

# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Draft Transportation Management Plan

## *Reader's Guide*

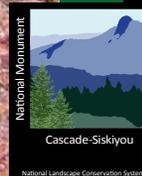
## March 2016

### Dear Reader:

The Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) Draft Transportation Management Plan (TMP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for your review and comment. This planning process will address all motorized / mechanized uses of the transportation system as well as hiking, horseback riding, and Nordic skiing.

Interested citizens are encouraged to use this Readers Guide as an introduction to the contents of the Draft TMP and EA for the CSNM. The EA is organized into four chapters and appendices. The four chapters detail the introduction, alternatives, affected environment, environmental consequences, and coordination. The appendices include supporting information for some of the topics discussed in Chapters 1 through 4.

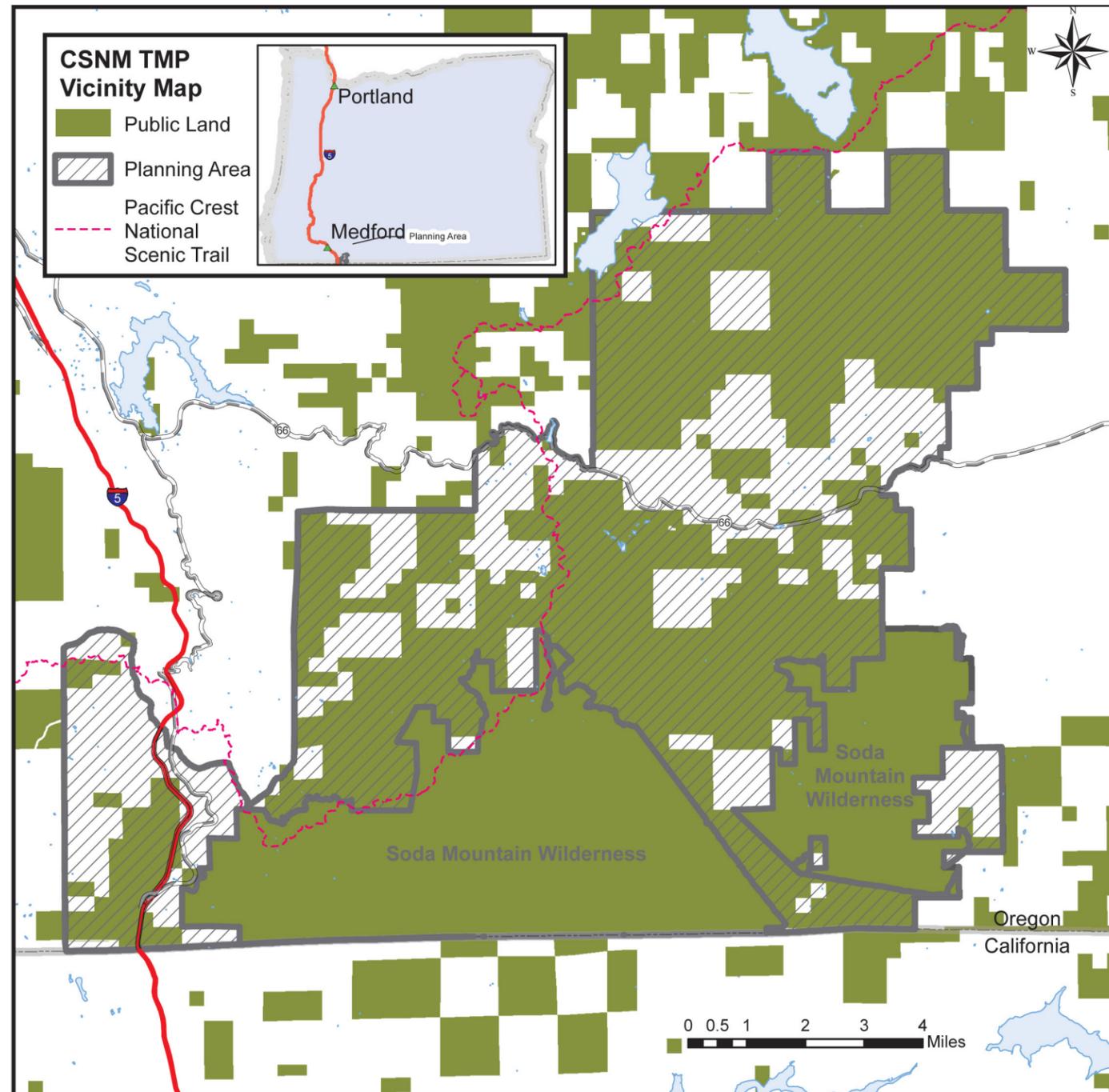
We hope this Readers Guide helps you understand the Draft CSNM TMP and EA. The final decision will be made only after consideration of the comments received. The decision maker may choose one of the alternatives or can select an alternative that blends components of one or more of the alternatives. Please contact our office if you have questions.



