



**US. Department of the Interior**  
Bureau of Land Management

Medford District  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504

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**Annual Program Summary  
and Monitoring Report**

for Fiscal Year 1996



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

**MEDFORD DISTRICT**

**ANNUAL PROGRAM SUMMARY  
AND MONITORING REPORT**



**Fiscal Year 1996**



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT MANAGER

This is the Medford District's first annual program summary under the Resources Management Plan (RMP) and the Record of Decision (ROD) which was published in June 1995. Future annual program summaries are planned for publishing shortly after the end of the fiscal year covered by the report.

In fiscal year 1996 the district completed 27 Jobs-in-the-Woods (JITW) projects, totaling \$886,819, employing 159 people including 133 displaced timber workers. The Jobs-in-the-Woods program had a good cross-section of projects that addressed many different aspects of ecosystem restoration. Projects included such watershed restoration projects as replacement of culverts on Sterling Creek and recreation site improvements at Hyatt Lake in the Ashland Resource Area.

The Applegate Adaptive Management Area (AMA) in the Ashland Resource Area is a good example of efforts to address ecosystem health and restoration aspects. That continuing project involves working closely with different agencies, county and local governments, and local land owners to address issues that surfaced in discussions and on field trips.

The Grants Pass Resource Area, in partnership with the Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratory's Photovoltaic Systems Assistance Center, completed an alternative energy project at the historic Rogue River Ranch. The ranch is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This year the Grants Pass Resource Area assumed administration of both private and commercial permits on the Wild and Scenic Rogue River. The second highest number of

private permits (7,828) was processed and \$88,337 in permit fees were collected.

Working with Southern Oregon University, the Grants Pass Resource Area established a local Environmental Career Organization (ECO) student program, targeting under graduates in environmental studies. Students gained valuable experience and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) obtained much needed vegetation data for watershed analysis.

Glendale Resource Area specialists supported the efforts to provide last minute changes in replacement timber volume for a Coos Bay District timber sale. The resource area also completed 240 miles of road inventory and provided coordination and inspection of the AT&T fiber optics line project.

Timber volume sold in 1996 was 47.7 (MMBF) totaling in value \$13.7 million. Approximately 932,000 seedlings were planted on 2,049 acres.

I convey my thanks and appreciation to all district personnel for their efforts in implementing the Resource Management Plan in a professional manner and as they continue to strive to implement changes using the adaptive management concept.

I express my appreciation for public involvement and input by environmental organizations, industry, special interest groups, individual citizens, and local governments. I also appreciate their participation in efforts such as the Province Advisory Council (PAC), Community Economic Revitalization Teams (CERT) and many other forums.

David A. Jones  
District Manager





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# INTRODUCTION

This Annual Program Summary is a review of the programs on the Medford District Bureau of Land Management for the period of June 1995 through April 1996. It is a progress report on the various programs and activities that have occurred on the district and provides an indication of some upcoming activities for FY 1997. It also summarizes the results of the district implementation monitoring accomplishments in accordance with Appendix L of the Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan and the District Monitoring Plan.

Implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan began in April 1994 with the signing of the Northwest Forest Plan Record of Decision. Subsequently, with the signing of the RMP Record of Decision in June 1995, the Medford District began implementation of the Resource Management Plan (RMP), which incorporates all aspects of the Northwest Forest Plan.



# RESTORATION PROJECTS

Ecosystems restoration is a long-term program to restore forest health, aquatic and riparian habitat and species diversity. In FY 1996, restoration activities could be grouped into five categories:

1. Riparian projects, e.g., density management and planting desired species.
2. Development of old growth characteristics in late successional reserves (LSRs), e.g., understory thinning to develop structural diversity and building a vegetative survey data base.
3. Reduction of erosion and sedimentation along rivers, streams and fish-bearing creeks, and reduction of fish passage impediments.
4. Using prescribed burns to reduce fire hazard and improve stand vigor.
5. Developing a source of native grass and shrubs to be used to stabilize disturbed areas and to compete with noxious weeds while reclaiming the site.

# WATERSHED ANALYSIS STATUS

The Medford District completed an initial evaluation of watershed that indicated that most fifth field watersheds were within or exceeded the 15% threshold. Continuation of the 15% is on hold pending resolution of various issues by the Regional Ecosystem Office (REO) and the Regional Interagency Executive Committee (RIEC). Projects will be implemented using the existing initial analysis pending that resolution by REO/RIEC.

The NFP/ROD (page C-44) and RMP-ROD (page 47) require that BLM and USFS retain late successional forest patches in matrix areas where little late successional forest persists. The standard and guidelines are to be applied in any fifth-field watershed (20 to 200 square miles) in which federal forest lands currently comprise 15% or less late successional forest (LSF), considering all land allocations. Agency guidance requires that late successional forests in current reserves within each fifth-field watershed be identified first before considering the matrix land allocations.

A list of watersheds that were analyzed follows.

| <b>MEDFORD DISTRICT WATERSHED ANALYSIS<br/>1ST ITERATIONS COMPLETED FOR FY 1996</b> |                    |                     |                    |                  |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <b>Resource Area</b>  | <b>Watershed</b>   | <b>Year Started</b> | <b>Total Acres</b> | <b>BLM Acres</b> |
| Butte Falls   | East Evans Creek   | FY 95               | 21,136             | 7,863            |
| Butte Falls   | Elk Creek (Tier 1) | FY96                | 85,475             | 21,619           |
| Grants Pass   | Williams Creek     | FY95                | 51,971             | 26,990           |
| Grants Pass   | Cheney/Slate       | FY96                | 48,915             | 9,491            |
| <b>Totals</b>   |                    |                     | <b>207,497</b>     | <b>65,963</b>    |

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## LATE-SUCCESSIONAL RESERVES (LSR)

At the end of FY 1996 the district had completed one Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) Assessment in conjunction with the Siskiyou National Forest. Even though the accomplishment was one assessment, it actually assessed eight specific LSRs and portions of four others. In reality this was a major accomplishment for the two agencies. The fire plans were discussed within the assessment of each LSR.

