

Briefing Paper

Pacific Northwest Region – Regional Office

Eastside Restoration Strategy Update 6 November 5, 2013

"Oregon is bucking the status quo these days in a good way—from the federal Blues strategy, to the state's support for increased pace and scale of restoration of federal lands, to the rise of collaboratives. The Cohesive Strategy needs to dovetail with those initiatives, reach for broader landscape change, and provide new levels of engagement for working with local jurisdictions and communities." -Doug Decker, Oregon State Forester

Integrating the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Pilot and the Eastside Restoration Strategy

Wildland fire burns across landscapes without regard for political jurisdictions, property lines, or land management units. This means that many stakeholders, with different authorities and resources, must work together closely. Whether it is implementation of a community wildfire protection plan or restoration of fire resilience to a watershed covering hundreds of thousands of acres, leveraging resources and expertise is expected to double treatments across Blue Mountains landscapes

The Cohesive Strategy Vision is “To safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a nation, to live with wildland fire.” On the same track here comes the Blue Mountains Landscape Restoration Strategy, potentially addressing some of the elements of the Cohesive Strategy.

So how may the two efforts meet?

Part of the Eastside Strategy is a project that is evaluating more than 4500 miles of strategically located roads for their use as fuel across the Ochoco, Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. In many areas, these roadsides will need thinning and prescribed burning before they can be used as a location from which to manage fire – we estimate that about 180,000 acres of forest thinning will be needed to create these fuel breaks. Once these breaks are in place, fire managers will have the opportunity to manage both prescribed fire and wildfire to create better effects on the land, with less risk to fire fighters, the public, and private lands.



for the greatest good

Leaders from the Eastside Restoration Strategy and the Cohesive Strategy (CS) Pilot Project have developed an agreement to integrate the Cohesive Strategy Pilot Project and the Blue Mountains Landscape Restoration Strategies, with the following specific actions:.

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- Strategic Fuel Breaks Project
 - A CS pilot representative will serve as a subject matter expert in support of Forest/District projects in the Blue Mountains, both by working with National Forest Collaboratives and by participating on interdisciplinary project planning teams
 - The CS will provide expertise and data to help validate and refine fuel break locations on federal, state and private lands through contracts or ODF staff assistance, demonstrating the value of a new Federal/State business model for National Forest restoration
 - The current CS effort to refine existing Community Wildfire Protection Plans will make these CWPPs more comprehensive, contributing to the success of restoration project planning and implementation
- An Eastside Restoration Forest Service representative will sit on the CS steering committee
- Eastside Strategy Forest Service and State funding will assist several biomass feasibility studies in Wallowa County, potentially creating more local markets for woody biomass
- Integration of CS and Eastside restoration communication strategies, including shared websites, will provide for better public understanding of State and FS restoration objectives and accomplishments

Taxpayers deserve to know that their agencies are working together, searching for ways to make their efforts complementary. This state/federal partnership shows how the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Blue Mountains Pilot and the Eastside Restoration Strategy can support and build on their respective efforts – resulting in safer communities, more efficient fire response, and a healthier, more resilient public estate in the Blue Mountains