Chapter 1 – 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 Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District (1995 RMPs; USDI BLM 1995 a, b, c, d, e, f). This Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS) provides a description and analysis of the management approach that the BLM is proposing for these lands, along with the various alternative management approaches that the BLM analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS.

In 2012, the BLM conducted an evaluation of the 1995 RMPs in accordance with its planning regulations, which require that RMPs "shall be revised as necessary based on monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan" (43 CFR 1610.5–6). This evaluation contains the conclusion 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" (USDI BLM 2012a, p. 12). Included in this evaluation was the identification of new information related to northern spotted owls, (including new demographic studies, the Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*)(owl recovery plan; USDI FWS 2011), and revision of critical habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (77 FR 71875)), and the BLM concluded that the EIS supporting the 1995 RMPs contains outdated analysis relative to the development of suitable habitat for the northern spotted owl (USDI BLM 2012, p. 14). From this evaluation, the BLM identified a need to modify or update management direction for most of the other resource management programs due to changed circumstances and new information.

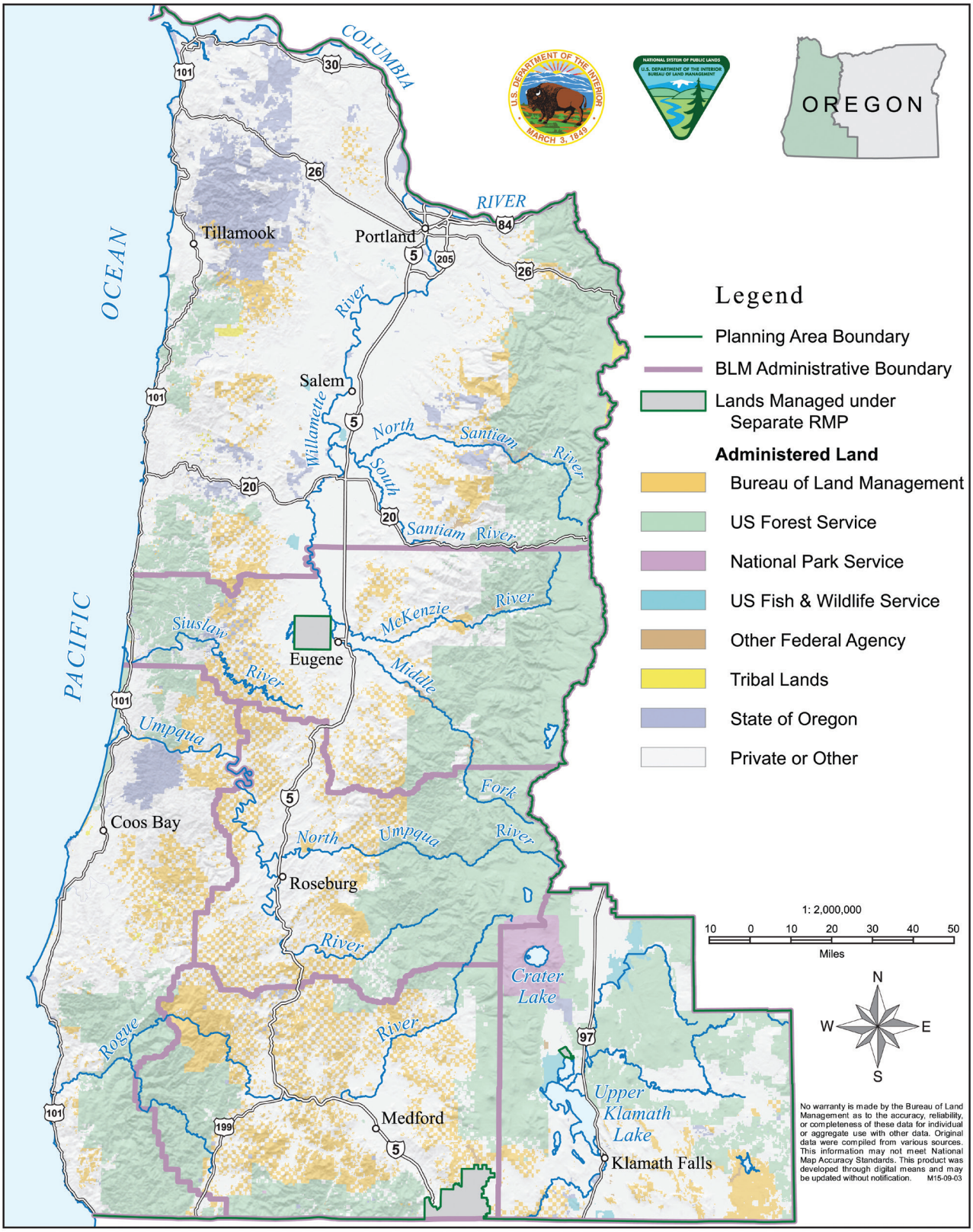
Summary of Notable Changes from the Draft RMP/EIS

Chapter 1 of this Proposed RMP/Final EIS—

- Expands the discussion in "Relationship of the RMPs to Other Plans and Programs" to address the relationship of the Proposed RMP to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy in the Northwest Forest Plan, and
- Updates the list of existing decisions that will be carried forward into the RMPs.

The Planning Area

The planning area includes approximately 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon managed by the BLM's Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District (**Map 1-1**).



Map 1-1: Major Ownership within the Planning Area

Throughout this document, the BLM will use the term 'planning area' to refer to all lands within the geographic boundary of this planning effort regardless of jurisdiction. However, the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under BLM jurisdiction (including mineral estate). The BLM will use the term 'decision area' to refer to the lands within the planning area for which the BLM has authority to make land use and management decisions. In general, the BLM has jurisdiction over all BLM-administered lands (surface and subsurface) and over mineral estate in areas of split estate (i.e., areas where the BLM administers Federal mineral estate, but the surface is not administered by the BLM).

Within the western Oregon offices, three BLM-administered areas are not included in the decision area: the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (Medford District), the Upper Klamath Basin and Wood River Wetland (Klamath Falls Field Office), and the West Eugene Wetlands (Eugene District). These areas have independent RMPs, and this revision process will not alter these independent RMPs.

Planning Process

The BLM integrates its planning process with its compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq*.), which requires that Federal agencies prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for all actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The BLM planning regulations direct: "Approval of a resource management plan is considered a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The environmental analysis of alternatives and the proposed plan shall be accomplished as part of the resource management planning process and, wherever possible, the proposed plan and related environmental impact statement shall be published in a single document" (43 CFR 1601.0–6). Therefore, the BLM presents this Proposed RMP integrated with the Final Environmental Impact Statement as a single document (Proposed RMP/Final EIS).

Preparing a RMP involves the following nine interrelated actions or steps:

1. Conduct scoping and identify issues.
2. Collect inventory data.
3. Analyze management situation.
4. Develop planning criteria.
5. Formulate alternatives.
6. Analyze effects of alternatives.
7. Select the preferred alternative; issue Draft RMP/EIS.
8. Issue Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
9. Sign Record of Decision.

The BLM has prepared a single Proposed RMP/Final EIS for the revision of the RMPs for the Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District. At this time, the BLM anticipates issuing two Records of Decision/Resource Management Plans (RODs/RMPs): one ROD/RMP that would apply to the Coos Bay District, Eugene District, Salem District, and the Swiftwater Field Office of the Roseburg District; and another ROD/RMP that would apply to the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District, the Medford District, and the South River Field Office of the Roseburg District.

