

## Summary

This summary presents a brief description of the major elements of this document. This summary is necessarily neither comprehensive nor complete. Furthermore, this summary omits the citations, definitions, and explanations provided in the document. Therefore, the details in the four chapters of this document are essential to fully understanding the planning process, the alternatives, and their effects.

### **Introduction**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is revising the resource management plans (RMPs) for its Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Field Office. This Draft RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides a description of the various alternative management approaches the BLM is considering for the management of these lands along with an analysis of the potential impacts of these alternatives.

The 1995 RMPs are consistent with the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, which the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture adopted for Federal forests within the range of the northern spotted owl. This RMP revision would replace the 1995 RMPs and thereby replace the Northwest Forest Plan for the management of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon. The purpose and need for this RMP revision are different from the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan. As such, the action alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS do not contain all elements of the Northwest Forest Plan.

The BLM conducted plan evaluations, which concluded that a plan revision is needed to address the changed circumstances and new information that has led to a substantial, long-term departure from the timber management outcomes predicted under the 1995 RMPs. Moreover, the BLM needs to revise existing plans to replace the 1995 RMPs' land use allocations and management direction because of new scientific information and policies related to the northern spotted owl.

The purpose of the RMP revision is to

- Provide a sustained yield of timber
- Contribute to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species, including
  - maintaining a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests
  - maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests
- Provide clean water in watersheds
- Restore fire-adapted ecosystems
- Provide recreation opportunities
- Coordinate management of lands surrounding the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe

### **Alternatives**

The BLM has designed the range of alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS to span the full spectrum of alternatives that would respond to the purpose and need for the action. The BLM has developed the alternatives to represent a range of overall management approaches, rather than exemplify gradations in design features. In this Draft RMP/EIS, the BLM analyzed in detail the No Action alternative and four action alternatives. In addition, the BLM analyzed how two sub-alternatives, which modify an individual component of northern spotted owl conservation in an alternative, would alter effects on timber production and northern spotted owls. Table 1 summarizes key features of the alternatives that vary substantially among the alternatives and are easily quantified and summarized.

The No Action alternative in this Draft RMP/EIS is implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written (in contrast to the BLM's current implementation practices under the 1995 RMPs). Implementation of the timber management program has departed substantially from the outcomes predicted in the 1995 RMPs, and continuing to harvest timber at the declared annual productive capacity level for multiple decades into the future would not be possible using the current practices.

All action alternatives include the following land use allocations: Congressionally Reserved, District-Designated Reserves, Late-Successional Reserve, Riparian Reserve, Harvest Land Base, and Eastside Management Area (Figure 1). The location and acreage of these allocations, with the exception of Congressionally Reserved, vary by alternative. Within each action alternative, the Harvest Land Base, Late-Successional Reserve, and Riparian Reserve have specific, mapped sub-allocations with differing management direction.

Alternative A has a Late-Successional Reserve larger than the No Action alternative. The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area and the High Intensity Timber Area. The High Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts).

Alternative B has a Late-Successional Reserve similar in size to Alternative A, though of a different spatial design. The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area, Low Intensity Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The portion of the Harvest Land Base in Uneven-Aged Timber Area is the largest of all action alternatives. The Low Intensity Timber Area and Moderate Intensity Timber Area include regeneration harvest with varying levels of retention.

Sub-alternative B is identical to Alternative B, except that it includes protection of habitat within the home ranges of all northern spotted owl known and historic sites.

Alternative C has the largest Harvest Land Base of any of the alternatives. The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area and the High Intensity Timber Area. The High Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts). Alternative C has the smallest acreage in the Riparian Reserve of all of the alternatives.

Sub-alternative C is identical to Alternative C, except that the Late-Successional Reserve includes all stands 80 years old and older.

Alternative D has the smallest Late-Successional Reserve of any of the alternatives. The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area, Owl Habitat Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The Owl Habitat Timber Area includes timber harvest applied in a manner that would maintain northern spotted owl habitat. The Moderate Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with retention. Alternative D has the largest acreage in the Riparian Reserve of all of the action alternatives.

