



Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary presents a brief description of the major elements of the Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS). This summary is necessarily neither comprehensive nor complete. Furthermore, this summary omits the citations, definitions, and explanations provided in the document. Therefore, the details in the four chapters of this document are essential to fully understanding the planning process, the alternatives and the Proposed RMP, and their effects.

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Medford, Lakeview, and Northern California Districts are revising the current resource management plan (RMP) for the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM). This Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS) provides a description of the various alternative management approaches the BLM is considering for the management of these lands along with an analysis of the potential effects of the alternatives and the Proposed RMP.

On June 13, 2000, President Clinton signed Presidential Proclamation No. 7318 (65 FR 37249) designating the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) in southwest Oregon. The Proclamation identified the ecological wonders and unique biological diversity of the area as the primary reason for designation of the CSNM and included numerous objects of scientific and historic interest that warranted protection. At the time of designation, the CSNM included 52,947 acres of federal land administered by the BLM, Medford District.

The BLM completed the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan in August 2008 (CSNM ROD/RMP; USDI BLM, 2008). The ROD/ RMP provided land use planning decisions including goals, objectives, allowable uses, and management actions for the BLM-administered lands within the monument boundary.

In March 2009, Congress designated the now 24,707-acre Soda Mountain Wilderness (SMW) within the boundary of the CSNM (Public Law 111-11, Section 1405). The BLM completed the Soda Mountain Wilderness (SMW) Stewardship Plan in April 2012. The 2008 CSNM ROD/RMP does not recognize this designation.

In January 2017, President Obama signed Presidential Proclamation No. 9564 (82 FR 6145, January 18, 2017) nearly doubling the size of the CSNM. The current boundary now includes approximately 113,820 acres of federal lands, including BLM-administered lands in the Medford and Lakeview Districts in Oregon and the Northern California District in California, and approximately 320



➤ The Proposed RMP/FEIS is available for viewing on the RMP ePlanning page:

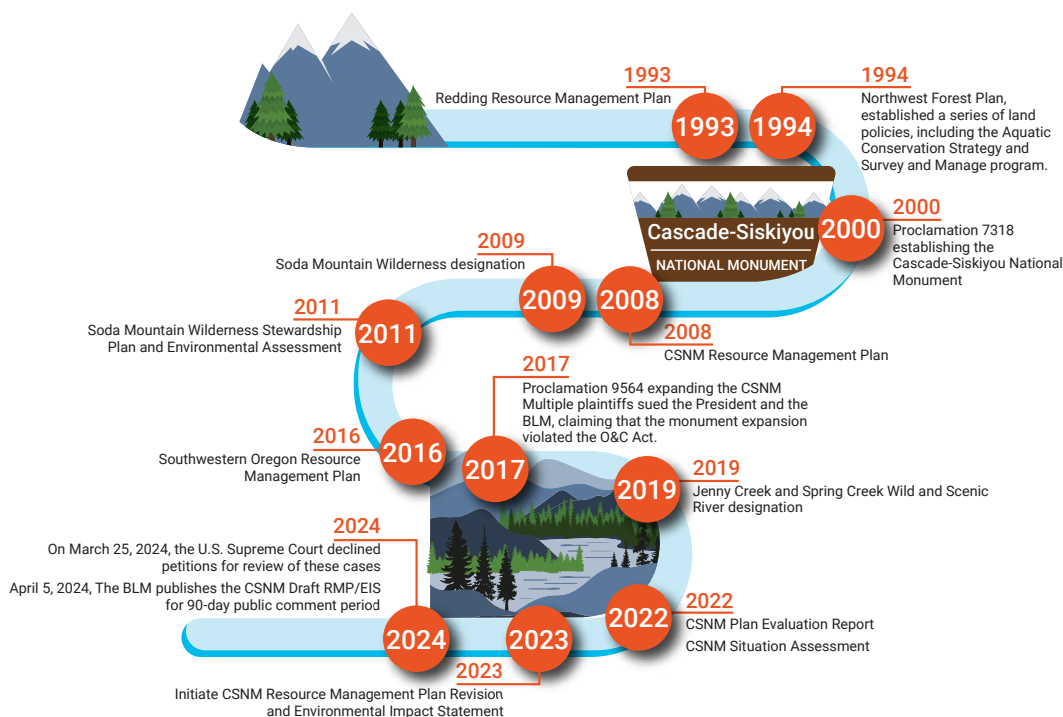
<https://bit.ly/CSNMplan>

➤ A Story Map of the Proposed RMP/FEIS is available for viewing on the RMP ePlanning page:

<https://bit.ly/CSNMstorymap>



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acres of lands managed by the Bureau of Reclamation. Additionally, there are approximately 58,578 acres of state- and privately-owned land within the CSNM boundary. These state and private lands are not part of the monument.

The expanded CSNM is currently managed under three different RMPs: the 2008 Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument RMP; the 1993 Redding RMP; and the 2016 Southwestern Oregon RMP. At the conclusion of the planning process, the BLM would approve a Record of Decision (ROD) and RMP for the CSNM that would bring all the BLM-administered lands in the monument under one ROD/RMP that is consistent with the proclamations that established and expanded the CSNM (USDI BLM, 2022d).

The purpose of this RMP is to protect and restore the objects of scientific and historic interest identified in Presidential Proclamations Nos. 7318 and 9564, by addressing the following:

- Protecting and restoring the diverse ecosystems that provide habitat for rare and endemic and special status wildlife and plant species.
- Protecting and restoring landscape-scale resilience for the area’s critically important natural resources.
- Protecting intact habitats and undisturbed corridors that allow for animal migration and movement.
- Reducing fire risk both within the wildland urban interface and to CSNM objects and values.¹
- Managing discretionary uses to protect CSNM objects and values.

¹ Under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the President of the United States has the authority “to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments.” The phrase “objects and values” is used throughout this draft RMP/EIS to refer to the “objects of scientific and historic interest” identified for the CSNM in Presidential Proclamations No. 7318 and 9564 (refer to Appendix B). The BLM has chosen to include the term “value” in this RMP to better describe to the public the Monument’s less tangible objects, such as “ecological integrity.”



