

Medford's Messenger

Winter 2015-2016



Medford District Office

BLM

Medford BLM's Mission

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

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



Medford's Messenger

a publication of

**Bureau of Land Management
Medford District Office**

Winter 2015-2016

Dear Public Land User:

Welcome to the Winter 2015-2016 edition of the *Medford's Messenger*. The purpose of our publication is to provide you with information on proposed and ongoing activities on the Medford District. It contains listings of projects by resource area that have been recently completed and identifies newly proposed projects.

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Dayne Barron
Medford District Manager

National Environmental Policy Act Analysis and Documentation

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

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

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

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

Departmental policy and CEQ regulations require that categorical actions be subjected to sufficient environmental review to determine whether any of the extraordinary circumstances apply, as listed in 43 CFR § 46.215, that would preclude the use of a categorical exclusion. An “extraordinary” circumstance is one that could have significant environmental effects beyond the “ordinary” circumstances already described and considered as applicable to the excluded actions in the rulemaking procedure. The Medford District/Resource Areas maintain on-site NEPA registers that list ongoing actions, and post all categorical exclusions and related decisions on the Medford District Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/index.php>.

The BLM is transitioning to a new NEPA register for all projects. Old projects will still be available from the above link. All new projects as well as some older documents that will have decisions after October 1, 2015 will be posted on the National Register for Land Use Planning and NEPA at: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do. On this site, you can search for documents by searching an interactive map or through a text search.

Categorically excluded actions, by regulation, do not require the documentation necessary for an EA or EIS. No public notice of a federal agency’s use of a categorical exclusion is required. The public was provided a formal opportunity to participate in the agency’s review and approval of these categorically excluded activities. Given this

context, the BLM may choose to proceed with these actions as part of the ordinary course of business in land management with the posting of a notice of decision on the District Web site. This notice would advise the public of the formal administrative review process for these individual actions available under 43 CFR § 4.450. Depending on circumstances, however, the BLM may invoke, by publishing a notice in a local newspaper of record, the administrative review process under 43 CFR § 5003 for certain individual forest management actions. Categorical exclusions posted on the Web site will provide the individual administrative remedy process in the document.

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

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

Medford District

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Winter 2015-2016

Recent Decisions

Title and Project Description	Location	Project Status	Contact
Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration EA	Medford District	Decision Record signed April 17, 2014. A Determination of NEPA Adequacy will be signed for each project resulting from this EA.	Tony Kerwin
Integrated Vegetation Management Programmatic EA	Medford District	A Decision Record will be signed for each project resulting from this EA from 2013-2017.	Tony Kerwin

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed			Contact
		Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	
Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides EA	Medford District	Completed	On Hold		Tony Kerwin

Ashland Resource Area

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Winter 2015-2016

Recent Decisions

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Project Status	Contact
1	South Fork Little Butte Forest Management Project EA Forest management treatment for the maintenance of sustainable forest production.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Decision Record signed August 19, 2015	Kathy Minor
2	New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T) Lease Renewal EA Renew communication lease (OR048563) on Soda Mountain.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland	Decision Record signed September 29, 2015	Kathy Minor
3	Hunter Communications Fiber Optic ROW EA Issue a right-of-way grant for the placement of fiber optic cable	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument	Decision Record signed November 12, 2015	Kathy Minor

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
4	Timber Mountain Recreation Plan/Draft EIS Activity-level recreation plan for managing off-highway vehicle use.	West of Jacksonville	Completed	Completed	Completed	Unknown	Diane Parry
5	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Deadwood grazing leases.	East and South of Howard Prairie Reservoir	Completed	On Hold			Jason Tarrant

