United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific Northwest Region

1990

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# **Record of Decision**

Land and Resource Management Plan

**Siuslaw National Forest** 



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Forest Service Siuslaw National Forest P.O. Box 1148 Corvallis, OR 97339

#### Reply To: 1920/1950

March 7, 1990

Dear Reader,

I am pleased to send you copies of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and accompanying Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Siuslaw National Forest. The FEIS describes ten alternatives for managing the Forest, one of which was selected as the basis of the Forest Plan.

These documents represent culmination of nearly ten years of public involvement by citizens like yourself who are interested in future management of the Forest. This is the first integrated plan ever prepared for the entire Siuslaw National Forest.

The material you have includes the following:

- SUMMARY of the FEIS;
- FEIS;
- FEIS APPENDICES A-J (Vol 1);
- FEIS APPENDICES K and L (Vol. 2);
- FEIS MAP PACKET;
- FOREST PLAN; and
- RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE FOREST PLAN.

I encourage you to focus your attention on implementation of the Forest Plan, which initiates a new overall strategy for managing the Forest. It retains existing emphasis on some programs, while changing emphasis for other programs.

The Forest Plan presents goals and objectives, and describes conditions that are desired for the Forest in the future. To help attain these goals, the Forest Plan includes standards and guidelines for various management activities.

The Responsible Official for this FEIS and Forest Plan is the Regional Forester for the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region.

I encourage you to review the enclosed documents. If you have questions, please contact Tony Vander Heide, Planning Staff Officer for the Forest. His phone number is 503-750-7019.

Sincerely,

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DAVID P. GARBER Acting Forest Supervisor



## CHANGES TO THE FOREST PLAN

A few changes were made to the Siuslaw Forest Plan after the planning documents were sent to the printer The changes were made to respond to State of Oregon recommendations for our Forest Plan

1 Class III stream riparian areas

An additional portion of the Class III stream riparian area is added to the suitable timber land base. Timber harvest activities are expected to occur above the break in slope outside of the stream channel and timber yields are expected to be equivalent to about 40% of full yield from the entire 100-foot riparian area Management objectives for the area remain the same as those specified in the Forest Plan; i.e., to manage vegetation in riparian areas to benefit fish and wildlife habitat and stream structure, while providing timber volume where feasible

Forest-wide standard and guideline FW-089 (page IV-49) should be replaced with the following

- FW-089 Buffer Width Where conifers exist along Class-III streams, leave a zone of such trees, averaging at least 8 per 100 lineal feet of stream (about four trees on each side), that are likely to contribute large woody debris to the channel. On the average, these conifers are assumed to be within 60 feet of the streams, measured horizontally Trees in the riparian area above the break in slope that are not needed to meet other objectives may be harvested.
- 2 Undeveloped area management Drift Creek Adjacent

The area selected for undeveloped management is the western-most portion of the Boulder Creek area, totaling about 1,500 acres rather than 2,600 acres. The remaining 1,100 acres are allocated to Management Area 15

The smaller Boulder Creek area will still provide semiprimitive nonmotorized recreation opportunities, since it is adjacent the Drift Creek Wilderness. Total unroaded, undeveloped areas on the Forest will be 26,200 acres rather than 27,300 acres

3 Management of visual quality along state Highways 34, 38 and 126

The visual quality objective for viewsheds along state highways remains the same as in the Forest Plan: full retention for foreground and partial retention for middleground areas. The method of managing middleground acres is changed. Some additional acres are added to the suitable timber land base. Partial harvests will be allowed on all acres within the middleground rather than on half the acres (Discussion of visual management prescriptions is in the final EIS, Appendix B, page B-48.)

4. Timber yield assumptions for root-rot pockets

The assumption that no yield will be obtained from root-rot pockets planted with conifer was changed to assume about 1/3 of normal timber yield can be obtained from those pockets not identified for replanting with alder (See the final EIS, Appendix B, page B-44 for more information about yield reductions for disease)

5 Allowable sale quantity (ASQ) and suitable land

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The effect of the above is to change the ASQ and suitable timber land base as follows

	FROM	TO 61 7 MMCF (335 MMBF)	
ASQ	61 2 MMCF (332 MMBF)		
Suitable land	357,000 acres	369,000 acres	

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## ERRATA SHEET

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## SIUSLAW NATIONAL FOREST PLANNING DOCUMENTS

FEIS

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Р П-35	Point/Counterpoint Table, #5 Wildlife Under the "Point" column, delete "Elk habitat would increase " Under the "Counterpoint" column, add "Elk habitat would decrease "
P III-68	Table III-15. Add "State threatened" to the list of selection criteria for western snowy plover
P III-70	Table III-16. Locations in Reserved Lands should show Cummins Cr Wilderness (3 sites) and Drift Ck Wilderness (2 sites)
P. IV-10	Table IV-3. Data in column "Alternative B" and row "5th Decade, 16-50 years" should be 10 6, not 1 6
FOREST PLAN	
P. IV-69	Paragraph 4, sentences 2-3 should read"Outside this MA, 12,957 more acres of suitable spotted owl habitat are protected in reserved areas such as Wildernesses and Cascade Head Scenic-Research Area Another 12,158 acres of SOHA are included in MAs other than the above (see Table IV-16) "
P IV-87	Paragraph 2, sentence 4 should read "The plan was a cooperative effort by the Forest Service, Tillamook County, and the state of Oregon The Forest Plan was developed to be consistent with the Sand Lake Plan " Delete. "and is incorporated by reference in the Forest Plan."
P V-44	Replace Table V-9L (Monitoring Questions - Wildlife (Ruffed Grouse)) with the attached Table V-9L

### Table V-9L. Monitoring Questions - Wildlife (Deciduous-Mix Habitat)

QUESTION: Is deciduous-mix habitat being maintained to provide habitat diversity in accordance with the Forest Plan?

**Discussion** - The hardwood or hardwood/conifer (deciduous-mix) stand is a transient plant community in the Coast Range since it requires periodic disturbance to perpetuate. However, this stand type provides an important component of habitat diversity on the Forest. Although no obligate deciduous-mix animal species have been documented, there are several species associated with this habitat type. The sharp-shinned hawk, black-throated grey warbler, and ruffed grouse are examples of species that may require hardwood or hardwood/conifer mix habitat during all or part of their life cycle. Management of this habitat type will contribute to habitat diversity on the Forest and will assist in maintaining viable populations of species closely associated with this habitat type.

Evaluation Question	Measured Action/Effect	Methods	Unit of Measure	Estimated Reliability	Information Collection Frequency	Report Period	Management Responsibility	Threshold of Variability	Estimated Annual Cost
Is at least 5% of the Forest (> 30,000 acres) comprised of hardwood or deciduous-mix habitat and distributed in both upland and riparian areas?	Total habitat available, acres in riparian per sub-basin, acres in upland per sub-basin	Forest Inventory and GIS	Acres	High	10 year	10 year	Wildlife Staff	Less than 30,000 acres on the Forest, More than 75% in ripari- an or upland areas	\$2000/ year
Is enough deciduous-mix condi- tion being created to maintain 5% of the Forest in deciduous-mix habitat?	Acres of deciduous-mix provided through cultural activities	Forest Inventory and GIS	Acres	Hıgh	.nnual	5 years	Wildlife Staff	Less than 300 acres per year, averaged over 5 years, of deciduous-mix created through cul- tural activity	\$2000/ year

# **RECORD OF DECISION**

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SIUSLAW NATIONAL FOREST

Land and Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement

#### SIUSLAW NATIONAL FOREST

Benton, Coos, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Polk, Tillamook, and Yamhill Counties in Oregon

USDA FOREST SERVICE

March 7, 1990

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## **RECORD OF DECISION**

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# SECTION I INTRODUCTION

## **BASIS AND NEED FOR DECISION**

This Record of Decision (ROD) documents my decision and rationale for approving the Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Siuslaw National Forest

Throughout this ROD, I have used some technical terms which may be foreign to a large segment of the public In some cases I have been able to explain the term, but in other cases explanations would have made this document unnecessarily long The reader is encouraged to refer to the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Glossary which defines terms used in this document

A draft EIS and proposed Forest Plan were filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on November 14, 1986 A supplement to the draft EIS was filed October 14, 1988 Additional details on meetings, notices, and documents preceeding the final EIS and Forest Plan are available in the final EIS, Appendices A and K.

### Authority

The final EIS and Forest Plan were developed under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 219) The final EIS satisfies requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500).

The Forest Plan is part of a framework for long-range planning established by the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) The Forest Plan establishes general direction for 10 to 15 years, and must be revised at least every 15 years [36 CFR 219.10(q)] The Forest Plan replaces previous resource management plans, including the:

10-Year Timber Resource Management Plan (1979, as amended in 1980 and 1984), Hebo Land and Resource Management Unit Plan (1978), Alsea Land and Resource Management Unit Plan (1979), Marys Peak Land and Resource Management Unit Plan (1977), and Mapleton Ranger District Multiple-Use Plan (1968)

Subject to valid existing rights, all permits, contracts, and other instruments for the use and occupancy of National Forest System land will conform with the Forest Plan at the earliest possible date

## AFFECTED AREA

The Siuslaw National Forest is in the Coast Range of western Oregon, adjacent to the Pacific Ocean The planning area includes the entire Forest located in portions of Benton, Coos, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Polk, Tillamook and Yamhill counties

The Forest is headquartered in Corvallıs Ranger District Offices are in Hebo, Alsea, Waldport, Mapleton, and Reedsport (Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area)

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Pursuant to the intent of NFMA, the Siuslaw National Forest conducted a large-scale public involvement program Formal activities included two Notices of Intent to Prepare an EIS printed in the *Federal Register*, two formal public comment periods on draft documents, and many meetings, presentations, and information distributions In addition to formal activities, Forest employees informally explained the purpose of the Forest Plan and how to effectively participate in the process Special public involvement activities were also conducted for the Sutton Area management alternatives (See final EIS, Appendix K)

Forest representatives met often with the state of Oregon Federal Plans Coordinator and various state agency representatives to clarify and correct technical problems with the draft EIS On the basis of state recommendations and public response received on the draft EIS, the Forest changed some management emphases in the Preferred Alternative. My staff and I were briefed on the public comments, the final EIS, and the Forest's changes to the draft Forest Plan I used this information to make my decision

#### Issues

Land and resource management planning began with identification of issues and concerns through contacts with local civic and community organizations; individuals; local, state and federal agencies, private industries; adjacent landowners; various interest groups; Native American tribes; and Forest Service employees Public comments and management concerns were analyzed, and 25 major issues were identified Of those, 15 issues were treated differently by the various alternatives for the Forest Plan The issues, which are described in detail in the final EIS, Chapter I and Forest Plan, Chapter III are specifically addressed in this ROD in Section III, Rationale for the Decisions The issues treated differently deal with:

Timber management Old growth Watershed management Fish habitat management Diversity of recreation opportunities Special Interest Areas (SIAs) Sutton and Sand Lake areas Scenic protection Wilderness management Undeveloped, unroaded areas Research Natural Areas (RNAs) Mineral development Effects on local communities Economic effects and values

The issues treated the same way in all alternatives deal with:

Mapleton Court decision Cultural resource management Congressionally-designated area management Land ownership adjustments Utility corridor, electronic site, and road management Native American Indian religious sites Soil productivity Herbicide use Wild and Scenic Rivers Developed recreation sites