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| A ALTERNATIVE A NO ACTION | B ALTERNATIVE B MOST ACTIVE MANAGEMENT | C ALTERNATIVE C MODERATE ACTIVE MANAGEMENT | D ALTERNATIVE D LEAST ACTIVE MANAGEMENT | E ALTERNATIVE E PROPOSED RMP |
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THE ALTERNATIVES AND THE PROPOSED RMP

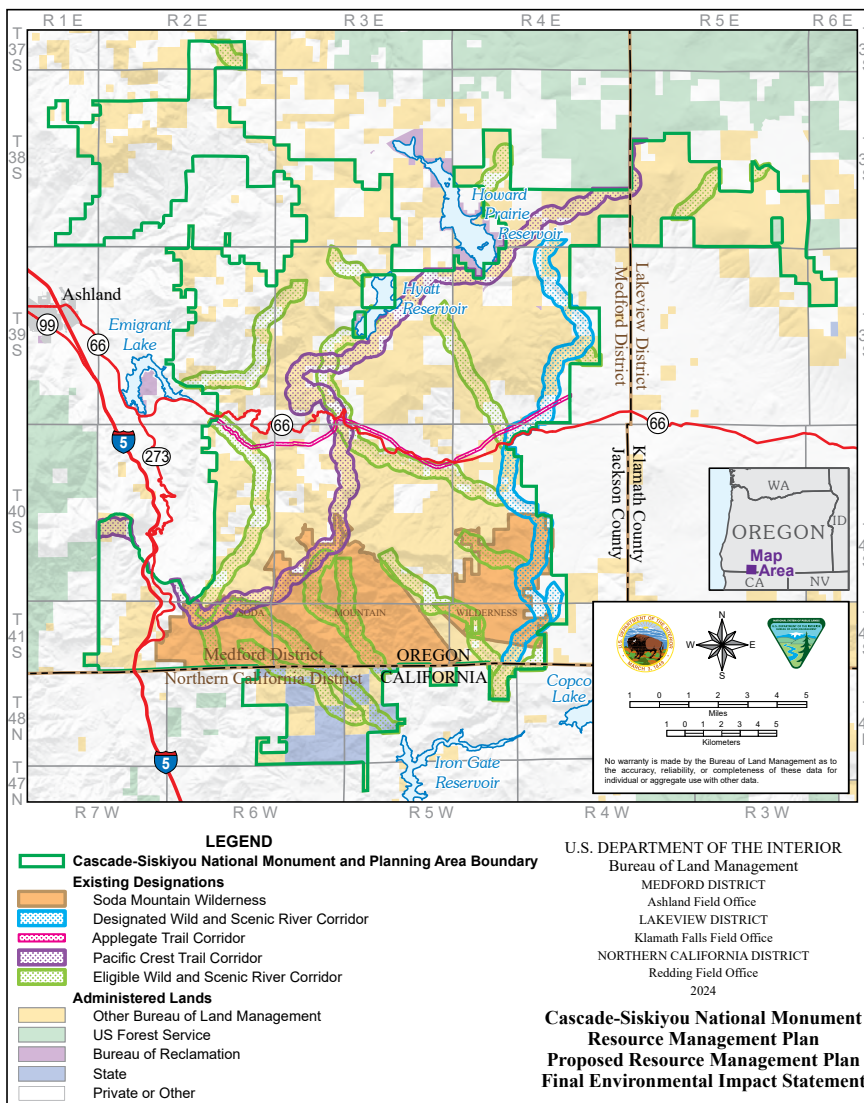
Alternative A (the No Action alternative) is the implementation of three existing RMPs as written. The action alternatives and the Proposed RMP include objectives (desired resource conditions and uses), management direction (actions to achieve the objectives), and the following management areas: Congressionally Designated Management Area, Administratively Designated Management Area, and Ecosystem Management Area. Within the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP, each management area has specific, mapped sub-management areas, sometimes with differing management direction.



bit.ly/CSNMstorymap

The BLM designed a range of action alternatives in the Draft RMP/EIS to span the full spectrum of alternatives that would respond to the purpose and need for the action. The BLM developed the alternatives to represent a range of overall management approaches, including variations in administrative designations, land use allocations, and objectives and management direction. In the Draft RMP/EIS, the BLM analyzed in detail Alternative A (No Action alternative) and three action alternatives (Alternatives B, C, and D). The BLM is carrying forward the action alternatives as presented in the Draft RMP/EIS into the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

The Congressionally Designated Management Area (CDMA) is comprised of the following sub-management areas: Wilderness Areas, Designated and Eligible Wild & Scenic River corridors, and National Scenic and Historic Trails. These areas were either designated by Congress (e.g., Wilderness Areas) or are associated with designations made by Congress (i.e. eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers). These are the same across all alternatives.



MAP 2-39: Congressionally Designated Management Areas- Alternative E (Proposed RMP)



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The Administratively Designated Management Area (ADMA) is comprised of the following sub-management areas: Herd Management Areas, Lands to be Managed for Their Wilderness Characteristics, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Research Natural Areas, and Special Recreation Management Areas. Administratively designated areas are created by the BLM through a land use planning process. These varied across alternatives based primarily on the degree of active management the BLM would employ.

