

Avery Creek Bald Eagle Management Area
Fremont National Forest
Paisley Ranger District
Lake County, Oregon

Forest Plan Amendment

This non-significant, site-specific amendment to the Fremont National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) would redesignates approximately 1085 acres of Management Area 5 (Timber and Range Production) to Management Area 2 (Endangered and Threatened Species).

Emphasis – This Management Area (MA) 2 would emphasize the protection of a known bald eagle core roost site, potential roost sites, flyways, and known or potential foraging grounds on the Paisley Ranger District.

Goal – The goal will be to maintain adequate winter roost habitat for the species in perpetuity and enhance future nesting potential.

Discussion – This MA would consist of approximately 1085 acres along the headwaters of Avery Creek, southeast of Avery Pass. Field Reconnaissance for Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive animals in the Joker II planning area began in April of 1995 by Wildlife Biologist Denise Pengeroth and continued in 1997 by Wildlife Biologist, Randy Ghormley. The first two visits occurred in February and March of 1995. Observations found bald eagles congregating in a single "hot spot" at the bottom west side of a tributary near its confluence with Avery Creek. A total of 13 bald eagles were noted using this roost stand in 1995, nearly all of which perched in ponderosa pine snags.

Additional field observations were conducted during and after the 1997 roosting season. A total of 16 eagles were observed during mid-January using the same "hot spot". Nearly all birds entered the roost via a direct flight up Avery Creek and across a then recent clearcut that borders the east side of the core roost. Casting surveys conducted during the summer of 1997 helped further define the core roost areas and pinpoint the individual roost trees. All roost areas contain old growth ponderosa pine with large lateral branches, large snags, and flyway access to the Avery Creek Drainage. Nest search efforts during the early summer of 1997 failed to find any evidence of nesting associated with the site.

**Prescriptions –
Access**

Access and activities would be limited with the establishment of an area closure for the Avery Bald Eagle Management Area from November 1 to May 1. This closure would apply to all entry, allowing for undisturbed use of the area by the bald eagles.

Timber Harvest

Silvicultural prescriptions will be developed that maintain the old-growth ponderosa pine component for future roost requirements. Timber harvest meeting these prescriptions would be allowed outside the prohibited access periods.

Fire Suppression

Plans for appropriate fire suppression response and fuels treatment will be developed to protect against catastrophic wildfire loss. It is unlikely that fire suppression and/or fuels treatment would occur during the period of eagle use. If it should, coordination with the wildlife biologist would need to occur.

Adjacent Landowners

Periodically inform adjacent landowners of eagle populations, habitat improvement projects, and other activities involving the MA. Work cooperatively with private landowners to maintain/improve foraging and roosting opportunities for eagles, since almost all food resources occur and are affected by activities on private land. Identify and recognize current land-use practices that are advantageous to the wintering eagles and establish recommendations for those which can be improved.