

# Toolbox Fire Recovery Project

## Social Impact Assessment

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### Introduction

This analysis will address social impacts of the various alternatives.. Social impact analysis is, in some ways, similar to economic impact analysis. However, it focuses on social issues beyond the economic effects upon the people, primarily during the period that project activities are underway. The Civil Rights Impact Assessment and its coverage of Environmental Justice addresses social impacts in another way. Social impact considerations are some of the many subjective values that are considered in determining which alternative has the best net public benefit.

Some comments received during the scoping period for this EIS raised issues related to social impacts. These comments are summarized below:

“Environmental Justice. USFS must provide for the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, culture, gender, national origin, business, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” (Comment of Rachel Thomas, Box 4637, Huachuca City, Arizona 85616)

In a telephone call, December 3, 2002, Jim Hogue expressed interest in economic opportunity for small contractors.

In a December 10, 2002 phone call, Bjorn Everson indicated an interest in knowing more about the project from the standpoint of potential thinning or riparian planting work for small operators.

“The questions I have are small. I wonder if personal use fire wood permits could be issued to remove burnt stands of Lodge pole by local folks?” (Comment of Leon Baker, P.O. Box 65, Silver Lake, OR 97638)

The US EPA, Seattle, suggests careful integration of Tribal issues. The primary Tribal issue in this project involves a small portion of the project area within the former reservation of the Klamath Tribes. While no formal Tribal input has discussed the social issues there, in the past the Tribe has been concerned with road closures that limit access to the land by members of the Tribe.

The US EPA, Seattle, also highlights civil rights Environmental Justice considerations similar to those noted by Ms Thomas, above.

A separate Civil Rights Impact Assessment has been developed for this project. It addresses the concerns expressed by Ms. Thomas and the EPA.

Generally these comments are oriented more toward the potential positive economic effects of the project upon small businesses rather than particular social impacts upon the people potentially affected by the project. The way in which contracts are developed and made available can affect whether or not smaller businesses can participate. A visitor to an open house in La Pine May 13, 2003, discussed a proposal under development for contracting reforestation activities. He generally agreed with the idea of larger reforestation contracts that included more contractor responsibility while freeing Forest Service employees to focus on contract administration and inspection.

### Data Sources

An economic profile was developed for Lake County using the Economic Profile System (see [http://www.sonoran.org/programs/si\\_se\\_program\\_page\\_3.html](http://www.sonoran.org/programs/si_se_program_page_3.html)). This system compiles county level data from a wide

variety of sources including the 2000 Census, County Business Patters, Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis and others.

Demographic information was compiled from 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census information using the Forest Service’s Natural Resources information System Human Dimensions Module (NRIS-HD) (see: <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nris/hd/abouthd.html>) and the U.S. Census Bureau’s County Quickfacts system (see <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/41037.html>). Additional information came from the Toolbox Civil Rights Impact Assessment (Pierce, 2003) and other sources as noted below.

## Scope

While social impacts may occur over a broad area, they tend to diminish with distance from the activities associated with the project. Thus this analysis will focus upon the small rural communities closest to the project area. These communities are Silver Lake and Paisley, in northern Lake County. Impacts upon other communities like Chemult, Gilchrist and Chiloquin are expected to be similar in form, but less intense than those seen in Silver Lake and Paisley.

## Context

**Population.** Lake County is a low-population county with a 2000 population of 7,401. Since 1970 the population grew 16%, but in the process the population peaked at nearly 8,000 people in the mid-1980’s before declining to present levels in the early 1990’s. The population has been relatively constant for the last several years. The county encompasses 8,359 square miles so the population density is less than one person per square mile.

