

# Memo

**To:** Dave Lorenz, Area Director

**From:** Norma Kline, District Forester

**CC:** Brian Pew, Deputy Chief State Forests,  
Rob Nall, AOP Coordinator

**Date:** July 29, 2015

**Re:** Information Item - Approved Annual Operations Plan for 2016

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The 2016 State Forests Annual Operations Plan for the Coos District is attached for your information. During my review of this plan, I have found that it is consistent with the *Elliott State Forest Management Plan*, all State Forest Operational Policies and the 2016 Annual Operations Planning Guidance. Additionally, all management activities comply with the Forest Practices Act.

Therefore, I have approved all management activities described in this plan.

New take avoidance policies for marbled murrelets has resulted in a shift of harvest acres into more of the 40-60 year old stands and less harvest of the mature stands. This shift provides less revenue and will not achieve the Annual Harvest Objective identified in the Implementation Plan. The new take avoidance policies are a direct result of *Cascadia Wildlands vs. Kitzhaber et al.* (case no. 3:12-cv-00961-AA).

During its preparation, this Annual Operations Plan was reviewed by technical specialists from within ODF, biologists from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, a resource specialist from the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians, and an archaeologist from Oregon Department of Transportation. We received their comments verbally and in writing (written comments are on file at the district office). The draft annual operations plan also underwent a 45-day public comment period. All comments were carefully considered and incorporated where appropriate. The changes resulting from public comments are summarized in Appendix E of the Coos District 2016 Annual Operations Plan.

Biological Assessments for marbled murrelets on two primary sales, Lucky Stulls and Lower Trout, and on an alternate sale, Deer Joe Combo, were sent to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for review and the District expects a response from the USFWS approximately three weeks after the approval of the AOP. The approval of these operations is contingent upon the response of the USFWS. The District will discuss and resolve any concerns raised by the USFWS regarding these operations prior to the auction of these operations.

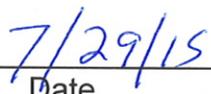
Approval of this plan does not constitute final approval of individual project details. The management activities described in this plan may be modified during the final preparation and/or implementation. Modifications to these management activities will conform to the process included in the Annual Operations Planning Policy.

The official copy of this Annual Operations Plan will be on file at the district office. Additional copies are available at the State Forests Program office in Salem. The plan is also available on the ODF web site at:

[http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE\\_FORESTS/Annual\\_Operations\\_Plans.shtml](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/Annual_Operations_Plans.shtml)

APPROVED:

  
Norma Kline

  
Date



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Forestry

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February 2, 2016



"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

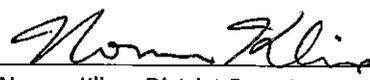
### MEMORANDUM

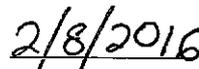
**To:** Dave Lorenz, Area Director  
**From:** Norma Kline, District Forester  
**CC:** Liz Dent, Division Chief State Forests  
Rob Nall, AOP Coordinator  
**Date:** February 2, 2016  
**Re:** Information Item – Elliott State Forest – Approved 2015 and 2016 AOP's

All approved Coos District AOP's are consistent with the Elliott State Forest Management Plan and Implementation Plan, all State Forest Policies and the Annual Operation Plan Guidance. Additionally, all management activities comply with the Forest Practices Act.

However, at this time, I am withdrawing approval of six harvest operations listed in the 2016 AOP, including the following: Howling Glenn, Lower Trout, Bickfoot, Young Footlog, Bakers Cake, and Deer Joe Combo. I am also withdrawing approval of West Glenn Howell, which is listed in the 2015 AOP.

These modifications to the FY 2015 AOP and FY 2016 AOP were made at the request of the Oregon Department of State Lands.

Approved:   
Norma Kline, District Forester

  
Date

# COOS DISTRICT

## 2016 ANNUAL OPERATIONS PLAN

### OVERVIEW

This plan describes the activities and outcomes that Oregonians can expect to see on Oregon's first State forest, the Elliott State Forest for fiscal year 2016. The 2016 fiscal year runs from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. Comments were considered and were used to improve this plan within the scope of the Department's authority, in alignment with the Elliott Forest Management Plan and Implementation Plan, and bounded by budgets and staff resources.

The Elliott State Forest is an actively managed forest, valued by many Oregonians for its unique mix of environmental, economic, and social benefits. This plan supports this mix and provides a balance of benefits as required by OAR 629-035-0000 through 629-035-0110.

In preparing this plan, we have consulted with geotechnical specialists, wildlife biologists, fish biologists, aquatic specialists, engineers, adjacent landowners, and an archeologist. In addition we offered a 45 day public comment period with opportunities for comment from various stakeholders as well as Oregonians in general.

### SHORT SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR FY2016

- Beginning the planning cycle to harvest approximately 11.2 million board feet of timber generating gross revenues of \$3.5 million.
- Protecting streams and water resources by conducting physical habitat and flow surveys and implementing a series of buffers and seasonal restrictions.
- Pursuing stream habitat development projects on West Fork Millicoma River and Buck Creek.
- Planting 240 acres and conducting vegetation and animal management activities on an additional 500 acres.
- Maintaining a road network of 320 miles.



*"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"*

# **COOS DISTRICT 2016 ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN**

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# COOS DISTRICT

## 2016 ANNUAL OPERATIONS PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

This Annual Operations Plan (AOP) covers the state forestlands managed by the Coos District for the fiscal year 2016, which runs from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. This plan describes how the activities and projects planned in the Elliott State Forest will achieve the goals and objectives of the 2011 Elliott State Forest Management Plan (FMP) and the Coos District Implementation Plan (IP). Refer to these documents for details on strategies. These activities include the following integrated forest management operations: commercial harvest operations; road construction, road improvement and maintenance; reforestation and young stand management; recreation; and planning.

This summary document will give an overview of the operations, and includes tables giving a number of details including estimates of volume and acres to be harvested, project costs, and gross and net revenues, and acres and cost estimates of planned reforestation and young growth management operations. More detail on harvest operations is available in the individual Pre-Operations Reports, which are available by request. A public involvement summary (Appendix E) has been added to the final plan.

A new FMP and IP were approved for implementation on January 1, 2012. This revised FMP describes the resource management concepts and strategies and incorporates take avoidance strategies. The IP describes specific descriptions of each basin and provides the harvest and silvicultural goals for the 10 year period.

Coos District manages 93,524 acres of state forestland primarily in the southern coast range, but with some scattered tracts in the Klamath Mountains in southern Coos and Curry counties. About 91% of the lands managed by the Coos District are Common School Forest Lands (CSFL) owned by the State Land Board and managed for them and the Board's administrative agency - the Department of State Lands - by ODF. All revenue from CSFL goes to the Common School Fund and ODF is reimbursed from the Fund for management expenses. The remaining 9% are Board of Forestry lands. Approximately two-thirds of the revenue from BOF lands is distributed to the county where the land is located, with the remaining one-third going to ODF for management expenses. The main ownership is the Elliott State Forest, which is one block of about 91,224 acres located just south of the Umpqua River between Reedsport and Scottsburg on the north and between Coos Bay and Allegany on the south. The Elliott is divided into 13 management basins representing sub-watersheds in the forest. Additionally, some 2,082 acres of Common School Land and 218 acres of Board of Forestry small tracts are scattered between the California border in the

south, up to the South Slough Estuary on the west, adjacent to Winchester Bay to the northwest, and to about Winston and Elkton on the east. Note that the acres detailed throughout the report express net acres, unless otherwise stated. Net acres are based on orthophotos and GIS and exclude roads, non-required thinning areas, stream buffers, other buffers and green tree retention areas.

Table 1 compares the proposed acres by harvest type<sup>1</sup> in this AOP to the harvest acre ranges specified in the IP. Total planned primary acres in this AOP are 564 net acres and the total planned alternate acres are 281 net acres, (primary acres are approximately 0.6% and alternate acres are approximately 0.3% of the district’s total acreage and both are less than the annual acreage estimate). The anticipated harvest acres, volume, and revenue for each proposed operation in this AOP are listed in the “Harvest Operations – Financial Summary” table in Appendix B, while a vicinity map of these harvest operations can be found in Appendix C.

Table 1. Annual Operations Plan objectives compared to annual estimated silvicultural activities identified in the Coos District IP. All values are net acres.

Silvicultural Activity	Elliott FMP & IP	2016 AOP
	Annual estimate	
<b>Partial Cut Harvest – Primary</b>	<b>0 - 500<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Regeneration Harvest - Primary</b>	<b>700 – 1000</b>	<b>537</b>
<b>Partial Cut Harvest – Alternate</b>	<b>0 - 500<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Regeneration Harvest - Alternate</b>	<b>700 – 1000</b>	<b>245</b>

<sup>1</sup> Partial cutting will be done as necessary to meet silvicultural objectives.

The FY 2016 operations plan includes both activities that take place “on the ground” within the fiscal year as well as operations that have contracts prepared within the fiscal year, but are actually accomplished in a future fiscal year. The proposed timber sale is planned to be designed, and submitted for processing during the FY16 time period. The actual on-the-ground operations will likely not occur during FY16 due to the time lag associated with contract duration. In contrast, reforestation and young stand management will be carried out during the FY16 time period.

The Forest Land Management Classification System (FLMCS) has been adopted into the 2011 Management Plan. Appendix A of this AOP summarizes the changes<sup>2</sup> that have been approved to the State Forests’ Forest Land Management Classification System. Mapped wildlife habitat in Focused Stewardship and High Value Conservation Areas increased by 1,440 and 2,841 acres respectively due to re-classification and creation of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas in 2014. At the close of the public comment period, the District Forester forwarded the changes with any public comments to the Area Director and State Forester for

<sup>1</sup> The definitions of the harvest types used to describe timber harvesting on State Forests can be found on the [State Forests website](#) under Forest Management and Planning. Briefly, a Modified Clearcut is the most common of three type of Regeneration Harvest (or clearcut) that may occur on State Forests. The defining characteristics of Modified Clearcuts are that they meet the structural component standards of the FMP (green tree, snag, and down wood).

<sup>2</sup> ‘Major Changes’ and the procedures for making these changes are described OAR 629-035-060.

review and approval. The FLMC baseline began with the 2011 Coos District Implementation Plan, Pages 8-9 and are reviewed on an annual basis to determine if a revision to the FLMC is warranted.

## INTEGRATED FOREST MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

### Timber Harvest Operations

#### **Overview of Timber Harvest Operations**

The FY16 primary harvest operations are estimated to generate gross revenues of approximately \$3,715,700 and net revenues of \$3,535,700. It is estimated that active management will result in producing approximately 10.3 million board feet of conifer volume and 0.9 million board feet of hardwood volume, for a total of 11.2 million board feet. 91 percent of the projected value is from Common School Land and 9 percent of the projected value is from Board of Forestry land.

The FY16 alternate harvest operations are estimated to generate gross revenues of approximately \$1,867,250 and net revenues of \$1,782,250. It is estimated that active management will result in producing approximately 5.5 million board feet of conifer volume and 0.3 million board feet of hardwood volume, for a total of 5.8 million board feet. 99 percent of the projected value is from Common School Land and 1 percent of the projected value is from Board of Forestry land.

Annual Operations Plans are developed to meet harvest objectives with respect to current staffing. Up to three sales in the FY16 alternate plan, Bakers Cake, Deer Joe Combo, and Young Footlog, may be included with the FY16 primary plan if sufficient staffing levels are available at the Coos District.

In addition to the above revenue and volume, some primary and alternate sales are expected to have pulp removed from sale areas. The amount and value of pulp is difficult to predict during the planning process but will likely occur in areas of regeneration harvest using whole tree yarding systems. This material also has potential for use in biomass operations. Refer to the attached Financial Summary table for more detail on volumes and values. Because of the uncertainties due to T&E species, the final conifer regeneration harvest acres/volume and value are projections.

Under the ESF FMP and IP, protocol surveys for northern spotted owls (NSO) and marbled murrelets are required. Density surveys for NSO's have been conducted during 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 survey seasons covering the entire Elliott and were completed according to ODF's policy. Surveys for marbled murrelets are conducted using ODF's policies in potential suitable habitat - defined as stands dominated by Douglas-fir that are at

least 100 years old or younger stands that have a component of residual trees. All the primary and alternate operations in the FY2016 sale plan have been surveyed for northern spotted owls and released for sale. Additionally, all primary and alternate operations with potentially suitable habitat have been surveyed to protocol for two years for marbled murrelets and released for sale. Several operations do not include marbled murrelet habitat. See Table 3 for more information about T&E surveys.

All of the primary and alternate harvest operations have been reviewed by ODF's wildlife biologists, aquatic specialist, geotechnical engineer, state forest engineer, and operations coordinator. Information on operations that occur within the provincial circle of a northern spotted owl or within a marbled murrelet management area has been provided to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Occasionally, operations may contain a resource or activity where review with another state agency, such as the Department of Agriculture or the Department of State Lands, is warranted. Written comments from the external resource specialists and the resolution of those comments are included as Appendix D of the final plan. A non-statutory written plan will be prepared in accordance with the Forest Practice Act for operations near or within habitat sites of any wildlife or aquatic species classified as threatened or endangered.

Surveys have also been, or will be conducted to determine stream classification of all streams associated with planned harvest areas. A statutory written plan will be prepared in accordance with the Forest Practice Act for operations within 100 feet of a Type F stream. Cable layouts through or over buffer strips are needed to provide for adequate suspension of logs. To protect water quality, full suspension will be required over stream channels and single end suspension where feasible on the rest of the sale area. During active operations a variety of methods will be used to prevent sediment from entering live streams. These methods include (but are not limited to) maintaining road surfaces, culverts and other road drainage structures, applying seasonal restrictions to haul routes, and monitoring and managing logging and hauling operations during times of heavy rainfall. Riparian areas along streams will be managed to support properly functioning aquatic habitats over time by applying the riparian management area (RMA) standards of the ESF FMP.

The units are reviewed by an ODF Geo-technical specialist to determine the potential for deliverability of wood via debris flows or torrents originating in the units. Debris flow track reaches receive the vegetation retention practices as prescribed in the Management Standards for Aquatic and Riparian Areas or in the case of public safety, comply with the Forest Practices Act retention standards.

To minimize yarding impacts on the slopes, single end suspension cable yarding will be required. Roads will be located on ridge-crests as much as possible and any steep sidehill portions will be constructed with full bench end-haul design and construction.

### Application of Riparian Strategies

All primary and alternate sales in the FY16 AOP will be prepared using the aquatic-riparian strategy from the ESF FMP. Please refer to this plan for detailed information on the strategy<sup>3</sup>. The application of the strategy is accomplished by first determining the stream classification and then surveying the streams after July 15 to determine the upper extent of perennial flow as well as determining the upper extent of defined channels. Upper extent of perennial flow and defined channels are established with GPS and integrated into GIS using LiDAR base imagery. Stream and channel reaches are carefully measured and, during the sale layout process, buffer distances and required conifer retention are adhered to according to the ESF FMP aquatic-riparian strategy. Additional trees needed to comply with the ESF FMP aquatic-riparian strategy are either included by increasing the buffer distance or by individually marking trees as wildlife trees above the minimum width buffer, but within the distances required in the ESF FMP aquatic-riparian strategy.

### Old Growth

Reserving remnant old-growth trees - trees over 175 years old as of 2010 - is a district policy and protecting old growth stands is an FMP policy. Care is taken to walk through the units and mark the residual old-growth as green tree retention. The only exception to this policy is if an old-growth tree is located where it impedes operability or causes a hazardous situation.

### Plants

The sale areas are checked against district knowledge for any listed plant location. The sale areas are also checked against the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (OBIC) database of known listed plant locations. Protection measures appropriate to the species would be implemented if listed plants were found within the harvest units.

### Clearcut Harvests

The ESF IP describes goals for the clearcut harvesting of 700 - 1000 acres on an annual basis. The primary FY2016 plan combined with the alternate FY2016 would meet the IP goal of 700 – 1000 acres.

The clearcut timber sales in this plan have been selected to maintain adequate nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF) habitat acreage for northern spotted owl provincial circles in accordance with State Forests policy. This practice is designed to maintain a diversity of age classes in the Elliott in keeping with the stand structure objectives. The locations of timber sale units were selected using legal requirements of FPA green-up, public safety areas, conservation areas, logistical issues of providing buffering between sold sales and murrelet survey areas, and maintaining logical harvest settings. Marbled Murrelet Management Areas (MMMA's) and Steep, Unique, and Visual (SUV) areas are excluded from harvest consideration.

### Carbon

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.oregon.gov/odf/state\\_forests/docs/esf/elliott\\_fmp\\_2011/elliottsf\\_2011\\_fmp\\_final.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/odf/state_forests/docs/esf/elliott_fmp_2011/elliottsf_2011_fmp_final.pdf) - Page 5-22 through 5-33

The Elliott State Forest and Pacific Northwest forests in general have the potential to sequester great amounts of carbon. A study completed by Ecotrust for the Elliott State Forest modeled five harvest level scenarios and resulting carbon storage potential of each harvest level. Data taken from this study shows the carbon sequestered each year on the Elliott State Forest is 800,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year from 2010 to 2015.<sup>4</sup> The 2016 AOP primary timber harvests will release 22,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. Thus, during the 2016 AOP, the Elliott State Forest will sequester 778,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. This amount of sequestered carbon is equivalent to the annual emissions of 151,700 cars.<sup>5</sup>

### Commercial Thinning

The ESF IP describes goals for the partial cut harvesting of 0 - 500 acres on an annual basis. Both the primary and the alternate FY2016 plans meet the IP goal for partial cut harvest.

The partial cut harvest units in both the primary and alternate plans have been selected to accelerate development of murrelet habitat while maintaining an effective buffer for existing occupied habitat.

### Forest Health

ODF's primary long-range plan to deal with Swiss needle cast (SNC) and unknown future forest health problems is to plant a greater diversity of species. ODF is a member of the SNC Cooperative, which is looking for additional ways to control this disease. In addition, Douglas-fir resistance to SNC is being tested by the South Central Coast Tree Improvement Cooperative. Coos District is a member of this cooperative.

Port-Orford cedar root rot, which can potentially kill both Port-Orford cedar and Pacific yew, is not a significant issue on the Elliott. Though the Elliott is within the range of Port-Orford cedar (POC), no natural POC has been documented in an inventory of the Elliott. A total of 6 acres of Port-Orford cedar was planted on the Elliott in 2002 - 2003. Scattered Pacific yew does exist in the Elliott. The only known location of the POC root rot is in a 1-2 acre plantation that was planted on the lower end of Palouse Creek. Vehicle access to this area is blocked off year-round to protect fish and wildlife, which effectively prevents spread of POC root rot through vehicle traffic. To our knowledge POC root rot does not exist elsewhere on the Elliott.

Sudden Oak Death has not been identified in the Elliott. Locations in Oregon where it has been identified have been quarantined by the Oregon Department of Agriculture to control its spread. ODF, in cooperation with the USFS, conducts annual statewide aerial surveys to identify areas with insect and disease problems, including Sudden Oak Death.

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<sup>4</sup> Carbon Analysis of Proposed Forest Management Regimes on the Elliott State Forest, Table 11.

[http://www.ecotrust.org/forests/Carbon\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Elliott\\_State\\_Forest.pdf](http://www.ecotrust.org/forests/Carbon_Analysis_of_Elliott_State_Forest.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html#results>

## **Summary of Timber Harvest Operations by Basin**

In the following section, the commercial forest management operations planned for FY16 will be summarized in the context of the management basins on the Coos District. Only those management basins that have planned harvest will be discussed. The 2011 FMP and IP identify 14 management basins. Basins 1 -13 encompass the Elliott and Basin 14 is inclusive of the scattered tracts. This section is a summary of the operations by basin, and is not meant to completely describe the planned operation. Refer to Appendix B, Table 4 for more detail of each operation.

### **Basin 1 – Mill Creek**

**Young Footlog (Alternate)** – This sale is a 114 acre , 3<sup>rd</sup> growth, 3 unit clear cut.

Special Considerations: All sale units lie within multiple NSO provincial circles. A Biological Assessment has been prepared to assess potential impacts to the NSO. The sale abuts Marbled Murrelet Management Areas to the west and east and is in within .25 miles of a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the north. This sale will require reconfiguring several Marbled Murrelet Management Areas if moved into the primary sale plan and prepared for auction.

### **Basin 4 – Scholfield Creek**

**Miller Top (Primary)** – This sale is a 53 acre , 3<sup>rd</sup> growth, 2 unit clear cut.

Special Considerations: Portions of this sale are within multiple NSO provincial circles. A Biological Assessment has been prepared to assess potential impacts to the NSO. This sale may be combined with Lean Dean, a 21 acre, 2<sup>nd</sup> growth, 2 unit clear cut scheduled in the FY2015 Annual Operation Plan.

### **Basin 9 – Henry’s Bend**

**Lucky Stulls (Primary)** – This sale is a 20 acre, 2<sup>nd</sup> growth, 1 unit clear cut combined with a 2 acre, 2<sup>nd</sup> growth 1 unit partial cut. Total harvest acres is 22.

Special Considerations: Area 1 abuts a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the east and is within .25 miles of a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the west. Area 1 will retain elevated amounts of down wood and created snags. Area 2 is the partial cut and is within the outer 100 meter buffer of the Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the east. Area 2 will retain advanced stand structure.

