

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Major Media Distribution
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**Public comment period, hearings set in January for
changes to NW, SW state forest management plans**

The Oregon Department of Forestry has scheduled a comment period and two public hearings in January to review proposed changes to its plans for northwest and southwest state-managed forests.

The comment period starts Jan. 1, and written input must be received by Jan. 29. The comment period and the hearings are part of a process to change administrative rules, which is necessary because the Board of Forestry has adopted the plans as rules.

The two public hearings – both from 5:30 to 9 p.m. – will be held Jan. 26 in Salem and Jan. 28 in Seaside.

The Board of Forestry is scheduled to consider results from the rulemaking process at its April 2010 meeting. If the board approves administrative rule changes, on-the-ground changes in management of these forestlands would likely take effect following revisions to implementation plans.

The proposed changes to the *Northwest Oregon State Forests Management Plan* affect about 630,000 acres of forestland. This includes the Tillamook, Clatsop and Santiam state forests, along with scattered tracts in the Coast Range of Polk, Benton, Lincoln and Lane counties.

The proposed changes to the *Southwest Oregon State Forest Management Plan* affect about 18,000 acres of blocked and scattered lands in Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Jackson counties.

In total, these lands comprise less than 3 percent of Oregon's forestland.

A proposed change to the plan for managing northwest state forests adjusts the long-term landscape goal for older-type forests. The goal would go from 40-60 percent of the landscape to 30-50 percent.

This adjustment will allow for greater economic returns through timber harvest, but still at a level of estimated output under (72 percent) an industrial model.

For both the northwest and southwest plans, the Board of Forestry approved language for implementing new strategies for species of concern. The strategies will replace all references to a proposed federal habitat conservation plan that was not completed.

The strategies provide additional conservation tools to maintain and enhance habitat for 40 species, including federal and state threatened and endangered species. The species list was identified by ODF and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Salem meeting Jan. 26 will be at the ODF headquarters, 2600 State St., in the Tillamook Room. The Seaside meeting Jan. 28 will be at the City Hall, 989 Broadway, in the council chambers.

Comments should be sent to Jeff Foreman. They can be e-mailed to jforeman@odf.state.or.us; mailed to 2600 State St., Salem, OR 97310; or faxed to (503) 945-7376.

Copies of the plans and their changes are available on the ODF Web site. Questions should be directed to Foreman at (503) 945-7506.