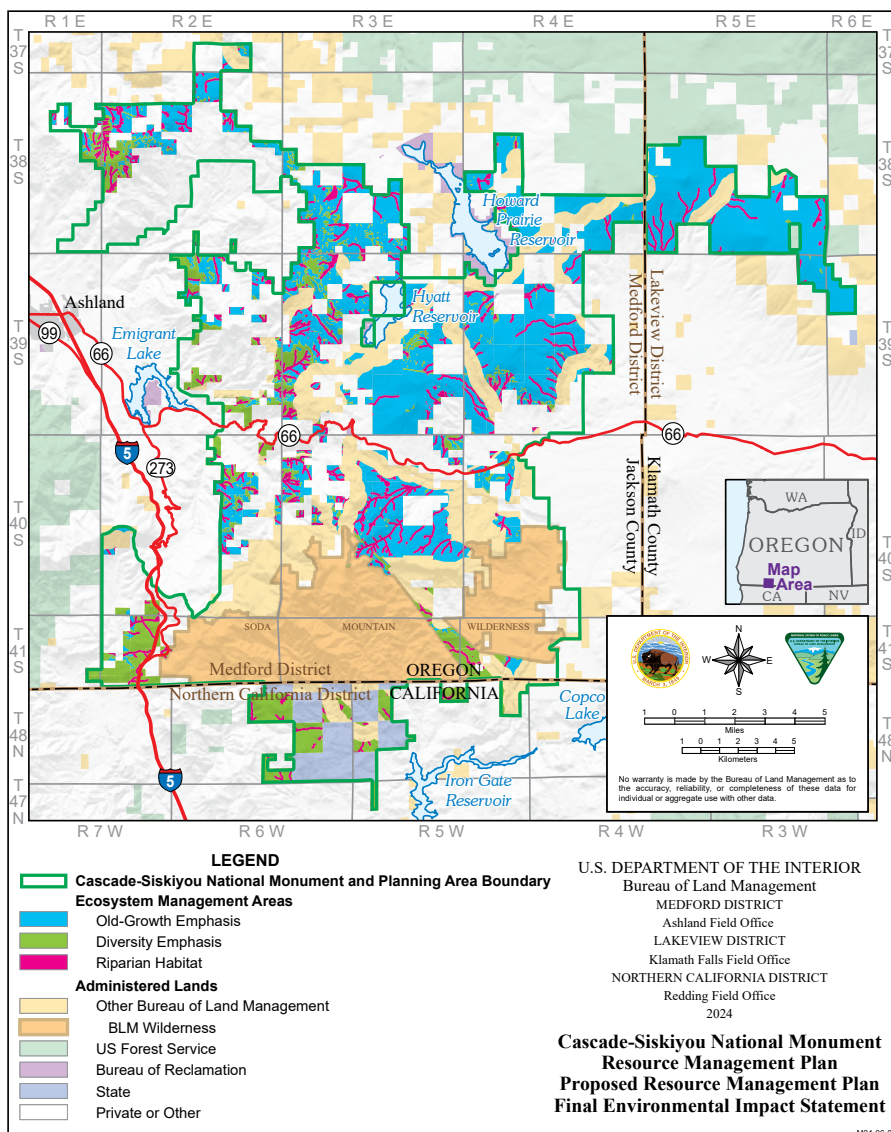
The Ecosystem Management Area (EMA) is a geographic area where multiple resources are managed with complementary objectives and management direction. Similar to the approach in the 2008 CSNM RMP, the BLM created the EMAs during this land use planning process using plant communities to develop the following sub-management areas: Riparian Habitat, Old-Growth Emphasis, and Diversity Emphasis. The EMA includes all remaining lands in the decision area that are not in one of the above management areas. EMA-Riparian Habitat includes lands within 170 feet of a stream or waterbody; EMA-Old-Growth Emphasis includes all conifer forest plant communities; and EMA-Diversity Emphasis includes nonforest plant community types, such as grasslands, shrublands, and oak communities

The EMA varies slightly across the action alternatives in response to changes in administrative designations that are proposed under the various alternatives. In addition, the BLM explored variations in management direction for the EMA in the action alternatives.

The BLM explored variations in geographic extents where the management approach would vary to address wildfire risk to people and property (i.e., wildland urban interface/ fuels emphasis area) and to CSNM objects and values.

The BLM explored variations in management approaches for recreation and visitor services by varying the designation of special recreation management areas (SMRAs) and extensive recreation management areas (ERMAs).

The BLM varied the availability of lands available for grazing with 27,820 acres available under Alternatives A, B, C, and E (Proposed RMP); and 0 acres available under Alternative D.



MAP 2-42: Ecosystem Management Areas- Alternative E (Proposed RMP)



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A ALTERNATIVE A - NO ACTION

The BLM-administered lands in the planning area are currently managed under three different RMPs as follows:

- 2008 Cascade Siskiyou National Monument RMP – 65,846 acres.
- 2016 Southwestern Oregon RMP – 42,320 acres.
- 1993 Redding RMP – 5,340 acres

The 2008 CSNM RMP included the following vegetation management areas:

- Diversity Emphasis Area (maintain, protect, and restore habitat and ecological processes), and
- Old-Growth Emphasis Area (maintain, protect, and restore historic conditions of late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystems).

The 2016 SWO RMP includes 39,852 acres (94 percent) of Oregon & California (O&C) lands with the remainder being Public Domain lands. The O&C lands are managed per the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act; 43 U.S.C. 1181a et seq.) for “permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities.” The SWO RMP includes the following unique land use allocations within the CSNM boundary:

- District-Designated Reserves (reserved from sustained yield timber harvest),
- Harvest Land Base (available for sustained yield timber production), and
- Riparian Reserve (areas next to streams managed for fish/aquatic species and their habitats and water quality/quantity).

The 1993 Redding RMP includes Public Domain lands in Siskiyou County, California. Relevant decisions for lands within the CSNM boundary include:

- Determination that lands in the planning area are part of the Klamath Management Area.
- Management objectives for Horseshoe Ranch, an area managed in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the BLM Medford District.
- Management objectives for Jenny Creek, designated as a Research Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern.



Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument



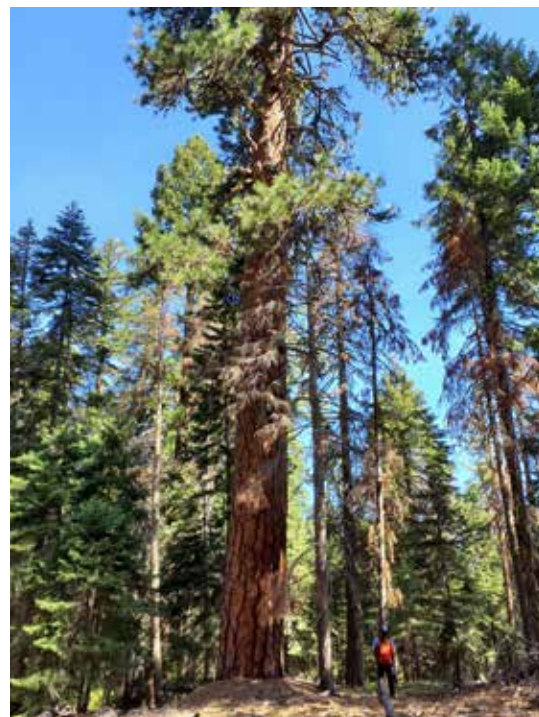
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B ALTERNATIVE B - MOST ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

Alternative B emphasizes flexibility in planning-level direction and promotes the most active management for the purposes of protection and restoration of CSNM objects and values using a variety of management tools. The BLM would designate Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect relevant and important values and would designate Research Natural Areas (RNA) to provide opportunities for scientific research and education.