**Lower Trout (Primary)** – This sale is a 24 acre, 3rd growth, 1 unit clear cut combined with an 11 acre, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth partial cut. This sale is an extension of a sale of the same name in adjacent Basin 12. Total harvest for this sale in Basin 9 is 35 acres and across both Basin 9 and 12 is 145 acres.

Special Considerations: Area 1 abuts a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the south. Area 2 is the partial cut and is within the outer 100 meter buffer of the Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the south. Area 2 will retain intermediate stand structure and the thinning prescription will accelerate development into advanced structure. This sale will not exceed FPA type 3 harvest unit limitations.

### **Basin 10 – Marlow Glenn**

**Bickfoot (Primary)** – This sale is a 24 acre, 3rd growth, 2 unit clearcut. This sale comprises Areas 5 and 6 of a sale located also in adjacent Basin 13. Total harvest for this sale in Basin 10 is 24 acres and across both Basins 10 and 13 is 134 acres.

Special Considerations: Area 5 is within .25 miles of a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the southeast. This sale will not exceed FPA type 3 harvest unit limitations.

**Howling Glenn (Primary)** – This sale is 210 total acres, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth, 7 unit clearcut.

Special Considerations: A small portion of Area 1 lies within a NSO provincial circle. A Biological Assessment has been prepared to assess potential impacts to the NSO. All sale areas except for Area 2 either abut or are within .25 miles of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas. This sale will not exceed FPA type 3 harvest unit limitations.

### **Basin 12 – Trout Deer**

**Lower Trout (Primary)** – This sale is a 96 acre, 3rd growth, 2 unit clear cut combined with a 14 acre, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth 2 unit partial cut. This sale is an extension of a sale of the same name in adjacent Basin 9. Total harvest for this sale in Basin 12 is 110 acres and across both Basin 9 and 12 is 145 acres.

Special Considerations: Area 1 abuts a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the south and Area 3 abuts a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the east. Areas 2 and 4 are partial cuts and are within the outer 100 meter buffers of the Marbled Murrelet Management Areas. Areas 2 and 4 will retain intermediate stand structure and the thinning prescription will accelerate development into advanced structure. There may be some possibility for stream habitat enhancement along Trout Creek. This sale will not exceed FPA type 3 harvest unit limitations.

**Deer Joe Combo (Alternate)** – This sale is a 56 acre, 3rd growth, 3 unit clear cut combined with a 36 acre, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth 2 unit partial cut. Total harvest of 92 acres.

Special Considerations: Area 1 abuts a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the south, Area 5 abuts one to the north, and Area 3 is within .25 mile of one. Areas 2 and 4 are partial cuts and are within the outer 100 meter buffers of the Marbled Murrelet Management Areas. Areas 2 and 4 will retain intermediate stand structure and the thinning prescription will accelerate development into advanced structure. There may be some possibility for stream habitat enhancement along Deer Creek.

### **Basin 13 – Ash Valley**

**Bickfoot (Primary)** – This sale is a 110 total acre, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth, 4 unit clearcut. This sale comprises Areas 1 - 4 of a sale located also in adjacent Basin 10. Total harvest for this sale in Basin 10 is 24 acres and across both Basins 10 and 13 is 134 acres.

Special Considerations: Areas 3 and 4 abut a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the west, and Area 2 is within .25 mile of a Marbled Murrelet Management Area. This sale will not exceed FPA type 3 harvest unit limitations.

**Bakers Cake (Alternate)** – This sale is a 75 total acre, 3<sup>rd</sup> growth, 3 unit clear cut.

Special Considerations: Areas 2, 3, and the western half of Area 1 lie within a NSO provincial circle. A Biological Assessment has been prepared to assess potential impacts to the NSO. An SUV Area (Steep, Unique, and Visual) is located to the east of Area 3. Access through an adjacent landowner will be necessary to facilitate yarding areas 2 and 3.

## **Forest Roads Management**

### **Overview**

The following is a summary of forest road projects that are anticipated to be accomplished as part of the proposed timber sales in the 2016 fiscal year. All sales planned in the FY16 AOP have had a slope stability risk assessment by an ODF geotechnical specialist. As needed, the geotechnical specialist will make site-specific road and engineering recommendations for practices to achieve resource and economic goals for the forest consistent with the Elliott FMP and IP. For detailed information on the risks associated with clearcut harvesting on steep slopes in the Tyee Core Area, please refer to the following research paper: Robison, E.G., K. Mills, J.T. Paul, L. Dent, and A. Skaugset. 1999. Oregon Department of Forestry 1996 Storm Impacts Monitoring Project: Final Report. Forest Practices Technical Report #4. Oregon Department of Forestry, Salem Oregon, 141 pp.

## **Road Construction**

For FY 2016, 0.4 miles of new road construction is planned for the primary operations for a total cost of \$30,000 and .5 miles of new road construction is planned for the alternate operations for a total cost of \$35,000. The Roads Summary Table (Appendix B, Table 6) specifies sale specific project costs. Further analysis during sale preparation may determine that in some cases the addition of new roads would provide better options in regard to safety and environmental impact. For example there may be a more suitable location to position a yarder for guyline anchors and skyline road alignment. All road construction and improvement will be done during favorable weather and excavated material will be deposited on stable slope locations with very low risk of entering stream channels.

## **Road Improvement**

7.1 miles of road improvement are identified in the primary operations for a cost of \$75,000 and .7 miles of road improvement are identified in the alternate operations for a cost of \$40,000. Various prescriptions for road renovation will be required, including but not limited to, resurfacing with hard crushed quarry rock, replacing culverts that are damaged or undersized, installing culverts at new locations in order to achieve proper spacing and ditch water diversion, grading and ditching, widening, and roadside brushing. Also, potential hazards associated with the road systems, such as old sidecast material or sub-surface drainage problems, will be identified and corrected. Primarily the objective is to minimize the impact forest roads have on slope stability, water quality, and wildlife and in general the surrounding environment and at the same time provide an adequate, safe and efficient transportation system.

## **Road Access Management (Road Closures)**

All of the roads that fall under this operations plan that are not surfaced will be closed to traffic, with the exception of ATV'S for reforestation purposes, once the operation is complete. The most common method of closing is to construct a tank trap or place large boulders at the road junction. A tank trap is a deep ditch between two large mounds of dirt. The road surface will be water barred at intervals proportional to gradient. Seasonal water-bars and closure may be necessary if an operation continues through two or more seasons.

**Vacated Roads** - None planned for either the primary or alternate operations in the FY 2016 AOP.

## **Road Maintenance**

The Elliott State Forest maintains an average of 320 miles of road annually. Road maintenance on the Elliott State Forest is accomplished by a road maintenance contractor at an average yearly cost of \$250,000. Declining budgets have reduced the road maintenance budget to \$125,000 in FY 2016. The road maintenance contract does not include the delivery of rock stockpiles, which are used by the maintenance contractor to

surface and repair roads. In the 2016 AOP, one rock stockpile is planned to be included in one primary timber sale contract for a project cost of \$25,000. The focus of road maintenance activities for FY 2016 will be to prevent resource damage and insure compliance with the Forest Practices Act. Road maintenance activities that may occur during Fiscal Year 2016 include grading road surfaces to maintain a smooth, stable running surface and to retain the original surface drainage. Surfacing material may be added or replaced as necessary on road segments that experience a breakdown or loss of surface material. Culverts, catch basins and ditches will be cleaned as necessary to ensure proper drainage. Worn out, damaged or undersized drainage structures will be replaced as necessary to prevent resource damage. Cut and fill slopes will be monitored for any changes that could result in damage. Problems most often encountered include raveling, erosion and slumping. Slides in roadbeds will be removed and old sidecast material will be pulled back from the road shoulder where slumping or tension cracks occur. Roadside vegetation control measures may be taken to improve visibility, drainage and slope stability.

## **Land Surveying**

One primary operation and one alternate operation in the 2016 AOP are adjacent to property lines. Approximately 2,400 feet of property line will need to be surveyed on Bickfoot Area 4 and approximately 1,600 feet of property line will need to be surveyed on Bakers Cake Area 2 and 3. Survey corner monuments that are near or within sale area boundaries need to be located and marked.

## **Young Stand Management**

Total expenditures of young stand management for the 2016 AOP is estimated to be \$148,800. The breakdown of individual activities is located in the Reforestation and Young Stand Management Report (Appendix B, Table 7). Planned operations in the FY16 AOP were designed to be in compliance with the current ESF Management Plan, Implementation Plan, and state and federal laws. Herbicides are applied in compliance with the label and the rules of the Forest Practice Act.

## **Site Preparation**

Aerial chemical site preparation on 240 acres is planned for a total cost of \$21,600. The goal of site preparation projects is to reduce vegetative competition and minimize tree seedling mortality during the first five years after planting. The primary and most cost-effective site preparation tool used by Coos District is aerial application of herbicides. Coos District uses means other than herbicides when appropriate such as burning or mechanical release (i.e. chainsaws). Approximately 10-15% of each year's regeneration harvest acreage (units) are not treated with herbicides to promote growth of forage for deer and elk and other species. Units are typically aerial site-prep sprayed once during the rotation length of the stand (i.e. 80 years).

## **Burning**

Burning is planned on 0 to 30 acres for a cost of \$0 to \$3,750. Burning is an alternative site preparation practice prescribed for the south aspect slopes of several units in each AOP. The main purpose of burning is to diversify the results of site preparation and to provide big game forage. However, portions of sales may also be burned to attain adequate stocking if planting sites are too few. The forb and grass competition resulting from burning provides forage to deer and elk. Burning is completed when duff moisture is adequate to avoid heat intensities that would damage soil. Areas chosen for burning have southern exposures, and a distribution of slash that can successfully spread fire.

## **Planting**

Initial planting is planned on 240 acres for a cost of \$86,400. Inter-planting is planned on 40 acres for a cost of \$5,600. This operations plan will include several stock types and a mix of species. The density and species mix will vary through time to meet the goals for the stand. The stock type will vary to provide the best balance of vigorous cost-effective stock. Thirty to forty percent of seedlings planted will be minor species, primarily hemlock and western red-cedar, to provide for diverse habitat and reduce the effects of Swiss needle cast and other diseases. Planting costs include all costs including seedlings.

## **Vegetation Management**

Release operations: Vegetation release is planned on 0 to 50 acres for a cost of \$7,000. These treatments are planned as needed to reduce competing vegetation. The purpose is to keep stands free to grow, keep stands vigorous and healthy and to increase return on investment. Most release treatments will be ground treatments: Hack & squirt with imazapyr, thin-line, or a ground based foliar application of triclopyr in water for Scotch broom, and manual release by inmates with chain saws. Aerial release operations, if needed, will be late-foliar applications of glyphosate in the fall or possibly 2,4-D in May.

Noxious or non-native plant control: Noxious plant control is planned on 25 acres for the 2016 AOP for a cost of \$1,250. The purpose is to control gorse, Scotch broom and other plants of concern identified as noxious by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Integrated pest management will be used which may include the use of a range of control measures including mechanical, herbicides, and biological control including the overtopping of some plants by conifer plantations.

## **Tree Protection**

Mountain beaver trapping is planned on 500 acres at a cost of \$20,000. Damage by mountain beaver can have significant impacts on stand stocking and growth. Mountain beaver trapping is prescribed on all clearcut harvest units in the 2016 AOP and recent AOP clearcuts. This is done to reduce the mortality and damage of seedlings to acceptable levels. Species other than Douglas-fir may be treated with vexar tubing (20 acres, \$2,800) or big game repellent (10 acres, \$400) to help reduce the damage caused by deer and elk.

## **Pre-commercial Thinning (density management)**

There are no pre-commercial thinning activities planned in the 2016 AOP.

## **Recreation Management**

### **Overview of Recreation Management**

Based on past assessment of needs and policies, there is very little formal recreation management on the Elliott State Forest. The Elliott is relatively lightly used for recreation, much of it occurring along the roads, rivers, and streams. The recreation that does occur is mostly confined to hunting, fishing, camping, and picnicking. Most recreation use is informal dispersed recreation, with the main users being the local residents who live in nearby communities. Local residents are attracted to the Elliott because its recreation is dispersed and unimproved, with few recreationists competing for favorite sites.

### **Facilities (Campgrounds, View Points, Trail Heads, etc.)**

At the current time there are only two developed recreational facilities on the forest – both on Board of Forestry land. The Millicoma Interpretive Center (MIC) is a fish hatchery and educational outreach facility on the West Fork Millicoma River operated by the ODFW. Salmonids, including chinook, steelhead, and Coho salmon, are spawned, reared, and acclimated at this facility to support fishery programs. The center also provides a hands-on approach to learn about the salmon life cycle to schools and groups who visit the facility. A short forest trail is associated with MIC for use by visitors.

Camp Millicoma – adjacent to MIC - is no longer managed by The Friends of Camp Millicoma. ODF staff has been approached by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) who have expressed interest in re-opening this site. BSA has proposed improvements to the existing lodge and Adirondack style shelters. BSA has also proposed additional Adirondack style shelters, a covered gathering place, and road improvements. Department staff is reviewing BSA proposals and if a Special Use Permit is granted, site improvements could begin in FY2016.

**Trails** – No planned management.

**Land Exchange** - None planned for fiscal year 2016.

## **Other Integrated Forest Management Operations**

Cooperation and participation with Coos Watershed Association, Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers, and the Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership will continue during the 2016 AOP period. Stream enhancement, restoration projects, and watershed and project

monitoring are likely activities during this period. Riparian management activities on the ESF support the goals of the Oregon Coastal Coho Conservation Plan which are to create conditions in which Coho are sufficiently abundant, productive, diverse and self-sustaining and provide substantial environmental, cultural, and economic benefits within the state of Oregon.

During the 2016 AOP, the Coos District has plans for in-stream log and boulder placement activities on Buck Creek and the West Fork Millicoma River in collaboration with the Coos Watershed Association. This in-stream work is planned to utilize up to 61 whole Douglas-fir trees and 720 cubic yards of boulders to be placed into the West Fork Millicoma River, and 41 whole Douglas-fir trees to be placed into Buck Creek. In addition, blasting and further development of the rock source on the 9000 road near the Elk Creek Fish Ladder will occur to secure the source of boulders for in-stream placement.

In addition, discussion is occurring with Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership for a possible stream enhancement project in the Plum Gulch / Big Creek drainages.

The Coos District will continue to sell permits to harvest special forest products on a request basis, consistent with product availability and protection requirements. This has amounted to annual revenue of approximately \$350 for the last several years.

### **Firewood Cutting Program**

The primary objective of the District Firewood Cutting Program is to provide a source of firewood from State Forests to the public for personal use and secondarily to reduce fuel hazards, improve visibility along roads, and provide a recreational opportunity. The District's Firewood Cutting Program is tied to the completion of timber sales. Timber sale contracts require any non-merchantable wood or cull material that has been yarded to the landing and is suitable for firewood to be placed in a pile.

State Forests are managed for multiple benefits, and snags, downed wood and stumps are important habitat components under our Forest Management Plan. Permittees are required follow the permit instructions, review the permit and district maps, and consult with ODF personnel to ensure they remain on State Forest land. Property lines are frequently unmarked and ODF firewood permits are only valid on State Forest land. Harvesting firewood without the landowner's permission is trespass.

Firewood is a high-risk vector for wood-boring insects, such as emerald ash borer and Asian longhorned beetle, two species responsible for widespread defoliation of forests in Midwest and Eastern states. The Oregon Invasive Weed Council and ODF encourage people to obtain their firewood in a place as close as possible to the place where it will be burned. Recreationists have a role in protecting forests by not moving firewood great distances.

The public will be notified of firewood cutting permits through the district's telephone recording (541-267-1774) and posting at the district office. Permits will be issued for differing lengths based on resource conditions and amount of wood available, during the

months outside the fire season. Coos Fire Protective Association (CFPA) regulates fire season and is generally from July 1st through October 15th.

A limited number of personal firewood cutting permits will be issued to the public, on a first come-first served basis, with a limit of two permits per individual or household within a firewood cutting season from fall through spring. The permit cannot be used to sell firewood to another party. Firewood cutting permits will be issued and administered to public employees under the same processes used by the public. Oregon Department of Forestry does not guarantee the quality or availability of wood when issuing firewood cutting permits. Exceptions to the two-cord limit may be made for non-profit organizations, with prior district authorization. Approximately 200 personal firewood cutting permits are issued each cutting season, though fewer permits have been available in the recent past due to reduced harvest levels.

Designated firewood cutting areas will be marked on the permit map, which excludes active and sold timber sales, recreation sites, and planned operations. There is no guarantee that units or travel routes will be posted in the field.

Enforcement of firewood cutting permits will be accomplished by contracted law enforcement officers and following ODF's Firewood Cutting Guidance described in section 12.2.G1.2.2. Additional firewood cutting permit requirements and guidelines are provided with the permit.

## PLANNING (and Information Systems)

### **Stand Level Inventory and Other Vegetation Inventories**

**Stand Level Inventory:** There are no plans in the 2016 AOP for any stand level inventory work.

**Stocking surveys and young stand fixed plots:** These inventory projects as part of normal reforestation efforts identify stocking levels and growth rates and will be used to develop stand management prescriptions. Prescriptions can include inter-planting, release, animal damage control, and PCT.

### **Fish and Wildlife Surveys**

Under the 2011 ESF FMP and IP, surveys of proposed timber sales for northern spotted owls are required on the Elliott. Density surveys for NSO have occurred in calendar years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and are planned for 2015. These surveys show population

density data and will provide two years of ongoing surveys as required by ODF's NSO Policy.

Surveys for marbled murrelets were completed in 2014 on stands containing or adjacent to potentially suitable habitat proposed for inclusion in the fiscal year 2016 primary and alternate sale plans to meet harvest objectives. No surveys for marbled murrelets are planned for the 2016 AOP.

Physical Habitat Surveys are done in the spring by ODF foresters to determine the upper extent of fish use in streams associated with timber sales. These surveys in addition to flow and channel surveys done after July 15 discussed earlier in the "Application of Riparian Strategies" section provide the information necessary to assure properly functioning aquatic and riparian systems will be maintained throughout the 2016 AOP.

**Table 3. Summary of status of T&E surveys.**

Operation	Species (NSO/MM) <sup>1</sup>	Status
ESF Density	NSO	Sixth year survey in 2015. Current survey expiration is March 15, 2016.
Lucky Stulls (Primary)	MM	Surveyed 2011-2012. Cleared for sale.
Lucky Stulls (Primary)	NSO	Surveyed 2013-2014. Planned survey 2015.
Lower Trout (Primary)	NSO/MM	Non-Habitat
Howling Glenn (Primary)	NSO	Surveyed 2013-2014. Planned survey 2015.
Howling Glenn (Primary)	MM	Non-Habitat
Bickfoot (Primary)	NSO	Surveyed 2013-2014. Planned survey 2015.
Bickfoot (Primary)	MM	Non-Habitat
Miller Top (Primary)	NSO	Surveyed 2013-2014. Planned survey 2015.
Miller Top (Primary)	MM	Non-Habitat
Bakers Cake (Alternate)	NSO	Surveyed 2013-2014. Planned survey 2015.
Bakers Cake (Alternate)	MM	Non-Habitat
Deer Joe Combo (Alternate)	NSO/MM	Non-Habitat
Young Footlog (Alternate)	NSO/MM	Non-Habitat

<sup>1</sup>Surveys are conducted according to accepted protocols when habitat for the specific species is determined to be present. NSO – northern spotted owl, MM – marbled murrelet.

### **Aquatic and Riparian Resources**

The objective of the 2003 Elliott Watershed Analysis was to compile information on water, fish, and wildlife issues that the Elliott State Forest will face in the near future and assess the historic, current, and future conditions of these resources. The analysis was tailored specifically to objectives for the Elliott State Forest and provides analysis for the Coos, Tenmile Lakes, and Umpqua watersheds within the Elliott. Additionally, the analysis includes an evaluation of social issues, such as human uses of the forest. The analysis is

being used to support the Elliott's current Forest Management Plan, Implementation Plan, Annual Operation Plans, and for future adaptive management.

## Research and Monitoring

The Riparian and Stream Temperature (“RipStream”) monitoring Project has been active in the Oregon Coast Range since 2002. Field work is complete and data analysis is ongoing. The project consists of 33 sites with about half on private forests and half on state forests. The objectives of this study are to evaluate effectiveness of Forest Practices Act and Forest Management Plan riparian strategies in protecting stream temperature and promoting riparian functions for the protection of fish and wildlife habitat. Baseline and post-harvest results have been published in three peer reviewed journal articles. Results indicate high variability in temperature patterns prior to harvest (Dent et al 2008)<sup>6</sup>. Results also indicate that current NW FMP State Forests Riparian Strategies are effective at meeting DEQ standards for “protecting cold water” (Groom et al 2011a and 2011b)<sup>7</sup>. The average harvest effect on maximum temperature by site (n=15, 3 of which were in or near the Elliott State Forest) was 0.0 C ( range -0.87 to 2.27 C )” (Groom et al 2011b)<sup>8</sup>. These strategies are also used on the Elliott State Forest.