9 **New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered**

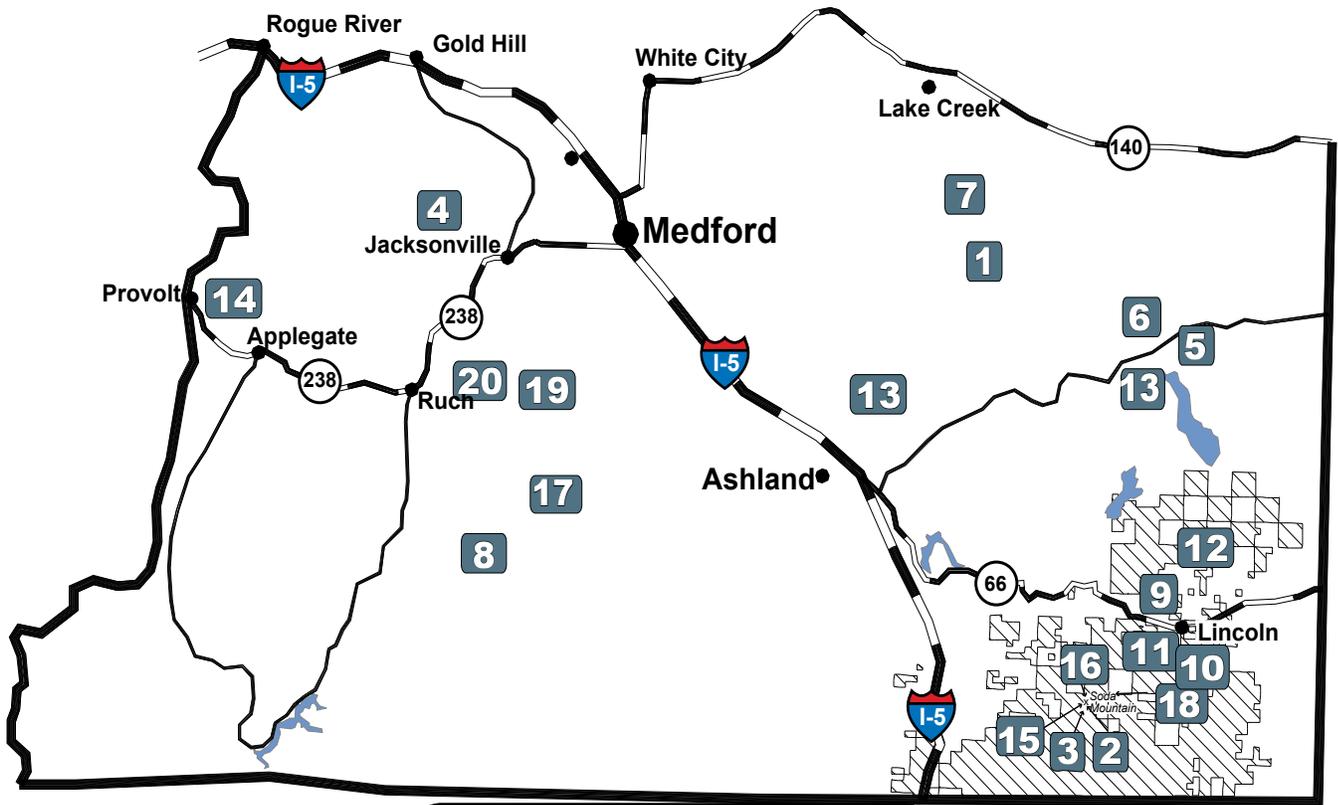
Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
6	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Conde Creek grazing leases.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Completed	On Hold			Jason Tarrant
7	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Lake Creek Spring, Lake Creek Summer, and Deer Creek-Reno allotments grazing leases.	Little Butte Creek watershed	Completed	On Hold			Jason Tarrant
8	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Lower Big Applegate allotment grazing lease.	Applegate watershed	Completed	On hold			Jason Tarrant
9	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan EA Comprehensive transportation management plan to evaluate the road network within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and determine transportation, restoration, and protection needs.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland to the California border	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Spring/ Summer 2016	Kathy Minor
10	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Land Exchange Revised EA First of two land exchanges identified in P.L. 111-011-Land Tenure Actions (Rowlett).	East of Ashland, near Lincoln	Completed	Completed	Completed	Spring 2016	Kathy Minor/ Mary Johnson
11	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Land Exchange EA Second of two land exchanges identified in P.L. 111-011-Land Tenure Actions (GLI).	East of Ashland, near Lincoln	Completed	Completed	Completed	Fall 2016	Kathy Minor/ Mary Johnson