**Age Structure.** The following table displays the percentage of the population in various age cohorts over time.

### Age Structure over Time – Lake County and Oregon

Age Cohort	1980		1990		2000	
	Lake Co. Percent	Oregon Percent	Lake Co. Percent	Oregon Percent	Lake Co. Percent	Oregon Percent
0 to 4 years	8.2	7.5	7.4	7.1	5.0	6.5
5 to 9 years	8.0	7.2	9.4	7.4	6.7	6.9
10 to 14 years	8.4	7.7	7.1	7.1	7.9	7.1
15 to 17 years	5.4	5.1	4.7	3.9	5.3	4.3
18 to 19 years	2.7	3.5	1.5	2.7	1.6	2.8
20 years	1.2	1.8	0.5	1.4	0.6	1.4
21 years	1.2	1.7	1.1	1.3	0.6	1.3
22 to 24 years	4.8	5.5	2.5	3.8	2.2	4.0
25to 29 years	8.5	9.6	5.7	7.5	4.7	6.8
30 to 34 years	7.0	8.6	7.9	8.6	4.8	6.9
35 to 44 years	11.9	11.5	15.4	16.8	14.7	15.4
45 to 54 years	11.2	9.3	11.5	10.5	16.0	14.8
55 to 59 years	5.6	4.9	5.1	4.1	6.3	5.1
60 to 61 years	1.8	1.8	2.1	1.6	2.2	1.6
62 to 64 years	3.1	2.6	3.7	2.6	3.6	2.2
65 to 74 years	7.1	7.0	8.7	7.9	9.8	6.4
75 to 84 years	3.3	3.4	4.4	4.5	6.0	4.7
85 years plus	0.7	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.9	1.7

Since 1980 and as a percentage, Lake County population has declined in all age cohorts except those over 34, which have been growing. Oregon as a whole has seen similar declines in the younger age groups and increases in the older age groups

except that there has been a relative decline in the 62-74 age cohort. The median age in Lake County is 42.7 compared to the statewide media of 36.3. The Lake County population is older than the state as a whole and aging. This is reflected in the increase in transfer payments and the large percentage of the workforce involved in health care.

**Education.** The following table compares the 2000 educational attainment of the Lake County population in comparison to that of the state of Oregon.

### Education – Lake County and Oregon

Educational Level	Lake County	State of Oregon
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7.2%	5.0%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	13.2%	9.9%
High School Graduate or Equivalency	33.4%	26.3%
Some College, no degree	25.2%	27.1%
Associate Degree	5.6%	6.6%
Bachelor's Degree	11.8%	16.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	3.7%	8.7%

The Lake County population is not as highly educated as the State of Oregon as a whole.

**Gender Mix.** The Lake County population is 50.1% male while the population of the State of Oregon as a whole is 49.6% male.

**Racial Mix.** The racial mix of Lake County and Paisley is compared to that of the state of Oregon in the following table:

### Racial Mix – Lake County, Oregon and Paisley

Race	Lake Co. %	Oregon %	Paisley %
White	91.0	86.6	98.0
Black or African American	0.1	1.6	0
American Indian and Alaska Native	2.4	1.3	0.8
Asian	0.7	3.0	0.4
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.2	0.0
Some other race	3.2	4.2	0.8
Hispanic or Latino of any race	5.4	8.0	1.2

Lake County is less diverse in terms of the mix of races although it has a higher proportion of Native Americans than the state as a whole. The rural community of Paisley is even less diverse with all but 5 of the 247 residents being white.

**Housing.** The following table displays the age of housing in Lake County compared to that of the State of Oregon:

### Housing – Lake County and Oregon

Year Structure Built	Lake Co.	Oregon
1999 to March 2000	2.0%	2.8%
1995 to 1998	6.2%	10.3%
1990 to 1994	3.4%	8.8%
1980 to 1989	11.4%	12.2%
1970 to 1979	25.6%	23.0%
1961 to 1969	10.9%	12.2%
1940 to 1959	22.4%	17.4%
1939 or earlier	18.2%	13.4%

The median value of a Lake County home was \$65,700 compared to the statewide media of \$152,100. Lake County residents tend to live in older housing of lower valuation than residents of the state as a whole. In Lake County 68.9% of households owned their own house while statewide the figure is 64.3%.

**Mobility.** In 2000, 46.8% of Oregon’s population had lived in the same house for five years or more. Of those who moved, 23.6% moved from a different county. In Lake County 55.1% lived in the same house five years or longer. Of those who moved, 18.9% moved in from a different county. Thus, the Lake County population appears to be less mobile than the population of the state as a whole.

