Strategic Plan

The *Malheur National Forest Strategic Plan* developed in 2007 (USDA 2007) is the MNF's model for developing an integrated program to implement restorations projects. The Strategy was developed by ranking subwatersheds with a set of qualitative and quantitative values to determine the priority for restoration work. Final scores are illustrated in Map 5 in the Map Section. The relative rankings of subwatersheds were used to develop a 5-year action plan and program of work for specific resource areas. Refer to the entire *Malheur National Forest Strategic Plan* for more information (USDA 2007).

Resource Specific Plans

The MNF has developed a variety of specific plans that tier to the Strategic Plan and guide restoration activities.

The *Collaborative Restoration Stewardship Business Plan* (USDA 2009) was developed to institutionalize the long-term Stewardship Contract. This business plan defines the MNF mission, strategy, scope of products, services, market, sustainability, feedstock and workforce analysis. Based on the plan, MNF received $8 million to complete stewardship fuels reduction activities from appropriated and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funding.

A Forest-wide *Beaver Management Strategy* (USDA 2007) was collaboratively developed with multiple partners including tribes, environmental groups, conservation districts and local, state and federal agencies. The strategy focuses on the need for integrating the role of beaver in aquatic restoration. Developed in accordance with land management planning direction, the strategy promotes ecological sustainability by using beaver as a key species to restore and maintain healthy wetland and riparian habitat.

The MNF *Aquatic/Watershed Restoration Strategy* identifies objectives to improve watershed conditions. Achieving this outcome requires focusing on the following broad objectives: assessing and restore high-priority watersheds and maintain riparian habitat in these watersheds; monitoring water quality impacts of activities on NFS lands; and restoring and maintaining native and desired nonnative plant, aquatic and animal species diversity. The strategy is being used to restore watershed health and contribute to species recovery.

Integration and funding for these programs has largely been a function of working on key projects with collaborative partners.

Collaborative Strategic Plans

Collaborative partners have initiated and engaged with the Forest in developing strategic plans for landscape restoration. Blue Mountains Forest Partners hosted a strategic planning session for the portion of the MNF in Grant County in 2009. Their *Strategic Plan of the Forest Collaborative of Grant County, Oregon* outlines a mission, vision and specific goals for working together and with the MNF to "improve the resilience and well-being of forests and communities

in the Blue Mountains" (BMFP 2009). The Harney County Restoration Collaborative conducted a similar exercise in developing their *Harney County Restoration Collaborative Declaration of Cooperation* signed by all members in 2009. The declaration contains members support statements, collaborative goals, commonly held desired future conditions, and operating guidelines.

In 2009 and 2010, The Nature Conservancy, Blue Mountains Forest Partners, Harney County Restoration Collaborative, and MNF convened a collaborative process called the "Big Look." The Big Look area is the combined Emigrant East and Grant County large-landscape scale planning areas on the Forest south of the Strawberry Mountains within Grant and Harney counties.

The goal was to develop a values-based map that informed the Forest about common priorities for restoration efforts and investments on 360,000 acres of the south half of the Forest (within the core of the current Proposal Area). The process was the first convening of the groups to develop a strategic, landscape-scale look at shared values. The final values that were considered for mapping to determine shared priorities are listed in Table 7 below.

Table 7 - Big Look Scored Values (Subwatersheds)

STAND DENSITY	Fire regime 1 and mid- to late-seral closed canopy
FREQUENT FIRE SYSTEMS	Fire regime 1 (0-35 year fire return interval)
KEY HABITAT	DOG's and ROG's and Goshawk
OLD GROWTH	Trees greater than 21 inches and DOG's and ROG's
ECOLOGICALLY DEPARTED AREAS	FRCC
ADJACENT PRIVATE LANDS	½ mile buffer
INFRASTRUCTURE/MILLS	Forest vegetation within 800 feet of existing road and on 35% or less slope

The final scores were used to determine the relative ranking of subwatersheds. Final results for values at risk are illustrated in Map 6 in the Maps Section. The mapped values of concern to stakeholders and the Forest identified the highest relative rankings as priority areas with the greatest support for restoration projects. Refer to the *Big Look Landscape Assessment, Values Analysis and Treatment Priorities* report for complete details and maps (The Nature Conservancy 2010).