Alternative B promotes the most active management to protect CSNM objects and values from fires originating on adjacent private lands, and to reduce the risk of wildfires spreading to residential properties in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The BLM would establish the WUI (Fuels Emphasis Area) as one-quarter mile from private property boundaries where structures are present and one-quarter mile around an identified community at risk and use all management tools.

The BLM would maximize the potential for an array of discretionary actions that are compatible with the protection of CSNM objects and values. Recreation and visitor services would be maximized through the designation of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) and Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs). The BLM would designate all lands as a right-of-way avoidance area, except for the Soda Mountain Wilderness, which would be a right-of-way exclusion area. The BLM would continue to make active grazing allotment lands available for livestock grazing so long as they're compatible with protection of CSNM objects and values.



Legacy Ponderosa Pine

C ALTERNATIVE C - MODERATE ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

Alternative C, identified as the BLM's preferred alternative in the Draft RMP/EIS, emphasizes flexibility in planning-level direction but promotes a moderate level of active management for protection and restoration of CSNM objects and values and sets some limitations on management actions and tools available. The BLM would designate two ACECs to protect relevant and important values. The BLM also proposes to seasonally restrict use of natural surfaced roads (December to May).

Compared to Alternative B, Alternative C promotes a more moderate approach to active management to protect CSNM objects and values from fires originating on adjacent private lands, and to reduce the risk of wildfires spreading to residential properties in the WUI. The BLM would establish the WUI, or Fuels Emphasis Area, as one-quarter mile around an identified community at risk. The BLM would use all management tools available but would set limits on allowable activities within portions of the WUI.



Example of a decommissioned former vehicle route in the Soda Mountain Wilderness.



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Recreation and visitor services would be accommodated to a lesser extent than under Alternative B, while protecting CSNM objects and values. The BLM would reduce certain types of recreation activities (e.g., cross-country snowmobile use) under this alternative, which would result in one less ERMA designated, and another ERMA reduced in size compared to Alternative B. The BLM would designate all lands as a right-of-way avoidance area, except for the Soda Mountain Wilderness and lands managed as wilderness characteristics, which would be right-of-way exclusion areas.

D ALTERNATIVE D - LEAST ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

Alternative D promotes the least active management for protection and restoration of CSNM objects and values. The BLM would rely primarily on natural ecosystem processes that would allow plant community dynamics to unfold without active intervention. Exceptions include the management of young conifer stands (plantations) that are a product of past timber harvest and thinning around legacy trees and along wildfire evacuation routes. The BLM would not designate any ACECs or RNAs.

Alternative D promotes the least intensive approach to active management to protect CSNM objects and values from fires originating on adjacent private lands, and to reduce the risk of wildfires spreading to residential properties in the WUI. Alternative D establishes the WUI, or Fuels Emphasis Area, as 120 feet from private property boundaries where structures are present. The BLM would limit management tools available for use, such as prohibiting machine piling, mastication, targeted grazing, or herbicide use.

The BLM would provide the least accommodation for discretionary uses. Recreation and visitor services management would focus on targeted areas and would be minimally accommodated while still meeting legal requirements for visitor health and safety and mitigating resource user conflicts. For example, the designation of SRMAs would remain the same as in Alternatives B and C; however, only ERMAs associated with existing recreation developments, such as trails, and trailheads, would be designated to provide high-quality recreation opportunities at those sites. The BLM would allocate all lands in the CSNM as a right-of-way exclusion area. As such, no new land use authorizations would be granted, except when mandated by law, including as necessary for the administration of valid existing rights, and providing reasonable legal access. The BLM would allocate all lands as unavailable for livestock grazing and all existing grazing leases would be phased out (not renewed).



Example of aquatic restoration at Fredenburg Springs



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E ALTERNATIVE E - THE PROPOSED RMP

The BLM has developed the Proposed RMP as a variation on Alternative C, which the BLM identified in the Draft RMP/EIS as the preferred alternative. Notable differences from Alternative C include:

- The BLM has added management direction throughout Appendix E to clarify that all future projects would be reviewed for compatibility with protecting CSNM objects and values during implementation-level NEPA and decision-making processes; and has clarified that the BLM provide opportunities for public and Tribal input.
- The BLM has added management direction to Appendix E, Section 4.G, that “For allotments with unprotected sensitive aquatic and riparian habitats, prior to beginning the next livestock season of use, implement grazing management practices to provide interim protections of these areas until a long-term/permanent solution is implemented.” The BLM identifies in the management direction the standards to be applied until appropriate site-specific analysis determines otherwise.
- The BLM would not designate any areas of critical environmental concern (ADMA-ACEC) or research natural areas (ADMA-RNA) (same as Alternative D). The relevant and important values of ACECs and scientific research values are also CSNM objects and values identified in the Proclamations, and as such are designed be protected consistent with the purpose and need for this plan.
- Management direction for CDMA-Wilderness has been included to provide clear guidelines regarding the restrictions for vegetation management actions in this area:
 - Limit vegetation management actions in Wilderness Areas to only occur for the purposes of removing non-native vegetation or to reduce wildfire risk to life, property, or wilderness character. All vegetation management actions must be consistent with the Wilderness Act and the direction provided in BLM Manual 6340.
- Manage the CDMA-National Scenic and Historic Trail management corridors the same as under Alternative C, with added clarification that invasive plant management activities would be allowed within 250-feet of the Pacific Crest Trail.
- The BLM’s management objective for ADMA-lands to be managed for their wilderness characteristics is the same as Alternative D, which is to protect wilderness characteristics while providing for compatible uses. Management direction for these lands is similar to Alternatives C and D but was modified to better align with other components of BLM’s management approach for the Proposed RMP:
 - These lands would be managed as a right-of-way exclusion area (same as Alternative C and D), which would restrict development of new facilities, including structures and roads, except when mandated by law, necessary for the administration of valid existing rights, or to allow reasonable access to non-federal lands.



