

Mapping and Data Assessment

The Illinois Valley Landscape Assessment

A Project of the Josephine County Stewardship Group (JCSG)

The purpose of the Illinois Valley Landscape Assessment is to enhance the capacity of the people of the Illinois Valley, the federal agencies and the JCSG to engage in community-based collaboration on natural resource issues.

JCSG wishes to support community-based agreements on moving forward with an active forest management program which is driven by forest health and integrates ecological, social and economic considerations. Our goal is to develop guidelines for forest treatment approaches and also to nominate priority projects for the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

Based on extensive interviewing of Illinois Valley residents, six action areas were identified to encourage practical progress forward in. These action areas directed the collection of available data, development of maps, and the assessment of these data.

Action Areas

- Forest Health Management
- Wildfire
- Off-highway vehicle use
- Roads and closures
- Trails and ecotourism
- Dumping and trash



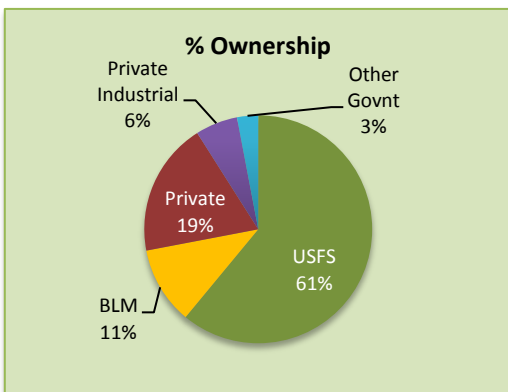
For a map of the Landscape Assessment area, click [here](#).

Maps help to tell the story of the Illinois Valley - the resource conditions and trends in the landscape that residents call home.

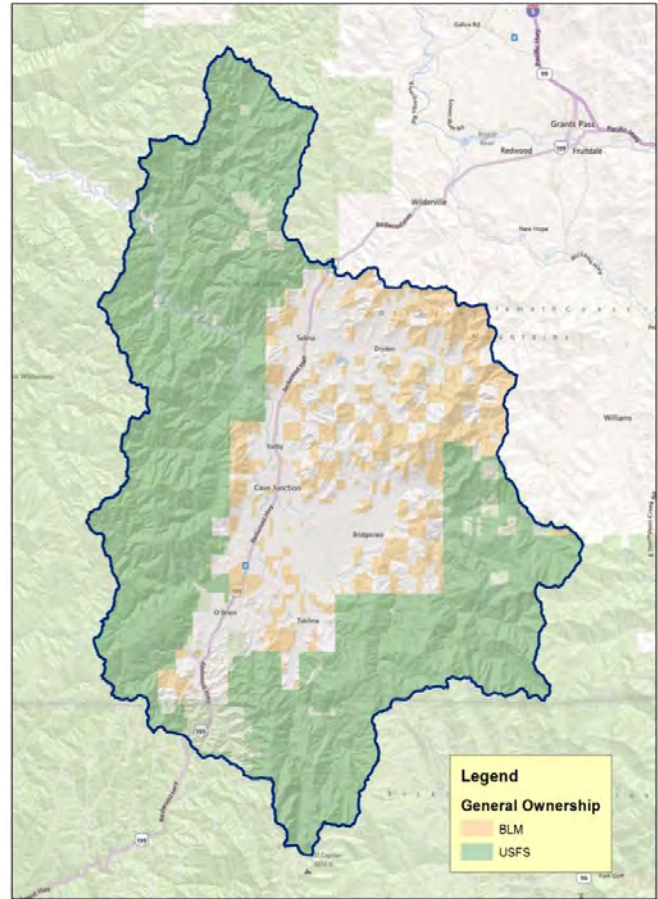
The links below take the reader to an interactive mapping website which contains several maps of the Illinois Valley. You are able to review the maps below, even add or subtract "layers" of your own, save maps and print them. They will be updated with new information as needed to meet the needs of the assessment. Use the [help](#) to learn how to use the interactive map. If you have questions about the map data and suggestions for additional maps, contact Jim Wolf at jamesawolf@gmail.com.

Federal Forest Management

Seventy-two percent of the 425,000 acres within the Illinois Valley Landscape Assessment Area are managed two federal agencies - U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Six percent of the lands are owned by private industrial forestry owners. Nineteen percent are owned by other private landowners. The remaining 3% are split between state, county, local government, and Oregon Caves NM. These numbers are very similar when considering only forest and resource lands.



The focus of the forest management portion of the IVLA is on USFS and BLM.