Decision to be Made

Through this effort, the BLM will decide on an approach to managing the public land it administers in western Oregon. As described in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA; 43 U.S.C, 1701(a)(2)), RMPs are tools by which "present and future use is projected." The BLM's planning

regulations make clear that RMPs are a preliminary step in the overall process of managing public lands, and are "designed to guide and control future management actions and the development of subsequent, more detailed and limited scope plans for resources and uses" (43 CFR 1601.0–2).

The major provisions of the RMPs will include the following land use plan decisions:

- Objectives for the management of BLM-administered lands and resources;
- Land use allocations relative to future uses for the purposes of achieving the various objectives; and
- Management direction that identifies where future actions may or may not be allowed and what restrictions or requirements may be placed on those future actions to achieve the objectives set for the BLM-administered lands and resources.

Management objectives are descriptions of desired outcomes for BLM-administered lands and resources in an RMP; the resource conditions that the BLM envisions or desires would eventually result from implementation of the RMP. As such, management objectives are not rules, restrictions, or requirements by which the BLM determines which implementation actions to conduct or how to design specific implementation actions.

Through the RMPs, the BLM will determine and declare the annual productive capacity for sustained-yield timber production.[1] The annual productive capacity is the timber volume that a forest can produce continuously under the intensity of management described in the RMPs for those lands allocated for sustained-yield timber production. The BLM will make the determination and declaration of the annual productive capacity for each of the six sustained yield units, which match the five western Oregon BLM district boundaries and the western portion of the Klamath Falls Field Office in the Lakeview District.[2] The determination of the annual productive capacity includes compliance with other laws and consideration of the objectives, land use allocations, and management direction of the RMPs, which affect the amount of timber that each of the sustained yield units can produce. Chapter 3 contains additional discussion of the determination of the annual productive capacity under Vegetation Modeling Products.

In both the 1995 RMPs and in the 2008 RMPs, the BLM identified that there would be some level of variation in the annual amount of timber offered for sale. In this plan revision process, the BLM will consider whether the plan will include some level of variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume that the BLM will offer on an annual basis or over a longer period of time. In making a decision about the extent to which the plan will identify such variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume to be offered, the BLM will take into account a number of factors, including the availability of resources and compliance with applicable law, among other agency considerations. The BLM would identify the level of variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume that may be offered as part of the declaration of the annual productive capacity in this RMP.

The Proposed RMP does not include any implementation decisions to be included in the eventual Records of Decision/RMPs.[3] That is, the BLM anticipates that all of the decisions in the Records of Decision/RMPs will be land use plan decisions.

[1] The terms 'annual productive capacity,' 'annual sustained yield capacity,' 'sustained yield capacity,' and 'allowable sale quantity' are synonymous.

[2] The BLM is in the process of consolidating the Eugene District and Salem District under a single administrative and operational unit with one District Manager. This consolidation does not alter the Eugene sustained-yield unit or the Salem sustained-yield unit, and these sustained-yield units remain the basis upon which the BLM determines and declares the ASQ.

[3] Implementation decisions authorize implementation of on-the-ground projects. Land use plan decisions (land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction) do not directly authorize implementation of on-the-ground projects. Land use plan decisions guide and control future implementation decisions, which can be carried

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose and need statement describes why the BLM is revising the 1995 RMPs and what outcomes the BLM intends the RMPs to achieve. The purpose and need statement defines the range of alternatives that will be analyzed in the planning process, because alternatives must respond to the purpose and need for action to be considered reasonable.

The proposed action is to revise the 1995 RMPs with land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction that best meet the purpose and need.

This plan revision process takes place against the backdrop of past planning efforts. These previous planning efforts and their supporting analyses, including the Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994a), the 1995 RMPs (the plans currently in effect; USDI BLM 1995 a, b, c, d, e, f), and the 2008 RMPs (which are no longer in effect; USDI BLM 2008 a, b, c, d, e, f), together with the results of the scoping process for this planning effort help to inform the BLM's discretion in determining the purpose and need for this action and to identify the scope of alternatives and impacts that need to be explored in this planning effort.

Need for the Action

The BLM conducted plan evaluations in accordance with its planning regulations, which require that RMPs "shall be revised as necessary based on monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan" (43 CFR 1610.5–6). These evaluations 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" (USDI BLM 2012a, p. 12). These evaluations also concluded that the management direction for most of the other resource management programs need to be modified or updated because of changed circumstances and new information. These evaluations concluded that changes are particularly indicated for the fisheries, aquatics, recreation, off-highway vehicle, and fire and fuels programs.

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. Since the 1995 RMPs were approved, there have been analyses on the effects of land management on northern spotted owl habitat, demographic studies, and analyses of the effects of barred owls on northern spotted owls. In addition, since that time, new policies for northern spotted owls have been put in place, including a revised recovery plan and a new designation of critical habitat.

Purpose of the Action

The purpose of this proposed action is to make land use plan decisions to guide the management of BLM-administered lands.

Several of the purposes of the action are necessary for the BLM to be able to deliver a predictable supply of timber from the BLM-administered lands, based on the BLM's almost two decades of experience implementing the Northwest Forest Plan, new scientific information, and the advice of other Federal

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out only after completion of further appropriate NEPA analysis or documentation, consultation, and decision-making processes.

agencies, as discussed below. Harvesting timber on a sustained-yield basis for the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act (O&C Act; 43 U.S.C. 1181a *et seq*.) purposes is required under the O&C Act. Harvesting timber on a sustained-yield basis ensures that the BLM will achieve the purposes of the O&C Act, which include continuing to be able to provide, over the long term, a sustained volume of timber within the management direction in the RMP. Declining populations of species now listed under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq*.) have caused the greatest reductions and instability in the BLM's supply of timber in the past. Any further population declines of listed species or new species listings would likely lead to additional reductions in timber harvest. Contributing to the conservation and recovery of listed species is essential to delivering a predictable supply of timber. Specifically, the BLM recognizes that providing large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest and maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests are necessary components of the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl. Providing clean water is essential to the conservation and recovery of listed fish, and a failure to protect water quality would lead to restrictions that would further limit the BLM's ability to provide a predictable supply of timber. Furthermore, the O&C Act recognizes the importance of water quality; the purposes of sustained yield include, among others, "protecting watersheds and regulating stream flow." Finally, in fire-prone ecosystems in southern Oregon, the BLM must manage forests to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fires and the attendant loss of timber. These purposes require the BLM to exercise its discretion to determine how best to achieve sustained-yield timber production over the long term and avoid future limitations on timber production.

Provide a Sustained Yield of Timber

The purpose of the action includes providing a sustained yield of timber. The O&C Act requires that the revested Oregon and California Railroad Grant lands and reconveyed Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands (O&C lands) be managed "for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). The O&C Act goes on to state that "[t]he annual productive capacity for such lands shall be determined and declared … [p]rovided, [t]hat timber from said lands … not less than the annual sustained yield capacity … shall be sold annually, or so much thereof as can be sold at reasonable prices on a normal market." In meeting the various requirements for managing the O&C lands, the Secretary of the Interior has discretion under the O&C Act to determine how to manage the forest to provide for permanent forest production on a sustained-yield basis, including harvest methods, rotation length, silvicultural regimes under which these forests would be managed, or minimum level of harvest. In addition, the FLPMA specifically provides 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 (i.e., takes precedence) (43 U.S.C. 1701 note (b)). Thus, the multiple-use management direction of the FLPMA does not apply to the O&C lands that are suitable for timber production. The planning process established by the FLPMA is applicable to the O&C lands, because it is not in conflict with the O&C Act's management direction for those lands.

For the public domain lands, the FLPMA requires that public lands be managed "on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.7]). The FLPMA also requires that "the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.12]).

