



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Oregon State Office

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Portland, Oregon 97208



**In Reply Refer to:**

1601 (OR933) P

December 21, 2010

EMS TRANSMISSION 12/22/2010

Instruction Memorandum No. OR-2011-015

Expires: 9/30/2011

To: DMs, DSDs, Staff, and Branch Chiefs

From: State Director, Oregon/Washington

Subject: Western Oregon Resource Management Plan Evaluations DD: 03/30/2011

**Program Area:** Land Use Planning

**Purpose:** Provide guidance for completing Resource Management Plan (RMP) Evaluations for western Oregon districts in fiscal year (FY) 2011.

**Policy/Action:** The Coos Bay District, Eugene District, Medford District, Roseburg District, Salem District, and Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District will complete plan evaluations of their 1995 Resource Management Plans (RMP). The evaluations will evaluate the implementation of the RMPs through FY 2010. The evaluations will begin in January 2011 and will be completed by July 30, 2011. The Oregon State Office (OSO) will provide overall coordination for the evaluations and will complete the plan evaluation findings report with the assistance of the districts. Attachments 1 and 2 (Western Oregon RMP Evaluation Plan, RMP Evaluation Plan Spreadsheet) provide details on the steps, data needs, and interim time frames for the evaluations.

Personnel from the districts and the OSO who are involved in the evaluations will retain records associated with the evaluation process. District records will be collected by the district planner or designee and will be retained on the district. The OSO records will be collected by the western Oregon planner. Attachment 3 contains recommendations for creating and managing the project file.

**Time frame:** This guidance is in effect immediately. Plan evaluations will begin after January 1, 2011. Districts will provide requested data for Timber Resources by February 4, 2011, and the remainder of the questionnaire to the OSO by March 30, 2011. Evaluation reports and findings will be completed by the OSO and districts by July 30, 2011.

**Budget Impact:** The implementation of this IM is anticipated to result in costs for a variety of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) activities, including data review and analysis to complete the plan evaluation questionnaire and spreadsheets. Those affected include district planners and program leads and OSO program leads.

**Background:** The BLM 1601 – Land Use Planning Manual and the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) state that RMPs “should be periodically evaluated (at a minimum of every 5 years).” The purpose of evaluations is to determine whether the land use plan decisions and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses are still valid and whether the plans are being implemented. The RMPs for the 6 west-side districts were last evaluated in 2004. An RMP revision effort for western Oregon districts was completed in December 2008. The new Record of Decision (RODs)/RMPs were withdrawn by the Department of the Interior in June, 2009. Due to the withdrawal of the 2008 RODs/RMPs, the districts have continued implementation of the 1995 RMPs. The 5-year evaluation cycle means that evaluations are now past due.

The plan evaluations will review the existing RMPs to determine if:

1. decisions remain relevant to current issues,
2. decisions are effective in achieving desired outcomes,
3. any decisions need to be revised,
4. any decisions need to be dropped from further consideration, and
5. any areas require new decisions.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** The 1601 – Land Use Planning Manual (Section 1601.04 - Responsibility and Section 1601.8 - Definitions) and H-1601-1 BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (Section V.B. Evaluation).

**Coordination:** District Managers reviewed and concurred with the framework and timeline for completing the evaluations. District planning staff reviewed the western Oregon 2011 RMP Evaluation Plan.

**Contact:** For further information, contact Anne Boeder, Western Oregon Planner, at (503) 808-6628.

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

Signed by  
Andrew M. Smith for  
Acting Associate State Director

Authenticated by  
Rita Wallberg  
Records Section

### 3 Attachments

- 1 – Western Oregon 2011 RMP Evaluation Plan (7pp)
- 2 – RMP Evaluation Plan Spreadsheets (3pp)
- 3 – Recommendations for Collecting and Managing the Project File (2pp)

Distribution  
WO210 (LS400)

# Attachment 1

## Western Oregon RMP Evaluation Plan January – July, 2011

*Evaluation of Coos Bay District, Eugene District, Medford District, Roseburg District, Salem District, and the Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District 1995 Resource Management Plans.*

### **Introduction**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) states that RMPs “should be periodically evaluated (at a minimum of every 5 years).” The Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the six west-side districts were last evaluated in 2004. The 8<sup>th</sup> year evaluations found that most resource programs were functioning as anticipated; however, the timber management program departed substantially from expected outcomes for many districts.

