United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
email address: BLM_OR_MD_Mail@blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

SEP 04 2014

1613 (ORM050)

Dear Neighbor:

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of possible land management activities that may occur near your neighborhood. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are beginning the analysis process for a plan amendment to the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Table Rocks Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The area being considered is located north of Medford in Townships 35 and 36 South, Ranges 2 and 3 West (see enclosed Map).

Why is an RMP Amendment Needed for the Table Rocks ACEC?

Since the publication of the Medford District RMP in 1995, the BLM has acquired 1,084 acres of land adjacent to the Table Rocks ACEC. The BLM evaluated these lands and found they meet the criteria for an ACEC and require special management. The RMP amendment would revise the existing boundary of the Table Rocks ACEC to designate the 1,084 acres acquired by the BLM as ACEC lands, and remove ACEC designation from a 0.9-acre gravel area currently used for overflow parking that does not contain ACEC resources. The proposed expanded ACEC boundary will contain lands managed by the BLM, TNC, and private landowners; however, the ACEC designation and BLM management would be limited to BLM-managed lands only.

The lands included in the Table Rocks ACEC would add important habitat to the ACEC; provide increased protection of threatened, endangered, and sensitive resources; and allow for consistent management of the Table Rocks area. Expanding the ACEC boundary to encompass a larger area would create additional opportunities for the BLM to obtain funding for monitoring, restoration, recreation development, or acquiring additional parcels from willing sellers. Visitor use in the Table Rocks ACEC is currently close to 50,000 people per year. Acquiring additional parcels would help disperse use and reduce the impacts to sensitive resources on the tops of both Upper and Lower Table Rocks.

In 2011, the Table Rocks was selected as one of 101 projects across the United States in which the Federal government could partner with states to support President Obama's America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative. This RMP amendment will advance the AGO goals by building on state, local, private, and tribal priorities for the conservation of land, water, wildlife, historic, and cultural resources. The area is collaboratively managed through a partnership between the BLM, TNC, The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

The Table Rocks play a significant role in the spiritual and cultural history of Native American tribes and the area is still an important historical and spiritual link for local tribes. The importance of the Table Rocks to local Native American tribes and Rogue Valley residents was identified in the Department of Interior's America's Great Outdoors Fifty-State Report (November 2011). Secretarial

Order 3323 identifies the Table Rocks as a Landscape of Regional Significance, which are large areas of land and water with the highest conservation and heritage values.

What Happens Next?

The BLM will prepare written documentation of the RMP Amendment for the Table Rocks ACEC and its associated Environmental Assessment (EA) for the public to review. At this time, the BLM would like to hear any comments, issues, and concerns you have that would help shape or further develop the Table Rocks ACEC RMP Amendment.

We recognize that the public place a wide range of values on resources and resource use on public lands. Comments clearly expressing site-specific issues or concerns are the most helpful in this process. We are contacting you at this time so your concerns or ideas can be considered early in the development of the project proposal. Your initial comments will be most useful if they are received by October 8, 2014. However, we will accept and review your comments up until the time a decision is made on this project.

Please send your written comments to Bureau of Land Management, Butte Falls Resource Area, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon 97504, or e-mail to BLM_OR_MD_Mail@blm.gov (Attention: Jean Williams). If you would like to be kept informed about this project or are interested in the BLM providing a public meeting or field trip for this proposal, please complete and return the attached "Interest Response Form." This will allow us to include you on any mailings and to contact you about any potential public meetings or field trips for this proposal.

Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart B, Section 1.27, all written submissions in response to this notice will be made available for public inspection, including the submitter's name and address, unless the submitter specifically requests confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses submitted on official letterheads and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the RMP Amendment for the Table Rocks ACEC and the EA has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments. For more information concerning the RMP Amendment for the Table Rocks ACEC, you may contact Jean Williams at (541) 618-2385.

Sincerely,

for Jean A. Williams
Acting Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

Enclosures

Enclosure 1

Interest Response Form

If you want to be on the mailing list for the Table Rocks ACEC RMP Amendment and associated Environmental Assessment (as described in the attached letter)…

Complete this form and return to:

Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Butte Falls Resource Area Planning
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504

Are you are interested in attending any potential public meetings or field trips regarding this proposal?

