

THE BLM MANAGES  
MORE THAN 2 MILLION  
ACRES OF LAND IN  
WESTERN OREGON



PHOTO: BLM

## BLM'S NEW FLAWED FOREST PLAN

Like a horror movie zombie, the logging plan for about 2.5 million acres of Oregon's public forests known as the "Whopper" is back, and within days of its Aug. 5 announcement, enviros and the timber industry filed lawsuits against it.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is calling its plan to cut 278 million board feet of timber per year off Oregon's federal forests "Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for Western Oregon." But Susan Jane Brown, an attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center, which together with Earthjustice is representing about 22 conservation groups in their lawsuit against the plan, calls it "WOPR junior."

The groups include in their argument that most of the timber would come from clearcut logging, streamside protections are cut in half or more and climate change is not addressed seriously enough.

The WOPR, which stands for Western Oregon Plan Revisions, was a logging plan for BLM lands that was proposed in 2008 and after years of litigation, it died away in 2012. The WOPR would have increased logging on old forests by 400 percent. After the WOPR died, the BLM returned to the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) for forest management that had helped calm the "forest wars" of the 1980s and '90s.

"It is certainly serving to reignite some of the forest wars most of us hoped had been put to bed by the Northwest Forest Plan," Brown says of the RMPs.

She tells *EW*, "These lands have already been squeezed pretty hard; you can't go back to that well endlessly."

The American Forest Resources Council, a timber

industry group suing because it wants more logging than the RMPs call for, says the "BLM is capable of producing 400 million board feet of timber per year."

According to the BLM, 81 percent of the lands it administers in the planning area are Oregon and California Railroad Revested Lands (O&C Lands). Logging on these lands historically generated money for Oregon counties, including Lane. Lane County Board of Commissioners voted in February to join a lawsuit against the BLM with the Association of O&C Counties. Commissioner Pete Sorenson voted against it.

Doug Heiken of Oregon Wild, one of the conservation groups suing over the plan, says, "Old-growth forests deserve the highest level of protection, but BLM's new plan adopts a number of new loopholes and excuses that will allow logging in 'protected' old forests." He says that the NWFP called for "rigorous science before allowing such logging" but that research was "never started let alone completed."

Brown says the NWFP addressed the legal demands of the Endangered Species Act and other laws that protect species such as the northern spotted owl in a complex way that the new plan does not. "Do we need to step up conservation efforts?" she asks. "Possibly. But how to do that and increase timber harvest by 37 percent?" The Western Environmental Law Center says that the BLM's 37-percent increase "could boost carbon emissions and make the forest less resilient to climate change and other disturbance."

While climate change may not have been as looming as a concern in the early '90s as it is now, Brown says

the BLM's new plan is "anemic" in its response to a warming planet. "Those BLM forests are definitely carbon sequesters" she says, with the "capacity to sequester lots and lots of carbon, but where rubber meets the road is in those big old trees."

Sarah Levy, BLM spokeswoman for the RMPs, says she cannot comment on the pending litigation, but in terms of the plan itself, she says the RMPs are not WOPR Junior, but an "entirely new plan." On climate change, she points to an analysis of the plan by the Interagency Working Group on Social Cost of Carbon that she calls "complex" and says the "BLM will increase net carbon 32 percent over current levels."

Brown also critiques the RMPs' reduction of riparian buffers, which limit how close to a stream trees can be cut down. "The BLM is focused on shrinking riparian buffers because under their view we don't need larger buffers for fish," she says. Trees provide shade and woody debris that keep water cool and provide habitat for salmon and other species.

Levy says while "management direction for the riparian reserves directs the BLM to protect fish and water, and is silent on terrestrial species" such as salamanders, "that doesn't mean that terrestrial species don't receive protection." She says findings of "no jeopardy" and "not likely to adversely modify" biological opinions from the Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries mean that "BLM is adequately protecting fish, water and wildlife under this plan."

Oregon's lands need "more care and feeding" that they would get under the RMPs, Brown says. ■



• The **Oregon Responsible Edibles Council** announces the launch of its initial public education campaign, "Try 5." OREC, formed in late 2015, says it "is a non-profit trade association of Oregon edible marijuana processors, with a mission of educating the public regarding the safe and responsible usage of edible marijuana products for adults 21 and over." The Try 5 campaign "will be able to teach the public about proper dosage levels and help prevent accidental over-ingestion for consumers new to cannabis-infused edibles." It encourages people to "know your dose" and start with no more than 5 mg of THC. To learn more about OREC and the Try 5 campaign go to [orediblescouncil.com](http://orediblescouncil.com).

• On Sunday, Aug. 14, nonprofit BRING received notice of **suspicious individuals in the Seavey Loop area** posing as employees. BRING says, "The report indicated that two men driving an older pickup had gone onto private property and, when confronted, claimed to be soliciting materials donations." One man may have been wearing a shirt that said BRING on it. "BRING employees do not solicit donations from private individuals door-to-door or scout for materials in residential neighborhoods," nor does it use private vehicles to haul large materials donations, the nonprofit recycling group says. BRING asks anyone who observes suspicious behavior to notify local law enforcement agencies immediately.

• This summer marks local brewery **Ninkasi's 10-year anniversary**. In a June press release, Ninkasi said

that operating under its mission to "Perpetuate Better Living," the brewery "has grown from a two-man team to become the 36th largest craft brewery in the United States, operating entirely from its facilities in Eugene, Oregon and employing more than 100 employees." To celebrate, Ninkasi released in July its N10, commemorative Imperial Blended Ale, with a collectible outer box, and "the iconographic artwork for N10 was crafted in collaboration with Ninkasi's in-house art department and Portland-based muralist and artist, Blaine Fontana." N10 is "crafted of 50 percent Imperial Stout, 10 percent Barrel-Aged Imperial Stout, 12.5 percent Imperial Total Domination IPA, 12.5 percent Imperial Maiden the Shade IPA and 15 percent Critical Hit Barleywine." To read more about it, see "The Label Makers" (6/30 issue) at [bit.ly/2aSqMZu](http://bit.ly/2aSqMZu).