

News Release

USDA Forest Service

USDI Bureau of Land Management

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Bureau of Land Management and USDA Forest Service Release

Draft Survey and Manage Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

PORTLAND, May 23, 2003 - The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service have released a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SEIS) that will supplement the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Survey and Manage issued in November 2000. The BLM and Forest Service would like to hear from the public regarding three methods for conserving rare and little-known species. Comments concerning the Draft SEIS should be received in writing by August 22, 2003.

The agencies proposed action would discontinue the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan. The proposed action would cost less to implement and have fewer impacts on other aspects of the Northwest Forest Plan. Under the proposed action, the species' habitat needs would rely on other elements of the Northwest Forest Plan and existing Forest Service Sensitive Species and the BLM Special Status Species programs. The objective of these programs is to keep species from needing to be listed under the Endangered Species Act and to meet population and distribution requirements of the National Forest Management Act and other legislation.

The proposed action in the Draft SEIS will assist the BLM and Forest Service in meeting the balance of environmental protection and production of commodities called for by the Northwest Forest Plan. A Final SEIS and Record of Decision would amend land and resource management plans for National Forests and BLM Districts within the range of the northern spotted owl (generally western Oregon and Washington, and northwestern California).

Although the amount of timber being harvested would increase under the Proposed Action, the BLM and Forest Service would still not meet the timber harvest levels called for in the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan. Under the proposed action, the probable sale quantity is approximately 765 million board feet. The probable sale quantity called for in the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan is 805 million board feet.

The decision to prepare the SEIS came as a result of a settlement of a lawsuit that involved the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, and a private timber organization, the Douglas Timber Operators. In their lawsuit, the Douglas Timber Operators claimed the Survey and Manage provisions are excessive and unwarranted because they violate the Oregon & California Revested Lands Sustained

Yield Management Act of 1937 and are beyond the authorities or intent of the National Forest Management Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

The Draft SEIS is available on line at <http://www.or.blm.gov/surveyandmanage/>. Comments on the Draft SEIS must be post-marked by August 22, 2003. Comments can be mailed to Survey and Manage, Argonne National Laboratory, EAD/900, 9700 South Cass Avenue, Argonne, IL 60439. Comments can also be faxed to 1 (866) 542-5904 or entered directly at the following website: <http://web.ead.anl.gov/surveyandmanage>.