

Introduction

Key Points

This draft environmental impact statement has been written because (1) the BLM plan evaluations found that the BLM has not been achieving the timber harvest levels directed by the existing plans, (2) there is an opportunity to coordinate the BLM management plans with new recovery plans and re-designations of critical habitat currently under development and (3) the BLM has re-focused the goal for management to the objectives of its statutory mandate to utilize the principles of sustained yield management on the timber lands covered under the O&C Act. There are four alternatives—the No Action Alternative and three action alternatives (Alternative 1, Alternative 2, and Alternative 3).

This draft environmental impact statement is broken up into the following sections:

- Chapter 1, which provides the purpose and need for revising the resource management plans.
- Chapter 2, which details the alternatives found to be reasonable solutions for the purpose and need presented in Chapter 1.
- Chapter 3, which details the current condition of the affected environment.
- Chapter 4, which provides the effects on the environment that result from each of the alternatives.
- Chapter 5, which lists those that participated in the development of this draft environmental impact statement.
- And an appendix volume and a map packet that each provides details regarding the analyses of the alternatives.

For details about the process up to this point (e.g., the published notice of intent, the scoping effort, and the planning criteria) and beyond the public commenting period, go to <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr>.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers the use of a variety of natural resources on approximately 2.6 million acres within an area of approximately 22 million acres, which is the western Oregon planning area. Resource management plans (RMPs) define the management direction for specified areas of BLM-administered lands (typically, for individual BLM districts or BLM resource areas). Resource management plans are typically designed to continue a defined management direction for a specified period of time that includes periodic evaluation. Resource management plans are formally evaluated periodically to determine whether there is a significant cause for amending or revising them.

The primary direction for administrating the approximately 2.2 million acres of what are called the O&C lands that lie within the approximately 2.6 million acres of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon is derived from the statutory authority of the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act (O&C Act). The remaining BLM-administered lands within the western Oregon planning area are public domain lands, and other statutory authorities direct the administration of those lands.

The BLM is proposing to revise existing plans to replace the Northwest Forest Plan land use allocations and management direction because (1) the BLM plan evaluations found that the BLM has not been achieving the timber harvest levels directed by the existing plans, and the BLM now has more detailed and accurate information than was available in 1995 on the effects of sustained yield management on other resources, (2) there is an opportunity to coordinate the BLM management plans with new recovery plans and re-designations of critical habitat currently under development and (3) the BLM has re-focused the goal for management of the BLM-administered lands to the objectives of its statutory mandate to utilize the principles of sustained yield management on the timber lands covered under the O&C Act of contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and other benefits from such management to watersheds, stream flows, and recreation.

our Southern Oregon Communities are growing very well ??? →



What is the purpose and need for the action being proposed?

The goals for the Northwest Forest Plan were broader than the specific requirements of the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act and sought to provide consistent management of the Forest Service and the BLM-administered lands, by applying National Forest Management Act requirements to the BLM-administered lands. The selected alternative for the Northwest Forest Plan was selected because it would "~~maintain the late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystem~~ and provide a predictable and sustainable supply of timber, recreational opportunities and other resources at the highest level possible." The purpose and need for this plan revision is focused on ~~specific legal requirements~~ and intended benefits of the BLM's unique mandate under the O&C Act, distinct from the mandate to the Forest Service under National Forest Management Act.

you need
to speak
with
Drville
Camp of
Selma.

The purpose and need for this proposed action is to manage the BLM-administered lands for permanent forest production in conformity with the principles of sustained yield, consistent with the O&C Act.¹ The plans will also comply with all other applicable federal laws including, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and, to the extent that it is not in conflict with the O&C Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. In accord with the Endangered Species Act, the plans will use the BLM's authorities for managing the lands it administers in the planning area to conserve habitat needed from these lands for the survival and recovery of species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.²

In selecting among the alternatives in this plan revision, BLM will evaluate which alternative or combination of alternatives best meets the Purpose and Need. In addition, BLM will consider the environmental consequences related to the issues identified during scoping and the cost of implementation.

¹ The Ninth Circuit in *Headwaters v. BLM*, 914 F.2d 1174 (9th Cir. 1990) confirmed that in the O&C Act Congress mandated timber production as the dominant use of these BLM-administered lands.