Coos District has been a participant in the Northwest Tree Improvement Cooperative since its founding over 30 years ago. The district is currently in the process of second generation testing. The district is also a participating member of the Stand Management Cooperative. A test site is located on the Elliott and district staff has been assisting in the measurement and maintenance of these plots since the beginning of the research. Forest-wide permanent plots were established on the forest in 1998. We also participate in the Swiss needle-cast

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<sup>6</sup> **Dent et al 2008:** Dent, Liz, Danielle Vick, Kyle Abraham, Stephen Schoenholtz, and Sherri Johnson, 2008. Summer Temperature Patterns in Headwater Streams of the Oregon Coast Range. *Journal of the American Water Resources Association (JAWRA)* 44(4):803-813. DOI: 10.1111/j.1752-1688.2008.00204.x

<sup>7</sup> **Groom et al 2011a:** Groom, J. D., L. Dent, and L. J. Madsen (2011), Stream temperature change detection for state and private forests in the Oregon Coast Range, *Water Resour. Res.*, 47, W01501, doi:10.1029/2009WR009061.

**Groom et al 2011b:** Groom, J.D., et al. Response of western Oregon (USA) stream temperatures to contemporary forest management. *Forest Ecol. Manage.* (2011), doi:10.1016/j.foreco.2011.07.012

<sup>8</sup> **Groom et al 2011a:** Groom, J. D., L. Dent, and L. J. Madsen (2011), Stream temperature change detection for state and private forests in the Oregon Coast Range, *Water Resour. Res.*, 47, W01501, doi:10.1029/2009WR009061.

**Groom et al 2011b:** Groom, J.D., et al. Response of western Oregon (USA) stream temperatures to contemporary forest management. *Forest Ecol. Manage.* (2011), doi:10.1016/j.foreco.2011.07.012

cooperative and have some plots installed in some young commercial thinning stands as a part of a study by this cooperative.

Permanent plots are being monitored on both the Lower Skunk Stand Management sale and the Hidden Valley Stand Management sale. These sales were designed to enhance owl and murrelet habitat under the 1995 HCP.

## Public Information and Education

The most significant planned activity in this area will be the Annual Operations Plan process including the public comment period.

District personnel routinely participate in and are voting members of the Coos Watershed Association and the Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership, and are also non-voting members of the Partnership for Umpqua Rivers. This activity enables the district to keep the watershed councils informed of district operations, to participate in planning watershed enhancement activities, and to receive information from neighboring landowners and other interested parties on concerns they have about the Elliott State Forest.

Each year the district participates with other landowners and agencies in the Lower Umpqua Tree Planting Day, which gives local school children an opportunity to plant trees. District personnel also assist with South Slough's Natural Resource Days each spring in helping school children learn basic forest measurements and outdoor skills.

# Administration

It is anticipated that there will be about 10 Full-Time-Equivalent positions (**FTE's**) at the Coos District whose responsibility is to implement current and past Annual Operations Plans. The Coos District is organized into three primary teams:

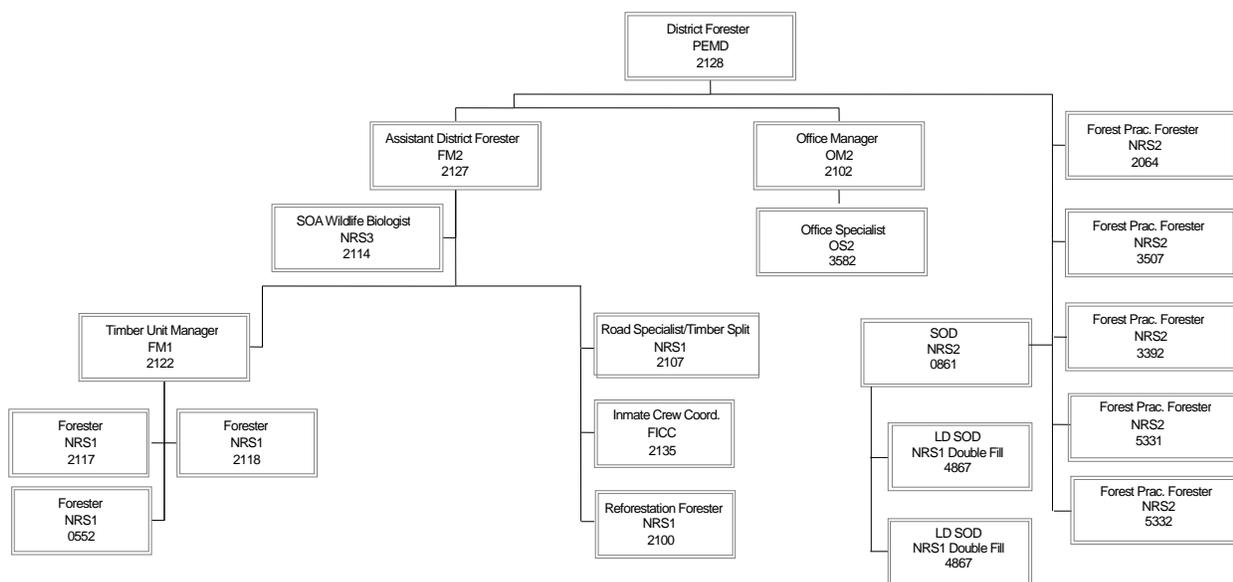
The Administrative Staff which includes the District Forester, Assistant District Forester, Office Manager, and the Southern Oregon Area Wildlife Biologist.

The Reforestation Team is composed of a Reforestation Forester and Forest Inmate Crew Coordinator (FICC). This team handles all noncommercial silvicultural treatments from site preparation through pre-commercial thinning.

The Timber Unit is composed of a supervisor and three Foresters. A fourth Forester splits their time as a Road Specialist. This team prepares Pre-Operations plans for timber sales, timber sale contracts, and administers timber sale contracts. They also are heavily involved in long-range planning and threatened/endangered species monitoring and surveying.

The Road Specialist / Forester prepares engineering plans and exhibits for contracts, administers road building/improvement and the road maintenance contract (50 percent); and prepares timber sale contracts and administers timber sale contracts (50 percent).

Many of the above personnel are involved in wildland firefighting activities during project fire situations throughout the state which can be a very significant workload in addition to normal duties. The Coos District staffing levels are in compliance with current budget instructions. See the organization chart below.



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# APPENDIXES

## A. Forest Land Management Classification Changes

This appendix describes (minor/major) changes to the State Forests' Forest Land Management Classification System including maps of the specific changes.

Approval Memo

Summary Tables 1, 2, 3

Stewardship Classifications Maps.

## B. Summary Tables

Table 4: Harvest Operations – Financial Summary

Table 5: Harvest Operations – Forest Resource Summary

Table 6: Forest Roads Management Summary

Table 7: Reforestation and Young Stand Management Summary

Table 8: Recreation Management Summary

## C. Maps

1. Coos District 2016 Vicinity Map
2. Other maps that support the AOP

## D. Consultations with Other Agencies

This appendix summarizes the results of consultations with the Oregon Department of Transportation, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, and Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians.

## E. Public Involvement

This appendix describes the results of the public involvement process of this AOP.

## F. Pre-Operations Reports

Pre-Operations Reports are available from the district upon request.



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Forestry

Coos District

63612 Fifth Road

Coos Bay, Oregon 97420

541.267.4136

FAX 541.269.2027

<http://www.odf.state.or.us>



"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

**To:** Dave Lorenz, Southern Oregon Area Director  
Doug Decker, State Forester

**From:** Norma Kline, District Forester

**Date:** July 24, 2015

**Re:** Revision of the District Forest Land Management Classification

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The Coos District is recommending a major change to the District Forest Land Management Classification (FLMC). The difference between major and minor change is defined in OAR 629-035-0060; in general a major change consist of a single change of 160 acres or more or multiple small changes that result in greater than 500 acres of change in one year. A major change requires State Forester approval.

Three changes resulted in an overall decrease of the mapped Focused Stewardship and increase High Value Conservation Area as follows:

- The creation and re-classification of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas during the 2014 year AND
- Removal of three duplicate overlapping NSO circles, duplicates based on erroneous, draft GPS coordinates AND
- The movement of two Northern Spotted Owl circles after the 2013 survey season

Results in decreasing Focused Stewardship and increasing High Value Conservation Area acres by 1,348 and 2,600 acres respectively (Table 2).

Tables 2 and 3, originating in the District Implementation Plan have been updated to reflect these changes. Table 3 illustrates where the change in acres occurred. The number with the strikethrough is the acreage prior to this modification. As defined in OAR 629-035-0060, major modifications require State Forester approval.

**Table 2. Coos District Acres, by Stewardship Class and Fund**

<b>Classification</b>	<b>BOFLs</b>	<b>CSFLs</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
General Stewardship	1,295	<del>13,511</del> 12,259	<del>14,806</del> 13,554
Focused Stewardship	<del>5,314</del> 5,300	<del>51,150</del> 49,816	<del>56,464</del> 55,116
Special Use	475	2,080	2,555
High Value Conservation Area	<del>1,793</del> 1,807	<del>47,906</del> 20,492	<del>49,699</del> 22,299
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>8,877</b>	<b>84,647</b>	<b>93,524</b>

There is no overlap between stewardship classes.

**Table 3. Coos District Acres, Focused Stewardship, Special Use and High Value Conservation Area Subclasses**

<b>Subclass</b>	<b>Focused Stewardship</b>	<b>Special Use</b>	<b>High Value Conservation Area</b>
Administrative Sites	-	-	-
Agriculture, Grazing or Wildlife Forage	-	99	-
Aquatic and Riparian Habitat	17,424	-	5,018
County or Local Comprehensive Plans	-	-	-
Cultural Resources	22	1	-
Deeds	-	-	-
Domestic Water Use	806	-	-
Easements	-	3	-
Energy and Minerals	-	-	-
Operationally Limited	-	2,980	-
Plants	45	-	-
Recreation	-	5	-
Research/Monitoring	39	57	-
Transmission	-	11	-
Unique, Threatened or Endangered Plants	-	-	609
Visual	2,492	77	-
Wildlife Habitat	<del>69,235</del> 70,675	-	<del>15,498</del> 18,339

There is no overlap within a subclass of a stewardship class.

The ODF Staff Analysis and Response to Public Comments in regards to both the AOP and FLMC may be found at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/odf/pages/state\\_forests/annual\\_operations\\_plans.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odf/pages/state_forests/annual_operations_plans.aspx)

The required 30-day public comment period was satisfied by having draft maps and tables available for a public comment process occurring concurrently with the normal 45-day public comment period for the Annual Operations Plan.

The public comment period occurred between April 6 and May 20, 2015. One comment was received, encouraging more areas managed by the District to be classified as High Value Conservation Areas (HVCA). Upon close examination, many of the commenters concerns, such as old growth stands, Coho streams, and T&E sites, are already classified as HVCA, while others do not meet specific requirements in in the FLMCS rule (OAR 629-035-0055).

The District is requesting review by the Southern Oregon Area Director and approval from the State Forester for this major change.

Approved by:

Nancy Hirsch, Deputy State Forester  
Doug Decker, Oregon State Forester

07/29/15  
Date

## Appendix A - Changes to Forest Land Management Classification

This Appendix describes changes to the Coos District Forest Land Management Classification (FLMC). These changes meet the definition of a major modification. A major modification is defined as one that cumulatively exceeds 500 acres within one year. Major modifications require a 30 day public comment period which is held in conjunction with the Districts 2016 AOP comment period.

The following points are changes made:

- The creation and re-classification of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas during the 2014 year AND
- Removal of three duplicate overlapping NSO circles, duplicates based on incorrect, draft GPS coordinates AND
- The movement of two Northern Spotted Owl circles after the 2014 survey season

Results in decreasing Focused Stewardship and increasing High Value Conservation Area acres by 1,348 and 2,600 acres respectively (Table 2).

Tables 2 and 3, originating in the District Implementation Plan have been updated to reflect these changes. Table 3 illustrates where the change in acres occurred. The number with the strikethrough is the acreage prior to this modification. As defined in OAR 629-035-0060, major modifications require State Forester approval.

Updated FLMC maps are also included in this Appendix.

**Table 2. Coos District Acres, by Stewardship Class and Fund**

Classification	BOFLs	CSFLs	Total Acres
General Stewardship	1,295	<del>13,511</del> 12,259	<del>14,806</del> 13,554
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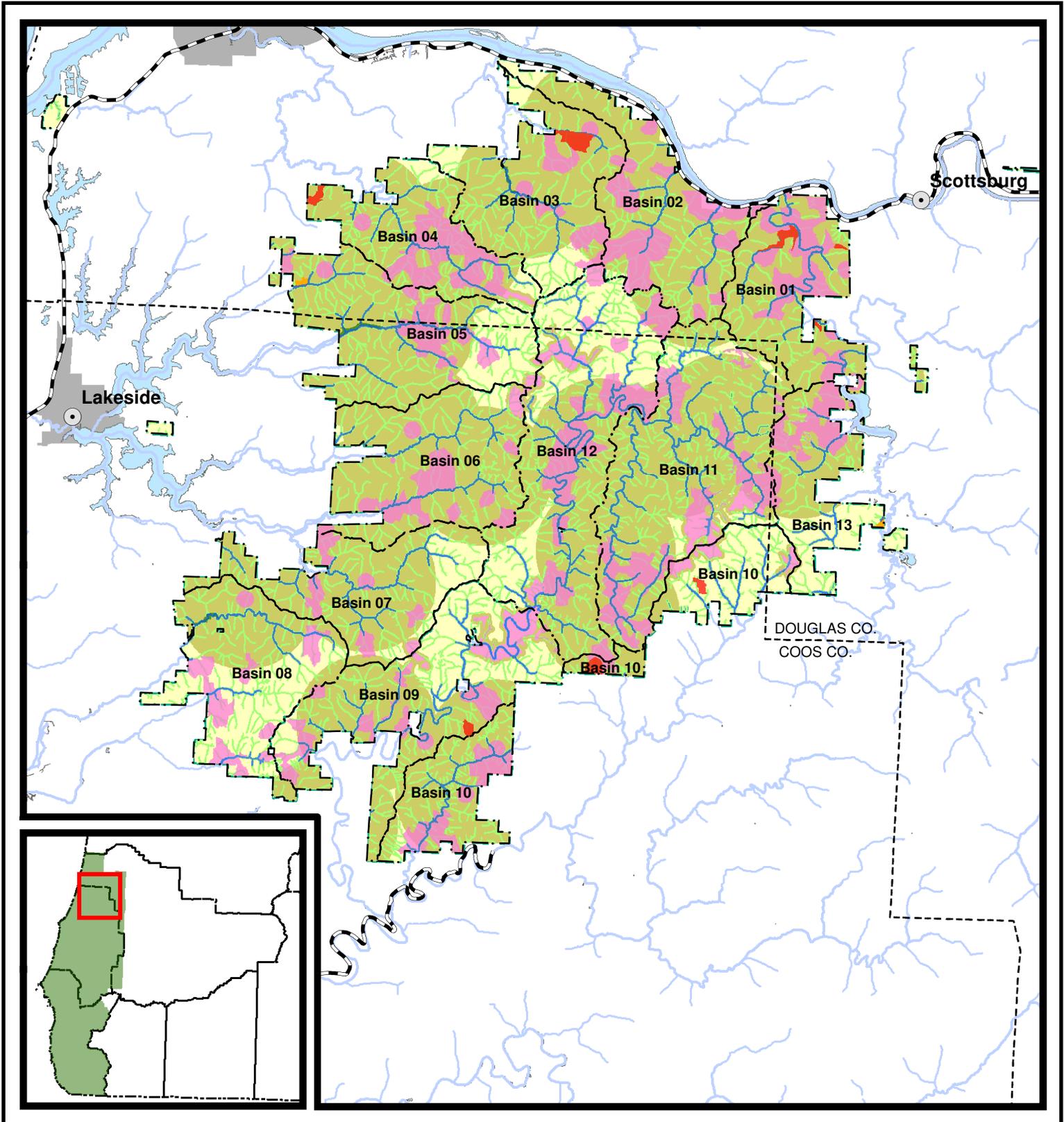
There is no overlap between stewardship classes.

**Table 3. Coos District Acres, Focused Stewardship, Special Use and High Value Conservation Area Subclasses**

<b>Subclass</b>	<b>Focused Stewardship</b>	<b>Special Use</b>	<b>High Value Conservation Area</b>
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Cultural Resources	22	1	-
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Easements	-	3	-
Energy and Minerals	-	-	-
Operationally Limited	-	2,980	-
Plants	45	-	-
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Transmission	-	11	-
Unique, Threatened or Endangered Plants	-	-	609
Visual	2,492	77	-
Wildlife Habitat	<del>69,235</del> 70,675	-	<del>15,498</del> 18,339

There is no overlap within a subclass of a stewardship class.

# Coos District Stewardship Classifications - Biological Subclasses



## High Value Conservation Area

- Aquatic and Riparian Habitat
- Wildlife Habitat
- Unique, Threatened or Endangered Plants

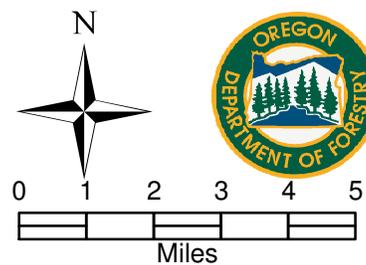
## Special Use

- Agriculture, Grazing or Wildlife Forage

## Focused Stewardship

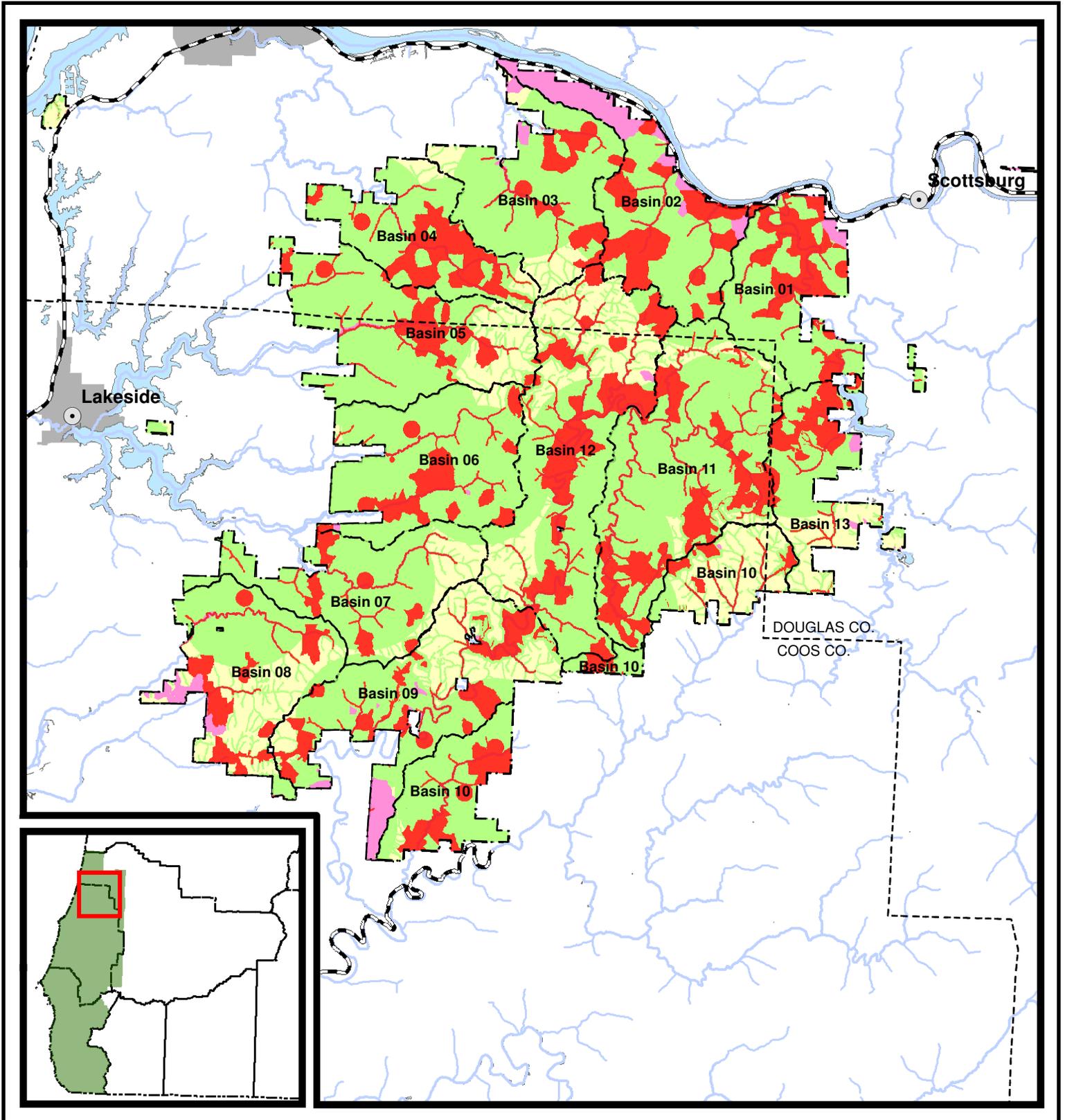
- Plants
- Aquatic and Riparian
- Wildlife Habitat

- Towns
- Adjacent Districts
- Management Basins



This product is for informational purposes, and may not be suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. This information or data is provided with the understanding that conclusions drawn from such information are the responsibility of the user.

