



USDA FOREST SERVICE

Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests

What a Forest Plan DOES and DOES NOT Do

Last Revised 2/22/2006

Land and Resource Management Plans – more commonly known as “forest plans” – are completed for every national forest. Congress decided long ago (1973 and 1976) what goes into a Forest Plan. In January 2005 the Forest Service issued a new Planning Rule which provided clarifying regulations and policies about the forest planning process.

The Revised Blue Mountain Forest Plan will make several key decisions and, of lasting importance, create layered and over-arching management direction. In other words, it provides the framework within which other project decisions can then be made on a case-by-case and site-specific basis. Just as important as what this Revised Forest Plan *will* do are those things it *will not* do:

Topic	The Forest Plan...	The Forest Plan...
<i>Laws, regulations, and policies</i>	DOES use guidance provided by the Forest Service Handbook, Forest Service Manual, and other federal regulations and policies to create an over-arching management plan – for the Blue Mountain's national forests.	DOES NOT make law, regulations, or policy. The Forest Plan is NOT a policy-making document; it reflects agency policy and goals.
<i>Budget for local Forest Service operations</i>	DOES consider financial feasibility of implementing plan goals and objectives.	DOES NOT determine funding levels for the national forests; budget allocations are determined in other ways.
<i>Travel management</i>	DOES identify what kinds of travel are suitable to particular parcels of land, based on desired conditions and other designations. Can vary by season of year.	DOES NOT make the decision to open, close, or otherwise restrict use of specific roads, trails, and designated areas to certain modes of travel (for example ATVs or mountain bikes). Decisions regarding specific roads, trails, and designated areas are made through project-level NEPA analysis and decision documents.
<i>Timber harvests</i>	DOES identify sustainable annual yields and DOES identify which lands are suitable for timber harvests for various objectives including timber production.	DOES NOT identify individual areas that will be offered for sale.
<i>Timber sales</i>	DOES provide desired conditions, strategies and design criteria to determine where and how sales can occur based on goals and objectives.	DOES NOT approve any site-specific timber sale.
<i>Grazing allotments</i>	DOES analyze and disclose which lands are suitable for grazing and describes the desired conditions for grazing practices.	DOES NOT make a decision about what to do with specific allotment management plans and permit renewals.

<i>Oil and gas</i>	DOES identify lands where potential for development exists.	DOES NOT control timing or extent or leasing activities below the surface, nor does it authorize surface activity. Specific activities are considered in project-level analysis.
<i>Coal</i>	DOES identify lands available for further consideration for coal leasing based on coal resource occurrence. Establishes surface and below-surface stipulations.	DOES NOT permit leasing, exploration or development. Further lease-specific activities are analyzed in NEPA.
<i>Land exchanges</i>	DOES identify values and considerations to be evaluated in potential exchange of land parcels. DOES identify landscapes where opportunities to consolidate landownership patterns should be or should not be pursued to meet the desired conditions.	DOES NOT identify or prioritize specific parcels for exchanges. Guidance governing required analyses for land exchanges is found in Forest Service manuals and handbooks.
<i>Ski areas</i>	DOES identify which lands have suitability, desired conditions, strategies and design criteria that emphasize ski-based resorts.	DOES NOT approve creation of any additional infrastructure such as lifts, runs, or snowmaking facilities.
<i>Endangered species</i>	DOES provide desired conditions, strategies, and design criteria to ensure sustainable habitat conditions for species that have been listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act.	DOES NOT decide which species will be protected under the Endangered Species Act. That is a decision made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service.
<i>Hunting and wildlife management</i>	DOES describe desired conditions, strategies and design criteria for managing habitat for many game and non-game species.	DOES NOT set hunting seasons, or designate areas as open or closed to hunting, or set harvest levels or hunting fees.
<i>Wilderness</i>	DOES allocate land to area designations that are managed for wilderness and other values. DOES recommend to Congress those areas that are capable and suitable for designation as wilderness.	DOES NOT create or designate lands as Wilderness.
<i>Wild, scenic and recreational rivers</i>	DOES identify those river segments eligible as wild, scenic, or recreational under the nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. DOES identify eligible river corridors to be managed to maintain the values that provide eligibility for wild, scenic, and/or recreational rivers.	DOES NOT designate those rivers as wild, scenic, or recreational. Finding of eligibility DOES NOT automatically launch further study.
<i>Law enforcement</i>	DOES emphasize cooperative partnerships and collaborative activities with stakeholder groups and local communities and governments.	DOES NOT include directives about law enforcement, specify enforcement staffing, or budget for those operations.