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
12	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Pine Plantation Restoration EA Restoration thinning on approximately 300 acres of pine plantations within the CSNM.	East of Ashland	Completed	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Michelle Calvert/ Luke Brandy
13	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Grizzly allotment grazing lease.	Little Butte Creek watershed	On Hold				Jason Tarrant
14	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize the Billy Mountain allotment grazing lease.	Applegate watershed	On Hold				Jason Tarrant
15	Oregon Department of Transportation Lease Renewal EA Renew communication lease (OR34999) on Soda Mountain.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Kathy Minor/ Tanya Dent
16	US Cellular Lease Renewal EA Renew communication lease (OR49604) on Soda Mountain.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland	Completed	Winter 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Kathy Minor/ Tanya Dent
17	Nedsbar Forest Management Project EA Forest management treatment for the maintenance of sustainable forest production.	Little Applegate River and Upper Applegate River watersheds	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Kathy Minor
18	PacifiCorp Lease Renewal EA Renew communication lease (OR 038053) on Soda Mountain.	Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, southeast of Ashland	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Kathy Minor/ Tanya Dent

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
19	<p>Jacksonville-to-Ashland Trail Project EA (Jack-Ash Trail)</p> <p>Develop nonmotorized trail segments that would allow users to travel on foot, bicycle, or horseback from Ashland to Jacksonville.</p>	Little Applegate River watershed	Completed	Winter 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Zach Million/ Michelle Calvert
20	<p>East Applegate Ridge Trail Project EA</p> <p>Construct a nonmotorized trail system in the Applegate Valley.</p>	Bishop Creek drainage in the Middle Applegate River watershed	Completed	Winter 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Zach Million/ Michelle Calvert



**Ashland Resource Area
Winter 2015-2016 Projects**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 South Fork Little Butte Forest Management Project EA 2 Cingular Wireless Lease Renewal EA 3 Hunter Communications Fiber Optics ROW EA 4 Timber Mountain Recreation Plan/Draft EIS 5 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Deadwood 6 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Conde Creek 7 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Lake Creek Spring/Summer, Deer Creek-Reno 8 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Lower Big Applegate 9 CSNM Transportation Management Plan EA 10 CSNM Land Exchange Revised EA #1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 CSNM Land Exchange EA #2 12 CSNM Pine Plantation Restoration EA 13 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Grizzly 14 Grazing Lease Authorization EA - Billy Mountain 15 ODOT Lease Renewal EA 16 US Cellular Lease Renewal EA 17 Nedsbar Forest Management Project EA 18 PacifiCorp Lease Renewal EA 19 Jackson-to-Ashland Trail Project EA (Jack-Ash Trail) 20 East Applegate Ridge Trail Project EA |
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Butte Falls Resource Area