² This revision process will satisfy a settlement agreement resolving long-standing litigation of the Northwest Forest Plan (*AFRC v. Clarke*, Civil No. 94-1031-TPJ (D.D.C.)) that alleged the current RMPs violate the O&C Act. The settlement agreement requires BLM to consider revisions to the RMPs by the end of the year 2008, and include at least one alternative that "will provide permanent forest production across the O&C lands without reserves except as required to avoid jeopardy under the Endangered Species Act." See *Appendix A* for a discussion of the Settlement Agreement.



The three action alternatives would cause a low-moderate risk of local extirpation or extinction for the conifer-related species that are known from 20 or fewer sites on BLM-administered lands.

There are 13 federally listed species that are found within the planning area. Only five of the thirteen federally listed species occur on BLM-administered lands. Under all four alternatives, populations of species listed under the Endangered Species Act would be maintained and all four alternatives would contribute to the recovery of these species.

Invasive Plants

The greatest risk for the introduction of invasive plants would be in areas where they are abundant and when management activity results in increased light and soil disturbance, and when activities are proximate to riparian areas.

Why do you want to promote the spread of weeds →

~~Alternative 2 would have the greatest risk of introduction based on levels of timber harvesting and associated roads. Alternative 2 also has the greatest risk of introduction into riparian areas based on riparian management widths, prescriptions, and levels of timber harvesting activities. The No Action Alternative would have the lowest risk of invasive plant introduction.~~

The greatest risk for the spread of invasive plants would be when management activities are dispersed and proximate to riparian areas.

Alternative 3 would have the highest risk of spread, since harvesting under Alternative 3 would be the most dispersed and occur on a larger proportion of lands. The No Action Alternative would have the lowest risk of spread.

Wildlife

For special status wildlife species, the habitat needs of aquatic- and riparian-associated species would be met for perennial and fish-bearing streams under all four alternatives. The habitat needs of aquatic- and riparian-associated species along intermittent streams would be met under the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1, but would not be met under Alternatives 2 and 3.

The habitat needs of forest-floor-associated species that are highly endemic to one or several locations would be at risk of decline in abundance and distribution under the three action alternatives.



yea!

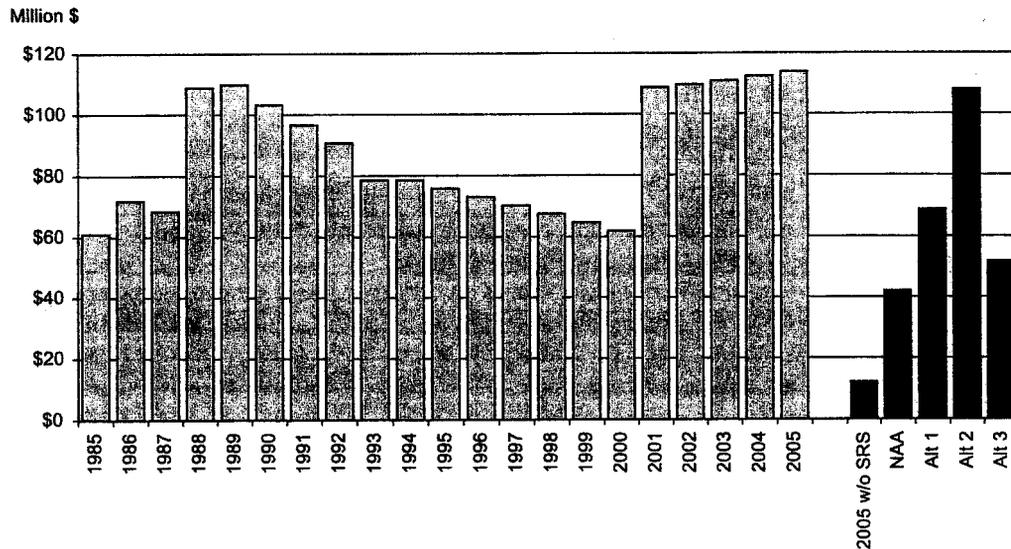
structurally complex forests that develop almost twice as fast after harvesting as in Alternatives 1 and 2.

- The No Action Alternative would reduce fragmentation in most physiographic provinces. Alternatives 1 and 2 would increase fragmentation in most provinces. Alternative 3 would increase fragmentation in all provinces.

Socioeconomics

As shown in *Figure 2 (BLM projected county payments compared to historic payments)*, none of the alternatives would produce timber receipts sufficient to bring payments to the O&C counties to the level provided by the BLM portion of the Secure Rural Schools payments. Alternative 2 would produce the highest payments to the counties at 94% of the O&C portion of the 2005 Secure Rural Schools payments, while the No Action Alternative would produce the lowest payments at 37% of the O&C portion of the 2005 payment.

