



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Web Address: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay> E-mail: [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov)

Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303



### **In Reply Refer To:**

5400/1792 (OR120)  
Butler Creek CT  
OR120-TS08-03  
Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids EA  
OR125-05-01

***August 18, 2008***

Dear Citizen:

Enclosed is copy of the Decision Documentation and maps for the “Butler Creek CT” (OR120-TS08-03) timber sale. The units in this sale were analyzed as part of the “Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids Environmental Assessment (EA No. OR125-05-01). The analysis concluded in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for proposed density management/commercial thinning and red alder conversion harvest projects. These projects were designed to implement management objectives described in the BLM Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan and Northwest Forest Plan.

Sincerely,

***A. Dennis Turowski /s/***

A. Dennis Turowski  
Umpqua Field Manager

Enclosures



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### In Reply Refer To:

5400/1792 (OR120)

Butler Creek

OR120-TS08-03

Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids EA

OR125-05-01

### Decision Documentation

#### Butler Creek CT Timber Sale

#### Analyzed in

EA No. OR125-05-01, Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids

### Background:

The Umpqua Resource Area, Coos Bay District Bureau of Land Management, using input from District resource staff and public input, prepared the Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids Environmental Assessment (EA) which concluded with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) dated February 1, 2008. The Proposed Action Alternative proposes to thin approximately 8,796 acres of conifer and to convert approximately 167 acres of red alder to conifer in 31-80 year old stands within the Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids Fifth Field Watershed. The edges of the project area overlap into Vincent Creek, Big Creek-Lower Umpqua, Lower Elk Creek, and Lower Camp Creek subwatersheds all within Douglas County. The *Butler Creek CT* timber sale, composed of EA units 56 (west of Butler Cr.), 57, 58 and 58A (north of Lutsinger Cr.), as outlined in the Table below is part of this EA and is located in T. 22 S., R. 08 W., Section 19 and T. 22 S., R. 09 W., Sections 24, 25, & 35, Willamette Meridian.

The proposed treatment area contains 254 acres within the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and 182 acres within the Riparian Reserve (RR) land use allocation.

The *Butler Creek CT* timber sale would implement treatments on 436 acres; reduced from an EA estimate of 769 acres, a reduction of 333 acres. The reduction in acres is for stream buffers, 30 feet for intermittent and 60 feet for perennial streams, and for whole or partial units that were dropped. These forest stands will develop on a different trajectory than the adjacent thinned stands.

The Proposed Action, to construct 3.98 miles of road identified in the EA, has been decreased to 2.91 miles.

The Proposed Action is to create 163 snags and to fell 109 trees for coarse woody debris in Unit #3.

The Proposed Action is to reserve western redcedar, Pacific yew, and hardwood species other than red alder except those trees that fall within road rights-of-way, landings, yarding corridors or as needed for safety reasons

The following tables show the relationship between EA estimates and field verified acres of forest treatment and miles of road treatment for the *Butler Creek CT* timber sale:

<i>EA Unit Number</i>	<i>Butler Creek CT Unit Number</i>	<i>Estimated Acres</i>	<i>Actual Acres</i>
<b>56</b> (west of Butler Cr.)	2	388	238
<b>57</b>	1	16	9
<b>57</b>	2	52	11
<b>58</b>	3	220	116
<b>58</b>	4	27	16
<b>58A</b> (north of Lutsinger Cr.)	5	66	46
<b>Totals</b>		<b>769</b>	<b>436</b>

	<i>Treatment Acres</i>	<i>New Road Construction (miles)</i>	<i>Road Decommissioning (miles)</i>
EA estimate	769	3.98	1.69
Butler Creek CT	436	2.91	1.86

### Harvest

- The sale area will be harvested with a skyline cable and ground based systems.

### Road Decommissioning

- 1.86 miles of road decommissioning consists of barricading, scarifying, waterbarring, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching on ten natural surface spur roads as necessary to stabilize road surfaces.

### Prescription

- The Butler Creek commercial thinning units #1 and 2 were marked using a basal area leave prescription of 115 square feet per acre. Unit #3 and 4 were marked to 120, and unit #5 was marked to leave on a 24 by 24 foot average spacing. Minor conifer, western red cedar and Pacific yew, and minor hardwood species will be retained except those trees that fall within road rights-of-way, landings, yarding corridors or as needed for safety reasons.

The *Final - Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement and its Record of Decision* (USDI 1995) responds to two needs: the need for forest habitat and the need for forest products (USDI 1995 p1). These needs are addressed in the RMP through an ecosystem management strategy under which BLM lands “will be managed to maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems from which a sustainable production of natural resources can be provided” (USDI 1995, p. 5).