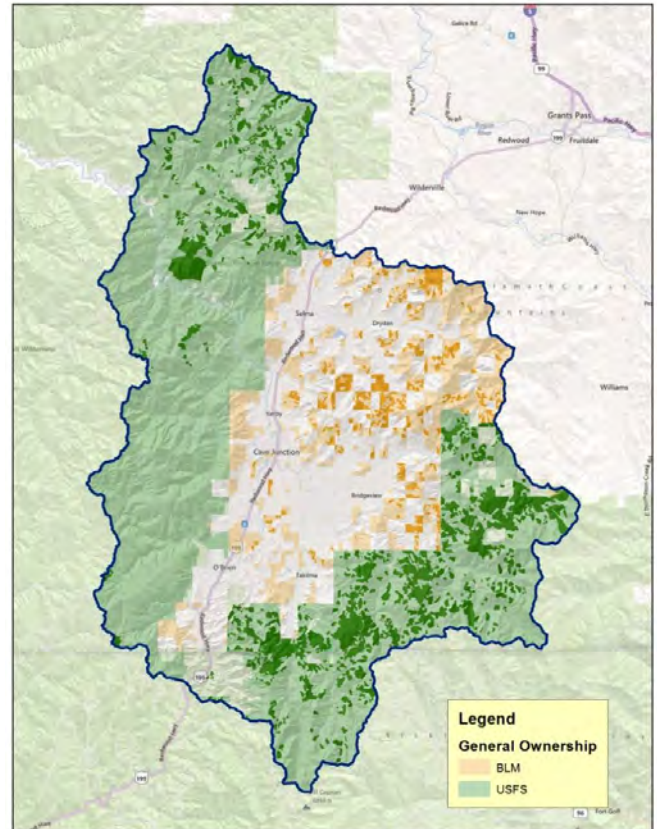
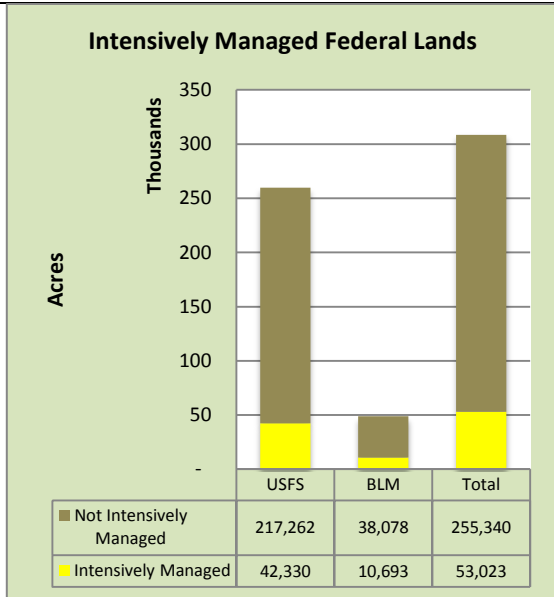
USFS and BLM ownership on the Illinois Valley Landscape Assessment Area

Federal forest management is summarized here by:

- [past federal forest management](#)
- [current forest management direction](#)
- [federal land management opportunities](#)

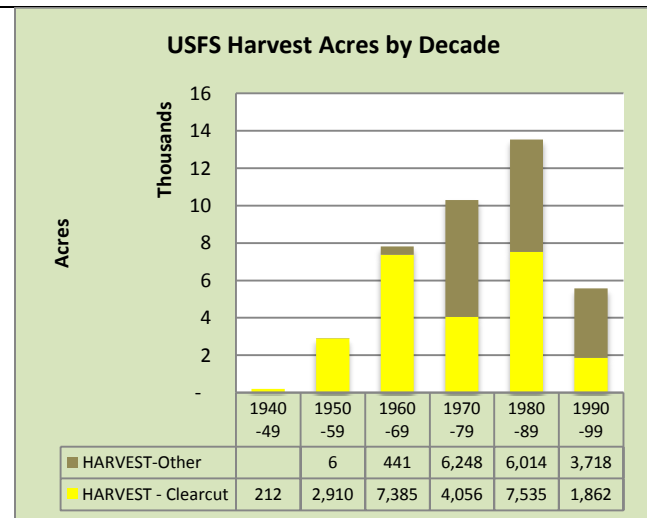
Past Federal Forest Management

Seventeen percent (approx 53,000 acres) of the federally managed lands in the Illinois Valley have been intensively managed (31% of those federally managed lands not Congressionally Reserved and Administratively Withdrawn).

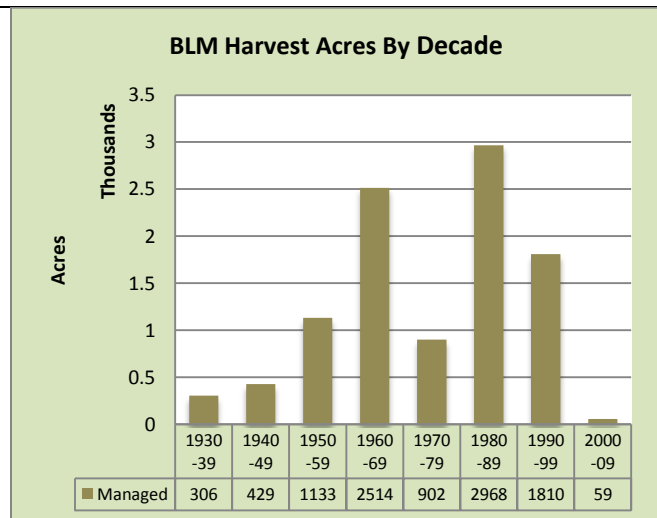


Intensively managed federal forest lands (shaded areas).
Source: KSWild

Intensive management reach a peak for both the USFS and BLM between the 1960's through 1994. Prior to 1970, nearly all the harvest was clearcut method on USFS. Clearcut harvest accounted for less than 50% in the 1980's and 1990's.