View from Lone Pilot Trail



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- For existing roads and trails that abut lands with wilderness characteristics, maintenance would be allowed within 30 to 100 feet of the edge of the right-of-way or centerline of road, depending on the road's maintenance level.
- The geographic extent of the EMA is intermediate between Alternatives C and D, and management direction is similar to Alternative C, but also draws upon the other alternatives.
- The WUI/fuels emphasis area combines elements of Alternatives C and D and consists of lands within ¼ mile of a Community at Risk and within 120 feet of private property boundaries where structures are present, excluding lands in CDMA-Wilderness. Management activities within the WUI would be modified where necessary to comply with other management direction (for management areas and resources). The BLM would determine what modifications would be needed on a case-by-case basis when conducting a compatibility review during the implementation-level NEPA and decision-making process.
- New management direction (no similar direction for Alternatives B, C, or D, but included for Alternative A) for Travel and Transportation Management:
 - Maintain existing roads to provide access for resource management and casual use while protecting water quality and facilities and providing user safety. Apply road maintenance and wet weather road use BMPs as needed.
 - Fully decommission/obliterate roads (permanent closure) with no future resource management need. Decommission (long-term closure) roads not currently needed for resource management but that would be used in the future. Apply road closure BMPs as needed (Appendix I). Close roads only where consistent with valid existing rights and not necessary for reasonable access to non-federal lands.
- New management direction (no similar direction for Alternatives B, C, or D, but included for Alternative A) for Recreation & Visitor Services:
 - Do not allow groups larger than 25 people and groups no larger than 12 people within the Soda Mountain Wilderness without prior authorization. Group size limits within the Soda Mountain Wilderness may be reduced as necessary to ensure protection of wilderness character.
 - Buck Prairie Extensive Recreation Management Area is reduced by 124 acres compared to Alternative C to eliminate overlap with the Table Mountain Snow Play Area SRMA and the Cottonwood Glades area.
 - The BLM would manage most of the CSNM as visual resource management (VRM) class I or II, which provide the highest levels of scenic quality protection. The only exceptions of differing VRM classes of management include where highly developed recreation sites would be managed as VRM Class III (378 acres), and transmission lines would be managed as VRM Class IV (1,709 acres).



Pilot Rock



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- For right-of-way (ROW) avoidance areas, the BLM has incorporated new management direction to clarify additional restrictions on how and where ROWs would be authorized, including conducting compatibility reviews during the implementation-level NEPA process, and providing opportunities for public and Tribal input. Additionally, in closed old refugia forests, the BLM would prohibit new ROW authorizations that would include new road construction or development of new linear features outside the boundaries of existing authorizations or road prisms, except when mandated by law, including as necessary for the administration of valid existing rights, or providing reasonable access to non-federal lands.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section summarizes the existing conditions and environmental consequences for each resource that the RMP would affect. Throughout this document, the BLM uses the term 'planning area' to refer to the CSNM boundary as identified by Proclamation 9564 and uses the term 'decision area' to refer to the approximately 113,500 acres of BLM-administered lands within the planning area.

The BLM used a science-based approach to develop alternatives and analyze their effects. Resource specialists drew on recent scientific literature from peer-reviewed journals, publications from the Forest Service and US Geological Survey, Joint Fire Science final reports, US Fish and Wildlife Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Plans, along with local surveys and studies conducted by BLM staff and contracted local scientists. In cases of conflicting scientific findings, the BLM carefully evaluated the evidence and made informed decisions on which studies to rely on. Research by established scientists in relevant fields and a higher number of consistent studies were prioritized over less reliable sources. The BLM adhered to the Department of the Interior's Scientific Integrity Policy (305 DM 3), emphasizing that all scientific information used for developing management direction and analyzing effects must be robust, high-quality, derived from rigorous scientific processes, and ultimately trustworthy.

Aquatic and Riparian Habitat

All alternatives would protect key riparian and aquatic habitat features through management direction that would provide sediment filtering, shade, and large wood producing vegetation adjacent to aquatic habitat. The action alternatives would provide additional protections to intermittent streams in the Jenny Creek and Spencer Creek Watersheds since more riparian features, such as meadows adjacent to intermittent streams, fall under management direction for riparian areas compared with the No Action Alternative.

Alternative D would phase out livestock grazing which would reduce the potential for adverse effects to 137 acres of sensitive aquatic and riparian habitats compared to the other alternatives. The Proposed RMP would also ensure interim protection of sensitive riparian areas until a long-term/permanent solution is implemented.

Alternative C and the Proposed RMP would result in the highest reduction in road sediment inputs to aquatic habitats by restricting vehicular uses of natural surfaced roads during the wet season. The Proposed RMP would result in the greatest reduction in sediment delivery to aquatic habitat within the Buck Prairie Extensive Recreation Management Area by closing roads during the shoulder season when roads may be wet but still accessible to traffic.



Jenny Creek Wild and Scenic River



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Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Research Natural Areas



None of the alternatives would have adverse effects to the relevant and important values of ACECs and the scientific research and education purposes of RNAs primarily due to the management direction for these lands. For example, the BLM would allow prescribed fire treatments to reduce fire risk in areas, such as Mariposa Lily ACEC, but prior to applying prescribed fire, the BLM would take necessary mitigation actions to reduce impacts to Bureau Special Status Species wildlife, plants and their habitats. Additionally, the BLM would conduct a compatibility review during implementation-level NEPA processes to ensure the proposed action would protect CSNM objects and values.

Managing natural ignitions when conditions are compatible to meet resource objectives would have a beneficial effect under Alternatives B, C, and the Proposed RMP.