The following purposes for the project are incorporated in the design features (Special Provisions) of the *Butler Creek CT* timber sale.

1. Improve Riparian Reserve stand structure by thinning out excess trees in overstocked stands to enhance the growth and vigor of the residual trees to provide larger and healthier trees for future management objectives while maintaining native species diversity. “*Apply silvicultural practices for Riparian Reserves to control stocking, re-establish and manage stands, and acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives*” (USDI-BLM 1995, pg. 13).
2. Improve GFMA stand structure by thinning out excess trees in overstocked stands to enhance the growth and vigor of the residual trees to provide larger and healthier trees for future management objectives while maintaining native species diversity. “*Apply silvicultural systems that are planned to produce, over time, forests with desired species composition, structural characteristics, and distribution of seral or age classes*” (USDI-BLM 1995, pg. 53).
3. Work towards the goals in the *Western Oregon Districts Transportation Management Plan* by improving problem roads and decommissioning roads not needed for continued resource management. “*Develop and implement a Road Management Plan or a Transportation Management Plan that will meet the Aquatic Conservation Strategy*” (USDI-BLM 1995, pg. 14).
4. Provide cost effective management that will enable implementation of these management objectives while providing collateral economic benefits to society.
5. Protect and/or restore rare and key habitats (wetlands, cliff habitats, talus habitats, grassy balds, or meadows). “*Using interdisciplinary teams, identify special habitat areas and determine relevant to values for protection or management on a case-by-case basis*” (USDI-BLM 1995, pg. 28).
6. Provide timber sale volume toward the Coos Bay District Allowable Sale Quantity as required in the O&C Act of August 28, 1937. The BLM has a statutory obligation under the Oregon and California Act of 1937 (O&C Act) to manage suitable commercial forest lands revested by the government from the Oregon and California Railroad grant (O&C lands) for permanent forest production in accordance with the sustained yield principle.

**Public Comments:**

The *Umpqua River - Sawyer Rapids* Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact was made available for public comment on February 1, 2008. The comment period closed on March 3, 2008.

We have made edits to the EA where appropriate to clarify the description of the various thinning prescriptions and the reserve language as it applies to selected species within the forest management activities. I conclude that these edits are not substantial and a revision of the EA is not warranted. The environmental assessment and existing Finding of No Significant Impact fully cover this timber sale and constitute BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA and conform to the applicable land use plan. As stated in the Notice of Sale for the *Butler Creek CT* timber sale, these documents are available for inspection at the Coos Bay District Office.

**Decision:**

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action Alternative as it applies to the *Butler Creek CT* timber sale described in the EA OR125-05-01 for the *Umpqua River – Sawyer Rapids EA* project.

Proposed activities that may affect listed wildlife species within the project area were submitted for consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with Section 7(A)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1536(A)(2) and (A)(4) as amended]. A Letter of Concurrence was received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in which they concur that the proposed actions are not likely to adversely affect the northern spotted owl, and the marbled murrelet.

Based on analysis by the Umpqua Field Office fisheries biologist, it has been concluded that the proposed activities in the *Umpqua River - Sawyer Rapids EA* project area will not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). It has been determined to have no effect on Oregon Coast coho, a species listed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries. Therefore consultation is not warranted.

**Rationale for Decision:**

I am choosing to offer *Butler Creek CT* timber sale for the following reasons

It is consistent with the Proposed Action as described in the EA. It meets the purpose and need for action described in the EA and in the *Final - Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP)* and its *Record of Decision*, as supplemented and amended. It is consistent with the RMP objectives and management directions for the GFMA, and Riparian Reserve LUA.

The No Action alternative fails to address the purpose and need for action and does not meet the management objectives.

**Administrative Remedies:**

In accordance with *Forest Management Regulations* at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective or be subject to formal protest until the *Notice of Sale* is published ". . . in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located." For this project, the *Notice of Sale* will be published in *The World* newspaper on August 21, 2008.