Source: USFS



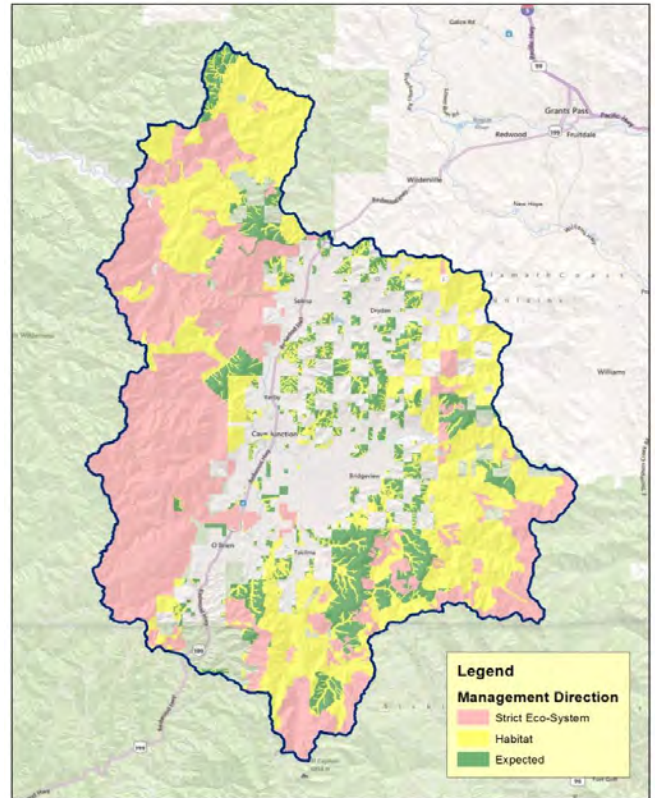
Source: BLM

Current Federal Forest Management Direction

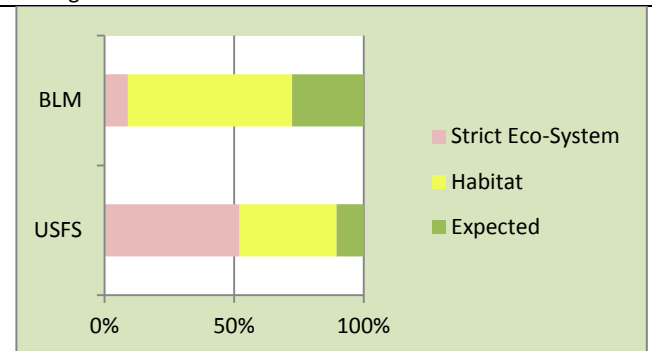
The overall vision of how federal forest lands are managed has changed significantly since the implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan in 1994 to end the impasse over protection of habitat for the northern spotted owl. During the 10 years prior to 1995, the Forest Service harvested approx. 12,000 acres – 50% of this as clearcuts. Harvest acres dropped to less than 10% of this during the following 10 years, none being clearcut harvest. Currently, 52% of Forest Service and 30% of BLM managed lands are designated for strict ecosystem purposes. 30% and 61% (FS and BLM) are reserved for habitat management. 18% and 30% (FS and BLM) are allocated for timber production.

This assessment used the following categories:

- **Strict Eco-System** includes Congressionally Reserved and Administratively Withdrawn lands: includes wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, research natural areas, areas of environmental concern, botanical areas, special interest areas, and lands designated for roadless (RARE II), backcountry, and visual purposes.
- **Habitat** includes areas where timber harvest can occur, but the purpose is for habitat improvement: includes late-successional reserves (LSR), riparian reserves, and critical habitat units designed by the USFWS for the northern spotted owl marbled murrelet.
- **Management Expected** areas are where harvest can be expected, but with the constraints of laws, policies, agency resource management plans: includes matrix and adaptive management areas (AMA). The agency land and resources management plans address heritage and cultural resources, wildlife, botany, management indicator species, Port Orford cedar root disease, watershed (CWE Analysis), soils, visual quality resources, historic range of variability and recommended management ranges for vegetation types and seral stages, spatial distribution and fragmentation, alternative silvicultural prescriptions, and more.