# Planning Area Description

The CSNM was reserved in June 2000 by presidential proclamation in recognition of its remarkable ecology and to protect a diverse range of biological, geological, aquatic, archeological and historic objects. The planning area is located in Jackson County, Oregon and consists of approximately 40,634 acres of BLM-administered lands. Since 2008, the BLM has acquired approximately 12,288 acres of additional land which have become part of the monument. The road systems on these newly acquired lands are considered in this evaluation. There are approximately 412 miles of road and 11.5 miles of designated trails within the 60,434-acre planning area which includes all public and private land.

In 2009, Congress designated 24,707 acres of the CSNM as the Soda Mountain Wilderness, removing this area from the transportation planning process.



# Why is BLM Conducting Transportation Management Planning in the CSNM?

The presidential proclamation specifically required that a management plan be written and states that, *“The management plan shall include appropriate transportation planning that addresses the actions, including road closures or travel restrictions, necessary to protect the objects identified in this proclamation.”*

The BLM completed the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP) in 2008 and concluded that “road densities throughout the monument are higher than desired to protect the “objects of biological interest” and support naturally functioning ecosystem processes.” At the same time, the transportation system must consider the protection of natural resources, access for federally recognized Native American Tribes, access for recreation and resource management; access requirements of adjacent landowners; and wildfire suppression on BLM lands, as well as adjacent private land.

In September 2008, portions of the transportation management decisions in the approved RMP were formally protested and appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). The issues were resolved in later negotiations which require BLM to revisit the snowmobile routes in the RMP and to reconsider the amount of roads to be closed and/or decommissioned.



*Hiking is one of the more popular recreational activities that occur on the monument.*



*The monument road system provides administrative access to authorized uses such as communication sites, power lines, and access for Talent Irrigation District infrastructure.*

# Alternatives

On the next several pages you will find a simple description of the four alternatives presented in the EA. For a more in-depth discussion of the alternatives, see the Draft TMP/EA. Following this brief description of the alternatives are tables comparing the alternatives by post-implementation results and treatment types.

## Alternative 1 - (No Action Alternative)

Alternative 1 would implement the current approved road treatments in the approved 2008 RMP and establish a baseline to evaluate the other alternatives.

- Approximately 113 miles would be designated open for public access on BLM administrated land.
- This alternative would decommission or close 11.47 miles of road, of which 6.12 miles (57%) are overgrowth and/or not accessible to the public.
- Alternative 1 does not propose any restoration or closure of the roads within the 12,288 acres of newly acquired lands or the roads the BLM agreed to evaluate in the IBLA negotiated settlement (ROD/RMP Maps 22 and 23).
- Snowmobiles could use designated open roads north of Highway 66 and the snowmobile routes identified on Map 25 (ROD/RMP Map), even where the routes are located on “closed” or “BLM and authorized use” roads.

## Alternative 2

The objective of Alternative 2 is to balance access needs with the ecological restoration identified in the approved 2008 RMP. This alternative would implement a targeted reduction of road densities, while maintaining access for private property owners, resource management, wildfire suppression, law enforcement, various recreational activities, administrative purposes, and access for federally recognized Native American Tribes.

- Approximately 82 miles would be designated open for public access on BLM administrated land.
- This alternative would decommission or close 164.19 miles of road, of which 63.82 miles (39%) are overgrowth or not accessible to the public.
- Snowmobiles for recreational use would not be allowed in the CSNM under this alternative.



*Road fill failure resulting from a plugged culvert on an unmaintained former logging road near Emigrant Creek.*



*Copco Road accesses the eastern portions of the monument and Soda Mountain Wilderness.*

## Alternative 3

This alternative would implement a targeted reduction of road densities, while providing a higher level of access than Alternative 2 for wildfire suppression, recreational activities and other administrative uses.

- Approximately 90 miles would be designated open for public access on BLM administrated land.
- This alternative would decommission or close 150 miles of road, of which 59.39 miles (40%) are overgrowth or not accessible to the public.
- Snowmobiles would be allowed on designated open roads north of Highway 66 and on the winter multi-use routes identified on Map 2-5 in the EA.
- This alternative would convert an existing closed road system to a designated 4.95-mile loop trail off of Emigrant Creek Road (39-2E-34) to Buck Rock Tunnel, a popular hiking destination.



