

Reader's Guide

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. The planning area for this RMP revision encompasses western Oregon and includes approximately 2.5 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. When approved, these RMPs will replace the existing RMPs and guide the management of public lands in the Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Field Office into the future.

The BLM has prepared this Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft RMP/EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1), the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), and other applicable law and policy.

Organization of the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

This Draft RMP/EIS provides a progression of information to the reviewer.

The Summary presents a brief description of the major elements of this document. The summary is necessarily neither comprehensive nor complete. Therefore, the details in the four chapters of this document are essential to fully understanding the planning process, the alternatives, and their effects.

Chapter 1 presents the purpose and need for this RMP revision and the guidance for the development of the action alternatives. Chapter 1 presents a discussion of the major authorizing laws and regulations that affect management of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.

Chapter 2 describes the No Action alternative and the action alternatives that are analyzed in detail, including identification of the preferred alternative. This chapter also discusses alternatives that the BLM considered but did not analyze in detail. Finally, this chapter presents a comparison of the alternatives, including summaries of key features of the alternatives and key impacts of the alternatives.

Chapter 3 describes the environment that the RMPs are likely to affect and the environmental consequences of the alternatives. Although many EISs present the affected environment and environmental consequences in separate chapters, the BLM has combined these two topics into this single chapter to provide all of the relevant information on a resource in a single discussion. This chapter includes sections for each resource that the RMPs are likely to affect. Each section begins with a summary of the methods used to analyze the impacts of the alternatives on this resource. The BLM has then divided each section into subsections that address a particular question about how the BLM's draft alternatives may affect the resource (the BLM refers to these questions as "issues"). Under each issue, the BLM describes the status and trends of the pertinent resource and the environmental consequences to the resource of the alternatives analyzed in detail, including the No Action alternative.

Chapter 4 describes the public involvement and collaboration that occurred during the preparation of this Draft RMP/EIS. That collaboration includes government-to-government relationships with tribes, formal cooperators in the planning process, and consultation with other agencies. This chapter also includes a list of staff involved in the RMPs for Western Oregon.

Following Chapter 4 is a list of acronyms, a glossary of words and terms that are not in common usage, and references cited in the document.

The appendices provide technical discussions and background information supporting the text of the Draft RMP/EIS.

Commenting

The BLM encourages the public to review this Draft RMP/EIS and provide comments pertaining to the alternatives and analysis. Comments will be most useful to the BLM to the extent that they

- present new information relevant to the analysis;
- present reasonable alternatives other than those analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS;
- make suggestions, with a reasoned basis, for the development of a proposed RMP;
- question, with a reasoned basis, the adequacy of, methodology for, or assumptions used for the analysis; or
- question, with a reasoned basis, the accuracy of information in the Draft RMP/EIS

Comments that are simply votes in support of or opposition to a particular alternative, or position statements in support of or opposition to particular BLM policies or proposals, without providing reasons, are less useful to the BLM in the planning process.

To be considered timely, comments on this Draft RMP/EIS must be submitted within 90 days of the publication in the Federal Register of the Notice of Availability for this Draft RMP/EIS. You can submit comments by mail to

RMPs for Western Oregon
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, Oregon 97208

or by electronic mail (email) to

BLM_OR_RMPs_WesternOregon@blm.gov

Comments by mail must be postmarked by July 23, 2015. Comments by email must be received by July 23, 2015. If you have questions, please contact Sarah Levy, BLM Public Affairs Specialist, at (503) 808-6217.

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

All information in your comments including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information (PII) is maintained as a BLM record. Although your information is sensitive and protected from public access, it may be made available under a Freedom of Information Act request. You may request in your comment that your PII information be withheld from public review although the agency is unable to guarantee full protection of such information. Please consider all information you may want to include in your comments.

Next Steps in the Planning Process

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/>

Following the 90-day comment period for this Draft RMP/EIS, the BLM will review the comments and work with cooperating agencies to develop a Proposed RMP/Final EIS. In that document, the BLM will present the Proposed RMP, which will be either one of the alternatives analyzed in this Draft RMP/EIS or a newly developed alternative that is within the spectrum of the alternatives analyzed in this Draft RMP/EIS. In the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, the BLM will also provide copies or summaries of substantive comments on the Draft RMP/EIS, the BLM responses to those comments, and changes or additions to the text of the Draft RMP/EIS in response to comments.

Following publication of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest that may be adversely affected by the approval of the Proposed RMP may protest to the Director of the BLM within 30 days of the publication of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The BLM will submit the Proposed RMP to the Governor of Oregon to identify any known inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies, or programs.

Following resolution of any protests and the completion of the consistency review by the Governor of Oregon, the BLM will prepare a Record of Decision/RMP (ROD/RMP) to approve the RMP revision. The ROD/RMP will identify the decision by the State Director on the RMP revision and the rationale for the decision. The ROD/RMP will also contain the RMP itself, including the land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction.

The publication of the ROD/RMP will represent the completion of the RMP revision process. Following publication of the ROD/RMP, the BLM will take only those management actions that are specifically provided for in the approved RMP, or, if not specifically mentioned, actions that are clearly consistent with the goals, objectives, or management direction of the approved RMP.