An RMP revision effort was completed in December 2008. The new Records of Decision (RODs)/RMPs were withdrawn by the Department of the Interior in June 2009.

Due to the withdrawal of the 2008 RODs/RMPs, the districts will continue implementation of the 1995 RMPs. The 5-year evaluation cycle means that evaluations are past due. Evaluations will be completed in FY2011 and will evaluate RMP implementation through FY2010.

### **Purpose of Western Oregon RMP Evaluations**

Evaluation is the process of reviewing RMPs to determine if:

1. decisions remain relevant to current issues,
2. decisions are effective in achieving desired outcomes,
3. any decisions need to be revised,
4. any decisions need to be dropped from further consideration, and
5. any areas require new decisions.

### **RMP Evaluation Process & Schedule**

Evaluations will be completed by each district. Overall coordination will be provided by the Oregon State Office (OSO). The schedule is as follows:

#### November 2010

- Management Review and Approval of RMP Evaluation Proposal.

#### December 1-11, 2010 (2 weeks)

- Review proposal and validate data request with program leads and districts.

#### January 3 – March 18, 2011 (11 weeks)

- Districts complete questionnaire and collect data.
- OSO Lead and District Planners brief district personnel as needed.

#### March 21 – April 29, 2011 (5 weeks)

- OSO Lead and District Planners consolidate and review data and draft preliminary findings reports.

#### May 2 – July 1, 2011 (9 weeks)

- Present preliminary findings report to managers and finalize reports.
- Briefings as needed.

Following are the BLM's steps for plan evaluations with detailed information about the western Oregon RMP evaluations:

**1. *Identify reasons for evaluating the RMP.***

- The BLM policy states that RMPs “should be periodically evaluated (at a minimum of every 5 years).”
- The RMP objectives and management direction need to be evaluated against new data and emerging resource issues (e.g., new Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) information, climate change science and new Department of Interior (DOI) policy, energy policy, biomass, etc.) to make sure plan decisions are still valid.
- It will allow us to verify and refine information for the timber program in light of new data and emerging resource issues. We can paint a more explicit picture of the degree harvest has departed from underlying assumptions of the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).
- A new plan revision process is likely in the near future. A plan evaluation is required prior to plan revisions or major plan amendments to understand why certain RMP objectives have not been met and what issues should be brought forward into the planning process. The plan evaluation serves as the starting point for the preparation plan. The preparation plan serves as the foundation of the entire planning process.
- A new plan revision or major amendment will take years to complete, the plan evaluation will identify needs for interim plan amendments or maintenance.

**2. *Group plans in a geographic region or planning area to look at issues that cut across boundaries.***

- The six western Oregon RMPs (Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District and the Eugene, Salem, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts) will be evaluated. If the need for plan revision and/or amendments is identified, the evaluation will help inform the logical sequence, timing, and groupings for future planning efforts.

**3. *Identify what the evaluation is to measure.***

*Who: Anne Boeder and Chris Cadwell will lead*

- Identify new information or circumstances that would alter the assumptions and conclusions of the 1994 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or invalidate the decisions in the 1995 RMPs.
- The western Oregon RMP Evaluations would verify, update, and refine 2004 evaluation results.
  - Programs functional in 2004 would likely not need to be revisited. District Planners/Resource Leads should confirm this by reviewing the 2004 Evaluation Report for their district and filling out the RMP Evaluation Plan Questionnaire and Spreadsheet.
  - The evaluation would focus on verifying 2004 plan evaluation conclusions for programs not meeting expected outcomes. For most districts, the timber

program was determined as not meeting expected outcomes. A list of specific questions and data needs regarding the timber program is included in the RMP Evaluation Plan Questionnaire and Spreadsheet.