Schedule of Proposed Actions

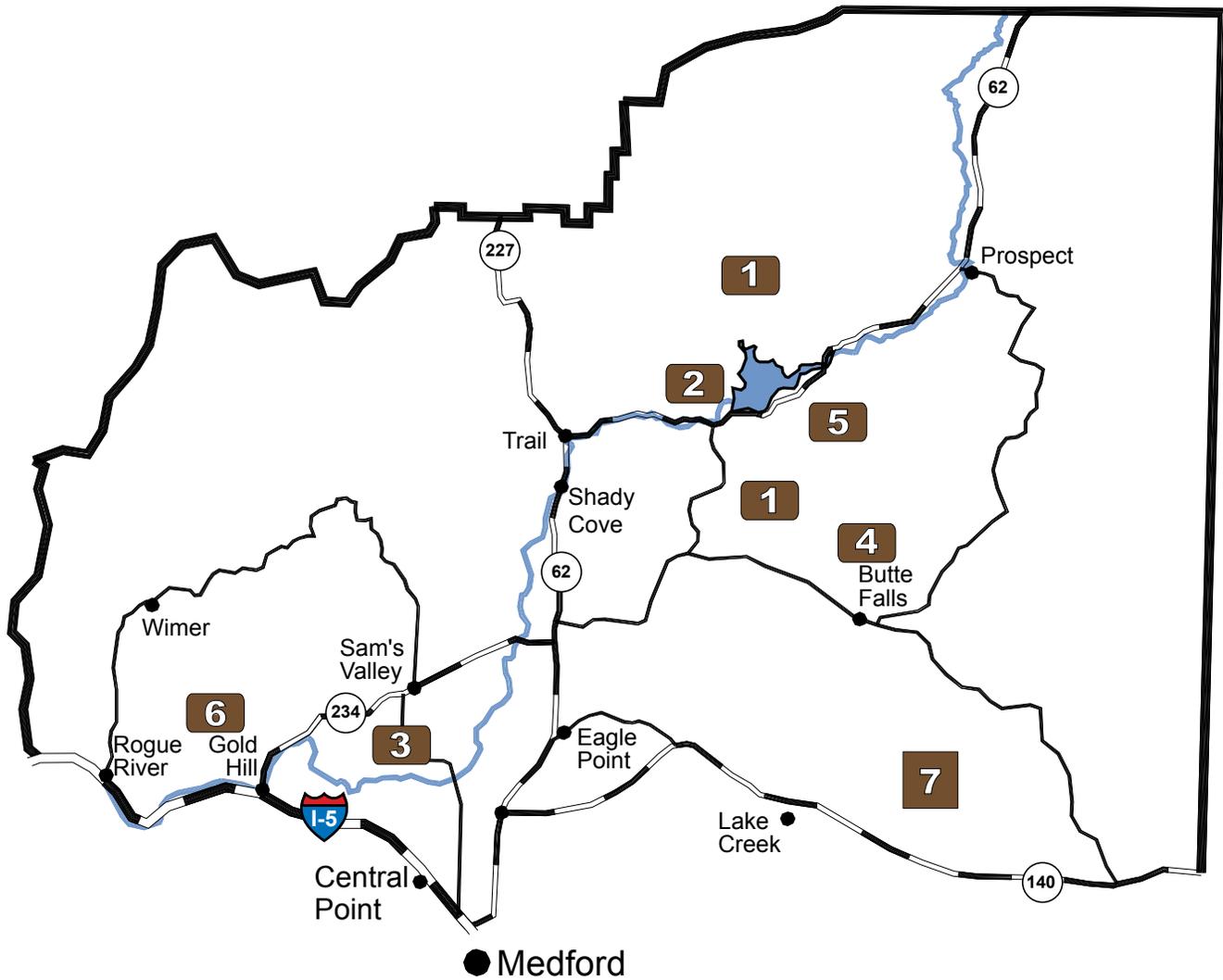
Winter 2015-2016

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
1	Flat Creek and Summit Prairie Allotments 10-year Grazing Authorization Renewal EA Proposal to authorize grazing leases in the Flat Creek and Summit Prairie allotments.	Elk Creek, Big Butte Creek, Little Butte Creek, Lost Creek/Rogue River, and South Fork Rogue River watersheds	Completed	Completed	Completed	On Hold	Jason Tarrant
2	Grazing Lease Authorization EA Proposal to authorize grazing leases in the Bear Mountain, Crowfoot, Vestal Butte Moser Mountain, and Neil-Tarbell allotments.	Shady Cove-Rogue River and Big Butte Creek watersheds	Completed	Completed	Completed	Winter 2016	Jason Tarrant
3	Table Rocks ACEC Management Area Resource Management Plan Amendment EA Amend the Medford District RMP to revise the ACEC boundary and establish the Table Rocks Management Area.	Gold Hill-Rogue River watershed	Completed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Tony Kerwin
4	Big Butte Creek Forest Management Project EA Landscape-scale forest management projects.	Big Butte Creek watershed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Stephanie Kelleher
5	Lost Creek Forest Management EA Landscape-scale forest management projects	Lost Creek-Rogue River watershed and the South Fork Rogue River watershed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Stephanie Kelleher