*A. Dennis Turowski /s/*

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A. Dennis Turowski  
Umpqua Field Manager

*August 18, 2008*

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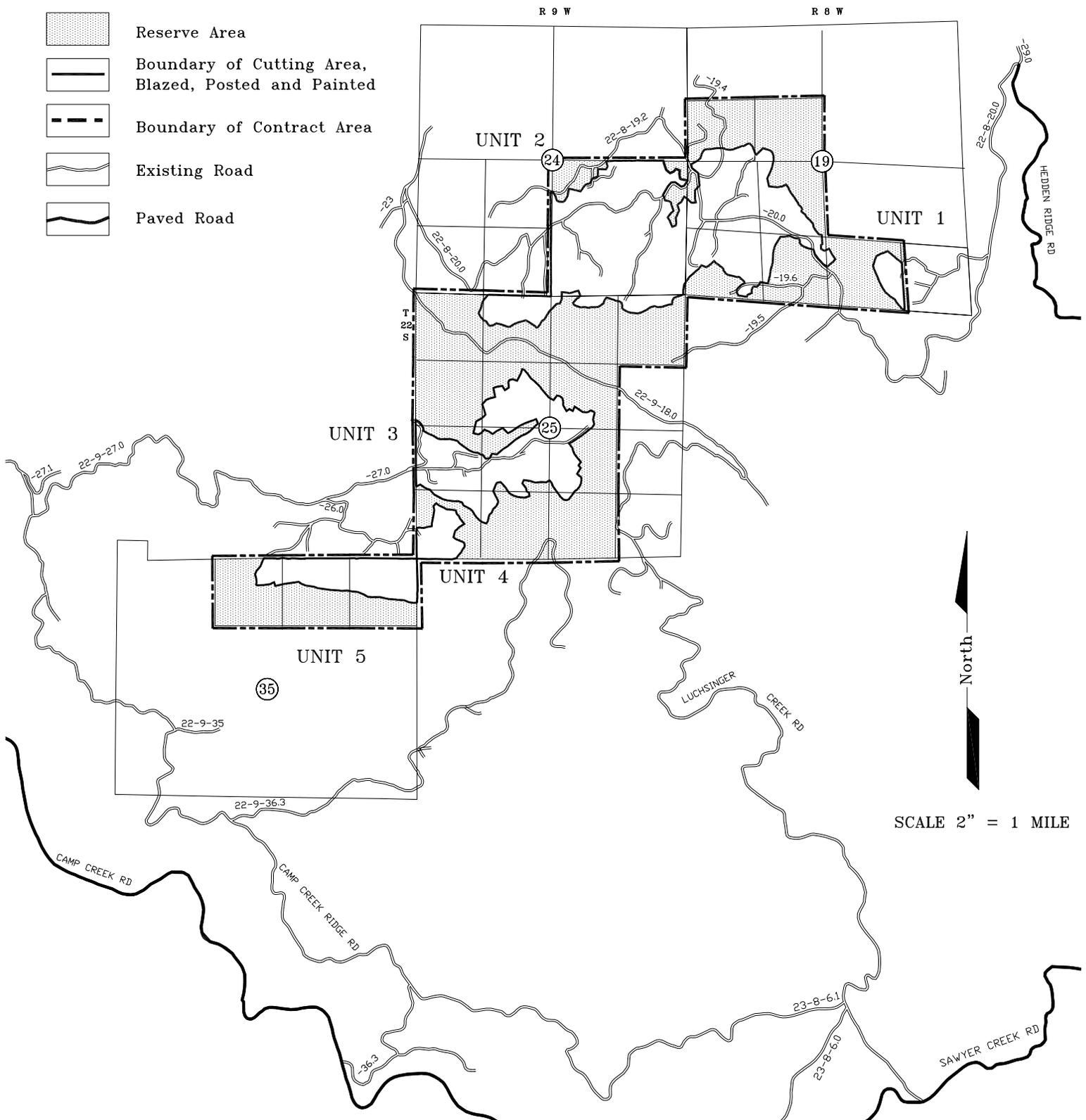
Date

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP  
 USDI-BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT

SALE NO. 08-03  
 EXHIBIT A-1  
 Page 1 of 1  
 BUTLER CREEK CT

T. 22S., R. 9W., Sec. 24, 25, 35 Will. Mer.  
 T. 22S., R. 8W., Sec. 19, Will. Mer.

-  Reserve Area
-  Boundary of Cutting Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted
-  Boundary of Contract Area
-  Existing Road
-  Paved Road