**Table I.** Key features of the alternatives.

Alt.	Total Late-Successional Reserve (Acres)	Protection of Structurally-Complex Forest	Riparian Reserve Total Width	Riparian Reserve Inner Zone Width	Marbled Murrelet Survey and Protection
No Action	478,860	None specified	2 SPTH <sup>21</sup> on fish-bearing streams; 1 SPTH on non-fish-bearing streams	None specified	Survey in Zones 1 and 2; protect contiguous recruitment and existing habitat within ½ mile of sites
Alt. A	1,147,527	≥120 years	1 SPTH on all streams	120' on fish-bearing and perennial streams; 50' on non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	None
Alt. B	1,127,320	District-defined map based on existing, district-specific information	1 SPTH on perennial and fish-bearing streams; 100' on debris-flow-prone non-fish-bearing intermittent streams; 50' on other non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	60' on fish-bearing and perennial streams; 50' on non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	Survey in Zone 1; protect contiguous habitat within 300' of sites
Sub. B	1,422,933				
Alt. C	949,279	≥160 years	150' on fish-bearing streams; 50' on non-fish-bearing streams	60' on fish-bearing and perennial streams; 50' on non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	Survey stands >120 years; protect contiguous habitat within 300' of sites
Sub. C	1,373,206	≥80 years			None
Alt. D	714,292	≥120/140/160 years on high/moderate/low productivity sites	1 SPTH on all streams	120' on all streams	Survey in Zones 1 and 2; protect habitat within ½ mile of sites

<sup>21</sup> Site-potential tree height

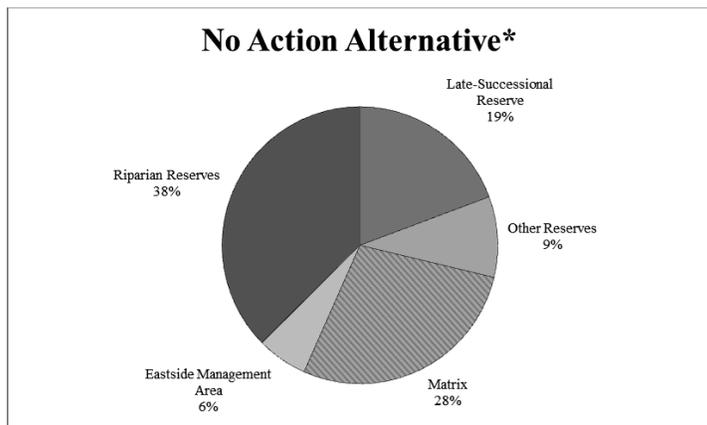
Alt.	Total Harvest Land Base (Acres)	Green tree retention	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (# Designated)	Recreation Management Areas (SRMA <sup>22</sup> Acres ERMA <sup>23</sup> Acres)	Protection of Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (Acres)	Suitable Wild and Scenic Rivers (# of River Segments)
No Action	691,998	GFMA <sup>24</sup> : 6-8 trees per acre Connectivity/Diversity: 12-18 trees per acre Southern GFMA: 16-25 trees per acre	89 (and 53 potential)	168,968 2,397,460	None	9 (and 51 eligible)
Alt. A	343,900	No retention	119	20,065 0	88,070	0
Alt. B	556,335	Low Intensity Timber Area: 15-30% retention	114	24,972 139,320	50,727	6
Sub. B	298,121	Moderate Intensity Timber Area: 5-15% retention				
Alt. C	741,332	No retention	111	59,046 357,771	50,727	6
Sub. C	495,507					
Alt. D	650,382	Owl Habitat Timber Area: maintain owl habitat Moderate Intensity Timber Area: 5-15% retention	118	86,693 580,458	None	59

