

Appendix E: Fire Management Unit Descriptions

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FMU 001 GF/BLM/Coast

FMU Identifier: General Forest /Bureau of Land Management/Coast Range

FMU Number: 001

General Risk Category: Moderate

Fire Behavior Indicator: Energy Release Component based on National Fire Danger Rating System (NDFRS²⁴) Fuel Model G

NFDRS Weather Station: Yoncalla

Acres: Total - 27,976, BLM - 17,842

Ecoregions: Level III - Coast Range; Level IV - 1G Mid-Coastal Sedimentary

Predominant Vegetation Type: Mostly forested with western hemlock/Douglas-fir; major shrub species include salal, sword fern, vine maple and rhododendron. Wetter slopes and riparian areas contain alder, maple, red cedar and grand fir. Drier south aspects may include a tan oak component

Communities at Risk Within or Adjacent to this FMU: Drain, Yoncalla, Elkton and Curtin, Oregon.

FMU Characteristics

This FMU is comprised of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed matrix lands located in the Coast Range Ecoregion. The BLM lands are intermixed with privately owned managed timberlands in a checkerboard ownership pattern.

Most of this FMU is located north and west of Roseburg within the Swiftwater Field Area of Coast Range Ecoregion 1G. Dominated by forest, this area is primarily used for logging and dispersed recreation. Forest is typically composed of western hemlock and Douglas-fir with a heavy brush component. Wetter slopes and riparian areas include big leaf maple, red cedar, grand fir and alder. Drier slopes on south aspects may include tan oak, madrone and other conifer species.

These lands have a mosaic of age classes. Much of the area has been intensively managed for timber production. Even-aged early and mid-seral plantations of Douglas-fir dominate the landscape on both BLM and privately owned lands. Late-seral (old growth) forests exist primarily on the BLM managed lands. Both the managed plantations and the remaining old growth forest have very high resource values.

Prescribed fire or mechanical fuels treatments are often used for site preparation after timber harvest on BLM lands. Pre-commercial thinning slash has historically not been treated, creating an increased risk of stand replacement fires until such fuels decompose. Fuels reduction activities, designed to reduce risk of stand replacement fire, is a priority in this FMU. The primary goal is to reduce the probability of large-scale late-successional habitat loss in adjacent Late Successional Reserves (LSR's). The primary fuels reduction activities that will occur in this FMU will continue to be those designed to treat fuels generated by timber harvest and silvicultural treatments.

²⁴ Refer to Table 12, NFDRS and Fire Behavior Fuel Models Relationships

Smoke from prescribed fires and wildfires will occasionally impact the above listed communities. Direct risk to the communities from fires originating in this FMU is low.

Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives

Strategic Objectives

- Take appropriate suppression response on all wildfires while providing for public and firefighter safety. In most cases, responses will consist of aggressive initial attack to extinguish fires at the smallest size possible.
- Minimize the direct negative impacts of wildfire suppression on ecosystem management objectives.
- For wildfires that escape initial attack, complete a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) to develop a suppression strategy and to evaluate the damage induced by suppression activities compared to expected wildfire damage. Suppression tactics will consider:
 - ✦ Protection of specific attributes of each land use allocation.
 - ✦ Collaboration and coordination with partners on wildfire suppression activities that will avoid or minimize adverse impacts on federal and non-federal lands.
 - ✦ Appropriate use of suppression tools such as aircraft, dozers, pumps and other mechanized equipment. Clearly define any restrictions relating to their use.
- Reduce hazardous fuels utilizing methods such as prescribed burning, mechanical or manual manipulation of forest vegetation and debris, or removal of forest vegetation and debris.
- Maintain transportation corridors.
- Reduce the number of human caused fires.

Measurable Objectives

- Detect 75% of all fires within two hours of origin or prior to reaching 0.5 acres.
- Suppress 94% of all wildland fires at ten acres or less.
- Mop-up all fires of ten acres or less within 72 hours of containment.
- Provide annual fire prevention outreach to schoolchildren (grades 1-5).
- Increase the number of fuels reduction treatment acres along main travel corridors and in areas of activity fuels.

Management Constraints Affecting Operational Implementation²⁵

The Roseburg RMP contains guidelines and constraints for fire management activities within all land use allocations (LUA's) for:

- Wildfire Suppression
- Fuels management and hazard reduction activities using prescribed fire

²⁵ ***LRMP/ROD management area prescriptions, standards and guidelines***

The Roseburg RMP also contains Best Management Practices (BMP's) that are site-specific methods, measures or practices designed to protect water quality or soil productivity. These sections of the Roseburg RMP are included in Appendix G.

The primary land unit allocation (LUA) in this FMU is Matrix. Other LUA's include riparian reserves and other special management areas.