Conservation and Recovery of Threatened and Endangered Species

The purpose of the action includes contributing to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species within the planning area, including the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and threatened and endangered anadromous fish. The Endangered Species Act requires agencies to ensure that their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of ESA-listed species or result in the adverse modification or destruction of critical habitat. Since the adoption of the Northwest Forest Plan, BLM has recognized that additional species listings could have the effect of further limiting the BLM's ability to provide a sustained yield of timber under the O&C Act (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994a, pp. 49–50). Using its discretion and authority under the O&C Act and the FLPMA, the BLM can direct sustained-yield management of the O&C lands and public domain lands in western Oregon in a manner that contributes to the conservation and recovery of ESA-listed species and helps limit or avoid future listings, and thereby best ensures a permanency of timber production over the long term, while, among other benefits of sustained yield, contributing to the economic stability of local communities.

The purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl necessarily includes maintaining a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests and maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests, based on the existing scientific information on the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl and the results of previous analyses as described below.

Large, Contiguous Blocks of Late-successional Forests

Large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest have been an element of northern spotted owl conservation strategies for over two decades. Thomas *et al*. (1990, pp. 23–27) described that a conservation strategy for the northern spotted owl requires large blocks of nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat (i.e., suitable habitat) that support clusters of reproducing owls, distributed across a variety of ecological conditions and spaced so as to facilitate owl movement between the blocks. Courtney *et al*. (2004, pp. 9-11, 9-15), in the status review for the northern spotted owl, evaluated the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl and concluded that, based on existing knowledge, large contiguous blocks of suitable habitat are still necessary for northern spotted owl conservation. Culminating this confirmation of the scientific information on the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl, the owl recovery plan recommends managing for large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest (USDI FWS 2011, p. III-19).

Based on the results of previous analyses, large contiguous blocks of late-successional forest would not develop in the absence of a land use allocation reserving a network of large blocks of forest. The Supplemental EIS for the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994b, p. 2-22) explicitly required that all alternatives analyzed in detail include the allocation of a network of Late-Successional Reserves. Other previous planning efforts have considered alternatives that would not allocate such a network, including:

- Alternative A in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved no late-successional forest outside of special areas and sites occupied by ESA-listed species
- Alternative B in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved small blocks of late-successional forest
- Alternative 3 in the 2008 Final EIS (FEIS), which would have allocated the majority of the landscape to a General Landscape Area that directed timber harvest on long rotations

For each of those alternatives, the analyses concluded that these alternatives would have resulted in less contribution to northern spotted owl conservation than alternatives that allocated a network of large

blocks of forest. Notably, Alternative 3 in the 2008 FEIS would have resulted in a total acreage of northern spotted owl habitat comparable to most other action alternatives, but would have failed to meet the conservation needs of the spotted owl because of the arrangement of that habitat. Overall, these previous analyses demonstrated that large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest would not have developed under these alternatives, further demonstrating that reserving a network of large blocks of forest from programmed timber harvest is a necessary part of the purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl.

Older and More Structurally-complex Multi-Layered Conifer Forests

The scientific foundation for the importance of older, more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests as habitat for the northern spotted owl has been clearly established. Thomas *et al*. (1990) described high-quality northern spotted owl habitat as older, multilayered, structurally-complex forests characterized by large-diameter trees, high amounts of canopy cover, numerous large snags, and lots of downed wood and debris. Courtney *et al*. (2004, pp. 5–18), in the status review for the northern spotted owl, evaluated the existing scientific information on spotted owl habitat and confirmed that nesting, foraging, and roosting habitat is associated with older, more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests in the Pacific Northwest. The 15-year spotted owl monitoring report concluded that the highest stand-level habitat suitability for spotted owls is provided by older, more structurally-complex forests (Davis *et al*. 2011, p. 38).

The owl recovery plan recommends maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests. As noted in the owl recovery plan, the maintenance of older, more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests has scientific support at several scales: "At the scale of a spotted owl territory, Dugger *et al*. (in press) found an inverse relationship between the amount of old forest within the core area and northern spotted owl extinction rates from territories. At the population scale, Forsman *et al*. (2011) found a positive relationship between recruitment of spotted owls into the overall population and the percent cover of spotted owl NRF [nesting, roosting, and foraging] habitat within study areas" (USDI FWS 2011, p. III-67). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted that, in dry forest areas, maintaining these older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests may require active management to meet the overlapping goals of spotted owl recovery and restoration of dry forest structure, composition, and processes including fire, insects, and disease.

Previous planning efforts have considered a wide variety of approaches to the management of older, more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests, including—

- Alternative A in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved no late-successional forest outside of special areas and sites occupied by ESA-listed species;
- The 1995 RMP, which reserved approximately 83 percent of old-growth forest;
- The Proposed RMP in the 2008 FEIS, which would have reserved 81 percent of old-growth forest and would have deferred harvest of any forest older than 160 years old for 15 years;
- Alternative E in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved all old-growth forest;
- A sub-alternative for Alternative 1 in the 2008 FEIS, which would have reserved all forests older than 200 years old; and
- A sub-alternative for Alternative 1 in the 2008 FEIS, which would have reserved all forests older than 80 years old.

None of these alternative approaches defined management direction explicitly in terms of older, more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests, but used a variety of different terms, such as older forest, old-growth forest, late-successional forests, or a specific stand age. Nevertheless, these different management approaches would have resulted in the maintenance of differing amount of older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests. Those analyses demonstrated that alternatives that

would have maintained more older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests would have maintained more northern spotted owl habitat and would have provided better conditions for northern spotted owl movement between large blocks of habitat than alternatives that would have maintained less older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests.

The existing science clearly establishes the importance of older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests as northern spotted owl habitat; the owl recovery plan recommends the maintenance of older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests; and the results of previous analyses demonstrate that maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests would contribute to meeting conservation needs of the northern spotted owl. Therefore, maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forest is a necessary part of the purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl.

To respond to this purpose for the action, alternatives would explore differing approaches to defining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forest, by such criteria as stand age, structure, size, or landscape context. In addition, alternatives would explore differing management approaches to maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forest, such as active management in dry forest areas to reduce fire risk and restore fire resiliency.

The purpose of this action includes maintaining marbled murrelet habitat. The status review of the marbled murrelet prepared for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the existing scientific information and confirmed the importance of maintaining suitable nesting habitat to the conservation and recovery of the marbled murrelet (McShane *et al*. 2004, pp. 4-61 – 4-63). Additionally, the recovery plan for the marbled murrelet (USDI FWS 1997) recommends protecting adequate nesting habitat for the marbled murrelet.

The purpose of this action includes protecting existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat for threatened and endangered anadromous fish. The status review of threatened and endangered anadromous fish prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service reviewed the existing scientific information and confirmed the importance of maintaining existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered fish (Good *et al*. 2005). The National Marine Fisheries Service has prepared several final and draft recovery plans for ESA-listed salmonid fish within the planning area, including the Upper Willamette River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Chinook Salmon and Steelhead (ODFW/USDC NMFS 2011), which recommend maintaining existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat.

Provide Clean Water in Watersheds

The purpose of the action includes continuing to comply with the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 *et seq*.), which directs the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The policy declaration in the FLPMA states that the BLM should manage the public lands in a manner that protects many resources and their values, including the water resource (43 U.S.C. 1701[a][8]). The FLPMA directs that land use plans provide for compliance with applicable State and Federal air, water, noise, or other pollution control laws, standards, or implementation plans (43 U.S.C. 1712[c][8]).

In addition, the O&C Act includes reference to protecting watersheds and regulating stream flows, requiring that the O&C lands be managed "for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of … protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow …" (43 U.S.C. 1181a).

Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems

The purpose of the action includes restoring fire-adapted ecosystems to increase fire resiliency. Previous analyses have shown that active management in the dry forest landscape of southern Oregon can positively influence fire risk and fire resiliency, thereby restoring fire-adapted ecosystems (2008 FEIS). Further, as noted in the owl recovery plan, natural landscape resilience mechanisms in the dry forest landscape of southern Oregon have been decoupled by fire exclusion and wildfire suppression activities. The owl recovery plan recommends active management within the dry forest landscape to restore ecosystem resiliency. Additionally, in order to provide for sustained yield of timber from public lands under the O&C Act, BLM management must account for potential loss of this timber to fire. Based on the BLM's authority under the O&C Act, the results of previous analyses showing the benefits of active management in restoring fire-adapted ecosystems, and in light of the recommendations in the owl recovery plan, the purpose of this action includes restoring fire-adapted ecosystems to increase fire resiliency.

Provide for Recreation Opportunities

The purpose of the action includes providing for recreation opportunities. The FLPMA requires that, among other uses, "the public lands be managed in a manner that will … provide for outdoor recreation" 43 CFR 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]. In addition, the O&C Act states that O&C lands shall be managed "… for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of … providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). Finally, changes in BLM policy since the 1995 RMPs for recreation land use allocations and management objectives necessitate plan revision, as concluded in the BLM plan evaluations (USDI BLM 2012, pp. 28–29).

Coordinate Management of Lands Surrounding the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe

The management of the Coquille Forest is subject by law (25 U.S.C. 715c (d)) to the standards and guidelines of forest plans for adjacent or nearby Federal forest lands. Title V of the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-208) created the Coquille Forest to be held in trust for the benefit of the Coquille Tribe. This Act states that the Coquille Forest shall be managed "under applicable State and Federal forestry and environmental protection laws, and subject to critical habitat designations under the Endangered Species Act and subject to the standards and guidelines of Federal forest plans on adjacent or nearby Federal lands, now and in the future." This Act also requires the Secretary of the Interior to take the Coquille Forest lands into trust for the benefit of the Coquille Tribe. As such, the purpose of the action includes coordinating the management of BLM-administered lands "adjacent or nearby" the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe.

Guidance for Development of All Action Alternatives and the Proposed RMP

The BLM developed all action alternatives and the Proposed RMP to meet the purposes for the action, described above in the Purpose and Need for Action. To be considered reasonable, action alternatives and the Proposed RMP had to make a substantial and meaningful contribution to meeting each of the purposes, rather than a minimal contribution. The alternatives and the Proposed RMP explored various ways of contributing to these purposes and meeting the requirements of the management guidance provided in this document.

In developing all action alternatives and the Proposed RMP, the BLM—

- Reviewed existing Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and nominations for new ACECs. In this review, the BLM did the following:
    - Determined if they meet the Relevance and Importance criteria
    - Determined, for those on O&C lands that meet Relevance and Importance criteria, if designation would be in conflict with the O&C Act, as detailed below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA
    - Eliminated from further consideration those areas that do not meet criteria for designation as ACECs
    - Determined the relevant and important resource values of the remaining nominations which could be protected and maintained through other features of the alternatives or if special management attention is needed
    - Included in the development of the alternatives those nominations that meet criteria for designation as ACECs
- Designated areas as Special Recreation Management Areas or Extensive Recreation Management Areas; lands not designated as one of these two categories are public lands not designated for recreation. Developed a range of recreation management area scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives, consistent with the discussion of recreation management areas below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA
- Designated Visual Resource Management classifications for all areas; developed a range of Visual Resource Management classification scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives, consistent with the discussion of visual resources below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA
- Evaluated all eligible Wild and Scenic River segments and determined which were suitable or non-suitable per Section 5(d)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1271 *et seq*.) and consistent with BLM Manual 6400 – Wild and Scenic Rivers (USDI BLM 2012b).
- Designated areas as *open*, *limited*, or *closed* to public motorized access in accordance with 43 CFR 8342.1; developed a range of travel management area scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives; and deferred implementation-level travel and transportation management planning until after completion of the RMP revision process. For those areas designated as *limited* in the RMP, defined interim management objectives and clearly identified the process leading from the interim area designation of 'limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails' to the development of a designated network of roads, primitive roads and trails, consistent with BLM Handbook 8342 – Travel and Transportation Handbook (USDI BLM 2012c)
- Considered a range of management alternatives for addressing lands with wilderness characteristics, consistent with the discussion of lands with wilderness characteristics below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA
- Designated areas that are available and have the capacity for planned, sustained-yield timber harvest, and declared an Allowable Sale Quantity of timber that represents the annual productive capacity for sustained-yield timber production
- Designated lands that are available or not available for livestock grazing; for lands available for livestock grazing, identified the amount of forage available for livestock
- Designated land tenure zones identifying lands for retention, disposal, or acquisition
- Designated lands as open, stipulated, or closed to the several forms of mineral entry location, leasing, or sale as appropriate to the type of commodity and land status; identified areas, if any, that the BLM would recommend for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry

In developing the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP, the BLM considered the concepts contained in the Framework to Guide Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plan Revisions and Amendments, dated April 11, 2011 (RIEC 2011).

The BLM did not constrain the development of alternatives by current or projected BLM budget or staff levels. As long as alternatives were economically feasible, the analysis of the alternatives assumed that BLM budget and staff would be sufficient to implement all alternatives and the Proposed RMP. The analysis of alternatives and the Proposed RMP included an evaluation of the cost of implementation.

In accordance with national BLM planning policy (USDI BLM 2005, pp. 11–13), the RMP will emphasize management direction for allowable uses and management actions needed to achieve desired resource goals and objectives, rather than administrative process, reviews, or analysis requirements. The BLM will use program guidance issued outside the land use planning process to provide direction on administrative process, reviews, and analysis. Ongoing program guidance provides more flexibility to respond to changing national or state-level BLM administrative process or analysis requirements. Of course, the RMP process itself will be conducted consistent with procedural, review, and analysis requirements necessary to comply with Federal law and regulations applicable to planning for BLM-administered lands.

The BLM developed action alternatives and the Proposed RMP to provide a high degree of predictability and consistency about implementing land management actions and a high degree of certainty of achieving management objectives (desired outcomes), especially those outcomes related to discrete statutory mandates.

The BLM developed action alternatives and the Proposed RMP to provide cumulative effects analysis, which provides a framework to simplify and facilitate project-level NEPA analysis for management actions implementing the RMP.

The BLM developed action alternatives to simplify implementation of management actions and reduce the costs of implementation.

Working closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, the BLM developed the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP to provide sufficient detail in the analysis to facilitate RMP-level Endangered Species Act consultation, as well as eventual project-level consultation for management actions implementing the RMP.

Working closely with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, the BLM developed the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP to satisfy State and Federal water quality rules and regulations at the RMP level.

Major Authorizing Laws

This section discusses how various laws affect management of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area. The planning area includes lands of different status: O&C lands, public domain lands, and acquired lands. This section only addresses the laws that have a substantial effect on the development and design of alternatives in this RMP revision. In addition to the laws presented here, many other legal authorities affect management of BLM-administered lands (**Appendix A**).