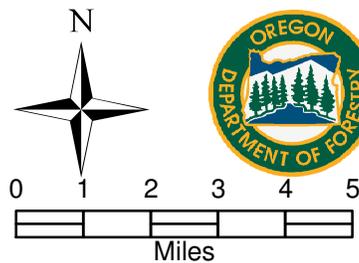
# Coos District Stewardship Classifications



## Stewardship Classification

-  Focused
-  HVCA
-  Special

-  Towns
-  Adjacent Districts
-  Management Basins



This product is for informational purposes, and may not be suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. This information or data is provided with the understanding that conclusions drawn from such information are the responsibility of the user.

## Appendix B. Summary Tables

**Table 4: HARVEST OPERATIONS - FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

District: Coos

Fiscal Year: 2016

Date: 06/30/2015

Primary Plan	Fund %		County	Sale Quarter	Net Acres		Volume (MMBF)			Value		
	BOF	CSL			Partial Cut	Clear-cut	Conifer	Hard-woods	Total	Gross	Projects	Net
Lucky Stulls		100%	Coos	2	2	20	1.0	0.1	1.1	\$467,500	\$40,000	\$427,500
Lower Trout		100%	Coos	2	25	120	2.2	0.2	2.4	\$753,500	\$30,000	\$723,500
Howling Glenn		100%	Coos	3	-	210	3.7	0.3	4.0	\$1,284,725	\$45,000	\$1,239,725
Bickfoot		100%	Douglas	4	-	134	2.6	0.1	2.7	\$871,000	\$40,000	\$831,000
Miller Top	99%	1%	Douglas	4	-	53	0.8	0.2	1.0	\$338,975	\$25,000	\$313,975
<b>Total:</b>					<b>27</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>3,715,700</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>\$3,535,700</b>

Alternate Plan	Fund %		County	Sale Quarter	Net Acres		Volume (MMBF)			Value		
	BOF	CSL			Partial Cut	Clear-cut	Conifer	Hard-woods	Total	Gross	Projects	Net
Bakers Cake*		100%	Douglas	Alt.	-	75	2.2	0.1	2.3	\$755,625	\$45,000	\$710,625
Deer Joe Combo*	5%	95%	Coos/ Douglas	Alt.	36	56	1.3	0.1	1.4	\$421,975	\$15,000	\$406,975
Young Footlog*		100%	Douglas	Alt.	-	114	2.0	0.1	2.1	\$689,650	\$25,000	\$664,650
<b>Total:</b>					<b>36</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1,867,250</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>\$1,782,250</b>

\* Alternate sales may be included in primary plan depending on staffing levels.

**Table 5: FOREST RESOURCE SUMMARY**

District: Coos

Fiscal Year 2016

Date: 06/30/2015

**Forest Resources Present In or Adjacent To Harvest Operations**

Primary Operation	Area (Optional)	Forest Health Issues Present <sup>1</sup>	Invasive Species Present <sup>2</sup>	Install/Replace Culverts on Streams	Operating within 100' of Fish Bearing or Perennial Stream <sup>5</sup>	Domestic Water Source Present/Adjacent	Potential Stream Habitat Improvement	Operating within a NSO Provincial Circle	Within 1/4 mile of MMMA	T&E Fish in Basin	T&E Plants Present/Adjacent	Geotechnical Issues Needing Review	Recreation Sites Present of Adjacent	Cultural Resources Present or Adjacent	Scenic Resources Present or Adjacent
Lucky Stulls		N	A	N	PS	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Lower Trout		N	A	N	PS	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Howling Glenn		N	A	N	PS	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Bickfoot		N	A	N	PS	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Miller Top		N	A	N	PS	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Bakers Cake (alternate)		N	A	N	PS	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Deer Joe Combo (alternate)		N	A	N	PS	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Young Footlog (alternate)		N	A	N	PS	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N

<sup>1</sup> A 'Y' (in any column) indicates yes the operation does involve the specified resource

<sup>2</sup> A 'P' indicates that the specified resource is present within the operations boundaries, while an 'A' indicates that the resource is adjacent to the operation (in any column).

<sup>5</sup> A 'F' for Fish Bearing or a 'PS' for Perennial Stream indicates that the operation may include activity within 100' of this stream type.

**Table 6: FOREST ROADS MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

District: Coos

Fiscal Year: 2016

Date: 04/02/2015

Primary Operation	Construction		Improvement		Other Projects*	Total Project Costs	Gross Value of Operation	Total Cost as a percent of Gross Value
	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost				
Lucky Stulls	0.0	\$0	0.9	\$10,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$467,500	8.6%
Lower Trout	0.0	\$0	1.8	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$30,000	\$753,500	4.0%
Howling Glenn	0.2	\$15,000	0.5	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$45,000	\$1,284,725	3.5%
Bickfoot	0.2	\$15,000	3.5	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$40,000	\$871,000	4.6%
Miller Top	0.0	\$0	0.4	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$338,975	7.4%
<b>Primary Total:</b>						<b>\$180,000</b>	<b>\$3,715,700</b>	<b>4.8%</b>

Alternate Operation	Construction		Improvement		Other Projects*	Total Project Costs	Gross Value of Operation	Total Cost as a percent of Gross Value
	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost				
Bakers Cake*	0.3	\$15,000	0.4	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$45,000	\$755,625	6.0%
Deer Joe Combo*	0.1	\$10,000	0.2	\$5,000	\$0	\$15,000	\$421,975	3.6%
Young Footlog*	0.1	\$10,000	0.5	\$15,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$689,650	3.6%

**Road Projects Not Associated with Commercial Forest Management Operations**

Road Maintenance		\$125,000				\$125,000
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\* rock stockpiles and potential landing construction

\*\* road maintenance value based on average yearly cost is \$250,000

**Table 7: REFORESTATION AND YOUNG STAND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

District COOS

Fiscal Year: 2016

02/12/2015

Management Activity	Board of Forestry			Common School Forest Lands			District	
	Acres Planned	Average Cost*/Acre	BOF Cost	Acres Planned	Average Cost*/Acre	CSL Cost	Total Acres	Total Cost
Initial Planting	0	\$360.00	\$0.00	240	\$360.00	\$86,400.00	240	\$86,400.00
Interplanting	0	\$140.00	\$0.00	40	\$140.00	\$5,600.00	40	\$5,600.00
Underplanting	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Tree Protection-Barriers	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	20	\$140.00	\$2,800.00	20	\$2,800.00
Tree Protection-Direct Control	0	\$40.00	\$0.00	500	\$40.00	\$20,000.00	500	\$20,000.00
Site Prep-Chemical- Aerial	0	\$90.00	\$0.00	240	\$90.00	\$21,600.00	240	\$21,600.00
Site Prep-Chemical- Hand	0	\$125.00	\$0.00	0	\$125.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Site Prep -Slash Burning	0	\$125.00	\$0.00	30	\$125.00	\$3,750.00	30	\$3,750.00
Site Prep -Mechanical	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	10	\$0.00	\$0.00	10	\$0.00
Fertilization	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Noxious weeds	0	\$50.00	\$0.00	25	\$50.00	\$1,250.00	25	\$1,250.00
Release-Chemical- Aerial	0	\$60.00	\$0.00	0	\$60.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Release,-Chemical-Hand	0	\$125.00	\$0.00	0	\$125.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Release-Mechanical-Hand	10	\$140.00	\$1,400.00	40	\$140.00	\$5,600.00	50	\$7,000.00
Precommercial Thinning	0	\$150.00	\$0.00	0	\$150.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Pruning	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Big Game Repellant (BGR)	0	\$40.00	\$0.00	10	\$40.00	\$400.00	10	\$400.00
<b>Totals</b>	--	--	\$1,400.00	--	--	\$147,400.00	<b>1,165</b>	<b>\$148,800.00</b>

\*Planting costs include all costs including seedlings

**Table 8: RECREATION MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

District: Coos

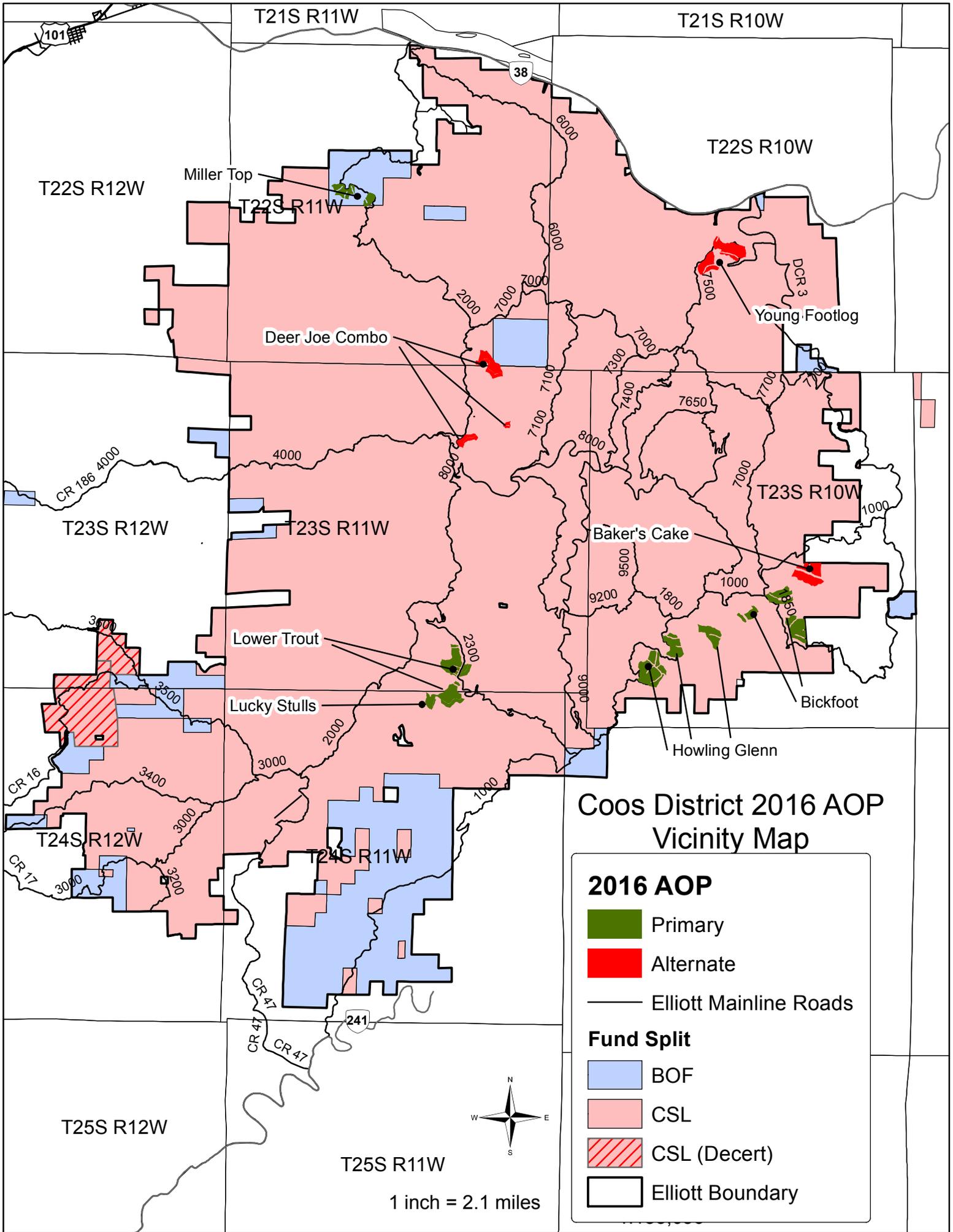
Fiscal Year: 2016

Date: 03/10/2015

Operation	Unit of Measure	Current	Construction Projects	Construction Cost (Funding)		Improvement Projects	Improvement Cost (Funding)		Total Cost	Comments
				ODF	Other		ODF	Other		
<b>Facilities</b>										
Campsites	Sites								\$0	
Day Use Areas*						*	0		\$0	
Trailheads									\$0	
Interpretive Sites									\$0	
(Other)	Sites								\$0	
<b>Trails</b>										
Non-Motorized	Miles								\$0	
Motorized	Miles								\$0	

**Total: \$0**

\* Refuse removal and Road Maintenance of undeveloped camping spots primarily along the West Fork Millicoma & Elk Creek



### Coos District 2016 AOP Vicinity Map

**2016 AOP**

- Primary
- Alternate

— Elliott Mainline Roads

**Fund Split**

- BOF
- CSL
- CSL (Decert)
- Elliott Boundary



1 inch = 2.1 miles

## **Appendix D: Consultations with Other Agencies**

This appendix summarizes the results of consultations with other Agencies including State, Federal, and Tribal.

- Archaeologists from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) have reviewed the proposed timber harvests and road construction to review potential impacts to cultural resources. No known historical or archaeological sites were found during this review.
- The Cultural Resources Protection Specialist from the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians reviewed the AOP and have no objection to the proposed work based on adverse impacts to known cultural resources.
- USDI Fish and Wildlife Service provided a review of 4 timber sales in the Coos District FY2016 AOP. USFWS reviewed Bakers Cake, Miller Top, Howling Glenn, and Young Footlog and concurred for all 4 sales that the risk of negatively affecting Northern Spotted Owls was low.



# United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office

2600 SE 98<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 100

Portland, Oregon 97266

Phone: (503) 231-6179 FAX: (503) 231-6195

Reply To: 8503.2001(15)

TS Number: 15-543

Brian Pew  
State Forests Deputy Division Chief  
Oregon Department of Forestry  
State Forester's Office  
2600 State Street  
Salem, OR 97310-1336

JUN 02 2015

Dear Mr. Pew:

This responds to your April 21, 2015, letter requesting review of eight timber sales proposed to be included in the Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Operations Plans for potential impacts to the federally-listed northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) (spotted owl). The timber sales included for the Coos District are: Bakers Cake, Miller Top, Howling Green, and Young Footlog; for the Western Lane District: Speed Walker, Barber North, Walker Tie, Tilden Two, Aha Pataha, Bulmer 16, and Wildcat Overlook; and, for the Southwest District: Trappers Cabin No. 7. Attached with your letter were the pre-operations reports and preliminary biological assessments for the proposed timber sales, portions of which are briefly summarized below. Our comments are based upon the information provided.

The Bakers Cake timber sale is a clearcut harvest of 75 net acres of spotted owl suitable habitat in three sale areas. Sixty-seven of these acres are within the 1.5 mile home range radius for the Salander Creek spotted owl activity center, but located about 1.2 miles away from the center. This timber sale is a mix of 44-64 year-old Douglas-fir stands along with some western hemlock, red alder, bigleaf maple and myrtle. The sale has an average dbh of 16-17 inches. The 2014 Little Salander Headwaters sale will remove 30 acres, and the 2015 Salander Ridge sale will remove 20 acres of suitable spotted owl habitat within the 1.5 mile home range radius of the Salander Creek spotted owl site. If the 67 acres along with the 50 acres from these previous years' sales are removed, there will be 2104 acres (47 percent of the area) remaining on state forest lands within the 1.5 mile Salander Creek activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to: the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest, the distance from the activity center of the harvest, and the marginally-suitable quality of the habitat to be harvested.

The Miller Top timber sale is a clearcut of 53 net acres in two sale areas. This timber sale is primarily 52 year-old Douglas-fir, with a minor component of western hemlock, red alder, bigleaf maple and myrtle. The sale has an average dbh of 12-13 inches. Area 1, consisting of 36 net acres, is considered suitable spotted owl foraging habitat. Area 2, consisting of 17 net acres, is not considered suitable spotted owl habitat. Area 2's 17 acres of non-suitable habitat are within the 1.5 mile home range radius of the Dean Creek spotted owl activity center. An approved 2015 timber sale, Lean Dean, will clearcut

five acres of suitable habitat within 1.5 miles of the Dean Creek activity center. The Miller Top timber sale will clearcut 38 net acres from within the 1.5 mile radius of the Scholfield Creek spotted owl site, with 21 of these acres considered as suitable spotted owl habitat. The approved Lean Dean timber sale will remove 14 acres of suitable habitat within 1.5 miles of the Scholfield Creek activity center. With the clearcut harvest of the Miller Top and Lean Dean timber sales, there will be 2589 acres (57 percent of the area) of suitable habitat on state lands within 1.5 miles of the Scholfield Creek activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to: the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest, the distance from the activity center of the harvest, and the marginally-suitable quality of the habitat to be harvested.

The Howling Glenn timber sale is a clearcut of 210 net acres in seven sale areas. This timber sale is primarily composed of 36-54 year-old Douglas-fir stands with a minor component of western hemlock, red alder, bigleaf maple, and myrtle. A ten acre portion of sale Area 3 is considered marginally suitable habitat. This timber sale will clearcut eight acres of non-suitable habitat within the edge of the 1.5 mile radius of the Upper Elk spotted owl site. No suitable spotted owl habitat will be removed. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to no suitable habitat being removed.

The Young Footlog timber sale is composed of 114 net acres that are primarily 43-52 year-old Douglas-fir, with a minor component of western hemlock, red alder, bigleaf maple and myrtle. The sale has an average dbh of 13 inches. Portions of the sale area are within the 0.7 and 1.5 mile Lower Mill activity center, and also within the 1.5 mile activity centers of the Luder and Footlog Creek spotted owl sites. However, none of the sale acres are considered potentially suitable spotted owl habitat. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to no suitable habitat being removed.

The Speed Walker timber sale consists of 41 net acres of 77 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red alder, and big-leaf maple. The stands have an average dbh of 16 inches and all the sale acres are considered suitable spotted owl habitat. This timber sale will clearcut 38 of the 41 net acres within the 0.7 mile circle for the McVey Creek spotted owl site. There are currently approximately 812 acres of state- and federally-owned suitable habitat within the 0.7 mile activity center. If the sale acres are removed, 78 percent of available suitable habitat would remain within 0.7 miles of the activity center. The Speed Walker timber sale will clearcut 41 net acres within 1.5 miles of the McVey Creek activity center. There are currently 3,249 acres of state- and federally-owned suitable spotted owl habitat within 1.5 miles of the McVey Creek activity center. There would be 71 percent of the area remaining in suitable habitat after the harvest within this area. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the high remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest.

The Barber North timber sale consists of 48 net acres of 71 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red alder, and big-leaf maple. The sale area has an average dbh of 17 inches. The entire sale area is considered suitable spotted owl habitat. The prescription is a modified clearcut removing merchantable Douglas-fir and most red alder. Some of the largest conifer, cedar, and maple will be retained, averaging six trees per acre. The Barber North timber sale is 1.3 miles from the San Antone spotted owl activity center and will remove 16 acres within its 1.5 mile activity circle. If these 16 acres are removed, there will be 2135 acres (47 percent) of suitable habitat remaining within 1.5 miles of the activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your

assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest and the distance from the activity center of the harvest.

The Walker Tie timber sale consists of 35 net acres of 77-82 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red alder, and big-leaf maple with an average dbh of 16 inches. The prescription is a modified clearcut removing merchantable Douglas-fir and most red alder. Some of the largest conifer, cedar, and maple will be retained, averaging 5-6 trees per acre. The entire sale area is considered suitable spotted owl habitat. This timber sale will remove 35 acres from within 1.5 miles of the Miller Creek spotted owl activity center. If the 35 acres are removed, 2240 acres (50 percent) of suitable habitat will remain available within 1.5 miles of the activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest.

The Aha Pataha timber sale consists of 81 net acres of 74-79 year-old Douglas fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red alder, and big-leaf maple with an average dbh of 21 inches. The entire sale area is considered suitable spotted owl habitat. The sale prescription is a modified clearcut removing merchantable Douglas-fir and most red alder. Some of the largest conifer, cedar, and maple will be retained, averaging six trees per acre. The Aha Pataha timber sale will remove 20 acres of suitable habitat within 0.7 miles, and 81 acres within 1.5 miles of the Pataha Creek spotted owl activity center. If the sale acres are removed, 717 acres (73 percent) of suitable habitat will be remain within 0.7 miles of the Pataha Creek activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest.

The proposed Bulmer 16 timber sale is also located within 1.5 miles of the Pataha Creek spotted owl activity center, but greater than 0.7 miles from the center. This timber sale consists of 54 net acres of 79 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red cedar, and big-leaf maple and has an average dbh of 19 inches. The entire sale area is considered suitable spotted owl habitat. The prescription is a modified clearcut that will remove merchantable Douglas-fir and most red alder. Some of the largest conifer, cedar, and maple will be retained, averaging seven trees per acre. If both the Aha Pataha and Bulmer 16 timber sale acres are removed, 2297 acres (51 percent) of the suitable habitat will remain within 1.5 miles of the Pataha Creek spotted owl activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest.

