protected?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Seasonal restrictions are in place for northern spotted owl sites consistent with consultation requirements. Activities in northern spotted owl habitat are being implemented consistent with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service consultation Project Design Criteria; target canopy retention is being met for most projects (see Monitoring Report and wildlife section for details). Buffers on Riparian Reserves and for special status wildlife and plants have been implemented.

## Fish Habitat

1. Are at-risk fish species and stocks being identified?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** All projects considered at-risk fish species and incorporated appropriate Project Design Features to avoid adverse effects on fish and fish habitat including Essential Fish Habitat.

2. Are potential adverse impacts to fish habitat and fish stocks being identified?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary

were reviewed.

**Finding:** All projects considered at-risk fish species and incorporated appropriate Project Design Features to avoid adverse effects on fish and fish habitat including Essential Fish Habitat. All projects were designed to be a “no effect” ESA determination on fish or Essential Fish Habitat.

## Special Status Species and SEIS Special Status Species and Habitat

1. Are special status species being addressed in deciding whether or not to go forward with forest management and other actions? During forest management and other actions that may disturb special status species, are steps taken to adequately mitigate disturbances?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** The Medford District consulted with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service on various management projects. All major ground-disturbing activities involve discussion with US Fish and Wildlife Service concerning Threatened and Endangered species. This ranges from a verbal discussion up to and including formal consultation.

2. Are the actions identified in plans to recover species and the requirements and recommendations in the biological opinion being implemented in a timely manner?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** The Medford District works closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service during project development; appropriate consultation was completed for each project. The District also works closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to reach a common understanding and consistent implementation of the 2011 Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl, particularly in regard to Recovery Actions 10 and 32.

## Special Areas (e.g., ACECs, RNAs)

1. Are BLM actions and BLM authorized actions/uses near or within special areas consistent with RMP objectives and management direction for special areas?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** The French Flat ACEC (*Lomatium cookii*) Habitat Restoration project was monitored. NEPA analysis for the project and implementation was consistent with management direction for the French Flat ACEC to maintain or improve values or resources for which it was designated.

2. If mitigation was required, was it incorporated in the authorization document?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary

were reviewed.

**Finding:** The French Flat ACEC (*Lomatium cookii*) Habitat Restoration project was monitored. This project was implemented consistent with management direction for the ACEC. No mitigation was required; however the project was designed to maintain or improve values or resources for which it was designated.

3. If mitigation was required, was it carried out as planned?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** The French Flat ACEC (*Lomatium cookii*) Habitat Restoration project was monitored. This project was implemented consistent with management direction for the ACEC. No mitigation was required; however the project was designed to maintain or improve values or resources for which it was designated.

## Cultural Resources, Including American Indian Values

1. Are cultural resources being addressed in deciding whether or not to go forward with forest management and other actions?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Cultural resource surveys were completed and effects analyzed as appropriate in the context of proposed activities for all projects.

2. During forest management and other actions that may disturb cultural resources, are steps taken to adequately mitigate?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** All cultural resources were buffered from project activities.

## Visual Resources

1. Are visual resource design features and mitigation methods being followed during timber sales and other substantial actions in Class II and III areas?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Timber harvest and other activities for all projects met BLM's Visual Resource Management requirements.

## Wild and Scenic Rivers

1. Are BLM actions and BLM authorized actions consistent with protection of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of designated, suitable, and eligible, but not studied, rivers?

**Monitoring Performed:** No monitored projects occurred within eligible or designated

Wild and Scenic Rivers.

**Finding:** N/A

### Rural Interface Areas

1. Are design features and mitigation measures developed and implemented to avoid/minimize impacts to health, life, property, and quality of life and to minimize the possibility of conflicts between private and federal land management?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** All projects that were in close proximity to private land contained design features that minimized impacts.

### Noxious Weeds

1. Are noxious weed control methods compatible with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?

**Monitoring Performed:** All projects in Appendix A of this Annual Program Summary were reviewed.

**Finding:** Noxious weed control measures are compatible with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives for all projects occurring on the Medford District BLM

# Medford District APS-Related RMP Implementation Monitoring Questions

This list of questions is addressed in the text of this Annual Program Summary.