## WHAT THE FOREST PLAN IS, AND IS NOT

As a long-range strategy for managing the Suuslaw National Forest, the Forest Plan and accompanying final EIS are programmatic The Forest Plan provides management direction to produce goods, services and uses in a way that maximizes long-term net public benefits. It is not a plan for day-to-day administrative activities of the Forest; it does not address such matters as vehicle and equipment management or organizational structure. The Forest Plan emphasizes application of various management practices to achieve multiple-use goals and objectives in an environmentally sound and economically efficient manner. It does not emphasize site-specific decisions, but through Standards and Guidelines and Management Area direction, displayed in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, significantly influences design, execution, and monitoring of site-specific activities. Standards and Guidelines are principles specifying conditions or levels of environmental quality to be achieved. They are the rules that govern our resource management practices and are the key to successful implementation of the plan. They will not be violated to achieve annual targets A Management Area consists of one or more areas of land which have similar management objectives and a common management prescription

## SECTION II

# DECISIONS

## SUMMARY OF THE DECISION

My decision is to approve, adopt, and implement the Forest Plan which accompanies the final EIS This decision is referred to as Alternative E (Preferred Alternative) for management of the Siuslaw National Forest Alternative E is a modification of the draft EIS Preferred Alternative and is a response to public comments and new information Differences between the draft Preferred Alternative and final Preferred Alternative include more protection for riparian areas; more acres included in Spotted Owl Habitat Areas; fewer acres allocated to timber production, although these acres support a higher allowable sale quantity; fewer acres in longer rotations; fewer acres maintained in an undeveloped condition; increased emphasis on dispersed recreation facilities for day-use; recommendations for expanded Special Interest Areas, protection of more old-growth, recommendations for more Research Natural Areas; and greater scenic protection for three major highways crossing the Forest.

Further, the Forest Plan establishes multiple-use goals and desired future conditions These are discussed in detail in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV

It is vital for the reviewer to understand what the Forest Plan does not do, it does NOT:

- Maximize any single resource use or public service,
- Propose the use of any resource beyond the biological capability of the land to sustain that use;
- Propose management of any resource based solely on values in the market place

## ELEMENTS OF THE DECISION

The program decisions I make here are accompanied by the necessary supporting NEPA analysis and disclosure required by law and regulation Additional NEPA analysis for these decisions is neither expected nor required. These decisions may be revisited or reassessed during implementation, but they do not have to be These decisions establish or identify the following

- Forest-wide goals and objectives
- Forest-wide desired future condition.
- Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines
- Management Area goals and location
- Management Area desired future condition.
- Management area Standards and Guidelines
- Monitoring program and evaluation process
- Lands suitable and selected for timber harvesting
- Forest-wide allowable sale quantity
- Location of additional Special Interest Areas (SIAs) and expansion of the existing Cape Perpetua SIA
- Incorporation of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area Management Plan and the Cascade Head Scenic-Research Area Management Plan

#### **Intended Activities**

I also intend to carry out certain scheduled activities Unlike the programmatic decisions listed above, these are *not* accompanied by all supporting NEPA analysis and disclosure required by law and regulation

Additional environmental analysis will be done during Forest Plan implementation These proposed and probable activities are displayed in activity schedules in the Forest Plan, Appendices A and B

It is important to note that all proposals in the Forest Plan can be accomplished from physical, biological, economic, social, and legal perspectives. It is not certain that these proposals will be accomplished First, outputs specified in the Forest Plan are estimates and projections based on available inventory data and assumptions

Second, all activities, many of which are interdependent, may be affected by annual budgets The Forest Plan is implemented through various site-specific projects, such as timber sales, wildlife habitat improvements, and campground development Budget allocations for any given year covered by the Forest Plan may cause projects to be rescheduled However, the goals and land use allocations described in the Forest Plan would not change unless the Forest Plan itself were changed If actual budgets are significantly different from those projected over a period of several years, the Forest Plan may have to be amended and, consequently, would reflect different outputs and environmental conditions The significance of changes related to budgets or other factors is determined in the context of the particular circumstances

During implementation, when the various projects are designed, site-specific analyses are performed These analyses may be disclosed in an environmental document and may lead to an amendment or revision of the Forest Plan. Any resulting documents are to be tiered to the final EIS for the Forest Plan, pursuant to 40 CFR 1508 28

#### Recommendations

I also am recommending certain decisions to others with the authority to make those final decisions Like my final decisions, recommendations *are* accompanied by all supporting NEPA analysis and disclosure required by law and regulation However, authority to make a final decision on these issue is not mine If others with higher authority accept the recommendation, the resulting final decision *will not* ordinarily be revisited or reassessed by the Forest Service during implementation of the Forest Plan

My recommendations include identification of:

- Location of additions to the RNA system
- Deletions from the Nationwide Rivers Inventory for the Wild and Scenic Rivers System

## SECTION III

# **RATIONALE FOR THE DECISIONS**

I approached my decisions by first looking at major issues and public comments on them and then comparing the responses of various alternatives to the issues I present my rationale for these decisions in the same manner below

During the period between the draft and final EIS, Siuslaw National Forest employees held numerous meetings with interested members of the public. Initially Forest employees met with the citizens to hear their concerns and clarify issues. Next, Forest employees looked at ways to address these comments, developed proposals for the major issues, and shared them with the citizens These citizens responded to the proposals, and their responses were used to develop recommendations to me

In arriving at these decisions, I reviewed the environmental consequences of the Forest Plan and alternatives. I gave particular attention to how the selected alternative responded to public issues and management concerns. In my judgment Alternative E maximizes net public benefits It balances adequate protection of the environment with production of both monetary and non-monetary resource outputs.

## **RATIONALE FOR RESOLVING EACH ISSUE**

The response of each alternative to the 25 major issues was a primary consideration in choosing the selected alternative. The alternatives and their resolution of issues are discussed below, and are disclosed in greater detail in the final EIS, Chapters I and II

#### **ISSUE 1:** Timber Management

The primary issue for the Siuslaw National Forest is what balance should be struck between timber management and management of other resources The issue contains the following questions:

- How much timber will be harvested?
- What kind of timber will be harvested?
- Where will timber be harvested?
- Which silvicultural practices and what schedule will be used?

The 1979 Timber Resource Plan addresses timber volume on the basis of board-foot measure It projected an annual timber sale level of 438 million board feet (MMBF). This included 9 MMBF of salvage material These terms are defined in the final EIS, Glossary. Annual timber sale level is comparable to allowable sale quantity (ASQ) Actual annual harvest of chargeable timber averaged 295 MMBF for the period of 1979 to 1988 The draft Forest Plan proposed an ASQ of 62 2 million cubic feet (MMCF) (295 MMBF)

Many of the issues raised during the planning process affect ASQ. Some of these issues include: land selected as suitable for timber production; silvicultural practices; cumulative effects on other resources--especially watersheds, fish and wildlife, achieving other resource objectives; and effects on jobs and community stability Public opinion is divided as to whether timber sale levels allowed by past plans should be continued. Many feel the Forest should maintain or increase the timber sale level to help sustain local economies They feel the Forest has enough Wilderness and other protected areas to meet other resource needs Others feel existing harvest levels are too high They do not want to see changes in unroaded areas and are concerned about effects of harvest on wildlife, water quality, soils, scenery, and recreation

The Forest considered alternatives with 1st-decade ASQs ranging from 13.5 MMCF (72 MMBF) to 79 8 MMCF (439 MMBF) in the final EIS The draft EIS considered alternatives with 1st-decade ASQs ranging from 19 6 MMCF (93 MMBF) to 96 5 MMCF (460 MMBF) The differences are due to major changes made between the draft and final EIS concerning modeled timber yield assumptions and reductions made to the suitable timber land to meet NFMA management requirements.

Two alternatives in the draft EIS proposed to manage timber on harvest schedules that would depart from nondeclining flow Public comments generally opposed departure schedules because they could pose unacceptable risks of adverse environmental impacts and not provide timber supplies needed to sustain local economies over the long-term

After considering all factors, it is my decision to implement the selected alternative with a 1st-decade ASQ of 61 7 MMCF annually The selected alternative manages timber on a nondeclining flow harvest schedule This harvest level reflects a balance between jobs, demand for wood products, income to the Treasury, and protection of the various nonmarket values desired by Forest users

The average annual ASQ of 61 7 MMCF of timber under this plan is the upper limit of chargeable wood to be sold from suitable Forest land during the first decade of the planning period. It is not an actual proposal for timber sale offerings. The annual timber sale offerings also include non-chargeable material and depend on budget appropriations, multiple-use objectives and market conditions.

ASQ will be monitored and controlled on the basis of cubic-foot measure for the Forest Plan Board-foot volume associated with the cubic-foot volume (i e, board foot/cubic foot conversion ratio) varies from stand to stand depending on the size and form of the trees Both board-foot and cubic-foot measure are displayed here, since board-foot has been and continues to be the customary unit of measure The stands expected to be harvested in the plan period will yield approximately 335 MMBF per year associated with the ASQ of 61 7 MMCF This will be used as a goal in the early part of the plan period; the transition from use of board-foot measure to use of cubic-foot measure should be made during this plan period

Chargeable volume, ASQ, is comprised of categories of timber which were used in making growth and yield predictions during development of the plan On the Siuslaw National Forest this included mortality salvage. Chargeable volume, ASQ, is from those lands designated as being suitable for timber production Other non-chargeable volume, not used in yield calculations because it did not meet Regional utilization standards, or standards for soundness, or because it is harvested from lands not suitable for timber production, may also be sold as part of the annual Timber Sale Program Quantity (TSPQ) Standards and Guidelines for the Management Areas specify when volume will be removed from lands not suitable for timber production (e.g. salvage from a Special Interest Area) Generally this is only done when removal of the timber would not conflict with the goals and desired future condition of the management area.

To achieve the TSPQ, yearly targets are developed These yearly timber targets can be higher or lower than the average annual ASQ, provided the chargeable volume does not cumulatively exceed the ASQ over the first decade

In the selected alternative, tree species offered for sale include 56 5 MMCF (316 MMBF) of mixed conifer and 5.2 MMCF (19 MMBF) of hardwoods Hardwood volume offered will be similar

to current harvest levels and should meet the needs of the small segment of the timber industry dependent on those species

In addition to the ASQ, I estimate that 2.4 MMCF of material unsuitable for sawlogs will be offered annually during the 1st decade. This material includes the approximate historic level of firewood, posts and poles, as well as a small amount of cull logs and chips

Timber will be managed on about 369,000 acres, of which about 26% will be managed on long rotations of 90 years or more to meet nontimber resource objectives About 5,200 acres will be clearcut annually. Precommercial thinning will occur on about 2,300 acres and commercial thinning on about 600 acres annually to improve stand density and species mix These terms are defined in the final EIS, Glossary

Even-aged management will be the primary silvicultural system, because it is well suited, ecologically and economically, for timber management of the major Coast Range commercial tree species (Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, and red alder). All of the ASQ assumes the use of even-aged silvicultural practices (Final EIS, Appendix G, Harvest Method Assessment). Uneven-aged silviculture practices will be considered in the project planning process as individual stands are investigated for harvest opportunities Actual selection of harvest methods-- clearcut, selection or shelterwood-- will be made at the project level, based on site-specific conditions and Management Area objectives. Factors to be considered in choosing logging methods include cost effectiveness, protecting inherent site productivity, and satisfying management objectives for a stand.