The Tilden Two timber sale consists of 72 net acres of 64 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered western hemlock, red alder, and bigleaf maple with an average dbh of 13 inches. The entire sale area is considered suitable spotted owl habitat and occurs within 1.5 miles of two spotted owl activity centers, Lake Creek and Upper McVey Creek. The prescription is a modified clearcut removing merchantable Douglas-fir and most red alder. Some of the largest conifer, cedar, and maple will be retained, averaging seven trees per acre. This timber sale will remove 19 acres within 0.7 miles of the Lake Creek spotted owl activity center, leaving 586 acres (59 percent) of suitable habitat available within this area. The Tilden Two timber sale will clearcut 72 acres within 1.5 miles of the Lake Creek spotted owl activity center. In addition, the previously planned 2015 Tilden Top timber sale will clearcut 78 acres of suitable habitat within 1.5 miles of the Lake Creek spotted owl activity center. With the combined removal of these two timber sales, there will remain 2079 acres (46 percent) suitable habitat within 1.5 miles of the Lake Creek spotted owl activity center. The same 78 acres of the 2015 Tilden Top timber sale also occur between 0.7 and 1.5 miles from the Upper McVey Creek spotted owl activity center. The Tilden Two timber sale will clearcut 32 acres within 1.5 miles of the Upper McVey Creek activity

center. With harvest of both of these timber sales, there will remain 2270 acres (50 percent) of suitable spotted owl habitat on state lands within 1.5 miles of the Upper McVey Creek activity center. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest and the marginally-suitable quality of the habitat to be harvested.

The Wildcat Overlook timber sale consists of 29 net acres of 79 year-old Douglas-fir with scattered pockets of western hemlock, red cedar, and big-leaf maple. The sale has an average dbh of 16 inches and is all considered suitable spotted owl habitat. The prescription is a modified clearcut removing merchantable Douglas-fir, but leaving some of the largest conifer, cedar, hemlock and maple averaging seven trees per acre. This timber sale will remove 14 acres within 1.5 miles of the Walton spotted owl activity center, leaving 1370 acres (30 percent) of suitable habitat within the 1.5 miles. The Wildcat Overlook timber sale is 1.4 miles from the Walton spotted owl activity center and according to the preliminary biological assessment, is separated from the activity center by a large area of non-suitable habitat. Furthermore, survey responses collected during the Pacific Northwest Research Station demography study show spotted owls largely being found on the State and Federal ownership within 0.7 miles of the activity center. The activity center is located on Bureau of Land Management land and all Federal ownership within 1.5 miles of this activity center is designated as late-successional reserve. Federal ownership makes up 17 percent of the area within 1.5 miles of the Walton spotted owl activity center, while nine percent is managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry, and the remaining 74 percent is in private ownership. Based upon the distance from the activity center, the survey information indicating primary habitat use, and the lack of habitat connectivity between the activity center and the harvest area, we concur that the Wildcat Overlook timber sale presents a low risk of negatively affecting spotted owls.

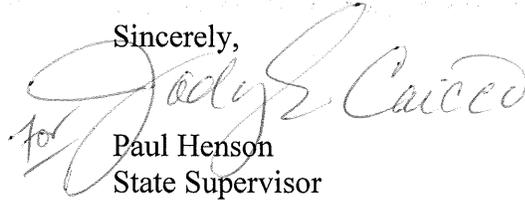
The Trapper's Cabin No. 7 timber sale consists of four sale areas with 40 net acres of modified clearcut and 130 net acres of light partial thinning. The sale is comprised of 77-101 year-old Douglas-fir with some incense cedar, sugar pine, madrone, and oak species in the understory. The average dbh of the stands is 13-16 inches. All of the sale areas are considered suitable spotted owl habitat. The Trapper's Cabin No. 7 timber sale will clearcut 40 acres and partial cut 89 acres within the 1.3 mile circle for the KCNA spotted owl site. No acres will be harvested within 0.7 miles of this activity center. If the sale acres are harvested, 1527 acres (45 percent) of the area within the 1.3 mile circle will remain in suitable habitat on state and federally-owned lands. The Trapper's Cabin No. 7 timber sale will partial cut 32 acres within 0.7 miles of the Kelseys Demise spotted owl activity center leaving 901 acres (91 percent) in suitable habitat within that area, and will clearcut 40 acres and partial cut 130 acres within 1.3 miles of this activity center, leaving 2478 (73 percent) of the suitable habitat remain within that area. Based upon our review of the information provided, we concur with your assessment that the risk of negatively affecting spotted owls is low due to the remaining percentage of suitable habitat post-harvest.

While reviewing these timber sales, we noted that all but two (Miller Top and Howling Glenn) appear to be within areas designated as critical habitat for the northern spotted owl. As pointed out in our final designation (77 Fed. Reg. 71876, December 4, 2012), inclusion of state-owned forest lands in the critical habitat designation highlights their essential conservation role and the potential conservation contribution of these lands to northern spotted owls. We believe the information contained in the designation provides an opportunity for management direction that focuses on long-term benefits to the species. We encourage all landowners to maintain and enhance the values of spotted owl habitat, especially if it has been designated as critical habitat. We suggest that you consider designated critical habitat areas when planning the location and prescriptions of future timber sales on state lands. We

would be glad to work with you in this regard to attempt to minimize impacts to northern spotted owls and their habitats.

If you have any questions about this response, please contact Richard Szlemp at 503-231-6179. We appreciate your efforts to avoid negative impacts to federally-listed species such as the northern spotted owl, and look forward to continued coordination in this regard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Henson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Paul Henson  
State Supervisor

**From:** Stacy Scott [<mailto:sscott@ctclusi.org>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 10, 2015 10:31 AM

**To:** GRECO Ryan \* ODF

**Subject:** RE: ODF - Coos District 2016 Annual Operations Plan - Comments requested

Ryan,

The Ancestral Territory of the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians extends from the mouth of Tenmile Creek (Lane County) in the north, south to Fivemile Point halfway between the mouths of Whiskey Run Creek and Cut Creek (coinciding with the border between Sections 30 and 31, Township 27 South, Range 14 West, Coos County), thence east to the crest of the Coast Range (to Weatherly Creek on the Umpqua River.) As such, the proposed work is within the Ancestral Territory of the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians. The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians have no objection to the proposed work based on adverse impacts to known cultural resources. However, it would be helpful and beneficial to have a proper cultural resources survey conducted before anticipated harvests so as to help with making an effects determination.

Please feel free to contact me if I may be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,  
Stacy

Stacy Scott, M.A., RPA  
Cultural Resources Protection Specialist/ THPO  
Confederated Tribes of the  
Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians  
1245 Fulton Avenue  
Coos Bay, Oregon 97420  
541.888.7513 (office)  
541.297.5543 (cell)  
541.888.2853 (fax)  
[SScott@ctclusi.org](mailto:SScott@ctclusi.org)

## **Appendix E: Public Involvement**

### **Public Comment Process for the 2016 Annual Operation Plan**

The Oregon Department of Forestry issued a Press Release on April 6, 2015 announcing a formal 45 day public comment period for the 2016 Annual Operations Plans from April 6 – May 20, 2015.

The purpose of the Public Comment Period was to provide an opportunity for the public to review the AOPs, ask questions, make recommendations and offer comments. As a public agency, ODF operates in the best interest of Oregonians, conducting business in an open way with opportunities for scrutiny to foster and maintain public confidence that ODF operations are benefiting Oregonians.

Past experience has shown that public comments have the potential to improve plans, so the objective was not only to inform the public, but to receive feedback that would help to clarify the AOPs, improve their consistency with the long range FMPs and IPs, and to become aware of any new information that could affect a planned operation or improve its efficiency or effectiveness.

At the end of the public comment period, the Coos District received 2 letters regarding the AOP. The district considered the questions, comments and recommendations in the letter. Factors that affected the districts consideration of the comments included:

- Does the comment enhance the consistency of the AOP with the FMP?
- Does the comment enhance the consistency of the AOP with the IP?
- Does the comment improve the clarity of the AOP?
- Does the comment provide new information that will affect the AOP or an operation?
- Does the comment improve the efficiency and effectiveness (or outcome) of the AOP?

The district then prepared responses that attempted to resolve each question or comment by providing additional information, discussing how the recommendation incorporated into the AOP, or explaining why the recommendation was not incorporated.

Note: A complete summary of all public comments and the districts responses related to the districts FY16 AOP can be found on our web site:

[http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE\\_FORESTS/state\\_forests.shtml](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/state_forests.shtml)

### **Coos District FY16 AOP Changes from Draft Review AOP**

The following changes were made to the FY16 AOP since the end of the public review period (May 20, 2015). These revisions were the result of further analysis by district personnel.

- Added results of consultations with other agencies.
- Corrected a mapping error for Deer Joe Combo Area 5 removing portions of Area 5 within the MMMA buffer.
- Changed Preemergent to Oust XP in Table 9 of the Bickfoot Pre-Operation Report.
- Adding emerging information about Recreation Management on Page 15 of the AOP.
- Updated Appendix A of the Forest Land Management Classification (FLMC) by presenting, from Table 2 instead of Table 3, an overall decrease of Focused Stewardship acres and increase of High Value Conservation Area acres by 1,348 and 2,600 acres respectively. Acre changes were a result of creation and re-classification of Marbled Murrelet Management Areas, movement of two Northern Spotted Owl circles (NSO), and removal of duplicate, overlapping NSO circles.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 5:11 PM  
**To:** FORESTS AOP STATE \* ODF  
**Subject:** State Forest AOP comment  
**Attachments:** AOPcommentStateForest052015.docx

**Categories:** Salem

Tony:

Attached is my 3-page comment letter, regarding the 2016 AOP State Forest public comment. The same is also pasted below.

Rex

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[REDACTED]  
Forest Policy Manager, CF  
Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.  
PO Box 12339; Salem, OR 97309



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc. • P.O. Box 12339, Salem, OR 97309

[REDACTED]  
*"Representing the logging industry since 1969"*

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May 20, 2015

Public Affairs Office – [REDACTED]  
Oregon Dept. of Forestry  
2600 State St.  
Salem, Oregon 97310                      Email: aop.state.forests@oregon.gov

Re: Comment: State Forest 2016 Annual Operations Plans

Dear Tony:

Please accept these comments on behalf of Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL), representing over 1,000 member logging and allied forest management businesses working across Oregon – most of which are small-business independent contractors. Some of our members also purchase forestry and timber sale contracts from the Oregon Dept. of Forestry, State Forest Programs. Approximately 90 percent of AOL member companies work in Western Oregon, encompassing these nine 2016 District Annual Operations Plans (AOP).

Throughout recent years of planning, we have remained involved in planning review, and communicated our interests surrounding these Forest Plans with Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) planning staff. As a member of the State Forests Advisory Committee (SFAC), I have also periodically offered input to ODF staff regarding implementation of the NW Oregon Forest Management Plan (FMP), Implementation Plans (IPs), and Annual Operations Plans. My comments in this letter do not speak for the SFAC.

When the Northwest Oregon State Forest Management Plan was adopted in 2001, timber output was promised to be similar to harvest outputs under private forest management. For 15 years now, this promise has been annually underperformed by about 33%. The timber revenues promised to the counties also have underperformed by an even greater degree. Another promise was that the FMP would mend the controversy surrounding public forestry and afford ODF the “social license” to manage state forests with balance. That unrealistic promise has also been unfulfilled. Environmental groups have waged litigation war on State Forest management over the past five years.

These AOPs should focus on optimizing economic outputs to capitalize on under-utilized State Forest timber growth. While the State Forest asset grows nearly twice the timber volume harvested annually, the surplus volume grown is foregone—regrettably, at the same times as NW Oregon counties, schools and Oregonians continue to suffer from revenue shortfalls. Today, the Department has the opportunity to make a difference to begin honoring promises made to counties and forest sector in 2001—by elevating the AOP harvest acreage and volume to the upper threshold defined in the IP acreage and volume objectives.

As written, we believe that the proposed AOPs would not fully execute the intent of the Board’s revenue and habitat direction for 2016. AOL recommends final approval of the AOPs, subject to your earnest consideration of our issues expressed below.

### **Issue 1. – Increase Revenue Performance.**

All the AOPs lack in their direction to maximize achievement of the revenue, timber and community economic performance under the IPs and FMP. Harvest should be increased to maximum extent practicable to elevate revenue output.

- Board of Forestry direction to increase internal rate of return
- Board of Forestry direction to increase revenues to the trust counties
- Board of Forestry direction to increase economic contributions to local communities and jobs
- Public demand for greater recreation services require increased timber revenues
- Statewide economic conditions warrant high timber revenues; e.g. high unemployment, high social costs, depressed domestic timber markets, forest sector infrastructure loss, short state General Fund budgets, short county and school budgets, etc.
- Depressed Forest Development Fund balance that’s precariously low

### **Issue 2. – Increase AOP Harvest Volume.**

The Board of Forestry directed ODF to increase revenue through increased AOP harvest volume to the maximum threshold defined in the IPs, while also providing habitat. We urge ODF to increase proposed AOP harvest levels to 280 mmbf or greater, until the Board concludes its current deliberations surrounding the Alternative FMP.

- All the proposed AOPs should increase the harvest volume pace to begin catching-up with the backlog of unachieved volume and acreage promised in the 2001 FMP. AOP harvest volume increase would significantly benefit Oregon’s economy, while remaining consistent with the 2010 FMP.

### **Issue 3. – Accelerate Progress Toward Desired Structural Category Ranges.**

The proposed schedule for forest structure development is extremely limiting for maintaining a managed forest. The proposed schedule too slowly harvests the surplus “Understory” category. We urge a revised

structure development that accelerates harvest to speed reduction of the surplus “understory” category, while more rapidly increasing the acreage of “regeneration” “layered”, and “closed single canopy” categories.

- Accelerate “understory” harvest—especially regeneration methods to increase acreage of regeneration and CSC; also accelerate “understory” harvest—thinning methods to increase future acreage of layered
- Accelerate strategy to improve growth of low-yielding thinned stands, progress to complex structure
- Proposed acreages for Silvicultural Management Activities still are dominated by thinnings. I urge you to re-balance the ratio, by increasing regeneration acres and decreasing partial cut acres.
- Begin catching-up with backlog of unachieved volume/acreage promised in the 2001 FMP, without giving preeminence to habitat structure

**Issue 4. – Coos District/Elliott AOP Omissions.**

The Coos District/Elliott AOP appears to exclude sufficient explanation for significant changes happening during 2013-15. We urge ODF to correct these omissions with a full discussion of the changes, IP revisions necessary, and AOP impacts of recent policy changes that have impacted Elliott SF harvest acreage, volume, habitat, and land ownership acreage. The Coos District/Elliott AOP fails to address the following:

- 2014 Elliott State Forest land sales
- Marbled murrelet lawsuit settlement effects
- Full scope of changed marbled murrelet habitat management strategies
- Future plans to revise the Coos District IP

Thank you for this opportunity to comment concerning District Annual Operations Plans. We look forward to working with the Department through AOP implementation.

Sincerely,



Forest Policy Manager  
Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

May 20, 2015

Norma Kline  
District Forester, Elliott State Forest  
2600 State St., Salem, OR 97310

Emailed to: [AOP.STATE.FORESTS@oregon.gov](mailto:AOP.STATE.FORESTS@oregon.gov) and [Norma.KLINE@oregon.gov](mailto:Norma.KLINE@oregon.gov)

## RE: Elliott State Forest 2016 Annual Operation Plan comments

### The 2016 AOP for the Elliott proposes:

- \* 537 acres of clearcutting 5 timber sales, including-
  - 22 acres of marbled murrelet nesting habitat up to 140 years old,
  - 5 sales, 511 acres adjacent to Marbled Murrelet Management Areas,
- \* 27 acres of thinning inside MMMA buffers;
- \* 240 acres of aerial herbicide spraying, costing \$21,600;
- \* 245 acres of ground herbicide use or “manual release by inmates with chain saws”;
- \* 500 acres of mountain beaver trapping, costing up to \$20,000;
- \* 000 acres of recreation or trail management, costing \$000,000;
- \* Generating 11.2 MMBF of timber volume, 90% from CSFL;
- \* Changes to the Elliott’s 2011 Forest Management Plan, including:
  - Reducing Coos District management by 1,451 acres,
  - Increased MMMA protected areas from 1,440 acres to 2,841 acres.

### 2016 Alternate Sales Include:

- \* 245 acres of clearcutting in 3 timber sales, including
  - 206 acres clearcutting next to MMMA
- \* 36 acres of thinning, all within a MMMA buffer.
- \* 5.8 mmbf could be sold in alternate sales.

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Norma Kline,

Please consider these comments on the Elliott State Forest 2016 AOP from Cascadia Wildlands, on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club, Oregon Wild, and Umpqua Watersheds. We ask for the ODF to drop the Lucky Stulls old-growth forest clearcut, and to eliminate logging and road building within Marbled Murrelet Management Areas (MMMA). We encourage the ODF to offer more thinning of managed plantations, to widen riparian buffers, to reduce aerial spraying of herbicides and to not kill or relocate native wildlife that threatens plantations.

## 1. Marbled Murrelets

The 2016 AOP directly impacts marbled murrelet habitat with four primary sales clearcutting adjacent to, or inside of marbled murrelet management areas, and two alternate sales clearcutting next to MMMA, or logging within the MMMA buffer.

Over 511 acres will be clearcut in sales adjacent to MMMA in the primary sales, and another 206 acres in alternate sales. That is up to 717 acres of logging that would preclude any future increase in murrelet habitat, and degrade interior habitat of the MMMA. Murrelets are particularly susceptible to openings near nest sites and nests are best protected from predators in interior forests. Logging these 717 acres threatens that nest security.

Particularly troublesome is **Lower Trout**, which could require up to one mile of reconstructed roads inside of the Trout Mouth MMMA. Reconstruction of roads 2310 and 2315 could mean large trees inside the MMMA need to be cut and sold. Because ODF does not know exactly where the murrelet nests are, the ODF failed to consider how we can be assured a nest tree in the path of road reconstruction is not being cut, or if a near-by nest tree is being opened to a new edge, increasing predation threats. We describe this problem further in Section 5 below.

**Lucky Stulls** is even more problematic, as it is one of the oldest forests remaining on the Elliott today and one of the best murrelet habitats left on the Pacific Coast. Just because murrelets were not present in 2011 when surveys were done, does not give ODF the authority to clearcut it now. By the time this sale is cut in FY 2016, it will have been over 5 years since the first murrelet survey was done. That survey is out of date and new surveys are required<sup>1</sup>.

The forests of Lucky Stulls are continuous habitat with the Trout Mouth MMMA, and, according to the Pacific seabird protocol and the State's operational policy, these forests should have been a part of the MMMA reserve.<sup>2</sup> Lucky Stulls Area 2 also logs within the Trout Mouth MMMA by thinning an old-growth forest. The ODF cannot claim that

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<sup>1</sup> Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies. Oregon State Forest Division. August 28, 2013. Section 2.9.

<sup>2</sup> Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies. Oregon State Forest Division. August 28, 2013. Section 2.16.

thinning existing, high-quality murrelet nesting habitat will enhance it. We discuss the thinning problems in more detail below, in Section 1C.

**Young Footlog** is a significant problem for murrelets because it clearcuts between to MMMA's, fragmenting the habitat in both MMMA's, and increasing the edge impacts by many hundreds of acres. Instead, the two MMMA's, Luder Footlog MMMA and Footpuck MMMA, should be connected to provide the needed interior habitat for both. Luder Footlog MMMA is too small to provide any interior habitat, and Footpuck MMMA is also too small, connected by only one point to the Luder Mill MMMA. Together, these three MMMA's are a crazy zigzag of protected habitat with big holes in the middle of them. These holes are being filled with proposed clearcuts like Young Footlog and provide ample opportunity for corvids and other edge predators to make the entire area unsuitable for murrelets. If there is a MMMA, in this case, 3 MMMA's, they should at least be protective of murrelets, as required by the state's murrelet operation policies.

#### **1b. Units within 300 feet of MMMA:**

The 2016 AOPs state that marbled murrelet surveys "are required if the Area contains or is adjacent (within 330) of potential marbled murrelet habitat..." Several of the 2016 sales are within 330 of murrelet habitat, yet no surveys were done. For instance:

- \* Lower Trout thins within the buffer for Trout Mouth, immediately adjacent to occupied murrelet habitat, yet no surveys were done.

- \* Howling Glenn sale is adjacent to the Panther Elk MMMA, yet no murrelet surveys were done. This is in spite of Howling Glenn area 3, one of the units immediately adjacent to the MMMA, contains suitable NSO foraging habitat.<sup>3</sup>

- \* Bickfoot sale, area 4, is adjacent to the Glen Headwaters MMMA, yet no murrelet surveys were done.

- \* Deer Joe area 4 logs within the Benson Headwaters MMMA buffer and area 5 logs adjacent to Benson Headwaters MMMA. Area 1 logs within the Deer Creek MMMA buffer, and Area 1 logs adjacent to the Deer Creek MMMA.

- \* Young Footlog is adjacent to Luder Footlog MMMA and Footpuck MMMA

#### **1c. Logging within MMMA boundaries:**

Lucky Stulls, Lower Trout and Deer Joe Combo log 33 acres within MMMA buffers. The AOP claims this is "to accelerate development of future murrelet habitat while continuing to function as a buffer."<sup>4</sup> However, the silviculture prescription for all of these thinning projects leaves as few as 80 trees per acre, taking over 50% of the current density. The ODF should cite the science they are using to make the claim that thinning, especially thinning mature forests over 140 years old, will accelerate development of murrelet habitat. Otherwise, it is apparent the logging inside MMMA's is for the sole purpose of increasing annual volume, not increasing murrelet habitat.