The O&C Act has been the statutory authority for the management of the O&C lands since 1937. Subsequent laws affect the management of the O&C lands to varying degrees. Laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act, are directly applicable to how the BLM exercises its statutory authorities in managing the O&C lands, but none of these laws repealed the underlying primary direction and authority for the O&C lands. Thus, the BLM has a duty to find a way to implement concurrently all these laws, in a manner that harmonizes any seeming conflict between them, unless

Congress has provided that one law would override another law, such as with the O&C Act and the FLPMA, as described below.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires Federal agencies to use their legal authorities to promote the conservation purposes of the act. This section also requires Federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that actions these agencies authorize, fund, or carry out will not jeopardize species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act or cause destruction or adverse modification to designated critical habitat for such species. Critical habitat is defined, in part, as geographic areas occupied by the species that contain the physical or biological features essential to the conservation of a species listed under the Endangered Species Act and that may need special management or protection. The BLM will complete Section 7 consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to signing Records of Decision/RMPs for this RMP revision.

Clean Water Act

The objective of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. To accomplish this objective, the statute requires that: water quality standards consistent with the statutory goals of the Clean Water Act be established; water bodies be monitored to determine whether the water quality standards are being met; and, if all of the water quality standards are being met, then anti-degradation policies and programs, including ambient monitoring, be employed to keep the water quality at acceptable levels. In accord with this statute, the responsibility for establishing these standards, developing a strategy for meeting these standards, and monitoring their attainment in Oregon has been delegated to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Sections 303(d), 313(a), and 319 of the Clean Water Act are relevant to management of water resources on BLM-administered lands. Section 303(d) (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1313[d]) directs the states and tribes to develop a list of waters that fail to meet water quality standards for various constituents including, among others, sediment, temperature, and bacteria. Section 303(d) requires states and tribes to develop total maximum daily loads that apportion a load of pollutants that can be discharged into the waters of a state. The total maximum daily loads determine what level of pollutant load would be consistent with meeting the water quality standards and allocate acceptable loads among sources of the relevant pollutants. Necessary reductions in pollutant loading are achieved by implementing strategies authorized by the Clean Water Act, along with other tools available from Federal, state, and local governments and nongovernmental organizations. Section 313(a) (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1323[a]) directs that the Federal Government, "(1) having jurisdiction over any property or facility, or (2) engaged in any activity resulting, or which may result, in the discharge or runoff of pollutants," shall comply with requirements for the control and abatement of water pollution. Section 319 (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1329) established management programs to control water pollution from nonpoint sources, such as sediment.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act

The FLPMA provides the legal authority to the Secretary of the Interior for the management of public lands. The FLPMA requires, in part, that "the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). In

addition, the FLPMA requires that "the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.12]). The FLPMA directs that acquired lands "… shall, upon acceptance of title, become public lands, and, for the administration of public land laws not repealed by this Act, shall remain public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 205.c]).

Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act

The O&C Act provides the legal authority to the Secretary of the Interior for management of the O&C lands. The O&C Act requires that the O&C lands "classified as timberlands … shall be managed … for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal [sic] of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). Section 701(b) of the FLPMA states, "Notwithstanding any provision of this Act, in the event of conflict with or inconsistency between this Act and [the O&C Act] …, insofar as they relate to management of timber resources, and disposition of revenues from lands and resources, the latter Acts shall prevail." In this case, the "latter Acts" refers to the O&C Act.

The O&C Act and the FLPMA

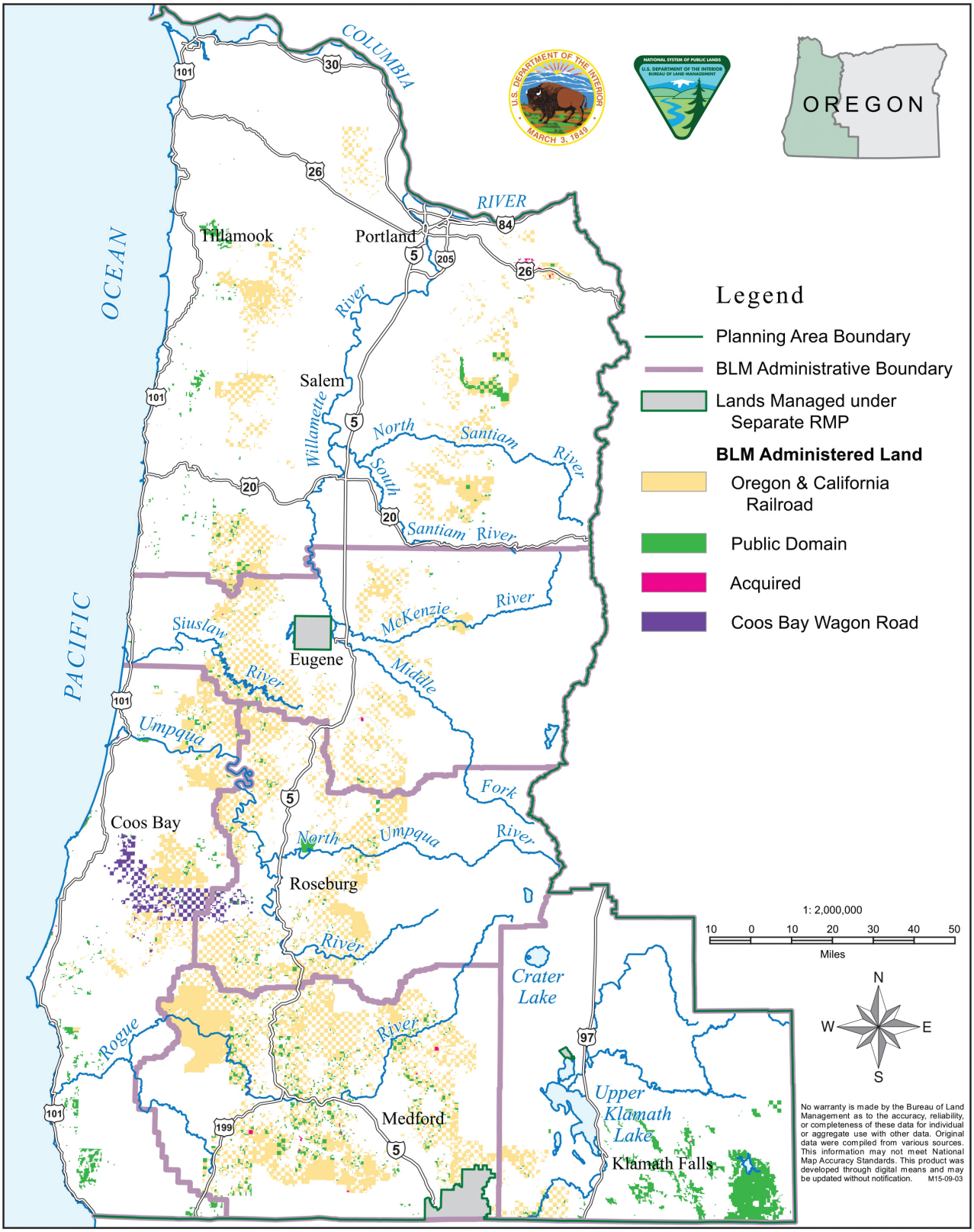
On August 28, 1937, Congress enacted the O&C Act, which provides the legal authority for the management of O&C lands and Coos Bay Wagon Road lands. Approximately 81 percent of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area are O&C lands, and approximately 3 percent are Coos Bay Wagon Road lands (**Map 1-2**). The provision of the O&C Act that provides the management direction for the O&C lands states, in part, that these lands:

> *"shall be managed except as provided in section 3 hereof, for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the [principle] of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities…"*

Based on the language of the O&C Act, the O&C Act's legislative history, and case law, it is clear that sustained-yield timber production is the primary or dominant use of the O&C lands in western Oregon. In managing the O&C lands for that primary or dominant use, the BLM must exercise its discretion to determine how to manage the forest to provide for sustained-yield timber production, including harvest methods, rotation length, silvicultural regimes under which these forests would be managed, or minimum level of harvest. In addition, the BLM must conduct this management "for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities." Finally, when implementing the O&C Act, the BLM must do so in full compliance with a number of subsequent laws that direct how the BLM accomplishes the statutory direction.

