

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION

Provide opportunities for use of Forest resources by disadvantaged persons

Provide equal opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, creed, sex, marital status, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

Coordinate planning activities with other federal agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribes, private landowners, and various community organizations.

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FOREST IN TEN YEARS

Significant changes may be apparent in those areas where projects have been implemented to meet the Forest Plan goals and objectives, but the overall character and appearance of the Forest will change only slightly over the first decade.

Landscape View The appearance and patterns of vegetation across the Forest will be affected mostly by timber harvests with about 90,000 acres of mature stands harvested during the planning period. Most of the timber harvesting will occur in stands of mature and old growth timber between young stands that were harvested and regenerated in the prior years. When viewed from a distance at the landscape level the result will be larger expanses of young stands and fewer small stands of mature timber. Where relatively large acreages of contiguous mature stands existed at the beginning of the planning period, the landscape will appear more broken and fragmented by 40 to 60 acre harvest units such as in the inventoried roadless areas where timber harvest is allowed.

Other major features will also contribute to the overall texture of the landscape. The beginnings of a network of mature stands along perennial rivers and streams will become evident where harvesting has removed mature trees adjacent to the riparian area. Mature stands of 160 to 300 acres reserved for wildlife will be prominent as will the mature stands remaining on those lands unsuitable for timber management due to soil instability or regeneration difficulty. In many cases, the spatial arrangement of these mature stands will be contiguous with other mature stands in the drainage.

Stand Level View The coarseness of texture of the forest vegetation will also be evident when viewed at the subdrainage or individual stand level. Recently harvested stands will have a different appearance from those harvested prior to Forest Plan implementation due to the retention of a greater amount of both live and dead vegetation in managed stands. Live overstory trees, averaging 2 to 10 per acre, and varying numbers of dead trees will remain after the final harvest. The remaining trees will provide current and future habitat for primary cavity excavator species, contribute to the maintenance of long-term soil productivity and provide some of the structural components of mature stands within managed stands. Mature trees will also be evident within harvest units adjacent to Class IV streams with potentially unstable or moderately stable banks. Large pieces of down wood will be evident in many harvest units.

Old Growth Some old-growth stands will not be harvested during the planning period. The largest, contiguous blocks will continue to be in Wilderness. Stands varying from more than a thousand to ten acres in size will remain intact in no-harvest management areas such as nonmotorized dispersed recreation, Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas, designated Old-Growth Groves, and areas designated as habitat for spotted owls, pileated woodpeckers and martens. Blocks of several hundred

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acres will also remain within the general forest allocations with largest, contiguous acreages occurring in those unroaded areas allocated to general forest.

Rivers In addition to retaining mature trees adjacent to streams and lakes, enhancement projects will add large woody debris in some waterways to mitigate the losses of sources for natural recruitment of large wood as a result of previous management activities. Projects will provide diverse stands of hardwoods and conifers in previously harvested riparian areas.

Visual and recreational values will be maintained or enhanced along rivers designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers and in the corridors adjacent to rivers identified as eligible for Wild and Scenic designation in the Forest Plan. The combination of Wild and Scenic designations, visual management objectives, riparian protection and recreation uses along the rivers will result in a network of rivers and streams that retain and enhance their natural appearance and ecological function.

Travelways Approximately 400 miles of new roads will be constructed, primarily to provide access for timber harvests. Some of these roads will enter several hundred acre blocks of mature stands within general forest allocations, while other roads built will be short spur roads or extensions of existing roads in currently roaded areas. Design and construction techniques will be employed to make these roads lay easy on the land, reducing the potential soil erosion and mass movement. In addition, 1,740 miles of road will be reconstructed in conjunction with timber harvests and recreation management. In some cases, the reconstruction projects will correct or alleviate erosion and road stability problems and provide for safe public access. Various roads, generally local and collector roads, will have restricted access to enhance wildlife habitat or to protect soil and water values.

Scenic quality will be maintained and enhanced along approximately 385 miles of Forest Service, county, state and federal highways that cross the forest. Two roads, Aufderheide Memorial Drive and the McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Loop are designated Scenic Byways and the recreational aspect of travel along these routes will be emphasized.

Wildlife Diversity Habitats for species dependent on mature and old-growth stands will be provided primarily in areas not allocated to timber management. Some suitable habitats will remain in general forest allocations, although they will generally be smaller and more isolated than areas withdrawn from harvest.

The acres of suitable habitat and the number of identified sites for bald eagles and peregrine falcons will exceed the levels in the recovery plans for these species. Habitat for other threatened, sensitive, and endangered species will meet or exceed levels needed to maintain or promote recovery of the species.

Elk habitat will be improved or maintained in areas managed for a high emphasis objective for big game. Forage enhancement projects, well distributed mature conifer stands for optimal cover, and controlled road access in the winter ranges will be evident in the high emphasis areas. The basic habitat components of forage and cover will be provided in areas with moderate or low emphasis objectives also, but in lesser quantity, distribution and quality.

Recreation Dispersed recreation opportunities will have been enhanced by 60 miles of new trail and an intensive annual maintenance program. These trails traverse a variety of land allocations across the Forest, with increased miles available in lower elevations.