**Economic Structure.** About 46% of the income in the county comes from non-labor sources. This is fairly evenly split between dividends/interest/rent (24%) and transfer payments (22%). Of the total transfer payments in 2000, 49% were for retirement and disability insurance and 30% were medical payments. About 8% of the payments were for welfare. Most of the rest of the income in the county comes from wage and salary workers with a small percentage of proprietor income. From 1990 to 2000 proprietor’s income shrank by 53% in real terms from 14% of total person income to 6% while non-labor income grew by 24%. Average earnings per job have fallen from \$27,849 in 1970 to \$20,353 in 2000. Median household income in Lake County was \$29,506 in 1999. That is well below the statewide median of \$40,916. In Oregon, 11.6% of the population lives below the poverty level while in Lake County 16.1% live in poverty

**Cross-County Effects.** The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) reports personal income in terms of location of residence. In Lake County people who live outside of Lake County and work in Lake County earn more than the people that live in Lake County and work outside Lake County. This indicates a net in-commuting for work from adjacent counties. Over the last decade the gap between inflow and outflow has been narrowing.

**Work.** County Business Patterns broke down the number of firms in Lake County and the 2000 Census broke down the county’s workforce by similar categories:

Category	Number of Firms	Percent of County Workforce
Retail Trade	37	9.2
Accommodations, Food Service, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	32	8.4
Health Care, Social Assistance, Educational Services	23	19.2
Other Services	19	5.7
Construction	18	5.7
Manufacturing	11	9.4
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	12	4.3
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Admin, support, waste mgmt, remediation services	12	3.8
Finance and Insurance. Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	13	1.8
Wholesale Trade	6	1.3
Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining and Ag Support	8	20.4
Information	3	1.2

Most of these firms operate in the Lakeview area in the southern part of the county, 40 miles south of Paisley and 90 miles south of Silver Lake.

**Lifestyles.** In Lake County, 57.8% of the total population over age 16 is in the labor force, but only 51.6% of the female population over age 16 is in the labor force. Of those workers, 68.9% drive alone to work, 14.1% carpooled, 9.6% walked and 6.1% worked at home. Only 4 people got to work using public transportation (including taxicabs). On the average it took 16.1 minutes to get to work. Residents of Lake County live more commonly in family households (69.8%) than the statewide population (65.6%). They live more commonly in married couple families (58.6%) than statewide (51.9%). Extended family households are less common in Lake County (2.8%) than statewide (4.2%).

**Uses of the Forest: Access.** The Civil Rights Impact Assessment (Pierce, 2003) states: The issue of access on Forest Service roads was raised during public scoping. Fremont National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Standards and Guidelines state, “Road density will be the most economical system necessary to meet the land management objectives. Overall density for the roaded area of the Forest will not exceed 2.5 miles per square mile” (LRMP, page 116). All alternatives were developed following an interdisciplinary Roads Analysis process that evaluated opportunities, determined priorities, and made recommendations for road management actions, including closure or decommissioning, for the purpose of promoting watershed recovery, reducing impacts on wildlife habitat, or protecting cultural resource sites. In response to input from Klamath Tribe representatives, the alternatives respond, to varying degrees, to retention of access on former Klamath Indian Reservation lands. Alternative C would retain all access. In Alternatives E, G, and H, only those roads recommended for decommissioning during the roads analysis process would be decommissioned. Other roads that have a less pressing need for treatment and were recommended for simple closure would remain open. For Alternative D, which responds to watershed restoration, wildlife habitat, and cultural resource objectives, the criteria used in developing road management proposals did not include retention of access within former reservation lands.