Relevant and important values in ACECs and scientific research and education values in RNAs would be protected regardless of whether a given ACEC or RNA is designated or not primarily due to the requirements of Proclamation Nos. 7318 and 9564 and BLM policy for management of National Conservation Lands. The relevant and important values of ACECs and scientific research values are also CSNM objects and values identified in the Proclamations. The BLM designed all actions alternatives to protect CSNM objects and values consistent with the purpose and need for this plan.



Oregon Spotted Frog habitat at Parsnip lakes

Climate Change



Fire in the CSNM, whether prescribed or natural, is the dominant source of GHGs currently, comprising 99 percent of quantifiable total GHG emissions in the CSNM. Annual greenhouse gas emissions and the social costs associated with them on BLM-administered lands would increase under all alternatives, with the largest increase under Alternative B and the least increase under Alternative D; however, annual greenhouse gas emissions associated with management of BLM-administered lands would remain less than one percent of the 2021 statewide and national greenhouse gas emissions.

Hydrology



All alternatives would maintain and protect water quality due to management direction and Best Management Practices that maintain shade and riparian vegetation that filters sediment. Alternative C and the Proposed RMP would provide additional benefit to water quality via a reduction in road sediment by restricting vehicular use of naturally surfaced roads during the wet season.

Water availability is an increasing concern for CSNM objects and values. Alternative B provides the most potential to improve or maintain summer low flows using vegetation treatments, due to the largest decadal target for ecological restoration treatments in the current snow zone.

Alternative D and the Proposed RMP would result in a reduction of adverse effects to water quality on 137 acres of sensitive riparian meadows and wetlands, benefit riparian conditions, and improve summer stream flows due to the elimination of grazing (Alternative D), or the interim protections provided for sensitive riparian areas (Proposed RMP). Sensitive areas would continue to be impacted in the short term until adjustments or modifications to practices are made under the No Action Alternative, Alternative B, and Alternative C.



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Lands and Realty

The No Action Alternative has the fewest acres, and Alternative D has the most acres in Land Tenure Zone 1 (not available for exchange). Designated and eligible Wild and Scenic River corridors; wilderness areas; National Scenic and Historic Trail management corridors; lands managed for their wilderness characteristics; and lands acquired with Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) would not be available for exchange under any action alternative. Alternative D has the fewest acres, and the No Action Alternative has the most acres in Land Tenure Zone 2 (available for exchange only if it furthers the purposes of the CSNM).

Under all alternatives, BLM-administered lands would generally be available for Rights of Way (ROWs) for administration of valid existing rights, to provide reasonable access to non-federally owned lands when no feasible alternate route is available, or subject to applicable laws. Alternative D would most constrain the BLM’s ability to grant ROWs. Alternative D would phase out all discretionary land use authorizations that do not meet those criteria.

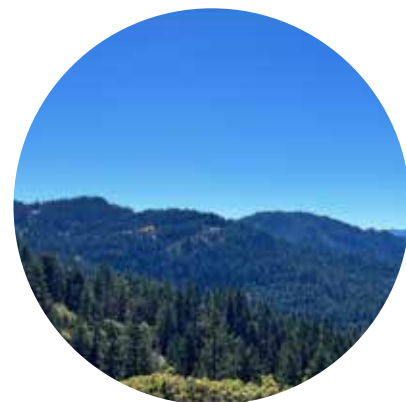


Example of land acquired with Land and Water Conservation Fund from willing seller

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Although there would be no areas managed for their wilderness characteristics under the No Action Alternative and Alternative B, wilderness characteristics would still receive some protection from other existing management decisions such as VRM Class II allocation and limiting public motorized access to existing and designated routes. Alternatives C, D, and the Proposed RMP would provide more protection of wilderness characteristics than the No Action Alternative and Alternative B. Alternatives C, D, and the Proposed RMP would designate lands with wilderness characteristics as closed to OHV use, which would increase opportunities for solitude and reduce impacts to naturalness.

Alternative D would have the least impact to wilderness characteristics as a result of WUI treatments compared to the other alternatives, since those treatments would be available to occur over the smallest area (73 acres, or 0.9 percent of lands with wilderness characteristics). However, all action alternatives would have minimal impacts to lands with wilderness characteristics from treatments in the WUI; Alternative C would impact 221 acres (2.6 percent); Alternative E (Proposed RMP) would impact 294 acres (3.4 percent); and Alternative B would impact 1,319 acres (15 percent). In addition, the BLM assumes not all lands would require treatments to reduce fire risk on every acre. Lastly, WUI treatments would have short-term negative impacts on apparent naturalness and solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation; over time, however, they would enhance naturalness by creating forest stands that more closely mimic the appearance and function of forests in which natural fire has not been suppressed.



View of Baldy Creek and Green Mountain lands with wilderness characteristics proposed units



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Livestock Grazing

Availability of authorized livestock grazing would be the same under the No Action Alternative, Alternative B, Alternative C, and the Proposed RMP. Alternative D would have the greatest impact to availability of authorized grazing since it eliminates grazing in the CSNM.

The No Action Alternative would not affect forage availability for livestock grazing. Alternatives B, C, and the Proposed RMP, the BLM would integrate adaptive, flexible, and out-come based grazing management. This would alter annual livestock forage availability but would not exceed current authorized AUMs.

Under the No Action Alternative, rangeland health would remain stable. Alternatives B, C and the Proposed RMP would improve overall rangeland conditions by using an adaptive, flexible, out-come based grazing, along with maintaining protective features and non-structural range improvements. Alternative D would rely on passive management of rangelands.

Minerals – Existing Rock Quarries

Under the No Action Alternative and Alternative B, all existing quarries would be available for BLM administrative use, resulting in the greatest availability of quarry rock. Alternative D would reclaim all existing quarries, resulting in no availability of quarry rock from these sites. Under Alternative C and the Proposed RMP, half of the quarries would be available for administrative use and half are reclaimed, resulting in a decrease in rock availability.

National Scenic and Historic Trails

The scenic values and recreational experiences for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) would be protected under all action alternatives, including the Proposed RMP.