## All Land Use Allocations

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 225)

1. Are the sites of amphibians, mammals, bryophytes, mollusks, vascular plants, fungi, lichens, and arthropod species listed in Appendix C being surveyed as directed in the SEIS ROD?
2. Are high priority sites for species management being identified?
3. Are general regional surveys being conducted to acquire additional information and to determine necessary levels of protection for arthropods and fungi species that were not classed as rare and endemic, bryophytes, and lichens?

## Riparian Reserves

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 226)

- 9A. What silvicultural practices are being applied to control stocking, reestablish and manage stands, and acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 9B. Are management actions creating a situation where riparian reserves are made more susceptible to fire?
- 13A. Are new recreation facilities within the Riparian Reserves designed to meet, and where practicable, contribute to Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 13B. Are mitigation measures initiated where existing recreation facilities are not meeting Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?

## Late-Successional Reserves

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 228)

14. What is the status of the preparation of assessments and fire plans for Late-Successional Reserves?
- 15A. What activities were conducted or authorized within Late-Successional Reserves and how were they compatible with the objectives of the Late-Successional Reserve Assessment?
- 15B. Were the activities consistent with Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines, RMP management direction, Regional Ecosystem Office review requirements, and Late-Successional Reserve Assessment?
16. What is the status of development and implementation of plans to eliminate or control nonnative species which adversely impact late successional objectives?
17. What land acquisitions occurred, or are under way, to improve the area, distribution, and quality of late-successional reserves?

## Adaptive Management Areas

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 229)

- 18A. Are the adaptive management area plans being developed?
- 18B. Do the adaptive management area plans establish future desired conditions?

## Matrix

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 230)

- 22. What is the age and type of the harvested stands?

## Air Quality

(RMP/ROD, Appendix L, page 231)

- 25A. Are conformity determinations being prepared prior to activities which may: contribute to a new violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation, or delay the timely attainment of a standard?
- 25B. Has an interagency monitoring grid been established in southwestern Oregon?

## Soil and Water

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 232)

- 27A. What watershed analyses have been or are being performed?
- 28. In watersheds where municipal providers have agreements, have the agreements been checked to determine if the terms and conditions have been met?
- 29. What is the status of identification of instream flow needs for the maintenance of channel conditions, aquatic habitat, and riparian resources?
- 30. What watershed restoration projects are being developed and implemented?
- 31. What fuel treatment and fire suppression strategies have been developed to meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 32. What is the status of development of road or transportation management plans to meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 33. What is the status of preparation of criteria and standards which govern the operation, maintenance, and design for the construction and reconstruction of roads?
- 34A. What is the status of the reconstruction of roads and associated drainage features identified in watershed analysis as posing a substantial risk?
- 34B. What is the status of closure or elimination of roads to further Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives and to reduce the overall road mileage within Key Watersheds?
- 34C. If funding is insufficient to implement road mileage reductions, are construction and authorizations through discretionary permits denied to prevent a net increase in road mileage in Key Watersheds?

35. What is the status of reviews of ongoing research in Key Watersheds to ensure that significant risk to the watershed does not exist?
- 36A. What is the status of evaluation of recreation, interpretive, and user enhancement activities/facilities to determine their effects on the watershed?
- 36B. What is the status of eliminating or relocating these activities/facilities when found to be in conflict with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 37A. What is the status of cooperation with other agencies in the development of watershed based Research Management Plans and other cooperative agreements to meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 37B. What is the status of cooperation with other agencies to identify and eliminate wild ungulate impacts which are inconsistent with attainment of Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?

## Wildlife Habitat

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 234)

40. What is the status of designing and implementing wildlife habitat restoration projects?
41. What is the status of designing and constructing wildlife interpretive and other user enhancement facilities?

## Fish Habitat

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 235)

42. Are at-risk fish species and stocks being identified?
43. Are fish habitat restoration and enhancement activities being designed and implemented which contribute to attainment of aquatic conservation strategy objectives?
44. Are potential adverse impacts to fish habitat and fish stocks being identified?