**Uses of the Forest: Firewood.** According to the Toolbox Firewood Resource Report (Pierce 2003), in the past 20 years an average of approximately 300 personal use firewood permits were sold per year on the Silver Lake Ranger District. An average of 1,200 cords were removed per year. Approximately 10 percent of the firewood removed in the past came from the project area. Local residents from Silver Lake, Christmas Valley, Fort Rock, and Summer Lake have been the primary gatherers of firewood due to the proximity of these communities to the project area. The trend is for an increase in firewood cutting District-wide. In 2002, 435 permits for 1,570 cords were sold on the District. In the near future firewood cutting in the moderate to very high burn intensity stands is expected to decrease slightly until the charred bark is loose enough to fall off the dead stems. During that time some of the local woodcutters may be displaced from the Toolbox project area, however; this number should be relatively minor and woodcutters will not have to travel far from the project area to find adequate sources of firewood on the District. The long-term opportunities for firewood cutting in the project area by the public and members of the Klamath Tribes will primarily depend on the access management strategy designed for each alternative, as described in the Access section of this analysis. Firewood cutting by Tribal members rarely occurs in the project area because of the distance from their homes. Former Tribal lands west of the project area on the Chiloquin Ranger District are considerably closer to most members’ residences.

**Uses of the Forest: Mushrooms.** Silver Lake District has not been traditionally known as an area with large mushroom populations. In 2002, 1,122 permits for commercial harvest of Matsutake mushrooms were issued Forest-wide. Most of those permits (1,107) were for use on the Chemult District. In comparison, only five permits were issued on the Silver Lake District for that same period. In 2002, The Fremont-Winema National Forests issued 30 commercial morel mushroom permits and 489 free use morel permits, none of which were for the Silver Lake District. Although the fires of 2002 may increase potential for mushroom growth in other areas of the Fremont-Winema National Forests, specialists do not foresee an increase on the Silver Lake District. Historically, mushroom populations have not increased in burned areas on the Silver Lake District (personal communication, J.Wilson, Silver Lake District Botanist, 03/2003).

**Uses of the Forest: Recreation.** Detailed data on recreation use of the Forest is provided in the Toolbox Civil Rights Impact Assessment (Pierce, 2003). The most common activities, in order of participation, are: fishing, camping, viewing scenery, viewing wildlife, hiking, picnicking and bicycling. Recreationists participate in many other activities although less frequently than these.

**Uses of the Forest: Klamath Tribes.** The southern portion of the Silver Lake Ranger District includes portions of former Klamath Tribal reservation lands. Through a Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Forest Service and the Klamath Tribes, certain traditional uses of the Fremont National Forest lands are guaranteed. Most of the Klamath Tribe cultural uses, such as camping, hunting, fishing, berry picking, plant gathering and firewood cutting follow use patterns similar to uses for the general public (An Assessment of Ecosystem Components in the Interior Columbia Basin and Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins, Volume IV, page 1928). There are, however, differences in purpose, as related to the culture of the Klamath Tribes.

**Social Institutions.** The north Lake County area offers a wide variety of institutions that help weave the social fabric. These include:

Schools

North Lake - K-12 (Silver Lake, Ft. Rock, and Christmas Valley)

Paisley - K-12

Libraries – all with limited hours

Paisley

Christmas Valley

Silver Lake

Medical Facilities

North Lake Clinic – Christmas Valley

Churches

Christmas Valley Assembly of God Church

Christmas Valley Community Church

Ft. Rock Community Church

Holy Family Catholic Church

Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall

Lutheran Church

North Lake Independent Christian Center

Paisley Assembly of God

Praise the Lord Fellowship

Seventh Day Adventist Church

Silver Lake Church of the Bible

Summer Lake Christian Fellowship

Other Organizations

Little League – all communities

Girl Scouts – Silver Lake

4-H – all communities

Ft. Rock Grange #578

**Overall Context.** Overall the above discussion describes a county with a very rural, somewhat isolated and impoverished community with a social structure served by a wide variety of churches and other institutions. Residents live close to their work. Work is primarily in service and support to the base natural resource industries of agriculture and forestry. The population is aging thus drawing more heavily on income from pensions while having increasing demands on the health care system. The forest and its road system is used by the residents in their work as well as for a variety of recreational and subsistence purposes.