Approximately 13% of the ASQ established in this plan depends on the application of intensive timber management practices including precommercial thinning, fertilization, and genetic tree improvement. The level of application of intensive timber management practices could impact the ASQ and inability to meet assumed levels could result in plan amendment.

The Forest is in the midst of completing an updated vegetation inventory. Data is expected to be available for use in late 1990 or early 1991 A comparison will be made of the timber stand information used in the forest planning process (based on a 1974 inventory) and the information from the new inventory If differences between the inventories are judged to be significant by the Forest Supervisor, adjustments may be made to the projected ASQ and a Plan amendment issued.

#### ISSUE 2: Old Growth

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#### How much of existing old growth will be maintained?

The future of old-growth stands on the Forest is an issue that has gained much public interest. In the past, much of the focus for this issue has been spotted-owl habitat, it now has a much wider scope Many individuals value old-growth trees and older forests for maintenance of diversity and site productivity, protection of watersheds, and for aesthetic and recreational purposes Old-growth stands provide habitat for numerous species of wildlife, including the spotted owl, which is proposed for federal listing as a threatened species.

Timber industry interests, on the other hand, feel that enough land is excluded from timber management through Wilderness, Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas and, recently, Spotted Owl Habitat Areas, to provide adequate amounts of old growth for future generations. Removing more land from timber production reduces the opportunity to harvest timber. The issue is confounded by the lack of a widely accepted definition of old growth. To many individuals, old growth includes mature stands of trees that are aesthetically pleasing. To ecologists, an old-growth forest must meet specific biological and physical criteria. Few older stands on the Forest would qualify under current ecological old-growth definitions.

The most recent vegetation inventory for the Forest (in 1976) indicates there are about 33,800 acres of old growth, but the inventory did not use many of the old-growth criteria considered important today. It may have included large diameter, younger mature timber stands and not included smaller, older stands

The draft Forest Plan proposed to maintain 19,000 acres of this 1976 inventory old-growth in Spotted Owl Habitat Areas, Wildernesses and other areas not suitable for timber management (e g Cascade Head Scenic Research Area). No acres were allocated specifically for old-growth management for amenity value. Of the 14,800 acres of old-growth included in the suitable land base, 3,000 acres would have been harvested in the 1st decade.

In the final EIS, the Forest considered alternatives ranging from protection of 20,000 acres of the inventoried old-growth to protection of all inventoried old-growth acres, with 1st-decade harvests of old-growth ranging from 12,000 acres to none, respectively

After considering public comments about old-growth values, I have selected Alternative E, which maintains 23,300 acres of old growth in Spotted Owl Habitat Areas, Wildernesses, and other areas not suitable for timber production Included in the 23,300 acres is 1,000 acres of old-growth groves to be managed primarily for amenity value and to be located in areas readily accessible to the public These groves may be any size.

The Forest is currently updating its old-growth inventory. Aerial photointerpretation and mapping of timber stands in the large (greater than 32") diameter class and with multiple canopy layers is complete, but plot surveys are not finished. Additional inventories of stands in the 18" to 32" diameter class will be completed during Plan implementation and will probably identify more acres that qualify as old-growth Until the old-growth inventory is complete, no old-growth stands that meet the definition described in Franklin (1986)<sup>1</sup> and that are larger than 40 acres will be harvested As more complete information about old-growth on the Siuslaw becomes available, it will be shared with the public. My current decision about the amount of old-growth to maintain for the future could be reviewed in light of the updated inventory information. Some old-growth, not meeting the Franklin definition will be harvested in the 1st decade At the end of the 1st decade, over 31,000 acres of the 1976 inventory old-growth is expected to remain

Based on the information I have available today, the widely dispersed and varied old-growth stands included in the 23,300 acres should adequately preserve representative old-growth forest types on the Siuslaw in the future I have not elected to "manage" old-growth stands by extending rotations because of the silvicultural uncertainties about this technique Some limited trials may be conducted to determine whether silvicultural treatments can be used to hasten development of old-growth characteristics in some of the Forest's younger stands Additional information about old growth on the Forest can be found in the final EIS, Chapter III, "Old Growth" and Chapter IV, "Direct Effects on Vegetation".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Franklin, J F, K Cromack, Jr, W Denison, A. McKee, C Maser, J Sedell, F Swanson, and G Juday 1986 Interim definitions for old-growth Douglas-fir and mixed conifer forests in the Pacific Northwest and California USDA Forest Service, Research Note PNW-447

#### **ISSUE 3: Watersheds**

How will land be managed to maintain stable watershed conditions and meet state water quality standards?

There is general public agreement that quality of soil and water must be protected A few timber industry groups expressed concern that the Forest's proposed practices were unnecessarily more restrictive than the state of Oregon's plan to comply with the Clean Water Act They are particularly dissatisfied with removal of headwall acres from timber production to reduce landslide potential, feeling that there is not enough scientific evidence to justify such measures Other individuals are concerned about effects of new road construction and harvest activity on erosion and sedimentation, since water quality is important to municipal water users and critical to maintenance of fish habitat, both in Forest streams and in estuaries

After consideration of public and municipality concerns for water quality, I have decided to accept the management practices described in the selected alternative for protection of watersheds To comply with Federal laws and regulations, streams and streambanks will be protected to prevent detrimental changes in water temperatures, blockages of water courses, and deposits of sediment where timber harvests are likely to seriously and adversely affect water conditions. In addition, the Forest will implement Best Management Practices that meet State water quality standards and comply with the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended in 1977 and 1987. (See the final EIS, Appendix J, Best Management Practices, and the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, Standards and Guidelines )

In the selected alternative, unstable slopes will continue to be protected by leaving vegetation where necessary to prevent increased landslide rates, and timber within 4th-order watersheds will be harvested at rates that ensure that less than 20% of each basin will be 10 years or younger in any 10-year period. The latter restriction will ensure that ground-disturbing activities are not concentrated in a few watersheds, which could adversely affect water quality. Additional practices for streamside protection, described in Issue 4, will be followed.

#### **ISSUE 4:** Fish Habitat

What quantity and quality of anadromous fish habitat will be protected?

The commercial fishing industry, anglers, resource management agencies, and the general public have an interest in maintaining productive fish habitats in Forest streams and estuaries into which the streams flow The Forest covers portions of five of the seven coastal Oregon watersheds producing most anadromous fish Several coastal communities depend on commercial fishing as an important part of their economy

Many environmental groups and individuals expressed concerns through comments on the draft EIS about adverse effects of timber harvest and road building on fish habitats Many feel these activities should be reduced or excluded from parts of the Forest, especially riparian areas, to ensure protection of fish and wildlife habitat. Others feel the Forest should explore ways to protect water quality and fish resources without removing land from timber production. Various timber industry groups feel that fish resources can be protected by applying available management practices, including placement of logs in stream channels during timber sales.

For forest planning, riparian areas are considered to be all areas within a horizontal distance of 100 feet from the normal line of high water of perennial stream channels. Alternatives in the

draft EIS proposed riparan area protection that ranged from 50-foot buffers on the south, east, and west sides of perennial streams (to provide shade for maintenance of stream temperatures) to 100-foot buffers on each side of all perennial and intermittent stream channels (for shade, sources of large woody conifer debris, and sediment reduction) The final EIS considered this same range of riparan protection

Since the draft EIS was released, research has further highlighted the importance of large woody debris (generally from coniferous trees greater than 65 years old) in providing stream structure and enhancing fish spawning and rearing habitat Research results also indicate that about 90% of large woody debris found in streams comes from the first 60 feet of streamsides Past practices removed most large woody debris from the Forest's perennial streams within or adjacent to harvest areas. Habitat capability declined below potential natural levels.

I have decided to adopt the selected alternative which will maintain adequate sources of large woody debris along streamsides and provide areas for future recruitment of material Vegetation buffers will average 100-feet along Class-I and -II streams Along Class-III streams, harvest will be allowed above the break in slope (expected to occur at an average of about 60 feet from the stream channel) to provide timber yields equivalent to about 40% of full yield from the entire riparian area Although fish habitat capability will continue to decline slightly during the next 50 years due to deficient debris sources in areas harvested in the past, the trend should slowly reverse An active program of channel enhancement will be pursued. However, much of the previously affected area is inaccessible and only time will return those areas to a fully productive condition. Management of soil and water resources is closely related to fisheries management. Therefore, management practices that provide long-term supplies of high quality water (Issue 3) are also keys to protecting fish habitat

Several reviewers of the draft EIS raised concerns about watershed and fish management practices proposed by the Forest The Forest contains some of the most productive timberland in the country. It also contains some of the most productive anadromous fish habitat Maintaining high levels of both of these valued resources has been a major objective of mine as I considered alternative management strategies for the Siuslaw National Forest

The forest planning process used a variety of theories, hypotheses, models, and data to project the interaction of timber harvest and fish production. Given the importance of these factors in projecting harvest levels, water quality and fish habitat conditions, it is imperative that the information be well grounded and scientifically acceptable

The State Proposal for the Suslaw Forest Plan recommended the Forest obtain formal outside peer review from the scientific community on the assumptions and modeling underlying the management practices selected for watershed and fish habitat protection in the Forest Plan The state requested the headwall leave practice be a central part of the review. I have decided to conduct such a review under the direction of the Forest Supervisor using scientists from Oregon State University and the Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station While the headwall leave areas will be the focus of the review, I also would like riparian leave areas included The resource effects to be highlighted include water quality, fish habitat, soil stability, wildlife habitat, and timber. Both the underlying theory used in developing the management direction and the interpretative logic, models, and data linking theory to field practices and estimated resource effects should be examined. In addition, the review will look at how this direction has recently been implemented in the field, including the size of headwall leave areas and the width of riparian buffers I expect the review to utilize appropriate components of the on-going COPE project and not duplicate any of the information gathered there I also expect the review to be completed within one year of the date of this ROD and to conclude with a report evaluating the soundness of the theory, logic, and models underlying the management direction and practices specified in the Forest Plan.

#### ISSUE 5: Wildlife and Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat

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How much habitat will be provided for wildlife, and threatened and endangered species, and what and where will these habitats be managed?

