

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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To: All District Managers and Field Managers
From: Deputy State Director for Resource Planning, Use and Protection
Subject: Analysis of Special Status Species Data Management Options

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage (S&M) Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines has highlighted the need to examine how the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages and uses data on Special Status Species (SSS). The Forest Service (FS) has adopted the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) Fauna and the to-be-built Threatened and Endangered Species Program (TESP) Plant modules as their SSS data management system. The BLM Special Status Species Program (SSSP) staff has long recognized a need for a data management system that can facilitate species range-wide, province-wide, or multiple watershed analyses. The SSSP data management system is essential for species inventories, development of conservation strategies, project level National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) analysis and other kinds of species and habitat assessments and analyses.

The SSSP staff in conjunction with the S&M Interagency Species Management System (ISMS) team are currently reviewing field unit sponsored data management systems, NRIS Fauna and TESP Plants, the national NatureServe Biotics4 database used by the Oregon Natural Heritage Program, and the ISMS database. Prior to the SEIS, the ISMS team was already in the process of documenting updated and streamlined user requirements for S&M species, due to the BLM-mandated shift from ArcView 3.x (used in the current version of ISMS) to ArcGIS, when the scope was expanded to include SSS. The scope of user requirements was expanded because of similarities in user requirements between SSS and S&M, SSSP data management needs, and the Draft S&M SEIS currently in process.

To document user requirements, the ISMS team, in coordination with the SSSP staff, has conducted a number of taxa-specific meetings to learn more about field sponsored SSS data management systems (Information Bulletin No. OR-2003-135). This information is being compiled and used to develop SSSP database management options. The options will compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches and databases, including projected costs of SSSP data management. The eventual outcome of the S&M SEIS will also help decide the future of the ISMS database.

We will continue to develop the data management options for the SSSP, and will include field and State Office managers and specialists in a review of the alternatives. Hopefully, the draft SSSP database management options will be available for review by the first of the year.

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Further questions can be addressed to Barbara Hill (OR-931) at 503-808-6052, Janis VanWyhe (OR-932) at 503-808-6296, or Neal Middlebrook (OR-935) at 541-751-4268.

Districts with Unions are reminded to notify their unions of this Information Bulletin 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
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(Acting)

Authenticated by
Mary O'Leary
Management Assistant

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