



USDA Forest Service
Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests

Frequently Asked Questions

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PLANNING PROCESS

How can we speed up the revision process and get projects on the ground?

During the land management plan revision process, the Ranger Districts are continuing to work on their programs-of-work and implement projects under the current land management plans. By taking an integrated approach to sustainability in the design of the revised land management plans, with the benefit of a diverse range of perspectives, the Revision Team hopes to:

- Better serve the public's interests in the future
- Allow project decisions to be implemented more strategically
- Gain more efficiencies in the planning process, and
- Shift our energy to achieving sustainability on the ground

How similar will the three Land Management Plans be? Are all three plans going to be identical? What if one forest identifies conditions different from other areas? Will these land management plans provide for consistency in guidelines, methods, and rules across the three forests?

Having consistent management across the three forests is one of the reasons we are revising all three plans under the same effort. There may be some slight differences in the final plans, but we expect the three plans will be 80-90% similar.

Is the vision going to be the same across the three forests?

We plan to have one vision that addresses the entire Blue Mountains. It is likely we will also develop visions for specific areas, depending on the information provided by the public.

How current or how old is the data you will be using? Is it new since the last plans? Will the data be peer reviewed?

We have been collecting data for a long time and there are various levels of "current." The Forest Service and other agencies and groups have collected a large amount of data since the current plans were developed. We will be using the best available data. Our Pacific Northwest Region and Research Station are working together to determine where we need scientific review and how to accomplish that.

What is sustainability?

The word sustainability means different things to different people. The challenge is to frame the context of sustainability so that we can decide what to sustain, for whom, how, and for how long, and at what cost for the present and for the future. We will work together through the Community Collaborative Workshops to define sustainability for the national forests of the Blue Mountains.

Most definitions of sustainability that have been developed over the last 10-15 years express the human desire for sustaining the health, diversity, and productivity of an environment that can provide society's needs now and for future generations of all living beings (Gladwin, 2001). There are many different perspectives and expectations about what this means.

Describing sustainable conditions is difficult because sustainability is a human value, not a fixed condition. Sustainability is affected by the ecological capability of the environment to support resource conditions and it is influenced by social values and economic expectations of people. It is also complicated by the fact that these ecological, social, and economic conditions can easily change over time.

Will the three components of sustainability (social, economic, and ecological) all have the same weight?

Yes, the land management plans will attempt to achieve a balance between the three components of sustainability.

Will there be a review of the interim directions such as PACFISH (Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-producing Watersheds in eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and portions of California – 1995), INFISH (Inland Native Fish Strategy – 1995), and the Eastside Screens?

PACFISH, INFISH, and the Eastside Screens will be reviewed as we revise the land management plans and the appropriate parts will be incorporated into the new plan direction.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION

How much input will people outside of the area have in the process?

The Revision Team wants to work with everyone who is interested in the land management plan revision and who will be affected by it. We are hearing from many people both within and outside the planning area. Each and every viewpoint receives equal consideration regardless of where it comes from or how many times it is expressed.

How is this collaborative process different than consensus?

Consensus implies that everyone agrees; we would like that, but don't expect it will happen. We will work together (collaboratively) to get as close as we can to consensus.

How will the decisions be made regarding issues that never have consensus? What criteria will be used? Will they be based on the majority opinion?

Decisions will not be based on majority opinion. We will sit down and look at the information we have. The Revision Team's job is to present the information and pros and cons to the Forest Supervisors, who will make the decision based in part on what is sustainable.

COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

What is the involvement of the American Indian tribes in the revision process?

American Indian tribes are sovereign nations. As such they are government entities with which the Forest Service establishes and maintains a government-to-government relationship. Through treaties, tribes have reserved rights and privileges for their tribal members on the lands ceded to the U.S. Government. The Forest Service now manages some of the lands ceded in the treaties. These treaties carry a legal responsibility by the U.S. Government toward American Indian tribes. This obligates the Forest Service to carry out laws and executive orders enacted for the protection and benefit of federally recognized American Indian tribes. To meet these responsibilities, the Forest Service is required to consult with tribes whenever our proposed policies or forest management actions may affect their interests. We are meeting this obligation in the following ways:

- Through formal consultation involving face-to-face meetings between Forest Supervisors and the Tribal Councils of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Nez Perce Tribe.
- By continuing staff-to-staff consultations through already existing relationships with these tribes.
- By making the tribes aware of and encouraging them to participate in opportunities to work collaboratively in developing the proposed Revised Land Management Plans.
- By responding to requests for involvement by other federally recognized tribes in whatever appropriate and reasonable manner they request.