**4. *Develop a questionnaire for field office to focus the evaluation.***

*Who: Anne Boeder will lead with district planner input.*

**5. *Establish an interdisciplinary team that will complete the evaluation. Team can include state office and field specialists, WO staff, Tribes, other Federal agencies, state and local governments, and the public.***

Following is a list of the team members along with anticipated workload:

- Anne Boeder, OSO, Overall Lead (2 Months)
- Chris Cadwell, OR931 (4 Weeks)
  - Forestry Lead
- OSO Program Managers, OR930 (2 Weeks)
  - National and state-wide policy review (compile list) as described in step six.
  - Advice and lead contact for program specific data collection.
- District Planners (3-4 Weeks)
  - District coordination & lead
  - Assist in evaluating and documenting results
  - Assist in writing draft and final evaluation reports
  - Collect RMP evaluation records for the district project file
- District Resource Leads/GIS specialists (1-2 Weeks)
  - District program review/data collection

**6. *Review published and unpublished documents that implement or support RMP decisions and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. Review implementation plans for new information, new issues, and additional protective management direction.***

*Who: Anne Boeder and OSO Program Leads*

- New Endangered Species Act (ESA) related Information (Listings, Critical Habitat, Recovery Plans)
- The BLM and OSO Manuals, Handbooks, Instructional Memorandums
- Executive Orders, Legislation, Secretarial Direction, BLM National Direction
  - DOI Strategic Plan (Climate Change)
  - Secretarial Order (Climate Change)
  - Sage Grouse, etc.
- 2008 FEIS conclusions and other new research relevant to 1994 EIS assumptions and conclusions with a focus on: wildlife, water quality and riparian resources, off highway vehicle (OHV) issues, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, and fire and fuels management.
- Protests, Appeals, and Litigation trends
- Northwest Forest Plan Monitoring Reports

**7. Review NEPA compliance and procedural conformance records (e.g., documentation of land use plan conformance and NEPA adequacy).**

*Who: Anne Boeder will lead with District Planner assistance.*

- National or Regional Programmatic EISs (completed or in-work)
  - National Geothermal Leasing Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS)/Plan Amendments
  - Designation of Energy Corridors on BLM-administered Lands in 11 western states PEIS/Plan Amendments
  - Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM lands in 17 western states PEIS/Plan Amendments (and Oregon step-down effort)
  - Palomar, Ruby, Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline Projects; Boardman to Hemingway transmission line Project
- District Annual Program & Monitoring Summaries
- National reviews (Alternative Internal Control Review for NEPA)

**8. Complete an evaluation report and document the findings of the evaluation. The report will contain two sections: Issues and needs common to all districts and district-specific issues/needs.**

*Who: Anne Boeder/Richard Hardt/Chris Cadwell will write the “Common to all Districts” and district planners will write the “District Specific” sections of the report. District planners will review the entire draft report.*

**9. Develop a communication strategy that addresses distribution of the evaluation findings and/or reports to the public and other stakeholders.**

*Who: OSO and District Planning and Public Affairs Staff*

## **RMP Evaluation Plan – District Questionnaire**

- 1. Do the 1995 RMP decisions appear to be correct and proper over time (e.g. is there a need for plan amendment or revision)?**
  - a. Review 2004 Evaluation Report using “Questions an RMP Evaluation Should Answer” to determine if there is information that would invalidate conclusions from 2004 report (program is achieving identified RMP outcomes/no new RMP direction is needed/RMP EIS analysis is valid).
  - b. Districts are not expected to collect new data beyond items in the RMP Evaluation Plan Spreadsheet or as needed under Item C below.
  - c. A conclusion that there is new information that would change a program’s 2004 evaluation conclusion regarding validity of 1995 decisions should be documented. Provide a narrative along with relevant data. Narrative should describe urgency of the need for changed/new RMP direction and implications if not addressed or delayed.
  
- 2. Are there targeted minor plan amendments or plan maintenance opportunities specific to your district (i.e. updated communication sites, land tenure) that would facilitate RMP implementation? Provide a narrative describing the need and timing.**
  
- 3. Has implementation of the timber harvest program been consistent with the assumptions of the declared Allowable Sale Quantity? Specifically:**
  - a. Have the mix of regeneration and thinning harvest in the harvest land base been consistent with the assumptions of the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ)?
  - b. Has regeneration harvest occurred across the range of age classes as assumed in the ASQ determination?
  - c. How much of the annual harvest has come from reserves?
  - d. What is the harvest volume trend, for regeneration and thinning harvest, as compared to the ASQ and RMP assumptions?
  - e. Have the assumptions for lands available for harvest changed?

