

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR WESTERN OREGON

PLANNING CRITERIA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Planning Criteria document? Why is the planning team producing and sharing it?

We use the Planning Criteria for two reasons: 1) these are the requirements that will guide our development of management alternatives for the draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); and 2) it contains our current ideas on how we will analyze the potential impacts of each of the alternatives. The Planning Criteria contains a broad sketch of preliminary alternatives to help give context to these discussions.

Does the publication of the Planning Criteria mean that the BLM has already made up its mind about how to manage its lands in western Oregon?

No. The publication of the Planning Criteria is an early step, of many, in the planning process. The Planning Criteria describes the guidelines for our development of alternative approaches to managing the BLM's western Oregon lands. The alternatives themselves are still very much in development. The Planning Criteria document provides a sketch of preliminary alternatives and a description of how we may analyze the impacts of these alternatives for review and comment, but we anticipate both changing prior to the completion of the Draft RMP/EIS.

Are Sections A, B, and C of the Planning Criteria drafts of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS? What information from the Planning Criteria will carry forward into the Draft RMP/Draft EIS?

The Planning Criteria is **not** a draft of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. A few pieces of the Planning Criteria will appear in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS but the majority of the Planning Criteria document just sets the stage for developing the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. This document is **not** an advance copy of the Draft RMP/EIS.

The alternatives included in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS *may* differ from the preliminary alternatives described in the Planning Criteria, and will certainly be much more detailed and address many more resource issues. While the Planning Criteria talks about analysis that will make up substantial portions of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, it does **not** contain any analytical results or conclusions.

An issue I feel strongly about is not mentioned in the Purpose and Need for Action in Section B. Why is that? Does this mean it is not important to the BLM?

Just because we do not mention a particular resource or use in the Purpose and Need for Action does not mean that it is unimportant to us or that it won't be addressed in the RMP/EIS. The Purpose and Need defines the specific elements that are essential for us to address in the RMP/EIS.

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An RMP is designed to provide a comprehensive strategic guide for all facets of BLM land management, as will be made clear by the breadth of issues addressed in the draft RMP/EIS.

Why is BLM talking about integrating the O&C Lands Act of 1937 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) but not about integrating the O&C Act and other laws?

The BLM will develop an RMP/EIS that complies with **all** applicable federal laws. It's important to note that FLPMA uniquely and specifically describes that if there is any conflict between its provisions and the O&C Act related to management of timber resources or the disposition of revenues from the O&C lands and resources, the O&C Act prevails. The Planning Criteria explains how such conflicts are going to be addressed during the planning process.

What are the Preliminary Alternatives? Why aren't the preliminary alternatives described in detail? Are these the alternatives that will be analyzed in the DEIS?

The preliminary alternatives are an early look at the various management options the planning team is developing for the draft RMP/EIS. The alternatives included in the draft RMP/EIS will present an array of detailed management approaches that the BLM *could* adopt to meet the guidelines described in the Planning Criteria.

In addition to being much more detailed than the preliminary alternatives, the alternatives in the draft RMP/EIS will address the full array of resource issues that the BLM manages in western Oregon. We will ask the public to comment on these alternatives in the draft RMP/EIS and we will then consider the pieces and parts of the alternatives to be included in the proposed RMP/Final EIS.

What is a public comment period and how do I submit my comments?

While we accept comments from the public throughout the planning process, a public comment period is an opportunity to provide your thoughts on a particular BLM document in a timely manner. Providing comments during the public comment period ensures that we can review your comments when we can make the most use of them in the planning process. You can submit your comments online, by email, or send them to us in the mail. Find out more here:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/>

What does the BLM do with the comments received on the Planning Criteria?

The comments submitted during the Planning Criteria comment period will help the planning team as it moves forward with the development of the draft RMP/EIS. Comments introducing new information or ideas for analysis could lead to changes in how we analyze the impacts of the management alternatives in the draft RMP/EIS.

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Comments suggesting additional management alternatives will be considered for inclusion in the detailed alternatives under development for the draft RMP/EIS, as long as they meet the guidelines provided in Section B of the Planning Criteria.

Section “C”, Analytical Methodology is lengthy and technical. What is it and why is this shared now?

The analytical methodology describes how the BLM’s resource specialists on the planning team are thinking about evaluating the impacts of the alternatives. We may adjust these methods due to new information or ideas up until the point the analysis is actually carried out. We are sharing the methodology now to gather any input the public may have on how the analysis is going to be done.

Why doesn’t Section “C”, Analytical Methodology, mention the alternatives?

The analytical methodology simply describes how impacts from these alternatives may be evaluated; it does not describe the approaches alternatives would take to managing resources. How we will conduct the analysis is not dependent on the alternatives.

After the Planning Criteria, what is the next step in the planning process?

The BLM will continue developing the components of the draft RMP/EIS. These components include the management alternatives, a description of the current condition of the resources that would be affected by the alternatives, and a description of the impacts of each alternative on these resources. This draft will be released for a 90-day public comment period.

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