<sup>22</sup> Special Recreation Management Area

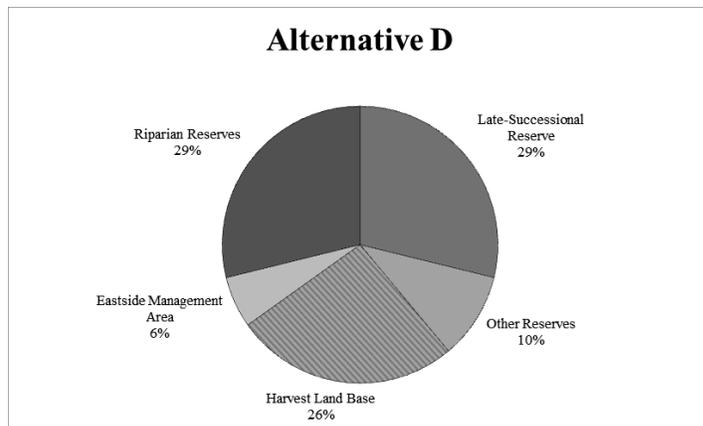
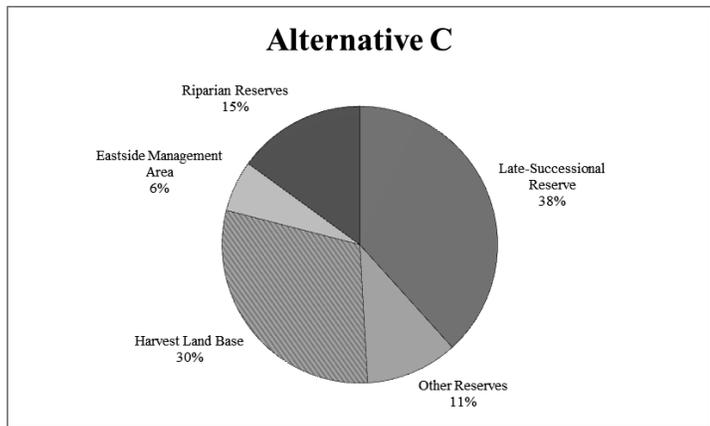
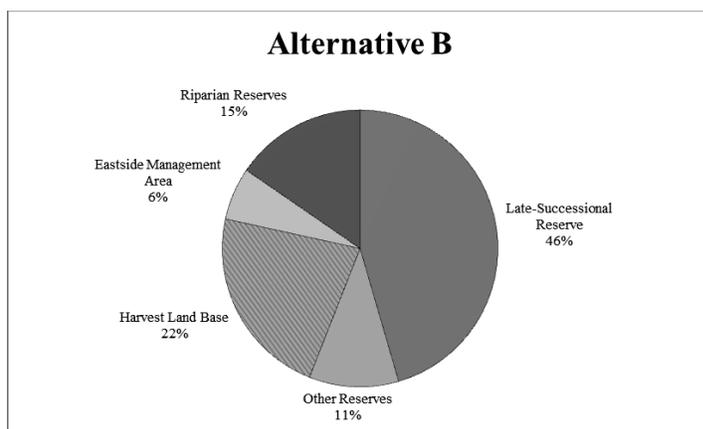
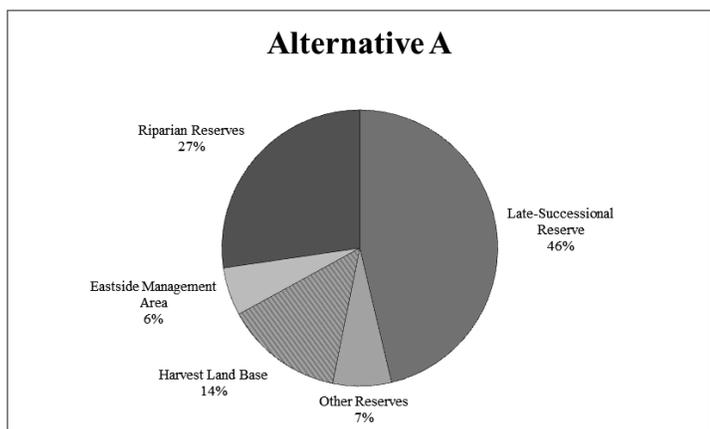
<sup>23</sup> Extensive Recreation Management Area

<sup>24</sup> General Forest Management Area

**Figure i.** Land use allocations under the alternatives.



No Action alternative displays modified hierarchy (see Chapter 2).



### **Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences**

This section summarizes the existing conditions and environmental consequences for each resource that the RMPs are likely to affect. Throughout this document, the BLM uses the term ‘planning area’ to refer to the 22 million acres of land within the geographic boundary of this planning effort regardless of jurisdiction, and uses the term ‘decision area’ to refer to the 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered land within the planning area.

### **Air Quality**

All action alternatives would produce more particulate emissions than the No Action alternative and current conditions. However, adherence to the requirements of the Oregon Smoke Management Plan would continue to limit impacts to human health and visibility from prescribed fires.