*The Emigrant Road access point to the Buck Rock Tunnel area.*

## Alternative 4

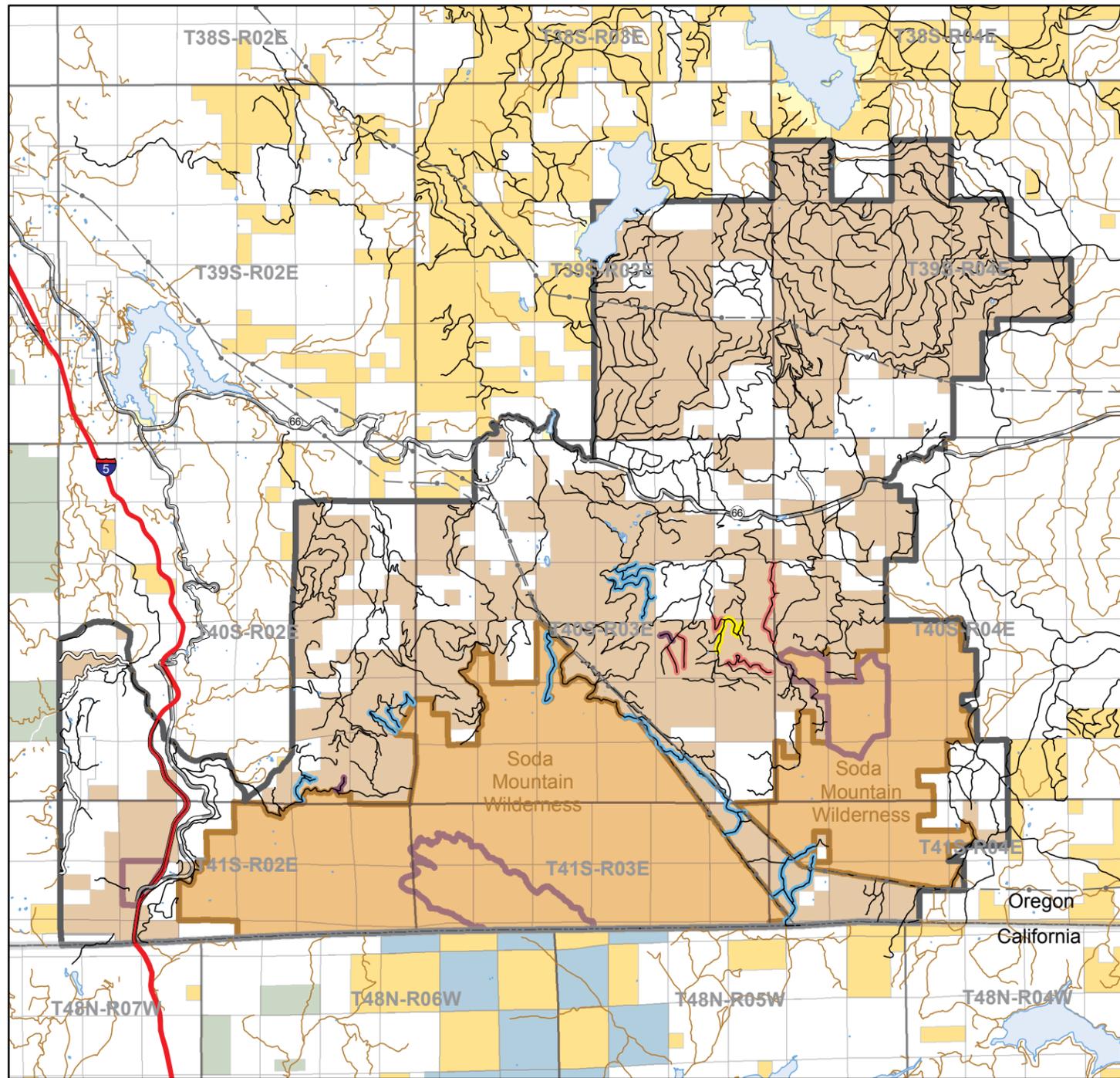
Alternative 4 implements the current approved road treatments in the approved 2008 RMP and would decommission roads identified in the IBLA settlement agreement (RMP Maps 22 and 23).

- Under this alternative approximately 114 miles would be designated open for public access on BLM administrated land.
- This alternative would decommission or close 22.31 miles of road, of which 11.78 miles are overgrowth or not accessible to the public.
- Alternative 4 does not propose any restoration or closures of the roads within the 12,288 acres of newly acquired lands.
- Snowmobiles could use designated open roads north of Highway 66 and the snowmobile routes identified on Map 2-7 in the EA, even where the routes are located on otherwise “closed” or “BLM and authorized use” roads.