Management direction. Source: USFS and BLM



Percent of land by management direction. Source: USFS & BLM

Federal Land Management Opportunities

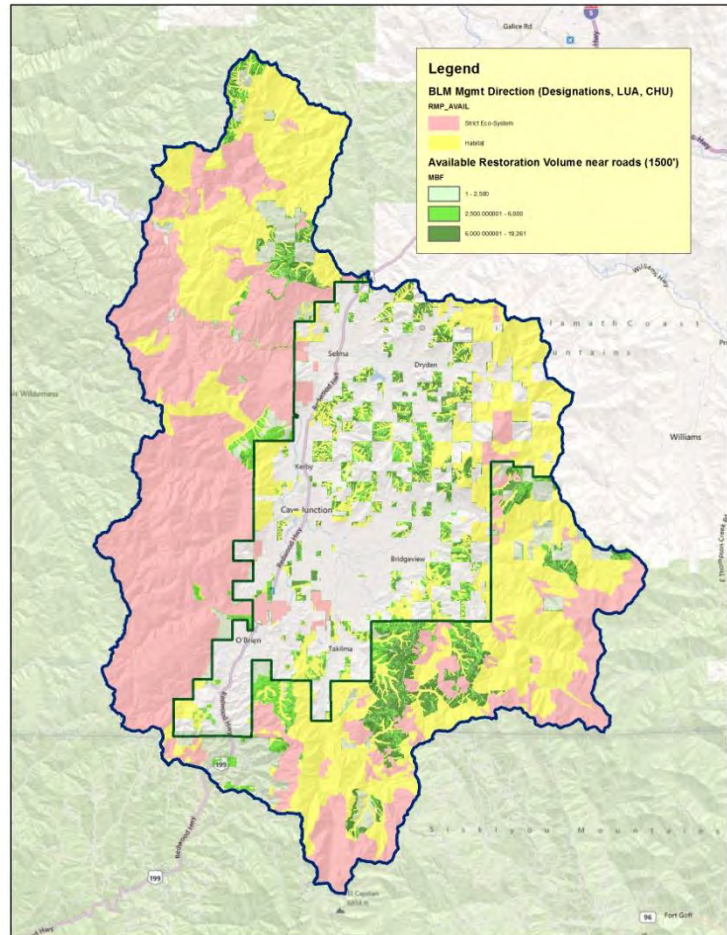
A key goal of the IVLA is to promote mutual understanding and direction in forest management between responsible agencies, local citizens, and interest groups in fostering healthy forests, reducing fire hazards, and promoting local economic activity. Opportunities need to be:

1. Within agency sideboards
2. Economically feasible
3. Address forest and community health and the concerns of all the partners

The map to the right displays those BLM and USFS areas that best meet the first two criteria above. Lands designated as Strict-Ecosystem (pink) or Habitat (yellow) in agency plans are considered as outside agency sideboards on this map. Most of the BLM managed lands (middle) are not available current due to legal actions. Approximately 26,000 acres of USFS lands are available.

To understand economic feasibility, hypothetical prescriptions removed the basal area in excess of the target only in trees below 20 inches based upon site productivity. Economic feasibility is measured by the “available” saw log volume in trees 10-20” in diameter that is excess of a basal area goal that are with 1500 feet of a road. The source of the data is a landscape assessment recently completed by the Southern Oregon Small Diameter Collaborative.

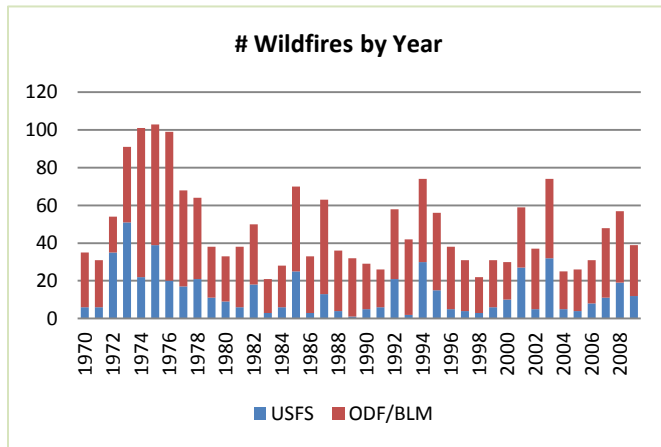
A working group has been formed to address the third criterion. The goal of this working group is to nominate projects to the Forest Service which are ecologically-oriented, economically feasible and socially acceptable.



Economic feasibility of federally managed lands within agency sideboards
Source: Southern Oregon Small Diameter Collaborative, BLM, USFS

Wildfire - History, Risk, and Mitigation Efforts

Wildfire and smoke impacts the lives of Illinois Valley residents every summer. Twenty-five percent of the Illinois Valley landscape has burned since 1939. On average, 48 fires start each year burning 730 acres. Most of fires (71%) start near people and roads on private and BLM lands protected by ODF and the IVFPD, but 85% of the acres burned result from fires starting on more remote Forest Service lands. Three years (1987, 1994, 2010) account for 83% of the acres burned since 1970.