The FLPMA provides the legal authority for the management of public domain lands and acquired lands. These lands and resources are to be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Approximately 15 percent of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area are public domain lands, and less than 1 percent is acquired lands (**Map 1-2**). The FLPMA specifically provides 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 (i.e., takes precedence) (43 U.S.C. 1701 note (b)). However, provisions of the FLPMA that do not conflict with the O&C Act related to management of timber resources or the disposition of revenues from the O&C lands are applicable to the O&C lands. Preparation of the RMPs and EIS will conform to these land laws as described in this section and will comply with other Federal laws, including, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.



Map 1-2: Land Status within the Planning Area

In developing the range of alternatives in this planning process, the BLM will need to apply the direction set forth in the O&C Act to key issues associated with the management of areas or resources that typically arise during land use planning. These areas or resources include:

- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Lands with wilderness characteristics
- Visual resources
- Recreation management areas
- Sensitive species

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

The FLPMA provides authority for designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (43 U.S.C. 1712 [Sec. 202.c.3]). In this planning process, the BLM will evaluate nominated and existing ACECs to determine whether relevant and important values are present and if special management is needed to maintain those values.

For areas that have relevant and important values and need special management to maintain those values, the BLM will designate and manage ACECs on public domain lands and acquired lands. The BLM will also designate and manage ACECs on O&C lands where the special management needed to maintain relevant and important values would not conflict with the planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act. For example, designating and managing ACECs on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production in the following circumstances: on non-forested lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification[4] category is 'not included in the harvest land base.' In addition, designating and managing ACECs on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production if the special management needed to maintain relevant and important values were compatible with sustained-yield timber production, even if that special management might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. Finally, designation and management of Research Natural Areas, which are a type of ACEC, on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production when the scientific value of the research is relevant to sustained-yield timber production.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Designated Wilderness Areas will be managed pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131 *et seq*.), the area's designating statute, the BLM's wilderness regulations at 43 CFR 6300 – Management of Designated Wilderness, and BLM Manual 6340 – Management of Designated Wilderness Areas (USDI BLM 2012d). In this planning process, the BLM will consider whether to manage lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics on public domain lands and acquired lands. The BLM will also consider whether to manage lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics on O&C lands where management for wilderness characteristics would not conflict with the planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act. For example, management for wilderness characteristics on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production in the following circumstances: on non-forested lands; on lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is 'not included in the harvest land base.'

[4] Timber Productivity Capability Classification is the process of partitioning forestland into major classes indicating relative suitability to produce timber. See Chapter 2.

However, management for wilderness characteristics cannot be compatible with sustained-yield timber production, because the selling, cutting, and removing timber in conformance with the principles of sustained yield would alter such areas to the point of reducing or eliminating their wilderness characteristics. Thus, in developing the range of alternatives for this planning effort, alternatives should not include managing O&C lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics in areas dedicated to sustained-yield timber production.

Visual Resources

The FLPMA provides authority for protection of scenic values (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). Through this planning process, the BLM will designate Visual Resource Management classes for all BLM-administered lands, based on an inventory of visual resources and management considerations for other land uses.

In this planning process, the BLM will designate Visual Resource Management classes that would protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory where the protection is required as part of the management specified by Congress in legislation, such as the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1271 *et seq*.). In this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Visual Resource Management classes that would conflict with sustained-yield timber production to protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory on public domain lands and acquired lands; on non-forested O&C lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on O&C lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is 'not included in the harvest land base.' Finally, in this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Visual Resource Management classes to protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory on O&C lands. This would occur to the extent that the protection of scenic values is compatible with sustained-yield timber production, even if that protection might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. The O&C Act contemplates that sustained-yield forest management can be conducted in a manner to provide for purposes including recreation, and the BLM recognizes that scenery can be an important component of recreation.

Recreation Management Areas

The FLPMA provides authority for management for outdoor recreation (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). The O&C Act contemplates that sustained-yield timber production can be conducted in a manner to provide for purposes including recreation. A Special Recreation Management Area is an administrative unit where the existing recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are recognized for their unique value, importance, and distinctiveness, as compared to other areas used for recreation. Consistent with BLM Manual 8320 – Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services (USDI BLM 2011a), within a Special Recreation Management Area, recreation and visitor services management is recognized as the predominant land use plan focus, where specific recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are managed and protected on a long-term basis.

In this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Special Recreation Management Areas on public domain lands and acquired lands; on non-forested O&C lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on O&C lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is not included in the harvest land base. Finally, in this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Special Recreation Management Areas on O&C lands to the extent that the management for recreation and visitor services would be compatible with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C

Act, even if that management might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. However, in developing the range of alternatives for this planning effort, alternatives should not include Special Recreation Management Areas on O&C lands if the management for recreation and visitor services would conflict with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act.

An Extensive Recreation Management Area is an administrative unit that requires specific management consideration in order to address recreation use, demand, or recreation and visitor services program investments. Extensive Recreation Management Areas do not necessarily conflict with sustained-yield timber production. Consistent with BLM Manual 8320, management of Extensive Recreation Management Areas "…is commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses." Furthermore, this manual explains that land use plan decisions for management of Extensive Recreation Management Areas will be "…compatible with other resource objectives." Because management for recreation values in Extensive Recreation Management Areas is intended to be done in a manner that is compatible with other resource uses, such as sustained-yield timber production, designation of Extensive Recreation Management Areas would not necessarily conflict with sustained-yield timber production. Therefore, the BLM will consider designating Extensive Recreation Management Areas on all lands in the planning area, including O&C lands.

Sensitive Species

The FLPMA provides authority for management for ecological and environmental values and to provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). Consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species (USDI BLM 2008g), the BLM shall designate Bureau Sensitive species and implement measures to conserve these species and their habitats. It is in the interest of the BLM to undertake conservation actions for such species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is warranted. By doing so, the BLM will have greater flexibility in managing the public lands to accomplish native species conservation objectives and other legal mandates. BLM Manual 6840 also directs that specific protection to species that are listed by the BLM as sensitive on lands governed by the O&C Act must be consistent with timber production as the dominant use of those lands.

In developing the range of alternatives to be considered in this planning process, the BLM will consider providing measures to conserve Bureau Sensitive species and their habitats on O&C lands to the extent that the conservation measures are compatible with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the O&C Act purposes. The BLM will consider providing these measures even if the conservation measures might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. Furthermore, the BLM will consider providing measures to conserve Bureau Sensitive species and their habitats on O&C lands to the extent that the conservation measures are necessary to prevent the need to list Bureau Sensitive species under the Endangered Species Act. Future listings under the Endangered Species Act could have the effect of limiting the BLM's ability to provide a sustained yield of timber under O&C Act; limiting or avoiding future listings could best ensure a permanency of timber production over the long term.

Management of the Public Domain Lands in Relation to the O&C Lands

Out of the approximately 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered lands in the planning area, 384,273 acres are public domain lands. While the FLPMA requires that the public domain lands be managed for a multitude of values, the Act does not require that every parcel be managed for every value. As in previous RMPs, these public domain parcels will be managed in accordance with the 1975 Public Land Order No. 5490 (40 FR 7450), which reserves these intermingled public domain lands for multiple-use management,

including the sustained yield of forest resources in connection with the intermingled O&C lands. The alternatives include a range of uses and management objectives for public domain lands in the planning area, which permits the BLM to consider multiple uses for the public domain lands, consistent with the requirements of the FLPMA.

