

Issue Paper: Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon

Background:

As required under FLPMA and current BLM policy, the Bureau updated its Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) inventories for western Oregon. The impetus for this update was the need for accurate information to analyze during the BLM's RMPs for western Oregon planning effort. In conducting these inventories, the Districts followed the guidance provided in BLM Manual 6310-Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands. This manual provides a process for identifying BLM lands that meet the following criteria: a) encompass at least 5,000 acres of roadless, contiguous BLM lands, b) appear to be in natural condition; c) provide outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The updated inventories identified 12 LWCs encompassing 90,199 acres of BLM land in western Oregon.

Key Points:

The BLM analyzed the extent to which each alternative would protect or degrade identified lands with wilderness characteristics (i.e., size, naturalness, and either outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation).

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

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>.

