

Chapter 1

Forest Plan Introduction

Purpose of the Forest Plan

The Forest Plan guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards and guidelines for the Winema National Forest. It describes resource management practices, levels of resource production and management, and the availability and suitability of lands for resource management.

The Forest Plan:

1. Establishes forestwide multiple-use goals and objectives;
2. Establishes forestwide standards and guidelines applying to future activities;
3. Establishes management area direction including management area prescriptions and standards and guidelines applying to future management activities in the management area;
4. Establishes the allowable sale quantity for timber and identifies land suitable for timber management; and
5. Establishes monitoring and evaluation requirements.

The Forest Plan embodies the provisions of the National Forest Management Act, the implementing regulations, and other guiding documents. Land use determinations, prescriptions, and standards and guidelines constitute a statement of the plan's management direction. However, the projected outputs, services, and rates of implementation are dependent on the annual budgeting process.

The plan will be revised on a 10-year cycle, or at least every 15 years.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Other Documents

This Forest Plan sets forth the direction for managing the land and resources of the Winema National Forest. The plan results from extensive analysis and considerations that are addressed in the accompanying final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). The planning process and the analysis procedures used to develop this plan are described or referred to in the FEIS. The FEIS also describes other alternatives considered in the planning process. Specific activities and projects will be planned and implemented to carry out the direction in this plan. The Forest will perform environmental analysis on these projects and activities. This subsequent environmental analysis will use the data and evaluations in the Forest Plan and FEIS as its basis. Environmental analysis of projects will be tiered to the FEIS accompanying the Forest Plan.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to the Regional Guide

The Regional Guide for the Pacific Northwest Region (as amended December 8, 1988) provides direction for national forest plans. It includes standards and guidelines addressing the major issues and management concerns considered at the Regional level to facilitate forest planning.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to the FEIS for Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation

The Forest Plan incorporates the Pacific Northwest Region's FEIS for Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation. In implementing the Forest Plan through project activities, the Forest will comply with the Record of Decision issued by the Regional Forester dated December 8, 1988, and the Mediated Agreement of May 1989. Use of all vegetation management techniques is allowed only when other methods are ineffective or when other methods will unreasonably increase project costs. Emphasis must be on prevention and early treatment of unwanted vegetation and on full public involvement in all aspects of project planning and implementation. Information about the vegetation management FEIS, ROD, and Mediated Agreement are available at the Forest Supervisor's Office.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Special Area Plans

The regulations (36 CFR 219.2[b]) guiding the development of Forest Plans states that "(if), in a particular case, special area authorities require the preparation of a separate special area plan, the direction in any such plan may be incorporated without modification." At present, one special area plan is being developed for the Sycan Wild and Scenic River. The Sycan Wild and Scenic River Plan should be completed within one year of this plan. Once completed, this plan will be incorporated unchanged into the Forest Plan.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Other Plans

This Forest Plan serves as the single land management plan for the Winema National Forest. All other land management plans are replaced by the direction in this plan; see chapter 5 for a listing of existing plans that this Forest Plan supersedes.

Forest Plan Structure

The plan is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction which describes the purpose of the plan, summarizes the content, establishes the area covered by the plan, and illustrates the geographic location.

Chapter 2 provides a summary of the analysis of the management situation. It includes brief descriptions of resource management situations and (as appropriate) demand and supply conditions for various commodities and services, productivity potentials, use and development opportunities, and information needs.

Chapter 3 summarizes the major public issues and management concerns, explaining how each was resolved in the planning process.

Chapter 4 describes the goals, standards, and guidelines established for the period of the plan. Included is a section describing multiple resource prescriptions (management strategies) that are specific to each management area.

Chapter 5 includes implementation direction, a plan for monitoring and evaluating Forest Plan implementation, and a description of the process for plan amendment and revision.

The glossary contains terms that require common understanding or that have special meanings.

