



**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**

Medford District Office  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504

**March 2002**



# Kelsey Whisky Draft Landscape Management Plan, Associated Medford District Resource Management Plan Amendments and Draft Environmental Impact Statement



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

**BLM/OR/WA/PL-02/010+1792**



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
email address: or110mb@or.blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1793(118)  
G6174(ST:bhk)

**MAR 19 2002**

Dear Reader:

We welcome your participation in evaluating this proposed resource management plan (RMP) amendment and RMP management implementation draft environmental impact statement for the Kelsey Whisky Landscape Management Planning Area. We are particularly interested in comments that present new information that would affect the analysis, possible improvements in the analysis, and suggestions for improving or clarifying the proposed management direction. For example, you might prefer the proposed fuels treatments from one alternative and the transportation management direction from another alternative. Specific comments are the most useful in helping us improve the analysis and development of the preferred alternative. In order to be considered in the Kelsey Whisky Draft Landscape Plan, Associated Medford District Resource Management Plan Amendments Final Environmental Impact Statement, comments must be received within the official comment period. The comment period will end 90 days after publication of the Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. The Medford District will announce the official comment period closing date in a news release in the *Grant's Pass Courier* and the *Umpqua Free Press* newspapers.

All written comments should be sent to the attention of Sherwood Tubman, Ecosystem Planner, Glendale Field Office, at the above address. Documents referenced in this DEIS may be examined at the Medford District Office during normal working hours.

There are three action alternatives and a no-action alternative, each developed with differing emphasis. Public comment was considered in developing and analyzing issues and alternatives in this document along with local government, known interest groups and data developed by Bureau staff.

No public meetings, open houses or field tours of the project area have been scheduled at this time. However, if there is sufficient public interest, public meetings can be arranged to discuss the management alternatives and answer questions.

Comments, including names and addresses of commentors, will be available for public review. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. This DEIS and your comments will be published on the Medford District website at [www.or.blm.gov/Medford](http://www.or.blm.gov/Medford) under "Planning Documents."

Sincerely,

Lynda L. Boody  
Field Manager  
Glendale Resource Area



**KELSEY WHISKY CREEK DRAFT LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT  
PLAN, ASSOCIATED MEDFORD RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
AMENDMENTS AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT**

**Glendale Resource Area Field Manager Recommendations**

I recommend the proposed Kelsey Whisky Creek Landscape Plan, associated amendments to the Medford Resource Management Plan (RMP) and draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) be published for public and interagency review. The proposed RMP amendments would consider alternative land use allocations and resource use management direction and identify additional areas with high public values. The transportation plan and road access management direction would be modified to facilitate federal resource protection, limit public access to private inholdings and still provide reasonable motorized access to traditional use areas. In addition, the landscape plan provides a coordinated, multi program, multi year management strategy which addresses forest and ecosystem health, while providing for commercial activities in conformance with the approved Medford RMP. The portion of the alternatives which would amend the Medford RMP were prepared in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5 5.

  
Lynda Boody, Glendale Field Manager

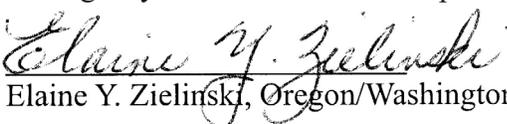
**Medford District Manager Concurrence**

I concur with the alternative Medford RMP amendments and various activity or RMP implementation actions considered in the array of alternatives. The draft plan and DEIS has been developed with appropriate public and interagency coordination.

  
Ron Wenker, Medford District Manager

**Oregon/ Washington State Director Approval to Publish the Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Public and Interagency Review**

I concur that the draft plan amendments and subordinate activity or RMP plan implementation actions have been developed and analyzed in accordance with applicable Department of the Interior and Bureau procedures. I approve publication of the draft EIS for the required 90 day public and interagency review and comment period.