### **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern**

The alternatives consider the designation of 121 potential Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Alternative A would designate the most and Alternative C the fewest areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern at 119 and 111, respectively.

### **Climate Change**

Carbon storage would increase under all alternatives. Greenhouse gas emissions associated with BLM-administered lands would increase under all alternatives, but would remain less than one percent of the 2010 statewide greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change provides uncertainty that reserves will function as intended and that planned timber harvest levels can be attained, with the uncertainty increasing over time.

### **Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

The BLM can reduce or eliminate effects to cultural and paleontological resources through systematic and thorough cultural and paleontological resource inventories. Implementation of Alternatives A and D would be the least likely to result in potential adverse impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.

### **Fire and Fuels**

All alternatives would increase stand-level fire resistance and reduce wildfire hazard on BLM-administered lands compared to current conditions. The BLM-administered lands constitute only a small portion of the entire interior/south dry forest landscape. Consequently, the modest shifts under any alternative would not result in any substantial change in the overall landscape fire resilience. The dry forest landscape would continue to have an overabundance of mid-seral closed forest and a deficit of late-seral open forest.

### **Fisheries**

All of the alternatives would increase the potential large wood and small functional wood contribution to streams from the current conditions over time. Sediment production from road construction and operation would increase by less than one percent under all alternatives, and the effects to fish would not differ by alternative. These effects to fish would be short-term and localized and could result from increases in turbidity or deposition of fines in the stream channel substrates affecting habitat in the short term.

## Forest Management

Even-aged systems with clear-cutting would produce more uniform stands in a mix of age classes without structural legacies. Two-aged systems with variable-retention regeneration harvesting would produce stands in a mix of age classes with legacy structures and multiple canopy layers. Uneven-aged management systems with selection harvesting regimes would produce mostly older, structurally complex stands and mature forests with multiple canopy layers.

The allowable sale quantity (ASQ) under the alternatives would range from 120 million board feet per year under Sub-alternative B to 486 million board feet per year under Alternative C. Non-ASQ timber harvest volumes in the first decade would range from 4 million board feet per year under Alternative D to 122 million board feet per year under the No Action alternative.

## Hydrology

Under the No Action alternative, and Alternatives A and D, less than 0.5 percent of all perennial and fish-bearing reaches in the decision area would currently be susceptible to shade reductions that could affect stream temperature if the BLM applies thinning in the outer zone of the Riparian Reserves. Under Alternative B and C, approximately 5 percent of all perennial and fish-bearing reaches in the decision area would currently be susceptible to shade reductions that could affect stream temperature if the BLM applies thinning in the outer zone of the Riparian Reserves.

Under all alternatives, potential sediment delivery to streams from new road construction would constitute less than a one percent increase above current levels of fine sediment delivery from existing roads. Less than 2 percent of the decision area would be susceptible to peak flow increases over time under any alternative. Less than 1 percent of the Harvest Land Base would be susceptible to landsliding with the potential to deliver sediment to streams over time under any alternative.

## Invasive Species

The risk of introducing and spreading invasive plant species over the next 10 years, and in the long term, would be lowest under Alternative D, and highest under Alternatives B and C. Sudden oak death infestations would occupy 100 percent of the Riparian Reserves in Infestation Zone 2 and almost 90 percent in Infestation Zone 3 by 2033 under Alternatives A and B.

## Lands and Realty

Under all alternatives, BLM-administered lands would generally be available for rights-of-way. Alternative D would most constrain the BLM's ability to grant right-of-ways from the current conditions.

## Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Alternative A provides the greatest protection of identified lands with wilderness characteristics within the planning area. Alternatives B and C provide intermediate protection of lands with wilderness characteristics within the planning area. Alternative D provides no protection of lands with wilderness characteristics with the planning area.

## Livestock Grazing

Under Alternatives A, B, and C, public land available for livestock grazing would decrease from 495,190 acres to 359,049 acres. This change would occur through the BLM making currently vacant allotments

unavailable for grazing. Under Alternative D, the BLM would no longer authorize livestock grazing within the decision area, a change that would affect 495,190 acres.