No activities were conducted or authorized within the LSRs in 1996. To eliminate or reduce the spread of non-native species which adversely affect late-successional objectives, the district has completed roadside surveys within the five LSR areas (171,497 acres) and provided for the release of biological agents. No new land acquisitions were made.

## MATRIX

In FY 1996 the age of the harvested timber included age classes of 80-250 years old. The type of harvest varied according to resource area and forest management type. In the North General Forest Management Area (NGFMA), the harvest was generally made up of shelterwood cuts, select cuts, regeneration harvests and commercial thinnings. In the South General Forest Management Area (SGFMA), the cuts were primarily mortality salvage and density management with some select cuts. (For further information, see the TIMBER RESOURCES section.)



## FIRE, FUELS, AND AIR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Wildfire suppression was provided under the Western Oregon Protection Contract with the Oregon Department of Forestry. For the 1996 fire season, 41 wildfires were suppressed under the contract with a total of 50 acres burned. In all cases the suppression actions were accomplished within the framework of the Medford District's Resource Management Objectives.

The use of prescribed fire occurred over 1,165 acres in 56 units in fiscal year 1996. The application and use of fire was accomplished within the objectives established for each land allocation under RMP. The prescribed burn activities included underburn (2%), handpile / burn (74%) and broadcast burn (24%).

All prescribed burning was accomplished under the Smoke Management Plan. The majority of the burning was handpiling which minimized particulate emissions and was done under optimum air mixing conditions. No Conformity Determinations were required because no burning occurred on BLM land within the Designated Areas (DA's) or the Ashland/Medford Air Quality Management Area during the year.

All existing landscape plans, based on the direction in the various watershed analyses, have considered the role of fire and relative fuel hazard and wildfire risk for each plan, and directed the use of prescribed fire and mechanical treatment as the primary mitigation for each plan. In all cases the objective of reducing the potential for catastrophic, high intensity wildfires has been a major consideration with all landscape timber sales.

The majority of the programmed fuels treatment acres is tied to current landscape plans within the district's fire prone areas adjacent to



the rural interface areas spread over the district. Testing of fuel modification concepts within the Thompson Creek Drainage is a major component of the Applegate Adaptive Management Area.

Fire management input has been completed for the Siskiyou LSR. The Siskiyou LSR plan was a cooperative effort between the Siskiyou National Forest and the Medford District. New implementation plans covering the fire management activity planning needs are still pending.

The use of prescribed natural fire has not been identified as part of any alternative for any fire management activity plan and/or landscape plan developed to date.

## APPLEGATE ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

*The Applegate AMA Draft Guide* was completed during FY96 and distributed to a wide group for review and comment. The Medford BLM District worked with the Rogue River National Forest, the Siskiyou National Forest, the Applegate Partnership, and many other agencies and community members in this effort. Other interagency efforts included completion of numerous assessments:

\* *Organizing for Innovation: A Look at the Agencies and Organizations Responsible for Adaptive Management Areas: the Case of the Applegate AMA* (Victoria Sturtevant, Margaret Shannon, Dave Trask), 12/95.

\* *Stories on the Land-An Environmental History of the Applegate and Upper Illinois Valleys*, George McKinley and Doug Frank, 10/95.

\* *Applegate Watershed Fuel Hazard and Risk Assessment* (BLM & FS), 95.

**Timber sales & forest products:** Most sales were the result of landscape planning which include forest health and restoration projects. Total volume offered in FY96 was 42.2 MMBF. Total volume sold was 29.5 MMBF treating approximately 4500 acres. Additional small sales totaling 2 MMBF were also sold providing smaller materials to local purchasers and providing learning opportunities. The objectives of these sales is to improve resilience of these landscapes to wildfire, insects, and disease.

**Research & Monitoring:** Applegate AMA technical team met monthly in the field evaluating projects. People (including non-federal members) offered ideas for project design to insure learning objectives are met. The community-based research and monitoring strategy seeks opportunities to increase participation, skills, and shared learning among all the players. Two efforts to share learning were begun including: *NOTES* (a newsletter covering research and monitoring) and *Applegate Learning Summaries* (one-page briefs identifying lessons learned). A home page was created for Internet access listing research projects, study results, papers and learning summaries: <http://id.mind.net/community/app/>

Another outcome was a highly successful conference held at a local high school in March--"Bringing Science Home to the Applegate." Co-sponsored by the Applegate Partnership and PNW, the conference brought together over 400 scientists, students, and community members participating in field trips, poster sessions and presentations.

**Community involvement:** Progressive work with the Applegate Partnership, the Applegate River Watershed Council (a subcommittee of the Partnership), and neighbors adjacent to projects led to nationwide recognition of



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the natural resource collaboration. The Ashland Resource Area's Lower Thompson Creek project has been held up as an example of what can happen when a resource agency opens up the planning process engaging neighbors in discussion and problem-solving. The considerable time spent up front in the planning phase with individuals and groups resulted in a highly supported project.

## TIMBER RESOURCES

To make up the total volume commitment, the Medford District's timber resources volumes came primarily from two sources--the adaptive management area (page 8) and the matrix area (page 6). Each of the areas had basic silvicultural systems applied to the land base. The following are brief descriptions of those harvest methods.

**Rights-of-way:** Removal of all timber and vegetation to facilitate the construction of an access road.

**Regeneration harvest:** Timber harvest in which the partial objective is opening a forest stand to the point where favored tree species can be established.

**Shelterwood:** A regeneration method under an even-aged silvicultural system where a portion of the mature stand is retained as a source of seed and/or protection during the regeneration period.