  
Elaine Y. Zielinski, Oregon/Washington State Director



**KELSEY WHISKY DRAFT LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN,  
ASSOCIATED MEDFORD DISTRICT RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT**

(X) Draft Environmental Statement    ( ) Final Environmental Statement

**Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management**

Type of Action:    (X) Administrative                      ( ) Legislative

**Abstract:**                      This Draft Landscape Management Plan/Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments/Draft Environmental Impact Statement describes and analyzes the impacts of four alternatives for managing the public lands within the Kelsey Whisky Landscape Planning Area. The alternatives are designed to achieve a variety of land management and restoration objectives. There are three action alternatives and a no-action alternative, each developed with differing emphasis, to be accomplished over several years. The range of activities include timber harvest of anywhere from 4.8 to 12.9 million board feet (MMBF), restoration activities, road decommissionings, water source enhancement projects, fuel hazard reduction projects, and other land management direction. Two of the four alternatives would require an amendment to the Medford RMP with the addition of 1600-2800 acres of designated area of critical environmental concern (ACEC). Allocations made in the Northwest Forest Plan would remain unchanged by ACEC designation. Alternative 2 is BLM's preferred alternative which would harvest 9.4 MMBF and designate 1600 acres ACEC.

**Comments:**                      Comments on this alternative are requested from all interested and/or affected agencies, organizations, and individuals. Comments must be received within 90 days of the Federal Register notice of availability.

For further information contact:

Sherwood Tubman, Team Leader  
Bureau of Land Management  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 97504  
541-618-2399



# Summary

## S1.0 Introduction

The following summary is a brief overview of the Kelsey Whisky Landscape Management Plan and Assorted Resource Management Plan Amendments and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). For complete information, please review the entire document. This summary is not meant to present all the information contained in the complete DEIS.

The DEIS presents an array of actions, and evaluation of potential environmental impacts that might be anticipated if implemented. The planning area contains valuable resources, including the Wild Rogue Wilderness to the west, the Rogue Wild and Scenic River Corridor through the center, Late Successional Reserve, and critical habitat for northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets. In consideration of these values, the broad spectrum of management proposals will be analyzed in an environmental impact statement (EIS). The Kelsey Whisky Planning Area (Map 1) encompasses approximately 104,000 acres within Josephine and Curry Counties in southwestern Oregon. It is situated approximately 23 miles northwest of Grants Pass and bordered by the Galice and Bear Camp roads to the south, the Wild Rogue Wilderness Area to the west, and the Marial National Backcountry Byway on the north and east.

A watershed analysis was completed for the northern portion of the Wild Rogue Watershed in December, 1999. The watershed analysis characterized the physical and biological conditions of the area, considered issues and key questions, compared current resource conditions with resource standards and identified some sample resource protection and restoration measures. Based on the Wild Rogue North Watershed Analysis, staff and public input, issue discussions and management actions were developed and analyzed and are presented here for public review.

Tables S-1, S-2, and S-3, found at the end of the chapter, summarize the alternatives and environmental consequences.

## S2.0. Purpose and Need

Timber harvest is a primary objective in lands designated in the Northwest Forest Plan as General Forest Management Area (GFMA), some of which the Kelsey Whisky Landscape Planning Area includes. The planning area was identified along the boundary of the Wild Rogue Watershed. In order to meet annual forest management requirements, the Glendale Resource Area needs to develop and implement plans for harvesting trees, restoring sites, conducting forest health treatments, and reducing fire hazards.

There is a growing need for management actions to reduce fuel hazard in the planning area to avoid large losses of valuable resources. In 1995 a federal fire policy (USDA 1995) was issued directing federal land managers to expand the use of prescribed fire to reduce the risk of large wildfires due to unnatural high fuel loadings and to restore and maintain healthy ecosystems. The use of prescribed fire is a management tool that would assist in meeting the objectives of conserving, protecting and restoring values for which have been identified throughout the planning area.

