United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE
1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459
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Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303

In Reply Refer To:

5400/1792 (OR-120)
OR120-01-33
EA OR128-06-06

December 22, 2008

Dear Concerned Citizen:

Attached is a copy of the Decision Documentation for the Remote Control Timber Sale, OR120-01-33. The Remote Control Timber Sale is the Preferred Alternative of the Remote Control Environmental Assessment (EA). This Decision Documentation will also be posted on the District Internet site: http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/index.php .

In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this project is effective when the notice of decision is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by decision are located. For this project, this forest management decision will be published in *The World* newspaper.

Sincerely,

/s/Paul T. Flanagan

Paul T. Flanagan
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Enclosures

United States Department of the Interior

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In Reply Refer To:
1792(OR-120)
EA-OR-128-06-06

DECISION RECORD and FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
For the
Remote Control Environmental Assessment
EA-OR-128-06-06

I. Introduction

An Interdisciplinary Team has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Remote Control Project located within the Myrtlewood Field Office of the Coos Bay District Bureau of Land Management. This EA is hereby incorporated by reference. Within this document, the team analyzed two alternatives: a no-action alternative and a proposed action alternative. The no-action alternative describes the effects of not conducting management activities on these lands at this time. The proposed action alternative describes the effects of conducting regeneration harvest on 193 acres, constructing 1.2 miles of new roads, decommissioning 1.1 miles of road, and snag creation. The locations for the units are T. 29 S., R. 10 W., Sections 9, 16, 28, and 29. Regeneration harvest would occur in the Matrix land-use allocation and snag creation would occur within the Riparian Reserve.

II. Background

The Coos Bay District (CBD) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is under the direction of the Final Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (USDI-BLM 1994) and its Record of Decision (USDI-BLM 1995), and the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (FSEIS), commonly referred to as the "Northwest Forest Plan" [NFP] (USDA-FS; USDI-BLM 1994a) and its Record of Decision (USDA-FS; USDI-BLM 1994b) as supplemented and amended by:

> *Management of Port-Orford-cedar in Southwest Oregon Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement* (USDA and USDI 2004), and its *Record of Decision* (USDI 2004).
>
> *The Final Supplement to The 2004 Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify The Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (USDA and USDI BLM 2007) and its *Record of Decision* (USDI 2007).

This EA is also tiered to and in conformance with the *Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17Western States* (USDI 2007b) and its Record of Decision (USDI 2007c).

As stated in the ROD for the NFP, the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) was developed to restore and maintain the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems on public lands within the range of Pacific Ocean anadromy. Consistency of the proposed alternative with the ACS Objectives is included in Chapter 4 of the Remote Control EA.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

I am adopting the EA, which indicates that there would not be a significant impact on the quality of the human environment from the implementation of any of the alternatives. This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council of Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

Context

The Proposed Action would occur in the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) Land Use Allocation (LUA) as designed by the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP anticipated that regeneration harvest would occur in the GFMA LUA. The Proposed action is in conformance with the Coos Bay District RMP.

The proposed activities are not national or regional in scope. The Remote Control EA comprises 193 project acres. The units are all located within the Sandy Creek sub-watershed (6th field) of the Middle Fork Coquille River watershed (5th field). The project acreage comprises 1.5% of the total acreage (12,731) of the Sandy Creek sub-watershed.

Intensity

Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(1))

Any impacts, both beneficial and adverse, are not significant as they are consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the 1994 Coos Bay District Final Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement to which the EA is tiered.

Public Health and Safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2))

The proposed activities would not significantly affect public health and safety. Adherence to the Oregon Smoke Management Plan (OAR 629-43-043) and the State of Oregon Administrative Rule No. 340-108, *Oil and Hazardous Materials Spills and Releases*, would minimize impacts to Air Quality and from Solid/Hazardous Wastes.

Unique characteristics of the geographic area (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3))

The proposed activities would have no impact on unique characteristics of the geographic area such as historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime or unique farmlands, wetlands or floodplains, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wilderness, or ecologically significant or critical areas.

Degree to which effects are likely to be highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4))

The effects on the quality of the human environment of the proposed activities are not highly controversial. Six comments were received in response to Scoping for this project (January 25 – February 27, 2006). Comments focused on project design and implementation. No comments were received that I consider highly controversial.

Degree to which effects are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5))
The possible effects of the proposed activities on the quality of the human environment are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risk. The environmental effects are fully analyzed in Chapter 4 of the EA.

Consideration of whether the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6))
The proposed project does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant effects.

Consideration of whether the action is related to other actions with cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7))
There are no significant cumulative effects identified by this assessment. The interdisciplinary team considered the proposed action in the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. No cumulatively significant effects to resources are predicted, as discussed in Chapter 4 of the EA.

Scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8))
The proposed activities would not affect districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed in or potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Nor would the activities cause a loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.

