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## Media Advisory

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### **Interior Launches Work Plan for BLM Western Oregon Forests**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today launched a Fiscal Year 2010 [work plan](#) for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) forests in western Oregon that will add economic certainty for local communities while protecting endangered species.

In addition to a proposed schedule of 62 timber sales under the Northwest Forest Plan, Salazar announced that federal field teams will identify future proposed timber sales with high likelihood of being sold and harvested and a special task force will take a fresh look at forest management issues in Oregon.

“In these tough economic times, we must do all we can to provide certainty for western Oregon timber mills and communities while conserving our land, water, and wildlife,” said Secretary Salazar. “These steps will help protect jobs and timber infrastructure, improve coordination between agencies as they review proposed timber projects, and move us toward a long-term strategy for forest management that is environmentally sound and economically sustainable.”

“The 62 sales under the 2010 scope of work could provide over 200 million board feet for local mills, supporting jobs and local infrastructure” said BLM Director Bob Abbey. “It is important that we continue to provide a reasonable amount of sales under the Northwest Forest Plan while, at the same time, we work towards creative, long-term solutions.”

For comparison purposes, from 2005 to 2008, the BLM has offered an average of 206 million board feet (MMBF) per year, of which approximately 150 MMBF per year was harvested.

"We are committed to working with BLM to process its 2010 program of work as expeditiously as possible in full compliance with Endangered Species Act consultation requirements," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Sam Hamilton.

In July, a plan developed and proposed during the previous administration, called the Western Oregon Plan Revision, [was withdrawn](#) for failure to adequately complete Endangered Species consultation. Since then, the BLM has been coordinating with the FWS to develop specific projects that can be implemented under the Northwest Forest Plan while meeting ESA criteria and using the best available science.

The steps announced today include the following:

### **1. Schedule of Proposed FY 2010 Timber Sales**

To provide additional certainty to local mills and local communities, the Bureau of Land Management released today [a list of 62 proposed timber sales](#) that may be offered over the next 12 months and that could provide approximately 230 MMBF for local mills. The BLM has completed Endangered Species Act consultation with the FWS on 46 of the 62 timber sales, with an associated volume of 199 million board feet. Some sales, primarily in the Roseburg District, are currently undergoing consultation, while others, primarily in the Medford District, are awaiting consultation. Before these sales are offered, consultation with FWS or NOAA will be completed. The sales also are subject to appropriate National Environmental Policy Act analyses and public participation.

Since the withdrawal of the Western Oregon Plan Revision in July, BLM has managed western Oregon forests under the Northwest Forest Plan and has sold 72 MMBF of timber in 22 sales with a value of \$5.4 million.

### **2. BLM-FWS Field Teams**

Secretary Salazar also announced that BLM and FWS professionals and other Federal agency specialists in Oregon are working together on interagency teams to jointly review potential and proposed timber sales. The mission of these field teams is to identify future sales under the Northwest Forest Plan that will provide greater economic certainty to local communities whose economies depend on sustainable timber harvests, while protecting endangered species. The joint field teams have completed their review on 46 of the 62 timber sales for 2010 and they will be continuing these reviews. The teams will also begin the review of potential sales that may be offered in the next 2-3 years.

### **3. BLM Special Review Task Force**

Secretary Salazar also announced today that he has asked BLM Director Bob Abbey and FWS Director Sam Hamilton to establish a special interdisciplinary task force to take a fresh look at processes that have guided the management of BLM forests in western Oregon. The task force will make recommendations to the Secretary on a process for finding a long-term strategy for forest management so that the O&C lands can reasonably, predictably and sustainably provide economic, social and ecological benefits. The special task force, which will include professionals from BLM, FWS, and other federal agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, will look at issues such as opportunities for public involvement, building consensus, scale of planning, and interagency coordination. The task force will provide its report to Secretary Salazar by spring, 2010.

For additional information, please visit [www.blm.gov/or](http://www.blm.gov/or). For a list of the 62 proposed timber sales that may be offered in FY 2010 under the Northwest Forest Plan, [click here](#).

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