*The Monument is a destination for horseback riding enthusiasts.*

# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan Alternative 1 Proposed Road Treatments



- |                                    |                 |                      |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument | Other Federal   | Interstate Highway   | Decommission/Spot Recontour |
| Other Bureau of Land Management    | State           | State Highway        | Decommission                |
| U.S. Forest Service                | Private/Unknown | Roads                | Passive Decommission        |
| Soda Mountain Wilderness           |                 | Noninventoried Roads | Drainage Improvement        |

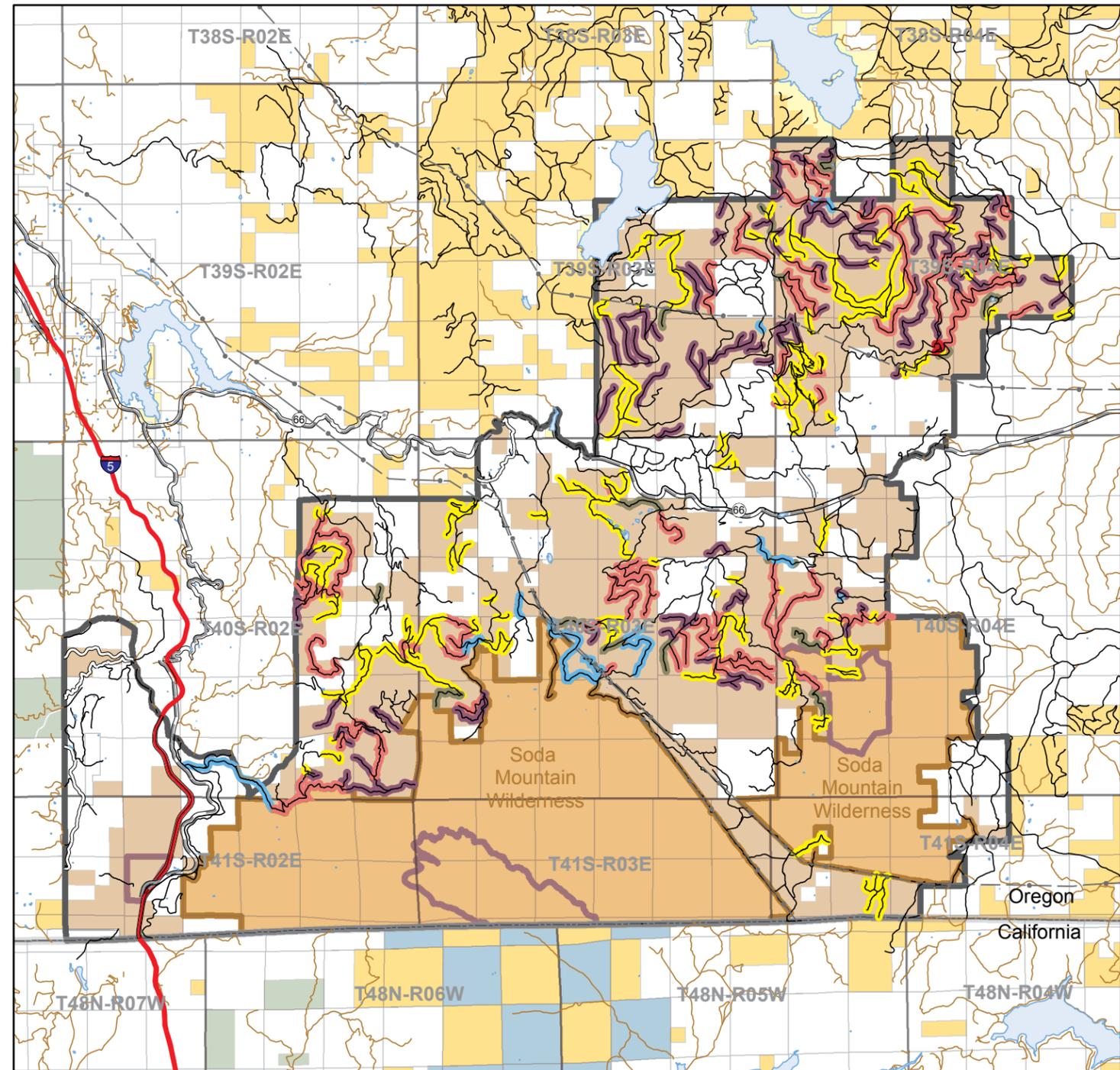
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Prepared By: Kathy Minor  
Current Date: 03.22.2016



# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan Alternative 2 Proposed Road Treatments

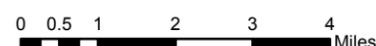


- |                                    |                 |                      |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument | Other Federal   | Interstate Highway   | Full Recontour              |
| Other Bureau of Land Management    | State           | State Highway        | Decommission/Spot Recontour |
| U.S. Forest Service                | Private/Unknown | Roads                | Decommission                |
| Soda Mountain Wilderness           |                 | Noninventoried Roads | Passive Decommission        |
|                                    |                 |                      | Drainage Improvement        |
|                                    |                 |                      | New Construction            |

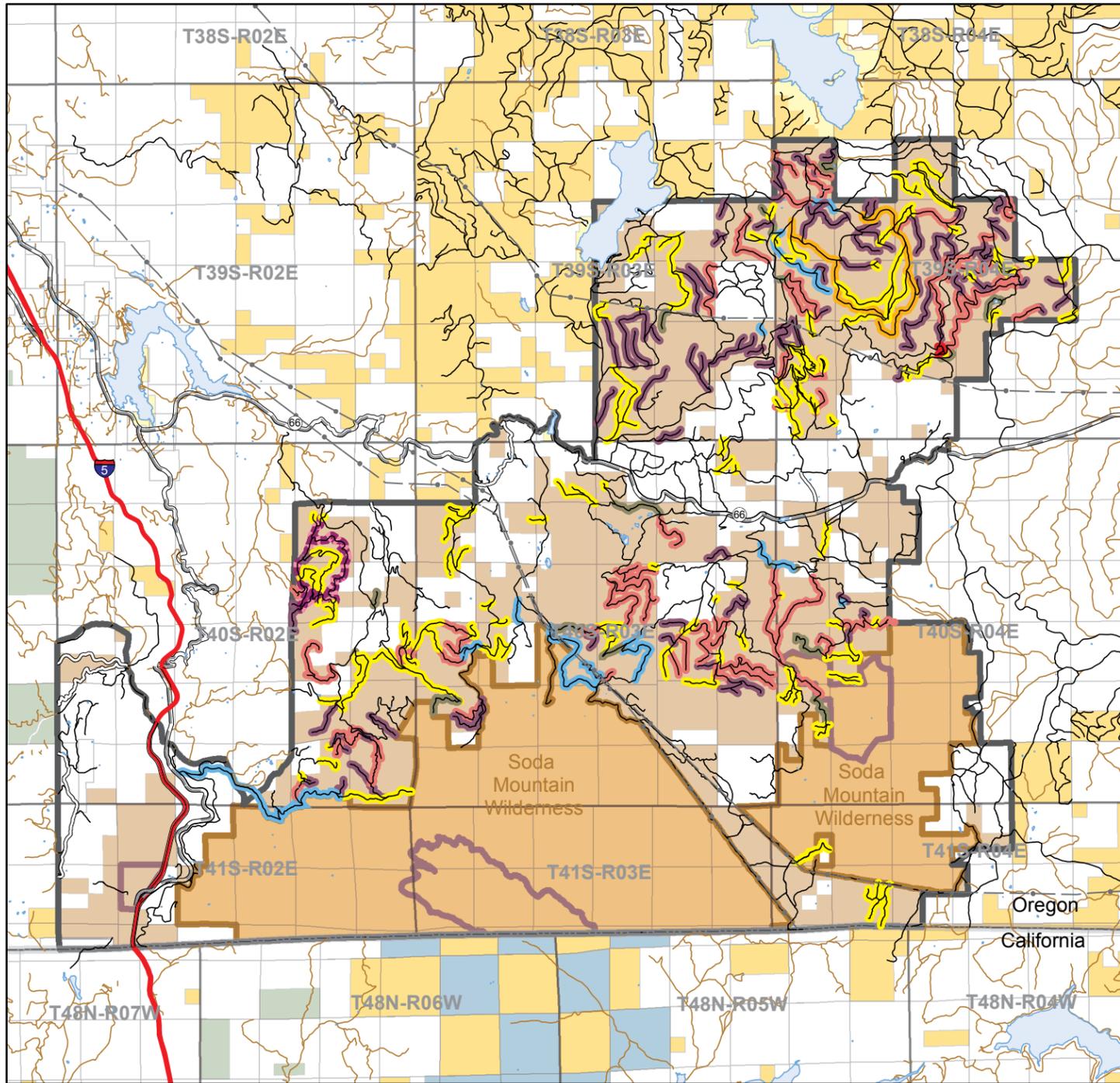
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# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan Alternative 3 Proposed Road Treatments