Thinning forest stands is needed within Late Successional Reserve lands, where stewardship and forest health are a primary focus, to reduce risk of catastrophic stand replacing wildfire, promote retention, and enhance late-successional forest habitat characteristics. The purpose of the actions related to thinning includes increasing the diameter growth of residual trees to promote development of larger diameter trees, snags and coarse woody debris, reducing competitive stress to larger diameter trees, and reducing ladder fuels.

The Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) has the objectives of providing new special areas to protect important values, preserving native species composition and ecological process of biological communities, and developing site-specific management plans for special areas as needed. Within the planning area, the East Fork Whisky Creek subwatershed has been identified as an area with multiple resource values converging in a single location. Since the completion of the RMP, a plant

group has been found to fill a heretofore unfilled plant cell in the Oregon Natural Heritage Plan. In addition, there are historical, cultural and scenic values that add to the quality of the subwatershed and merit protection for future generations. Historic trails, mine adits, mine tailings and remnants of structures as well as the unroaded character of the basin, undisturbed by timber harvest and seemingly wild and natural are some of the factors. The 34-8-1 road marks the eastern boundary of the basin and is currently a designated Back Country Byway to Marial. There are several vista opportunities along this route that provide very good looks into the East Fork Whisky Creek as well as into the Rogue Canyon in the distance. In addition, the vegetation composition and quality of the ecological processes in several areas within the subwatershed provides an opportunity to replace an existing cell with a higher quality vegetative community for the Oregon Natural Heritage Plan.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is mandated to balance production of timber with numerous management concerns. The Oregon and California (O&C) Act of August 28, 1937 (O&C Act) requires the Secretary of the Interior to manage O&C lands for permanent forest production in accordance with sustained-yield principles. Further, the Act requires that management of O&C lands protect watersheds, regulate stream flow, provide for recreational facilities, and contribute to the economic stability of local communities and industries. FLPMA directs the BLM to manage public land on the basis of multiple use and “in the manner that would protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historic, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values.”

## **S3.0 Issues**

The identification of significant issues to be addressed in the plan was the purpose of the scoping process. For planning purposes, an “issue” was defined as a matter of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities, the environment, or land uses. These issues provide a focus for environmental analysis and a basis for resulting decisions. The four primary issues described below were identified through public scoping and internal evaluation, and further supported by the Wild Rogue Watershed Analysis (North and South). Additional issues and resources are addressed to provide context for the analysis and resulting decisions.

- Fuels and Fire - Accumulation of fuels is increasing the risk of intense fires.
- Late-Successional Habitat - Since late successional reserves will take several years to develop all of the characteristics of late-successional habitat, the concern is that activities in the matrix may result in short term (10-20 years) impacts to late-successional habitat and affiliated species and negatively effect connectivity between Late-Successional Reserves.
- Timber Management - A key component of the Northwest Forest Plan and the Medford District Resource Management Plan is providing commercial timber harvest from lands designated as General Forest Management Area (GFMA).
- Transportation System - New temporary or permanent roads are needed for timber harvest and have the potential to lead to further development of the planning area. Some areas have high road densities and others have none.

## **S4.0 Proposed Action**

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Kelsey Whisky Draft Landscape Plan and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment addresses four management action alternatives, including a No-Action Alternative, to be implemented within the next several years. The three “action” alternatives, Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 describe various ways activities would be managed in the Kelsey Whisky Landscape Planning Area. Each alternative has a different emphasis, primarily defined in terms of resource focus, with the underlying premise to maintain, protect, restore, or enhance relevant and important ecological and biological value(s).

## **S4.1 Alternative 1**

This alternative would provide the highest level of commercial timber and other commodities, consistent with management direction from the Medford District Resource Management Plan and the Northwest Forest Plan. Alternative 1 includes the implementation of up to four timber sales, various fuels treatments, road management actions and wildlife enhancement projects. Actions proposed in this alternative are summarized in table S-2.