This issue focuses not only on the desirability of maintaining wildlife populations, but on levels of management needed to provide both habitats for various species and an appropriate balance of such habitats. Many individuals and timber industry groups are concerned that the Forest is unnecessarily setting aside large amounts of forest land for species that may be more adaptable than thought Many comments received on the draft EIS expressed the feeling that those species adversely affected by timber activities would be protected in lands currently unavailable to timber production, such as Wildernesses and Special Interest Areas Numerous other comments received on the draft EIS expressed concerns that timber production activities have detrimental effects on species that are dependent on mature conifer forests Cavity-nesting species are harmed by removal of trees that provide snags and hollow trees Species that use mature deciduous-mix habitat could be adversely affected as the amount of this forest type declines as a result of natural succession and harvest activities

All management activities will protect habitat values for listed threatened, endangered, and sensitive species and species proposed for listing The Forest Plan, Chapter IV, provides direction consistent with the Endangered Species Act and recovery plans for listed species In a meeting on December 22, 1989 the USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with biological evaluations in the final EIS, and concluded the Forest Plan is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, Aleutian Canada goose, brown pelican, peregrine falcon, and Oregon silverspot butterfly. Pursuant to 150 CFR 402 14(b)(1) formal consultation is not required

Since the draft EIS was released several actions have taken place regarding the northern spotted owl which influence how I will provide for the needs of this species on the Siuslaw National Forest First, a Supplement to the EIS for an Amendment to the Pacific Northwest Regional Guide was issued in July, 1988 The December 8, 1988, Record of Decision for the Supplement identifies standards and guidelines for spotted owl habitat management. The analysis in the Supplement considered the conflicting views and scientific information of others. It provided new criteria for establishing "Spotted Owl Habitat Area" (SOHA) networks on forests in Washington and Oregon, including the Siuslaw National Forest While the draft EIS considered a total of 1,000 acres for each SOHA on the Forest, the Supplement now requires management or dedication of 2,000 acre SOHAs and a network of habitat areas to ensure distribution of spotted owls across the Forest

Second, on April 26, 1989, the FWS announced its intention to develop a proposal to list the northern spotted owl as threatened throughout its range On June 23, 1989, a proposal to list the northern spotted owl was published in the *Federal Register* The FWS is expected to decide if the northern spotted owl will be listed as a threatened species sometime in the summer of 1990.

Finally, Section 318 of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1990, Public Law 101-121 which expires September 30, 1990, directed additional interim habitat protection for the spotted owl. (A SOHA is to include 2,500 acres on the Siuslaw National Forest) It also provided that the December 8, 1988, Record of Decision accompanying the Final Supplement

to the EIS for an Amendment to the Pacific Northwest Regional Guide, be reviewed and revised as appropriate by September 30, 1990. Any new information gathered subsequent to the issuance of the Record of Decision as well as the Interagency guidelines for conservation of northern spotted owls developed by the Interagency Scientific Committee are to be considered in this review

This committee, chaired by Dr Jack Ward Thomas, was appointed by the Chief of the Forest Service and the Directors of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service Recommendations by the Committee are expected in April of this year.

Because it is likely that the Regional Guide Standards and Guidelines will change by September 30, 1990, in response to the studies mentioned above, I have not conferenced with the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service on spotted-owl habitat provisions in the Forest Plan As new information about spotted owl needs becomes available, i e, through the Interagency Scientific Committee or through revision of the Supplement as mandated by Section 318 of the 1990 Appropriation Act, the Forest Plan will be changed to comply with new standards and guidelines to ensure population viability of the species Appropriate consultation or conferencing actions will then be taken.

After consideration of public comments and federal and state agency concerns about spotted owl population viability, I have decided to implement the selected alternative which establishes 29 SOHAs This level of habitat protection meets Supplement guidelines, protects all known pairs of owls on the Forest (24) and provides for future dispersal of spotted owls on the Hebo Ranger District Twenty of the SOHAs are currently occupied by pairs of owls Each of these SOHAs has been expanded to 2500 acres for Fiscal Year 1990 to comply with the provisions of Section 318

The spotted owl network consists of dedicated SOHAs, habitat in Wildernesses, and other habitat in management areas without scheduled timber harvests. The selected alternative will maintain about 71,000 acres (53%) of the 135,000 acres of identified suitable spotted owl habitat on the Forest This network is distributed throughout the Forest and takes into account both suitable habitat and location of known spotted owls Refer to the final EIS, Chapter III and the Forest Plan, Chapter IV for further discussion of spotted-owl direction

I have decided to provide habitat for a wide range of species, not limited to those proposed or listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened or endangered. I will accomplish this through utilization of the best current information on habitat needs of Management Indicator Species. This decision meets requirements of laws and regulations that govern protection of wildlife habitats

Habitat for big game, such as elk, will be provided through integrated resource management Timber harvests will be distributed spatially and temporally to provide forage sufficient to minimize significant fluctuations in populations During the next 10 years, 200 acres of permanent meadows will be created to improve spatial distribution of forage areas Habitat capability of elk will increase slightly from existing levels

Habitat for species dependent on mature conifer, such as pileated woodpeckers and marten, will be managed through longer rotations of timber. Mature conifer stands become suitable for these species at about age 80 The suitable habitat will be maintained until at least age 100 Stands will be harvested when suitable replacement stands have been located Habitat capability for pileated woodpecker will drop 9% in the 1st decade, as a result of timber management activities that reduce mature conifer habitat.

The marbled murrelet, a small robin-sized sea bird that nests in mature and old-growth habitat within 30-40 miles of the coast, has recently become a species of interest. However, little information about its habitat needs is available. For the plan period (10-15 years) I believe the mature confer areas, the SOHAs and other areas that contain mature and old-growth habitat such as riparan leave areas, headwall leave areas, and Special Interest Areas will provide sufficient habitat for the marbled murrelet As additional information about the habitat needs of this species becomes available, the Forest Plan can be modified to incorporate it.

Habitat capability for primary-cavity excavators will decrease slightly in the 1st decade Levels will be monitored and mitigation measures such as leaving green trees will ensure adequate amounts and distribution of dead and defective trees to provide at least 40% of the habitat capability in all forested subbasins

There will be no specific management of deciduous-mix habitat. Sufficient habitat is expected to be present to meet needs of associated species, e.g., grouse, sharp-shinned hawk, and several species of warblers. During the next 10 years, upland deciduous mix will decline slightly to 56,000 acres. Most of the riparian area (77,000 acres) also provides deciduous mix Without change in management, deciduous-mix habitat would decline to about 28,000 acres in the 5th decade as hardwood and mixed forest land is converted to more commercially desirable conifer stands. Should new research reveal the need to maintain more deciduous-mix habitat, the Forest could promote actions to provide more acres of deciduous habitat in the future Red alder regenerates naturally in openings and habitat can be provided in relatively short time frames (30-40 years)

#### **ISSUE 6:** Recreation Opportunities

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What diversity of recreational opportunities will be provided?

Because of its geographical location at a forest-ocean interface, its unparalleled coastal settings, and its closeness to the major urban areas of the Willamette Valley, the Forest is unique among National Forests in providing a wide variety of high-quality recreational opportunities. The primary aim is to provide the appropriate level of various recreation opportunities while recognizing the importance of present developed recreation sites on the Coast and highly-productive timber land more inland.

Recreation has been treated as four separate issues: developed recreation opportunities (Issue 25), undeveloped area opportunities (Issue 11), semiprimitive motorized opportunities (Issue 8), and Special Interest Areas (Issue 7) Decisions for those issues are treated in detail later in this Record of Decision The following discussion highlights several of the important recreation opportunity indicators. Recreation opportunities will be provided in various settings, from semiprimitive to developed Terms describing recreation opportunities are defined in the final EIS, Glossary.

Demand for developed recreation is increasing, but fortunately anticipated demand for developed recreation can be met with minimal effects on other resources. Additional facilities will be developed to meet demand during the next 10 years (see Issue 25). Most developed sites are in Rural settings; some are in Roaded Natural (RN) settings. About 15,600 acres of RN recreational opportunities will be provided in the Oregon Dunes NRA, Cascade Head Scenic-Research Area, Sand Lake Recreation Area and the Sutton Area. RN opportunities will also be available in the four Special Interest Areas (7,100 acres), and other areas of the Forest that add up to a total of 52,400 acres (8% of the Forest).

Capacity for semiprimitive nonmotorized (SPNM) recreation is inadequate to meet demand Opportunities for SPNM recreation are available in unroaded areas of at least 2,500 acres exhibiting little evidence of human disturbance Established Wilderness, as well as several undeveloped areas, are also suitable The opportunities for SPNM recreation will be increased in two ways. 1) by maintaining SPNM conditions in two undeveloped areas, and 2) by building trails in undeveloped areas and Wildernesses, since steep slopes and thick brush limit cross-country travel without trails SPNM recreation opportunities will be provided on about 33,100 acres (5% of the Forest), which includes the three Wildernesses, two areas in the Oregon Dunes NRA, the Wassen Creek undeveloped area, and a portion of the Drift Creek Adjacent undeveloped area located next to the Drift Creek Wilderness The existing 99 miles of trails will be maintained and about 70 miles of new trail will be constructed during the 1st decade to accommodate a variety of recreation visitors.

Demand for semiprimitive motorized (SPM) recreation opportunities, i e, opportunities for use of off-road vehicles in a relatively primitive setting, is higher than the supply capability on the Forest and is expected to increase. Only one area offers this type of setting--the sand areas on the Oregon Dunes NRA This area will continue to provide about 10,300 acres of SPM opportunity, which is expected to satisfy demand until about the year 2015 Opportunities for off-road vehicle use will also be provided at the Sand Lake and Sutton Areas, but not in SPM settings

Rural opportunities will be found across the majority of the Forest, on about 534,000 acres. Supply far exceeds demand

#### **ISSUE 7:** Special Interest Areas

How much of the Forest will be managed as Special Interest Areas?

This is part of the issue dealing with diversity of recreational opportunities provided on the Forest (Issue 6) Special Interest Areas (SIAs) possess unusual scenic, historic, research, or other special values The areas are managed principally for recreation in a nearly natural condition, and timber production is excluded

The Forest has two designated SIAs--Cape Perpetua (1000 acres) and Marys Peak (924 acres)--and two potential areas--Mt Hebo (1,680 acres) and Kentucky Falls (2,850 acres) The Cape Perpetua SIA could be enlarged to 2,780 acres

Designation of all potential SIAs received widespread support in comments on the draft EIS Local environmental groups would like to see the potential Kentucky Falls area enlarged to include land along the North Fork of the Smith River

To be responsive to public interests and to protect places with special values, I have decided implement the selected alternative which enlarges the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area to 2,780 acres and maintains the Marys Peak Scenic-Botanical Area. Additionally, I am designating the Mt Hebo Scenic-Biological Area (1,684 acres) and Kentucky Falls Scenic Area (1,680 acres) as SIAs The Kentucky Fall SIA contains land along the North Fork of the Smith River to provide a trail corridor.

#### -- ISSUE 8: Recreation Areas at Sutton and Sand Lake

What mix of recreational opportunities will be provided in the Sutton and Sand Lake areas and will it be compatible with wildlife and plant habitat?

The Sutton Recreation Area (2,700 acres) and Sand Lake Area (1,100 acres) are recreation complexes which consist primarily of sand beaches and dunes, offering a variety of coastal recreation opportunities Open sand areas suitable and desirable to off-road vehicles (ORV) users are limited on the Forest and are in high demand Currently, some portions of the Sutton and Sand Lake areas are open to ORV use, or provide access for such use; some portions are closed to ORV use to protect sensitive plants and animals and provide nonmotorized recreation opportunities.

Public comments, primarily local, indicate that opinion about future management of Sutton is highly polarized. Many people feel the Sutton Area should remain undeveloped to discourage heavy recreational use and should be entirely closed to ORVs Other people feel ORV use is a legitimate use of National Forest land and desire equal space with pedestrian uses. Several people expressed concern about disturbance to shore birds from dogs and feel dogs should be leashed in the area

After considering public comments and management concerns about the Sutton area, I have decided to implement the selected alternative which provides a wide diversity of recreational opportunities, including ORV use on about 215 acres. This will continue the current management direction, with which there has been general public compliance. In addition, an overlook and information area will be developed adjacent to Highway 101 at Lily Lake, and improved parking and sanitation facilities will be constructed at Baker Beach. Refer to the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, Management Area 9 for more information about Sutton Area management.