Malheur National Forest - Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy

The new USDA vision for the Forest Service has articulated clear direction for aligning leadership and resources around a common goal of restoration across all landscapes and all ownerships. The administration specifies five emphasis areas as: restoring and sustaining forest landscapes, protecting and enhancing water resources and watershed health; making landscapes more resilient to climate change, responsible budgeting for wildfire, and creating jobs and sustaining communities.

The Malheur National Forest Leadership Team considered the Strategic Plan results, resource specific priorities, ongoing collaboration plans and emerging efforts along with the new USDA vision and priorities and other ecological, social, economic and institutional considerations to develop a *Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy*. The current Strategy outlines a vision and restoration goals for the Forest.

Vision

Our shared vision with these groups and local communities is of restored landscapes and sustainable ecosystems resilient to uncharacteristic wildfire and adaptive to disturbance regimes and climatic influences. Whole watersheds are healthy, functional and provide a diversity of native aquatic, wildlife, and plant habitats and species. Wood products and contracting infrastructures are viable and responsive to existing and new opportunities for restoration-based industries. Visitors and residents enjoy dispersed recreation, local history and traditional cultures and contribute to the health of the whole ecosystem, including the social and economic well-being of surrounding communities. Through collaborative processes and adaptive learning, the MNF and partners use science-based decision-making to support and foster landscape-scale approaches to restoration.

Restoration Goals

The following four restoration goals were identified to guide program of work decisions and to maximize the benefits to all landscapes:

- Goal 1- Restore Landscape Resiliency – Restore landscape resiliency by increasing our ability to achieve multiple objectives in vegetation/fuels; and maintain or restore high priority watersheds and riparian sites to healthy conditions (i.e. implement the Forest Aquatic/Watershed Restoration strategy using watershed ratings and treatment area suitability).

- Goal 2- Improve Collaborative and Social Capacity – Focus on large landscape-scale areas where we have collaborative support and emphasize building trust and common ground. Create a path to more complex project areas adjacent to or outside the large-landscape scale areas that have a higher ecological need (i.e., Ragged Ruby, Big Mosquito, Bridge Creek, Deardorff, and Reynolds watersheds).

- Goal 3– Increase Economic and Organizational Capacity – Maintain a sustainable flow of work and outcomes with the appropriate workforce. Contribute to retaining current infrastructure, supporting new and emerging markets, and local economic benefits while taking on higher risk projects in the future (i.e., skyline logging, more expensive NEPA such as EISs).

- Goal 4- Ensure Efficiency and Effectiveness – Link restoration of landscapes across all lands and ownerships and demonstrate a logical progression within and across the Malheur National Forest with all partners (i.e. tribal, federal, state and private).

10-Year Action Plan

The focus of this Strategy is on integrating a suite of activities and investments to accomplish the Forest restoration goals. The 10-year program of work outlined in the Table 8 emphasizes an

integrated approach to reducing stand densities through commercial and pre-commercial thinning, utilization of woody biomass from these treatments, lowering fuel loads through fuel treatments, and restoring ecosystem services and functions through restoration activities (e.g. habitat fencing, road decommissioning, stream improvements, terrestrial and aquatic exotic species control, etc.). Project boundaries are based on subwatersheds.

Location of Proposal Area

The Proposal Area for the first 10-years of the CFLRP is the combined large-landscape scale areas initially defined for the Big Look. The area was selected and expanded to focus on high priority subwatersheds, the need to reduce fire risk across the landscape, build collaborative interests and working toward common ground, and proximity to existing infrastructure in local communities. These project areas are not shaded in Table 8. Refer to the Maps section for an illustration of project areas across the landscape.