The districts are requested to provide the data for the Timber Resources portion of the RMP Evaluation Plan Spreadsheet to Chris Cadwell by February 4<sup>th</sup> 2011. In addition to the data in the spreadsheet, the districts will be requested to provide a short narrative on the status of sales which are:

- no bid,
- re-offers,
- mutually cancelled, and
- sold unawarded as of the end of FY2010.

Details of this narrative are outlined in the spreadsheet. A first draft of a narrative to address the 5 questions above will be developed by the OSO based on the data provided by the Districts. The District Forestry staff and Planners will be provided the draft narrative for their review and input before it is finalized.

RMP Objective (Matrix):

*Produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products.*

RMP Management Direction:

*Conduct timber harvest and other silvicultural activities in that portion of the Matrix with suitable forest lands according to management actions/direction in the Timber Resources section.*

- 4. In the Medford District, how does the amount of Northern Spotted Owl habitat lost to wildfires compare to predicted levels described in the Northwest Forest Plan FEIS (P. 3&4-42)?**
  
- 5. Were there any other programs shown as departing from expected RMP outcomes in the 2004 Plan Evaluations for your district? Determine if they are still departing from expected outcomes and provide a narrative along with relevant data. Provide a narrative along with relevant data. Narrative should describe urgency of the need for changed/new RMP direction and implications if not addressed or delayed.**

## Questions an RMP Evaluation Should Answer

1. Are management actions outlined in the plan being implemented? Which decisions are not being implemented and why.
2. Does the plan establish desired outcomes (i.e., goals and objectives)?
3. Are the allocations, constraints, or mitigation measures effective in achieving (or making progress towards achieving) the desired outcomes? This determination is often made based on information obtained from resource assessments.
4. Have there been significant changes in the related plans of Indian Tribes, state or local governments, or other Federal agencies?
5. Are there new data or analyses that significantly affect the planning decisions or the validity of the NEPA analysis?
6. Are there unmet needs or new opportunities that can best be met through a plan amendment or revision, or will current management practices be sufficient? For example, are there outstanding requests for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designations to protect resource values? *Note: ACECs must be designated through the land use planning process.*
7. Are new inventories warranted pursuant to the BLM's duty to maintain inventories on a continuous basis (Federal Land Policy and Management Act Section 201)?
8. Are there new legal or policy mandates as a result of new statutes, proclamations, Executive orders, or court orders not addressed in the plan?

**Attachment 2 - RMP Evaluation Plan Spreadsheet**

**Part I. All Programs (General)**

District	Program	2004 Evaluations Conclusion: Meeting Expected Outcomes		2004 Evaluations Conclusion: Not Meeting Expected Outcomes		Notes
		No Change in Conclusion	Change in Conclusion*	No Change in Conclusion	Change in Conclusion	
	Land Use Allocations					
	Watershed Analysis					
	Timber Management					
	Silviculture					
	Forest and Woodlands Management (K Falls)					
	Special Forest Products, Biomass					
	Soils					
	Hydrology					
	Wildlife Habitat					
	Wildlife including Special Status Species					
	Botany including Special Status Species					
	Fisheries including Special Status Species					
	Air Quality and Fire and Fuels					
	Rural Interface					
	Lands and Realty, Special use Permits, Utility Corridors, Communication Sites					
	Roads, Access, Rights-of-Way					
	Recreation					

District	Program	2004 Evaluations Conclusion: Meeting Expected Outcomes		2004 Evaluations Conclusion: Not Meeting Expected Outcomes		Notes
		No Change in Conclusion	Change in Conclusion*	No Change in Conclusion	Change in Conclusion	
	Off-highway Vehicle Use					
	Visual Resource Management					
	NLCS (Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Monuments, etc)					
	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern					
	Significant Caves					
	Botany					
	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds					
	Archeology, Paleontology, Cultural & Historic Resources, including Native					
	Renewable Energy and Adverse Energy Impact Assessments					
	Rangeland Resources, Livestock Grazing and Wild Horse & Burro					
	Minerals and Energy					
	Hazardous Materials					
	Socioeconomic, Jobs in the Woods, etc.					
	Payments					
	Contracting					
	Management Actions					