Management direction for Sand Lake was described in the Sand Lake Management Plan of 1980, a cooperative effort of the Forest Service, Tillamook County and the State of Oregon At this time there is no need to change that plan based on comments on the draft EIS Forest Plan standards and guidelines described in Chapter IV, Management Area 8, are consistent with the 1980 Sand Lake Plan

#### **ISSUE 9:** Visual Quality

Which areas of the Forest will be managed to maintain or enhance visual quality?

Landscapes seen from areas that are heavily used by the public, such as roads, rivers, or developed recreation sites, are called scenic viewsheds. Viewsheds are more sensitive than other areas because scenic quality may significantly affect recreational experiences of those viewing it Timber harvest activities, including road construction, can change visual quality of viewsheds. Many people find changes to the natural setting objectionable and feel that most or all viewsheds should be maintained in a natural character. Many advocates of visual protection, however, stated--through comments on the draft EIS or in meetings after the EIS was released--that viewsheds should not be protected in lieu of protection for watersheds or fish and wildlife habitats

In the draft Plan, only Highways 101 and 38 received full retention of natural scenery in the foreground, while most other sensitive travel corridors received partial retention

After consideration of the state of Oregon concerns for visual quality protection along major travel corridors across the Forest, I have decided to maintain full retention along five major highways-- Highways 101, 38, 34, 18, and 126, and provide partial retention for 11 other roads (6,250 acres of viewshed) In addition, the foreground along Marys Peak Road will be managed to maintain or improve existing visual conditions in recognition of the special recreational features of the area In total, the Forest will manage 51,200 acres of viewsheds for scenic protection

#### ISSUE 10: Wilderness Management

How will the three Wildernesses on the Forest be managed?

The Forest Plan provides for management of the three Wildernesses--Cummins Creek, Drift Creek, and Rock Creek, to provide opportunities for semiprimitive nonmotorized recreation and preserve natural ecosystems. The areas are either too small or located too close to roads to provide for primitive recreation opportunities

Visitor use of the areas has been severely restricted due to dense brushy conditions In the 1st decade, about 9 miles of trail will be added to Cummins Creek Wilderness and 7 miles of trail to Drift Creek Wilderness to increase accessibility for visitor enjoyment There are currently 11 miles of trail in these two areas Rock Creek Wilderness will be maintained without trails to preserve opportunities for solitude and wilderness character

More detailed management plans for the Wildernesses will be prepared within 2 years from the date on the ROD Interim guidelines, described in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, Management Area 12, will be followed until then

#### ISSUE 11: Undeveloped Areas

Which areas of the Forest will be managed as undeveloped areas?

Currently there are seven areas identified as "roadless" in the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation II (RARE II) process, totaling 46,800 acres outside of Wilderness on the Siuslaw National Forest Boundaries and current acreages are displayed in the final EIS, Appendix C

An additional 4,400 acres is available as roaded lands adjacent to the roadless areas which could revert to undeveloped condition if not harvested again in the future. Also, about 3,000 acres around the North Fork of the Smith River adjacent the potential Kentucky Falls SIA could be preserved as an undeveloped area

The Forest can provide opportunities for undeveloped recreation in unroaded areas that are at least 2,500 acres and essentially natural in character

Public comment on the draft EIS indicates strong disagreement on the future management of roadless areas Timber interests feel that removing more land from the timber base for undeveloped recreation is unnecessary and unjustified, believing that opportunities provided in the Wildernesses and Oregon Dunes NRA are adequate to meet future demands Other individuals feel that unroaded opportunities are dwindling as new roads are built in previously undeveloped areas, and all existing undeveloped area should be retained for future generations. Many groups and people would like undeveloped portions of the Oregon Dunes NRA maintained and ORVs excluded to

protect sensitive plant and animal species. The Forest reviewed specific comments for each roadless area and examined options for resolving concerns.

The Forest evaluated a range of alternatives that would maintain none to all of the inventoried roadless areas and potential undeveloped areas outside of the Oregon Dunes NRA in an unroaded condition. All roadless areas in the Oregon Dunes NRA (20,000 acres) were maintained in all alternatives.

It is my decision to proceed with implementation of the selected alternative which directs that 55% (25,800 acres) of inventoried roadless area acres be maintained in a roadless character. The remaining 45% are allocated to various levels of development involving roading and production of both market and nonmarket outputs.

Four of the undeveloped areas are on the Oregon Dunes NRA (Tenmile, Tenmile Lake, Woahink, and Umpqua Spit), totalling approximately 20,000 acres. These areas will be maintained in undeveloped condition to be consistent with direction in the 1979 Oregon Dunes NRA Management Plan. The areas will be evaluated for future management during review of the Oregon Dunes Plan, scheduled to occur within 3 years from the date of this ROD.

Two other areas will be managed for undeveloped recreation opportunities. They are Wassen Creek (4,700 acres) and an area adjacent to the Drift Creek Wilderness (1,200 acres). Also, about 300 acres of land adjoining the Drift Creek Adjacent roadless area will be allowed to revert to unroaded condition, bringing the total Drift Creek Adjacent area to 1,500 acres.

The acres to be managed in a roadless condition decreased about 5,300 acres between the draft and final EIS. In the selected alternative, additional acres were removed from timber production to provide more spotted owl habitat and additional riparian protection. SOHAs are located on portions of all three roadless areas and portions of the potential undeveloped area around the North Fork of the Smith River. In response to concerns about maintaining a stable timber supply, I decided to allocate some of the acres that were proposed for undeveloped recreation in the draft Plan to multiple-use management in the final EIS. Most of these acres are the small, western portions of the Drift Creek Adjacent roadless area and the Hebo-Nestucca roadless area.

Management of the roadless areas on the Forest will proceed according to their land use allocation. Approximately 2,500 acres of roadless areas are scheduled for timber harvests in the next 10 years. Most of these acres are in the Hebo-Nestucca area, which has been found to have less value as an undeveloped recreation area. Proposed timber sales scheduled for roadless areas will receive appropriate environmental analysis and documentation before they are implemented.

This decision will provide an equitable balance between development and preservation of roadless areas. Land use allocations are displayed on the Forest Plan Map although there have been minor changes made to boundary of the Drift Creek Adjacent area.

#### **ISSUE 12:** Research Opportunities

Which areas on the Forest will be reserved for Research Natural Areas, and how will management direction for Cascade Head Experimental Forest be included in the Forest Plan?

The Forest Plan recommends three sites for inclusion in the Research Natural Area system-Cummins/Gwynn Creeks (4,800 acres), Sand Lake (241 acres), and Reneke Creek (480 acres). Locations and detailed descriptions are provided in the final EIS, Chapter III.

Two potential RNAs in the Oregon Dunes NRA will be managed to maintain their potential research values, but I am deferring recommendation for them until revision of the Oregon Dunes Management Plan of 1979. This will allow more opportunity for public interest groups to participate in the decision-making process and allow for analysis of more site-specific information.

Management direction for Cascade Head Experimental Forest will be incorporated without change in the Forest Plan.

#### **ISSUE 13:** Minerals and Energy

How much and where will mineral resources be developed and what management direction is needed for leasing and development of energy minerals?

The Forest Plan will continue to allow exploration and development of mineral resources, including oil and gas. Access restrictions and other measures will prevent or mitigate resource damage in areas of exploration or development.

Approximately 720 acres in two proposed RNAs are recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry. The other proposed RNA is located within a Wilderness, which has already been withdrawn from mineral entry. In addition, lands managed for threatened and endangered species habitat or designated for Special Interest Areas will be considered for withdrawal from mineral entry. Under the Forest Plan, about 10% of the Forest would be withdrawn if all the recommended withdrawals were approved. About 9% of the Forest will be included in management areas having high access restrictions, 7% with moderate, and 74% with low access restrictions. Minerals management direction is described in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV.

#### **ISSUE 14:** Local Communities

How will management of Forest resources affect local communities?

Forest management activities and resulting outputs influence job opportunities, incomes, and quality of life of residents in local communities. Public comments on the draft EIS indicated deep concern about future employment opportunities and community stability. Many individuals, but particularly those employed by or benefiting from the wood products industries, feel the Forest should maintain or increase emphasis on commodity production. Others feel the Forest should protect amenity values such as clean water, wildlife and fish habitats, and recreation opportunities.

In my judgment, the Forest Plan will produce a balance between commodity outputs and amenity resources that will contribute to economic stability of dependent communities, while maintaining the natural character and recreational settings desired by Forest visitors from all areas. Decisions contained in the Forest Plan will affect communities. The Forest Service will work with communities to address these effects within the framework of the Pacific Northwest Strategy.

Employment and receipts generated by the Siuslaw National Forest are important to local economies. The total number of jobs supported by Forest outputs is expected to increase 19% in

the next 10 years, with timber-related employment expected to remain the same as the past 5 years. The Forest Plan is expected to provide opportunities for increased economic growth in recreation-related areas.

#### ISSUE 15: Economic Value

What economic value will Forest resources generate in the future?

There is national and local concern about the economic value of Forest outputs in terms of net receipts to the Forest Service, as well as long-term investment value. The issue involves not only how much money Forest resources generate but also how efficiently those resources are produced.

Because most of the net monetary value of the Siuslaw National Forest comes from timber, management objectives which would significantly change the level of timber harvest would also significantly change the overall present net value (PNV) of the Forest and receipts to the U.S. Treasury. Annual receipts from Forest outputs exceed costs to manage the Forest. Between 1984 and 1988 annual receipts averaged \$47 million, of which 99% were from timber sales. Total cost of operating the Forest averaged \$24 million per year of which 62% was for timber management and road construction.

The Forest Plan is the most economically efficient combination of outputs and activities needed to meet established objectives. Economic efficiency is explained in the final EIS, Chapter II and Appendix B.

The selected alternative has a PNV of \$2,031 million. The PNV analysis is displayed in detail in the Final EIS, Chapter II. It ranked sixth in terms of PNV among the alternatives. Section IV of this ROD compares alternatives with a higher PNV to that in the selected alternative.

Annual receipts from Forest outputs will exceed costs to manage the Forest. Assuming all ASQ will be harvested and the price of timber will increase 1%/year, annual Forest receipts and payments to counties will increase 49% compared to the annual average of the past 5 years. Annual receipts will average \$70 million and payments to counties will average \$17.5 million. The cost of operating the Forest is expected to average \$31.8 million/year.

#### ISSUE 16: Mapleton Court Decision

How will the Forest comply with the U.S. District Court Decision concerning the Mapleton Ranger District?

As a result of a lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court on July 29, 1983 by the National Wildlife Federation and two other groups, the Mapleton District timber sales program has been limited. The plaintiffs prevailed on some of their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) claims, and the Mapleton District was enjoined from proceeding with its timber sale program in April of 1984, except for a small amount (approximately 6 MMBF) authorized by the judgment. Subsequently, Congress passed legislation in 1985 (P.L. 99-88, August 15) which allowed the sale of some buyback and defaulted timber on the Mapleton District. Congress later passed legislation in 1988 (P.L. 100-446, September 27) which allowed the District to offer new sales of 90 MMBF in Fiscal Year 1989. The recently passed Appropriation bill for Fiscal Year 1990, Sect. 318 (P.L. 101-121, October 1989) anticipates the district will contribute about one-third of the timber sale targets established for Fiscal Year 1990.