### **Minerals**

Under the action alternatives, the BLM would petition for the withdrawal of an additional six to eight percent of the decision area. Approximately 90 percent of the decision area would remain open to locatable and salable mineral entry. All of the decision area would remain open to leasable mineral development.

### **National Trails System**

Alternative D would provide the largest National Trail Corridor and protect the greatest number of acres within the viewshed. However, these acres only account for nine percent of all viewable acres.

### **Rare Plants and Fungi**

Only two Federally-listed plant species occur within forest and woodland habitat in the decision area: Kincaid's lupine and Gentner's fritillary. Under all alternatives, the BLM would conduct pre-disturbance survey and apply conservation measures for these Federally-listed plant species. The BLM would manage Bureau Sensitive plant and fungi species under the BLM's sensitive species program under all alternatives. Under all action alternatives, species that are currently Survey & Manage and not included on the Bureau Sensitive species list would receive no specific protections.

### **Recreation and Visitor Services**

Alternative A would provide a reduction in recreation opportunities when compared to the existing management situation. Alternative D would provide the greatest number and acres of recreation management areas in closest proximity to the twelve most populated communities in the planning area.

### **Soil Resources**

All alternatives would increase the acreage of detrimental soil disturbance from timber harvest, road construction, and fuels treatments by 13 to 30 percent of current amounts during the first decade. The BLM would be able to reduce the acreage of detrimental soil conditions from timber harvest, road construction, and fuels treatments through sound management practices that would limit initial compaction levels, remove existing or created compacted surfaces, and improve soil water and organic matter levels.

### **Socioeconomics**

BLM-administered lands provide a wide variety of market and non-market goods and services to the planning area such as timber, recreation, carbon storage, minerals, and source water protection. The annual harvest value of timber, compared to \$23 million in 2012, would increase under all alternatives; from \$37 million under Alternative D to \$135 million under Alternative C. Using non-market valuation techniques the analysis estimates the 2012 value of recreation on BLM-administered lands at \$223 million and the annual value of carbon storage at \$99 million. Under all alternatives, the annual value of recreation would increase to \$250 million. The annual value of net carbon storage would increase under all alternatives except Alternative C, under which it would fall to \$55 million.

In 2012, BLM management contributed 7,900 jobs and \$355 million in earnings to the planning area, which is about 0.4 percent of the total jobs and earnings. Under the alternatives, these contributions would range from a low of 6,900 jobs and \$304 million in earnings (Alternative D) to a high of 12,419 jobs and \$584 million in earnings (Alternative C). Employment effects to low-income populations in Coos, Curry, Douglas, and Klamath Counties would be disproportionately negative under Alternatives A and D. Low-income communities and tribes in these counties would also be vulnerable to these disproportionately negative effects. Under Alternative B, employment effects would be disproportionately negative for Coos and Curry Counties.

There is uncertainty regarding the source and amounts of future payments to counties from activities on BLM-administered lands. Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act payments to counties totaled \$38 million in 2012. Had payments in 2012 been based on the O&C Act formula, they would have been \$12 million. Under the alternatives, payments in 2018 would range from a low of \$19 million under Alternative D to a high of \$67 million under Alternative C.

## **Sustainable Energy**

Under all alternatives, the majority of the land in the decision area would be available for the potential development of sustainable energy resources. While there is no current geothermal development and limited potential in the decision area, all action alternatives would be less constraining to geothermal development than the current condition.

## **Trails and Travel Management**

All action alternatives would increase the acreage closed to off-highway vehicle use and decrease the acreage open to off-highway vehicle use when compared to the No Action alternative.

## **Tribal Interests**

An ongoing dialogue between BLM representatives and designated tribal representatives and their leadership produced the issues addressed in the Tribal Interests section. A large portion of the tribally identified issues are covered under specific resource sections (e.g., fish, water, socio-economics, cultural resources), though the effects specific to tribal communities may differ due to the unique relationships that tribes have with the landscape and resources on it.

## **Visual Resources Management**

Under all alternatives, visual resource quality would decline to some extent over time, because the BLM would manage a substantial acreage of land at a higher Visual Resource Management class than the Visual Resource Inventory class at which it inventoried. Alternative D would provide the greatest protection, and Alternatives A, B, and C would provide the least protection of visual resources.