## Special Status Species and SEIS Special Attention Species and Habitat

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 236)

48. What coordination with other agencies has occurred in the management of special status species?
49. What land acquisitions occurred or are underway to facilitate the management and recovery of special status species?
50. What site-specific plans for the recovery of special status species were, or are being, developed?
51. What is the status of analysis which ascertains species requirements or enhances the recovery or survival of a species?
52. What is the status of efforts to maintain or restore the community structure, species composition, and ecological processes of special status plant and animal habitat?

## Special Areas

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 238)

54. What is the status of the preparation, revision, and implementation of ACEC management plans?
- 55A. Are interpretive programs and recreation uses being developed and encouraged in ONAs?
- 55B. Are the outstanding values of the ONAs being protected from damage?
56. What environmental education and research initiatives and programs are occurring in the Research Natural Areas and Environmental Education Areas?
57. Are existing BLM actions and BLM-authorized actions and uses not consistent with management direction for special areas being eliminated or relocated?
- 58A. Are actions being identified which are needed to maintain or restore the important values of the special areas?
- 58B. Are the actions being implemented?
59. Are protection buffers being provided for specific rare and locally endemic species and other species in habitats identified in the Northwest Forest Plan ROD?

## Cultural Resources, Including American Indian Values

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 239)

61. What mechanisms have been developed to describe past landscapes and the role of humans in shaping those landscapes?
62. What efforts are being made to work with American Indian groups to accomplish cultural resource objectives and achieve goals outlined in existing memoranda of understanding and to develop additional memoranda as needs arise?
63. What public education and interpretive programs were developed to promote the appreciation of cultural resources?

## Wild and Scenic Rivers

(RMP/ROD, Appendix L, page 241)

- 66A. Are existing plans being revised to conform to Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives?
- 66B. Are revised plans being implemented?

## Socioeconomic Conditions

(RMP/ROD, Appendix L, page 243)

68. What strategies and programs have been developed, through coordination with state and local governments, to support local economies and enhance local communities?
69. Are RMP implementation strategies being identified that support local economies?

70. What is the status of planning and developing amenities (such as recreation and wildlife viewing facilities) that enhance local communities?

## Recreation

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 244)

71. What is the status of the development and implementation of recreation plans?

## Timber Resources

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 245)

72. By land use allocation, how do timber sale volumes, harvested acres, and the age and type of regeneration harvest stands compare to the projections in the Northwest Forest Plan ROD Standards and Guidelines and RMP management objectives?
73. Were the silvicultural (e.g., planting with genetically selected stock, fertilization, release, and thinning) and forest health practices anticipated in the calculation of the expected sale quantity implemented?

## Special Forest Products

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 246)

74. Is the sustainability and protection of special forest product resources ensured prior to selling special forest products?
75. What is the status of the development and implementation of specific guidelines for the management of individual special forest products?

## Fire/Fuels Management

(ROD/RMP, Appendix L, page 247)

77. What is the status of the preparation and implementation of fire management plans for Late-Successional Reserves and Adaptive Management Areas?
78. Have additional analysis and planning been completed to allow some natural fires to burn under prescribed conditions?
79. Do wildfire suppression plans emphasize maintaining late-successional habitat?
80. Have fire management plans been completed for all at risk late-successional areas?
81. What is the status of the interdisciplinary team preparation and implementation of regional fire management plans which include fuel hazard reduction plans?

# Appendix C. Summary of Ongoing Plans and Analyses

## NEPA Documentation

The review of the environmental effects of a proposed management action can occur in any of four ways: Categorical exclusion (CX), administrative determination, environmental assessment (EA), or environmental impact statement (EIS).

A CX is used when the BLM determines the type of proposed activity does not individually or cumulatively have significant environmental effects and is exempt from requirements to prepare an environmental analysis. CXs are covered specifically by Department of the Interior and BLM guidelines.

An administrative determination is a conclusion by the BLM that previously prepared NEPA documentation fully covers a proposed action and no additional analysis is needed. This procedure is used in conjunction with a Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA) form. If an action is fully in conformance with actions specifically described in the RMP and analyzed in a subsequent NEPA document, a plan conformance and NEPA adequacy determination may be made and no additional analysis is needed.