How will threatened and endangered species be dealt with in the Land Management Plan Revision process?

- Recovery plans, existing conservation strategies and agreements are being considered in developing plan components. Consulting agencies may be involved in determining how the plan components will contribute to recovery of listed species.

RECREATION

What kinds of recreation activities will be allowed in the revised land management plans?

The Revised Land Management Plans will not include a specific list of what recreation activities are allowed on national forest lands. In lieu of this, the Revised Land Management Plans will include general guidelines for the range of suitable recreation activities in a particular area. Within the Blue Mountains, the activities that you will be able to experience in the future will depend upon many factors such as compatibility with the natural resources, appropriateness for the social setting, and complying with national laws and regulations. A wide range of settings and opportunities are currently available on all three national forests; these range from extremely primitive, like hiking in the North Fork John Day Wilderness, to the more developed camping experience at Magone Lake Campground.

The Revised Land Management Plans will address the kinds of outdoor recreation activities most likely to be appropriate on national forest lands in broad categories such as “motorized” and “non-motorized” or “developed” and “dispersed”. A comprehensive assessment at the national, regional, and local level will be done to determine trends in supply and demand for the various types of uses in these broad categories. Each forest will then identify their special niche towards providing these uses. In many cases these activities can be provide on national forest land, however, some activities will be better suited for off-forest sites or managed by private entities under permit from the Forest Service.

ROADLESS AREAS AND WILDERNESS

What is the difference between wilderness and roadless?

Wilderness is a congressional designation. The 1964 Wilderness Act defines congressionally designated wilderness as, “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain”.

This Act further defines an area of wilderness to mean an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which “(1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.”

Roadless Areas or *Inventoried Roadless Areas*: These terms mean many things to many different people. In the initial land management planning process, roadless areas were identified as the first step to determining what areas might be suited for wilderness recommendation – areas with wilderness potential - and are identified in Appendix C of each of the four *Final Environmental Impact Statements (FEIS)* for the *current* Land Management Plans. Appendix C of each land management plan identified inventoried roadless areas and their potential wilderness values. Roadless lands on national forests have been addressed in several studies: in the 1970’s studies called RARE and RAREII “Roadless Area Review and Evaluation” (RARE). The current Appendix C inventoried areas were also included in the “2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule”. The “2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule,” and subsequent roadless area rulemaking, provides management direction for the lands specified in the rules, but this rulemaking is not intended for making wilderness recommendations or designations.

What is the status of the “Roadless Rule”?

The Forest Service announced its final rule on the conservation of roadless areas on May 5, 2005, the State Petitions for Inventoried Roadless Area Management Rule. On September 20, 2006, a federal judge reinstated the “2001 Roadless Rule,” a Clinton-era ban on road construction in nearly a third of national forests. Litigation over the ruling is ongoing. Visit the Roadless Area Conservation website for current information (<http://www.roadless.fs.fed.us/>).

How will the decision be made to recommend areas out of the wilderness “inventory” as new wilderness?

Wilderness is being addressed in a three-step process during land management plan revision. These three steps include a review of areas with wilderness potential, an evaluation of the capability, availability, and need for these areas to be wilderness, and the determination of management direction.

We do not know at this time if the Revised Land Management Plans will recommend new wilderness.

Review - Interdisciplinary teams made up of natural resource specialists who know the areas well, updated information about the resources of the lands described in Appendix C of the current Land Management Plans. The draft results of this review and update of the inventory were available for public review in April 2005. Further refinements to the inventory are being made based on public comments and additional Forest Service review.

Evaluation - After the review and update of the inventory is completed, areas in the inventory are evaluated to decide whether to recommend them for additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Under the Forest Service Handbook criteria, areas with wilderness potential are evaluated for capability, availability, and need. Any decision to recommend designation of an area for wilderness is identified at that time.

Determination - The evaluations are reviewed and management direction is decided with full knowledge of the environmental consequences.

Who will make the decision to recommend new wilderness?

The decision whether to recommend additional wilderness areas will be made by the Forest Supervisors at the time a decision on the Revised Land Management Plan is made. Proposed recommendations will be identified in the Proposed Revised Land Management Plans in 2007.