Recreation and Visitor Services

The No Action Alternative allocates the most acres as Recreation Management Areas (RMAs) but expenditure of funding for Recreation & Visitor Services would not be prioritized. Alternative D would allocate the least number of acres as RMAs and recreation and visitor services would be minimally accommodated. Alternatives B, C, and the Proposed RMP would diversify and increase recreational opportunities through designating two ERMAs in areas of existing recreational use (disc golf at Shale City and recreation at Buck Rock Tunnel) and one new ERMA that would offer recreation and interpretation opportunities for a unique geologic feature. By diversifying and increasing recreational opportunities and experiences Alternatives B, C, and E are expected to better meet anticipated recreation demand than the No Action and Alternative D.



Pacific Crest Trail



*Winter recreation at Table Mountain
Snow Play Area.*



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There would no long-term change to the desired Recreation Setting Characteristics (RSC) in SRMAs or targeted RSCs in ERMAs from WUI treatments under any alternative. The effects of WUI treatments are short-term since the noise and limited access during WUI treatments subside once the work is completed and overtime WUI treatments create more natural stands.

Livestock grazing would have the most effect on the naturalness RSC in RMAs under the No Action Alternative. Alternatives B, C, D, and the Proposed RMP do not designate any RMAs with a Primitive or Back Country naturalness RSC; therefore, there would be no effects to the targeted RSCs under these alternatives.

Across all the alternatives there would be adequate opportunities for the issuance of SRPs since greater than 90 percent of the CSNM would be open to the issuance of SRPs.

Socioeconomics

Alternative D has the greatest potential for negative social and economic impacts due to phasing out of existing facilities through changes in rights-of-way management. It would decrease recreational opportunities, eliminate livestock grazing opportunities, increase wildfires risk to private lands and properties, and prevent the active management needed to protect and restore CSNM objects and values (although these would continue to be protected as required by the Proclamations). The other alternatives vary in their effects, but the social and economic impacts would not be significant.

The impacts of Alternative D would fall on many sectors of society but especially on low-income populations in the adjacent counties. Therefore, Alternative D would have negative, disproportionate impacts on this environmental justice population. The other alternatives would not have environmental justice impacts.

The inclusion of O&C Act lands in the CSNM would impact revenue, and thereby counties and communities, due to restrictions on sustained yield commercial timber harvest. However, since the proclamations prohibited sustained yield commercial timber harvest, none of the action alternatives included it. Therefore, any associated social and economic (and other) conditions are not affected by any of the alternatives.

Soils

Current BLM actions are designed to restore degraded soils to a healthy and functional state while also safeguarding against adverse impacts from high-severity wildfires. Under all action alternatives, restoration treatments (thinning and under burning) in the ecosystem management areas would temporarily increase the overall detrimental soil disturbance on the landscape. However, management direction limits detrimental soil disturbance to less than 20 percent of the operational area. Alternative B would have the greatest short-term detrimental soil disturbance (3,326 acres), but the greatest long-term benefit. Alternative C and the Proposed RMP would have short-term soil disturbance of 1,452 acres. Alternative D would have the least short-term detrimental soil disturbance (520 acres), but would forgo long-term gains of soil functionality, and would have higher risk of high-intensity wildfire-related soil disturbance.



*CSNM Contact Station on Highway 66
next to Greensprings Inn and Cabins*



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Travel and Transportation Management

Alternative C and the Proposed RMP provide the most restrictions on public motorized access with more than 35,000 acres allocated as closed to public motorized access. The Proposed RMP provides slightly more seasonal restrictions on road use than Alternative C (5,887 acres compared to 5,801 acres). Alternative B is the only alternative that would allow for cross-country snowmobile use in the Surveyor Mountain ERMA.

Visitation to the CSNM, development on private lands in the area, and vehicle traffic, are expected to increase over the next 20 years. Future travel management planning completed during RMP implementation would reduce road mileage open to motorized use within the CSNM. A reduction in public motorized use would benefit monument objects and values while still allowing public access. Opportunities for mechanized use (bicycle) as well as pedestrian and equestrian use would increase.



View of Highway 66 traveling through the CSNM

Vegetation

Dry Forest: Landscape resiliency and ability to resist large-scale, high-severity disturbance at the stand-level.

Considering climate change, restoring forests closer to the Natural Range of Variability would improve both stand-level resistance and landscape-level resilience. The effects of disturbance such as insects and disease, drought-based mortality, and density dependent mortality have altered forest characteristics from historic levels. Managing and maintaining forest stands within a desired range of conditions specific to forest type to reduce dense forest stands would mitigate damage from disturbance at both the stand-level and landscape-level. All action alternatives propose restoration treatments that would set forest stands on trajectories toward conditions better suited for warmer and dryer climate conditions by reducing stand density, accelerating the development of heterogeneous stand structure, and increasing species diversity. However, Alternative B would provide the most flexibility to promote and maintain stand conditions more resilient to disturbance (based on types of treatments and amount of acres treated) followed by Alternatives C and E (Proposed RMP), and Alternative D. In the long term, these treatments would foster greater resilience to natural disturbances, protect a range of habitats, and provide better protection from large-scale, high-severity disturbances in the CSNM. The BLM's Proposed RMP incorporates science-based diameter limits for tree retention would increase the success of restoration efforts aimed at shifting species composition to more fire-resistant species, while still retaining important legacy trees on the landscape.

Protection and development of late-successional forests

Under all alternatives, the amount of late-successional forest would increase, primarily via growth rather than from proposed management activities. Alternative D would result in the least amount of open canopy late-successional forest, indicating low species and spatial heterogeneity. The BLM's management approach would aid in creating more open canopy late-successional forest than would otherwise occur



View from Pacific Crest Trail



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without management. Under Alternatives B, C, and E (the Proposed RMP), the management approach would provide for nearly equal proportions of open and closed canopy late-successional forest suggesting enhanced species diversity within these forests and lower density-related stress. Alternative D would be dominated by closed canopy late-successional forest.

Protecting and restoring ecological functioning of nonforest plant communities

Invasive plants are to remain a permanent part of the CSNM plant communities given the high rates of sustained treatment needed. Expected treatment rates are expected to be lower than spread rates. The No Action Alternative and the Proposed RMP would come closest to at least maintaining the status quo.