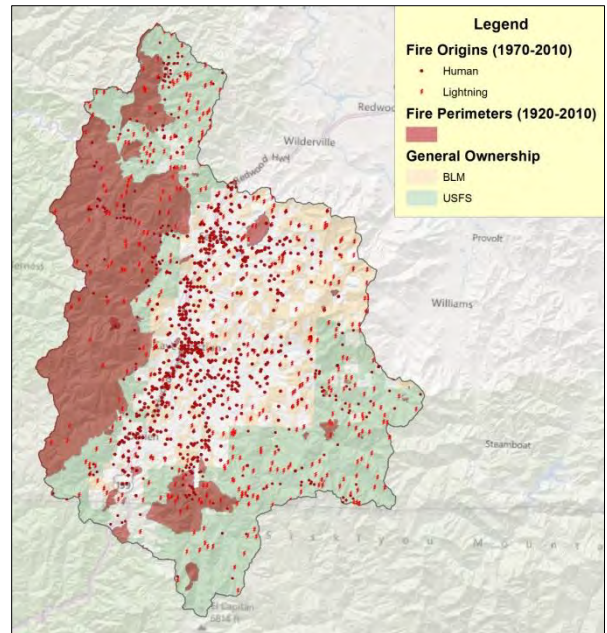
Wildfire ignitions in the IVLA area. Source: USFS & ODF

In response to the 2002 Biscuit Fire, the county initiated the [Josephine County Integrated Fire Plan](#) to reduce wildfire risk to citizens, the environment, and quality of life. The [Illinois Valley Fire Plan](#) was developed in 2005 and updated in 2011 by the Illinois Valley Rural Fire District to “better prepare local residence for the next wildfire”.

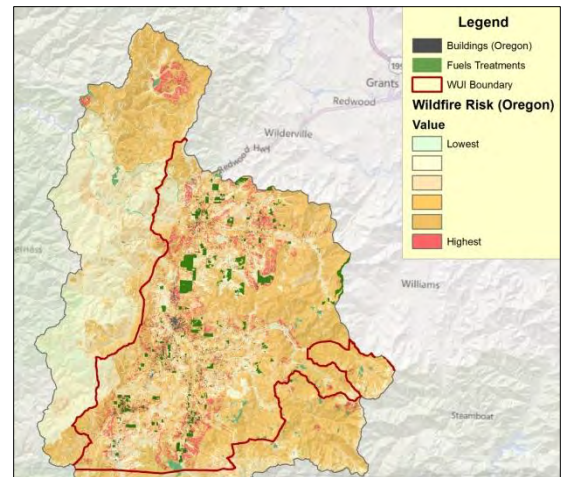
Starting in 2001, money directed to agencies and private landowners through the National Fire Plan has resulted in treating more than 11,000 acres of hazardous fuels in the Illinois Valley to help protect communities and natural resources. This accounts for 7% of the landscape within one mile of homes.

Agency/Program	Acres
BLM	6,357
US Forest Service	3,962
Oregon Dept of Forestry grants on private	210
Illinois Valley Community Development Organization grants to private	979
Lomakatsi Restoration Project grants to private	144

Source: BLM, USFS, ODF, IVCD, Lomakatsi



Wildfire history. Source: USFS & ODF.



Wildfire risk & fuel treatment locations (Oregon only).

Source: 2-County Assessment, BLM, USFS, ODF, IVCD, Lomakatsi

The National Fire Plan has focused fuels treatment with the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) since 2001. Current national direction is providing additional consideration for creating fire resilient forests that reduce risk to both homes and important habitat and forest assets.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Use

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use is a popular recreational activity in the Illinois Valley. However, use of OHV in and near streams, wetlands, botanical and Port-Orford Cedar Root Rot areas affect water quality, cause erosion and introduce invasive species and disease.

The IVLA facilitated discussions to develop an effective means of channeling off-highway vehicle use into non-destructive areas and uses. While OHV use is allowed on over 500 miles of federal roads and trails, there are currently no designated OHV use areas in the Illinois Valley. Potential OHV use areas and loops are being identified and evaluated by an OHV work group.

The primary jurisdictions for OHV use are Oregon and California state laws and rules. Additional information is available from [Oregon Parks and Recreation Dept.](#) and the US Forest Service (see links below).

