



Initial Analysis of Trump Administration's Proposal to Revise RMPs for Western Oregon BLM Lands

Trump Administration Proposal Could Allow Old-Growth Clearcuts with Zero Sideboards

- Nearly 2 million acres, or 77% of Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, could be opened to clearcutting with no protections for remaining ancient trees and old-growth stands. The remaining 23% are either Congressionally-protected or cannot grow trees sustainably.
- Pointing to timber harvest figures from before coho salmon, spotted owls, and other iconic Pacific Northwest species were listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Trump Administration seeks a return to “maximum” logging that “aligns with historically higher levels.”
- Despite previous determinations of ESA compliance premised on increasing old-growth habitat and protecting streams, the Trump Administration now proposes to potentially eliminate Late Successional Reserves (LSRs) and reduce riparian protections even further than the 2016 Resource Management Plans (RMPs) did.
- This proposal is clearly a timber industry-driven response to recent litigation wins by conservation groups holding BLM accountable for failing to adhere even to the minimal protections offered by the 2016 RMPs for old-growth stands and ESA-listed species.
- The proposal opens up all currently designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and natural areas for reevaluation, potentially eliminating them and opening them up for logging.
- BLM’s own environmental analyses acknowledge that clearcutting and similar forms of logging *increase* fire hazards for up to 50 years. Despite hotter, drier, and longer fire seasons, the Trump Administration aims to again prioritize this practice on public lands.
- As outlined in the Federal Register notice, the proposal has no grounding in science or consideration for the needs of imperiled plants, fish, and wildlife, or the communities that rely on BLM lands for clean water and recreation opportunities.

Background on BLM’s Western Oregon RMPs

- In 1995, the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) took effect, encompassing *all* federal lands—including BLM lands—within the range of the northern spotted owl. Conservation on BLM lands was considered essential to the success of the plan.
- After several attempts, BLM withdrew its Western Oregon lands from the NWFP in 2016, adopting new RMPs that significantly weakened protections for areas reserved to protect and restore habitat for ESA-listed species (LSRs) and along streams (Riparian Reserves).
- BLM’s 2016 RMPs survived legal scrutiny by promising to create *more* late-successional (old-growth) forest habitat over time, and protected old trees established by 1850 and over 40 inches in diameter.
- Federal appellate courts have clarified that the 1937 O&C Act grants BLM discretion to set aside reserves as non-timberland, especially to comply with other statutes like the ESA and the Clean Water Act.