Alternative B, followed closely by the Proposed RMP (Alternative E), would enhance ecological functioning across nonforest vegetation apart from chaparral, where no treatment is allowed under the Proposed RMP. With its generally passive approach to management, Alternative D would result in declining ecological functioning except in riparian areas where removal of livestock grazing is expected to increase ecological functioning.

Chaparral, which comprises nearly half of the nonforest vegetation, would see improved ecological functioning under the Alternative A (No Action), Alternative B, and Alternative C with restoration treatments.

Visual Resources

All action alternatives, including the Proposed RMP, are very similar in the degree of scenic quality protection (within 2 percent). Every action alternative manages more lands, at a more protective VRM class, than the VRI class, with ranges of 3.2 to 5.3 percent of more protection than less protection. This means that every action alternative would see a beneficial change of scenic quality over time within the planning area. However, the Proposed RMP (Alternative E) would provide the highest amount of scenic quality protections.



View of Pilot Rock from the Lone Pilot Trail

Wildland Fire Management

Alternatives A and B would contribute the greatest amount toward wildfire risk reduction to the WUI and CSNM objects and values achieving a 20 percent wildfire risk reduction within either the local or landscape areas. Alternative C and the Proposed RMP would achieve nearly 20 percent wildfire risk reduction within the local area and greater than 10 percent within the landscape area. Alternative D would not satisfy minimum thresholds for wildfire risk reduction.

Alternatives A and B would provide the greatest localized wildfire risk reduction to important legacy tree CSNM objects followed by Alternatives C and the Proposed RMP and then Alternative D.

Common to all action alternatives, applying ecological restoration treatments that achieve reduced wildfire hazard only within strategic linear features optimally placed to disrupt large fire growth would fall short of the minimum 10 percent of the CSNM planning area needed for effective wildfire risk reduction.



Example of BLM implementing prescribed fire



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Terrestrial Wildlife

Overall, effects to Bureau Sensitive and ESA listed species from the objectives and management direction under the action alternatives are anticipated to be minimal. Management directions provide many protective guidelines that would limit impacts. Alternative B would target the largest number of acres for restoration, allowing more long-term habitat altering actions to take place.

Under Alternatives B, C, D, and the Proposed RMP, the habitat restoration proposed under the Ecosystem Management Area objectives, combined with management direction for Ecosystem Management Area (EMA) – Old Growth Emphasis Areas, EMA – Diversity Emphasis Areas, and terrestrial wildlife, would have short-term adverse effects, but would have beneficial effects by improving wildlife habitat quality and resiliency in the long-term.

Northern Spotted Owl (NSO)

Management direction under all alternatives would contribute to NSO Recovery Action 10 (conserve spotted owl sites and high value spotted owl habitat) and Recovery Action 32 (maintain older, more structurally complex multi-layered forests) through a targeted treatment strategy that conserves high value northern spotted owl habitat, including nesting-roosting and closed old refugia (COR), while also addressing risk of loss to habitat from severe wildfire.

Alternatives B, C, and the Proposed RMP would contribute the most toward NSO Recovery Action 6 (implement silvicultural treatments in younger stands for development of structural complexity) because they provide EMA management direction with the highest restoration targets and footprint.

Alternative D would result in the highest overall increase (20 percent) in nesting, roosting, foraging habitat within the decision area over 50 years, followed by Alternative C (17 percent), the Proposed RMP (16 percent), Alternative A (7 percent), and Alternative B (6 percent).

Management direction in Alternatives A and B would contribute the greatest amount toward wildfire risk reduction to CSNM objects and values (including NSO NRF habitat), followed by the Proposed RMP, Alternative C, and Alternative D.

Dispersal-quality habitat increased in Alternatives A, C, D and the Proposed RMP over 50 years. The increase was highest in Alternative C (up to 5 percent), followed by the Proposed RMP and Alternative D (up to 4 percent), and the least in Alternative A (up to 2 percent).



Northern Spotted Owl



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CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

On April 5, 2024, the BLM released the Draft RMP/EIS for a 90-day comment period. The BLM received comments from Tribes, other government agencies, organizations, and members of the public. During the comment period, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) hosted three in person public meetings in May 2024. The BLM answered questions, provided information, and encouraged meeting attendees to submit comments. In addition to the public meetings, the BLM hosted a virtual meeting in May 2024, which presented an overview of the Draft RMP/EIS as well as information on how to comment. A total of 103 people attended the meetings. The BLM received a total of 348 unique comment submissions that included 1,092 comment letters, and nearly 4,000 comments. Livestock grazing, vegetation, and wildland fire management received the most comments.

The BLM honors its legally affirmed Nation-to-Nation relationship with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations, protects and supports Tribal sovereignty and self-governance, and strives to uphold this unique trust responsibility with Tribes. The BLM is consulting on a government-to-government level with the nine federally recognized Tribes located within, or that have interests within, the planning area. Two non-federally recognized tribes were also involved in the planning process. The BLM has been conducting traditional Nation-to-Nation consultation and integrating staff-to-staff outreach methods such as emails, virtual meetings, and phone calls since the planning effort was initiated.

A cooperating agency is a qualified governmental entity—whether local, state, Tribal, or federal—that has entered into a formal agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to offer input and expertise during the planning and environmental analysis stages. For the Resource Management Plan (RMP), invitations were extended to fifteen federal agencies, nine state agencies (four in Oregon and five in California), five local governments (four in Oregon and one in California), and the eleven previously mentioned Tribes. Ultimately, the BLM established ten cooperating agencies for this RMP. The BLM followed applicable regulations for consulting with other agencies about ecologically and culturally sensitive aspects of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Specifically, consultations were undertaken to ensure the plan's compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as well as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



Public meetings held in 2024 in conjunction with the release of the Draft RMP/EIS



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You can stay in touch with the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument RMP effort in the following ways:



Email: blm_csnm_rmp@blm.gov



Planning Website: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2023675/510>



Medford District Office Phone: 541-618-2200



Scan QR Code with your smart phone to
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bit.ly/CSNMplan