\*Provide supporting data and narrative

**Part II: District Data Request for Timber Resources**

	Sold		Projected *	
	Acres	Volume	Acres	Volume
<b>Harvest Land Base (ASQ)</b>				
Regeneration Harvest				
Thinning and Density Management				

\* Projected = Trim Plus first decade projection times 1.5 (15 years).  
 If second decade Trim data is available it may be used (optional).  
 Coos Bay and Eugene:  
 Prorate Trim Plus data for ASQ before and after 3rd year adjustment.

	Sold	Projected
	Acres	Acres
<b>Regeneration Harvest and Age Class</b>		
0-70		
80-140		
150-190		
200+		

All volumes rounded to nearest million board feet.

Provide a short narrative on the number of sales and volume as of the end of FY 2010 which are: No Bid, Sold Unawarded, Contract Cancellations, and Re-Offers.

	Sold	
	Acres	Volume
<b>Reserves</b>		
LSR		
Riparian Reserve		

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Volume by Fiscal Year</b>																
ASQ Regen																
ASQ Thinning																
Non-ASQ Thinning																
Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Evaluation	Third Year				Eighth Year					2011 Evaluation						

<b>Average Annual 1st Decade Projected Volume</b>	
ASQ Regen	
ASQ Thinning	

## **Attachment 3**

### **Western Oregon RMP Evaluations**

#### **Recommendations for Collecting and Managing the Project File**

January, 2011

Author: Anne Boeder

- Draft copies:
  - generally, do not save drafts except for important milestones like review drafts;
  - all the copies with little back and forth edits are not needed.
  - Are only saved with substantive changes between versions.
  - If saving drafts for official project file, print and file them. Be sure copies contain the date and author, and that handwritten notes are legible.
  
- Emails:
  - Only save emails that are substantive...do not include emails that deal with logistics.
  - For substantive emails, you must print the email message and attachments, being sure to capture the full transmission information (To, From, Date, Subject), and file it in the project file.
  - Make sure the subject line accurately reflects the topic of discussion. Write it on the hard copy printout of the email if you need to clarify.
  - For an email string, you only need to print and file the final message that contains the full string (all intermediate stages do not need to be retained separately).
  - The author of the initial email is responsible for saving it for the project record (including the responses, if any). However, if you took an email that was authored by some one else, and began a new string with other people, you become the author and must include it.
  
- Meeting notes:
  - The official copy of the agenda, meeting notes (taken by designated note-taker for the meeting) and handouts should be maintained in the project file. Attendees' personal notes taken at the meeting do not need to be retained, as they are considered your personal reference notes.

#### **General:**

- Be sure full names, employee titles (i.e., Joe Smith, Forester, Roseburg District), dates (March 1, 2005, not just March 1), and a subject are included on the front of the document. Imagine attorneys or a judge trying to figure out what it is about.

- Maintain consistency of names, titles and acronyms (keep a master list of acronyms).
- Records in the file should be on 8-1/2 x 11 sized paper:
  - Print on one side only (do not try to save paper by printing back-to-back).
  - Minimize use of color and graphics on documents (they should be legible in B&W).
  - Multi-page documents should not be stapled.
  - An email and attachments are considered one document. List the number and name of attachments on the front of the email. If you have an internet link as an attachment, go to the site and print out the relevant information.
  - If using file codes, write the code on the back side of the page in the upper left corner.
- Telephone conversation records should be made of all substantive telephone calls, with a copy filed in the project file. Be sure to document full names, titles, dates, etc.
- When creating records (including emails), be professional in tone. Remember if litigated, the document may need to be produced for the administrative record before a judge.
- The Internet/Intranet cannot be used to store the official copy of project records. Documents posted on the Internet/Intranet are considered reference copies, and the original must be in the project file.
- For large reference documents where it is not practical to include it in its entirety:
  - Copy the front pages (provide publish dates, Title, etc) and the relevant section you referenced. Make sure you can obtain the entire document/book in the future if needed.
  - Alternatively, provide an electronic copy (on CD) with a cover sheet providing relevant information (Title, date, etc).