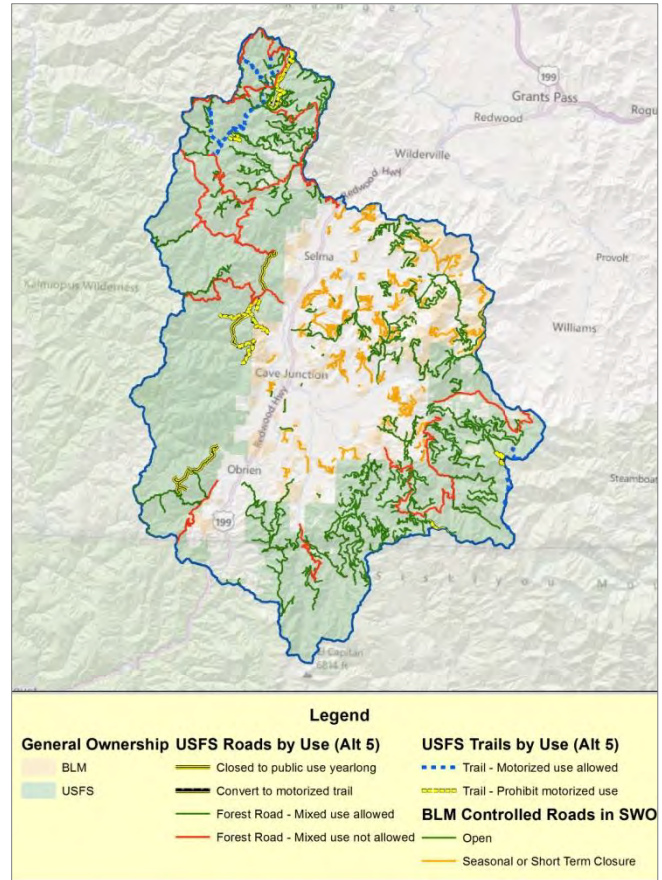
OHV use on USFS managed lands is being addressed in the travel management plan. A [Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement](#) (DSEIS) for Travel Management Planning (motorized vehicle use) on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is in the process of receiving public comments (see [Chapter II, pages 43-45](#)).

Within the IVLA area, the preferred alternative (Alternative 5) in the plan provides:

USFS Roads and Trails	Miles
Total roads open to the public	573
Mixed use allowed	440
Mixed use not prohibited	133
Total trails	105
Motorized use allowed	23

Source: Interpreted by USFS road and trail data and Alternative 5 map. Motorized mixed use is defined as use of a NFS road for use by both highway-legal and non highway-legal vehicles at the same time.

An opportunity to address OHV use on BLM managed lands, including 330 miles of road, is available as a [new resource management plan \(RMP\)](#) is being developed for western Oregon.



USFS and BLM OHV use. Source: Interpreted by USFS road and trail data and Alternative 5 map, BLM.

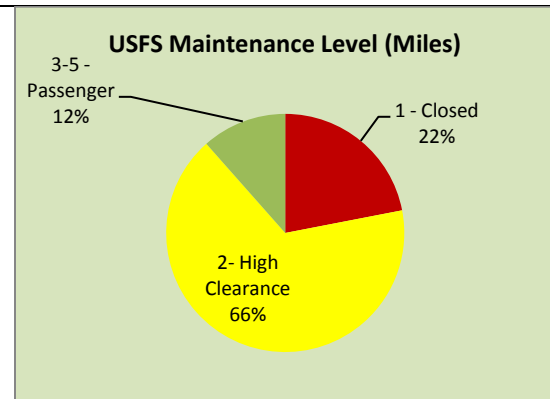
This map shows allowed uses of USFS roads and trails using Alternative 5 of the draft travel management plan. BLM roads are displayed by closure status.

The map does not currently show the location of areas that have been proposed by the work group for OHV use. Further assessment and coordination work with landowners is needed.

Roads and Access to Federal Lands

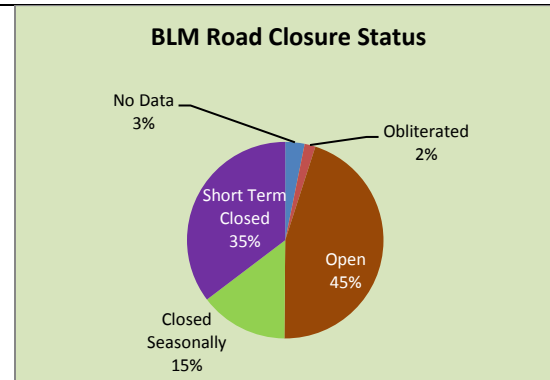
Roads provide motorized and non-motorized access to public lands for a variety of uses. Some of these roads have been closed or decommissioned to meet a wide range of resource and agency needs.

The Forest Service has jurisdiction for 855 miles of road within the IVLA area. Seventy-eight percent of these miles are identified for long term service. Nearly ten percent have been decommissioned. Twenty-two percent are closed.

