



# Port-Orford-cedar Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Team  
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## Scoping Notice

February 10, 2003

Dear Interested Public:

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are initiating work on a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to consider management alternatives for Port-Orford-cedar in the Oregon portion of its range. You are receiving this letter because you: (1) have previously indicated an interest in FS or BLM planning activities in southwest Oregon or northwest California, (2) are a government agency, tribe, or business often involved with such planning, or (3) have been identified as someone who might have an interest in Port-Orford-cedar management. If you are not an agency or tribe and wish to continue to receive information about this SEIS, you must request to be on our mailing list (see below.)

## Background

Port-Orford-cedar is a conifer tree found in southwestern Oregon and northwestern California. It is infected by an introduced pathogen, *Phytophthora lateralis*, which causes Port-Orford-cedar root disease. The root disease is nearly always fatal to the Port-Orford-cedar trees it infects, reducing Port-Orford-cedar in the ecosystem and impacting other resources dependent upon it. Research shows the rate of spread of the root disease is linked, at least in part, to transport of spore-infected soil by human and other vectors. Water-borne spores then readily spread the pathogen down slope and down stream. The disease occasionally affects Pacific yew growing in association with Port-Orford-cedar, but infects no other species.

The Agencies have included management direction for Port-Orford-cedar in their Land and Resource Management Plans. BLM Plans require management activities around Port-Orford-cedar to conform to the [Port-Orford Cedar Management Guidelines](#), and Forest Service Plans have similar requirements. According to these Plans, project planners apply various practices to reduce root disease spread and maintain Port-Orford-cedar in the ecosystem. These practices may include washing equipment and agency vehicles traveling between infected and uninfected areas, closing roads to prevent adjacent stands from becoming infected, removing Port-Orford-cedar from along roads to reduce the likelihood of infection, managing for Port-Orford-cedar on low-risk sites, and selective breeding to take advantage of the natural resistance exhibited by some trees.

## Need for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

The Agencies have a need to maintain Port-Orford-cedar as a part of the forest ecosystem because it serves as a component of many habitats and plant communities, provides culturally significant products for tribes, and provides unique forest products. The Agencies also have a need to provide

access to public lands for multiple-use activities including recreation, fire control, product harvest, and other uses. However, the likely effects of the current management direction have not been examined at the range-wide scale. Without this analysis, it's not clear if the direction and its actual application are adequate, or conversely, if the costs of those practices exceed their benefits. The SEIS will examine the existing, as well as alternative, management direction for the BLM and FS administrative units in southwest Oregon. The SEIS will examine how well each alternative retains Port-Orford-cedar and benefits the resources that depend on it, and will also examine cost-effectiveness and effects on other forest uses such as bough harvest and recreation access. The SEIS will provide the responsible officials with information to decide which alternative provides the most appropriate level of protection.

The SEIS is a joint effort by the OR/WA BLM and the Forest Service. The decision resulting from this SEIS will only affect federal lands, amending the land and resource management plans for the Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg BLM Districts, and the Siskiyou National Forest. The responsible officials are the BLM State Director for OR/WA and Forest Service Regional Forester for Region 6. Three California National Forests, the Klamath, Six Rivers, and the Shasta-Trinity, are Cooperators in the SEIS process. Any need to amend the POC Standards and Guidelines in these forest plans will be evaluated based on a review of any new information or changed circumstances described in the SEIS.

## **Scoping**

The Agencies are currently in the process of collecting scoping comments on this proposal to prepare a SEIS. Comments are sought that will help the Agencies identify issues to be addressed in the SEIS and identify interested and affected persons. Issues identified will be used to develop possible alternatives for managing Port-Orford-cedar. Preliminary issues identified include how effective are current practices at slowing the spread of the disease and maintaining Port-Orford-cedar, what ecological resources are affected by the loss of Port-Orford-cedar, and should forest uses be restricted to prevent spread of the disease. A range of alternatives will be developed for management of Port-Orford-cedar and the disease. Alternatives will include elimination of all Port-Orford-cedar specific guidance, and increased management efforts including identification of additional areas and seasons where access should be restricted.

Please send your written comments concerning this proposal to:

Mail: Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Team      E-mail: [ORPOCEIS@or.blm.gov](mailto:ORPOCEIS@or.blm.gov)  
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Portland, OR 97208

Comments should be received before the scoping period ends on March 12, 2003. No formal public scoping meetings are scheduled, but may be scheduled if there is sufficient interest. If scheduled, such meetings will be announced in local newspapers and on the website listed below, at least 15 days before they are held.

All written and electronic submissions in response to this notice or to the draft or final SEIS are available for public inspection (including the submitter's name and address unless the submitter specifically requests confidentiality.) If you wish to withhold your name 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 submitted on official letterheads, and from

individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organization or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

### **To be on our Mailing List**

You will be placed on our mailing list only if:

- you provide scoping comments, or;
- you are a Federal, State, or local agency normally involved with BLM or FS Environmental Impact Statements, or if you are a business or organization known to have a strong interest in this particular action;
- you are a tribe; or
- you write or e-mail us asking to be included on the list.

Correspondence should be addressed to one of the addresses listed above.

Unless you specify otherwise, persons on our mailing list will receive or be directed to a copy of the Draft SEIS, as follows:

- Persons submitting electronic scoping comments will receive an electronic notice that the SEIS is posted on our website.
- Persons mailing scoping comments will receive a printed copy of the Draft SEIS.

### **SEIS Schedule**

Following the scoping period, the Agencies will develop and analyze alternatives in a Draft SEIS. The Draft SEIS is expected to be available for public review and comment for 90 days beginning in June 2003. We expect a final SEIS to be available by the end of December 2003, with the Record of Decision to follow in late February 2004.

### **Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Website**

The Notice of Intent, news release, this Scoping Notice, the Draft and Final SEISs, and the Record of Decision will be posted at the website [http://www.or.blm.gov/planning/Port-Orford-cedar\\_SEIS/](http://www.or.blm.gov/planning/Port-Orford-cedar_SEIS/) as they become available. The website also has linkages to other agency websites containing additional Port-Orford-cedar information.

Thank you for providing us with your comments on this proposal.

Sincerely,



KENNETH E. DENTON  
Acting Team Leader  
Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Team