

BOARD MEMO – AOCC & BLM MOU – UPDATE (BOC Meeting 4.15.26)

Subject

AOCC Lands Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Purpose

The AOCC Lands Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is intended to formalize coordination between Oregon counties and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding the planning and management of federal O&C lands.

Background

The Association of O&C Counties (AOCC) advocates for the health and productivity of federal “O&C” forest lands in western Oregon. These include 2.1 million acres of timberlands once privately owned as part of a grant in exchange for construction of a railroad in the late 1800s.

These lands were returned to federal ownership in 1916. “O&C” references to the “Oregon & California Railroad lands” located exclusively in 18 Counties in western Oregon. Lincoln county included.

AOCC advocates for sustained yield management of the O&C forests, as required by federal law under the O&C Act. AOCC was formed in 1925 as an advocate for how the O&C lands are managed and has been active in all legislation and administrative actions regarding land management.

As Lincoln County’s representative to the Association of Oregon Counties (AOCC), my role is to:

- Participate in regional and statewide discussions
- Monitor issues that affect Lincoln County
- Bring relevant information back to the Board
- Ensure transparency with the public

This MOU agenda request is part of that responsibility and is intended to support informed Board discussion as AOCC seeks consensus on this matter and others as it relates to O&C/BLM lands.

Lincoln County Revenue Context (Historical Funding)

Recent financial data shows that Lincoln County has received BLM/O&C-related funding in most years, with amounts that vary based on federal decisions and land management practices.

- 2024–25: \$93,166
- 2023–24: \$91,774
- 2022–23: \$98,810
- 2021–22: \$102,477
- 2020–21: \$76,749
- 2019–20: \$0

Over the past five years, this represents approximately: \$460,000 in total federal forest-related revenue. Year-to-year variability (ranging from \$0 to over \$100,000). A funding stream that is not guaranteed or fixed

Why This Matters to Lincoln County

Decisions regarding forestry and land management practices—such as harvest levels, land use priorities, and environmental and regulatory approaches—ultimately impact revenues to the County.

Forest management directly influences wildfire risk, ecosystem health, wildlife habitat, and overall community safety. The broader working forest economy provides jobs, involves local businesses, and contributes to regional supply chains.

Federal forest lands support a wide range of recreational opportunities that are central to activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, and tourism.

Notably, Lincoln County has received approximately \$460,000 over the past five years in federal forest-related revenue, compared to \$18 million to \$30 million for counties like Lane County. While the scale differs, the same federal land management decisions still

directly affect our community. The various benefits of forests to us hinge on well-managed public lands.

Historically, counties received about 50% of timber receipts from O&C lands. In recent years, funding has often come through Secure Rural Schools payments, which are set by Congress and not directly tied to harvest levels

Lincoln County needs to be engaged early to ensure our local needs, values, and priorities are part of the conversation moving forward as new land management plans are considered.

In federal land management, the overarching planning documents are known as Resource Management Plans (RMPs). Developed and implemented by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), these are long-range plans typically spanning 15 to 20 years. RMPs establish key decisions related to land use allocations, timber and harvest levels, conservation areas, recreation uses, and the overall management direction for these lands, shaping both current activities and future outcomes.

Why Lincoln County should participate in the MOU

The AOCC Lands MOU is intended to ensure that counties are included in early discussions regarding federal land management, can communicate local fiscal and community impacts, and have an opportunity to inform decisions that affect county revenue and public services.

The AOCC Lands MOU provides a pathway for that participation. Participation in the AOCC Lands MOU does not obligate Lincoln County to specific actions, funding, or staffing commitments.

Any future engagement or allocation of staff time would be subject to Board direction

Requested Board Action

1. Review and discussion of the AOCC Lands MOU
 2. Direction on whether Lincoln County Board of Commissioners should participate in the MOU
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Thank You
Commission Miller