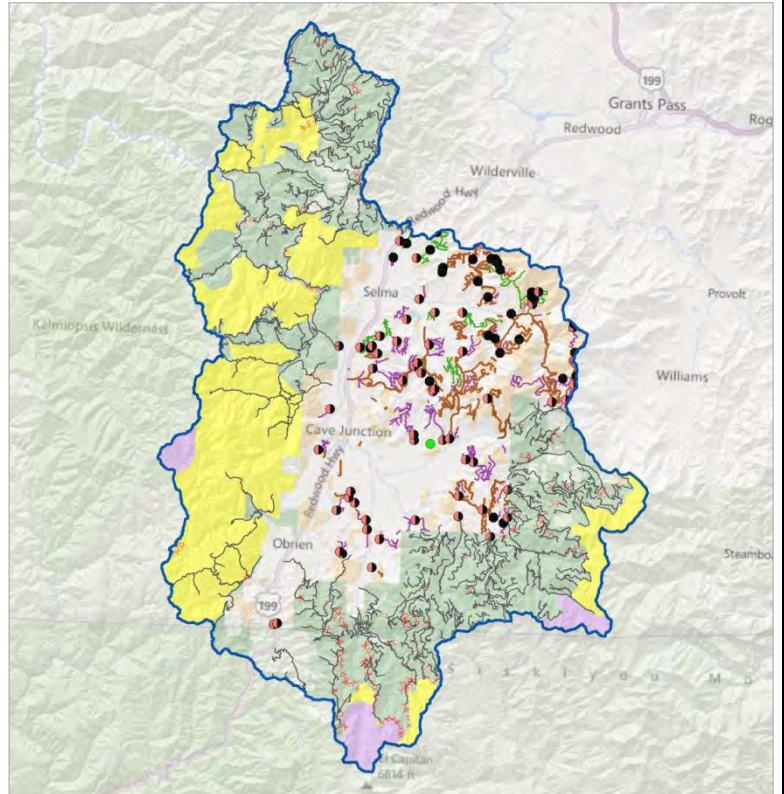


USFS Maintenance Level (percent of miles).
Source: USFS

Forty-five percent of the 330 miles of roads that BLM controls are open, fifty percent closed seasonally or short-term, and two percent have been decommissioned. There are eighty-eight BLM closure devices, sixty-six percent being gates and the rest are more permanent earth or logs. Road access for BLM roads is complicated by the checkerboard ownership pattern and reciprocal road use agreements of private owners.



BLM road closure status in the IVLA. Source: BLM



USFS and BLM roads and access in the Illinois Valley Landscape Assessment Area. Source: USFS and BLM

The map above shows the level of access and status of BLM and Forest Service roads and areas identified by the Forest Service to be managed as roadless or congressionally reserved as wilderness.

A [Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement \(DSEIS\)](#) for Travel Management Planning (motorized vehicle use) on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is in the process of receiving public comments.

The IVLA did not assess the potential impact of roads on water quality, fish passage, invasive weeds and disease. Other assessments completed by agencies and other organizations are addressing these concerns. Examples include the [Watershed Condition Framework](#) and [Restoring the Rogue](#). Declining agency budgets will increase the need for further assessment.

Trails and Eco-Tourism

The Illinois Valley is one of the most beautiful and bio-diverse places on the planet. Opportunities for recreation abound. It is home to Oregon Caves National Monument and numerous state, county, forest service and BLM recreational sites, and 109 miles of Forest Service and BLM trails (105 and 4 respectively) designed for a range of uses.

The Illinois Valley Recreation Opportunities Committee (IVROC) identified a need to consolidate trail information to encourage eco-tourism. Trail and trailhead data was collected from the USFS, BLM, Oregon Caves NM, Josephine County, [KS Trails](#), and local hiking and equestrian enthusiasts. Common information elements were identified and a workgroup is in the process of collecting the information. The goal of the groups is have one-stop access to current trail information.

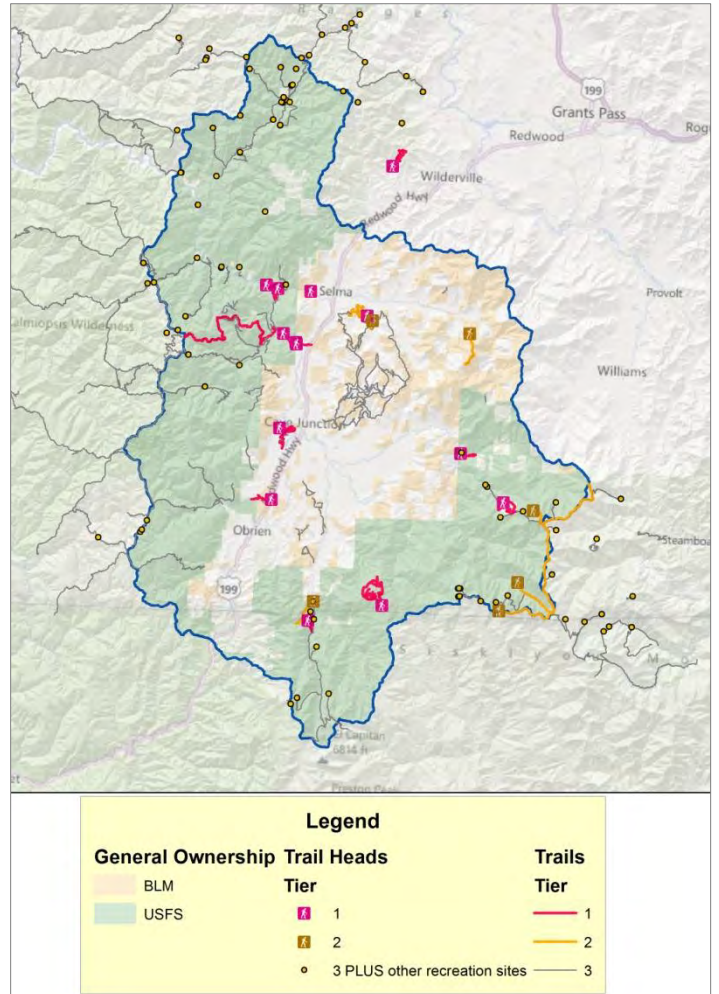
The workgroup identified a dozen local tourist friendly trails and scenic drives as Tier 1 excursions. They are now identifying tourist friendly trails for horse and bicycle enthusiasts (Tier 2). All other trails are designated Tier 3. Another workgroup is identifying potential OHV (off highway vehicle) use areas and loop trails.

