



USDA FOREST SERVICE

Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa–Whitman National Forests

What a Forest Plan DOES and DOES NOT Do

Land and Resource Management Plans – more commonly known as “forest plans” – are completed for every national forest. Congress decided long ago (1973 and 1976) what goes into a Forest Plan; clarifying regulations and policies were later issued by the Forest Service.

The Revised Blue Mountain Forest Plan will make several key decisions and, of lasting importance, create layered and over-arching management direction. In other words, it provides the framework within which other project decisions can then be made on a case-by-case and site-specific basis. Just as important as what this Revised Forest Plan will do are those things it will not do. The following table explains those differences:

Topic	The Forest Plan...	The Forest Plan...
Laws, regulations, and policies	DOES use guidance provided by the Forest Service Handbook, Forest Service Manual, and other federal regulations and policies to create an over-arching management plan – for the Blue Mountain’s National Forests.	DOES NOT make law, regulations, or policy. The Forest Plan is NOT a policy-making document; it reflects agency policy and goals.
Budget for local Forest Service operation	DOES consider financial feasibility of implementing plan goals and objectives.	DOES NOT determine funding levels for the National Forests; budget allocations are determined in other ways.
Travel management	DOES identify what kinds of travel are suitable to particular parcels of land, based on desired conditions (DFCs) and other designations. Can vary by season of year.	DOES NOT make the decision to open, close, or otherwise restrict use of a specific road or trail to certain modes of travel (e.g., ATVs or mountain bikes). If the management objectives for certain parcels change, then site-specific plans for road and trail management will have to be made separately from the Forest Plan to bring travel into compliance. Decisions regarding specific roads and trails are made through project-level NEPA analysis and decision documents.
Timber harvests	DOES identify sustainable annual yields and DOES identify which lands are suitable for timber harvests for various objectives including timber production.	DOES NOT identify individual areas that will be offered for sale.
Timber sales	DOES provide direction and standards to determine where and how sales can occur based on goals and objectives.	DOES NOT approve any site-specific timber sale.
Grazing allotments	DOES analyze and disclose which lands are suitable for grazing and describes the parameters or standards grazing practice shall attain.	DOES NOT make a decision about what to do with vacant allotments or allotment management plans and permit renewals.

Oil and gas	DOES identify which lands are administratively available and authorized for leasing, and the surface use stipulations that must be met in development.	DOES NOT control timing or extent or leasing activities below the surface, nor does it authorize surface activity. Specific activities are considered in project-level NEPA.
Coal	DOES identify lands available for further consideration for coal leasing based on coal resource occurrence. Establishes surface and below-surface stipulations.	DOES NOT permit leasing, exploration or development. Further lease-specific activities are analyzed in NEPA.
Land exchanges	DOES identify values and considerations to be evaluated in potential exchange of land parcels. DOES identify landscapes where opportunities to consolidate landownership patterns should be or should not be pursued to meet DFCs and objectives.	DOES NOT identify or prioritize specific parcels for exchanges. Guidance governing required analyses for land exchanges is found in Forest Service manuals and handbooks.
Ski areas	DOES identify which lands have DFCs, objectives and standards and suitability that emphasize ski-based resorts.	DOES NOT approve creation of any additional infrastructure such as lifts, runs, or snowmaking facilities.
Endangered species	DOES provide DFCs, objectives and standards to ensure sustainable habitat conditions for species that have been listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act.	DOES NOT decide which species will be protected under the Endangered Species Act. That is a decision made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
Hunting and wildlife management	DOES describe desired conditions, objectives and standards for managing the habitat for many game and non-game species.	DOES NOT set hunting seasons, or designate areas as open or closed to hunting, or set harvest levels or hunting fees.
Wilderness	DOES recommend to Congress those areas that are capable and suitable for designation as wilderness. DOES allocate land to area designations that are managed for wilderness values.	DOES NOT create or designate lands as Wilderness.
Wild, scenic and recreational rivers	DOES identify those river segments eligible for further study as wild, scenic, or recreational under the nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. DOES allocate land to river corridors that must be managed to maintain the values that provide eligibility for wild, scenic, and/or recreational rivers.	DOES NOT designate those rivers as wild, scenic, or recreational. Finding of eligibility DOES NOT automatically launch further study.
Law enforcement	DOES emphasize cooperative partnerships and collaborative activities with stakeholder groups and local communities and governments.	DOES NOT include directives about law enforcement, specify enforcement staffing, or budget for those operations.