## **S4.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)**

This alternative would also emphasize timber harvest on GFMA lands, but would modify timber harvest from alternative 1 to help maintain connectivity for late-successional species and would include no new permanent road construction.

An Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) would be designated in the East Fork Whisky Creek subwatershed to protect the Tanoak / Douglas-fir / Salal / Evergreen Huckleberry plant group which is not currently under the Oregon Natural Heritage Plan. This ACEC would encompass approximately 1,676 acres and would include some lands currently designated both as General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and as Late-Successional Reserve (LSR). An ACEC management plan would be implemented if an ACEC is designated. Road construction and most logging would be prohibited. Active timber management would be limited to stand establishment and manipulation in previously harvested areas and treatments that directly support the ACEC value. Fire suppression would be done with limited use of mechanized equipment such as dozers or tractor lines. Heavy equipment would stay primarily on existing ridge roads. Actions proposed in this alternative are summarized in table S-2.

## **S4.3 Alternative 3 (No Action Alternative)**

The No Action Alternative would allow for routine management actions to occur within the EIS area in accordance with established RMP guidelines. Actions which would require an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would not occur under alternative 3. No scheduled timber sales for the 5 year planning period, fuels treatments, or water development treatments would be anticipated over the next 5 years. The No Action Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and provides the baseline against which to compare the other alternatives.

## **S4.4 Alternative 4**

Alternative 4 was designed to emphasize protection of non-commercial resources while still providing some level of commercial commodities. Timber harvest would be implemented only where needed to promote future growth of existing forest stands, forest health, wildlife habitat or fuels management. No regeneration harvest is proposed for this entry. No new roads, either permanent or temporary, would be constructed. An ACEC would be designated in the East Fork Whisky Creek subwatershed. This ACEC would encompass approximately 2,843 acres, with management as described for alternative 2. Actions proposed in this alternative are summarized in table S-2.

## **S4.5 Proposed Amendments to the Medford District Resource Management Plan**

In order to implement certain actions, the Medford District Resource Management Plan would require amendment to its current status. These actions would include designation of a new area of environmental concern, changes in off-highway vehicle usage of certain roads through closure, and changes in availability of lands for energy and utility related uses.

## **S5.0 Environmental Consequences**

### **S5.1 Analysis Assumptions and Guidelines**

The following assumptions and guidelines were used to guide and direct the analysis of environmental consequences:

- If selected, any of the alternatives would be implemented as described in Chapter 2, including the Management Common To All Alternatives.
- The Bureau of Land Management would have sufficient funding and personnel to implement alternatives.
- Current trends in management, including land use and fuels development, would continue in compliance with the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Northwest Forest Plan.
- The selected action alternative would be implemented over approximately the next three to seven years.
- The monitoring identified within the context of the alternatives would be funded and implemented.
- The Aquatic Conservation Strategy, as described in the RMP, and the Best Management Practices in Appendix D of the RMP, would be common to all action alternatives.
- The environmental consequences would be consistent with those described in the RMP and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS), unless specifically identified in this document.
- Clearance surveys have not been completed for all Special Status and Survey and Manage species. Required surveys would be completed for these species before a Record of Decision is signed. All required sites would be protected according to established direction and protocols.

**Table S-1. Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Medford District Resource Management Plan.**

Management	Alternatives			
	1	2 Preferred	3 No Action	4
<b>Land Use Allocations Which Amend the Medford Resource Management Plan</b>				
Designation of ACEC in East Fork Whisky Creek subwatershed	No Change	+ 1,677 acres	No Change	+ 2,844 acres
<b>Off-Highway-Vehicle Restrictions Which Amend the Medford Resource Management Plan</b>				
Miles closed due to road decommissioning	10.4 miles	10.4 miles	No Change	13.8 miles
Roads closed with gates	5.08 miles	5.08 miles	No Change	9.16 miles
Roads closed with barriers	2.29 miles	2.29 miles	No Change	No Change
<b>Leasable Mineral and Energy Resources Amendments to the Medford Resource Management Plan</b> (Area is describe in Medford RMP as low potential for oil & gas and geothermal resources)				
No surface occupancy stipulation	No change	+ 470 acres, not including pre-existing constraints	No change	+ 1,093 acres, not including pre-existing constraints
Standard leasing stipulations	No change	- 470 acres	No change	- 1,093 acres
<b>Utility Transmission Corridor or Sites and Special Use Permit Opportunity Amendment to the Medford Resource Management Plan</b> (Area does not include occupied corridors, or have known interest in special use permits or sites)				
Use/permit Restricted acres	no change	+ 1,667 acres	No change	+ 2,844 acres