Yes or No (please circle)

Please Print Clearly:

Name: _____

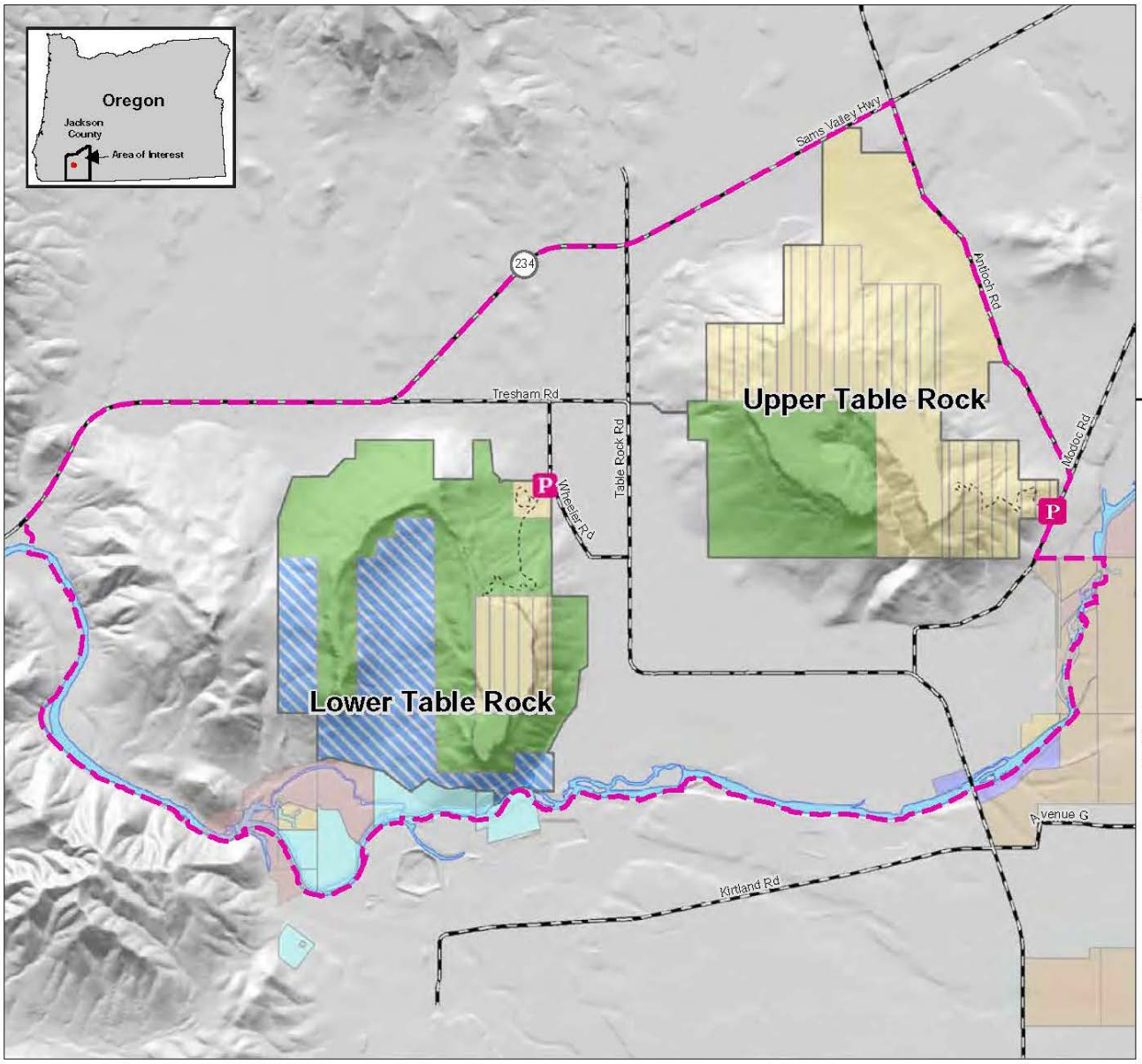
Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone number or email address: _____
(required for contact about potential public meetings or field trips)

We are trying to save paper and conserve resources. Please respond if you wish to be kept informed and receive future mailings for this project.

Map 1: Vicinity and Ownership



P Trailhead Parking
Trail
Road
Management Area
BLM-administered
BLM-administered, ACEC
The Nature Conservancy
Conservancy Conservation Easement
Jackson County
Denman Wildlife Area (ODFW)
TouVelle State Recreation Site
State of Oregon

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Miles

Table Rocks Management Plan

Medford District
October 2012

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