Matrix

- ▶ Appropriate suppression response will be used. A full range of suppression strategies is available.
- ▶ Minimize damage to riparian vegetation during wildfire and prescribed fire activities.
- ▶ Fire lines should be constructed outside riparian areas. Machinery such as tractors may be used where approved by a resource advisor.
- ▶ Prescribed fire treatments will be designed to prevent reduction in site productivity.
- ▶ Detection efforts will be intensified during critical fire periods.

Mgt. Constraints Related to Wildland Fire Suppression and Fuels Treatment

Fire suppression is contracted with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Section C.5.5 of the protection contract addresses "Special Fire Management Measures". The BLM's "Special Fire Management Area Maps" identify areas where modified suppression tactics are required to protect specific resources values including soils, threatened and endangered (T&E) species and habitat, archaeological sites and recreation facilities. Copies of these maps are provided to the Fire Protection Districts and each BLM Field Office maintains a copy.

Management Constraints Specific to Wildland Fire Use

Wildland fire use (WFU) is precluded at this time due to complex issues associated with forest management investments, risk to resource values, a checkerboard ownership pattern, and heavy fuel loadings in this mixed severity fire regime.

Historic Fire Occurrence

The southwest Oregon area experiences moderate fire activity, mainly associated with lightning ignitions during the summer months. Detailed statistics regarding historic fire activity may be found in Appendix C.

Fire Management Situation

Weather patterns influencing fire behavior and historical weather analysis.

- ▶ Historic lightning pattern tracks north from the Siskiyou Mountains.
- ▶ Fall east wind events (foehn winds) can result in extreme fire behavior late in the fire season (September – October).
- ▶ Marine influences (onshore/offshore flow) produce cooler temperatures, higher humidities, and higher amounts of precipitation and fog. These influences are more pronounced along the western portions of the FMU.

Fire season determination.

In general, fire season is declared by the Douglas Forest Protective Association (DFPA) in mid-June, and the season runs through late September. This decision is based on local weather conditions and the predicted Energy Release Component (ERC). Season ending weather events normally occur in late September or October.

Fuels conditions likely to influence fire behavior.

The current vegetative pattern of the area is more fragmented than it was in the past. As a result of extensive logging and residential development, a vegetative pattern of smaller patches of younger age classes now exists. Fuel types vary widely across this FMU. Young plantations, dense pole stands and multi-story old growth timber stands are included. Extreme fire behavior can occur in any of these fuel types given critical weather conditions.

The fuels that can have the greatest influence on fire behavior across the landscape are activity fuels created by forest management operations and silvicultural treatments. Although regeneration (i.e. clearcut) harvests are not an option for any lands within LSR's, clearcut logging on adjacent private land continues. Pre-commercial thinning and density management operations designed to speed the growth of trees and provide for old-growth habitat also continue. The greatest fire risk occurs in the first one to two fire seasons after activity fuels are created. The slash has cured and red needles are still attached. Wildfire in these areas will result in higher rates of spread and higher fire intensities.

Regardless of the checkerboard ownership pattern, activity fuels from regeneration timber harvest, pre-commercial thinning, commercial thinning and other forest management treatments that produces increased surface fuels may result in increased fire behavior until such fuels have time to decay.

The live vegetation in many of the managed stands in the FMU are dense, even though hazard reduction treatments, most often associated with site preparation after timber harvest, were conducted within the past five to twenty years. Many of these stands are represented by the NFFL brush fuel model 5, and generally require a wind driven fire and low humidity to sustain crown fire behavior. The high component of live fuels acts as a heat sink that slows a fire's rate of spread. Stand replacement fires can result from surface fires in these stands due to crown scorch of the young trees and brush.

Old growth stands include numerous fuels characteristics that influence fire behavior. Numerous large snags create overhead hazards to firefighters and are a source of embers that cause relatively long range spotting. High levels of large woody debris, a desirable habitat feature in ecosystem management, can result in high intensity and long duration fire. Multistory canopies create ladder fuels that can carry flames from a surface fire high into crowns of old growth trees.

Fire Regime Alteration

Unknown at this time.

Control problems and dominant topographic features.

Potential control problems:

- Moderate to heavy fuel loading in many forested areas.
- Continuous fuels with few natural barriers or fuel breaks.
- During extreme weather, fires can become convection driven with potential for long range spotting.

Dominant topographic features:

- Highly dissected mountains with high gradient streams.
- Well developed road system provides access within one mile in most cases.
- Water is relatively abundant along major streams and creeks at lower elevation, but less available at higher elevations.

Firefighter and public safety considerations.

