

**MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS**  
**Reordered By Ranking**

1. There is a severe lack of funding for the federal land management agencies. Funding is insufficient to provide basic stewardship of the land and its resources, and to offer a full range of environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits. Declining budgets are causing a loss of institutional knowledge (agency and contractors) needed for management, and an inability to retain or recruit trained personnel in some areas (i.e., capacity to restore habitats, address threats, implement sound adaptive management, and enforce regulations). An increase in fire suppression funding has come at the expense of preparedness and fuel reduction. Currently, increased funding is needed for environmental assessment and monitoring of aquatic ecosystems, facilities and access maintenance, and road maintenance and decommissioning. (7 d., 9 votes)
2. Clarity of purpose is lacking for federal forestlands. Federal forestlands are managed under a complex set of statutes (ESA, NFMA, FLPMA, CWA, etc.) that sometimes have conflicting goals. For example, NFMA requires the FS to manage for timber, wildlife, water, and recreation; however, no instructions are provided for addressing trade-offs when conflicts exist, and no mechanism is provided to balance the need for environmental services (habitat for listed species, clean air and water, open space) with commodity output. Federal agencies need clear direction on how to balance the production of multiple resources. (7 a., 9 votes)
3. Natural processes on Oregon's federal forests have been modified by a number of factors. For example, fire suppression and silvicultural practices have modified fire regimes and behavior producing changes in vegetative conditions (including species composition, stand density, and a large tree component). These changes in vegetation have in turn altered how wildfire, insects, disease and invasive species interact with forests, ultimately modifying forest resiliency. As a result we may not meet and/or sustain a range of desired management objectives related to wildlife habitat, water quality, private timber investments, structures in the wildland-urban interface, and public impacts from smoke. (3 a., 9 votes)
4. Climate change may directly affect forest conditions in Oregon. Historical fire regimes have been disrupted, and climate change may combine with wildfire to dramatically alter forests. Climate change combined with fire may cause wholesale conversions of some habitat types. We could see changes from dry temperate forests to grasslands, moist forests to dry woodlands, and high-severity fires may eliminate entire forest types. This type of change would increase risks of species extinction, and reduce economic and social values derived from the forest. (5 b., 8 votes)
5. Oregon is losing the local capacity and markets needed to support a viable forest products industry, and the workforce needed to provide forest protection and restoration services. Some sawmills in western Oregon are being supported by unsustainable supply of sawlogs imported from Washington State and DNR lands,

- while eastern Oregon industry is in rapid decline and close to losing infrastructure completely. (6 b., 8 votes)
6. Oregon lacks a consistent, predictable federal timber sale program. Harvest goals in the federal land management plans have not been achieved. The resulting 80 percent reduction in federal timber harvests has caused mill closures, job losses, and economic hardship in many rural communities. (2 b., 7 votes)
  7. Lack of active management on federal lands is changing the condition of the forest and may lead to future problems. Growth has dramatically exceeded removals on federal lands during the past decade causing a build up of fiber and concentrations biomass across the landscape. High mortality and fuels are creating conditions for catastrophic wildfires. (3 b., 7 votes)
  8. Water quality in some areas is insufficient to protect beneficial uses, such as drinking water, fish and aquatic life, recreation, and irrigation. Major problems include temperature, sedimentation and turbidity, and toxics. Riparian vegetation, important for many functions, is in poor condition in some areas. Salmon and other aquatic life are especially vulnerable to temperature, sedimentation and toxic pollutants, and federal forestlands provide key refugia for at-risk fish stocks. Many municipal water sources are from federal lands - primary concerns include sedimentation, turbidity and pesticides. Poorly constructed and maintained forest roads can cause land slides and other water quality problems. The current backlog in road maintenance and road closures is increasing sediment production. Road systems connected to hydrologic features can cause changes in peak flows. Water quality can also be impacted by grazing, mining, and recreation. (4 b., 6 votes)
  9. The current conservation system in Oregon does not provide adequate habitat to maintain all terrestrial and freshwater biological diversity. Federal lands provide habitat, especially old growth, that is critical to providing for older forest associates and threatened species. Additional older forest habitat is needed to adapt to changing conditions, provide certainty, and maintain future options – e.g., loss of spotted owl habitat due to catastrophic wildfire and the invasion of the Barred Owl. (1 a., 4 votes)
  10. Poor aquatic and watershed conditions exist across the federal landbase. Management techniques like thinning treatments are not prioritized to protect freshwater ecosystems, increase effectiveness and reduce cost and controversy. Thinning, slash burning and associated activities can pose risks to watershed health. (4 a., 4 votes)
  11. Some types of forest habitats on federal forestlands are in poor condition. There is a lack of diversity in dense young plantations on the west-side of Oregon, a lack of dead wood for dependent wildlife, and declining forage for deer and elk. (1 c., 4 votes)