An EA is prepared to assess the effects of actions that are not exempt from NEPA, categorically excluded, or covered by an existing environmental document. An EA is prepared to determine if a proposed action or alternative will significantly affect the quality of the human environment and, therefore, will require the preparation of an EIS.

Major proposals that will significantly affect the environment and were not previously analyzed in an EIS, require that an EIS be prepared.

## Table Rocks/RMP Plan Amendment

The Table Rocks ACEC was designated in 1986 to recognize and protect botanical and geological features, special status species, and natural systems. The area included 1,003 acres on Upper Table Rock and 240 acres on Lower Table Rock. The area on Upper Table Rock was also designated an ONA (Outstanding Natural Area) at the same time and the designations were carried forward in the 1995 Medford District ROD/RMP.

Between 1979 and 2009, The Nature Conservancy acquired several land parcels or conservation easements on the Table Rocks that they have managed as the Table Rock Preserve. Their management objectives have been to protect the ecological diversity, to provide scenic and biologic continuity between Lower Table Rock and the Rogue River, and to protect the area from potential subdivision or development.

As of 2012, the entire summits and most of the flanks of the Table Rocks are now owned either by the BLM or The Nature Conservancy. The BLM has acquired three parcels from The Nature Conservancy: 37 acres on Lower Table Rock in 1997 to develop trailhead facilities and 818 acres on

Upper Table Rock in 2012 in two separate parcels. These parcels are under temporary management that is consistent with the ACEC management until they are official designated as part of the ACEC.

In March 2013, the BLM, The Nature Conservancy, Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde, and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians signed a management plan to include 4,864 acres as the Table Rocks Management Area. Because the Table Rocks played a significant role in the spiritual and cultural history of Native American tribes, and still serves as an important link for them, the area will be collaboratively managed through a partnership between the BLM, The Nature Conservancy, and the Grand Ronde and Umpqua Band of the Cow Creek Tribes. The land ownership of the area consists of 2,759 acres by The Nature Conservancy and 2,105 acres by the BLM. Of the BLM lands, 862 acres are currently not part of the ACEC.

The purpose of the RMP amendment is to revise the boundary for the Table Rock ACEC to include BLM parcels acquired since designation in 1986 and remove a 0.9-acre area across from Upper Table Rock trailhead from ACEC and ONA designations. The purpose also includes establishing a larger Table Rock management area to include BLM and The Nature Conservancy parcels. The amendment would affect only BLM and The Nature Conservancy managed lands; no private lands would be affected.

The BLM's Notice of Intent to amend the Medford District RMP was published in the Federal Register on September 8, 2014. The notice initiated the public scoping process and provided a 30-day scoping comment period. On October 16, 2014, the BLM held a public open house to discuss the proposed ACEC boundary expansion. In response to feedback from the public, the BLM provided an alternative boundary proposal and extended the public comment scoping period to November 25, 2014. The draft EA is expected to be released for a 60-day public comment period in early 2016.

## **Timber Mountain/John's Peak OHV Plan**

The public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Timber Mountain Recreation Management Area concluded on May 13, 2009. This site-specific analysis is available on the Medford District BLM Web site. A final EIS and ROD are delayed at least until after the completion of the current Revision for Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon.

The District has initiated a collaborative process with stakeholders to develop a modified alternative that the BLM would analyze as part of the final EIS; an alternative that would be acceptable to the broader community. This would be considered in final decision making for the plan. The management plan will offer an alternative that will provide for a recreational opportunity in a forest, mountain, and trail environment. The area offers a quality riding experience for users of Class I (all-terrain vehicles), Class II (four-wheel drive vehicles), and Class III (motorcycles) vehicles. Visitor information would be provided to ensure proper use of public lands. Law enforcement measures would be employed, as appropriate. The BLM will cooperate with county and private landowners to preserve and maintain the character of the area.