**Select cut:** A method of uneven-aged management in which single trees (single-tree selection) or groups of trees (group selection) are harvested from stands without harvesting the entire stand at any one time.

**Commercial thinning:** Removing merchantable trees from an even-aged stand to encourage

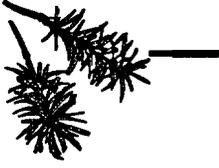
growth of the remaining trees.

**Mortality salvage:** Harvesting dead and dying timber.

**Density management:** Cutting trees for the primary purpose of widening their spacing to allow the growth of the remaining trees to accelerate. Used also to improve forest health or, if maintenance or restoration of biological diversity is the objective, to accelerate the attainment of old-growth characteristics.

**Overstory removal:** The final stage of cutting in which the remaining overstory trees are removed to allow the understory to grow.

**Hardwood removal:** Harvesting hardwoods within a stand in which coniferous species are dominant.



Listed below are the volumes offered during fiscal year 1996. These figures do not contain the active contract modifications which may change acres, volume, and cutting methods throughout the life of the contract. They also do not include the replacement volume mandated as part of the Congressional Rescissions Act (Public Law 104- 19).

| ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA (AMA)        |                                    |                             |                                |                                |                                |                                   |                                |                                   |                               |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| FY96                                  | Totals                             | Right-of-Way                | Regeneration Harvest           | Shelterwood                    | Select cut                     | Commercial Thinning               | Mortality Salvage              | Density Management                | Over-story Removal            | Hardwood Removal |
| ACRE VOL. (MBF)                       | 5475.0<br><b>18,914.0</b>          | 6.0<br>125.0                | 27.0<br>351.0                  | 104.0<br>1,129.0               | 359.0<br><b>3,109.0</b>        | 798.0<br>2,155.0                  | 64.0<br>492.0                  | 4,117.0<br>11353.0                | --<br>--                      | --<br>--         |
| GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT AREA (GFMA) |                                    |                             |                                |                                |                                |                                   |                                |                                   |                               |                  |
| ACRE VOL. (MBF)                       | <b>4,541.5</b><br><b>28,819.8</b>  | 31.5<br>791.0               | 200.0<br><b>3,309.0</b>        | 44.0<br>401.0                  | 529.0<br><b>5,017.2</b>        | <b>1,8622.0</b><br>9,648.0        | 413.0<br><b>2,019.6</b>        | <b>1,373.0</b><br>5,864.0         | 89.0<br>1,765.0               | --<br>5.0        |
| TOTAL FY96 PROGRAM                    |                                    |                             |                                |                                |                                |                                   |                                |                                   |                               |                  |
| ACRE VOL. (MBF)                       | <b>10,016.5</b><br><b>47,733.8</b> | <b>37.5</b><br><b>916.0</b> | <b>227.0</b><br><b>3,660.0</b> | <b>148.0</b><br><b>1,530.0</b> | <b>888.0</b><br><b>8,162.2</b> | <b>2,660.0</b><br><b>11,803.0</b> | <b>477.0</b><br><b>2,511.6</b> | <b>5,490.0</b><br><b>17,417.0</b> | <b>89.0</b><br><b>1,765.0</b> | --<br><b>5.0</b> |



The following (listed by sale name, resource area, and land use allocation (LUA)) are those individual sales that were harvested excluding positive and negative modifications:

| <b>SALE</b>                   | <b>RA</b> | <b>LUA</b> | <b>TOTAL SALE ACRES</b> | <b>TOTAL SALE VOLUME*</b> |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rancheria                     | BF        | GFMA       | 950.0                   | 5,096.0                   |
| Round Sampson                 | AS        | GFMA       | 101.0                   | 575.0                     |
| Howard Hazard Salvage         | AS        | GFMA       | 80.0                    | 64.4                      |
| LT Test                       | AS        | AMA        | 63.0                    | 245.0                     |
| Pointless Fir                 | GL        | GFMA       | 134.0                   | 4,163.0                   |
| Lower Thompson Creek          | AS        | AMA        | 1,464.0                 | 5,442.0                   |
| Lost Fortune                  | GL        | GFMA       | 91.0                    | 1,795.0                   |
| Tokyo Ginger                  | BF        | GFMA       | 344.0                   | 4,726.0                   |
| Ravencroft                    | GP        | GFMA       | 1.0                     | 11.5                      |
| Hyatt Hazard                  | AS        | GFMA       | 28.0                    | 140.1                     |
| Campman Access R/W Salvage    | GP        | G F M A    | 2.0                     | 9.0                       |
| Bonnie Riffle Hazard Salvage  | GL        | GFMA       | 6.0                     | 40.3                      |
| Cabin Sealed Removal Salvage  | BF        | GFMA       | 1.0                     | 7.0                       |
| Hinkle Gulch                  | AS        | AMA        | 898.0                   | 2,801.0                   |
| I-Shank                       | GP        | GFMA       | 250.0                   | 1,334.0                   |
| Flat Nine                     | AS        | AMA        | 19.0                    | 45.0                      |
| Anderson Salvage              | AS        | AMA        | 25.0                    | 44.0                      |
| Reroadside Hazard Salvage     | GP        | AMA        | 29.0                    | 393.0                     |
| County Sawmill Neg R/W        | GL        | GFMA       | 1.5                     | 23.0                      |
| McMullin Creek                | GP        | GFMA       | 402.0                   | 1215.0                    |
| Cove Ridge                    | AS        | AMA        | 30.0                    | 68.0                      |
| Shady Jam                     | AS        | AMA        | 21.0                    | 101.0                     |
| Climax Blowdown Salvage       | AS        | GFMA       | 20.0                    | 40.0                      |
| Langdon Salvage               | GL        | GFMA       | 2.0                     | 28.0                      |
| Elk Valley Salvage            | GL        | GFMA       | 3.0                     | 24.5                      |
| Westside Blowdown Salvage     | GP        | GFMA       | 10.0                    | 49.0                      |
| Jamison Gulch R/W             | BF        | GFMA       | 1.0                     | 11.0                      |
| Fred-n-jack                   | BF        | GFMA       | 1,389.0                 | 6,612.0                   |
| Windy Buzzard Salvage         | AS        | GFMA       | 10.0                    | 63.0                      |
| Windy Evans Salvage           | BF        | GFMA       | 58.0                    | 185.0                     |
| Buck Rock R/W                 | BF        | GFMA       | 3.0                     | 11.0                      |
| McLawson                      | GL        | GFMA       | 222.0                   | 1,387.0                   |
| Flounce Rock                  | BF        | GFMA       | 84.0                    | 276.0                     |
| Windy Trail                   | BF        | GFMA       | 41.0                    | 57.0                      |
| Honey Salvage                 | GL        | GFMA       | 1.0                     | 33.0                      |
| Middle-Thorn                  | AS        | AMA        | 2,092.0                 | 7,074.0                   |
| Round Bull                    | GP        | AMA        | 756.0                   | 2,139.0                   |
| Free And Easy                 | GP        | GFMA       | 306.0                   | 844.0                     |
| Road Side Salvage             | GP        | AMA        | 10.0                    | 55.0                      |
| Jack & Josie                  | AS        | AMA        | 68.0                    | 507.0                     |
| <b>Totals</b>                 |           |            | <b>10,016.5</b>         | <b>47,733.8</b>           |
| *Hardwood volume was 5.0 mbf. |           |            |                         |                           |