Figure 2. BLM projected county payments compared to historic payments



Effects vary widely by county. The BLM plays the greatest role in the Douglas County budget, where it accounts for 20% of the total budget and 70% of the discretionary budget.

Alternative 2 would have the most favorable impact on local economies and would result in a net increase of 3,442 jobs and \$136.5 million of earnings (wages). The No Action Alternative would have the least favorable impact on local economies and would result in a net decrease of 3,770 jobs and \$125.5 million of earnings. Under all four alternatives, economic losses would be greatest in southwestern Oregon where the O&C lands are concentrated. *Table 2 (Total economic impacts by alternative)* shows that under all, but Alternative 2, the loss of Secure Rural Schools funding, coupled with the reduction in



Alternative 1

The key land use allocations for this alternative are:

- **Late-successional management areas.** These areas are designated to provide structurally complex forests. They are similar to the existing late-successional reserves under the No Action Alternative. There would be no salvaging after disturbances in these areas, except for safety or operational reasons.
- **Riparian management areas.** These areas would maintain or promote the development of mature or structurally complex forests, and provide for the riparian and aquatic conditions that supply streams with shade, sediment filtering, leaf litter and large wood, and root masses that stabilize stream banks. They are half the width of the current riparian reserves under the No Action Alternative (with the exception of non-fish-bearing perennial streams which remain the same).
- **Timber management areas.** In these areas, forests would be managed to achieve a high level of continuous timber production that could be sustained through a balance of growth and harvesting and an allowable sale quantity of timber. The rotation age would be approximately 80 to 100 years and there would be no green tree retention after regeneration harvesting.

The BLM has been telling me for years now, they don't do clear cuts any more ???

Alternative 2

The key land use allocations for this alternative are:

- **Late-successional management areas.** These areas would provide habitat for the northern spotted owl (large, connected blocks of suitable habitat) and the marbled murrelet. Salvaging would be allowed to recover economic value from the timber harvested after stand-replacement disturbances. These areas are based on new recovery planning efforts for the northern spotted owl.
- **Riparian management areas.** These areas would maintain or promote the development of mature or structurally complex forests and provide for the riparian and aquatic conditions that supply streams with shade, sediment filtering, leaf litter and large wood, and root masses that stabilize stream banks.

All streams, except for intermittent non-fish-bearing streams, would have a 100 foot nonharvesting and shade retention area on each side of the stream. Intermittent non-fish-bearing streams that have a high risk of debris flows (a source of large wood) would also have a 100 foot nonharvesting and shade retention area on each side of the stream. Other intermittent non-fish-bearing streams would retain a 25 foot area with noncommercial vegetation on each side of the stream and 12 conifer trees per acre.

- **Timber management areas.** These areas would be managed to achieve a high level of continuous timber production that could be sustained through a balance



of growth and harvesting and an allowable sale quantity of timber. The rotation age would be approximately 80 to 100 years and ~~there would be no green tree retention after regeneration harvesting.~~

Alternative 3

The key land use allocations for this alternative are:

- **General landscape areas.** These areas would provide for the habitat conditions that are required for late-successional species, would maintain and promote the development of mature or structurally complex forests, would provide continuous timber production that could be sustained through a balance of growth and harvesting, and would offer an allowable sale quantity of timber. The rotation age would approximate natural stand-replacement disturbances (generally, 360 years north of Grants Pass and 240 years south of Grants Pass).

There would be a deferral of regeneration harvests until 50% of an assessment area is older than the threshold stand age of 90 years north of Grants Pass and 140 years south of Grants Pass. In the meantime, partial harvesting and commercial thinning would be applied to stands that are at or beyond the partial harvest interval age (60 to 120 years, depending on the vegetation series).

~~There would be 6 to 9 green trees retained after harvesting depending on the vegetation series, and salvaging for economic purposes would be allowed after a disturbance (with legacy retention requirements).~~

when you leave only a few trees standing in a clear cut they usually snap off with the first winter winds.

POTENTIAL OHV EMPHASIS AREAS MEDFORD DISTRICT

What is an OHV?

OHV stands for *off-highway vehicle* and includes all motorized uses: motorcycles, 4-wheelers, 3-wheelers, dune buggies or rails, SUVs, pickups, snowmobiles, and cars. Mountain bikes are not considered an OHV.

Why does the Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR) address OHV areas?