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<sup>3</sup> Howling Glenn Biological Assessment. ODF. 3-20-15. Page 2.

<sup>4</sup> Deer Joe Combo 2016 AOP. Page 5.

Heavy thinning will fragment habitat and create new edges for potential predation. The Murrelet policy requires that logging in the murrelet buffers cannot degrade the MMMA, which is what heavy thinning is doing.

The AOP for the three sales that log within MMMA boundaries, Deer Joe, Lower Trout, and Lucky Stulls, states that a marbled murrelet biological assessment is attached. It was not attached. Please provide us with those Murrelet BAs and provide additional comment time after they are made public.

**1d. MMMA's have holes and zigzag edges.**

A number of newer configured MMMA's have donut holes in the middle, or uneven edges, where younger forests have been delineated out of the MMMA's. These holes and ragged edges increase potential predation into the interior of the MMMA's. This is not in compliance with the Marbled Murrelet Recovery Plan, which says:

Protect 'recruitment' nesting habitat to buffer and enlarge existing stands, reduce fragmentation, and provide replacement habitat for current suitable nesting habitat lost to disturbance events. ... Such stands are particularly important because of the vulnerability of many existing habitat fragments to fire and wind and the possibility that climate change will increase the effects of the frequency and severity of natural disturbances. Such stands should not be subjected to any silvicultural treatment that diminishes their capacity to provide quality nesting habitat in the future.<sup>5</sup>

We raised this issue in our 2015 comments. In response, the ODF simply claimed that the donut holes are in compliance with the state's murrelet management policy, but did not say where the policy allowed it. The ODF did not address the non-compliance with the USFWS Recovery Plan. This is also not in compliance with the Elliott 2011 FMP, which says (3-13) the ODF will consider all ESA recovery plans.

Last year the ODF also responded that donut holes were not suitable habitat for murrelets. However, the MAMU Operation Policy defines potentially suitable as forests that are at least 60 years old (section 6.15.1.1). Many of the donut holes and uneven edges exclude forests of this age.

**Young Footlog proposed 2016 alternate sale** is an example of why the MMMA zigzag shapes and holes are a problem. The 2016 draft AOP says:

"The sale [Young Footlog] abuts Marbled Murrelet Management Areas to the west and east and is in within .25 miles of a Marbled Murrelet Management Area to the north. This sale will require reconfiguring several Marbled Murrelet Management Areas if moved into the primary sale plan and prepared for auction."

What? The Young Footlog AOP never explained why the MMMA's would have to be reconfigured. Please respond with a full explanation.

Area 2 of Young Footlog clearcuts immediately adjacent to Luder Footlog MMMA, which has no designated buffer. Therefore, Young Footlog is clearcutting in the buffer that should have been designated for that MMMA. The ODF Murrelet policy states that

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<sup>5</sup> USFWS Marbled Murrelet Recovery Plan. 1997. Page 143.

clearcut logging is not allowed in the buffer. Luder Footlog is relatively small, so the Young Footlog clearcut will significantly reduce the functional interior habitat in that MMMA.

Young Footlog also clearcuts adjacent to the Footpuck MMMA, and a few feet from the Luder Mill MMMA. These two MMMAs have crazy zigzag boundaries and holes that allow this clearcut intrusion into the MMMA interior habitat to occur. Instead, the MMMAs should be reconfigured so they fully protect interior habitat, as required by the state's operational policies.

### **1e: All murrelet occupied habitat is not protected in a MMMA**

ODF failed to designate MMMAs for all occupied murrelet habitat found in the 2013 murrelet surveys. In 2013 the Adams Ridge No.2 timber sale, state contracted surveyors recorded marbled murrelet occupancy, but no MMMA was designated. Also in 2013, volunteer surveyors with Coast Range Forest Watch documented murrelet occupancy near Palouse Creek. An analysis of the occupied habitat was included in the timber appraisal report prepared by Northwest Forestry Services for the DSL in 2013, but no MMMA was designated. We raised this issue last year, and ODF failed to respond to it. The ODF should explain their breach of the state's MAMU Policies: "If a subcanopy detection indicative of occupancy occurs... the State Forests Division will designate occupied habitat and an buffer..."<sup>6</sup>

Our comments last year noted that two murrelet occupied sites were documented in the 2013 Site Classification Form, one for Little Tenmile Butte and one for Adams Creek No. 2, where ODF states the "MMMA designation is deferred pending decision on the sale of this parcel by the State Land Board". We asked: Does this mean the State is planning on selling these parcels with known occupied habitat, but not disclosing the location of the occupied habitat or designating a MMMA? The ODF failed to respond to this comment. In any case, the state has decided not to sell these parcels, so a MMMA must be designated at this time.

The newest occupied habitat documented by Coast Range Forest Watch is in the 2014 Lean Dean timber sale. On May 15, 2015, the maps and survey forms were given to ODF at the Coos District offices. Certified marbled murrelet surveyors documented a pair of marbled murrelets at 0.8 canopy height in Township 22, Range 11, Section 16, in the NE quarter of the SW quarter. State Operational Policies require the Coos District to designate a MMMA and to cancel the Lean Dean timber sale.

## **2. Spotted Owl:**

The Northern Spotted Owl 2014 Demography Study, released in 2015, relayed alarming statistics about the current owl populations in the area of the Elliott State Forest. The report found that in the Oregon Coast Range, spotted owl sites declined from a high of 88% in 1991 to a low of 28% in 2014. Just in the last two years there has been an alarming decline, from 33% in 2013 down to 28% in 2014. In 2014, pairs were observed

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<sup>6</sup> Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies. Oregon State Forests Division. August 28, 2013. Section 2.12.

at 17% of the sites, down from 20% in 2013<sup>7</sup>. In light of this demography study, the fact that there were any fledglings in the Elliott in 2014 is remarkable, such as the young produced at the Luder owl site.

In addition to the Oregon Coast Range statistics, the Tyee Demographic studies<sup>8</sup> are also relevant to the Elliott since the study area adjoins the Elliott's east side and some owls in the study area share a home range on the Elliott.

According to the Tyee demographic study, in 2014, 65 non-juvenile spotted owls were documented in the study area, which is only 46% of the owls that had been documented in 1990. 2014 was the lowest number of owls detected since 1990 and the first year that the population of spotted owls has dipped below 50% of the original 1990 population level. The Tyee owl population (and thus the Elliott owl population) is an aging population with low recruitment of young owls. The study found only 3 individual owls under the age of 5 years old in 2014 as compared to 34 young owls in 1996.

The ODF's current protocol for protecting owls is out-of-date. The ODF must consider this new information and reduce impacts on the spotted owls left in the Elliott.

In 2016, four Elliott timber sales could log within a NSO Home Range, including Bickfoot, Miller Top, Bakers Cake and Young Footlog.

Young Footlog will leave as little as 50% suitable habitat within the Footlog Creek circle, an area that had an owl pair in 2014. Only 53% will be left within the Luder owl site, even though that pair produced young in 2014. Owls producing young in an area with lots of bared owls should be fully protected.

Miller Top has the cumulative impact of being adjacent to the recently sold 2015 Lean Dean sale. After Miller Top, barely 50% suitable habitat is left within the Dean Creek and Scholfield home range.<sup>9</sup> This is especially troublesome because just last year, in 2014, a spotted owl pair were determined to be in the area.<sup>10</sup>

Bakers Cake will leave as little as 47% suitable habitat within the Salander Creek home range. The Biological Assessment for Bakers Cake warns:

“Of growing concern is the number and location of recently completed and planned sales within the Salander Creek home range circles. Within the last 10 years, there have been 6 completed sales removing approximately 303 acres of habitat within the 1.5 mile circle and approximately 37 acres of habitat in the 0.7 mile circle. In addition, there are 2 approved sales which have not yet completed operations which will remove another 50 acres within the 1.5-mile circle. In my last BA prepared for the 2015 AOP Salander Ridge timber sale (March 2014) within the Salander Creek home range, I cautioned that additional sales, depending on habitat, location and

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.reo.gov/monitoring/reports/nso/COA%20nso%20demog%20annual%20report%202014.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.reo.gov/monitoring/reports/nso/TYE%20nso%20demog%20annual%20report%202014.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> NSO Biological Assessment for Miller Top. 3-20-15. Page 1.

<sup>10</sup> NSO Biological Assessment for Miller Top. 3-20-15. Page 2.

prescription, could elevate the risk to the occupancy and productivity of this site.”<sup>11</sup>

The ODF biologist none-the-less gave his blessing to the Bakers Cake sale, as it is just a little-bit more degradation. However, the ODF biologist did not consider the new information in the Demographic studies when he did this. These studies must be considered before a final decision is made to degrade this owl site further.

## 2b. Critical Habitat for 2016 sales

The Spotted Owl Critical Habitat designation says:

“Inclusion of [Elliott State Forest] lands in the critical habitat designation highlights their essential conservation role and provides opportunities for educating visitors to these areas, nearby landowners, and ODF about the potential conservation contribution of these lands to northern spotted owls.... this designation clearly indicates the value of these lands for the conservation of the northern spotted owl. We believe the value of the information included in the designation would provide an opportunity for management direction that focuses on benefits to the species.”<sup>12</sup>

The Elliott’s 2016 AOP failed to consider the USFWS designation of Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl. This is a violation of the Elliott’s Forest Management Plan, which says: “The FMP will consider management plans and overarching planning documents of other agencies when managing for fish and wildlife...”<sup>13</sup> The 2016 AOP didn’t mention “critical habitat”, much less consider it, as required by the Elliott FMP.

Five of the eight 2016 potential timber sales are in, or partially in designated critical habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl: Lucky Stulls, Lower Trout, Bickfoot, Bakers Cake and Young Footlog. Many of these sales have a Biological Assessment attached to the AOP because they log close to a spotted owl activity center. However, not one of the Biological Assessments for spotted owl impacts mentions the logging would occur within designated critical habitat.

The ODF should drop the clearcutting component of these five sales because clearcutting degrades critical habitat. The USFWS explains why the Elliott has designated spotted owl critical habitat. They say:

“Special management considerations or protection are required in this subunit [the Elliott] to address threats from current and past timber harvest and competition with barred owls.... We have determined that all of the unoccupied and likely occupied areas in this subunit **are essential** for the conservation of the species to meet the recovery criterion that calls for the continued maintenance and recruitment of northern spotted owl habitat. The increase and enhancement of NSO habitat is necessary to provide for viable populations of northern spotted owls over the long term...”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Bakers Cake NSO Biological Assessment. 4-3-15. ODF. Page 3-4.

<sup>12</sup> Final Rule. Designation of Revised Critical Habitat for the NSO. USFWS. 50 CFR Part 17. November 2012. Page 80-81

<sup>13</sup> Elliott State Forest 2011 Forest Management Plan. ES-10 and 3-13

<sup>14</sup> NSO Critical Habitat. page 200.

In spite of this, the ODF is proposing to clearcut many acres of unoccupied foraging and nesting habitat for the NSO, instead of providing for viable populations over the long term. Clearcuts proposed in the 2016 AOP in spotted owl critical habitat should be dropped.

## **2c. NSO Recovery Plan**

Especially when clearcutting spotted owl habitat in critical habitat, the ODF should at least follow the recommendations of the 2011 NSO Recovery Plan. Last year the ODF responded to this issue by claiming: “ODF’s approach to protecting and managing occupied sites is consistent with the USFWS NSO Recovery Plan.”<sup>15</sup>

We disagree. For instance, concerning clearcutting in critical habitat, the 2011 NSO Recovery Plan (page III-19) says: “Regeneration harvest, if carried out, should apply ecological forestry principles as recommended by Franklin et al.” This requires at least 15% of the stand to be in dispersed and aggregate retention, not the 2 trees-per-acre proposed for Elliott clearcuts.

The Recovery Plan also states (III-20):

Likewise, in areas with regeneration harvest in moist forest Matrix lands, any harvest should be designed using ecological forestry principles that emphasize retention of larger and older trees, snags and downed wood of varying size and decay classes, and live trees with decay and deformities (see Swanson et al. 2010). Unlike traditional regeneration harvests, applying these measures retain important habitat features while also encouraging eventual development of late successional conditions.

The BAs for the 5 sales in critical habitat failed to consider the spotted owl recovery plan, including this recommendation for regeneration harvests. The Elliott’s Forest Management Plan also requires the ODF to comply with the recovery plan. It says:

The FMP will consider management plans and overarching planning documents of other agencies when managing for fish and wildlife (e.g., Oregon Conservation Strategy, Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan, **ESA recovery plans**).<sup>16</sup>

At least 4 Recovery Actions (RA) from the recovery plan applies to the Elliott State Forest: RA 10, 13, 19 and 32. It violates the Elliott FMP not to consider these recommendations in the recovery plan.

**Recovery Action 10** requires the State to “avoid activities that would reduce nesting, roosting and foraging habitat within provincial home ranges...” Clearcutting foraging habitat violates this recommendation. The BAs identify Howling Glenn, Miller Top, Bakers Cake as providing foraging habitat. Other sales without BAs, but in critical habitat, are likely also foraging habitat. Clearcutting nesting, roosting and foraging habitat in Lucky Stulls also violates RA 10.

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<sup>15</sup> ODF Public Comment Responses. 6-16-14. Page 2.

<sup>16</sup> Elliott State Forest Management Plan. 2011. ES-10 and 3-13.

**Recovery Action 32** states that: “Because spotted owl recovery requires well distributed, older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests on federal and **non-federal lands**, land managers should work with the Service... to maintain and restore such habitat...<sup>17</sup>.

The high-quality spotted owl habitat found in the Lucky Stulls proposed sales should be protected by application of Recovery Action 32, especially since RA 32 doesn't go far enough. There is no evidence that protecting just a subset of the highest quality owl habitat will be enough to ensure co-existence between spotted and barred owls, and the Elliott State Forest has an increasing number of barred owls.

### **3. Coho Salmon**

The 2016 AOP provides inadequate buffers for streams that support the ESA protected Coho Salmon. There are also small seasonal streams throughout the sale units that flow downstream into fish-bearing streams with inadequate buffers.

All the proposed sales, except for one, are being clearcut on potential “High Landslide Hazard Locations” and clearcut within a likely “potential debris flow track reach”. The clearcut can be as close as 25’ to many of these streams, with only 10 trees per acre left in the next 75’. These stream buffers are inadequate and could facilitate the delivery of fish-killing sediment downstream to fish-bearing streams.

For many of the smaller streams, ODF retains a 0’ tree-buffer, stripping them of all stream-side protection in the form of tree-shade and wood delivery. This degrades these streams as well as the fish-bearing streams they feed downstream.

Deer Joe Combo Area 2 appears to log right up to the banks of Deer Creek, off of road 2645. Table 16 for Deer Joe Combo says that it is a “potential debris flow track reach” and that “deposition likely at confluence with Type F Deer Creek”. This is unnecessary to cause these impacts to Deer Creek, especially Area 2 also logs within a MMMA. This Area should be dropped. At least a bigger stream-buffer should be left on Deer Creek, a buffer of two-site-potential tree heights for this fish-bearing stream.

The Elliott is riddled with landslides in clearcuts, adding sediment to fish-bearing streams. The ODF should monitor and quantify these landslides in an attempt to reduce their numbers in the future.

**Scientists have found ODF’s Riparian Strategies are insufficient to protect salmon.** The Riparian Management Strategies in the 2016 AOP are virtually identical to those proposed in the Elliott’s 2008 draft HCP. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) found the 2008 draft HCP strategies to be so inadequate in protecting fish that they refused to give ODF an incidental take permit for coho salmon. In spite of this critique, the ODF is continuing with these same, inadequate stream buffers in the 2016 AOPs.

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<sup>17</sup> NSO Recovery Plan. Page III-67.

NMFS found that the stream buffers ODF is using would not “provide for the survival and recovery of Oregon Coast (OC) coho salmon”.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, NMFS cited stream temperature increases and a lack of wood delivery to streams as the biggest problems harming salmon. ODF should therefore have changed this riparian strategy for the 2016 AOPs.

Oregon hired the Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST) to counter the NMFS claims<sup>19</sup>. However, the IMST also gave poor grades to the type of buffers being used in the 2016 AOP. They found that:

- \* small riparian buffers will not “result in achieving desired future conditions in aquatic and riparian ecosystems on the Elliott State Forest.”<sup>20</sup>

- \* small riparian buffers are not based on the best available science<sup>21</sup>,

- \* ODF’s “conclusions are professional conjecture and not based on research...”<sup>22</sup>,

- \* the ODF gives too much “credence to studies that support narrower buffers.”<sup>23</sup>, and

- \* “The analysis does not explicitly account for the real extent of... harvesting effects in riparian management areas, which may significantly influence stream temperature...”<sup>24</sup>

For non-fish bearing streams (Type N) that feed fish streams, the Science Team found an abundance of problems with ODF’s assumptions, such as: “it is problematic to generalize that waters warmed by upstream exposure by harvest will cool simply by being shaded downstream.”<sup>25</sup> In spite of this finding, many intermittent streams in the 2016 AOP timber sales have no tree-buffer at all, and some have an inadequate 25’ no-harvest tree-buffer. Often this 25’ tree-buffer is alder trees, which the ODF damages or kills with herbicide spraying.

Our comments last year raised this herbicide issue. The ODF responded defensively by saying “ODF applies herbicides to competing brush species to ensure successful reforestation”. (See section 9c below for a broader discussion of herbicides). When clearcutting on stream sides, protecting water and fish should be a priority over successful reforestation.

The Science Team’s models show that a “150-foot unmanaged buffer was required to have sufficient shade”<sup>26</sup> to protect salmon in cool waters, and that in the Elliott, “shade levels in managed areas could remain below desired future conditions for decades.”<sup>27</sup> Since these assessments are on same riparian strategies used in the 2016 AOP, the ODF should have made a change to protect Coho Salmon habitat.

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<sup>18</sup> Letter from NMFS, 7-21-09, to Coos District Forester, “RE: Elliott State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan.”

<sup>19</sup> Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team. 2010 Review of the Draft Elliott State Forest HCP and DEIS: (August 2008 drafts). Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Salem, Oregon. 10-6-2010

<sup>20</sup> Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST) Review. 2010. page 5-6.

<sup>21</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 7.

<sup>22</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 19.

<sup>23</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 8.

<sup>24</sup> IMST Review. 2010 page 12.

<sup>25</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 13.

<sup>26</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 16.

<sup>27</sup> IMST Review. 2010. page 16. Citing February 5, 2009 memo from Peter Leinenbach (USEPA, Seattle, WA) to Teresa Kubo (USEPA, Portland, OR)

Also, consider the findings of a recent Science Review Panel Report on nutrient problems from too small riparian buffers<sup>28</sup>:

Logging or fuels management treatments that disturb vegetation generate increased nitrogen leaching from forest soils that enters streams and wetlands by both surface and subsurface flow paths. ... By virtue of their high density across the landscape, headwater streams with seasonal flow receive a large portion of the nutrients mobilized by up-slope disturbance. Therefore full protection of wide Riparian Reserves along even the smallest stream channels (and surface-connected wetlands) is necessary for effective nutrient retention.”

Available science indicates that continuous, no-cut Riparian Reserves exceeding 30-50 m (100-150 ft) or more along all streams and wetlands are needed to fully mitigate the effects of up-slope logging on nutrient loading to freshwater systems.

The ODF should widen riparian buffers in the 2016 AOP based on this and other recent scientific findings.

#### **4. Thinning**

The ODF should do more thinning of managed plantations, not just clearcut them. The 2016 AOP includes only 36 acres of thinning, and half of those are in alternate sales. All of the thinning is controversial, heavy thinning in buffers for occupied murrelet habitat (see section 1 for more on this).

Outside of logging in MMMA's, the 2016 AOP does not include any thinning. The same was true with the 2015, 2014 and 2013 and 2012 AOP. The 10-year Implementation Plan is being violated by not thinning. It says: “under the 2011 FMP... ODF anticipates that ... commercial thinning will average about 250 acres per year.”<sup>29</sup> If the ODF is going to comply with this, the 2017 AOPs will have to have 6 years of thinning, or about 1,500 acres.

Last year we made a similar comment. The ODF responded by saying: “The IP sets a target for a ten-year period for the partial cut of between 0 to 500 acres annually”.<sup>30</sup> Here, the ODF seems to say the IP allows 0 acres thinned, year after year. We disagree. The IP clearly says the ODF will *average* 250 acres per year, not average 0 acres per year.

Thinning, or partial cuts, were assumed in the IP and FMP, and must be implemented on the Elliott. If ODF continues to never thin managed plantations outside of reserves, the ODF will not attain the goal of 50% advanced structure in 60 years. It is a clear violation of the FMP when Intermediate Structure stands are ALL being clearcut and none are being partial cut to enhance growth into advance structure.

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<sup>28</sup> Independent Science Review Panel: Northwest Forest Plan, Aquatic Conservation Strategy. March 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Elliott State Forest IP. page 16.

<sup>30</sup> Response to comments. Page 3.