| <b>ALLOWABLE SALE QUANTITY (ASQ)</b> |                               |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>RESOURCE AREA</b>                 | <b>TARGET FY 96 (MBF) (B)</b> | <b>OFFERED FY 96 (MBF)* (G)</b> |
| ASHLAND                              | 15,730.0                      | 17,968.2                        |
| BUTTE FALLS                          | 12,458.0                      | 17,047.1                        |
| GLENDALE                             | 11,471.0                      | 7,847.2                         |
| GRANTS PASS                          | 8,341.0                       | 5,021.3                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>48,000.0</b>               | <b>47,883.8</b>                 |

\*The total offered volume *includes* volume from contract modifications and volume from special forest products (posts and poles). In addition to the total volume offered, 4,253.0 mbf were sold as replacement volume as mandated under Public Law 104-19.

## **PORT ORFORD CEDAR (POC)**

Port Orford Cedar continues to be threatened by the root rot disease caused by *Phytophthora lateralis* in all its range in Southwest Oregon and northwestern California. In 1996, the Medford District completed a roadside survey to detect the presence of healthy and dead or dying POC in its range within the district. The percentage of mortality was also estimated. This effort is to be followed by aerial observations and to test the use of new technologies such as infrared mapping to detect the presence of POC beyond the road areas. BLM is cooperating with USFS and Oregon State University in screening for genetic resistance to the disease. Road closure to minimize the spread of the disease continues to be an option as the extent of the infestation is evaluated.

# SILVICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



The Medford District planted 932,000 seedlings on 2,049 acres. Two major projects included in the planting were the rehabilitation efforts on the Hull Mountain and Sprignett Butte fire salvage areas.

| Comparison of intensive silviculture practices--RMP-projected models vs. Actual |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Silviculture Practice   | Annual Projected Amount<br>(Acres) | Actual Amount<br>(Acres)<br>Accomplished in FY96 |
| Site preparation/prescribed fire  | 600                                | 1,165  |
| Site preparation/other  | 100                                | 136  |
| Maintenance/protection*   | 2,500                              | 17,519   |
| Release/precommercial thinning (PCT)*   | 7,800                              | 4,076  |
| Plant regular stock**   | 270                                | 2,538  |
| Plant genetic stock**   | 1,030                              | 511  |
| Fertilization*  | 5,700                              | 0  |

\*Bringing maintenance levels of young stands created in the late '80s and early '90s to a current status have been the budgetary and operational priorities. By the end of 1998, acres treated in the maintenance/protection category will begin to decline sharply, while release/thinning and fertilization will increase to approximately RMP-projected acreage.

\*\* As Provolt Orchard matures and produces more seed, acres planted with genetic stock will increase to near RMP projections, while planting with regular stock will decrease accordingly.



## FOREST HEALTH

In 1996 treatments such as pre-commercial thinning, stand thinning, prescribed burns, and planting diverse tree species, and efforts to contain and control undesirable species of non-native species (i.e. insects, diseases, noxious weeds) all contributed to forest and ecosystem health by maintaining or improving soil productivity, meeting coarse woody debris and snag objectives and maintaining the natural richness of the tree species.

In 1996, added attention and efforts were given to protect Port Orford Cedar from infection by a fatal root rot disease caused by a soil living fungus. These efforts included identification of infested Port Orford Cedar locations, participating with others in developing a genetic breeding study, and other cooperative efforts. The Medford District is continuing the effort against the spread of sugar pine blister rust through the production of seeds that are genetically tested for resistance, at the district's Charles A. Sprague Orchard in Merlin.

## SPECIAL FOREST PRODUCTS (SFP)

The special forest products program is monitored on a continuing basis by each SFP coordinator within each resource area to ensure the sustainability and protection of the resources. During this evaluation period several conferences were held on a regional level, but no specific guidelines for the management of individual special forest products were developed.

## TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE PROGRAM

Survey protocols are being developed and fine tuned by interagency teams. For example, the red tree vole early screening results were used to determine the intensity and levels of surveys and the possible mitigation measures to take when voles are found.