**Table S-2. Summary of management in all alternatives.** Treatment acreages and mileages are approximations for analytical purposes, based on preliminary field review and existing spatial data. Actual treatment acres may vary slightly.

Management	Alternatives			
	1	2 Preferred	3 No-Action	4
Activity / Implementation Actions Affecting the Planning Area Transportation System				
Permanent Road Construction	1.7 miles	0 miles	0 miles	0 miles
Temporary Road Construction	2.0 miles	1.9 miles	0 miles	0 miles
Primitive roads to be improved	9.2 miles	8.2 miles	0 miles	8.2 miles
Road Decommission	10.4 miles	10.4 miles	0 miles	13.8 miles
Road closed with gates	5.08 miles	5.08 miles	8.03 miles	9.16 miles
Road closed with barricades	2.29 miles	2.29 miles	0 miles	0 miles
<b>Forest Stand Treatments Proposed to Implement the Medford District Resource Management Plan</b>				
Treatments Designed to Meet the Medford District Resource Management Plan Timber Management Objectives				
Regeneration harvest (RH, OR, OR/CT RH/CT, RH/OR)	628 acres 8,006 MBF	355 acres 4,473 MBF	0	0
Commercial Thin (CT, CT/PCT)	871 acres 3,491 MBF	969 acres 3,642 MBF	0	955 acres 3,418 MBF
Total Harvest Treatments	1,499 acres 11,497 MBF	1,324 acres 8,115 MBF	0	955 acres 3,418 MBF
Tractor Yarding	None	None	None	None
Cable Yarding	1,187 acres	874 acres	None	700 acres
Cable/Helicopter	148 acres	171 acres	None	122 acres
Cable/Tractor	164 acres	155 acres	None	51 acres
Helicopter Yarding	None	124 acres	None	82 acres
Precommercial Thin	50 acres	50 acres	None	61 acres

**Table S-2. Summary of management in all alternatives.** Treatment acreages and mileages are approximations for analytical purposes, based on preliminary field review and existing spatial data. Actual treatment acres may vary slightly.

Management	Alternatives			
	1	2 Preferred	3 No-Action	4
Fuels Treatments Associated with RMP Timber Objective Treatments				
Slash/Pile (SP)	1,716 acres	1,751 acres	None	1,659 acres
Broadcast Burn (BB,UB,UB/SP)	961 acres	740 acres	None	261 acres
Mechanical Fuels Treatment (MFT)	51 acres	51 acres	None	51 acres
Treatments Designed to Meet RMP Non-Timber Objectives (e.g., forest health, wildlife habitat, fuels, etc.)				
Partial Cut (CDM, CDM/NDM)	329 acres 773 MBF	329 acres 773 MBF	None	328 acres 768 MBF
Tractor Yarding	1 acre	1 acre	None	None
Cable Yarding	103 acres	103 acres	None	103 acres
Helicopter Yarding	137 acres	137 acres	None	137 acres
Cable/Helicopter	51 acres	51 acres	None	51 acres
Cable/Tractor	47 acres	37 acres	None	37 acres
Non-Commercial Density Management (LSR)	181 acres	181 acres	None	181 acres
Pine enhancement/ maintenance (West Fork Whisky Cr.) (Matrix)	1,091 total acres, 561 acres CT 650 MBF	1,091 total acres, 561 acres CT 600 MBF	None	1,105 total acres 575 acres of CT 625 MBF
Pine Conversion; Pine to Douglas-fir (Quail Cr. fire) (LSR)	221 acres 10 MBF	221 acres 0 MBF	None	221 acres 0 MBF
Fuels Treatments Associated with RMP Non-Timber Objective Treatments				
Slash/Pile (SP)	1,837 acres	1,823 acres	None	1,784 acres
Underburn (UB, UB/SP)	1,129 acres	1,129 acres	None	1,129 acres