Table 8 - Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy Project Areas

Project Name	District Lead	Area (acres)	Target NEPA Date	Ready for Implementation
Canyon Creek	BM	53,000	Complete	2006
16 Road	PC	5,000	Complete	2008
Dads	BM	7,000	Complete	2009
Rd. 18	BM	2,000	Complete	2010
Green Ant	EC	10,000	Complete	2010
Knox	PC	20,000	Complete	2010
Damon	PC	20,000	May 2010	2010
Jane	EC	32,000	June 2010	2010
Pine Beetle CE's	PC	1,000	September 2010	2010
Starr	BM	36,000	January 2011	2011
Galena	BM	36,000	2011	2011
Soda Bear	PC/BM	20,000	2011	2011
Marshall Devine	EC	35,000	2011	2012
Upper Pine	EC	32,000	2012	2013
Antelope	BM	11,000	2012	2013
Elk 16	PC	42,000	2012	2013
Austin 26	PC	1,000	2012	2013
Ragged Ruby	BM	33,000	2013	2014
Magone/Grub	BM	14,000	2013	2014
Summit	PC	22,000	2013	2014
Sage Hen (aquatics)	EC	2,000	2013	2014
Wolf	EC	36,000	2013	2014
Big Mosquito	BM	35,000	2014	2015
Bridge Creek	PC	12,000	2014	2015
Upper Camp Cr	EC	25,000	2014	2015

Lower & Middle Camp Cr	BM	29,000	2015	2016
Upper Bear/Lake Cr	PC/BM	38,000	2015	2016
Cliff	PC/EC	26,000	2015	2016
Rattlesnake	EC	25,000	2015	2016
CottonwoodClear Cr	BM	31,000	2016	2017
Reynolds	PC	16,000	2016	2017
Crowsfoot Cr	EC	14,000	2016	2017
Lower Deer & Corral Cr	BM	28,000	2017	2018
Deardorff	PC	11,000	2017	2018
Still Spring Cr	EC	15,000	2017	2018
Headwaters Silvies	BM	21,000	2018	2019
Upper Middle Fork	PC	35,000	2018	2019
Lonesome Cr	EC	10,000	2018	2019
Tex/Murderers	BM	39,000	2019	2020
Bear	PC	29,000	2019	2020
Sage Hen (terrestrial)	EC	17,000	2019	2020
Hog/Cyclone Cr	BM	24,000	2020	2021
Hay Cr	EC	18,000	2020	2021
Upper Scotty	BM	20,000	2021	2022
Total Acres:		**991,000**		
Proposal Area Total Contiguous Acres		***478,000 acres**		

*Total unshaded blocks represent projects in the Proposal Area.

Restoration Activities

Several types of ecological restoration activities are proposed for each project area in the Proposal Area. These activities include vegetation treatments (commercial and pre-commercial thinning, biomass removal), fuels treatments (whole tree yarding, grapple pile, hand pile, jackpot burning, underburning); aspen and cottonwood restoration (thinning of conifers, riparian fencing, hinging); riparian, aquatic, watershed and wildlife habitat improvements (road closures and decommissioning, remove/replace stream barriers, remove exotic species, provide screens on diversions, improve road drainage, large wood additions, noxious weed treatments, wetland/meadow enhancement, hardwood plantings, log weirs, and in-stream structures). Table 9 summarizes activities planned for accomplishment by year and over the next 10-years.

Table 9-Summary of Activities Planned for Accomplishment by Year and 10-year Total

Activities-Mechanism (Measure)	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	10 years
Commercial Thinning- Timber Sale & IRTC(Acres)	0	6,600	3,850	4,700	6,000	6,250	7,500	4,750	2,500	2,225	44,375

Commercial Thinning & Biomass- IRSC Acres	0	3,400	4,650	5,300	6,000	6,250	7,500	4,750	2,500	2,225	42,575
Pre-commercial Thinning and Treat/Remove the Biomass -IRSC, Service(Acres)	287	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	12,887
Underburning-Service, Agency (Acres)	0	2000	3000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	54,000
Roads decommission/Close-Service (Miles)	0	0	14	21	28	28	28	28	28	28	203
Fish passage /instream improvements & exotics –Agency, Service(Miles)	0	0	5	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	73
Aspen protect & restore-Service, Volunteer (Acres)	0	100	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	1,700
Wildlife forage enhancement-Service, Agency (Acres)	0	1,700	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	19,300
Creation of Large Wood in Riparian-Agency, Service(Miles)	0	0	5	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	70
Riparian Planting/Fencing-Service (Miles)	0	0	3	3	6	10	10	10	10	10	62
Noxious Weeds – Agency (Acres)	0	100	100	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	1,600