In 1996 no formal analysis was taking place, but surveys for species such as great gray owl and red tree vole to aid in refining the mapping of known range of these species were conducted. Surveys for species listed in Appendix C, such as great grey owl and red tree vole, are mandated for FY 1997 timber sales. Most of the survey protocols were not finalized and no protection buffers were provided in time for implementation in the 1996 field season--except for listed species such as spotted owl. Within LSRs activities benefiting habitats of late successional species were encouraged. A network of wider Riparian Management Areas and spotted owl

100-acre cores scattered across the matrix is being provided to benefit some sensitive species.

Spotted owl sites known prior to January 1994 provided 100 acre cores. Bald eagle and peregrine falcon sites are protected. Otherwise, priority sites were not identified in 1996. No arthropod surveys were initiated in 96 other than some macro invertebrate sampling in conjunction with stream surveys.

The Grants Pass Resource Area completed the Brazier exchange which benefitted bats and owls. Otherwise land exchanges have been identified as a low priority for the district and state.

A long term demographic study of the northern spotted owl continued with the monitoring to



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interagency protocol standards of 100 known sites. Neotropical birds were monitored at a Monitoring Avian Production and Survivorship (MAPS) nesting site and fall migrant banding station. Known bald eagle and peregrine falcon nest sites were monitored. Several sale areas were surveyed for northern goshawk presence.

## FISHERIES

Medford District fisheries biologists primarily evaluated the impacts and proposed mitigation associated with timber sales, road construction and maintenance. Secondary work included: (1) fisheries evaluations and recommendations for watershed analysis and Jobs-In-The-Woods projects, (2) Endangered Species Act coho salmon and cutthroat trout consultation, and (3) coordination with local watershed councils. Watershed analyses were performed for Elk Creek, East Evans Creek, Williams Creek, West Fork Cow Creek and Star Gulch. Jobs-In-The-Woods projects included five bottomless arch culverts installed as fish passages. These culverts replaced non-fish-passage culverts. Other projects included a riparian thinning on Elliott Creek. The first biological assessment was completed for coho salmon Endangered Species Act consultation. A district-wide stream and riparian inventory of 110 miles of fish habitat was completed under the Challenge Cost Share Program. Fisheries biologists also conducted annual coho spawning surveys as a joint effort with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies.

## SURVEY AND MANAGE SPECIES (S&M)

Surveys are being conducted for the vascular plants listed in Appendix C prior to ground disturbing activities. This is part of the surveys that are conducted for Special Status Plants. At this time, survey protocols have not been developed and we are not required by the BLM state office to survey for species in Appendix C.

Protection buffers are being provided on a site-by-site basis for specific rare and locally endemic species of plants in the upland matrix.

Known sites for vascular plants and non-vascular plants (bryophytes, lichens, fungi) are being protected. Buffers are being provided for the known sites.

High priority sites for species management are not being identified. Botanists have discussed some sites, but have not brought these forward to managers as yet.

General regional surveys will be conducted out of the Regional Ecosystem Office.

Under the Northwest Forest Plan, the district inventoried two species of lady's slipper orchids, *Cypripedium montanum* and *Cypripedium fasciculatum* and candy stick species, *Allotropa virgata*. **One** hundred twenty-nine sites were found on the district for the three species. (Sites are not indicative of populations.)



# SPECIAL STATUS AND SEIS SPECIAL ATTENTION SPECIES HABITAT

Special status plant species are being addressed when deciding whether or not to go forward with forest management and other actions. Inventories of all land-disturbing activities occur to detect presence or absence of these species. More than 50,000 acres were inventoried in FY 96. Specific mitigation occurs for each species. If it appears mitigation will not protect the species, the proposed project may be re-routed or that portion of the project may be dropped.

The actions identified in plans to recover species are being implemented. Many species do not have identified plans as yet. This is one area that needs more work.

Coordination with **other** agencies is occurring on several special status plant species. Medford District has three signed interagency Conservation Strategies. The Medford District has completed different monitoring reviews, genetic testing, inventories and shared data with other agencies. The district continues to share all known site data with the Oregon Natural Heritage as well as other federal agencies in Oregon.

The Medford District acquired 274 acres for habitat protection for *Calochortus greenei*, a BLM special status species. The acquired lands are adjacent to the largest population of this species on BLM land.

Completed conservation strategy plans have been approved and are being implemented for *Frasera umpquaensis* and *Cimicifuga elata*. Several other plans are in draft stages.

The Medford District, in cooperation with Oregon Department of Agriculture and The Nature Conservancy, continued the demographic monitoring of Cook's lomatium (*Lomatium cookii*), a Federal Candidate Species found in vernal wet valley floor meadows in Southern Oregon. This habitat is rapidly being lost to urban development. This is the fourth year of monitoring that began to show an increase in the total number of plants.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural inventories were conducted on numerous projects in fulfillment of district responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. An agreement was finalized with Southern Oregon University for curation of archaeological materials from Medford District sites in accordance with the Department of Interior Museum Property Handbook, Part 411. Public outreach and education goals were addressed through field schools conducted in partnership with Pomona College and with Southern Oregon University. These goals were also addressed through a class taught with Southern Oregon University on using BLM's *Exploring Oregon's Past: A Teachers' Activity Guide*. The program contributed archaeological and historical information to the human dimension portion of watershed analyses conducted on the district.



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## SPECIAL AREAS

BLM actions and authorized actions/uses near or within special areas are largely consistent with the RMP objectives and management direction. Some unauthorized OHV use is occurring in some special areas. The resource areas are planning to use gates to eliminate these problems.

The Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns (ACEC) management plans are in different stages of completion. Interpretive programs and recreation uses are being developed for Upper Table Rock as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA).

Identification of what needs to be done to maintain or restore important values of the special areas is an on-going effort that requires more attention. Protection buffers are being provided for specific rare and locally endemic species and other species in the upland forest matrix.