Appendix A gives a detailed three-year timber sale schedule. Appendix B has the detailed project schedule for other resource areas. Appendix C lists the Best Management Practices. Appendix D contains major

portions of the 1864 Klamath Indian Treaty and the 1981 Consent Decree. Appendix E gives detailed information to determine what timber harvest volume is chargeable to the allowable sale quantity.

Forest Description

The Winema National Forest (also referred to as the Forest) was established in 1961 in a unique way. More than 50 percent of the Forest is comprised of former Klamath Indian Reservation land. Two purchases by the Federal Government--the first in 1963 of about 500,000 acres and the second in 1973 of about 135,000 acres--were combined with portions of three other national forests to form the Winema National Forest.

Members of the Klamath Tribe reserve specific rights of hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering forest materials on former reservation lands. This forms a unique relationship between the Klamath Tribe and the Forest for the management of portions of the Forest. The other lands comprising the Forest were transferred from neighboring national forests.

The Forest is located in south-central Oregon on the east side of the Cascade Mountain Range and consists of approximately 1.04 million acres. The Forest is divided into three administrative units, called Ranger Districts, located in the communities of Klamath Falls, Chiloquin, and Chemult. The Forest is within Congressional District 2.

The Forest has three designated wildernesses, Mountain Lakes, Sky Lakes, and Mount Thielsen, and one designated National Wild and Scenic River, the Sycan.

The Forest is bordered by Crater Lake National Park, Klamath Forest Wildlife Refuge, Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, and Bureau of Land Management lands. Close by are: the Rogue River, Deschutes, Umpqua, Modoc, Klamath, and Fremont National Forests; Lower Klamath National Refuge; Tulelake National Wildlife Refuge; Clear Lake National Refuge; and Lava Beds National Monument. Private timber company and Oregon State Department of Forestry lands are also adjacent to the Forest.

The Forest is located between the Cascade Range (High Cascades) and the Basin-Range physiographic provinces. Elevations range from about 4,000 to 7,000 feet with some mountain peaks above 9,200 feet. Characterized by a generally north-south oriented chain of inactive volcanos, the High Cascades area is located on the western edge of the Forest. Located east of the High Cascades, the Basin-Range area is characterized by broad, flat valleys alternating with generally low north-south ridges.

The climate of the Forest is characterized by warm, dry summers and wet, cool winters. Most winter precipitation occurs as snow, particularly at higher elevations. Precipitation on the Forest is highest along the eastern slope of the Cascades. Average precipitation throughout the Forest varies from 15 inches to 50 inches. Seasonal variation of temperature on the Forest is wide. At Klamath Falls, the average temperature over the year is approximately 48 degrees F, and extremes range from 24 below zero to 105 degrees. Summer frost can occur throughout the Forest.

Vegetative communities on the Forest range from marshlands and meadows to the fir and mixed conifer forest on the west side. On the Forest's northern and eastern portions, the communities range from marshlands and meadows to ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, and western juniper forest. Subalpine communities occur at the higher elevations. More than 90 percent of the Forest is tree covered.

An estimated 368 species of animals inhabit the Forest. Although many animals live throughout the general forest area (such as the deer population), others have specific habitat requirements. For example, northern spotted owls inhabit only the old-growth mixed conifer communities on the eastern slopes of the Cascades.

The Klamath Basin, in which most of the Forest is located, is the largest waterfowl congregating area on the West Coast and one of the largest waterfowl congregating areas in the nation. The Basin provides the largest area of wintering and nesting habitat for bald eagles in the continental United States.

The population of Klamath County is approximately 59,000. Of this number, nearly 45,000 residents live in the combined city-county urban area of Klamath Falls. With its resources of timber products, recreation opportunities, rangelands, and a variety of wildlife habitats, the Forest affects the residents of Klamath County. Forest products and agriculture are the major industries within the county. The Forest historically has supplied about 15 percent of the timber processed in the county. Recreation opportunities on the Forest provide an important contribution to lifestyles and the economy in the county. Most of the recreationists who use the Forest are from Klamath County or the Medford-Rogue Valley area.

See chapter 3 of the FEIS for a detailed description of the Forest.

FIGURE 1-1