The IP says: “Intermediate Structure stands respond very well to partial cutting. Not only do the residual trees grow faster, but complex structures and diverse habitats develop more rapidly...”<sup>31</sup> The FMP estimated a number of intermediate structure stands that would grow into advanced structure. This estimation will not be accomplished if the ODF never thins in these forests. It is a violation of the Elliott’s FMP to not implement thinning sales outside of reserves.

## 5. Lower Trout timber sale

**Lower Trout area 3** has been previously thinned. The ODF failed to explain why it was thinned, and why it is being clearcut now, before it meets its cumulative mean annual increment growth (CMAI). The Elliott’s FMP says, “If maximization of wood volume is the objective for the stand, this age [CMAI] is generally used as the rotation age. Periodic thinning enhances growth and extends the culmination age.”<sup>32</sup>

**Lower Trout Areas 2 and 4** thin within MMMA buffers, right up to occupied habitat, leaving as few as 80 trees per acre. The AOP claims, “Areas 2 and 4 will be maintained as Intermediate Structure, and will, over time develop into Advanced Structure.” However, the silviculture prescriptions for this thinning will delay, not enhance advanced structure. About 75% of the trees in these units would be sold and removed from the unit. As few as 80-trees-per-acre will be left. This is thinning too heavy and will not benefit the adjoining MAMU occupied habitat. As the stand ages, there are not enough trees left for adequate recruitment for snags, necessary for murrelet habitat. Virtually all potential future snags are being sold off now. The other major problem with removing so many trees is that interior habitat within the MMMA will be opened to predators of murrelet nests.

These units are 50 years old, and will become murrelet habitat in just 50 more years. Suppression snags, and perhaps created snags, would be an appropriate way of reducing the live-stem count from the plantation, providing abundant habitat to cavity nesting birds, habitat that is in short supply in the Elliott State Forest clearcuts. But instead, putting all of the excess trees on a log truck and removing them from the site will degrade the older-forest characteristics of the future stand.

The AOP for Lower Trout says the desired future condition of stands 2 and 4 post harvest is “intermediate”. The Coos 2011 Implementation Plan defines “Intermediate Structure as “characterized by the closed crowns of the overstory trees...”<sup>33</sup> Leaving only 80 trees per acre fails to meet this definition. The ODF failed to give a canopy closure that would be guaranteed to remain.

The 2011 Elliott Forest Management Plan states (3-8) that stands with intermediate structure, such as area 2 and 4 of Lower Trout, will develop into advanced structure without thinning. It describes how snags and downed wood begin to appear in the stand.

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<sup>31</sup> Elliott State Forest IP. page 24.

<sup>32</sup> Elliott 2011 FMP A-6.

<sup>33</sup> 2011 IP page 22.

“Near the end of the stage, a sufficient amount of trees have died and the living trees have enough variation that small gaps form and understory trees, shrubs, and herbs begin to reappear.” Neither the IP nor the FMP describe heavy thinning in intermittent stands to enhance older forest characteristics, which is the only option for logging in a MMMA buffer in the 2016 AOP.

The ODF should present some science that thinning so heavy adjacent to occupied habitat is somehow good for murrelets. Until that science is presented, units 2 and 4 should either be dropped, or the prescription should be changed to leave over 150 trees per acre.

The Lower Trout AOP states that marbled murrelet surveys “are required if the Area contains or is adjacent of potential marbled murrelet habitat...” Area 2 and 4 are adjacent to the Trout Mouth occupied murrelet habitat. They should have been surveyed.

**Lower Trout recreation and roads:** The AOP for Lower Trout says there is no recreation occurring in the project area. This is wrong and should be corrected. One of the highest use camping sites in the Elliott is adjacent to Lower Trout, and on an access road into the sale. South of road 2300, on the Millicoma River, immediately east of Lower Trout area 2 is a very high-use camping area, occupied almost year-around. Road 2310 goes right through the camping area, and is even part of the camping area. Rebuilding this road and hauling logs out on it will severely degrade this camping spot.

Road 2310 is currently not drivable after it crosses Trout Creek (near it’s confluence with the Millicoma River), south of the campground. This stream crossing will need to be re-established, and the road reconstructed for about a half mile to its intersection with 2315. Then road 2315 will need to be reconstructed into Areas 1 and 2. In total, about one mile of road will be reconstructed through the Trout Mouth MMMA. Large trees within the MMMA would need to be cut down (and sold). The ODF will not even know if they are cutting down a nest tree in the MMMA, or creating an opening next to a nest tree. This is in violation of the ODF’s operational policies for murrelets.

Opening up this road for logging, including a new crossing across Trout Creek, will also open up this road to recreational motorized recreation. Having the campground next to 2300 in the MMMA is hard enough on murrelets, as camping attracts corvids, the major predator of murrelet nests. But rebuilding a mile of road that is currently inaccessible into the MMMA will add to the degradation of murrelet habitat because it will become more available to motorized recreation.

The AOP failed to mention any of these activities or consider any of these impacts by logging within the MMMA and thinning next to it, as required by the State’s murrelet management policy<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies. Oregon State Forests Division August 28, 2013. Section 2.25.11.

## 6. Lucky Stulls Timber Sale

The Elliott's 2016 AOP failed to address the cumulative impacts of the Lucky Stulls clearcut being adjacent to Lower Trout clearcut, area 1. This level of clearcutting, 144 acres at one time above Trout Creek, will cause peak flow increases, damaging the creek more than any one of the sales would on it's own.

**Logging in MMMA buffer:** Area 2 of Lucky Stulls logs in the Trout Mouth MMMA buffer, along with areas 2 and 4 of Lower Trout sales. Again there are cumulative impacts by logging so many acres of the Trout Mouth buffer at once that should have been considered.

Area 2 of Lucky Stulls logs mature forests in the MMMA, 140-year-old forests that are already functioning murrelet habitat. Yet the AOP claims logging it will enhance murrelet habitat and advanced structure. This is an absurd claim. There is absolutely no science that says the ODF can thin older forests and improve murrelet habitat. Clearly, logging Area 2 only creates a better timber sale volume for the year. ODF will only leave as few as 35 trees per acre! More than half of the old trees will be taken, and put on a log truck and removed. Apparently none will be recruited for wildlife snags. Opening up of the canopy of a native, mature forest will only help predators have access to the interior of the MMMA. We strenuously object to the logging of this murrelet habitat inside a MMMA.

The 2016 AOP says, page 19:

“Permanent plots are being monitored on both the Lower Skunk and the Hidden Valley Stand Management sales. These sales were designed to enhance owl and murrelet habitat under the 1995 HCP”

This study has been going on for decades. The ODF should reveal some of the study results of how murrelet habitat was enhanced, or not, before logging more murrelet habitat in the Trout Mouth MMMA buffer. If there is no scientific data that logging high-quality murrelet habitat enhances it, the ODF must drop Area 2 of Lucky Stulls. It does not comply with the ODF's Murrelet Operation Policies for MMMA buffers, which is for the purpose of protecting occupied habitat within the MMMA.<sup>35</sup>

**Logging old growth forests in Lucky Stulls:** Area 1 of Lucky Stulls is also problematic, as ODF is clearcutting nesting habitat for the spotted owl and marbled murrelet. This is continuous habitat with the adjacent Trout Mouth MMMA, and should have been designated a part of that MMMA.

Part of Lucky Stulls has been designated Spotted Owl critical habitat by the USFWS. The ODF cannot degrade critical habitat by clearcutting it, especially high-quality (RA32) habitat. (See section 2b of these comments for more on this).

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<sup>35</sup> Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies. 8-28-13. 1.1.6.2.

The ODF does not need to clearcut some of the oldest forests in the Elliott, specifically the 140-year-old Lucky Stalls timber sale. This forest is rare in the Elliott, and is clearly needed for the recovery of the Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet.

Area 1 has been deemed “Likely” for a Debris Flow Track, with a landslide down into Trout Creek, into endangered coho habitat. The ODF should drop this very controversial timber sale.

## **7. Cumulative impacts of adjacent multi-year clearcuts.**

Bickfoot, Areas 1 and 2, is 56 acres, adjoining the 2014 Shake-N-Baker area sale, which was 64 acres. Together, these acres equal 120 acres, the limit the OFPA allows for openings. But they wrap around a clearcut between them. Another clearcut is south of Bickfoot. This pushes the opening size over the 120-acre limit. In addition to exceeding the OFPA limitations, the ODF should consider the cumulative impacts of all these clearcuts on the watershed impacts downstream.

Miller Top is 62 acres. All units immediately adjoin all units of the Lean Dean 2015 timber sale, 23 acres. Together, these Areas equal 85 acres, which has cumulative impacts the ODF never considered, like water flow, peak flow increase, murrelet and owl use, and increased road use.

Bakers Cake is 107 acres on the edge of the Elliott State Forest. It is adjacent to private land clearcuts, meaning the 120-acre OFPA opening will be exceeded. While this might be legal because of the two separate landowners, the large opening will none-the-less have the same negative impacts that prompted the 120-acre limitation to begin with. Having a watershed with so much early-seral habitat means peak flow increases downstream. Residents in Ash Valley, directly under these clearcuts, depend on this watershed for their household, livestock, and irrigation uses. Peak flows will increase during the wet weather, and there will be less water available during the dry season. Especially with the advent of climate change, Ash Valley residents are having longer summer-time droughts, and Bakers Cake, a 107 acre clearcut above them, will further harm their water supply.

Another problem with Bakers Cake is that it clearcuts a straight-edge line next to a designated “Visual” reserve. Clearcutting a straight-edge up to the visual reserve is not visually friendly.

## **8. Recreation**

The Elliott’s Implementation Plan describes how the Elliott is well known for it’s “recreational opportunities”<sup>36</sup>. Unfortunately, there is \$0 being spent on recreational opportunities<sup>37</sup> in the 2016 AOP budget. The excuse is that the public only wants dispersed recreation. However, the current dispersed recreation occurring the Elliott is

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<sup>36</sup> Elliott State Forest IP page 9.

<sup>37</sup> Coos District 2016 AOP. Table 8, page 32. Recreation management summary, for a total of \$0.00.

degrading resources, and should be monitored and problems corrected. For instance, in the most popular camping areas there are no sanitary facilities. Piles and TP ring these areas, causing unsafe conditions for the public and for fish and wildlife. The ODF should invest something in the way of pit toilets near the most popular camping spots. Another problem is camping trash. This is especially problematic for camping areas within MMMA's, where corvids are attracted to all the trash that is never picked up.

When we raised this issue in the 2015 AOP comments, the ODF responded that: "The 2015 AOP does not mention ATV use in connection with recreation..."<sup>38</sup> That is exactly the problem. The 2016 AOP also ignores the most popular, and the most destructive recreation occurring on the Elliott, the ATV off-road play areas. This year, the ODF should respond to the actual problem we are addressing.

For instance, one camping spot on the 8100 road (in the middle of the Elkhorn Ranch MMMA) has become a popular playground for Off Highway Vehicles. Motorized recreation enthusiasts have dug several large mud bogs to play in near the Millicoma River, and it is evident from crushed river-bank vegetation, they extend their play into the Millicoma River itself. We have pictures of trucks driving up and down the river in the location of coho spawning beds.

None of these problems are addressed in the 2016 AOP and there is no monitoring of recreation. This should be corrected in the final AOP. Just because there are no monitoring funds, doesn't mean the ODF should refuse to acknowledge the reality of what is going on. The ODF should also consider building and maintaining non-motorized hiking trails in the Elliott.

## **9. Other problems with the 2016 AOP**

### **9a: Basin 9, Henry's Bend**

The 10-year Implementation Plan (IP) for the Elliott says, concerning Basin 9, that the "Harvest opportunities in this basin are low". It is the only "low" rated basin in the entire Elliott State Forest; the lowest amount of logging should occur here. In spite of this, Basin 9 has been the target of clearcuts every year the IP has been implemented. It is being one of the highest logged areas.

This year over 55 acres are being clearcut in the Lucky Stulls and Lower Trout timber sales. Last year it was the 51 acre Eleven Creek Headwaters sale, and before that it was the 42-acre Eleven Creek No. 3 sale, and the year before (2013) it was the 79-acre Elk Ridge Split and 24-acre Millicoma Overlook. It is not in compliance with the IP to have large clearcuts every year in a basin where harvest opportunities are the lowest on the forest. In fact, it appears Henry's Bend is being one of the heaviest logged basins on the Elliott since the advent of the 10-year IP. This does not meet any definition of "Low".

Last year we asked the ODF for their monitoring data of acres in each basin to see if other basins meet the IP requirement for logging levels. The ODF failed to send it. The

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<sup>38</sup> ODF Response to 2015 AOP comments, page 4.

ODF should at least disclose if they track the data needed to meet their IP requirements, or not.

The ODF response also defended logging more in Basin 9 by saying the acres logged were a small percent of the basin's acres. However, considering the amount of MMMA's designated in the basin, and the amount of large stream RMAs, the area allowed to be clearcut vs. what is being clearcut is not "low".

In fact, the IP says that there are only a few of the MMMA acres in Basin 9 that actually exist. Many new MMMA's were placed in this basin after the 2011 IP was written, making the 2011 IP very out of date. The ODF should update the acres of MMMA's and recalculate the percent available for clearcutting. Then the ODF should re-evaluate if this is relatively "low", as required, compared to how many acres are being clearcut in the moderate and high-cut basins. The information should be made public.

### **9b. Carbon**

The 2016 AOP will release 22,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere.<sup>39</sup> The ODF considers this insignificant because areas that were clearcut earlier are now sequestering more carbon. Instead, the ODF should consider that those earlier clearcuts will never sequester enough carbon to make up for what was lost when they were clearcut, and thus don't make up for what ODF is now proposing to clearcut.

The ODF should have considered the loss of 22,000 tonnes, plus the permanent loss of future sequestration in the 153 years it will take some of the forests to catch-up to where they are now. Indeed, it will never catch up since the rotation age has moved to 40 years. Instead, the Elliott will experience a significant, permanent net-loss of carbon from what existed before the 2016 AOP is implemented. The AOP failed to document this loss of carbon.

Analyses that claims logging is *carbon neutral*, because the forest captures and stores the same pre-harvest amount of carbon after a period of regrowth, is highly misleading. The proper analysis requires comparison of the amount of carbon with the project and without the project, not before and after logging. This is required to accurately determine the effect of vegetation removal on forest carbon storage.

The only way to properly evaluate the net carbon impacts of energy from forest biomass [or any vegetation management] is to estimate ... net change in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels over time *with* and *without* the harvest of wood biomass for energy. ...[I]t is necessary to construct a baseline, or control, scenario (that is no biomass harvest). ... Once a baseline is established, one can assess how switching to wood biomass would change atmospheric carbon levels. ... [T]he information provided by only comparing forest carbon stocks before and after biomass harvest could be a very misleading indicator of the impact of biomass energy on the atmosphere.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Coos District 2016 AOP page 8.

<sup>40</sup> Carellichio, P., Walker, T. 2010. Commentary: The Manomet Study Got the Biomass Carbon Accounting Right. The Forestry Source. 4 Nov 2010. [http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/saf/forestrysource\\_201011/index.php#4](http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/saf/forestrysource_201011/index.php#4).

### **9c. Herbicides**

The ODF will aerial spray 240 acres with herbicides, including Glyphosate, Imazapyr, Premergent and 2,4-d.

The ODF should consider the recent scientific findings on these herbicides, and not just rely on the old, out of date “label” information for safety considerations. For instance, in March 2015, the World Health Organization determined that Glyphosate (Roundup) is a probable carcinogen for humans<sup>41</sup>. Yet ODF will spray this chemical where forestry workers (often prisoners who have no choice) come into contact with it, or spray it where people live downstream or downwind.

Stream buffers are not big enough to prevent herbicide drift from contaminating the water. In fact, Oregon has the smallest buffers and weakest rules for aerial spraying of any Pacific Northwest state. Worse, if there are people living next to a unit clearcut in the Elliott, no buffers for herbicides are required at all around homes and schools.

The ODF should reduce, not increase their use of these dangerous chemicals, and eliminate aerial spraying completely. The adjoining land manager, BLM, has clearcut many acres since they stopped all aerial spraying in the 1980’s, and they have successfully reforested their clearcuts. The ODF should do the same, and save the public \$21,600 each year (the cost of the aerial spraying for 2016 sales).

The AOP for Bickfoot says the chemical “Premergent” will be applied. Did the ODF mean a Pre-emergent herbicide? Which ones? If it is Pendimethalin or DCPA, both are classified by the U.S. EPA as “possible human carcinogens”, and both have the potential to harm endangered species.<sup>42</sup>

While none of the individual sales listed the use of 2,4-d, it was indicated in the 2016 draft report, page 14, as a possibility. This herbicide is also dangerous to humans and wildlife.

### **9d. Killing Wildlife**

The ODF plans to kill mountain beavers on 500 acres at a cost of \$20,000<sup>43</sup> in 2016. Every year the ODF spends thousands of dollars to kill this native mammal of the Pacific Northwest forests. Instead, the ODF should consider alternatives to this practice. The adjoining federal landowners, the BLM and Forest Service, do not do this, so it is not clear why the ODF must do it.

The Elliott’s Forest Management Plan (FMP) also allows the ODF to kill the American black bear<sup>44</sup> and the Elliott Implementation Plan (IP) allows aquatic American Beavers to be trapped and their dams destroyed as soon as the beavers “pose a risk to plantations”.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045%2815%2970134-8/abstract>.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.pesticide.org/the-buzz/2010/07/24/preemergent-herbicides-on-home-landscapes>.

<sup>43</sup> 2016 AOP Draft Report.

<sup>44</sup> Elliott 2011 FMP page C-11. When a problem bear is trapped, it is killed, not relocated.

<sup>45</sup> Elliott 2011 IP. page 61.

While the ODF disclosed the extent of killing of the mountain beavers, the ODF fails to report on how much other wildlife is eliminated annually, and the cost.

Since the Elliott has no monitoring plan, these numbers should be reported publically. The ODF should also modify their FMP and IP to not allow the taking of native wildlife that might cause a small amount of economic damage to tree plantations.

## **10. Changes to Land Classifications**

Last year, in comments to the Elliott's first designations of Special Use and High Value Conservation Areas, we stated it was not clear what the definitions was for these land designations. The Elliott's Forest Management Plan and Implementation Plan do not appear to have been formerly amended with the addition of these designations, or amended to define these land classifications.

ODF's response to this comment was that the definition was someplace else confusing. These were not part of the original FMP, and they are not defined by the FMP. We ask again, are there amended Elliott FMPs and IPs clearly describing the definition of, and the purpose of these new subclasses. If so, please provide a link to updated and amended Elliott FMPs and IP online.

Last year we asked why more coho streams were not classified High Value Conservation Area, assuming that is a more protective designation than Focused Stewardship, where most "Aquatic and Riparian Habitat" now reside. We received no answer, so we repeat that question this year. For instance, areas next to the Millicoma and Elk Rivers should be designated HVCA's. They are important not only to fish habitat, but to upland wildlife using them as travel corridors. They also contain most of the recreation use areas and camping sites on the Elliott.

All forests next to Loon Lake should be designated HVCA because of their important contribution to nesting bald eagles and other birds and wildlife who fish in the lake.

All old-growth forests remaining in the Coos District should be designated HVCA, as this wildlife habitat is very rare in the Coast Range.

All areas designated by the USFWS as Critical Habitat for any wildlife should be designated HVCA for wildlife in the Coos District. All spotted owl sites, including adequate foraging areas around the sites should be HCVAs. All spotted owl Habitat Conservancy Areas designated under the former HCP should be designated as an HCVA under the new plan.

Two of the "Scattered Tract's" managed by the Coos District should be HCVAs. One is the parcel next to the Umpqua Lighthouse State Park, and the other adjoins the South Slough National Estuary Research Reserve, and is part of the Estuary watershed. The ODF failed to respond to this comment in 2015, so we will make it again this year.

**In Conclusion:**

This concludes our comments on the Elliott 2016 AOPs. The ODF should remove any Areas that log in MMMAs. Building new or reconstructed roads through MMMAs should be eliminated. The ODF should also avoid clearcutting any murrelet nesting habitat, such as in the Lucky Stulls sale. Instead, the ODF should do more thinning of managed plantations to help meet goals of timber production and providing jobs to the local community.

Thank you for considering these comments in your final decision.

Sincerely

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# Oregon

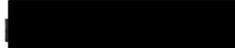
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"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"



"STEWARDSHIP  
IN FORESTRY"

July 8, 2015

RE: 2016 AOP Public Comment Responses

Dear 

Thank you for your comments on the Coos District 2016 AOP. Our responses to your comments are attached. Hopefully we have addressed your concerns adequately. The public comments will be posted on ODF's web site [http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE\\_FORESTS/state\\_forests.shtml](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/state_forests.shtml) along with the ODF reply.

Sincerely,

Norma Kline  
District Forester  
Coos District

ODF's responses are organized according to the 9 sections of comments provided by Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club, Umpqua Watersheds and Oregon Wild.

## 1. Marbled Murrelets

You had many comments regarding Marbled Murrelets and how they could impact the 2016 AOP.

All timber sales in the 2016 Annual Operations Plan are in compliance with State Forest Division Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies, effective August 28, 2013.

