

Scientists from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and five federal agencies recently released a scientific review of the BLM's proposed Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which thoroughly questioned the scientific basis of the study.

The 100 page report covers finds fault with many areas of the DEIA, including the BLM's analysis and conclusions around stream temperature. When Willamette Riverkeeper commented on the DEIS in early January, we focused on the likelihood that the WOPR would increase stream temperatures throughout the region and violate the temperature TMDLs. The scientific review team agreed.

Some excerpts from the report:

“Analyses in the Water Section of the DEIS are problematic. Stream temperature analysis in the WOPR DEIS does not use the most recent and relevant science on the subject, has inadequate model parameterizations, and would probably not meet BLM's Management Objectives for maintaining and restoring water quality in some stream segments or basins.”

“The stream temperature analysis in the WOPR DEIS ignores several key parameters in riparian ecotones affecting temperature, including stream discharge & propagation, stream geomorphology, geometry, and topography.”

“The WOPR DEIS stream temperature change predictions are lower than empirical studies with similar buffer widths.”

The BLM is in the process of preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and hopefully will improve its science and change its proposed management plans as a result of this report and the thousands of other comments supporting healthy public forests and watersheds for all.

To read the whole scientific report, see:

www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr/files/Science_Team_Review_DEIS.pdf