

Bureau of Land Management, Western Oregon Plan Revisions Office
331 SW 1st Ave. Portland OR 97208

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Re: BLM Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Dear BLM,

I am a resident of the Applegate Valley. I am a hiker, horseback rider and avid birdwatcher. After gaining understanding of the WOPR from the draft EIS, I am very concerned with the direction it will take. The changes put forth in the WOPR will negate the protections gained by the NWFP and will lead to degraded habitat, water pollution and increased conflict and controversy.

Instead of moving towards a plan of clear cutting, the BLM needs to seek ways to integrate the ecosystem requirements of the Endangered Species Act within the timber production mandate of the O & C Act. Why do you want to return to an archaic form of logging in the dry soils of Southern Oregon?

Why is it that the WOPR ignores climate change? As science supporting the claim of incomplete or unavailable information, BLM cites 3 year old climate change reports with the most recent citation being 2004. Since 2004 (and even before - see below) there has been testimony before Congress on this topic and the responsible scientific community has been unanimous in its conclusions. "Greenhouse gasses are accumulating in the Earth's atmosphere as a result of human activities, causing surface air temperatures and subsurface ocean temperatures to rise" - Climate Change source, U S National Academy of Sciences, 2001. Also on climate change, the 2001 Order from the Secretary of the Interior states under "Bureau of Office Responsibilities" "Each bureau and office of the Department will consider and analyze potential climate change impacts when undertaking long range planning exercises, when setting priorities for scientific research and investigations when developing multi-year management plans and/or when making major decisions regarding the potential utilization of resources under the Departments purview." I don't know how much more long range or multi-year you can be than the WOPR.

Another item to worry about is fire. The BLM acknowledges in the DEIS that the number of fire resilient acres will decrease in Alternates 1 and 2. How can you have a preferred alternative that increases fire danger by clearcut logging and reducing stream buffers?

On the subject of clean water and fisheries, how can you rationalize decreasing the riparian buffers? Decreasing the buffers and increased clearcut logging will surely cause increased silting of the rivers, harming the fisheries and negating the gains made with the NWFP.

My final comment concerns OHV emphasis. Why does the Medford district get 13 OHV areas, when all other districts get 0 - 4? The BLM is having trouble policing the existing John's Peak/Timber Mountain area. How do you expect to monitor 13 areas? I agree with Jackson County Commissioner Dave Gilmour's recommendations which state that if we must have OHV areas they should be limited to 3 total (Elderberry Flats, Ferris Gulch and Salt Creek) and be monitored closely.

In conclusion, I feel that at a time when the public consensus for old growth ecosystem protection and second growth thinning has never been stronger, the fact that the BLM is proposing to clearcut forests older than our nation and turn complex ecosystems into tree plantations that are more susceptible to severe wildfire is very disappointing. To quote former Eugene Congressman Jim Weaver: " Although the O & C lands are under their own statutes, they are still federal forests and the BLM should honor the even flow, non-declining yield provision. The privately held forests of the northwest have been ravaged. Only the spotted owl lawsuits have kept some of the national forests old growth standing. Now, the BLM should never, never say to hell with the future and allow the wholesale logging of the last great forest preserve." The O & C Act even states that lands be managed for permanent forest production and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut and removed in conformity with the principle of sustained yield.

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