In complying with the intent of the Court's judgment, the Forest examined issues raised in the lawsuit and contained in the final opinion. An analysis of effects of the alternatives on the Mapleton District is provided in Appendix E of the final EIS for the Forest Plan. The final EIS and Forest Plan will be reviewed by the U.S. District Court to determine whether the injunction can be lifted.

#### ISSUE 17: Cultural Resources

What standards will be used to guide management of cultural resources?

Federal law requires protection of significant cultural and historical resources on public lands for future generations.

The Forest Plan has standards and guidelines to ensure that proposed projects will not inadvertently harm or destroy important cultural resources. Cultural resource inventories will be conducted for all proposed ground-disturbing activities. Sites will be evaluated for their potential to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Eligible sites will be nominated to the Register and management plans prepared to ensure their protection. Ineligible sites will be evaluated for their potential research or interpretive values. Interpretive plans will be prepared for sites selected for public use.

#### **ISSUE 18:** Congressionally Established Areas

How will management direction for congressionally designated areas other than Wilderness be included in the Forest Plan?

Management direction in current approved plans for the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area (NRA) and Cascade Head Scenic-Research Area will be incorporated without change in the Forest Plan. A summary of the management direction can be found in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV.

New issues concerning management of the Oregon Dunes NRA, such as public concern over the amount of land open and closed to ORV use, will be evaluated during revision of the Oregon Dunes NRA Management Plan, scheduled to occur within 3 years of the date of the ROD.

#### ISSUE 19: Land Ownership Adjustment

What land ownership adjustments will be made to support resource management goals?

A land ownership adjustment plan for the Forest was developed in 1967, and updated in 1978 and 1986, to establish guidance for exchange, purchase, donation and transfer of land with other Federal agencies. A land adjustment plan is incorporated as Appendix C of the Forest Plan.

My decision to proceed with the Forest Plan will not affect the land purchase program, which is authorized and funded annually by Congress. Land exchange opportunities are not expected to change. The exchange program will be utilized, where possible, to help attain desired future conditions in the Forest Plan.

#### ISSUE 20: Corridors, Electronics Sites, and Facilities

What areas will be suitable for utility corridors, electronics sites, and roads; and how will they be designed, developed and maintained?

The Forest Plan maintains existing utility corridors and electronics sites and I am designating several new electronics sites (see Forest Plan, Chapter IV). Proposals for future utility lines will be analyzed by an interagency group after consideration of existing corridors. Locations of corridors are displayed in the final EIS, Chapter III. Management direction is described in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV.

The Forest has approximately 2,500 miles of roads, of which about 1,100 miles are arterial and collector roads. Most of these (925 miles) are maintained for general public use. About 57% (1,400 miles) are local roads maintained for high-clearance vehicles and commercial traffic. Local roads are subject to seasonal use restrictions for wildlife habitat protection and to minimize user conflicts. During the 1st decade of the Forest Plan an average of 30 miles of local road will be constructed per year. Essentially all needed arterial and collector roads are in place, but many may require reconstruction to meet management area objectives.

Road construction and reconstruction will be planned at the project level to ensure cost effectiveness. Roads will be designed and maintained to minimum standards required for safety of users, for intended uses, and to meet resource objectives for an area. Specific management direction for roads is described in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, "Standards and Guidelines."

#### ISSUE 21: American Indian Religious Freedom

How will Native American Indian religious freedom be assured on National Forest Land?

The Forest Plan ensures that known settings and locations of sites once important for religious purposes are protected from disturbance and are available for use by American Indians. Forest personnel will continue to cooperate with the Tribes in identifying and maintaining traditional uses of the Forest. If additional settings and locations are identified, appropriate protection measures will be incorporated into the Plan.

#### ISSUE 22: Soil Productivity

How will soil productivity be maintained?

There is general public agreement that soil productivity must be protected. Timber harvests and slash burning can reduce soil productivity. For that reason, specific prevention and mitigation measures were developed. The measures are described in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV, "Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines" and refer to Best Management Practices described in the final EIS, Appendix J.

#### ISSUE 23: Herbicide Use

How will herbicides be used?

The Forest Plan is tiered to the Pacific Northwest Region's FEIS for Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation, and the Forest will comply with the Record of Decision issued by the Regional Forester in November 1988 and the mediated agreement of August 1989 The decision allows use of all vegetation management techniques, including herbicides, but allows use of herbicide only when other methods are ineffective or will increase project costs unreasonably Emphasis must be given to prevention and early treatment of unwanted vegetation, as well as, to full and ongoing public participation to assist with all aspects of project planning and implementation

#### ISSUE 24: Wild and Scenic Rivers

What rivers are eligible for Wild and Scenic River classification and how will these areas be managed?

Since publication of the draft EIS in 1987, three rivers--Nestucca, Alsea and Siuslaw--were studied intensively to provide input to Senator Hatfield's Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988 The Nestucca and Alsea rivers were included in early drafts of the Bill, but not in the final legislation The Siuslaw River was not included in the Bill.

The Forest received many suggestions about which additional rivers should be studied for eligibility -Based on these suggestions nine rivers were studied in detail Results of eligibility studies indicated that segments of seven rivers are eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System

River	Potential Classificatio
Nestucca River	Recreational
Drift Creek (Siletz)	Scenic, Recreational
Alsea River	Recreational
Siuslaw River	Recreational
N. Fork Smith River	Scenic, Recreational
Wassen Creek	Wild, Recreational
Umpqua River	Recreational

Additional information on the eligibility studies is in the final EIS, Appendix L

Forest lands adjacent to the seven eligible rivers will be managed to maintain their eligibility Suitability determinations, which must be made for all eligible rivers, will be conducted during Forest Plan implementation Standards and guidelines for managing eligible rivers are provided in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV

Two rivers, the Little Nestucca and Three Rivers, were found to be ineligible I will recommend these be removed from the National Park Service's Nationwide Rivers Inventory.

These recommendations are preliminary administrative recommendations that will receive further review and possible modification by the Chief of the Forest Service and Secretary of Agriculture Congress has reserved the authority to make final decisions on designation of rivers to be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

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#### ISSUE 25: Developed Recreation Opportunities

How many developed recreation opportunities will be provided and how will they be managed?

The Forest presently has 88 developed recreation sites, which include campgrounds, picnic grounds, observation sites, and a visitor center, with a combined capacity of 9,660 people at one time. Most of the developed sites are along the Pacific Coast on Highway 101 A few are along highways between the Coast and the Willamette Valley and others are in the interior of the Forest

I have decided to implement the selected alternative which will maintain the existing 88 developed recreation sites at a full-service level, while complementing local government efforts to promote tourism along the Oregon coast Quality of the key coastal recreation sites will be enhanced by adding more convenience facilities and improved visitor information services New day-use facilities, with an additional capacity of 250 people at one time, are planned along the Coast to meet projected demand.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Ten alternatives were analyzed in detail in the draft EIS An additional alternative was analyzed in detail in a supplement to the draft EIS. The final EIS analyzes ten alternatives in detail. They include eight from the draft EIS, the alternative from the supplement to the draft EIS, and one modified alternative from the draft The final EIS eliminated one draft EIS alternative from detailed study because few public comments were received supporting the alternative and the issue was better resolved in the modified alternative (See the final EIS, Chapter II). The modified alternative is the Forest Service selected alternative, Alternative E Tradeoff analysis and environmental consequences are presented in the final EIS, Chapters II and IV

#### ALTERNATIVE NC (No Change)

The No Change Alternative was developed in response to appeals brought by the Northwest Forest Resource Council who felt a "true no-action" alternative representing current management plans was not included in the the draft EIS Alternative NC is designed to represent the existing Timber Resource Plan of 1979, as amended in 1984, and consequently does not comply with all provisions of NFMA and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture to implement NFMA

The purpose of the Timber Resource Plan was to determine potential yield of harvestable timber on the Forest, and not to be an integrated resource plan Alternative NC would optimize timber production from suitable timber land determined by pre-NFMA criteria ASQ for Alternative NC would average 92 MMCF (438 MMBF) annually in the 1st decade Management practices to protect water quality would be insufficient to meet state water quality standards and fish habitat would be 69% below present capability levels by the 5th decade Not all wildlife populations would be provided habitat needed to maintain population viability No roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA would be managed as unroaded areas A PNV for this alternative was not estimated, as the Timber Resource Plan did not include nontimber resources and would not be comparable to the other alternatives

#### ALTERNATIVE A (No Action)

This is the "No Action" alternative required by NEPA This alternative would continue the current course of action as described in current management plans including the 1979 Timber

Resource Plan, as amended in 1984 Emphasis would be on wood production and elk habitat management Annual ASQ for the "No Action" Alternative would average 65.9 MMCF (351 MMBF) in the 1st decade, and harvests would be distributed to Ranger Districts based on their long-term sustained yield capacities

Management practices needed to meet NFMA regulations would maintain water quality that meets state standards and ensure viable populations of fish and wildlife Habitat for spotted owls would be maintained in 22 Spotted Owl Habitat Areas (SOHAs) to meet requirements for population viability Fish habitat capability would decline 16% below present levels by the 5th decade Roaded and developed recreation opportunities would be provided in a natural setting over a major portion of the Forest No roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA would be maintained for unroaded recreation. No additional Special Interest Areas would be recommended; Reneke Creek would be recommended for designation as a RNA

#### ALTERNATIVE B

Alternative B would emphasize efficient production of wood products Soil, water, fish and wildlife resources would be managed at levels commensurate with high timber production, but levels would at least meet NFMA management requirements Timber would be managed on about 64% of the Forest, and about 11% of timber production land would be managed on long rotations (90+ years) Annual ASQ would average 69 1 MMCF (381 MMBF) in the 1st decade Management practices would maintain water quality in compliance with state standards, and ensure viable populations of fish and wildlife There would be 22 managed SOHAs Fish habitat would decline 27% below present levels by the 5th decade

No roadless areas outside of the Oregon Dunes NRA would be maintained as unroaded areas, and few facilities would be developed for dispersed recreation Scenic conditions along visually-important roads, including Highway 101, would not be protected One additional Special Interest Area would be recommended; no additional RNAs would be recommended

#### ALTERNATIVE B-DEPARTURE (RPA)

Alternative B-Departure would attempt to meet all resource targets assigned to the Siuslaw National Forest by the 1980 Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) program, while emphasizing economic efficiency This alternative would produce high amounts of timber in the 1st decade by departing from a nondeclining flow harvest schedule Annual ASQ would average 79.8 MMCF (439 MMBF) in the 1st decade, and about 19% of timber land would be managed with long rotations (90+ years) Other resources would be managed as in Alternative B, although effects of higher 1st-decade harvests would reduce fish habitat 37% below present levels by the 5th decade

#### ALTERNATIVE C

Alternative C emphasizes production of wood and big game while providing a variety of recreational opportunities Other resources would be managed to maximize present net value Timber would be managed on about 61% of the Forest, and annual ASQ would average 66 5 MMCF (365 MMBF) in the 1st decade. Harvests units would be located to provide an even distribution of forage for big game, and about 8,700 acres of permanent meadows would be created for elk forage. Management practices would maintain water quality in compliance with state standards Fish habitat would decline 23% below present levels Wildlife habitat would be managed to meet management requirements of NFMA regulations There would be 22 SOHAs About 7,000 acres of roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA would be managed

to emphasize unroaded recreation Trails for dispersed recreation and scenery along many of the visually important roads would receive moderate emphasis

#### ALTERNATIVE D

Alternative D emphasizes production of major commodities with market value (wood products, commercial fish--particularly salmon, and developed recreational activities for which a fee is paid). The Forest would be managed in a cost efficient manner, but not necessarily in an effort to produce the highest dollar return. Timber would be managed on about 54% of the Forest, and annual ASQ would average 60.6 MMCF (332 MMBF) in the 1st decade About 16% of tumber lands would be managed with long rotations. In certain areas with highly productive salmon habitat, there would be no harvest in riparian areas and on steep slopes. Prime salmon habitat would be 5% above existing capability, but capability Forest-wide would remain the same as existing conditions Wildlife habitat would be managed to meet management requirements, but would not protect habitat of all the known pairs of spotted owls Elk production would drop slightly below present levels by the 5th decade

No roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA would be managed for undeveloped recreation opportunities, and few facilities for dispersed recreation would be developed. No new Special Interest Areas would be established and the existing Cape Perpetua SIA would be maintained at about one-tenth its present size. Scenic protection would be provided only along coastal Highway 101.