- |                                    |                 |                      |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument | Other Federal   | Interstate Highway   | Full Recontour              |
| Other Bureau of Land Management    | State           | State Highway        | Decommission/Spot Recontour |
| U.S. Forest Service                | Private/Unknown | Roads                | Decommission                |
| Soda Mountain Wilderness           |                 | Noninventoried Roads | Passive Decommission        |
|                                    |                 |                      | Road to Trail Conversion    |
|                                    |                 |                      | Brush for Fire Access       |
|                                    |                 |                      | Drainage Improvement        |
|                                    |                 |                      | New Construction            |

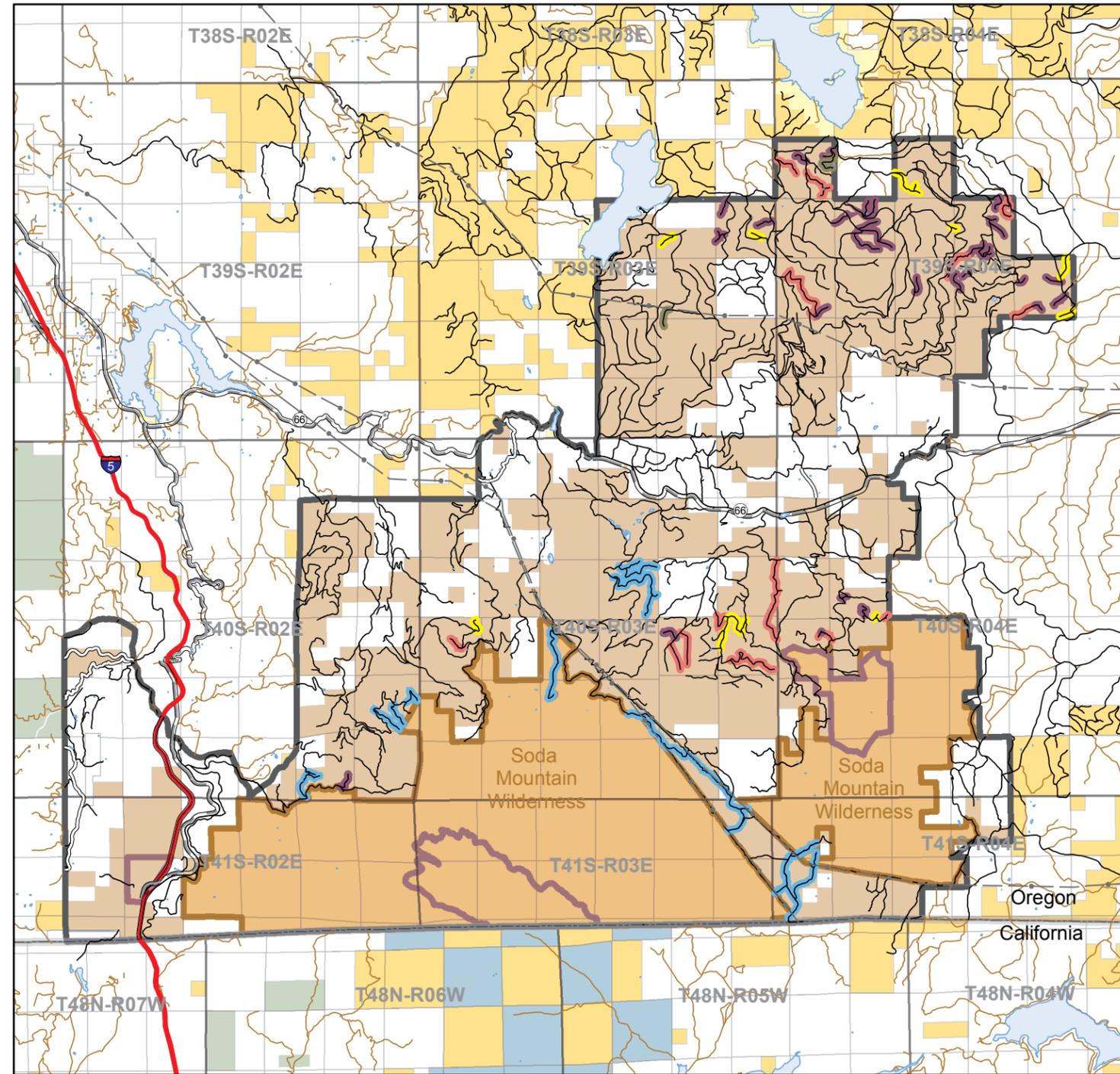
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# Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Transportation Management Plan Alternative 4 Proposed Road Treatments

