



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
**U.S. Department  
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov

## News Release

Date: February 21, 2012

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### **Secretary Salazar Proposes Expansion of Ecological Forestry in Western Oregon to Provide Sustainable Timber, Healthier Habitat**

*BLM to Schedule 5 Additional Ecological Forestry Sales and Update Resource Management Plans with Latest Science and Forestry Principles*

MEDFORD, Ore.— During a visit today to one of three ecological forestry pilot projects in Oregon, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced that the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will apply ecological forestry principles on a broader landscape to restore forest health and to provide sustainable timber harvests for local mills and the communities who rely on the timber industry for jobs and economic strength.

“It is time to move beyond the endless lawsuits and court battles that have tied Oregon forests in knots for decades, and instead focus on how we can restore healthy habitat and provide sustainable timber harvests and revenues,” said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. “With the latest science and the lessons from these pilot projects, we can apply the principles of ecological forestry to the broader landscape and address the growing risks of catastrophic fire, insect infestation, and climate change.”

In December 2010, Secretary Salazar set in motion a plan to apply the principles of active forest management, as suggested by Professors Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin, on BLM lands within the Coos Bay, Roseburg, and Medford Districts in Oregon. The Medford pilot project, which was the first of the three sales, received no protests or administrative appeals and sold for more than four times the appraised value.

Based on the promise of these pilot projects, which is described in the recently-released [Forestry Pilot Project Report](#), Salazar announced today that in addition to continued work on these three pilots, the BLM will plan for least five additional timber sales using ecological forestry principles by the end of Fiscal Year 2013.

Following the visit to the Medford Pilot Project, Secretary Salazar, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources Butch Blazer, and BLM Oregon State Director Ed Shepard held a town hall in Medford to discuss next steps toward forest restoration in Western Oregon.

At the meeting, Salazar said that – as part of the commitment to restoring healthy habitat and providing sustainable timber harvest and revenues – BLM will undertake Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions which will provide goals, objectives, and direction for the management of approximately 2,500,000 acres of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon. The western Oregon planning area consists of the Coos Bay District, Eugene District, Medford District, Roseburg District, Salem District, and the Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District.

“Increasing the pace of forest restoration on public lands is critical to the health of our forests and the health of our rural economies,” said USDA Deputy Undersecretary Butch Blazer, who joined Secretary Salazar in western Oregon. “By working in partnership with local communities, forest industry, and conservation groups, this Administration believes it is possible to move beyond the timber wars of the past and towards a positive future for our forests, our wildlife and communities.”

“We will continue to work closely with the BLM to ensure that their planning process is guided by the best available ecological science,” said Director Ashe. “An active forest management approach like the one we’re seeing here at the Medford pilot project will help restore forest health, increase resilience and foster diversity.”

The first step in the BLM’s process to revise RMPs is a formal public scoping period to seek public input regarding the range of issues to be addressed in the planning process, including the management alternatives that should be examined. In a Notice of Intent that will soon be published in the Federal Register, the BLM will identify the scale of planning as six RMPs with a single environmental impact statement (EIS), however public input is being sought on whether different approaches should be considered.

The revisions to the existing RMPs will determine how the BLM will actively manage BLM-administered forests in western Oregon for multiple objectives including contributing to the recovery of threatened and endangered species, to provide clean water, to restore fire adapted ecosystems, to produce a sustained yield of timber products, and provide for recreation opportunities.

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