



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Releases Western Oregon Forest Management Report

WASHINGTON, DC – Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Bob Abbey today announced the findings of the interdisciplinary Western Oregon Task Force for moving forward in the management of BLM-administered forests in western Oregon.

“The recommendations of the task force will help us develop a common vision and a sustainable future for Western Oregon forests,” said Director Abbey. “Sustainable forest management provides certainty to local economies that will in turn provide for sustainable communities. To break the cycle of agency decision followed by litigation we need collaborative solutions built together with Oregon leaders, the public, and other agencies.”

At the request of Secretary Salazar in October 2009, the interdisciplinary Western Oregon Task Force was convened by Abbey and the late U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Director Sam Hamilton. Its work has concluded, resulting in 18 recommendations that will move the process forward in establishing effective management of BLM-administered forests in Western Oregon. The report is available at: http://www.blm.gov/or/news/files/WOTF_FinalReport.pdf

The special task force was led by BLM-New Mexico State Director Linda Rundell and composed of 13 Federal employees from the BLM, FWS, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Forest Service (FS), with backgrounds in a range of resource disciplines.

In addition, the Department of the Interior is working with the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce in developing a series of actions that will provide a framework for implementing key recommendations of the interdisciplinary task force.

For decades, forests managed by the BLM have been embroiled in controversy. This and changes in the economy, have contributed to the decline in area jobs associated with forest management, impacting local economies.

In the short term, the BLM and the FS will coordinate and announce an annual timber sale program based on final funding levels. In addition, the agencies will announce a prospective three year timber sale program.

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The BLM manages more land – more than 245 million acres - than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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