Relationship of the RMPs to Other Plans and Programs

The 1995 RMPs are consistent with the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, which was adopted by the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture for Federal forests within the range of the northern spotted owl as an "ecosystem management plan for managing habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest related species." The April 1994 Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan, signed jointly by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture amended the BLM's land use plans in effect at the time. In 1995, the BLM completed new RMPs, which were designed to be consistent with the Northwest Forest Plan's land use allocations and its standards and guidelines.

The Northwest Forest Plan is not a statute or regulation. It was a coordinated, multi-agency amendment to the then-current RMPs of the BLM and forest plans of the U.S. Forest Service. The Secretaries and the agencies retained authority provided by statutes and regulations to revise these plans in the future. The only provision the Northwest Forest Plan made concerning future amendments or modifications to these plans was that they would be "coordinated" through the "Regional Interagency Executive Committee and the Regional Ecosystem Office" (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994a, p. 58). In keeping with the intention of the Northwest Forest Plan to encourage cooperation and coordination of programs among the Federal agencies, the BLM has coordinated with the Regional Interagency Executive Committee on this RMP revision. Furthermore, many of the agencies that are represented on the Regional Interagency Executive Committee are cooperating agencies in this RMP Revision. Those cooperating agencies include the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency (Chapter 4).

The Northwest Forest Plan did not change the authority of the BLM, provided under the FLPMA and its promulgating regulations, for amending or revising RMPs. The 1995 RMPs, consistent with FLPMA planning regulations, anticipated the possibility that periodic plan evaluations could lead to RMP amendments and revisions. The BLM has subsequently amended the 1995 RMPs, as described below.

The interagency Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (USDA FS and USDI BLM 2001), amended all of the 1995 RMPs.[5]

The BLM has also amended the Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg District RMPs with the Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendment for Management of Port-Orford-cedar in Southwest Oregon, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg District (USDI BLM 2004), which was based on

[5] The Survey and Manage categorizations for the red tree vole were established in this record of decision. The Ninth Circuit Court decision in *Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center v. Boody*, 468 F.3d 549 (2006), found that the changes to those Survey and Manage categorizations for the red tree vole would constitute plan amendments that need to be analyzed with NEPA procedures. The court then invalidated the re-categorizations regarding the red tree vole, because the BLM had not prepared a plan amendment and appropriate environmental analysis consistent with the FLPMA and NEPA.

an interagency supplemental EIS. Under all alternatives in this RMP revision, the BLM would continue to manage Port-Orford-cedar in accordance with this 2004 Record of Decision.[6]

In addition, the BLM has amended individual RMPs with amendments of more limited scope than the above amendments, and has periodically maintained individual RMPs.[7] Individual District Annual Program Summaries have documented these RMP amendments and RMP maintenance actions.

In contrast to these amendments of the 1995 RMPs, 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, as described earlier in this chapter, is different from the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan. As such, the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP do not contain all elements of the Northwest Forest Plan.

Survey and Manage

The BLM adopted a purpose and need for this RMP revision that is consistent with the agency's discretion and obligations under the FLPMA and the O&C Act. Under the O&C Act, the BLM has no specific wildlife conservation mandate, but has a range of discretion on how to manage the O&C timberlands for permanent, sustained-yield timber production. The purpose and need for this RMP revision differs from the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan, and reflects the BLM's determination that it can achieve the goals of the O&C Act without the Survey and Manage measures. While neither the Proposed RMP nor any of the action alternatives in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS therefore includes the Survey and Manage measures, Survey and Manage is reflected in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS's No Action alternative described in Chapter 2.[8]

The purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan was guided by the policy pronouncements of President Clinton at the 1993 Forest Conference directing the BLM and U.S. Forest Service to adopt a "comprehensive … common management approach to the [federal] lands administered throughout an entire ecological region" (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994a, p. 1). To achieve this comprehensive approach, the Northwest Forest Plan included a goal of supporting "viable populations, well-distributed across their current range, of species known (or reasonably expected) to be associated with old-growth forest conditions" (FEMAT 1993, p. II-5; USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994b, p. 3&4-113). This goal was founded on the Forest Service planning regulation issued under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) "to maintain viable populations of existing native and desired nonnative vertebrate species in the planning area" (36 CFR 219.19).[9] This Forest Service planning regulation did not and does not apply to

[6] The Standards and Guidelines in the 2004 Port-Orford-cedar ROD describe all currently available disease-control practices, dividing them between those that should be applied generally and those that may be applied to specific management activities. The Standards and Guidelines include a Risk Key (pp. 32–37) to clarify the environmental conditions that require implementation of one or more of the listed disease-controlling management practices. The BLM would apply the Risk Key during site-specific project planning. This approach precludes the need for additional analysis because BLM would continue to implement the Port-Orford-cedar ROD under any alternative or the Proposed RMP in accordance with the conditions described in the Risk Key for risk reduction management practices.

[7] RMP maintenance actions respond to minor data changes and incorporation of activity plans and are limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. Plan maintenance does not result in expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved RMP.

[8] As further explained in Chapter 2, the No Action alternative in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS is implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written (in contrast to the BLM's current implementation practices under the 1995 RMPs).

[9] Since the adoption of the Northwest Forest Plan, the Forest Service adopted new planning regulations at 36 CFR 219 in 2000 and in 2012, which replaced the cited regulation.

the BLM, and is not a part of the purpose for this RMP revision. There is no comparable regulation for maintaining "viable populations" in the BLM's regulations implementing the FLPMA or O&C Act. In carrying out this goal, the Secretaries for the respective departments included what is known as 'Survey and Manage' as mitigation in the Northwest Forest Plan to provide benefits to these species and increase the likelihood of viable, well-distributed populations across all Federal lands in the planning area, including BLM-administered lands (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994b, p. 3&4-129).

The Northwest Forest Plan species viability objective is not part of this RMP revision. However, the purpose of this revision does include contributing to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species, consistent with the BLM's mandate under the Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, all of the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP would implement the BLM's Special Status Species policy, which is described in detail in the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines, which is incorporated here by reference (USDA FS and USDI BLM 2004, pp. 45–54), and include conservation measures to the extent necessary to prevent the need to list Bureau Sensitive species under the Endangered Species Act (BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management).

In addition, in developing a plan consistent with the purpose and need for this RMP revision, the BLM will not need the Survey and Manage measures to protect species associated with older and more structurally-complex forests. This is because the purpose of this RMP revision includes maintaining a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests and maintaining older and more structurally-complex multi-layered conifer forests, as necessary components of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl. All action alternatives and the Proposed RMP therefore allocate a Late-Successional Reserve network, where sustained-yield timber harvest would not occur, that is larger than what is provided in the Northwest Forest Plan and broadly encompasses "old-growth forests." Each alternative and the Proposed RMP would more than sufficiently address maintenance of older and more structurally-complex forests, without the need for additional mitigation like that provided by Survey and Manage. Further, even if the larger Late-Successional Reserve and protection of older and more structurally-complex forests were not sufficient to provide adequate habitat for Survey and Manage species, before such species could need listing under the Endangered Species Act, the BLM would be able to include such species on the BLM Sensitive species list and provide necessary management to avoid the need for listing (see the Rare Plants and Fungi and Wildlife sections of Chapter 3).

Finally, based on this analysis, the BLM concludes that the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP would avoid potential disruptions to sustained-yield timber production by avoiding contributing to future listing of any Survey and Manage species under the Endangered Species Act. Even if the habitat and site protection under action alternatives and the Proposed RMP were not sufficient to provide adequate habitat for Survey and Manage species, before such species could need listing under the Endangered Species Act, the BLM would be able to include such species on the BLM sensitive species list and provide necessary management to avoid the need for listing and thus avoid potential disruptions to future sustained-yield timber production on BLM-administered lands.