## **Wildlife**

### **Northern spotted owl**

The northern spotted owl population is under severe biological stress in much of western Oregon and has an even chance of being extirpated from the Coast Range within 35 years. This population risk is predominately due to competitive interactions between northern spotted owls and barred owls. Under current barred owl encounter rates, the BLM has no opportunity through habitat management in the Coast

Range to reduce risks to the northern spotted owl during the next 50 years, and there are no substantive differences among the alternatives in their potential effects on those risks. However, in the western Cascades and Klamath Basin, the BLM would contribute to self-sustaining northern spotted owl populations during the next 50 years under all alternatives.

### **Marbled Murrelet**

All alternatives would result in an increase in the amount of marbled murrelet high-quality nesting habitat and total nesting habitat in 50 years. Alternatives A, B, and C would result in the loss of 96, 12, and 210 future marbled murrelet sites, respectively, as a result of timber harvest in the Harvest Land Base in the absence of surveys.

### **Wild Horses**

The Pokegama herd is the only wild horse herd in the decision area and is currently within the appropriate management level of 30 to 50 horses. Alternative D, which would eliminate livestock grazing, would reduce competition for forage and provide the potential for increased growth of the Pokegama herd. Otherwise, the alternatives would not differ in their effects on the Pokegama herd.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Under Alternative A, the BLM would not designate any of the 51 eligible Wild and Scenic River segments as suitable, resulting in impacts to all eligible river segments and their associated values. Under Alternatives B and C, the BLM would designate six eligible Wild and Scenic River segments as suitable. Under Alternative D, the BLM would designate all 51 eligible Wild and Scenic River segments as suitable, resulting in the greatest protection for all segments and their associated river values.

### **Consultation and Coordination**

The preparation of this Draft RMP/EIS has included 38 public involvement efforts, including formal scoping, regional workshops on recreation management, community listening sessions, and public meetings about the Planning Criteria and preliminary alternatives.

The BLM is planning a series of public meetings after the release of the Draft RMP/EIS. The purpose of these meetings is to help members of the public understand the content of the Draft RMP/EIS and provide meaningful and constructive comments. There will likely be six “open-house” public meetings (one meeting per District) where people can engage with BLM employees on all resources addressed in the Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM will likely also be organizing issue-specific meetings on topics such as socio-economics, forestry, aquatics, and wildlife. Information on meeting locations and dates will be available at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/>

The BLM is consulting on a government-to-government level with the nine federally recognized tribes located within, or that have interests within, the planning area. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Klamath Tribes are formal cooperators in the RMP revisions, in addition to their government-to-government status.

The BLM has been assisted in the preparation of this Draft RMP/EIS by a Cooperating Agency Advisory Group, including representatives of Federal and State agencies, counties, and Tribes. In addition to meeting as a full group periodically throughout the development of the Draft RMP/EIS, the Cooperating

Agency Advisory Group also created five working groups in order to facilitate a more detailed level of engagement with the BLM on the following topics: aquatics, outreach, terrestrial, socio-economics, and tribal issues.

Working through a robust engagement process with neutral facilitation, the cooperators have provided expertise on much of the subject matter the BLM is addressing in the Draft RMP/EIS, as well as advice based on experience with similar planning efforts. The cooperators have provided feedback on public outreach sessions, data sources and analytical methods, and components of the draft alternatives. They have provided oral and written feedback and ideas throughout the process of developing the Draft RMP/EIS. Nearly all cooperators have been positive about the level of engagement and the general direction of the planning process. However, the Association of O&C Counties (which is the designated representative of 15 counties) has continued to express a high level of concern about the BLM's planning process. Specifically, the Association of O&C Counties continues to assert that the BLM's Purpose and Need statement was fatally flawed by failing to place sustained sustained-yield timber production as the primary purpose of the planning effort.

The BLM district managers and planning personnel have met with individual county commissioners on an ongoing basis to provide updates on progress and key milestones. As noted above, several county governments are formal cooperators in the planning process. While the Association of O&C Counties represents most of the counties at the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group meetings, BLM district managers also maintain relationships with local county representatives.

Before signing a Record of Decision on the RMP revisions, the BLM will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service signed an ESA Consultation Agreement, which identifies responsibilities for each agency and defines the processes, products, actions, timeframe, and expectations for the consultation process.