

Issue Paper: Livestock Grazing Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon

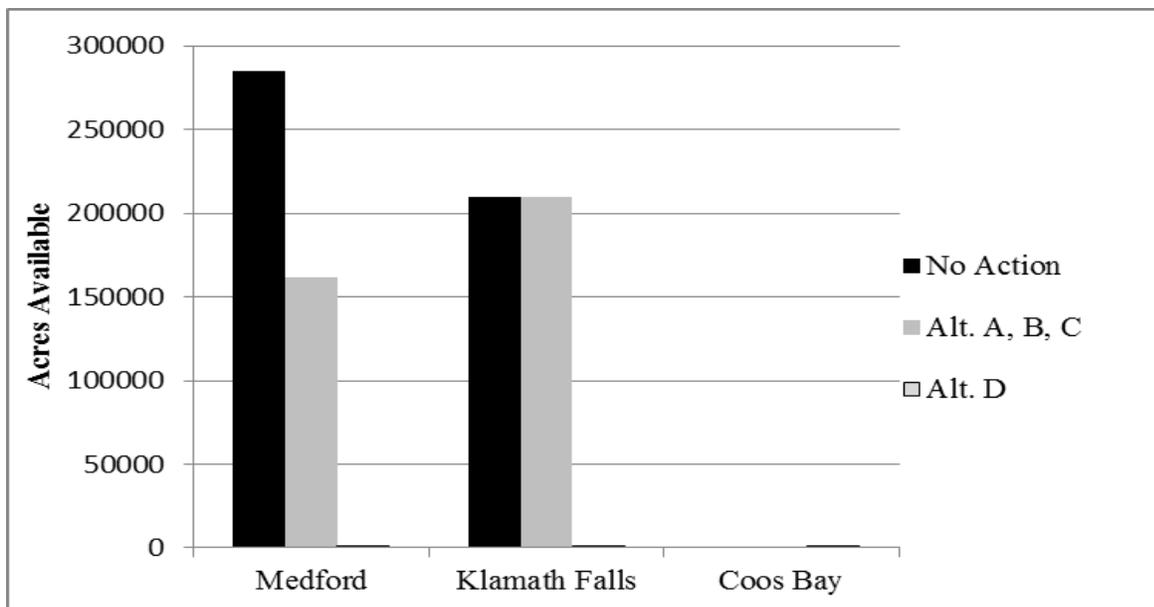
Introduction: In Oregon, the BLM administers approximately 12 million acres of rangelands. Management of these lands is focused on restoring rangeland health where necessary and maintaining healthy landscapes where they currently exist. Only the Medford and Coos Bay Districts and the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District administer livestock grazing permits in the decision area. The BLM does not currently administer grazing permits within the Salem, Eugene, or Roseburg Districts.



Key Points:

- Under Alternatives A, B, and C, public land available for livestock grazing would decrease from 495,190 acres (20 percent of the planning area) to 359,049 acres (14 percent of the planning area). This change would occur through the proposal of:
 - 42 vacant allotments on the Medford District becoming unavailable for livestock grazing.
 - 4 vacant allotments on the Coos Bay District being unavailable for livestock grazing.
 - 2 vacant allotments on the Klamath Falls Field Office becoming unavailable to livestock grazing.
- Under Alternative D, the BLM would no longer authorize livestock grazing within the decision area, a change that would affect 495,190 acres (20 percent of the decision area).
- The majority of grazed acres within the decision area are meeting rangeland health standards or making significant progress toward meeting the standard.
- The five standards assessed for rangeland health are:
 - 1- Watershed Function (Uplands). Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates, moisture storage and stability that are appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.
 - 2- Watershed Function (Riparian/Wetland areas). Riparian/wetland areas are in properly functioning physical condition appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.
 - 3- Ecological Processes. Healthy, productive and diverse plant and animal populations and communities appropriate for soil, climate, and landform are supported by ecological processes of nutrient cycling, energy flow, and the hydrologic cycle.
 - 4- Water Quality. Surface water and groundwater quality, influenced by agency action, complies with State water quality standards.
 - 5- Native, T & E, and Locally Important Species. Habitats support healthy, productive and diverse populations and communities of native plants and animals appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

- The BLM assumes that for the 12 livestock grazing allotments within the decision area where grazing was a casual factor in not meeting a standard, within one year of the rangeland health assessment, the BLM would make, or has made, a change in livestock grazing to eliminate grazing as the causal factor. Therefore, in all alternatives, including No Action, either those allotments would make significant progress toward meeting the standard or livestock grazing will no longer be a contributing factor.
- Forage within allotments is adequate to support current levels of permitted livestock grazing.
- Under all alternatives, timber harvest activities occurring within allotments may create temporary reductions in available livestock grazing initially to allow understory vegetation to recover and to protect seedlings. Timber harvest activities in the long-term generally provide for increased forage for livestock.



The graph above shows acres available in the decision area by District/Field Office.

The Resource Management Plans (RMP) for Western Oregon will determine how the BLM-administered lands in western Oregon will be managed to further the recovery of threatened and endangered species, to provide for clean water, to restore fire-adapted ecosystems, to produce a sustained yield of timber products, to coordinate management of lands surrounding the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe, and to provide for recreation opportunities.

For more information, please visit the BLM's Resource Management Plans of western Oregon website at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/index.php>.