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) uses Resource Management Plans (RMP) to provide management direction and implement on-the-ground action. RMPs ensure that the public lands are managed in accordance with the intent of Congress as stated in laws such as the O&C Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

BLM wants to evaluate OHV use at the district-level because there has been an increase in OHV use on public lands in recent years. The Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), with public input, will allow BLM to study, evaluate, identify, and designate appropriate locations in the Medford District that will provide for OHV recreation. BLM also has to abide by an Executive Order which requires us to control and direct OHV use to protect resources, promote safety, and to minimize user conflicts.

????

What about the language in the WOPR?

The WOPR is a draft and unfortunately, there were some errors in the final print copy. For instance, none of the *potential* OHV emphasis areas in the Medford District were included in a table of potential areas but were instead placed in a table of existing OHV emphasis areas. Another section on OHV use reads as if Alternative 2 would compel the Medford District to designate all 13 areas when it should read that the areas could be so designated. The errors will be corrected in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Why have OHV emphasis areas?

Designating OHV emphasis areas will allow BLM to better manage motorized recreation activities as well as other forms of recreation and uses. These areas will be located to lessen environmental damage, minimize harassment of wildlife, better manage conflicts between recreation uses, and to ensure the compatibility of OHV use with existing conditions in populated areas.

There is no present management

Is it an open "play" area?

No. If an area is designated as an emphasis area, it does not mean it will be an open play area. BLM will decide whether areas in each District are *open, closed, or limited to designated roads and trails*. OHV emphasis areas would be located within areas that are limited to designated roads and trails where off-highway vehicle use is more concentrated and intensively managed.

Conflicts is continue to increase without education

??

The designation of roads and trails in these areas will be a part of future transportation management planning, which is expected to be completed within 5 years after the completion of the RMP. This planning will focus on smaller geographic areas and will include additional opportunities for public involvement and comment.

Why are there no emphasis areas for hiking, bicycles, or horses?

Most roads and trails are open to and encourage these uses. The non-motorized use does not affect the resources to the degree that unmanaged OHV use can.

True

How will BLM make decisions as to which emphasis areas will be designated?

BLM will rely on public comments and feasibility of management to make a final decision on these areas.

POTENTIAL OHV EMPHASIS AREAS MEDFORD DISTRICT

BLM
Medford District Office

What happens to an area if it is designated as an emphasis area?

Until road and trail designations are completed through the transportation management plan, all motorized vehicles will be limited to the interim road and trail network as mapped unless closed or restricted under a previous planning effort or due to special circumstances.

Routes may be closed or limited under seasonal or administrative restrictions.

Management actions that could be considered for these areas include concentrated law enforcement attention, signing, and construction of off- and on-loading or parking facilities.

How will the closures restriction be enforced?

??
How

What happens outside an emphasis area?

These areas would also be subject to the designations of *open, closed, or limited to designated roads and trails*, meaning OHV use would be allowed except in the *closed areas*. More site-specific transportation planning would also be undertaken, but with an emphasis on transportation needs other than OHV use.

Why these 13 OHV emphasis areas and why does the Medford District have more than other districts?

Three of the areas are designated in the current RMP and additional areas were identified based on current OHV usage. + *abusage*.

During the public scoping for the WOPR, BLM heard from numerous members of the public that increased OHV use was occurring on BLM. The public comments confirmed what subject matter experts on the Medford District were also observing about OHV use.

The Medford District then looked at the areas where OHV use was occurring and included them in the WOPR. By including potential OHV areas in WOPR, the planning process could be used to evaluate the potential areas and ensure public involvement opportunities.

Other districts did not see a need to undertake such extensive OHV planning.

How Do I Provide Comments?

You have a chance to provide substantive comments and input to this planning process. Besides participating in these open houses, you may provide substantive comments and information to the WOPR planning team at the following:

Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, Oregon 97208

You may also provide comments on-line at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr>.

And, you may use the Daylight Decisions forum at: <http://www.daylightdecisions.com/wopro>.