How much wilderness was recommended in the current Land Management Plan?

The current Land Management Plans for the national forests of the Blue Mountains do not recommend any new wilderness. The 1984 Oregon Wilderness Act and others created many wilderness acres prior to the finalized land management plans and included direction that Oregon national forests did not have to make additional wilderness recommendations during the initial round of land management planning.

What protocol was used for the update and review of the inventory?

The *Forest Service Handbook* outlines detailed criteria for the review of lands with potential for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. While the inventory process itself is NOT a land management plan decision, the evaluation of lands with wilderness potential and recommendation for new wilderness is.

How did you select areas to consider?

The existing Land Management Plan Appendix C - Inventoried Roadless Areas establish the starting point for the current review and update of the inventory of areas with wilderness potential. Using inventory criteria outlined in Forest Service Handbook (FSH 1909.12, 7.1), the review and update is anchored in the existing Appendix C areas. The review and update is used to correct misapplication of criteria and incorporate changed conditions since the initial land management plan. The review and update process does not resolve issues based on public disagreement with the criteria. Examples of errors include inclusion of private property to determine area size, mapping errors that misrepresent the intended area, or instances where an area meeting the criteria was simply overlooked in the initial inventory. The inventory review and update process involves both increases and decreases to the Appendix C areas.

Situations that may result in acreage changes:

- Corrections, including mapping refinements and errors in the 1990 application of inventory criteria
- Management activities that have occurred since the last inventory such as road construction, timber harvest, or other developments that are inconsistent with the inventory criteria in the Forest Service Handbook
- Disposal of national forest lands or acquisition of private lands through land exchanges

We are not changing the criteria outlined in the Forest Service Handbook or starting a new, zero-based inventory. It is important to keep the focus on review and update of the existing information from Appendix C of the current Land Management Plans, and to remain consistent with the criteria in the Forest Service Handbook. Any suggested changes to the 1990 inventory must include the reason for the change.

Can areas identified in the current Land Management Plans as having wilderness potential ever be developed?

Yes. Areas inventoried as having wilderness potential should not be considered “de-facto wilderness”.

Inventoried Roadless Areas encompass 18% of the national forest land within the Blue Mountains. There are 79 Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) totaling almost 981,457 acres.

The existing land management plans provided direction that allowed road building and timber harvest in some IRAs.

- In the Malheur National Forest Plan 101,094 acres of the IRAs were categorized as available for development and 79,854 acres were categorized as unavailable for development. The portion of the Ochoco National Forest now managed by the Emigrant Creek Ranger District has an additional 3,504 acres not scheduled for development, and 3,955 acres scheduled for timber and range management.
- In the Umatilla National Forest Plan 86,100 acres of the IRAs were categorized as available for development and 195,000 acres were categorized as unavailable.
- The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Plan (outside of the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area) has 130,510 acres of the IRAs were categorized as available for development and 121,470 acres were categorized as unavailable.

Not all of the timber harvest and road construction that was projected in the current land management plans has occurred. Areas not recommended for wilderness are considered for other management direction, which is determined through the land management planning process, depending upon the characteristics of each area. This decision is based on the desired values and uses for a particular area as identified through a public involvement process.

What kinds of activities would be allowed in these areas with wilderness potential?

Under the revised land management plans, areas identified as having wilderness potential could be managed to protect specific values or uses identified by the public or the agency. There may be some changes in motorized access opportunities. It is important that the public share their thoughts about particular areas so that the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team has a broad understanding about how these areas are currently being used or could be used. This will help create a Revised Land Management Plan that includes future management that is responsive to people’s needs and to the desired conditions for the area.

Why should I care about areas with wilderness potential, where they exist, and how they are managed in the future?

The collaborative process is an opportunity to interact meaningfully with interested parties in the inventory review and update. As we move through this review and update of the inventory, we want to keep all involved parties focused on identifying changes based on the inventory criteria outlined in the Forest Service Handbook. Although some parties may choose to create their own inventory using different criteria, it is important to note that the Forest Service will keep a consistent approach to the review and update of areas with wilderness potential, based on the criteria in the Forest Service Handbook.

What happens to acres that are in the inventory but not recommended for wilderness?