12. A lack of understanding by elected federal, state and local officials, of the cause and effect of management limitations, is causing reduced payments to counties and the resulting in the deterioration of ecosystem health and the long-term sustainability of federal properties. (6 a., 4 votes)
13. There is a lack of diversity in local economies of rural Oregon. There are too few recreation based jobs being supported by federal forestlands. There are also too few restoration jobs – including fuels work, prescribed fire, weed control, road removal, erosion control, and jobs associated with instream habitat improvements. (6 d., 4 votes)
14. Oregon's forests are being fragmented by roads and timber harvesting. Too few roadless areas being maintained to provide habitat for wildlife species that use contiguous blocks of interior forest. (1 d., 3 votes)
15. There is a lack of meaningful opportunities for diverse groups of stake-holders to help design projects on the ground. In many cases, the alternative selected for implementation does not represent the full range of options proposed by all interest groups. There is also a lack of variety in treatments tested independently across the landscape. These factors have combined to create a lack of trust in management decisions. (7 f., 3 votes)
16. There is a lack of public recognition of the incongruence of unlimited consumption of natural resources while severely limiting reliance on our own resources. (7 g., 3 votes)
17. The tools in many laws, designed to facilitate implementing projects, are underutilized. Examples include the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, Stewardship contracting, and Categorical Exclusions. (7 c., 3 votes)
18. There is a lack of sound and trusted science from all sectors (agencies, universities, industry and NGO's). Additional information desired:
  - a. impacts of forest management on conservation of biological diversity,
  - b. best practices for forest restoration,
  - c. technologies for making best use out of forest products
  - d. understanding the effects of climate change on forest composition, structure, fire regimes, forest insect populations, and water supply,
  - e. understanding key natural processes our systems have for adapting to change
  - f. Need an integrated model that attempts to understand what the triple bottom line (environmental, economic and social) would look like 'on the ground'
  - g. Few cooperative water data collection projects (7 h., 2 votes)

19. Land ownership patterns, especially in the checkerboard ownership on BLM lands, may hinder conservation and resource management goals. (1 b., 2 votes)
20. Reduction in federal timber harvests is causing private forestlands to be converted to non-forest cover and land uses. (2 a., 2 votes)
21. Increased carbon storage is beneficial to reduce climate change. (5 a., 2 votes)
22. The loss of forest industry jobs is negatively affecting local communities in rural Oregon. (6 c., 2 votes)
23. There is too little recognition of the non-commodity value of forests to attracting diverse jobs in Oregon's forest policies. (6 e., 2 votes)
24. There is a lack of coordination with State and local governments. Examples include: The damaging effect of local authorities "permitting" of human development forcing abandonment of natural resource priorities in fire and safety situations; fire suppression preparedness is not complementary with adjacent state protection levels; a need for improved coordination and streamlining due to shrinking local, state and federal agency budgets and overlapping federal regulations that guide land management decisions. (7 e., 2 votes)
25. The availability of sustainable water supplies for future beneficial uses (water quantity) is limited. The ability to construct reservoirs on forest lands is limited. Oregon lacks an open dialogue with water users whose water sources are on forestlands and whose conveyance systems cross forestlands. (4 c., 1 vote)
26. Laws and regulations need to be reviewed, evaluated, coordinated and streamlined to clarify intent, empower implementation, and reduce redundancy. The current rules create a system of overlapping constraints that are difficult to implement without violating (e.g., diameter size limits for harvesting, deferred management of certain species or forest types, dedicated riparian strips, and set-asides for single interests). Focusing on desired conditions may facilitate implementation. Conflicting laws increase paperwork, staff time, drain resources, and create barriers. Conflicting laws cause public frustration. Current laws and rules do not require analyzing the "Balance of Harms" that will occur if a project is not implemented. i.e., analyze the impacts of an action vs. no action. (7 b., 1 vote)