## Project Impacts

Within the social context presented above, the action alternatives developed for this project inject a perturbation in the social fabric by bringing in workers from outside the area to perform the logging, reforestation and related activities. As discussed in the Economic Impact Assessment, there are few Lake County residents available to take on this type of work. That Assessment reveals that the various action alternatives will bring in about 130 to 170 workers at one time, assuming activities are dispersed over a six-year timeframe. Some of these workers would be involved in logging operations, but even more would be involved in other activities, primarily reforestation.

The activities involved have been a basis for economic activity in the area for many years, so the types of workers and the jobs they do will not be surprising to the community. The community is also set up to service these types of activities although the action alternatives inject more workers into the area than have been seen in the recent past. The communities have already felt some impacts as private landowners have harvested damaged timber from their lands and begun reforestation activities. The activities on the Winter Salvage project are likely to begin before those on Toolbox. Thus, some of the cumulative impact will be spread over time and not be as extreme as it otherwise might be. The Winter Salvage impacts are relatively small in comparison to the Toolbox impacts since the Winter project involves a small area and relatively little timber harvest.

While the outside workforce is likely to be more racially diverse than the local resident population, the residents have worked effectively with and supported workforces like this in the past and can be expected to do so in the future. The primary services needed by the workers will be food and shelter. Local businesses that can supply lodging, space for recreational vehicles, food (grocery stores and restaurants) and other services will capture most of the money spent by the

workers in the area. Businesses will likely need to increase their employment either by adding employees or giving present employees more hours. This should result in increased local household incomes during project activities. Since these businesses have supported similar, although not quite as large, workforces in the past, it is not likely that much capital expansion will be needed.

Since reforestation activities are expected to span a period of six years, it is reasonable to expect some of the workers to move to the area with their families for most of that period. Given the wide variety of churches in the area, these families can be easily brought into the social fabric of the community if the churches seek them out or the families choose to participate.

Local residents use forest roads to access the project area for a variety of purposes. In general these residents will prefer to have all roads open for their use. The alternatives vary in the sum of road closures and decommissionings ranging from 82 miles in Alternatives E and G to 147 miles in Alternative D. Opponents to road closures often take the position that no closure is a good closure. These individuals will oppose road closures in all of the alternatives. Other local individuals are likely to take a more pragmatic view although they may oppose certain road closures.

## Conclusions

The no-action alternative will not change the current conditions in this area from those described above. However, selection of that alternative is likely to increase the feelings of hopelessness and lack of control typically encountered in a contracting economy. The action alternatives will vary only slightly in their social effects because they all propose the same types of activities and the community has supported these activities and their workforces in the past. Only the scale of the activities affects the social impacts. Given that the differences are marginal, Alternative G will have the largest social impact because it would bring the largest workforce into the area. Alternative E would have the smallest because it would bring in the smallest workforce.

Under any of the action alternatives, the communities around the project will generally see more people in stores and gas stations, more rooms filled in local motels and more spaces filled in local RV parks for the duration of the project activities. In addition some families will move into the area and need mobile home space or some other relatively low cost housing. There will be increased opportunity for local residents to supply these needs and improve their economic conditions.

## Use of This Report

This Toolbox Fire Recovery Project specialist report was prepared during March, April and May of 2003. It will be used, along with specialist reports from multiple resource areas, to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Toolbox Fire Recovery project. This specialist report will become a part of the planning record for the project, filed under:

“Toolbox/ Planning Record/ E\_Specialists\_reports\_data\_inventory\_and\_collection”

This report will be filed both in the ‘hard-copy’ planning record binders, on file at the Silver Lake Ranger District, and on the Fremont National Forest “K-Drive”. In the interest of planning process efficiency, particularly in light of time and budget constraints, editing that occurs to the content of this report during the preparation of the DEIS will be reflected in the DEIS and will not necessarily be entered back into the content of this report. To insure the accuracy of such edits, I will review the content of both the DEIS and the (Final) FEIS and certify that their content is consistent with the analytical conclusions in this report. If during DEIS or FEIS editing, substantially different conclusions or interpretations are reached or substantial additional analysis is prepared from that displayed in this report, an addendum to this report will be prepared.

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