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Title and Project Description	Location	Proposed				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision Date	
6	<p>Sam's Valley Reinforcement Project Right-of-Way EA</p> <p>Proposal from Pacific Power to widen its existing right-of-way on BLM lands to accommodate an additional power line between Sam's Valley and Grants Pass.</p>	Rogue River watershed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Tony Kerwin
7	<p>Bieber Salt Forest Management Project</p> <p>Landscape scale forest management projects</p>	Little Gutte Creek watershed (Salt Creek and Lower North Fork Little Butte Creek sub-watersheds)	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Stephanie Kelleher



Butte Falls Resource Area

Winter 2015-2016 Projects

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| <p>1 Grazing Lease Renewal EA—
Flat Creek and Summit Prairie</p> <p>2 Grazing Lease Renewal EA—Bear Mountain,
Crowfoot, Vestal Butte, Moser Mountain, and
Neil-Tarbell</p> <p>3 Table Rocks ACEC Management Area
Resource Management Plan Amendment EA</p> <p>4 Big Butte Creek Forest Management Project</p> | <p>5 Lost Rogue Forest Management EA</p> <p>6 Sam's Valley Reinforcement Project Right-of-
Way EA</p> <p>7 Bieber Salt Forest Management Project</p> |
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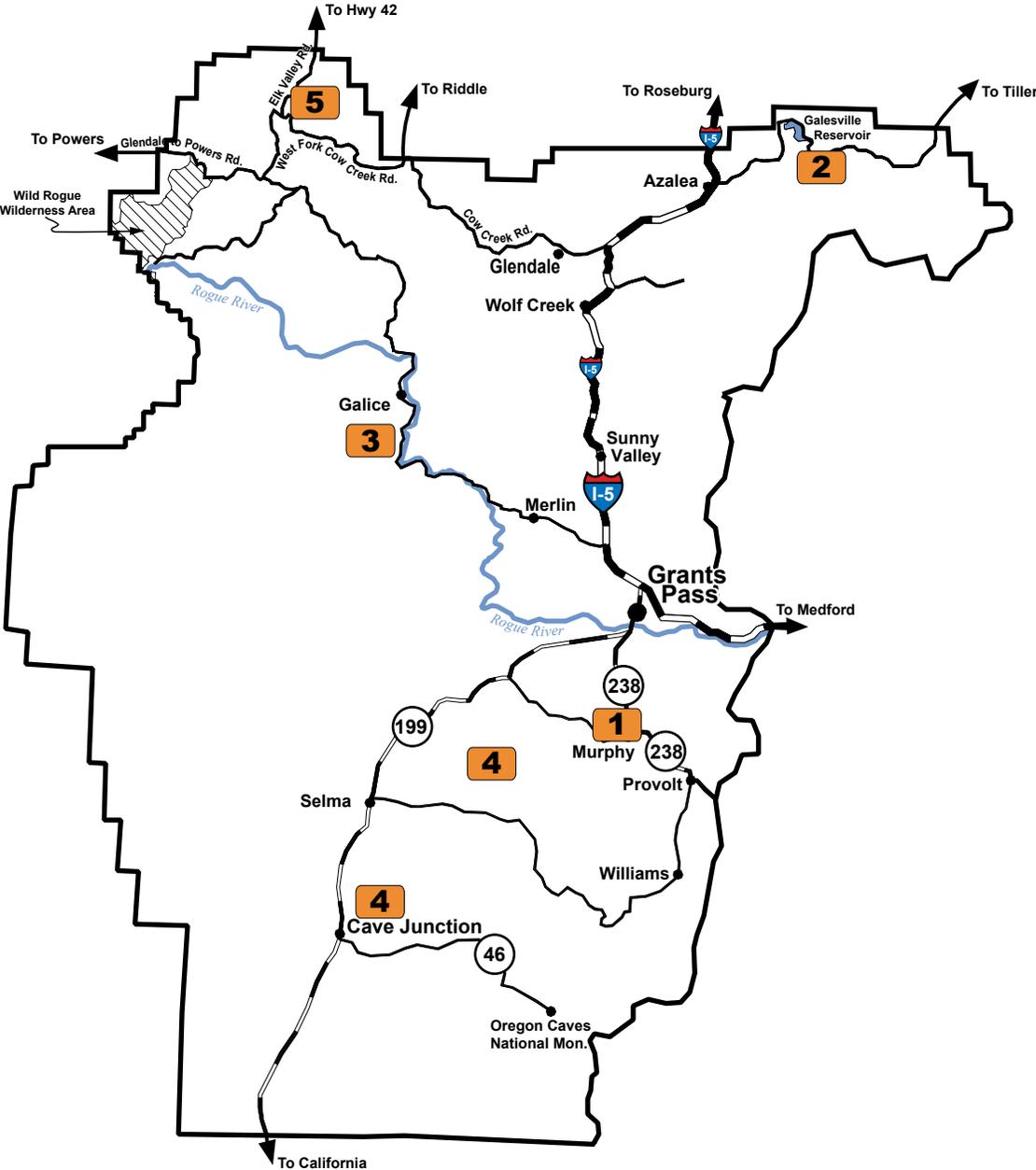
Grants Pass Resource Area

