

Fact Sheet and Q&A Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Expansion

Fast Facts

- Original monument is approximately 65,000 acres in southwestern Oregon
- Managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Expansion is approximately 42,000 acres in Oregon and 5,000 acres over the border in California

What is the effect of the President's proclamation?

The President's proclamation expands Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and the expansion is comprised entirely of existing federal lands. The designation directs the BLM to manage the expansion for the care and management of objects of scientific and historic interest identified by the proclamation. The area generally may not be disposed of by the United States and is closed to new extractive uses such as mining and oil and gas development, and subject to valid existing rights. The designation provides that the expansion will be managed under the same laws and regulations as the original monument, apart from allowing a travel management plan for the expansion that authorizes snowmobile and mountain bike use off of roads within the expansion, so long as it is consistent with the care and management of the monument's objects.

Will there be an opportunity for local input in the management planning process?

The BLM will undertake a planning process for the expansion, including opportunities for public input, consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the BLM's planning regulations and policies. The BLM will coordinate with state, local, and tribal governments as part of the planning process.

What kind of public process took place before this expansion?

The idea to expand Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument originated locally with a group of scientists who raised concerns in 2011 that the existing boundary was too small to preserve the monument's biodiversity. In 2015, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2015 (S. 132), which would have protected most of the areas in the proposed Monument expansion through conservation and recreation designations. At the invitation of Senator Merkley and Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Deputy Secretary of the Interior Michael Connor attended a public meeting last October in Ashland, Oregon, to hear opinions from members of the public about the monument expansion proposal. Approximately 500 people attended the meeting, and the majority of speakers supported the expansion proposal. Attendees referenced the strong science-based rationale for expanding the monument – including threats to the area's fragile natural resources, as well as the benefits for the local tourism industry. After that meeting, in order to help facilitate a robust public comment process, Senator Merkley announced that he would continue to accept comments on the proposal. He received more than 5,000 comments, with approximately three-fourths in favor of the expansion.

What lands does the expansion add to the monument?

The expansion of the monument includes areas identified for their ecological contribution to the purposes for which the original monument was established, including the Horseshoe Ranch and Jenny Creek areas in Siskiyou County, California; the upper Jenny Creek Watershed; the Grizzly Peak area; Lost Lake; the Rogue Valley foothills; the Southern Cascades area, including Moon Prairie and Hoxie Creek, all in Jackson County, Oregon; and some of the area surrounding Surveyor Mountain, including Old Baldy and Tunnel Creek wetland in Klamath County, Oregon. Together, these areas represent approximately 48,000 acres of public lands – 42,349 in Oregon, and 5,275 in California.

Who supports the expansion?

In 2011, 15 scientists, primarily from the local area, raised concerns that the existing boundaries of the monument would be insufficient to preserve the biological diversity for which the monument was established, and proposed an expansion of the monument's boundaries. In 2015, 70 additional scientists endorsed the proposal in an open letter. In 2015, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2015 (S. 132), which would have protected most of the areas in the proposed monument expansion through conservation and recreation designations. State representatives Peter Buckley and Kevin Talbert, and the late state Senator Alan Bates, publicly endorsed the expansion as well. The Ashland City Council, Ashland Mayor, Ashland Chamber of Commerce, Talent City Council, Talent Mayor, and Talent Chamber of Commerce have all formally endorsed expanding the monument. Dozens of local businesses have also expressed support for the expansion, as well as several private property owners within the expansion boundary, and numerous local and national conservation groups.

How does the expansion impact public access, including vehicle use?

The expansion allows for public access, including hunting and fishing, which will continue to be managed by the State of Oregon and the State of California. The expansion will be managed under the same laws and regulations that apply to the rest of the monument, including the management provisions of the original proclamation, which prohibits all motorized and mechanized vehicle use off road. However, the proclamation for the expansion provides for a new travel plan that could authorize reasonable off-road snowmobile and mountain bike use in the expansion, if the use is consistent with the care and management of the monument objects. The expansion does not apply to or affect tribal land, private property, state property, or local government property.

How does the expansion impact grazing?

The expansion will be managed under the same laws and regulations that apply to the rest of the monument, including the management provisions of the original proclamation. The original proclamation requires a study of the impacts of grazing on the ecosystem, and provides that existing authorized permits or leases may continue with appropriate terms and conditions under existing laws and regulations. It provides that if grazing is found incompatible with protecting the objects of biological interest, the

Secretary of the Interior will retire the grazing allotments pursuant to the processes of applicable law. Finally, it provides that if grazing permits or leases are relinquished by existing holders, the Secretary will not reallocate the forage available under those permits or for grazing purposes unless that reallocation will advance the purposes of the monument.

How does the expansion impact timber harvesting?

The expansion will be managed under the same laws and regulations that apply to the rest of the monument, including the management provisions of the original proclamation. Subject to valid existing rights, the original proclamation prohibits the commercial harvest of timber, except when part of an authorized science-based ecological restoration project for protection and old growth enhancement objectives, consistent with the purposes of the proclamation. It provides that no portion of the monument would be considered to be suited for timber production or used in a calculation or provision of a sustained yield of timber. Finally, the proclamation specifies that removal of trees from within the monument may take place only if clearly needed for ecological restoration and maintenance or public safety.

How does the designation affect military uses of the land and airspace?

Nothing in the proclamation would prohibit low-level overflights of military aircraft, designation of new units of special use airspace, or the use or establishment of military flight training routes over the expansion, consistent with the care and management of the objects to be protected.