



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Medford District Office  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford>

(ORM060)  
BLM Ashland Field Office

SEP 27 2019

Re: Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project  
[DOI-BLM-ORWA-M060-2020-0001-EA](#)

Dear Interested Public:

Thank you for your interest in the management of your public lands. The Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ashland Field Office is initiating a public scoping period for the Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project. Scoping is the process by which the BLM solicits input on the potential issues, impacts, and alternatives to be addressed in the environmental assessment (EA). This letter describes why the BLM is proposing this project, lists the treatment types that are being considered, contains a map of the Bear Grub Planning Area (with the potential treatment areas), and instructions for public involvement.

The location of the project boundary include portions of the Middle Applegate, Little Applegate and Bear Creek Watersheds. The Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project will be consistent with the management goals and direction in the 2016 Southwestern Oregon Resource Management Plan (SWO RMP) and the associated land use allocations. Specifically, this vegetation management proposal would be designed to achieve the following:

1. Harvest Land Base-Uneven-Aged Timber Area (SWO RMP, pp. 67-70)
  - Conduct integrated vegetation management to promote the development and retention of large, open grown trees and multi-cohort stands, increase vegetative species diversity, adjust stand composition or dominance, enhance the development of structural complexity and heterogeneity, create growing space for hardwood and pine persistence and regeneration, and reduce susceptibility to disturbances such as fire, disease, or insect infestation.
2. Riparian Reserve-Dry (SWO RMP, pp. 76, 84-87)
  - The management objectives and direction for Riparian Reserve-Dry are similar to those for Uneven-Aged Timber Areas with more emphasis on forest thinning to ensure that stands are able to provide trees that would function as stable wood in stream. This land use allocation has zone-specific management direction that may also include snag creation and/or tipping individual trees to provide for in-stream fish habitat restoration.
3. Fuels Reduction (SWO RMP, pp. 69, 91)
  - These treatments are designed to improve, enhance, or maintain landscape and ecosystem resilience. Treatments may target activity and natural hazardous fuels to: modify the fuel

profile, reduce potential fire behavior and severity, improve, enhance, or maintain resilience in Uneven-Aged Timber Areas and Riparian Reserve-Dry land use allocations. Treatments may also improve effective fire management opportunities within Wildland Urban Interface or in close proximity to other highly valued resources.

### **Preliminary Project Information**

This project would be implemented to fulfill multiple purposes including: contributions to the Allowable Sale Quality established in the SWO RMP to meet purposes of the Oregon and California and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands act of 1937 (O&C Act), restore and maintain forest health and resiliency of stands, and to improve fire and fuels management opportunities. After preliminary review of the landscape conditions (such as forest structure, stand density, forest health), BLM resource specialists proposed preliminary treatment areas for vegetation management actions in portions of the Bear Creek, Middle Applegate, and Little Applegate watersheds (see enclosed map). Vegetation management treatments that may be proposed include: commercial thinning, selection harvest, fuel treatments and maintenance, and tree tipping. Additional related management activities are also being considered for the project including: renovations, stabilization and maintenance of existing roads, and construction of potential new roads. The proposed action may utilize a combination of commercial timber sale contract(s) and service contracts. Further details on the types of treatments being considered are referenced by page number above and can be found in the SWO RMP that is available at:

[https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/rod/SWO\\_ROD\\_RMP.pdf](https://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/rod/SWO_ROD_RMP.pdf)

### **Public Involvement**

We would like to hear from you regarding any information or comments you would like to be considered in the development of the project. Comments that clearly articulate specific suggestions, information, or concerns are the most helpful. The input you provide will help an interdisciplinary team of BLM resource specialists to develop alternatives, project design features, and to assess the potential environmental effects.

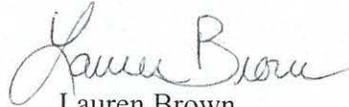
Please send your comments to Bureau of Land Management, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504, Attention: Ashland Planning and Environmental Specialists. Comments can be submitted directly into the BLM's ePlanning site, at <https://go.usa.gov/xVw38> . Comments may also be emailed to [BLM\\_OR\\_AFO\\_VMP@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_OR_AFO_VMP@blm.gov) (RE: Bear Grub VMP).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that all written submissions from private individuals in response to this notice, including your name, address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information may be made available for public inspection and disclosure, unless you specifically request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your personal identifying information from public review or disclosure, you must state this at the beginning of your written comment. We will honor such requests to the extent allowed by law, but you should be aware that release of that information may be required under certain circumstances. All submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organization or business will be made available for public inspection and disclosure in their entirety.

If you do not have comments at this time, but would like to be kept informed on this project, please complete and return the enclosed "Interest Response Form" and your name will be maintained on the project mailing list. We are in the preliminary development of this project, so now is the best time for you to provide input. However, we welcome your comments at any time. Your input will be most helpful if it is received by *November 1, 2019*. Those responding to this or other public notices concerning the Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project will be notified of EA availability. We look forward to working with you throughout the development of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lauren Brown".

Lauren Brown  
Field Manager  
Ashland Field Office