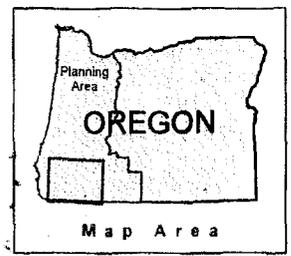
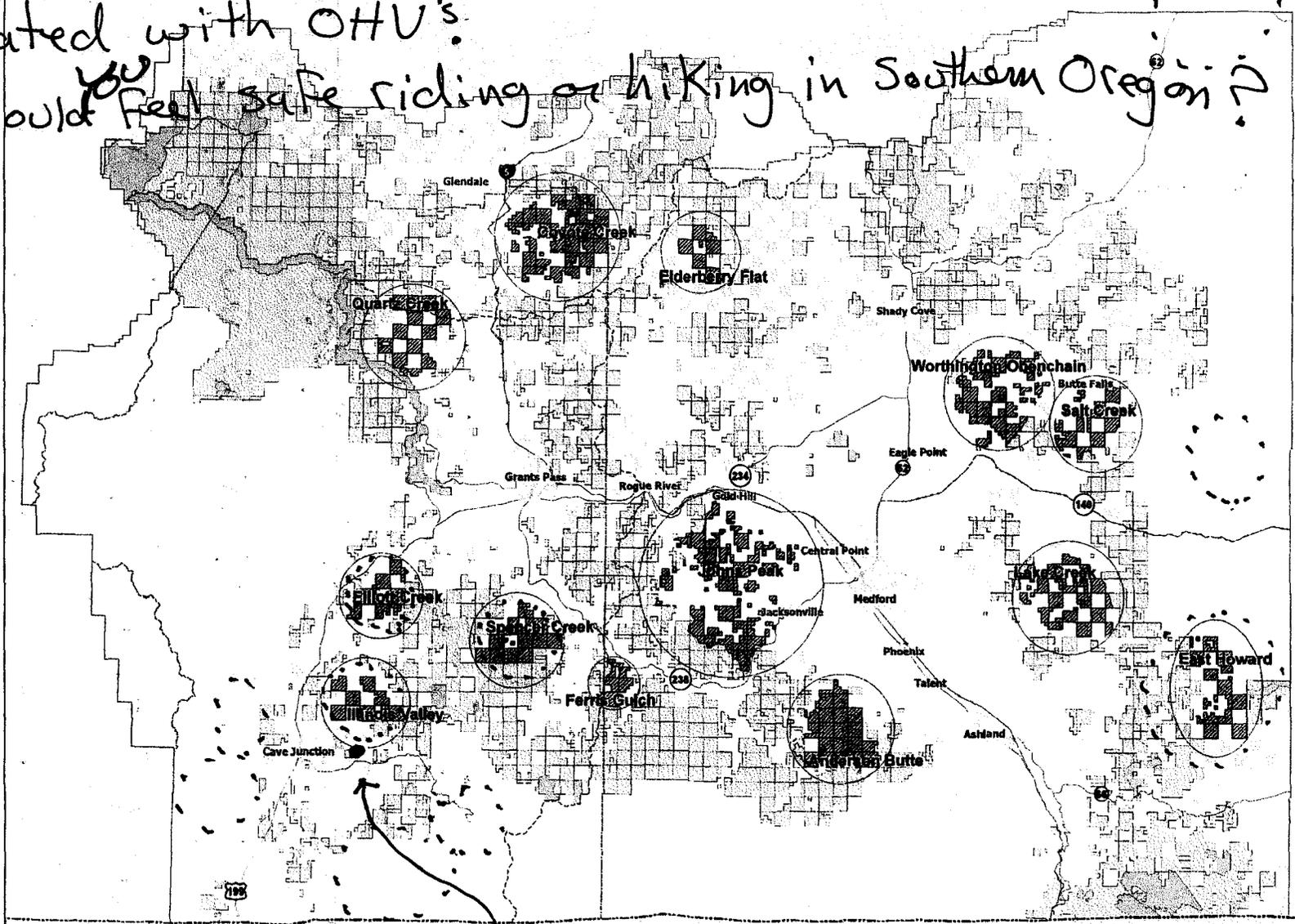
Comments must be submitted on or before January 11, 2008.

Thank you for your participation in the management of your public lands.

* Show me on this map where I will be able to ride my horse that is not now + will not be in the future...
 in undated with OHV's.

* Where would ^{you} feel safe riding or hiking in Southern Oregon?

- Legend**
- City
 - OHV Emphasis Area
 - Out Area
 - MEDFORD
 - Highway
 - Boundaries**
 - County
 - BLM District
 - BLM Resource Area
 - STATE
 - OHV Designation**
 - Closed
 - Limited





WESTERN OREGON PLAN REVISIONS
OHV Emphasis Areas
Medford District



..... where I currently ride my horse

How come when hikers, horses,
or bikes cause erosion on a trail
it is closed, or rerouted, But
when an OHV cause massive
erosion on a trail you talk
about opening up more areas
to them ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

I just don't get it.