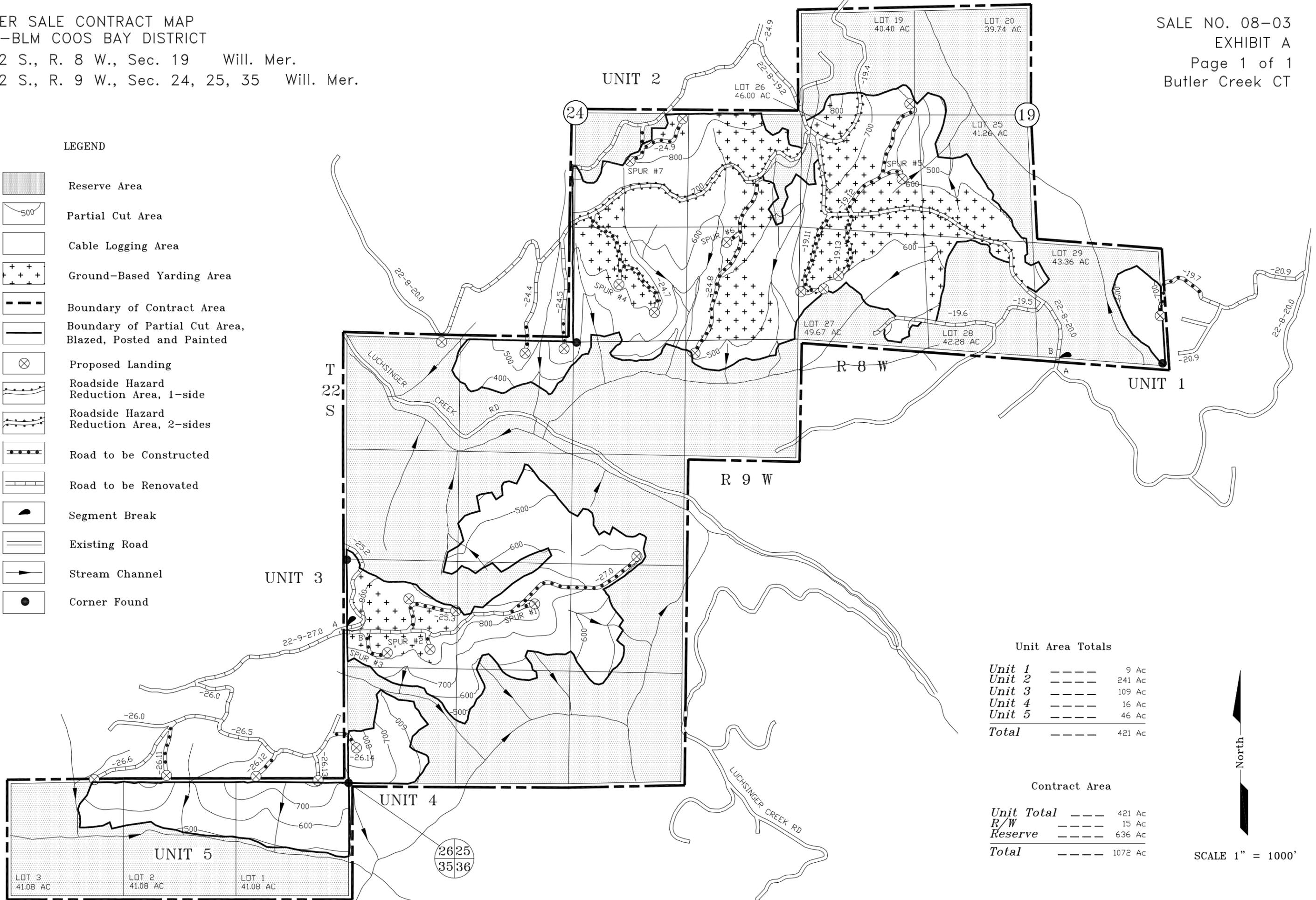
TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP  
 USDI-BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT

T. 22 S., R. 8 W., Sec. 19 Will. Mer.  
 T. 22 S., R. 9 W., Sec. 24, 25, 35 Will. Mer.

SALE NO. 08-03  
 EXHIBIT A  
 Page 1 of 1  
 Butler Creek CT

LEGEND

-  Reserve Area
-  Partial Cut Area
-  Cable Logging Area
-  Ground-Based Yarding Area
-  Boundary of Contract Area
-  Boundary of Partial Cut Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted
-  Proposed Landing
-  Roadside Hazard Reduction Area, 1-side
-  Roadside Hazard Reduction Area, 2-sides
-  Road to be Constructed
-  Road to be Renovated
-  Segment Break
-  Existing Road
-  Stream Channel
-  Corner Found



Unit Area Totals

Unit 1	9 Ac
Unit 2	241 Ac
Unit 3	109 Ac
Unit 4	16 Ac
Unit 5	46 Ac
<b>Total</b>	<b>421 Ac</b>

Contract Area

Unit Total	421 Ac
R/W	15 Ac
Reserve	636 Ac
<b>Total</b>	<b>1072 Ac</b>

North  
 SCALE 1" = 1000'