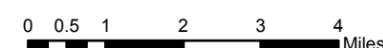


- |                                    |                 |                      |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument | Other Federal   | Interstate Highway   | Full Recontour              |
| Other Bureau of Land Management    | State           | State Highway        | Decommission/Spot Recontour |
| U.S. Forest Service                | Private/Unknown | Roads                | Decommission                |
| Soda Mountain Wilderness           |                 | Noninventoried Roads | Passive Decommission        |
|                                    |                 |                      | Drainage Improvement        |

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# Components Common to All Alternatives

## Road Treatments Common to All Alternatives

All alternatives include a variety of treatments of the road system at various different levels by alternative. Proposed road treatments fall into eight main types of treatments, although the combination of treatments for each road segment may vary based on specific needs. The types of treatments are briefly described below and describe in more detail in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences).

### *Full Recontour*

This treatment would generally be used in areas of high aquatic value (riparian) and would entail removing culverts, restoring channel gradient, recontouring the road prism, scattering available vegetation, and replanting with native seed as needed to prevent erosion.

### *Decommission/Spot Recontour*

This treatment involves a combination of excavator work (at stream crossings and in riparian areas) and subsoiling (ripping the road surface) with a bulldozer. Only a portion of the road would be recontoured. Compaction would be reduced utilizing a bulldozer to break up the road surface as needed, scatter available vegetation over the road, and spread native seed as needed to prevent erosion.



**DURING RECONTOURING:**  
*An excavator decommissioning a road and removing culverts at a stream crossing.*



**IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECONTOURING:**  
*Same road immediately after treatment and prior to seeding with native vegetation.*

### *Decommission*

This treatment would be used for road sections that are outside riparian areas. The road surface would be subsoiled (ripped) with a bulldozer to break up compaction. The entry to the road would be blocked either by installing an earth berm, blocking with boulders, or a combination of the two.

### *Road to Trail Conversion*

Trail construction or improvements on restored road beds will be completed either during the road restoration by mechanical means or with the use of hand tools following road restoration. A trail width tread (24 to 36 inches wide) will be left within the road prism.



*Before decommissioning and spot recontouring for road-to-trail conversion.*



*Same section of road, two years later with trail constructed.*

### *Passive Decommission*

Passive decommissioning is used on stable, native-surface roads that have not been used very often and are either already re-vegetating naturally or can re-vegetate naturally. Some of the roads proposed for passive decommissioning may be reopened if needed for emergency (e.g., fire suppression, search and rescue, law enforcement, medical evacuation) on a transitional basis until such time as the road becomes overgrown and is no longer drivable.



*Passively decommissioning by narrowing and growing over on a former logging road in Section 20, Township 39S, Range 4E above Beaver Creek.*

## Brush for Fire Suppression Access

This treatment would gate roads in strategic locations for fire suppression and maintain these roads over time by clearing brush and removing fallen trees in order to allow limited access for firefighting personnel and equipment. Roads maintained in this status could also be used for other emergency purposes (i.e., search and rescue, medical emergency, or law enforcement).



Road access is important for wildfire suppression. Oregon Gulch Wildfire, 2014.

## Drainage Improvement

This treatment would be applied to roads that are to be retained as part of the transportation network but exhibit drainage issues and/or chronic erosional features. Inadequate road drainage may be improved by reshaping the road surface, maintaining or installing new drainage structures, and replacing undersized culverts to meet current BLM standards.



Poor drainage and lack of maintenance causing road failure on former logging road in the Baldy Creek area.



Road to Buck Rock Tunnel off New Emigrant Creek Road showing signs of drainage problems.

## New Construction

New road construction is limited to instances where it is necessary to meet the primary objectives for management of the CSNM. Requirements under valid existing rights or relocation of an existing road in order to reduce impacts on the “objects of biological interest” are examples of when new road construction might occur (CSNM ROD/RMP 2008, TRAN-5, p. 87).

