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**In Reply Refer to:**  
1736 PFP (OR935) P

April 21, 2003

EMS TRANSMISSION 04/22/2003  
Information Bulletin No. OR-2003-135

To: All OR/WA District Managers and CA Field Managers (Arcata, Redding and Ukiah)

From: Deputy State Director for Resource Planning, Use and Protection, OR/WA  
Deputy State Director for Natural Resources, CA

Subject: FYA: Participation in the ISMS Version 2.0 User Requirements Identification Process

**Introduction**

Since March 2000, the Interagency Species Management System (ISMS) has been used in the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) field offices and regional headquarters in the Northwest Forest Plan area. The ISMS team is now planning to revisit the user requirements for the ISMS with current and potential users. This is a result of several converging factors, including:

1. Since ISMS was deployed, Geographic Information System (GIS) technology has taken a great leap forward, and technology is now available to simplify and make easier the use of ISMS. Both agencies will be moving away from ESRI ArcView 3.2, currently used by ISMS, to ArcGIS v. 8 and 9. ISMS must be upgraded by October, 2004, to meet the Oregon BLM deadline to discontinue use of ArcView 3.2.
2. The current Survey and Manage (S&M) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) will consider alternatives, including moving some S&M species to the agencies' sensitive and special status species program. Results of the Record of Decision (ROD) process will need timely support by a database.
3. To meet the needs of its field and regional office users, ISMS must change. Users have requested a number of changes to ISMS that have become apparent with use since deployment. ISMS is hard to use in analysis and thus is not easily useful for field office analyses to solve land management issues and carry out planning and management activities.

**Timing**

Work on scoping and collecting user requirements for ISMS Version 2.0 is beginning now due to the immediacy of agency implementation of ESRI ArcGIS/dropping ArcView, the need for

timely database support of the SEIS ROD, and the lengthy lead time necessary to adequately revisit current data and functional needs/database redesign. A series of decision points will help to guide the ultimate design, user population, and scope of the new application. As part of the process the ISMS Oversight Committee will provide ongoing oversight, and the S&M Intermediate Managers Group (IMG) will review and approve options for continued development and use of ISMS Version 2.0. This will ensure that activities for revisiting the design and scope will have management support.

## Parameters of Version 2.0 Strategy

The ISMS Version 2.0 Strategy includes a number of parameters for revisiting user requirements and redesign.

1. Data wanted in the database must support required analysis. If it is not needed for analysis, it will not be accommodated in the revised database.
2. The capability to use ISMS for easy information retrieval and analysis will be just as important as ease of data entry.
3. Field Office analyses (in support of land use planning, permit processing and maintaining healthy ecosystems) and Regional analyses (Annual Species Review or future equivalent) will both be accommodated so that the different user groups can easily access the local data and/or regionally important data.
4. Information from pre-disturbance surveys and strategic surveys will be accommodated in a way to allow efficient data input and analysis by all who need access to the information.
5. The currently available ArcGIS technology will be used to greatly streamline the database use and the data quality assurance responsibilities for data stewards.
6. The application will need to support any potential decision resulting from the ongoing S&M SEIS, so the collection and analysis of user requirements will include the needs of both agencies' special status species programs and the Survey and Manage program.

## Scope

ISMS currently has over 500 users. The ISMS team will revisit / reanalyze user requirements with representative subsets of these users, including managers and GIS specialists. Eastside Forest Service Region 6 and BLM specialists are also asked to participate in some of the meetings to ensure that the ISMS V.2.0 database supports any outcome of the S&M SEIS alternatives/ROD. Currently the Forest Service Natural Resource Information System Fauna and Flora Modules are not fully deployed nor fully capable of supporting the S&M program, and the BLM does not have a state-wide special status species observation/location database. A series of meetings will be scheduled with various "user groups" over the next 10 months. Each group will consist of 8-12 people who will be asked to answer an email questionnaire, participate in one or two 1 ½ day meetings, and review the products of the meetings, all over an approximate 4-6 month period. Attachment 1 provides additional detail.

## Request for Volunteers

This Information Bulletin is a request for volunteers to participate in some of the user requirements groups. Invitations to specific ISMS users/managers/GIS specialists will also be forthcoming for individual user groups. Attachment 2 indicates the first planned meetings and some known dates. Invitations have been sent via email to some of the potential participants in

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the first group, the Vascular Plants/Vegetative Special Status Species group. Management support is requested for the participation of these individuals and for individuals in future groups.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting the new ISMS Version 2 Requirements Coordinator, Stephanie Miles, at (503) 326-4320, email at [Stephanie\\_Miles@or.blm.gov](mailto:Stephanie_Miles@or.blm.gov), or if unable to reach her, either of two Regional ISMS Data Stewards, Kelli VanNorman, (503) 326-4325, email at [Kelli\\_VanNorman@or.blm.gov](mailto:Kelli_VanNorman@or.blm.gov), and Stephanie Sprague, (503) 326-4327, email at [Stephanie\\_Sprague@or.blm.gov](mailto:Stephanie_Sprague@or.blm.gov).