## Appendix D. Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
ACS	Aquatic Conservation Strategy
AMA	Adaptive Management Area
ASQ	Allowable Sale Quantity
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CBWR	Coos Bay Wagon Road
CCF	Hundred Cubic Feet
CSNM	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument
CWD	Coarse Woody Debris
CX	Categorical Exclusion
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
EA	Environmental Assessment
EEA	Environmental Education Area
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GeoBOB	Geographic Biotic Observations
GFMA	General Forest Management Area
LSR	Late-Successional Reserve
MBF	Thousand Board Feet
MMBF	Million Board Feet
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFP	National Fire Plan
NWFP	Northwest Forest Plan
O&C	Oregon and California Revested Lands
ODA	Oregon Department of Agriculture
ODEQ	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
OR/WA	Oregon/Washington BLM
PD	Public Domain Lands

PILT	Payment in Lieu of Taxes
REO	Regional Ecosystem Office
RIEC	Regional Interagency Executive Committee
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RNA	Research Natural Area
ROD	Record of Decision
ROD/RMP	Medford District ROD and RMP
R&PP	Recreation and Public Purposes
S&G	Standards and Guidelines
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan
WQRP	Water Quality Restoration Plan

## Appendix E. Definitions

**Adaptive Management Area** — The Medford District's Applegate AMA is managed to restore and maintain late-successional forest habitat while developing and testing management approaches to achieve the desired economic and other social objectives.

**Anadromous fish** — Fish that are born and reared in fresh water, move to the ocean to grow and mature, and return to fresh water to reproduce, e.g., salmon, steelhead, and shad.

**Area of Critical Environmental Concern** — An area of BLM-administered lands where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish and wildlife resources; or other natural systems or processes; or to protect life and provide safety from natural hazards.

**Candidate species** — Plant and animal taxa considered for possible addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Species. These are taxa for which the US Fish and Wildlife Service has on file sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threat(s) to support issuance of a proposal to list, but issuance of a proposed rule is currently precluded by higher priority listing actions.

**Ecological Forestry**—Forestry projects designed using the forest management principles of Doctors Jerry Franklin and Norm Johnson.

**Fifth field watershed** — A watershed designation of approximately 20 to 200 square miles in size.

**Fiscal year** — The Federal financial year. A period of time from October 1 of one year to September 30 of the following year.

**Hazardous materials** — Anything that poses a substantive present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed.

**Late-successional reserve** — A forest area that has been reserved from scheduled timber harvest under the RMP.

**Matrix land** — Federal land outside of reserves and special management areas which will be available for timber harvest at varying levels.

**Noxious weed** — A plant specified by law as being especially undesirable, troublesome, and difficult to control.

**Precommercial thinning** — The practice of removing some of the trees less than merchantable size from a stand so that remaining trees will grow faster.

**Prescribed fire** — A fire burning under specified conditions that will accomplish certain planned objectives.

**Refugia** — Locations and habitats that support populations of organisms that are limited to small fragments of their previous geographic ranges.

**Regional Interagency Executive Council** — A senior regional interagency entity which assures the prompt, coordinated, successful implementation at the regional level of the Northwest Forest Plan

standards and guidelines.

**Research natural area** — An area that contains natural resource values of scientific interest and is managed primarily for research and educational purposes.

**Resource Management Plan** — A land-use plan prepared by the BLM under current regulations in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

**Riparian Reserves** — Designated riparian areas found outside late-successional reserves.

**SEIS Special Attention Species** — Species identified in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Northwest Forest Plan as needing special management attention. A term which incorporates the “Survey and Manage” and “Protection Buffer” species from the Northwest Forest Plan.

**Silvicultural prescription** — A detailed plan, usually written by a forest silviculturist, for controlling the establishment, composition, constitution, and growth of forest stands.

**Site index** — A measure of forest productivity expressed as the height of the tallest trees in a stand at an index age.

**Site preparation** — Any action taken in conjunction with a reforestation effort (natural or artificial) to create an environment that is favorable for survival of suitable trees during the first growing season. This environment can be created by altering groundcover, soil, or microsite conditions, using biological, mechanical, or manual clearing, prescribed burns, herbicides, or a combination of methods.

**Special Status Species** — Plant or animal species in any of the following categories:

- Threatened or Endangered Species
- Proposed Threatened or Endangered Species
- Candidate Species
- State-listed Species
- Bureau Sensitive Species
- Bureau Strategic Species

**Stream mile** — A linear mile of stream.

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

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