Tier 1 Trails

Deer Creek Center
 Eight Dollar Mountain Botanical Boardwalk
 Grayback Interpretive
 Jeffry Pine Loop
 Kerby Flat
 Lake Selmac
 Little Falls
 Oregon Caves
 Osgood Ditch
 Page Mountain Snow Park
 Rough & Read Creek Forest Botanical
 Waters Creek Interpretive
 West Fork

Tier 2 (Horse)

[Lake Selmac Boundary](#)
[Kerby Peak](#)
[Sanger Peak](#)



Tier 1, 2 & 3 trails. Source: Many

This map shows federal and state recreational sites, current trails by designated use, and agency recreation objectives.

Ideas for new trails are also being discussed and pursued. Work is being done to complete the final eight miles of the Coast to Crest Trail.

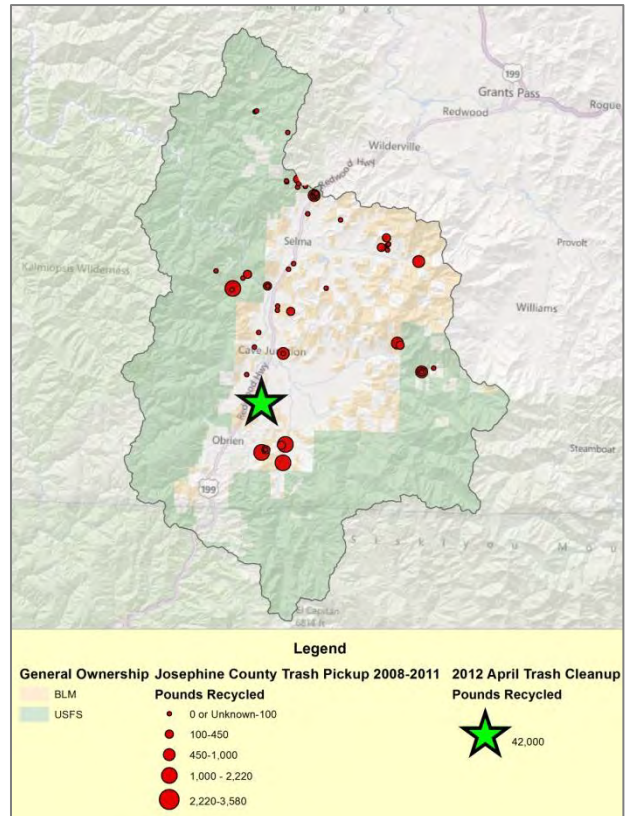
Declining agency budgets and the effects of falling trees killed in the Biscuit Fire are making maintenance a serious concern. Volunteers efforts such as the [Siskiyou Upland Trails Association](#) are playing an important role.

Trash and Dumping

According to the [Clean Forest Project](#) (CFP), the rate of trash being dumped in Forest and BLM Land is increasing exponentially due to many factors, including the sagging economy and the lack of personal accountability to care for our environment. The negative effects on our Eco-systems from illegal dumping are numerous. Through volunteer efforts coordinated by the CFP in the Illinois Valley, more than 16,210 pounds of trash have been removed and recycled from 63 sites.

A successful clean-up day was held on Earth Day, April 21 with the Rotary Club, Oregon SOLV, Clean Forest Project and the JCSG. Twenty-one tons of trash, stolen cars, appliances, tires, and other material was removed.

This map shows the clean-up sites and pounds removed by volunteers and others through efforts of the Clean Forest Project locally. It also shows the general location of the April 12, 2012 cleanup and recycle day.



Trash pickup and recycle. Source: Clean Forest Project and IVLA