**Districts with Unions** are reminded to notify their unions of this IB and satisfy any bargaining obligations before implementation. Your servicing Human Resources Office or Labor Relations Specialist can provide you assistance in this matter.

Signed by  
 Leo R. Sidebotham  
 for Edward W. Shepard

Signed by  
 J. Anthony Danna  
 Deputy State Director for

Deputy State Director for Resource  
Planning, Use and Protection  
Oregon State Office

Natural Resources  
California State Office

2 Attachments

- 1- [ISMS V.2](#) (2pp)
- 2- [ISMS V.2 User Requirements Meeting Schedule](#) (1p)

Distribution

WO-230 (Room 204LS)  
CA-330 (Paul Roush, Jeanne McFarland)  
OR-010 (Lucile Housley)  
OR-931 (Judy Nelson, Joan SeEVERS)  
OR-932 (Janis VanWyhe)  
OR-935 (Nancy Duncan, Paul Hohenlohe, Russell Holmes, Rob Huff,  
Neal Middlebrook, Bruce Rittenhouse)

FWS

Jay Watson, Laura Finley, Barbara Amidon, Paul Phifer, Steve Morey

## ISMS VERSION 2.0 REQUIREMENTS MEETING SCHEDULE

The dates and locations are tentative or not yet determined. Some additional groups will be identified as the process is followed.

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Vascular Plants and Vegetative Special Status Species Program	May 28-29, 2003	Roseburg, OR
Fungi	June 10-11, 2003	Corvallis, OR
Amphibians	July 28-29, 2003	Yreka, CA or Medford, OR
Mollusks	August 19-20, 2003	Eugene, OR
Bryophytes and Fungi	August 26-27, 2003	Portland, OR
Owls and other High Mobility SS species	October 22-23, 2003	TBD
Bats	September XX, 2003	TBD
Arthropods	TBD	TBD



## **Interagency Species Management System (ISMS) Version 2**

### **What is ISMS?**

The Interagency Species Management System (ISMS) is an Oracle database with a Geographical Information System (GIS) User Interface for part of the data entry. It is hosted by the United States Forest Service (FS), Region 6, and used by about 530 FS and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) persons in Region 5, Region 6, and BLM Oregon and California. USFWS, Region 1, staff also query it. It originally was to have been a threatened, endangered and special status species / Survey and Manage species database, but development progressed slowly, so in mid-1999, Bill Bradley, DSD Resources, OR BLM, and Bob Devlin, Director of Natural Resources, R6, FS decided that in order to shorten time to deployment, the scope should be cut to just Survey and Manage.

The original database for Survey and Manage was the Known Site Database, which was populated from information on known locations researched from herbariums, museums, and other sources, including the National Forest and BLM District staffs. The data from this simple database was moved into ISMS prior to deployment to the field office users in March of 2000. Other data placed into the database prior to deployment was known sites data collected by the field office staffs and sent into the Regional Ecosystem Office for central data entry solely to support the preparation of the 2000 Supplemental EIS. A minimal number of data fields were entered in this central effort since the EIS only needed basic occurrence information. Much work on the part of the field offices and the ISMS staff has accomplished great increases in data integrity and completeness to fix most of the data problems stemming from that early pre-deployment data entry. ISMS contains information about existing locations of Survey and Manage Species and about areas which were surveyed for specific species. This information is available spatially (in GIS) and in the database. The data can be queried in Oracle SQL, MS Access and GIS ArcView formats. Support for ISMS users will continue as before while we also begin upgrading the application into ISMS Version 2.0. We do not plan on future modifications beyond ISMS Version 1.15, which will accommodate two new fields per form for documenting Fire Management Recommendations. This version is planned for April 2003 release.

### **What is ISMS Version 2.0?**

ISMS Version 2.0 is a planned redesign of the database and data entry application to take advantage of changing technologies, verify the existing user business needs and to respond to changes in the Survey and Manage program. The main goal of ISMS 2 is to plan or create an application for analysis instead of focusing on data input. ISMS 2 will focus more on giving users an application to help them in their resource work rather than

a data entry tool. After it is completed, a logical task to explore by the ISMS team and the field offices would be collecting data electronically in the field and dumping it into ISMS.

The current ISMS application is a combination of Oracle forms and ArcView utilizing attribute data stored in an Oracle database and spatial data stored in distributed shapefiles. Since the initial design of ISMS, exciting advances in GIS technology have occurred that should make interacting with and storing ISMS spatial data much easier.

Changes to the Survey and Manage program as a result of the current SEIS may result in a different purpose for the ISMS database. The ISMS team plans to collect requirements that fit within the scope of any of the alternatives of the SEIS and follow whatever management program changes come from the SEIS record of decision. To be in sync with the SEIS ROD, we have to start requirements gathering before the decision is published in order to meet user needs.

**What is the next step?**

The ISMS development team is beginning to meet with representative groups across the two agencies throughout the region to receive information from many different people on information and resource program business needs that reflect how resource specialists and managers do their work and how an application can facilitate that.

If you have an interest in participating in a requirements meeting, please contact Stephanie Miles, our User Requirements Coordinator. Other contacts are also listed if Stephanie can not be reached temporarily.

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