

Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision—2014

Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests



Watershed

In a Nutshell

The preferred alternative would result in improved forest health over broad scales and this would contribute to improved watershed conditions.

The preferred alternative would contribute to improved watershed and riparian habitat conditions.

Watershed conditions would be improved in all alternatives.

Definitions

Key Watersheds have a combination of relative population strength for one of four aquatic focal species (Chinook salmon, steelhead, inland redband trout, and bull trout), good watershed conditions, and good aquatic and riparian habitat condition. Key watersheds are identified at the subwatershed level and consist of areas approximately 10,000 to 40,000 acres. Key watersheds are expected to be managed so that risk to aquatic and riparian habitats is minimized.

Priority Watersheds are key watersheds that have been selected by the forest as priorities for watershed, riparian, and aquatic habitat restoration.

Riparian Management Areas (RMAs) are portions of watersheds where aquatic and riparian-dependent resources receive primary emphasis. RMAs occur at the margins of standing and flowing water, intermittent stream channels and ephemeral ponds, springs, and wetlands.

Document Sections

Desired Conditions: Watershed, Volume 3, p. 182; Riparian Management Areas Volume 3, p. 226

Effects Analysis: (Watershed, Water Quality and Water Uses) Volume 1, p. 254

Forest-wide standards and guidelines: Volume 3, Appendix A, p. 256

Management Area standards and guidelines: Volume 3, Appendix A, p. 280

Objectives: Volume 3, Appendix A, p. 237, Objectives for watershed condition, by forest, are in Table A-48, page 238 for the Malheur N.F., Table A-49, page 242 for the Umatilla N.F., and Table A-50, page 247, for the Wallowa-Whitman N.F.



For the greatest good

Analysis Methods: Volume 3, Appendix B, p. 327

Tables identifying Key and Priority Watersheds by forest: Appendix B, p. 331

FAQs

Q. How will riparian and aquatic habitats be managed?

A. Most existing management direction will be carried forward. This includes the use of riparian management areas (formerly RHCAs, or riparian habitat conservation areas in PACFISH and INFISH) and the identification of key watersheds (formerly priority watersheds) that are crucial habitats for threatened, endangered or sensitive fish and other aquatic or riparian-dependent species. In addition, forests identify priorities for active restoration from the set of key watersheds in order to make the best use of restoration funding.

Q. What kinds of watershed restoration actions are proposed and how will watershed conditions be improved?

A. The forest plan does not describe specific actions that will take place, but describes objectives for improvement in watershed, soil, riparian, and aquatic habitat conditions. Watershed restoration objectives are described in Tables A-48, A-49, and A-50 in Appendix A. Forest vegetation conditions are expected to improve in all alternatives and this contributes to improved watershed conditions. The analysis in the DEIS suggests that decreasing sediment delivery and the hydrologic effects of roads will contribute improved overall watershed conditions.

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