You comment about road reconstruction inside the Trout Mouth MMMA. There are no plans to reconstruct roads inside this MMMA. The 2195 road will access Areas 3 and 4 and the 2177 road will access Areas 1 and 2. Both these roads are outside the Trout Mouth MMMA and both these roads will be improved, not reconstructed. The term "reconstruction" is not used in the Lower Trout Sale Plan.

You comment that Lucky Stulls surveys are out of date. Lucky Stulls was surveyed in 2011 and 2012. Lucky Stulls conforms to Marbled Murrelet policy 2.9 "*Accept surveys conducted under 1.1.2.6 and 1.1.2.7 as valid for a five-year period and up to April 1 of the sixth year once an area has been surveyed to policy standards and murrelet occupied habitat has not been designated. Initiate new surveys prior to conducting or continuing operations after this period.*" Lucky Stulls surveys are valid to April 1, 2018.

You comment that thinning in Lucky Stulls will not enhance murrelet habitat and that Lucky Stulls is an old growth forest. It is not. It is a stand of mature second growth approximately 137 years old. The 2011 Elliott State Forest Final Management Plan 5-10 defines "old growth" as at least 175 years old as of 2010. The 2011 Elliott State Forest Final Management Plan C-15 affirms the utilization of silviculture to develop pathways to achieve structural diversity. Many mature stands thinned in the '60's, 70's, and 80's have grown into prime wildlife habitat. A timber stand that is 137 years old will respond positively to silvicultural treatments and will over time develop vertically. Vertical development will create habitat niches and support increasing numbers of wildlife species.

You comment about what you call "crazy zigzags of protected habitat with big holes in the middle of them" pertaining to the Luder Footlog MMMA and the Footpuck MMMA. These two MMMA's are within a mosaic of stand ages. There is not contiguous MAMU habitat but some mature second growth stands interspersed with some younger stands. Both these MMMA's are designed in compliance with the August 28, 2013, Marbled Murrelet Operational Policy, sections 2.16 and 2.17. The policy states that we are to "*Designate as occupied habitat all contiguous potentially suitable habitat in a survey area if a subcanopy detection indicative of occupancy is observed in any site within that survey area*" and "*Designate a 100-meter wide buffer to protect designated occupied habitat...*". ODF correctly applied this policy in the design of these two MMMA's. You comment again later in 1d about MMMA "doughnut holes" and "zigzag edges". Our response this year, as last year, is that MMMA designations are in compliance with Marbled Murrelet Operational Policies 2.15 through 2.25

You provided a comment that MAMU surveys were required yet not completed for Lower Trout, Howling Glenn, Bickfoot Area 4, Deer Joe Areas 1, 4, and 5 and Young Footlog. You are correct that a very small overlap of Deer Joe area 5 is within the buffer of the Benson Headwaters MMMA. The map for this sale has been updated with the removal of clearcut harvest within the MMMA buffer. Young Footlog is addressed below. The remainder of the sales listed do not contain potentially suitable MAMU habitat and all are at least 100 meters from such habitat. Accordingly, these sales comply with Marbled Murrelet Operational Policy 2.1.

You comment that thinning younger stands within the 100 meter MMMA buffer will not accelerate development of murrelet habitat. This was addressed above in our response to thinning in Lucky Stulls. Younger stands are proven to show the beginnings of vertical development within the first decade after thinning. Density management to maintain stand vigor and promote vertical development and resultant habitat niches is a scientific fact and is the basis for silvicultural science.

You comment about MMMA “zigzag” and “holes” pertaining to Young Footlog. The MMMA’s in the vicinity of Young Footlog were established prior to 2013. In compliance with Marbled Murrelet Operational Policy 2.27, ODF reviews MMMA’s established prior to 2013 when they are within .25 miles of a proposed harvest operation. *“Review timber harvest-related activities within ¼ mile of any survey area associated with any subcanopy detection indicative of occupancy to ensure that occupied habitat is designated and buffered from proposed activities as described in policies 1.1.2.15 – 1.12.18.”* If necessary, Young Footlog acreage or prescription may be modified to ensure compliance with the 2013 MAMU policy.

You comment that not all murrelet occupied habitat is being protected and cite examples of where information was provided to ODF relative to (former) Adams Ridge No. 2, Palouse Creek, Little Tenmile Butte, Adams Creek No. 2, and Lean Dean timber sales. In accordance with MAMU policy 2.14, the information provided to ODF is currently being evaluated. There was a proposed sale a few years back called Adams Creek No. 2. ODF-contractor first year surveys were done on this sale and there were no detections. 2<sup>nd</sup> year surveys were started and during this time the Division of State Lands decertified the land status thereby freeing this parcel up for auction. Adams Ridge No. 2 does not exist. ODF-contractor MAMU surveys were started on Little Tenmile Butte but it too was decertified by the Division of State Lands and the parcel is no longer managed by ODF.

## 2. Spotted Owls

You comment that ODF’s protocol for protecting owls is out-of-date. ODF adheres to the State Forest Division Northern Spotted Owl Operational Policies and Procedures dated March 1, 2013. Operational Policy 3.22 directs a review of the policy for currency every three years. Operational Policies are not due for review until March 1, 2016 and are currently up-to-date.

You comment that Bickfoot, Miller Top, Baker Cake, and Young Footlog all log within a NSO home range. Bickfoot is totally outside of any NSO circle.

You comment that that Miller Top will deplete the Dean Creek and Scholfield NSO circles to “barely 50% suitable habitat”. Suitable habitat remaining in the Dean Creek NSO circle after Miller Top is 75% and 54% within the 0.7 mile inner circle and 1.5 mile outer circle respectively. Suitable habitat remaining in the Scholfield Creek NSO circle after Miller Top is 67% and 57% within the inner circle and outer circle respectively. The suitable habitat remaining after Miller Top within the NSO circle is well above 50%.

You comment that Bakers Cake will leave 47% suitable habitat within the Salander Creek NSO circle and cite verbiage written by the ODF biologist as proof of site degradation. The NSO Biological Assessment on Page 1 identifies a 40% suitable habitat retention requirement within the 1.5 mile home range. After harvest of Bakers Cake, there will be 68% and 47% suitable habitat remaining within the .7 mile inner circle and 1.5 outer circle respectively. This is well above the 40% requirement. Bakers Cake is identified in the BA as having a **Low** risk of negatively NSO’s. .

You comment that Young Footlog will leave 53% suitable habitat in the Luder Creek NSO circle. First, Young Footlog will not deplete any NSO circle of suitable habitat. Page 2 of the NSO BA

prepared for this sale describes this sale as unsuitable foraging habitat for NSO's. The suitable habitat contained in the Luder Creek NSO circle remains unchanged at 77% and 61% within the inner circle and outer circle respectively. Table 1 on Page 7 of the BA summarizes before and after levels of suitable habitat within the inner and outer circles for all NSO circles. Because Young Footlog does not involve the harvest of suitable habitat, the levels of suitable habitat within the NSO circles before and after harvest are unchanged.

You comment that the Elliott 2016 AOP fails to consider USFWS designations of Critical Habitat for NSO's and allege that ODF's approach is inconsistent with the USFWS NSO Recovery Plan. ODF complies with the 2011 Elliott Forest Management Plan, the Implementation Plan, and the Oregon Forest Practices Act, along with departmental policies, procedures and guidance that direct the decisions that are made.

ODF is making a significant voluntary effort through the Elliott State Forest Management Plan which is anticipated to retain 30 to 50 percent of the landscape as advanced structure. ODF engages USFWS to review and comment on Biological Assessments as part of the AOP process. This year, USFWS reviewed and concurred with all of ODF's biological assessments for Spotted Owls of low risk.

### 3. Coho Salmon:

You claim that ODF leaves 0' stream buffers on smaller streams. There is no truth to this claim. All streams and channels receive protection from ground disturbance and specific conifer retention depending on stream classification. ODF protects all streams and channels to varying degrees as specified in Strategy 5b in the Elliott Forest Management Plan, November 2011.

You claim that Deer Joe Combo Area 2 will log right up to the banks of Deer Creek. Again, there is no truth to this claim. All streams and channels will be protected according to Strategy 5b in the Elliott Forest Management Plan, November 2011.

You claim that "the Elliott is riddled with landslides". As in past years you comment again that all landslides are bad and should be reduced. Again ODF will provide research about long term benefits with debris flows occurring in the Oregon Coast Range. When debris flows occur, "water quality may be temporarily degraded as suspended and bedload sediments increase. Landslides generally have short-term negative effects on fish habitat. Over the long term, inputs of LW and gravel are an important mechanism to sustain and improve fish habitat" (Everest and Meehan, 1981, from 2011 ESF Forest Management Plan 2-46).

The following additional research supports ODF's assumptions regarding landslides' and debris flows' beneficial effects on fish habitat (2-46 and 2-47 of the 2011 ESF Forest Management Plan):

Research and monitoring, including the ODF landslide study, ("StormImpacts andLandslides of 1996", Robison et al., 1999), has documented that small Type N streams in steep terrain contribute significant amounts of large-diameter wood (greater than 24 inches) to fish-use streams. It has also been established that the lack of large wood in stream systems can be a contributing factor to the degradation of fish habitat.

Reeves et al. (2003) studied the sources of large wood in Cummins Creek, a fourth-order watershed in the Oregon Coast Range. They found that 65 percent of the number of pieces and 46 percent of the estimated volume of wood originated from upstream sources delivered by landslides or debris flows more than 300 feet from the channel. The remainder of the wood originated in streamside sources immediately adjacent to the channel. Wood

from upstream areas constituted the majority of wood found between the bank-full channel width and below the surface level of water at bank-full flow. Reeves et al. (2003) also state that 25 percent of the wood was in aggregates (log-jams), which were formed mostly from wood originating in the upstream areas.

You comment that ODF's riparian strategies are insufficient to protect salmon. We believe they are sufficient. Streams in all the 2016 AOP sale units will be surveyed and appropriate riparian protection will be applied to all streams and channels according to Strategy 5b in the Elliott Forest Management Plan, November 2011. Strategy 5b primarily sets targets for conifer retention. Sometimes a particular stream reach may be hardwood dominated and it is problematic to meet the conifer retention target. In these instances a posted hardwood buffer is established and is protected just as a conifer dominated stream buffer would. No herbicide spraying is allowed in riparian areas and this includes hardwood dominated stream buffers.

ODF is disappointed that your organizations offer no positive feedback for past or planned in-stream work. For example, the 2016 AOP outlines the plan to place up to 61 whole Douglas Fir trees and 720 cubic yards of boulders in the West Fork Millicoma River. Likewise, up to 41 whole Douglas-Fir trees are planned to be placed into Buck Creek, all with local watershed association cooperation. These projects will increase stream complexity, spawning habitat, and gravel recruitment as natural debris flows occur upstream.

#### 4. Thinning:

You comment that ODF should do more thinning of managed plantations, not just clearcut them, as this is not meeting the Implementation Plan goals. The proposed thinning acres this year are within the range of the IP goals. However, clearcut acres are below the IP target of 700 – 1000 acres annually.

For the 2016 AOP there are 27 acres of commercial thinning proposed in the primary plan and 36 acres proposed in the alternate plan for a total of 63 acres.

#### 5. Lower Trout Timber Sale:

Your comments about Lower Trout are closely related to Section 4: Thinning discussed above. Any discussion regarding commercial thinning must involve a measure of density. Your arguments regarding thinning are based only on trees per acre which is a very rudimentary measure of stocking. Trees per acre alone is appropriate for reforestation surveys but not for commercial thinning design. ODF measures stocking with respect to either Stand Density Index (SDI) or Relative Density (RD). Both methods take into consideration basal area and quadratic mean diameter and provide a much better picture of stand stocking than does trees per acre alone. Commercial thinning prescriptions are carefully designed to achieve a certain level of stand structure as defined by SDI or RD. The thinning prescriptions for Lower Trout will over time achieve a residual stand structure of larger diameter trees and increased vertical crown development resulting in more created habitat niches.

You comment that recreation is occurring within the Lower Trout project area and further expand on this premise with more comments about the 2310 and 2315 roads. This was already addressed in Section 1: Marbled Murrelets but we will address it again. All areas of Lower Trout will be accessed from the 2195 and 2177 roads. The dispersed recreation area you identified at the bottom of the

2300 road is outside of any of the timber sale areas and there are no plans to re-open the 2310 or 2315 roads.

6. Lucky Stulls Timber Sale:

Your comments about Lucky Stulls are a repeat of your comments in Section 1 Marbled Murrelets and as such were already addressed in that section. But you also add a comment about residual stocking and base this comment only on trees per acre. This was addressed in Section 5: Lower Trout. In summary, Lucky Stulls Area 2 is 137 years old and will respond to silvicultural treatment, and over time, the stand will develop vertically. Vertical development will create habitat niches and support increasing numbers of wildlife species.

You comment there is no science to support growth response from thinning 140 year forests. The science to support thinning in older Douglas-fir stands has been around for over 50 years (Williamson USDA PNW36, 1966; PNW117, 1971; Worthington USDA Bull 1230, 1961; Yerkes, USDA, 1960).

You comment that ODF does not need to clearcut some of the oldest forests in the Elliott. ODF's legal mandate and fiduciary responsibility to the State Land Board and to the Common School Fund is to maximize revenue. It is problematic to fulfill our fiduciary obligations by the harvest of younger timber alone.

You comment that timber stands like the 22 acre Lucky Stulls timber sale are rare in the Elliott. It is not rare. The main block of the Elliott State Forest has approximately 31,000 acres in age classes of 120 years and older, or approximately 34 percent of the main block acreage.

7. Cumulative Impacts:

You claim that Bickfoot, and Shake-N-Baker, together with other adjacent clearcuts, exceed the 120 acre FPA unit size limitation. Bickfoot and Shake-N-Baker together equal 120 acres. The other clearcut you claim these units wrap around and the clearcut you claim is to the south are Cedar Top Area 2 and Cedar Glenn Area 1 respectively. Cedar Top Area 2 was harvested in 2004 and currently is stocked with 310 trees per acre with an average height of over 11 feet. Cedar Glenn Area 1 was also harvested in 2004 and is currently stocked with 356 trees per acre with an average height of over 11 feet. Clearly both Cedar Top Area 2 and Cedar Glenn Area 1 are fully stocked and free to grow according to the FPA standards.

8. Recreation:

No money is budgeted for recreation in the 2016 AOP. No money has been budgeted for recreation since 2013 which coincides with the year of the lawsuit. Since the lawsuit, our fiduciary obligations together with our dramatically reduced harvest levels and revenue stream has left little money for discretionary budgeting. We are aware the dispersed campsites along the 8100 road are popular in the summer months. As ODF discovers or learns of OHV damage that could impact protected resources, appropriate repairs will be made as funding allows.

9. Other Problems:

You comment about the harvest levels occurring in Basin 9 are higher than "low" as projected in the Implementation Plan. Planned harvests comply with the Elliott FMP, the Implementation Plan and State Forest Division Operational Policies for required retention levels of NSO and MAMU suitable habitat and habitat protection.

You comment about carbon release and sequestration. Your comments are identical to the 2015 AOP comments and simply changed “2015 AOP will release 26,000 tonnes” to “2016 AOP will release 22,000 tonnes”. You are concerned that ODF considers the release of 22,000 tonnes of Carbon insignificant. For 2016 the Elliott will sequester 778,000 tonnes of carbon, which is the equivalent of 151,700 cars.

For a second year in a row you cite a 2010 commentary “The Manomet Study Got the Biomass Carbon Accounting Right” by Carellichio and Walker, in regards to forest carbon storage calculations. This commentary is a response to a June 2010 report by the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences titled “Biomass Sustainability and Carbon Policy Study”. This study researched the amount of carbon storage and the initial carbon debt, including the release of carbon and the additional greenhouse gasses from the burning of biomass to create energy, before and after units were harvested for biomass fuel. The 2016 timber sales planned by ODF do not include any harvests for biomass. Harvested timber from ODF sales is typically manufactured into structural lumber, plywood, or pulp products, storing the carbon instead of releasing it as burning it would. It would be inappropriate to apply your recommended carbon accounting to the 2016 AOP, just as it was inappropriate to apply it to the 2015 AOP.

You comment about the use of herbicides. You allege that the Federal label is old and outdated and that ODF will spray herbicides on stream buffers, inmates, and people living downwind. On the Elliott State Forest, herbicides are one tool used in Integrated Pest Management to temporarily control competing vegetation to ensure economical establishment and growth of forest tree species, as required by the Forest Practice Act. All herbicide applications are in accordance with the Forest Practices Act and the Federal herbicide label requirements which are the requirements by law. If the law changes as a result of one of the studies you cited, ODF will comply with that law.

The planned preemergent to be used on Bickfoot is Oust XP. This will be changed in the Pre-operations report.

You comment about the killing of mountain beavers. These rodents pose a serious risk to the successful establishment of a new plantation. Their extensive underground networks and voracious eating of seedlings can decimate new conifer plantations. A robust trapping program is a financially sound strategy to comply with the Forest Practice Act for establishing and maintaining a new plantation.

You comment about ODF plans to kill American black bear and American beavers. There are no plans to kill either of these species in the 2016 AOP. The IP does not state anywhere that American Beavers will be killed. It does state that they will be allowed to persist unless they are posing risks to stream crossings or plantations. If they are creating risks, the IP states that they may be live trapped and relocation will be considered (IP page 61).

#### 10. Land Management Classification:

You have multiple comments about the FLMCS (Forest Land Management Classification System). You stated that the lengthy written response you received last year from Justin Butteris from the ODF Salem office did not adequately address your questions. Mr. Butteris last year provided you with specific Oregon Administrative Rule citations. We will provide you with more details about these OAR’s in an attempt to make the FLMCS clearer.

Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 629, Division 35 contains the specific rules governing the FLMCS.

629-035-0040: This section establishes all forest land as being either Silviculturally Capable or Non-silviculturally Capable.

629-035-0050: This section describes the classification of Silviculturally Capable lands. All Silviculturally Capable lands can be harvested at some level unless a legal or contractual obligation prevents such management, or the District Forester determines that a parcel or parcels is better designated as single use.

629-035-0055: This section further classifies Silviculturally Capable and Non-silviculturally Capable lands into one of 4 classifications: 1) General Stewardship 2) Focused Stewardship 3) Special Use 4) High Value Conservation Area. If lands are classified into Focused Stewardship, Special Use, or High Value Conservation Areas then they will receive further sub-classifications.

- 1) General Stewardship lands are actively managed to accomplish integrated forest management goals over time and across the landscape to achieve the full range of social, economic, and environmental benefits as identified in the FMP.
- 2) Focused Stewardship lands are also actively managed to accomplish integrated forest management goals over time and across the landscape with the addition of specific goals for the subclass. These specific goals or plans can be identified in the FMP, the IP, or the AOP. Management can be modified to emphasize protection and management of identified forest resources. The sub-classifications are Agriculture; Grazing & Wildlife Forage; Aquatic and Riparian Habitat; Cultural Resources; Deeds; Domestic Water Use; Easements; Energy and Minerals; Plants; Recreation; Research and Monitoring; Energy Transmission; Visual; and Wildlife Habitat.
- 3) Special Use lands are committed to a specific use and management is integrated whenever possible with other management goals as long as there are no long term adverse impacts to the specified resource. The sub-classifications are into Administrative Sites; Agriculture; Grazing & Wildlife Forage; County or Local Comprehensive Plans; Cultural Resources; Deeds; Domestic Water Use; Easements; Energy and Minerals; Operationally Limited; Recreation; Research and Monitoring; Energy Transmission; and Visual.
- 4) High Value Conservation Area lands are appropriately managed in order to maintain, enhance, or restore important conservation values in which lands are either legally or contractually constrained, committed to specific conservation values, or where management activities are limited to that which will achieve specific conservation goals. The sub-classifications are Aquatic and Riparian Habitat; Unique, Threatened, or Endangered Plants; and Wildlife Habitat.

Key Points: FLMCS does not define the goals but instead defers to the overarching FMP, IP and AOP's to define the management goals. The FMP and IP provide overarching guidance for a period of 10 or more years before they are revised. Changes to FLMCS does not dictate changes to the FMP or IP. Prescriptions are not part of FLMCS. The FMP, IP, and AOP sets goals and establishes prescriptions. The integrated management approach is a major premise to all Silviculturally Capable lands with General Stewardship, Focused Stewardship, and to a lesser extent Special Use classifications, meaning active management in varying degrees of intensity is utilized across the landscape and over time to achieve a wide range of resource goals. High Value Conservation Area are committed to maintaining immediate specific conservation goals via a legal requirement, thus management activities are limited to those that are compatible with achieving goals for the specific conservation value.

Your specific questions are fairly consistent in their theme in that you are requesting Focused Stewardship land to be re-designated as High Value Conservation Area land such as forests adjacent to Loon Lake, Old Growth forests, spotted owl sites, Coho streams, and specific scattered tracts. Lands around Loon Lake and Coho streams are already classified as HVCA, as can be seen in Appendix A of the draft 2016 AOP. Spotted owl cores are HVCA's, though the specific scattered tracts you mention do not meet the requirement in the OAR to be a HVCA. Old Growth stands are already included as HVCA under the Unique, Threatened, or Endangered Plants subclass, as directed by State Forester Decker in his approval letter dated June 25, 2014, included in the final 2015 AOP.