Treatment	Alternative 1 Approximate Length (miles)	Alternative 2 Approximate Length (miles)	Alternative 3 Approximate Length (miles)	Alternative 4 Approximate Length (miles)
Full Recontour		8.24	7.32	0.83
Decommission/Spot Recontour	4.26	57.99	46.20	9.09
Decommission	0.63	41.61	39.39	8.78
Passive Decommission	1.25	56.36	52.14	3.61
Roads to Trails Conversions			4.95	
<b>Total Road Reduction through Decommissioning<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>6.14</b>	<b>164.19</b>	<b>150.00</b>	<b>22.31</b>
Brush for Fire Break			6.22	
Drainage Improvement	13.41	8.54	11.99	13.41
New Construction		0.27	0.27	
<b>Total Roads Decommission or Closed<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>11.47</b>	<b>164.19</b>	<b>150.00</b>	<b>27.64</b>
<b>Decommissioned or Closed Roads <u>not</u> Currently Accessible by the Public<sup>3</sup> (miles/%)</b>	<b>6.52 mi. (57%)</b>	<b>63.82 mi. (39%)</b>	<b>59.39 mi. (40%)</b>	<b>11.78 mi. (43%)</b>

<sup>1</sup> Decommissioning is the broad category of treatments that includes the following specific treatment: full recontour, decommission/spot recontour, decommission, passive decommission, or road to trail conversion.  
<sup>2</sup> For Alternatives 1 and 4 this total include roads identified for drainage improvement that would be blocked per direction in the CSNM ROD/RMP.  
<sup>3</sup> Portions of “Total Road Reduction through Decommission” that are currently inaccessible to the public as they are overgrown or eroded, already blocked, or not drivable.

## Fire Suppression Water Sources Common to All Alternatives

There are 20-21 (depending on alternative) water source installations within the planning area that have been identified by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and BLM as necessary for fire suppression and the health and safety of monument visitors. Some of these facilities are in need of improvement to make them fully functional and others are in need of routine maintenance. Routine maintenance and repair of fire water sources would occur as needed.



Fire suppression water source in the Mill Creek drainage.

## Recreational Activities Common to All Alternatives

In general, management of recreational activities within the planning area falls under the guidance provided in the ROD/RMP (pp. 94-102). This Draft TMP does, however, address access for specific recreational activities including:

- Trails
- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- Trail Maintenance
- Trailhead
- Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)
- Bicycles



Hikers on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.



The monument is open to hunting and regulated by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).



Several alternatives would provide for snowmobile use on designated routes.

The planning process for the CSNM TMP plan remains open, and the alternatives we have presented are not carved in stone. The final decision is still months away, but in the meantime, we plan to listen, discuss, and consider the opinions of all people and organizations. The final decision will be made only after consideration of the comments received. The decision maker may choose one of the alternatives or can select an alternative that blends components of one or more of the alternatives.

**The public is encouraged to view the Draft TMP and EA and this Reader's Guide at:**

<http://tinyurl.com/BLM-ORWA-M040-2016-0003-EA>

These documents will also be available at the Ashland and Medford libraries and at the Medford and Grants Pass BLM offices.

An informational open house for the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument draft Transportation Management Plan will be held at the Bellview Grange at 1050 Tolman Road, Ashland, OR on April 6, 2016, from 6 to 8 p.m. At the open house, the public will be able to discuss the proposed alternatives, talk to BLM resource specialists, and provide written input.

Written comments will be accepted at the open house and in writing throughout the comment period which ends May 9, 2016. Comments may be mailed or emailed.

**Written comments can be mailed to:**

Bureau of Land Management  
Medford Office  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 97504  
Attention: Kathy Minor - CSNM Draft TMP

**Email comments can be sent to:**

[blm\\_or\\_md\\_mail@blm.gov](mailto:blm_or_md_mail@blm.gov)

Before including an address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifiable information in any comments, be aware that the entire comment – including personal identifying information – may be made public at any time. Requests to withhold personal identifying information from public review can be submitted, but the BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so.

For additional transportation management planning information, contact Joel Brumm, Assistant Monument Manager, at (541) 618-2256.

## Public Involvement

Public involvement for the CSNM TMP began in the fall of 2009. The project appeared in the Ashland Resource Area's Schedule of Proposed Actions published in Medford's Messenger (BLM's quarterly newsletter). A letter briefly describing the TMP and inviting comments was mailed to adjacent landowners, interested individuals, organizations, federally recognized Native American tribes and other agencies on December 2, 2011. The public scoping period was open through April 2, 2012. The BLM received nine scoping comment letters in response to its scoping notice.

### How can you participate?

The EA is open for a 45-day comment period beginning March 25th. We request that your comments regarding the Draft TMP be submitted by May 9th. Your review and comment on the content of this document are critical to the success of this planning effort. If you wish to submit comments on the Draft EA, we request that you make them as specific as possible. Comments that clearly articulate site-specific suggestions, issues or concerns are the most useful.

***The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument is an ecological wonder, with biological diversity unmatched in the Cascade Range.***

*-Presidential Proclamation, June 9, 2000*



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