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About 145,000 acres of the roadless area inventory will remain unroaded after 10 years.

Wilderness use will continue to grow. Areas with high user impacts will be protected from degradation or rehabilitated as necessary through a combination of site recovery projects, user education and user management

Additional opportunities for interpretation and public use of areas with exceptional scenic, cultural, biological or geological characteristics will be provided by the 46 Special Interest Areas and 34 Old-Growth Groves identified in the Forest Plan. Each area will be managed to maintain its unique qualities and provide for public education and enjoyment

Nine Research Natural Areas could be available for scientific use, including five that are recommended for designation in the Forest Plan.

Communities The Forest will take advantage of opportunities to enhance the vitality of surrounding communities by applying a new focus to look and work beyond the traditional boundaries. This focus will reaffirm and emphasize working with other government agencies, local businesses, and the communities themselves in the spirit of interdependence and cooperation that has always existed at the local Ranger District level. Communication, cooperation, and partnerships between the Forest and local citizens will be fostered and enhanced.

FOREST IN FIFTY YEARS

The Forest Plan, by law, must be revised at least every 10 to 15 years. If the direction in this Plan were continued, unchanged over the next 50 years, however, many changes would be readily apparent.

Landscape View The forest will present a contrast of age classes, including large blocks of mature and older stands of trees in areas deferred from timber harvesting interspersed with managed stands 0 to 90 years old. Although some of the texture and mosaic of mature stands and varying ages of managed stands at the landscape level that existed after the first 10 years will still exist, the acres of mature stands in the general forest will have decreased by about 450,000 acres. Within areas available for timber harvest, natural, mature stands will appear as isolated patches or linear corridors mostly in areas with extended rotations such as visually sensitive areas or land that is unsuitable for timber management. Harvest units of 40 to 60 acres will be evident in areas where the predominant stand age is 60 to 90 years old.

The network of natural, mature stands along rivers and streams and in areas maintained for wildlife habitat will be readily apparent, although in some cases, the retention of large trees in 40 to 50 year managed stands will soften the contrast between the natural and the managed stands. Gaps in the network of mature, natural stands along the rivers and streams will be less apparent as reforestation projects mature.

Stand Level View Visible differences in managed stands created before implementation of the Forest Plan and those created after its implementation will be less apparent than at 10 years. Most of the general forest will consist of trees 0 to 90 years old. Although the size of the regenerated trees at 50 to 60 years will tend to reduce the visual impact of the increased retention of live and dead vegetation within harvested stands, the ecological functioning of these stands may be significantly different. The retention of some live and dead vegetation will be apparent in recently harvested units.

Old Growth All of the natural, mature and old-growth stands within no-harvest allocations will still exist in essentially the same condition as they were at the beginning of Plan implementation. It is possible, however, that unpredictable events such as wildfires, windstorms or insect epidemics may have changed the appearance in some of these areas. Few old-growth stands will remain in areas managed for timber production except in visually sensitive areas along highways and major river corridors.

Rivers Water quality will be high. Most of the stream segments on the Forest will have a natural appearance and improved channel conditions as a result of natural input of woody debris and stream enhancement projects. On a broader scale, all of the river and stream systems on the Forest will have a natural appearance and a stable, functioning ecosystem.

The implementation of rehabilitation and improvement projects will result in increased populations of resident fish and increased habitat capacity for anadromous species.

Travelways The road system needed for resource management and protection, completed at approximately 7,200 miles, will appear mature and more stable as vegetation is established on areas of exposed soil. Reductions in new construction and reconstruction or closure and restoration of roads with stability problems will reduce the amount of erosion and soil movement. Many roads will be maintained for timber harvest and public access, while others will be closed during certain times of the year or for certain uses to enhance wildlife habitat and to protect soil and water resource values.

Visual corridors along major highways, some Forest roads and rivers will appear natural or near natural. Small openings and younger stands of trees may be apparent in some areas as a result of timber harvesting, although the retention of 10 green overstory trees in harvest units will create a varied texture.

Wildlife Diversity Populations of species dependent on mature and old-growth habitats will be lower, but will be stable and remain above viable levels. Habitat for these species will exist primarily in areas withdrawn from timber harvest, in Wilderness and possibly some in long rotation management areas such as visual corridors.

Populations of threatened, endangered, or sensitive species will be above the levels necessary for viability and habitat will be available to maintain these populations.

Elk habitat quality will be lower in moderate and low emphasis areas, but will remain at or above the objective levels. Habitat in high emphasis areas will be capable of supporting larger, stable population levels.

Recreation Demand for recreation will be higher. Construction of additional developed recreation sites will provide increased opportunities for developed recreation activities.

About 92,000 acres of the roadless area inventory will remain unroaded after 50 years. Other areas that were unroaded at the beginning of Plan implementation will be roaded.

Primitive and semiprimitive recreation opportunities will be limited to Wilderness and areas withdrawn from harvest. In Wildernesses, high use areas will be returned to a more primitive condition.

Community Each community will have capitalized on its uniqueness and involved its citizens in the development of a desired future. Forest activities will continue to support the goals and plans of resource-dependent communities.