Areas not recommended for wilderness will be considered for other management direction, which is determined through the land management planning process, depending upon the characteristics of each area. This decision is based on the desired values and uses for a particular area as identified through a public involvement process.

Could the simple fact that an acre of land is in the inventory provide the basis for a lawsuit?

No, the inventory itself is NOT a land management plan decision, although the recommendation for new wilderness is subject to legal action.

Nearly 1 million acres inventoried that “could” become wilderness seems like a lot. Is this comparable to the number of acres inventoried in the last planning process? Are they the same areas shown in the last Plan? How much or how little overlap is there?

The existing Land Management Plan Appendix C - Inventoried Roadless Areas establish the starting point for the current review and update of the inventory of areas with wilderness potential. The 2006 inventory is 23,333 acres less than the current Land Management Plan inventory. The review and update corrected misapplication of criteria and reflects changed conditions since the initial land management plan. Examples of errors include inclusion of private property to determine area size, mapping errors that misrepresent the intended area, or instances where an area meeting the criteria was simply overlooked in the initial inventory.

Why can't the wilderness areas be identified once and for all?

The National Forest Management Act (1976) requires that each national forest go through the process of inventorying and evaluating areas with wilderness potential each time a land management plan is revised. Additionally and the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984 requires this review and evaluation for national forest system lands in Oregon when land management plans are revised and the 2005 Planning Regulations re-emphasizes these requirements.

If an individual is really opposed or supportive of an acre being in the inventory, what can or should he/she do?

The collaborative process is an opportunity to interact meaningfully with interested parties in the inventory review and update. The Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision Team is committed to a collaborative process for review and update of the inventory and evaluation of areas with wilderness potential. In Round Three of the Blue Mountains Land Management Plan Revision Collaborative Community Workshops (April, 2005) we introduced our inventory and evaluation process, discussed important contributions and constraints of areas with wilderness potential, and began taking comments from the public on the updated inventory. If someone has additional comments, he/she should contact the Revision Team by phone, email/letter, or personal visit.

ACCESS AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

How does the National OHV Rule fit in with land management planning?

The Final Travel Management Rule, also referred to as the OHV rule, was adopted in November 2005. The rule directs national forests to continue partnerships and working relationships with interest groups to provide enhanced motorized recreation opportunities by having a system of designated routes and designated areas providing opportunities for OHV use while still ensuring that natural resources are protected.

The Final Travel Management Rule (OHV Rule) will be implemented nationwide across the Forest Service and will require about four years of analysis and public involvement. This process will occur separate from the revision process on the portions of the Blue Mountains land management plan revision area located in Oregon and Washington. The result will be travel management maps that designate specific roads, trails, and areas open for motor vehicle use on all national forests and grasslands. This process will NOT occur within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area and there are no plans to change the management direction or decisions in the recently completed Comprehensive Management Plan for Hells Canyon.

Revising the land management plans will give us the opportunity to apply the OHV Rule consistently across the three forests for more satisfactory recreation experiences while protecting valuable resources. The designation is expected to be an open public process, based on direction in the current land management plans.

The Revised Land Management Plans will discuss what areas are best suited for OHV and other types of recreational use. Plan Revision will not be making site-specific decisions about where OHV routes should or should not be located; this will be a Ranger District or project-level decision requiring additional public participation. Site-specific evaluations, which are not part of the land management plan revision process, will assist land managers in deciding available OHV opportunities in specific areas.

The OHV Rule does NOT apply to over-snow vehicles. More information about the OHV Rule can be found on the National Forest Service Headquarters' website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/ohv/>

Why does the Forest Service keep closing so many roads?

The Revised Land Management Plans will not make site-specific decisions about which roads will be open or closed; this will remain a Ranger District or project-level decision and will require public participation. There are several reasons why the Forest Service closes roads:

To reduce sediment: Unsurfaced roads are chronic sources of sediment from surface runoff which, when entering a stream, reduces water quality and habitat for aquatic species. Over time, this runoff can cause erosion, also adding sediment to streams. In addition, road drainage systems, such as water bars and culverts, may channel road surface sediment directly into streams. Once in the stream, high levels of fine sediment can increase filtration costs in public water supplies and reduce the spawning success of salmon and trout.