## NOXIOUS WEEDS

Containment and/or reducing noxious weed infestations on Medford District administered lands in five counties (Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Coos, and Curry) using an integrated pest management approach is receiving increased attention. Currently we are tracking twelve species of noxious weed plants, three more than listed in the Resource Management Plan (meadow knapweed, spotted knapweed and Spanish broom). The number of species targeted for containment or control will depend on new introductions, availability of effective control methods, and funding. In 1996, BLM roads in five late successional reserves totaling 17 1,497

acres were surveyed, 18 releases of biological-agents were used to control yellow starthistle, two releases to control spotted knapweed and one chemical treatment to sanitize one rock quarry.

## RECREATION

Eighteen new campsites and a shower facility were added to the Hyatt Lake campground and a new group shelter was constructed. The management of three additional miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCNST) came under the jurisdiction of the BLM when the Rogue River National Forest transferred management. Medford BLM now manages 44 miles of the PCNST.

Backcountry Byways, trails, recreation sites, and the Table Rocks Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) continue to be publicized and intensively managed for recreation. Numerous elementary school children participated in guided hikes on the Table Rocks and local communities continue to benefit from tourists who are attracted to these recreation opportunities.

Management plans for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) are in various stages of completion and revision. Some are adequate and will remain in effect, others are being revised, and many are yet to be written. The plan for Hole-in-the-Rock ACEC was written in FY 96. The status of plans is shown in the following table.



The Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Hyatt/Howard Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) was completed in FY 96. The preparation of the other plans for SRMAs, trails, and proposed recreation signs, however, was limited due to lack of personnel, funding or other priorities.

The Soda Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is still managed under the Interim Management Policy of Lands Under Wilderness Review (IMP) pending future legislation.

| STATUS OF ACEC MANAGEMENT PLANS |                            |                                 |  |  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| #ACECs from RMP                 | ACEC Plans Written in FY96 | # ACEC Plans that Need Revision | # ACEC Plans Previously Completed and Current in FY 96 | # New ACEC Plans that Need to be Written |
| 30                              | 1                          | 2                               | 1  | 26                                       |

## OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES (OHV)

Existing off-highway vehicle (OHV) closures within the Congressionally designated Rogue National Wild and Scenic River and the Pacific Crest National Trail (except for roads crossing the Pacific Crest Trail) will continue in order to protect their recreational resource values.

OHV uses, as related to research natural areas, areas of critical environmental concern, environmental education areas and other designated areas, are continuing to be regulated as in Medford RMP, pages 66-67.

In 1996, a roadside survey of Port Orford Cedar infected with root rot disease was completed. Aerial survey and infrared imagery are planned for 1997. Off-highway vehicle use will be limited to designated roads within the infested areas.

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVER PROGRAM

The Medford District Office is revising its river plan for the 27-mile Hellgate Recreation Area (Le., confluence of the Applegate River and the Rogue River downstream to Crave Creek) of the National Wild and Scenic Rogue River. The Hellgate Recreation Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement is scheduled for a 60-day public review period in February and March of 1998.

Conformance with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives and implementation of the River Plan is pending plan approval.



# MINERALS RESOURCES (MINING)

The Medford District has more than 200 active mining notices. Each year we inspect about one-half of all mining sites on the district. In 1996, 130 sites that were the most likely to have impacts on other resources were inspected. Two sites were placed in non-compliance status.

The BLM also introduced new occupancy regulations--43CFR3715, May 20,1996--to minimize problems associated with occupancies of federal mining claims. The district began implementation of these regulations immediately and began reducing the number of unauthorized occupancies. The district has approximately 60 known mining-related occupancies.

The district continues to sell mineral materials to the public including clay, decorative rock, and quarry rock used for driveways and roads. Ten materials sales were made to businesses and **private** citizens in FY96.

# TRANSPORTATION/ ROADS

The Western Oregon Transportation Management Plan was completed in 1996. One of the stated objectives of the plan is to comply with ACS objectives. Some roads and associated drainage features that posed substantial risk to aquatic or other resources were reconstructed. Those identified in watershed analyses included:

- \* surfacing dirt roads
- \* replacing deteriorated culverts
- \* replacing log fill culverts
- \* replacing undersized culverts in perennial streams to meet 100-year flood event (6)

Other efforts were made to reduce overall road miles by closure or elimination of roads (see table below).

| DECOMMISSIONED ROADS |                   |              |             |                 |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Resource Area        | Jobs in the Woods | Timber Sales | Total Roads | Estimated Miles |
| Ashland              | Yes               | No           | 61          | 34              |
| Glendale             | Yes               | Yes          | 2           | 1.38            |
| Butte Falls          | No                | Yes          | 13          | 3.48            |
| Grants Pass          | Yes               | No           | 34          | 21.23           |
| OBLITERATED ROADS    |                   |              |             |                 |
| Resource Area        | Jobs in the Woods | Timber Sales | Total Roads | Estimated Miles |
| Ashland              | No                | No           | 0           | 0               |
| Glendale             | No                | No           | 0           | 0               |
| Butte Falls          | No                | Yes          | 3           | .51             |
| Grants Pass          | No                | No           | 0           | 0               |



There are two types of decommissioned roads:

1. **Decommissioned.** Road segments closed to vehicles on a long-term basis, but may be used again in the future. The road is left in an “erosion-resistant” condition by establishing cross drains and removing fills in stream channels and potentially unstable fill area. The road is closed with a tank trap or equivalent.

2. **Obliterated.** Roads not needed in the future will be subsoiled, seeded, mulched, and planted to reestablish vegetation. Cross drains, fills in stream channels, and potentially unstable fill areas will be removed to restore natural hydrologic flow. The road is closed with a tank trap barrier or equivalent. The road will not require future maintenance and will be removed from all inventories.