- Potential need for traffic control and possible evacuation coordination.
- Mapped roads may not provide ready access without use of heavy equipment to open.
- Potential for smoke impacts and power line damage along the main travel corridor, including Hwy 138 and Smith River Road.

Fire prevention and education opportunities.

- Fire prevention signing in accordance with protection contract.
- Operations permits required during fire season.
- Local news coverage at beginning of and throughout fire season.
- Actively disseminate fire restriction information and make forest user contacts.
- Yearly participation in 5th and 6th grade forestry tour.

Values to be protected (TES, Cultural, etc.)

During suppression action, resource advisors and protection agencies are provided Special Fire Management Area Maps of the District that identify resources requiring special protection. Best Management Practices located in the Roseburg RMP, Appendix D define site-specific methods, measures or practices to protect water quality or soil productivity. These may also be found in Appendix G.

Proposed hazard fuels treatments or prescribed burns.

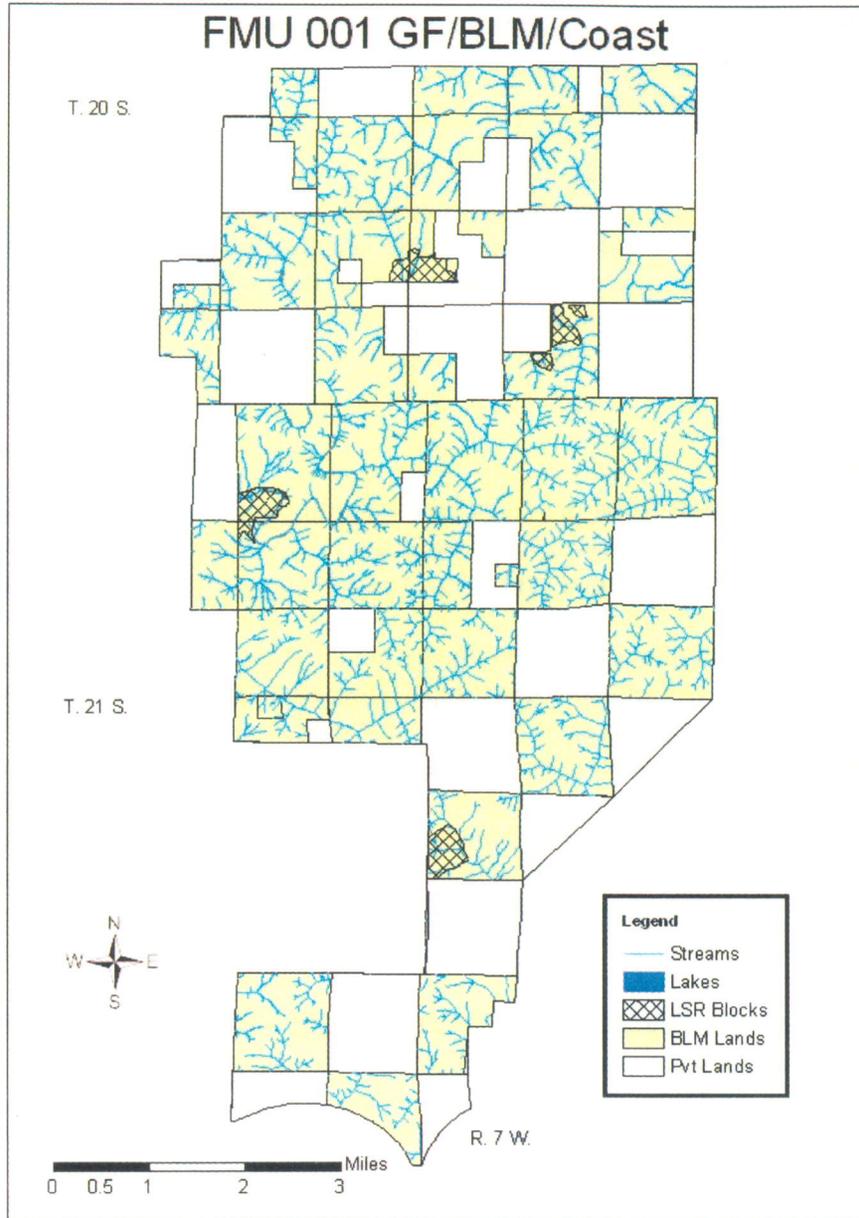
Numerous active timber sales include fuels reduction requirements in their contracts. Work is scheduled as units are logged.

Other elements of the fire environment affecting management (smoke management).

The Oregon Smoke Management Plan restricts burning opportunities. The State of Oregon's closed fire season, and restrictions at National Preparedness Levels IV and V affect prescribed fire opportunities.

Other special concern area.

No other special concerns are noted beyond those contained in the Special Fire Management Area Maps.



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