To meet transportation system management goals: Forest roads should provide public and administrative access to national forest lands, and be designed and maintained to have minimal adverse impacts to land and water resources. The Forest Service has national direction requiring a "roads analysis" to evaluate changes in the transportation system (FSM 7700, Chapter 7710). Locally, site-specific analyses of roads that are causing severe resource impacts have identified roads that need to be either improved (to eliminate or greatly reduce the impacts) or decommissioned (if they are no longer needed).

In response to budget reductions: Locally, there have been some site-specific decisions to close roads because the funding is no longer available to maintain them in a safe and environmentally sound condition. Over the last few years, budget reductions have made the Forest Service take a hard look at the efficiency of the road system and the current backlog of necessary road maintenance on all types of roads.

To meet open road density goals: The road density standards contained within the existing land management plans resulted from an integrated analysis focused on balancing the needs of big game with timber management objectives. As specific projects have been implemented, open roads (not needed for other reasons) have been closed to meet land management plan standards. The open road density standard varies between 1.5 miles of open road per square mile and 2.5 miles of open road per square mile depending on the big game management goals for a particular area. These are measured and/or monitored at the watershed level.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

What are Wild and Scenic Rivers?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 establishes three classes of river systems: wild, scenic, and recreation. The purpose of the act was to protect designated rivers "...for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations".

What is the genesis of the Act?

Due to dams, diversions, and water resource development projects which occurred from the 1930's to the 1960's, the need for a national system of river protection was recognized by conservationists (notably Frank and John Craighead), congressional representatives such as Frank Church, and federal agencies. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was an outgrowth of a national conservation agenda of the 1950's and 1960's, captured in the 1962 recommendations of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission. The Act concluded that selected rivers be preserved in a free-flowing condition and be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

When was the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act passed?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542) was enacted on October 2, 1968 and has been amended many times, primarily to designate additional rivers and authorize additional rivers for study for possible inclusion.

How are rivers designated?

There are two ways rivers can be designated into the national system:

- *By an act of Congress.* Rivers designated by Congress are listed in Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- *By the Secretary of the Interior.* The Secretary may designate a river; however, it must first be designated into a valid state river protective system by or pursuant to state law(s), and the appropriate governor(s) must apply. Applications by the states are evaluated and processed by the National Park Service.

What qualifies a river as a Wild and Scenic River for the national system?

To be eligible for designation, a river must be free-flowing (not to be confused with ‘naturally flowing’ which is explained later) and contain at least one Outstandingly Remarkable Value. An Outstandingly Remarkable Value may be scenic, recreational, geologic, related to fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar value.

When is a river or river segment evaluated for eligibility for possible inclusion in the national system?

There are three instances when federal agencies assess eligibility: 1) at the request of Congress through specific authorized studies; 2) through their respective agency planning processes; or 3) by the National Park Service evaluation of a Section 2(a)(ii) application. River areas identified through the inventory phase are evaluated for their free-flowing nature and must possess at least one Outstandingly Remarkable Value.

What is the definition of “free-flowing?”

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act defines free-flowing as “existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway”. The existence of small dams, diversion works, or other minor structures does not automatically disqualify a river as a potential addition to the national system. Congress did not intend all rivers to be “naturally flowing,” (flowing without any man-made up or downstream manipulation). The presence of impoundments above and/or below the segment (including those which may regulate flow regimes within the segment), and existing minor dams or diversion structures within the study area, do not necessarily render a river segment non-eligible. There are segments in the national system which are downstream from major dams or are located between dams.

How can a river below a dam or impoundment be considered “free-flowing”?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act defines a “river” as “a flowing body of water...or portion, section, or tributary thereof...” “Free-flowing” is defined as “existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment...” Therefore, any section of river with flowing water meets the technical definition of free-flowing, even if impounded upstream.

What is the definition of “Outstandingly Remarkable Value?”

In the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, river values identified include scenic, recreational, geologic, related to fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values. It does not further define Outstandingly Remarkable Values. Agency resource professionals develop and interpret criteria in evaluating river values (unique, rare, or exemplary) based on professional judgment on a regional, physiographic, or geographic comparative basis.

What are possible “other similar” Outstandingly Remarkable Values?

Examples of other similar Outstandingly Remarkable Values include botanical, hydrological, paleontological, scientific, or heritage values.

What types of watercourses qualify for wild and scenic designation?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act defines a river as “a flowing body of water or estuary, or a section, portion, or tributary thereof, including rivers, streams, creeks, runs, kills, rills, and small lakes.”