**Table S-2. Summary of management in all alternatives.** Treatment acreages and mileages are approximations for analytical purposes, based on preliminary field review and existing spatial data. Actual treatment acres may vary slightly.

Management	Alternatives			
	1	2 Preferred	3 No-Action	4
Mechanical Fuels Treatments	289 acres	289 acres	None	302 acres
RMP Fire Suppression Priorities and Equipment Limitations				
Wildfire Suppression	Full Fire Suppression	Full Fire Suppression but limits on heavy equipment in ACEC	Full Fire Suppression	Full Fire Suppression but limits on heavy equipment in ACEC
Wildlife Habitat Enhancement to Meet RMP Objectives				
Spring/Pond Enhancement	3 sites	4 sites	None	4 sites

BB	Broadcast Burn	PCT	Pre-commercial Thin
CDM	Commercial Density Management	RH	Regeneration Harvest
CT	Commercial Thin	SL	Slash
MFT	Mechanical Fuels Treatment	UB	Underburn
NDM	Non-commercial Density Management	L&S	Lop and Scatter
OR	Overstory Removal	MBF	Thousand Board Feet
P	Hand Pile, burn piles	SP	Slash/Pile

**Table S-3. Summary of Environmental Consequences by Key Issue.**

Management	Alternatives			
	1	2 Preferred	3 No-Action	4
<b>Issue 1: Fire and Fuels Management</b>				
Acres of fuel treatments	+5,983 acres	+5,783 acres	0	+5,186 acres
<b>Issue 2: Late-Successional Habitat</b>				
Loss of late-successional habitat - regeneration harvest (Matrix)	-628 acres	-355 acres	0	0
Short-term degradation of late-successional habitat from commercial thin (Matrix)	-871 acres	- 969 acres 385 acres would retain 60% canopy with remainder approx. 40%	0	- 955 acres 385 acres would retain 60% canopy with remainder approx. 40%.
Promotion of late-successional habitat by commercial and non-commercial density management (LSR)	+510 acres	+510 acres	0	+509 acres
Loss of suitable owl habitat - removed	-2,353 acres -921 acres	1,320 -623 acres	0 0	-1142 -289 acres
- degraded to dispersal habitat	-1,432 acres	-697 acres	0	-853 acres
Acres of Critical Habitat Impacted	-1,385 acres	-1,259 acres	0	-709 acres
Total Critical Habitat removed	-751 acres	-610 acres	0	-273 acres
Total Critical Habitat degraded-Commercial Thinning	-634 acres	-649 acres	0	-436 acres
<b>Issue 3: Timber Management</b>				
Estimated Timber harvest levels	12,930 MBF	9,488 MBF	0	4,811 MBF
Change in acres available for scheduled timber harvest	No Change	- 470 acres	No Change	- 1,093 acres
Net Matrix Acres Available for Scheduled Timber harvest	+10,208 acres	+9,738 acres	+10,208 acres	+9,115 acres
Acres returned to timber production through road decommission	+18.3 acres	+18.3 acres	0.0	+25.1 acres
<b>Issue 4: Roads/ Transportation System</b>				
Temporary Road Construction	2.0 miles	1.5 miles	0.0	0.0
Permanent Road Construction	+1.7 miles	0.0	0.0	0.0
Roads Decommissioned	-10.4 miles	-10.4 miles	0	-13.8 miles



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