Schedule of Proposed Actions

Winter 2015-2016

New and Ongoing Projects Being Considered

Map Number	Project Name and Description	Location	Proposed Dates				Contact
			Scoping	Analysis	Public Review	Decision	
	Road Right-of-way Agreements and Hauling Permits Individual requests from other public agencies and private parties for access through BLM-managed lands.	Throughout the Grants Pass Resource Area	Ongoing as requests are received.				Leah Schofield
1	Section 13 Quarry Expansion EA Proposal to extract mineral material in T37S, R6W, section 13.	Lower Applegate River watershed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Leah Schofield
2	Upper Cow LSR Project EA Proposed forest management project to improve late-successional conditions within the LSR and attain the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives in riparian reserves.	Middle Cow Creek watershed	Completed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Ferris Fisher
3	Stray Dog Mining EA Mineral material extraction in T35S, R8W, section 3.	Hellgate Canyon-Rogue River watershed	Completed	Winter/Spring 2016	Winter 2015/2016	Summer 2016	Ferris Fisher
4	Crooks Creek/Limestone Caves Mining Withdrawal EA Proposal to withdraw 3,680.3 acres from mineral entry to protect geological, fisheries, and wildlife resources.	Deer Creek watershed	Completed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Leah Schofield
5	Cold Elk Forest Management Project EA Landscape-scale forest management activities.	West Fork Cow Creek watershed	Winter 2015/2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Leah Schofield



**Grants Pass Resource Area
Winter 2015-2016 Projects**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Section 13 Quarry Expansion EA 2 Upper Cow LSR Project EA 3 Stray Dog Mining EA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Crooks Creek/Limestone Caves Mining Withdrawal EA 5 Cold Elk Integrated Vegetation Management Project EA |
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Acronyms and Definitions

ACEC—Area of Critical Environmental Concern

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

CSNM—Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

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

EIS (Environmental Impact Statement)—a detailed written statement as required by section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act.

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

GFMA—General Forest Management Area

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

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

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

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

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

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

Resource Area	Project

Please send me additional information on the following project(s):



Please remove my name from the Medford's Messenger mailing list.

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