What are some of the aspects or steps federal agencies go through in their evaluation of potential wild and scenic rivers in their land management planning process?

There are a number of aspects that federal agencies use in their planning or evaluation process:

- Assessment of free-flowing condition and Outstandingly Remarkable Values.
- Determination or finding of eligibility or non-eligibility.
- Inventoried or tentative classification based on the development of shoreline, watercourse, and access.
- Establishment of tentative, preliminary, or proposed boundaries and/or river areas.

- Establishment of protective management requirements for eligible rivers.

When and how are rivers classified as wild or scenic?

Once determined eligible, river segments are tentatively classified for study as either wild, scenic, or recreational based on the degree of access and amount of development along the river area. If designated by congress, the enabling legislation generally specifies the classification. The following factors are generally used to assign classification of individual river segments: accessibility, primitive nature, number and type of land developments, structures, water resource developments, and water quality.

What is the difference between a “Wild”, “Scenic”, and “Recreational” river?

Any rivers designated in the national system are classified in one of three categories depending on the extent of development and accessibility along each section. Designated river segments are classified and administered under one of the following, as defined in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act:

Wild river areas: Those rivers, or sections of rivers, that are free of impoundments, generally inaccessible except by trail (no roads), with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and having unpolluted waters.

Scenic river areas: Those rivers, or sections of rivers, that are free of impoundments, having shorelines or watersheds largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads (roads may cross but generally not parallel the river). These rivers are usually more developed than wild and less developed than recreational. This classification may or may not include scenery as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value.

Recreational river areas: Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along the shoreline, and may have had some impoundment or diversion in the past. This classification, however, does not imply that recreation is an Outstandingly Remarkable Value, nor that the segment must be managed or developed for recreational activities.

What is the significance of a river’s tentative classification?

River segments may be tentatively classified for protective management purposes prior to a final suitability determination and/or congressional action. This ensures that river values and characteristics are protected (subject to agency policies and standards) until the evaluation process and possible designation is completed.

Can a Wild and Scenic River have more than one classification?

Although rivers included in the national system are usually referred to as “Wild and Scenic Rivers,” there are three classifications (wild, scenic, or recreational) which may be applied to a particular river segment. Distinct segments along the river may contain differing and non-overlapping classifications. For example, a 100-mile designated wild and scenic river may be classified as wild for 50 miles, scenic for 30 miles, and recreational for 20 miles.

What are the differences in Wild and Scenic River access opportunities and limitations under the three classifications?

River access is evaluated in the land use planning process. Specific access needs for public enjoyment, as well as any limitations, are determined in a River Management Plan. In keeping with the requirements of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, “wild” rivers are generally inaccessible, except by trail (no roads); “scenic” rivers are accessible by road, which generally don’t parallel the river; and “recreational” rivers may have parallel or crossing road and railroad access.

Once a river segment has been determined eligible and given a tentative classification (wild, scenic or recreational), how are its values protected?

Protective management of federal lands in the river area begins at the time the river segment(s) has been found eligible (except for non-federal lands under Section 5(a) study rivers, in which case the provisions of Sections 7(b), 8(b) and 9(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act apply). The identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values are afforded adequate protection, subject to valid existing rights. Protective management may be initiated by the administering agency as soon as eligibility is determined. Specific management prescriptions for eligible river segments provide protection in the following ways:

- **Free-flowing Values:** The free-flowing characteristics of eligible river segments cannot be modified to allow stream impoundments, diversions, channelization, and/or riprapping to the extent authorized under law.
- **River-related Values:** Each segment shall be managed to protect Outstandingly Remarkable Values (subject to valid existing rights) and, to the extent practicable, such values shall be enhanced.
- **Classification Impacts:** Management and development of the eligible river and its corridor should not be modified, subject to valid existing rights, to the degree that its eligibility or tentative classification would be affected (for example, tentative river area classification cannot be changed from wild to scenic, or from scenic to recreational).

How many Wild and Scenic Rivers do we currently have?

Across the Blue Mountain national forests, there are 13 rivers designated by congress as Wild and Scenic. On those 13 rivers, 201 miles are classified “wild”, 95 miles are classified “scenic”, and 104 miles are classified “recreation”.

What does this have to do with the Blue Mountains Forest Plan revision?

The Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968 states that, “In all planning for use and development of water and related land resources, consideration shall be given by all federal agencies involved to potential wild, scenic and recreational river areas, and all river basin and project plan reports submitted to congress shall consider and discuss any such potentials.”

In addition, the Forest Service Handbook requires that national forest planning address all rivers designated by congress for study, in the nationwide river inventory, or identified as a potential wild and scenic river by a national forest, wholly or partially on national forest lands. Treatment may vary, but generally, planning teams should: 1) evaluate each river to verify that it meets the eligibility criteria specified in Sections 1(b) and 2(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and document the finding of eligibility or non-eligibility, and 2) identify the river's tentative classification in the land management plan. At such time when funding is available, the Forest Service will: 3) conduct a suitability analysis, and 4) make a decision whether or not to recommend designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

What are the Eastside Screens?

The Regional Forester signed a regional plan amendment incorporating the Eastside Screens into the land management plans for all national forests east of the Cascade Mountains (“eastside”) in Oregon and Washington in 1993. The Eastside Screens were intended as a short-term approach to maintaining future planning options concerning wildlife habitat associated with late and old structure (LOS) forests and to protect anadromous fish habitat by restricting timber harvest in certain situations.

The amendment established a series of three screens that are applied to areas being considered for timber harvest. Only timber sales consistent with the screens can be prepared and offered.

- The first screen required protecting streams using zones of various widths depending on whether the stream flow is permanent, intermittent, or ephemeral. This screen was replaced by a second regional plan amendment incorporating PACFISH/INFISH direction in 1995.
- The second screen required a comparison of historical forest structural stages with current conditions in the analysis area.
- The results of this comparison guide activities in the third set of screens that contains standards for treatment within late or old structure forest stands, connectivity between late and old structure forest stands, snags and down logs, and goshawk habitat.

What is the “21-inch rule” associated with the Eastside Screens?

The 21-inch rule is contained within Screen 3 of the Eastside Screens. It applies to two different scenarios:

- In the first scenario, where levels of late and old structural forest stages (LOS) are below the range of what occurred historically in the analysis area, timber sale activities are prohibited within LOS stands, and all *live* trees greater than 21 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) must be retained outside LOS forest stands.
- Although rarely applicable, in the second scenario, the level of LOS is within or exceeds historic levels, timber harvest activities can occur in LOS forest stands and could include the harvest of trees greater than 21 inches DBH.

How will invasive weeds be addressed in the revised plans?

The Forest Service recently developed an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze the effects of invasive plants on ecosystems in Oregon and Washington. The Invasive Plant EIS developed measures for prevention, treatment, and monitoring of invasive plants on national forest lands. These new measures have been amended into all land management plans in Oregon and Washington. Each of the Blue Mountains national forests is completing more detailed site-specific analyses of the effects of implementing individual weed treatment projects incorporating the new measures into each project. The Revised Land Management Plans will also include these measures.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

How will economic flows of goods and services be determined?

The Revision Team will be describing the types of goods and services, both market and non-market, that the ecosystems have provided historically and the desires people have expressed for the future. The team, together with all interested parties, will need to define how to measure these flows to appropriately account for how they are related to the ecological and social systems. For example, ‘biomass removed’ as a marketed good may provide an economic value in the form of timber harvested. An example of a non-market service is recreation use.

We have been working together to determine which areas are suitable for which uses. This will help us better understand what ranges of desired conditions may be sustainable into the future.

What does “optimum” land ownership pattern mean?

A primary objective of the Forest Service lands program is to consolidate lands within the original boundaries of the national forests to facilitate improved protection and management of natural resources or to improve access to national forest lands. Land acquisitions and purchases are only pursued on a willing seller basis. In addition, any exchange or purchase must be determined to be in the public interest.

How will land management plan revision affect my mining claim?

Mining activity and access to mineral claims on federal lands is guided by numerous federal laws and statutes. The Organic Act of 1897 provides for the continuing right to conduct mineral activities under the general mining laws as long as the rules and regulations governing the access and use of national forest lands are complied with. The Organic Act also recognizes the rights of miners and prospectors to access national forest lands for “all proper and lawful purposes,” including prospecting, locating, and developing mineral resources. The Forest Service recognizes that mineral exploration and development are important parts of its management program. However, the Forest Service also has the responsibility to ensure that exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources are conducted in an environmentally sound manner and that these activities are integrated with the planning and management of other natural resources.