## RESEARCH

In 1996, the Medford district participated in an intensive effort with the Forest and Rangeland Ecosystems Science Center and other districts to review the literature and ongoing research projects in BLM and to identify gaps in knowledge and applied research. This effort resulted in the publication of ***A Research Problem Analysis in Support of the Cooperative Forest Ecosystem Research (CFER) Program*** (June 30, 1997), an excellent review of Research status and assessment of ***needs*** for forests and ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest. Some of the research projects that the Medford District is currently participating in includes density management and regeneration of Douglas fir and other species, a retrospective study of how management history affects species diversity, and the identification and evaluation of northern spotted owl habitat.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The district completed 27 Jobs-in-the-Woods (JITW) projects, totaling \$886,819, employing 159 people including 133 displaced timber workers in 1996. Medford’s FY96 Jobs-in-the-Woods program had a good cross-section of projects that addressed many different aspects of ecosystem restoration. Projects included such watershed restoration projects as replacement of a culvert on Sterling Creek, recreation site improvements at Hyatt Lake, and the AMA projects. The Medford District should be able to implement an excellent mix of projects for many years to come and to support local economies.

The Hyatt Lake Campground recreation site is undergoing a major upgrade and enhancement in the Ashland RA. The Upper Cow Creek Recreation Plan was completed in FY96 to develop the Upper Cow Creek drainage. This was a coordinated effort between the Medford District’s Glendale RA, Douglas County Parks and Recreation, USFS-Tiller RD, Oregon Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, private forest industries, and the local private property owners. Developing a coordinated plan has taken 2 years.

The Glendale RA, the Powers RD-USFS, and the cities of Powers and Glendale, Oregon, have successfully secured funding for a recreation bikeway from Powers to Glendale. This project includes improvement of roads, new wayside facilities and other improvements for a positive experience for biking enthusiasts.



# MONITORING

During fiscal year 1996, collections from timber sales in Oregon included \$67,979,686 from O&C lands and \$9,941,349 from public domain lands. As always, those receipts are shared with county governments. The resource-management-related payments to counties (predominantly from timber sales) within the boundary of the Medford District for 1996 are shown on the following table:

| PAYMENTS TO COUNTIES<br>WITHIN MEDFORD DISTRICT |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| COUNTY  | PAYMENTS FOR FY 96 |
| Coos County                                     | \$39,581           |
| Curry County                                    | 72,098             |
| Douglas County                                  | 231,578            |
| Jackson County                                  | 129,849            |
| Josephine County                                | 90,736             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>\$563.842</b>   |

## THIRD-YEAR EVALUATION

A third-year evaluation of the Westside Resource Management Plan is in the early planning stages at this time. The evaluation will be completed in FY 1999 and cover the implementation period 1996-1998.

**Effective and Validation Monitoring.** These two phases of monitoring are long-term models for evaluating the effects of implementing the goals of the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP). Effective monitoring is expected to reveal trends in environmental change (magnitude and duration) and validation monitoring will focus on detecting the causes of the changes. The Medford District is cooperating with other districts and the state office to develop an effectiveness monitoring plan for the westside districts. This will continue into FY1998.

**Province-level Implementation Monitoring.** A combined team representing federal agencies and community members was selected the first year of province-level implementation monitoring. The team addressed 131 questions on fifteen randomly selected timber sales within the Southwest Oregon Province. Specific results can be seen in the report entitled **Results of FY1996 (Pilot Year) Implementation Monitoring Program** (March 3,1997). This document is available from the REO or can be reviewed at any local BLM/USFS office.

**Medford District Implementation Monitoring.** Implementation monitoring was based on a process developed by the Medford District Research and Monitoring Committee. The basis was Appendix L of the RMP/ROD. Questions were separated into those which were project related, and those which were more general and appropriately reported in the Annual Program Summary or completed reports. The district monitoring team randomly selected projects for monitoring for the period from May 1995 to April 1996. A summary of the district monitoring follows.



**SUMMARY OF NUMBERS AND TYPES OF PROJECTS MONITORED  
MAY 1995 TO APRIL 1996**

| <b>Project Type</b> | <b>Butte Falls RA</b> | <b>Glendale RA</b> | <b>Grants Pass RA</b> | <b>Ashland RA</b> | <b>District Total</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Timber Sales     | 2                     | 0                  | 3                     | 4                 | 9                     |
| 2. Silviculture     | 0                     | 1                  | 0                     | 4                 | 5                     |
| 3. Riparian         | 0                     | 0                  | 0                     | 0                 | 0                     |
| 4. Fish Habitat     | 0                     | 1                  | 0                     | 0                 | 1                     |
| 5. Wildlife Habitat | 0                     | 1                  | 1                     | 0                 | 2                     |
| 6. Prescribed Burns | 0                     | 7                  | 0                     | 0                 | 7                     |
| 7. Road Restoration | 0                     | 4                  | 0                     | 0                 | 4                     |
| 8. Other            | 12                    | 16                 | 11                    | 10                | 49                    |

**NUMBERS AND TYPES OF SELECTED MONITORING PROJECTS  
MAY 1995 TO APRIL 1996**

| <b>Resource Areas</b> | <b>Timber Sale</b> | <b>Silviculture Projects</b> | <b>Wildlife Habitat Restoration</b> | <b>Slash Burn</b> | <b>Road Restoration Projects</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Ashland               | 4                  | 1                            |                                     |                   |                                  | 1            | 6             |
| Grants Pass           | 2**                |                              | 1                                   |                   |                                  | 4            | 7             |
| Glendale              |                    | 1                            | 1                                   | 4                 | 1                                | 2            | 9             |
| Butte Falls           | 1                  |                              |                                     |                   |                                  | 7            | 8             |
| <b>TOTALS</b>         | <b>7</b>           | <b>2</b>                     | <b>2</b>                            | <b>4</b>          | <b>1</b>                         | <b>14</b>    | <b>30</b>     |

**Monitoring Results.** All 30 projects selected for implementation monitoring (see table above) were evaluated in conjunction with the questions in Appendix L of the RMP/ROD. Many of the project elements were found to have been either designed or completed prior to the time the requirements went into effect. In some cases, the questions were not applicable to the project element. Ninety-nine percent of the project elements met the requirements and only one percent of the elements failed. Thirty-two percent not only met, but exceeded the requirements. Results were favorable and reflected good efforts to implement the RMP/ROD.