Aquatic Conservation Strategy

As described earlier in this chapter, this RMP revision would replace the 1995 RMP's and thereby replace the Northwest Forest Plan for the management of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon. The BLM adopted a purpose and need for this RMP revision that is consistent with the agency's discretion and obligations under the FLPMA and the O&C Act. The purpose and need differs from the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan and reflects BLM's determination that it can achieve the goals of the O&C Act without the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) in its entirety as constituted in the Northwest

Forest Plan. Because of these differences, none of the action alternatives or the Proposed RMP in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS includes the ACS in its entirety as constituted in the Northwest Forest Plan. The ACS in its entirety as constituted in the Northwest Forest Plan is reflected in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS's No Action alternative described in Chapter 2.

As previously discussed, the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan was guided by the policy pronouncements of President Clinton at the 1993 Forest Conference directing the BLM and U.S. Forest Service to adopt a "comprehensive … common management approach to the [federal] lands administered throughout an entire ecological region" (USDA FS and USDI BLM 1994a, p. 1). To achieve this comprehensive approach, the Northwest Forest Plan includes the ACS, which was intended to fulfill nine broad objectives, including restoring and maintaining the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems and supporting well-distributed populations of riparian-dependent species. These objectives were based on the Forest Service organic statute and implementing regulations. The ACS consists of four components: riparian reserves, key watersheds, watershed analysis, and watershed restoration.

The Proposed RMP addresses all four of the components of the ACS of the Northwest Forest Plan (see Chapter 2 and **Appendix B** for more detailed description of the land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction of the Proposed RMP). The BLM has modified several of the ACS components from how they are constituted in the Northwest Forest Plan, consistent with the purpose and need and guidance for the development of all action alternatives for this RMP revision (discussed earlier in this chapter) and in light of monitoring results and new scientific information (discussed in the Fisheries and Hydrology sections of Chapter 3).

Riparian Reserves

The Northwest Forest Plan allocates 'interim' Riparian Reserve widths along all streams, wetlands, and water bodies. These 'interim' widths have not been modified in practice as anticipated. The Northwest Forest Plan ties requirements for management actions within the Riparian Reserve to consistency with the nine broad ACS objectives.

The Proposed RMP allocates a Riparian Reserve along all streams, wetlands, and water bodies, with management objectives related to fish habitat and water quality, and management direction for actions within the Riparian Reserve. In the Proposed RMP, the Riparian Reserve widths vary by class of watershed, as described below.

Key Watersheds

The Northwest Forest Plan designates three categories of watersheds: Tier 1 Key Watersheds, Tier 2 Key Watersheds, and non-key watersheds. Tier 1 and Tier 2 Key Watersheds have the same management approach, which has three requirements that differ from non-key watersheds:

- No net increase in road mileage
- Key watersheds are highest priority for watershed restoration
- Watershed analysis is required prior to most management activities

The Proposed RMP defines three classes of subwatersheds and varies Riparian Reserve widths and management direction for actions within the Riparian Reserve by these classes of subwatershed.

Watershed Analysis

The Northwest Forest Plan directs the process of conducting watershed analysis: a systematic procedure to characterize the aquatic, riparian, and terrestrial features within a watershed. The Northwest Forest Plan requires the use of watershed analyses to refine Riparian Reserve boundaries, prescribe land management activities including watershed restoration, and develop monitoring programs. The Northwest

Forest Plan required the completion of watershed analysis prior to approval of several types of implementation actions.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the guidance for the development of all action alternatives includes emphasizing management direction for allowable uses and management actions needed to achieve desired resource goals and objectives, rather than administrative process, reviews, or analysis requirements. Consistent with this guidance, the Proposed RMP does not include management direction requiring or directing a specific watershed analysis procedure. However, as discussed in more detail in **Appendix X**, the BLM will compile watershed-scale information on aquatic and riparian resources, including identifying resource conditions, watershed processes, risks to resources, and restoration opportunities, as needed for planning and analysis of implementation actions under the approved RMP.

Watershed Restoration

The Northwest Forest Plan directs watershed restoration actions to control road-related runoff and sediment production, restore riparian vegetation, and restore in-stream habitat complexity.

The Proposed RMP includes management direction for watershed restoration similar to the watershed restoration described in the Northwest Forest Plan (see **Appendix B** and **Appendix V**).

Existing Decisions

Under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP, this RMP revision would not alter the following existing decisions, which remain valid for continued implementation within the decision area:

- Record of Decision for Implementation of a Wind Energy Development Program and Associated Land Use Plan Amendments (USDI BLM 2005b)
- Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States (USDA FS and USDI BLM 2008)
- Approved Resource Plan Amendments/Record of Decision for Designation of Energy Corridors on Bureau of Land Management-administered lands in the 11 Western States (USDI BLM 2009)
- Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon Record of Decision (USDI BLM 2010)
- Record of Decision for Management of Port-Orford-cedar in Southwest Oregon (Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts; USDI BLM 2004a)
- Seed Orchard Records of Decision for Integrated Pest Management (Eugene, Medford and Salem Districts; USDI BLM 2005c, 2006, 2005d)
- Pokegama Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan (Klamath Falls Field Office; USDI BLM 2002)
- Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan (Medford District; 37 FR 13408)
- Rogue National Wild and Scenic River: Hellgate Recreation Area Recreation Area Management Plan (Medford District; USDI BLM 2004b)
- North Bank Habitat Management Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern Record of Decision (Roseburg District; USDI BLM 2001)
- North Umpqua River Management Plan (Roseburg District; USDA FS, USDI BLM, and Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department 1992)
- Molalla River-Table Rock Recreation Area Management Plan (Salem District; USDI BLM 2011b)
- Quartzville Creek National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (Salem District; USDI BLM 1992)

- Salmon National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (Salem District; USDA FS and USDI BLM 1993)
- Sandy Wild and Scenic River and State Scenic Waterway Management Plan (Salem District; USDI BLM 1993)
- Table Rock Wilderness Management Plan (Salem District; USDI BLM 1987)
- Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area Management Plan (Salem District; USDI BLM 1983)

The BLM would continue to implement actions directed by these decisions unless and until the BLM amends, revises, or rescinds these existing decisions in decision-making separate from this RMP revision. The BLM provided separate NEPA compliance to support these existing decisions. This RMP revision does not alter these existing decisions or analyses; accordingly, this Proposed RMP/Final EIS considers such actions among the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in cumulative effects analyses. For the purpose of NEPA analysis, the BLM summarizes and cites these decisions and their supporting analyses to incorporate them by reference into Chapter 3 of this Proposed RMP/Final EIS where they are relevant to the analysis, consistent with 40 CFR 1502.21.

The Medford District is currently preparing an environmental assessment for an amendment to the 1995 Medford RMP to change the boundary of the Table Rocks Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to include newly acquired Federal lands and to encompass lands administered by The Nature Conservancy. If the BLM acquires The Nature Conservancy parcels in the future, The Nature Conservancy lands would become part of the ACEC. The environmental assessment will also analyze the impacts of an implementation action of converting temporary public use restrictions into permanent supplementary rules. The Table Rocks ACEC was originally designated in the 1986 Medford Management Framework Plan to recognize and protect botanical and geological features, threatened, endangered, and special status species, and natural systems.

This RMP revision would not alter the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (Medford District; USDI BLM 2008h), the Upper Klamath Basin and Wood River Wetland Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (Klamath Falls Field Office; USDI BLM 1995g), or the West Eugene Wetlands Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (Eugene District; USDI BLM 2015). The BLM-administered lands under these RMPs are not within the decision area for this RMP revision.

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