

Introduction

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has formed a partnership agreement with the USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to perform an analysis of the Trask River Watershed. This report summarizes the findings of that watershed analysis project. Additional material was produced in the course of the project that was not included in the final report. This information is available from the ODF website (http://www.odf.state.or.us/DIVISIONS/management/state_forests).

Together, ODF and BLM manage 64% of the land area in the Trask watershed. The lands managed by these agencies are mainly located in the mountainous, forested, upper portions of the watershed. While the focus of this document is on these lands, it is recognized that watershed concerns are not limited to publicly owned lands. Because of the interconnected nature of watershed resources, activities and resources on other land are also considered. However, it is the intention of these agencies that this document would supplement, rather than replace, the existing Trask Watershed Assessment (TBNEP 1998a).

Both ODF and BLM have policies that emphasize cooperation between landowners and with local stakeholder groups. Toward this purpose, the cooperation between BLM and ODF has been quite beneficial. Additionally, the Tillamook Bay Watershed Council and the Tillamook Bay Performance Partnership were consulted during production of the watershed analysis. These local watershed groups provided beneficial input to this watershed analysis, including the identification of local concerns.

While ODF and BLM both have mandates to perform watershed analysis and manage forested lands, there are specific differences in their direction for watershed analysis. These are discussed in the following paragraphs. This watershed analysis is designed to fulfill the specific watershed analysis needs of both agencies.

ODF direction for watershed analysis

The direction for ODF comes from the Northwest Oregon State Forests Management Plan (FMP) and from Intent Statements of the Board of Forestry (BOF). The FMP states that “Watershed assessment and analysis must be a critical process in refining and planning management activities related to implementation of this forest management plan. With a greater understanding of the interrelated processes occurring in watersheds, plans and activities can be better structured, potential consequences better anticipated, and communication and resource understanding improved.” In recognition of this principle, the BOF later issued intent statements that extended this mandate statewide.

For ODF, this is a pilot watershed analysis. The effectiveness of this document will be evaluated against these three goals specified by the FMP:

1. Collect data on and evaluate baseline condition assumptions by identifying and assessing the condition of limiting factors; and determining if the riparian and aquatic strategies are addressing the appropriate process and function concerns within the watershed.
2. Provide information for the refinement of district implementation plans.

3. Contribute watershed-level information to a comprehensive review of forest management plan goals and strategies.

This evaluation will be used to adjust the scope and methods of future watershed analyses.

The FMP specifies that ODF watershed analysis should be performed in a methodology compatible with the OWEB methodology. This methodology may be supplemented, as necessary, with additional methods to meet ODF objectives. While this watershed analysis uses the OWEB protocols, it has also helped to identify specific areas where supplementation or changes to the methodology would be most useful to meet ODF management objectives. It is expected that these adjustments will be made in future watershed analyses.

BLM direction for watershed analysis

Direction for the BLM to conduct watershed analysis comes from the federal Northwest Forest Plan (NFP)¹. Watershed analysis is one of four components of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy delineated in the NFP. As such, it provides the basis for BLM monitoring and restoration programs and the foundation from which Riparian Reserves can be delineated.

BLM watershed analysis is performed according to the standards outlined in the Federal Guide for Watershed Analysis, version 2.2, August 1995. This document meets those standards.

The NFP specifies provides for designation of key watersheds. These are watersheds that serve as refugia for at-risk fish species and stocks and areas that supply high quality water. Within the Trask watershed, the Elkhorn subwatershed has been designated as a key watershed.

¹ **USDA and USDI (USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management). 1994c. Record of decision for amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management planning documents within the range of the Northern Spotted owl: Standards and guidelines for management of habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest related species within the range of the Northern Spotted owl. U.S. Government Printing Office.