#### ALTERNATIVE E (Selected Alternative)

Alternative E is the Forest Service Preferred Alternative. It was developed in response to public comments received on the draft EIS, the supplement to the draft EIS, and ongoing public involvement in forest planning The goal of this alternative is to maximize net public benefits Emphasis is on anadromous fish habitats, coastal recreation, high quality drinking water, and stable supplies of timber

About 56% of the Forest would be managed for timber production Annual ASQ would average 61 7 MMCF (335 MMBF) in the 1st decade. About 26% of timber land would be managed with long rotations (90+ years) Harvest units would be distributed and scheduled to provide a steady supply of forage for big game, and about 1,000 acres of permanent meadows would be created during the next 50 years Management practices would meet state water quality standards and protect additional riparian areas to enhance fisheries resources. Fish habitat would be 8% below present levels by the 5th decade Wildlife habitat would be managed at levels adequate to meet management requirements and in some cases include added protection. There would be 29 SOHAs, seven more than recommended to meet management requirements, to protect all known pairs of owls and provide dispersal linkages to habitat on adjacent BLM land

About 6,200 acres would be managed for undeveloped recreation opportunities outside the Oregon Dunes NRA. Emphasis on development of facilities for dispersed recreation would provide additional nonmotorized opportunities that could link coastal and inland areas for Forest visitors Mt Hebo and Kentucky Falls would be recommended for designation as Special Interest Areas, and three additional RNAs would be recommended for designation Scenic protection along all major travel corridors would be fully or partially protected

#### ALTERNATIVE F

Alternative F would provide a wider range of recreational uses and opportunities while emphasizing management of habitat for fish and nongame wildlife, protection of scenic resources, and production of a moderate amount of timber. Timber would be managed on about 50% of the Forest, and annual ASQ would average 52.6 MMCF (288 MMBF) in the 1st decade About 34% of timber land would be managed with long rotations Management practices would provide more protection for watersheds than required by NFMA regulations -- most slopes prone to landslides would be protected, no riparian areas would be harvested, and fish habitat capability would be 2% above present levels Wildlife habitat would be managed to provide levels beyond that needed to meet management requirements There would be 25 SOHAs, and additional habitat would be provided for species dependent on mature conifer and dead and defective trees.

About 13,700 acres of roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA and another 2,500 acres would be managed to provide unroaded recreation opportunities Mt. Hebo and Kentucky Falls would be recommended for Special Interest Area designation, and one additional RNA would be proposed for establishment Scenery would be protected along all major travel corridors on the Forest.

#### ALTERNATIVE G

Alternative G is designed to enhance resources that do not have a direct market value, such as water quality, fish, wildlife, dispersed recreation, and scenery High levels of nongame wildlife habitat and moderate levels of big game habitat would be provided.

Timber would be managed on about 29% of the Forest Annual ASQ would average 28.2 MMCF (151 MMBF) in the 1st decade About 58% of timber land would be managed on long rotations of 90 years or more Management practices for watersheds would provide more protection than required by management requirements-- none of the riparian area would be harvested, and slopes prone to landshdes would be well protected Fish habitat would be 7% above present levels by the 5th decade Habitat for nongame wildlife would be provided at levels greater than needed to maintain population viability-- there would be 27 SOHAs, and additional habitat for species dependent on mature conifer and dead and defective trees Timber harvests would be scheduled to provide an even distribution of forage for big game, and about 3,900 acres of permanent meadows would be created during the next 50 years

About 16,900 acres of roadless areas outside the Oregon Dunes NRA and another 3,700 acres would be managed for nonmotorized recreation opportunities in unroaded areas Mt Hebo and Kentucky Falls would be recommended for Special Interest Area designation, and two additional RNAs would be recommended for establishment All old growth would be protected All travel corridors would receive full scenic protection

#### ALTERNATIVE H

The goal of Alternative H is to preserve natural systems in large areas of the Forest and to protect habitats of nongame wildlife and fish There would be particular emphasis on maintaining all old-growth stands and protecting soil and water resources

Timber would be managed on about 21% of the Forest, and all on long rotations of 90 years or more. Annual ASQ would average 13 5 MMCF (72 MMBF) in the 1st decade Watershed protection would exceed management requirements -- large areas that are prone to landslides or adjacent to streams would be preserved to benefit fish habitat; all municipal watersheds would be closed to timber harvest and public access, except when needed to meet wildlife objectives, and no riparian areas would be harvested. Fish habitat capability would increase 10% above present levels Habitat for nongame wildlife would be provided at levels above those needed to meet population viability -- there would be 37 SOHAs, and habitat for species dependent on mature confer and dead and defective trees would be emphasized Management areas for bald eagles would be about five times larger than required by the recovery plan.

About 26,800 acres of roadless area outside the Oregon Dunes NRA and another 10,000 acres would be managed for nonmotorized recreation opportunities in unroaded condition The Kentucky Falls SIA would be recommended for designation and the potential Mt Hebo SIA would be protected within the Hebo-Nestucca roadless area. Three additional areas would be recommended for RNA establishment. All old growth would be protected. Scenery along all major travel corridors would be fully protected

## ALTERNATIVES WITH A HIGHER PRESENT NET VALUE

Present net value (PNV) is used to measure economic efficiency of each alternative PNV is the sum of priced benefits minus the sum of costs for the 150-year planning period, discounted to the present Nonpriced benefits, public concerns and negative effects cannot be fully valued in economic terms, so PNV does not measure all factors that differ between alternatives.

The selected alternative has a PNV of \$2,031 million The following five alternatives have higher PNVs

Alternative	PNV (MM\$)		
B-Departure	2,341		
В	2,245		
C	2,192		
Α	2,065		
D	2,049		

Alternative B-Departure has the highest PNV, because of its emphasis on timber production, high 1st-decade harvest levels, and minimum protection for noncommodity resources Dollar benefits generated from timber sales on the Forest far exceed costs for timber management and exceed priced benefits generated from amenity resources In Alternative B-Departure, timber management provides a 1st-decade annual timber sale level 31% higher than that harvested in the last 10 years Most of the land is managed intensively with a harvest age of 80 years or less There is little management for mature conifer stands needed by pileated woodpecker and marten A minimum spotted owl habitat network is provided, removing about 44,000 acres from timber management. No acres are managed for scenic protection along any of the roads crossing the Forest

Alternative B-Departure reserves fewer acres of old growth, undeveloped areas, Special Interest Areas, and Research Natural Areas. Watersheds receive minimum protection needed to meet state water quality standards. Fish habitat capability declines below present levels, because accelerated sedimentation from harvest activities increases and potential large woody debris beneficial to fish habitat is harvested and removed from riparian areas

Similar comparisons can be made between the selected alternative and the other alternatives with higher PNVs The selected alternative strikes a balance between economic benefits and environmental

concerns. It provides higher overall benefits recognizing the importance of non-priced values such as water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and scenic values

The selected alternative provides more protection for fish resources than Alternatives B, B(Dep) and C. More acres are removed from timber harvest along streamsides to provide future supplies of woody debris for fish streams Alternative A provides the same protection, and Alternative D more protection since it emphasizes commercial fisheries

Compared to alternatives with higher PNVs, the selected alternative removes more land from timber production for spotted owl habitat This is to provide more assurance that pairs of owls found on the Forest so far will survive and that habitat will be available for dispersal of young Mature confer sites for marten and pileated woodpecker are larger, with more forested acres managed for their habitats More dead and defective tree habitat is provided for cavity-nesting birds Wildlife management costs are higher than all alternatives, except Alternatives B and C, which emphasize elk forage seeding in clearcuts. Overall, wildlife dollar benefits are highest of all alternatives due to the total projected increase in wildlife habitat capability

The selected alternative also better addresses public concerns about recreation opportunities on the Forest. Although priced recreation benefits are about the same for all alternatives, the selected alternative has the highest recreation costs, which lowers PNV In the selected alternative, higher quality recreation sites are offered Developed coastal sites and several inland dispersed recreation areas receive facility improvements and increased visitor information services. In addition, about 6,200 acres on two roadless areas are reserved for undeveloped recreation, and all the potential SIAs are recommended for designation. Scenic values are protected fully along five of the major highways crossing the Forest and partially along the rest.

These added resource provisions in the selected alternative either remove land from timber production or reduce the intensity of timber management on some lands, and this lowers PNV. For more detailed comparisons of the alternatives, see the final EIS, Chapter II, "Comparisons of the Alternatives"

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE**

The environmentally preferable alternative causes the least damage to the biological and physical environments and protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources All alternatives considered in detail satisfy legal and environmental standards except the No Change Alternative does not meet NFMA management requirements

The environmentally preferable alternative is Alternative H This alternative schedules less intense development activity, retains more acres in an unroaded and undeveloped condition, and programs less ground-disturbing activity during the next 10 to 15 years than in the Forest Plan

Additional information on the environmentally preferable alternative and other alternatives considered is in the final EIS, Chapter II

Alternative H emphasizes old growth, wildlife, fish habitat, and undeveloped, dispersed and unroaded recreation on the Forest These are largely nonmonetary resources which (except for commercially-caught salmon) generally do not have established market values This alternative has an annual ASQ of 72 MMBF (13 5 MMCF), and a road construction program of 12 miles annually during the 1st decade All old growth would be retained for wildlife and ecological values. Fish and dead and defective tree habitat would increase over current levels. All roadless areas would be maintained in unroaded condition

I did not select the environmentally preferable alternative because:

- It does not achieve a reasonable balance between concerns for maintaining environmental quality and satisfying demands of society for commodity and non-commodity outputs from the Siuslaw National Forest
- The Forest Plan has a more positive response to issues and concerns It contributes to local economic stability; provides a steady timber supply; and will help to maintain existing county populations, land uses, employment opportunities, and roaded recreation opportunities to a greater degree than is provided by the environmentally preferable alternative.

Alternative E, the Forest Plan, recognized and provides for landscape, resource, vegetation and animal diversity through land use allocations and management areas identified and displayed in the final EIS, Map Packet - Alternative E.

Alternative E provides appropriate environmental safeguards at an acceptable direct economic cost This alternative incorporates the perspective that the Forest Service is the trustee of the environment for succeeding generations All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted. I believe Alternative E provides for the proper and continued use and development of Siuslaw National Forest resources in a manner that maintains economic stability, yet retains local natural heritages, such as fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, outdoor recreation opportunities, and scenic quality.