\* Thirty projects that required environmental assessments (EAs) or categorical exclusions (CEs) were selected randomly for office and field review. Seven were timber sales, two silviculture projects, two wild habitat restoration, four slash burns, one road restoration project and fourteen other projects (special forest products, land exchange, rights-of-ways, special use permits, mining, communication sites, research, recreation and bridge replacement).

\*\* Two timber sales were selected that received office review because one sale involved yarding a single tree that had fallen across a property line and the other cutting 14 trees along a BLM road to permit an applicant to reach a mining claim.



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# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN MAINTENANCE

The Medford District Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision RMP/ROD was approved in April 1995. Since then, the district has been implementing the plan across the entire spectrum of resources and land use allocations. As the plan is implemented, it has become necessary to make minor changes, refinements, or clarifications of the plan. These actions are called “plan maintenance.” They do not result in expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions or changes in the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved RMP/ROD. Plan maintenance does not require environmental analysis, formal public involvement or inter-agency coordination.

## Clarification from OSO/REO

**Guidance on determining “Site Potential Trees”:** The term “site-potential tree height,” used for determining widths of riparian reserves, has been defined as: “The average maximum height of the tallest dominant trees (200 years or older) for a given site class.” (NFP C-31) The BLM Oregon State Office (OSO) provided one possible method for determining the height of a “site-potential tree” in Instruction Memorandum OR-95075 which is adopted in its entirety as RMP clarification. REO concurred with the proposed method. Both OSO and REO recognized that there might be many ways to determine site potential tree and emphasized that this should not be the only approved way to determine the trees’ height.

The OSO “site potential tree” determination method basically includes the following:

- \* Determining the naturally adapted tree species which is capable of achieving the greatest height within the fifth field watershed and/or stream reach in question.

- \* Determining the height and age of dominant trees through on-site measurements or from inventory data.

- \* Averaging the site index information across the watershed using inventory plots, or well-distributed site index data, or riparian specific data where index values have large variation.

- \* Select the appropriate site index curve.

- \* Use Table I from the guidance to determine the maximum tree height potential, which equates to one site potential tree for prescribing riparian reserve widths.

**Guidance on measuring riparian reserves width:** Both the RMP/ROD (pg 26) and the NFP ROD (pg B-13) contain the statement, “Although riparian reserve boundaries on permanently-flowing streams may be adjusted, they are considered to be the approximate width... necessary for attaining Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.” The REO (letter dated March 22, 1995) and the Research and Monitoring Committee (letter dated March 22, 1995) agreed that a reasonable standard of accuracy, for measuring riparian reserves in the field is plus or minus 20 feet, or plus or minus 10 percent of the calculated width. This guidance has been adopted as RMP clarification.

**Guidance on coarse woody debris in the matrix:** Both the NFP (pg. C-40) and the Medford RMP/ROD (pg. 13) have specific guidelines on coarse woody debris (CWD) retention in the matrix. The requirement was to leave a minimum of 120 linear feet of logs per acre greater than or equal to 16 inches in diameter and greater than 16 feet in length. Numerous questions on proper implementation arose, and



several efforts were made to clarify those questions. BLM Oregon State Office (OSO) issued Instruction Memorandum No. OR-95028 (November 29, 1994) and Change 1 (draft) (July 21, 1995) to clarify using *the large end of the log for the diameter criteria*, retention of existing CWD, retention of standing trees to meet CWD and other items. On November 19, 1996, OSO issued Information Bulletin No. OR-97-064, entitled *Implementation of Coarse Woody Debris Standards and Guidelines*. This IB provided further clarification of previous guidance and several alternative methods of meeting the CWD requirements of the NFP and RMPs. All of these OSO instructions are adopted as RMP clarification and are being implemented on the Medford District.

**Clarification/correction on Special Status Species Protection Buffers:** The RMP/ROD (p. 54), and the NFP ROD (p. C-27), included *Buxbaumia piperi* as a protection buffer species. OSO Instruction Memorandum OR-96-108 advised us that inclusion of this species as a protection buffer species was an error and directed us to remove it from the protection buffer species status.

**Adoption of Interagency Resource Information Coordination Council (IRICC)**

**Aquatic Data Standards:** The Oregon State Director adopted the core data elements as defined in the Report of the IRICC Fish/Hydrog-

raphy Strike Team, *Stage I Common Data Standards for Aquatic Inventory and Stream Identification* (see BLM Instruction Memorandum No. OR-97-069, copy available in Medford District Office). These standards were developed in 1996 by an interagency team of aquatic specialists for use by federal and state agencies in basin-wide aquatic inventories, and approved by the Regional Interagency Advisory Council. Common core data elements will allow the comparison and aggregation of information across whole watersheds, regardless of ownership or agency jurisdiction. Although these have been available for a while, the Bureau of Land Management has not had a standardized stream inventory protocol in which to apply them. Beginning in FY 98, basin-wide inventories will be completed through a single statewide contract with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Corvallis lab (details forthcoming). The state's protocols have already been modified to include these standards.

### **New Federal Regulations**

**Occupancy Regulation: 43CFR3715** May 20, 1996, *Use and occupancy under the mining laws*.

**Purpose:** Establishes guidelines for occupancy on mining claims and provides for civil and criminal penalties.