

## **Malheur National Forest - Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy**

The new USDA vision for the Forest Service has articulated clear direction for aligning leadership and resources around a common goal of restoration across all landscapes and all ownerships. The administration specifies five emphasis areas as: restoring and sustaining forest landscapes, protecting and enhancing water resources and watershed health; making landscapes more resilient to climate change, responsible budgeting for wildfire, and creating jobs and sustaining communities.

The Malheur National Forest Leadership Team considered the [Malheur National Forest Strategic Plan \(2007\)](#) results, resource specific priorities, ongoing collaboration plans including an effort called “The Big Look”<sup>1</sup>, and emerging efforts along with the new USDA vision and priorities and other ecological, social, economic and institutional considerations to develop a *Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy*. This Collaborative Strategy updates the Forest’s Strategic Plan for future years and outlines a vision and restoration goals for the Forest.

### Vision

Our shared vision with these groups and local communities is of restored landscapes and sustainable ecosystems resilient to uncharacteristic wildfire and adaptive to disturbance regimes and climatic influences. Whole watersheds are healthy, functional and provide a diversity of native aquatic, wildlife, and plant habitats and species. Wood products and contracting infrastructures are viable and responsive to existing and new opportunities for restoration-based industries. Visitors and residents enjoy dispersed recreation, local history and traditional cultures and contribute to the health of the whole ecosystem, including the social and economic well-being of surrounding communities. Through collaborative processes and adaptive learning, the MNF and partners use science-based decision-making to support and foster landscape-scale approaches to restoration.

### Restoration Goals

The following four restoration goals were identified to guide program of work decisions and to maximize the benefits to all landscapes:

- Goal 1- Restore Landscape Resiliency – Restore landscape resiliency by increasing our ability to achieve multiple objectives in vegetation/fuels; and maintain or restore high priority watersheds and riparian sites to healthy conditions (i.e. implement the Forest Aquatic/Watershed Restoration strategy using watershed ratings and treatment area suitability).
- Goal 2- Improve Collaborative and Social Capacity – Focus on large landscape-scale areas where we have collaborative support and emphasize building trust and common ground. Create a path to more complex project areas adjacent to or outside the large-landscape scale areas that have a higher ecological need (i.e., Ragged Ruby, Big Mosquito, Bridge Creek, Deardorff, and Reynolds watersheds).

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<sup>1</sup> In 2009 and 2010, The Nature Conservancy, Blue Mountains Forest Partners, Harney County Restoration Collaborative, and MNF convened a collaborative process called “The Big Look.”

- Goal 3– Increase Economic and Organizational Capacity – Maintain a sustainable flow of work and outcomes with the appropriate workforce. Contribute to retaining current infrastructure, supporting new and emerging markets, and local economic benefits while taking on higher risk projects in the future (i.e., skyline logging, more expensive NEPA such as EISs).
- Goal 4- Ensure Efficiency and Effectiveness – Link restoration of landscapes across all lands and ownerships and demonstrate a logical progression within and across the Malheur National Forest with all partners (i.e. tribal, federal, state and private).

### 10-Year Action Plan

The focus of this Strategy is on integrating a suite of activities and investments to accomplish the Forest restoration goals. The 10-year program of work outlined in Table 1 emphasizes an integrated approach to reducing stand densities through commercial and pre-commercial thinning, utilization of woody biomass from these treatments, lowering fuel loads through fuel treatments, and restoring ecosystem services and functions through restoration activities (e.g. habitat fencing, road decommissioning, stream improvements, terrestrial and aquatic exotic species control, etc.). Project boundaries are based on sub watersheds.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>District Lead</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>	<b>Target NEPA Date</b>	<b>Ready for Implementation</b>
Canyon Creek	BM	53,000	Complete	2006
16 Road	PC	5,000	Complete	2008
Dads	BM	7,000	Complete	2009
Rd. 18	BM	2,000	Complete	2010
Green Ant	EC	10,000	Complete	2010
Knox	PC	20,000	Complete	2010
Damon	PC	20,000	May 2010	2010
Jane	EC	32,000	June 2010	2010
Pine Beetle CE's	PC	1,000	September 2010	2010
Starr	BM	36,000	January 2011	2011
Galena	BM	36,000	2011	2011
Soda Bear	PC/BM	20,000	2011	2011
Marshall Devine	EC	35,000	2011	2012
Upper Pine	EC	32,000	2012	2013
Antelope	BM	11,000	2012	2013
Elk 16	PC	42,000	2012	2013
Austin 26	PC	1,000	2012	2013
Ragged Ruby	BM	33,000	2013	2014
Summit	PC	22,000	2013	2014
Sage Hen (aquatics)	EC	2,000	2013	2014
Wolf	EC	36,000	2013	2014
Big Mosquito	BM	35,000	2014	2015
Bridge Creek	PC	12,000	2014	2015
Upper Camp Creek	EC	25,000	2014	2015
Lower & Middle Camp Creek	BM	29,000	2015	2016
Upper Bear/Lake Cr	PC/BM	38,000	2015	2016
Cliff	PC/EC	26,000	2015	2016

Rattlesnake	EC	25,000	2015	2016
Cottonwood/Clear Creek	BM	31,000	2016	2017
Reynolds	PC	16,000	2016	2017
Crowsfoot Creek	EC	14,000	2016	2017
Lower Deer & Corral Creek	BM	28,000	2017	2018
Deardorff	PC	11,000	2017	2018
Still Spring Creek	EC	15,000	2017	2018
Headwaters Silvies	BM	21,000	2018	2019
Upper Middle Fork	PC	35,000	2018	2019
Lonesome Creek	EC	10,000	2018	2019
Tex/Murderers	BM	39,000	2019	2020
Bear	PC	29,000	2019	2020
Sage Hen (terrestrial)	EC	17,000	2019	2020
Hog/Cyclone Creek	BM	24,000	2020	2021
Hay Creek	EC	18,000	2020	2021
Upper Scotty	BM	20,000	2021	2022
<b>Total Acres:</b>		<b>91,000</b>		

BM – Blue Mountain Ranger District  
PC – Prairie City Ranger District  
EC – Emigrant Creek Ranger District

### Restoration Activities and Outcomes

Several types of ecological restoration activities are proposed in the Landscape Strategy. These activities include:

- Vegetation treatments (commercial and pre-commercial thinning, biomass removal)
- Fuels treatments (whole tree yarding, grapple pile, hand pile, jackpot burning, underburning)
- Aspen and cottonwood restoration (thinning of conifers, riparian fencing, hinging)
- Riparian, aquatic, watershed and wildlife habitat improvements (road closures and decommissioning, remove/replace stream barriers, remove exotic species, provide screens on diversions, improve road drainage, large wood additions, noxious weed treatments, wetland/meadow enhancement, hardwood plantings, log weirs, and in-stream structures)

The anticipated outcomes are:

- Clean water
- Resilient Wildlife and fish habitat and populations
- Effective use of wood fiber including biomass
- Implemented Community Fire Protection Plans