This Forest Plan has been developed with public participation, which included involvement, coordination, and comments from federal, state and local agencies including the state of Oregon (Governor's Office, Federal Plans Coordinator, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Forestry, Water Resources Department, Historic Preservation Office, and Parks and Recreation Division); the US Fish and Wildlife Service; the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians; and representatives of county and city governments, industry groups, special interest groups and individuals.

Numerous efforts were made to ensure that the selected alternative considered the goals of other public agencies. Comments and letters from agencies were reviewed and analyzed extensively; numerous meetings and field trips were conducted with officials from other agencies (See the final EIS, Appendix K), and actions were taken to address their concerns

I believe Alternative E is compatible with and complementary to the goals of other agencies and Native American tribes. Coordination with many agencies, groups, and individuals will continue as projects are implemented

I select Alternative E because, in my judgment, it maximizes net public benefit The term "net public benefit" is necessarily subjective. Many people may disagree with this evaluation, and in fact, therein he the controversies surrounding these decisions Due to the controversial nature of the decisions I am making, I have shared with you, the reader, the factors I considered I compared the selected alternative to the "environmentally preferable alternative" and to alternatives with higher present net values. I recognized that "environmentally preferable" is also a subjective term, and explained the basis for that subjective conclusion

# SECTION IV

## **SCHEDULES**

The Forest Plan will be implemented through identification, selection, and scheduling of projects to meet its management goals and objectives. These projects are displayed in the Forest Plan, Appendices A and B.

Project schedules will be available for review at the Ranger District Offices and Supervisor's Office. Schedules of possible projects will routinely change as projects are implemented or removed from the lists for other reasons, and as new projects take their place. Adjustments to schedules may occur based on results of monitoring, budgets, and unforeseen events.

The Forest Plan provides direction in the form of goals and objectives, standards and guidelines, monitoring requirements, and probable scheduling of management practices. It does not cover projects on specific sites except in a broad manner. Each proposed project will be subject to site-specific analysis in compliance with NEPA. This process may result in a decision not to proceed with the proposed project, even though the project is compatible with the Forest Plan.

The Forest Plan's scheduled projects are translated into multi-year program budget proposals. The schedule is used for requesting and allocating funds needed to carry out planned management direction. Upon approval of a final budget for the Forest, the annual work program will be updated and carried out.

The Forest program of work will implement management direction of the Forest Plan. Outputs and activities in individual years may differ significantly from those shown in Forest Plan, Chapter IV, depending on final budgets, new information derived from updated inventories and monitoring, and any future amendments or revisions of the Forest Plan.

All timber sales offered after issuance of the Forest Plan will comply with direction contained in it. Timber Sales now under contract will be administered under provisions of existing contracts. Changes to existing timber sale contracts may be proposed on a case-by-case basis where overriding resource considerations are present.

The Forest Plan will be implemented 30 days after the Notice of Availability of the Forest Plan, EIS, and Record of Decision appears in the Federal Register.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Monitoring and Evaluation Program is the management control system for the Forest Plan. It will be used to provide information on progress and results of implementation. One result of monitoring will be an assessment of needs for amending or revising the Plan. Monitoring and evaluation are discussed in more detail in the Forest Plan, Chapter V.

Monitoring is intended to keep the Forest Plan current and responsive to change. Monitoring and evaluation each have a distinctly different purpose and scope. Monitoring consists of gathering data, observations, and information. During evaluation, the data and information are analyzed and interpreted. This process allows determination of whether conditions are within bounds and intent of Plan direction. Forest Plan monitoring is not a substitute for existing monitoring activities. Many activities are currently being monitored on the Forest to comply with administrative and legal responsibilities. (FSM - Admin. Review Procedures).

Monitoring and evaluation will provide information to:

- Compare planned to applied management standards and guidelines to determine if objectives are achieved [36 CFR 219.12(k)].
- Quantitatively compare planned versus actual outputs and services [36 CFR 219.12(k)(1)].
- Measure effects of prescriptions, including significant changes in land productivity [36 CFR 219.12(k)(2)].
- Determine planned costs versus actual costs associated with carrying out prescriptions [36 CFR 219.12(k)(3)].
- Determine population trends of the management indicator species and relationship to habitat changes [36 CFR 219.19(a)(6)].
- Evaluate effects of National Forest management on adjacent land, resources, and communities [36 CFR 219.7(f)].
- Identify research needs to support or improve National Forest management [36 CFR 219.28].
- Determine if lands are adequately restocked [36 CFR 219.12(k)(5)(i)].
- Determine, at least every 10 years, if lands identified as unsuitable for timber production have become suitable [36 CFR 219.12(k)(5)(ii)].
- Determine whether maximum size limits for harvest areas should be continued [36 CFR 219.12(k)(5)(iii)].
- Ensure that destructive insects and disease organisms do not increase to potentially damaging levels following management activities [36 CFR 219.12(k)(5)(iv)].

Results of evaluations will lead to the following types of decisions:

- Continue practice, no change necessary.
- Refer the problem to the appropriate Forest officer for corrective action.
- Modify the management practice through Plan amendments.
- Modify land designation through Plan amendments.
- Revise output schedules.
- Revise unit output costs.
- Revise the Plan.

Three types of monitoring and evaluation will be conducted:

- IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING Implementation monitoring will determine if plans, prescriptions, projects, and activities are implemented as designed and in compliance with Forest Plan objectives and Standards and Guidelines.
- EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING Effectiveness monitoring will determine if plans, prescriptions, projects, and activities are effective in meeting management direction, objectives, and the Standards and Guidelines.
- VALIDATION MONITORING Validation monitoring will determine whether initial data, assumptions, and coefficients used to develop the Plan are correct; or if there is a better way to meet forest planning regulations, policies, goals, and objectives.

Evaluation of results of the site-specific monitoring program will be documented in an annual evaluation by the Forest Interdisciplinary Team. Any need for further action is recommended to the Forest Supervisor.

Actions directed by the Forest Supervisor could include one or more of the following:

- A determination that no action is needed.
- District Ranger(s) may be directed to improve application of management direction.
- Management direction for a particular piece of land may be modified as a Forest Plan amendment.
- The Standards and Guidelines may be modified as a Forest Plan amendment.
- The projected schedule of outputs may be modified as a Forest Plan amendment.
- The needed action may singly or cumulatively be so significant as to cause the Forest Supervisor to initiate revision of the Forest Plan.

If, through monitoring and evaluation, it is determined that management objectives cannot be achieved without violating the Standards and Guidelines, the plan will be amended. In amending the plan, one or more of the following can be changed: allocations, management prescriptions, projected outputs, or standards and guidelines.

## **MITIGATION**

Mitigation measures will minimize or eliminate potential conflicts or adverse effects of implementation. Mitigation measures have been developed through interdisciplinary efforts and incorporated into the Forest Plan at different levels in several different ways.

The Standards and Guidelines and Management Area prescriptions in the Forest Plan, Chapter IV are a fundamental and integral part of these measures, and as such they are a basic and essential part of the Forest Plan.

The land use allocations play an important role in mitigation through separation of incompatible uses.

National Forest Management Act requirements were incorporated into the planning process and are reflected in land use allocations and Standards and Guidelines.

"General Water Quality Best Management Practices" (USDA 1988) are incorporated by reference under requirements of Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

Additional mitigation measures are developed and implemented at the project level, tiered to and consistent with the measures listed above.

## AMENDMENT AND REVISION PROCESS

This Forest Plan may be changed either by an amendment or a revision. Such changes may be made as a result of monitoring or project analysis (see Forest Plan, Chapter V). An amendment may become necessary as a result of situations such as:

- Recommendations of the Interdisciplinary Team based on their review of monitoring results.
- Determination that an existing or proposed permit, contract, cooperative agreement, or other instrument authorizing occupancy and use is not consistent with the Forest Plan, but should be approved, based on project level analysis.
- Adjustment of management area boundaries or prescriptions.
- Changes necessitated by resolution of administrative appeals.
- Changes needed to improve monitoring plans or information and assumptions used in the Plan.
- Changes made necessary by altered physical, biological, social, or economic conditions.

Based on an analysis of the objectives, guidelines, and other aspects of the Forest Plan, the Siuslaw National Forest Supervisor shall determine whether a proposed amendment would result in a significant change to the Forest Plan. If the change is determined to be significant, the Forest Supervisor shall follow the same procedure as that required for development and approval of the Forest Plan. If the change is not determined to be significant, the Forest Supervisor may implement the amendment after appropriate public notice and compliance with NEPA. The procedure is described by 36 CFR 219.10(e) and (f), 36 CFR 219.12(k), FSM 1922.51-52 and FSH 1909.12.

As Regional Forester, I will approve significant amendments and the Forest Supervisor will approve "nonsignificant" amendments. The determination of significance must be documented in a decision notice and would be appealable under 36 CFR 217. A mailing list will be maintained to provide notification and invitation to comment on proposed amendments.

The amendment documentation will include as a minimum:

- A statement of why the Forest Plan is being amended (some possible reasons are mentioned above).
- The actual amendment will be described.
- Rationale for the amendment.
- A statement of significance related to FSM 1922.51. This is the NFMA significance and relates to changes to the Forest Plan.
- A statement of NEPA compliance (40 CFR 1500-1508, FSM 1950, and FSH 1909.15) regarding effects on the environment and how effects disclosed in the Plan EIS may change as a result of the amendment.
- A statement of appeal rights.

NFMA requires revision of the Forest Plan at least every 15 years However, it may be revised sooner if physical conditions or demands on the land and resources have changed sufficiently to affect overall goals or uses for the entire Forest. If a revision becomes necessary, procedures described in 36 CFR 219 12 will be followed.

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#### SECTION V

## **APPEAL RIGHTS**

This decision may be appealed in accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR 217 by filing a written notice of appeal within 90 days of the date of this decision. The appeal must be filed with the Reviewing Officer

F Dale Robertson, Chief USDA Forest Service P.O. Box 96090 Washington, D.C. 20090-6090

A copy must be sent simultaneously to the Deciding Officer

John F. Butruille Pacific Northwest Region USDA Forest Service 319 S.W Pine P O Box 3623 Portland, OR 97208-3623

The notice of appeal must include sufficient narrative evidence and argument to show why this decision should be changed or reversed (36 CFR 217 9)

Requests to stay the approval of this Land and Resource Management Plan shall not be granted [36 CFR 217 10(a)]

For a period not to exceed 20 days following the filing of a first level notice of appeal, the Reviewing Officer shall accept requests to intervene in the appeal from any interested or potentially affected person or organization [36 CFR 217 14(a)]

Decisions on site-specific projects are not made in this document

The schedule of proposed and probable projects for the first decade is included in the appendices to the plan Final decisions on these proposed projects will be made after site-specific analysis and documentation in compliance with NEPA

I encourage anyone concerned about the Plan or Environmental Impact Statement to contact Wendy Herrett, Forest Supervisor, in Corvallis, Oregon, 503-750-7008, before submitting an appeal It may be possible to resolve the concern or misunderstanding in a less formal manner

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JOHN F BUTRUILLE Regional Forester - USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region 319 SW Pine, P.O. Box 3623 Portland, OR 97204-3623

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Date