Threatened or endangered species and their critical habitat (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9))

- Consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. The Service has determined that implementation of the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the northern spotted owl or the marbled murrelet or adversely modify their Critical Habitat.
- Analysis of the proposed action has resulted in a determination that there would be "*no effect*" to Oregon Coast coho salmon.
- The proposed action would also not result in adverse effects to Essential Fish Habitat as designated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA; 16 U.S.C. 1855 as amended).

Any effects that threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10))
The proposed activities would not violate Federal, State or local laws imposed for the protection of the environment. These include the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act.

Analysis has also concluded that implementation of the proposed actions would not contribute to the need to list any Special Status Species as identified in BLM Manual 6840 and BLM OR/WA 6840 policy.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the President's National Energy Policy. As there would be no impact to the exploration, development or transportation of undeveloped energy sources from the proposed action, a Statement of Adverse Energy Impacts is not required.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the Remote Control environmental assessment, I have determined that the proposed action would not have a significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. I have determined that the effects of the proposed regeneration harvest activities and associated road management activities are within those anticipated and already analyzed in the *Final Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* and would be in conformance with the *Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* for the Coos Bay District.

Paul T. Flanagan	***December 22, 2008***
Paul T. Flanagan Myrtlewood Field Manager	Date

Decision
It is my decision to select the Proposed Action as described in the Remote Control Environmental Assessment, which has been incorporated by reference. The EA and FONSI analyzed the selected alternative and found no significant impacts. Implementation of this decision will result in forest management activities, including regeneration harvest of GFMA through commercial timber harvest, snag creation in the Riparian Reserve, and road construction, renovation, and decommissioning. All design features identified in the EA will be implemented. The selected alternative is in conformance with the *Coos Bay District Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (May 1995), as supplemented and amended, which conforms with the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (Northwest Forest Plan)* and its *Record of Decision* (USDA/USDI 1994), as supplemented and amended.

Updated Information
The following table shows the harvest acreage using GIS data and compared to the final traversed acreage on the ground:

Sale Unit	GIS Acreage	Traversed Acreage
Unit 1	48	48
Unit 2	17	18
Unit 3	27	27
Unit 4	101	108
Totals:	193	201

Alternatives
In addition to the selected alternative, there was a no action alternative that would not carry out forest management activities on these lands at this time.

Rationale for the Decision
The proposed action would most effectively meet the purpose of action, which includes providing a sustainable supply of timber, providing early-successional habitat, and provide for important ecological functions such as dispersal of organisms, carryover of some species from one stand to the next, and maintain ecologically valuable structural components (EA p.5). The proposed action would provide 8.5 MMbf of harvest volume which contributes to meeting the Coos Bay District's Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ). Additionally, the proposed action would retain legacy components such as snags and down wood, as well as create snags within the Riparian Reserve.

Consultation and Coordination
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, Formal Consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. The Service has determined in a Biological Opinion that implementation of the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the northern spotted owl or the marbled murrelet or adversely modify their Critical Habitat.

National Marine Fisheries Service
At the signing of this Decision, coho salmon were listed as a "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act. In accordance with current policy, BLM is expected to confer with NMFS on actions that may affect coho salmon. The Remote Control project has been determined to have "No Effect" to coho salmon and their designated Critical Habitat.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires Federal agencies to consult with the Secretary of Commerce regarding any action or proposed action authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) under the Act. The alternative, as described in the environmental assessment (p. 58) would not adversely affect EFH.

Public Involvement
The Remote Control project conducted public scoping from January 25 – February 27, 2006 and has been included in the Coos Bay District semi-annual Planning Updates since the fall of 2005.

On November 24, 2008, The Remote Control FONSI was released for a 15-day Public Review and was sent to local groups, businesses, state and local government agencies, and individuals. This review period was extended by 10 days. Two comments were received.

Upon reviewing the comments, the following topics warranted additional clarification within the EA: climate change, carbon sequestration, and West Nile virus. These clarifications did not result in a change in the appropriateness of the FONSI. Other comments did not raise substantive issues that would influence my selection of the Action Alternative of the Remote Control EA.

Administrative Review Opportunities
This forest management decision may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 – Administrative Remedies. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003.2, this notice of forest management decision, published December 23, 2008 in *The World* newspaper, will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests of this project. Protests of the decision must be filed with this office within 15 days after this publication of the decision. As interpreted by the BLM, the regulations do not authorize acceptance of protests in any form other than a signed, paper document that is delivered to the physical address of the BLM office. Therefore, e-mail or facsimile protests will not be accepted. If no protest is received by the close of business (4:30 pm) on January 6, 2008, this decision will become final. If a timely protest is received, this decision will be considered in light of the protest and other pertinent information available in accordance with 43 CFR 5003.3.

/s/Paul T. Flanagan ***December 22, 2008***

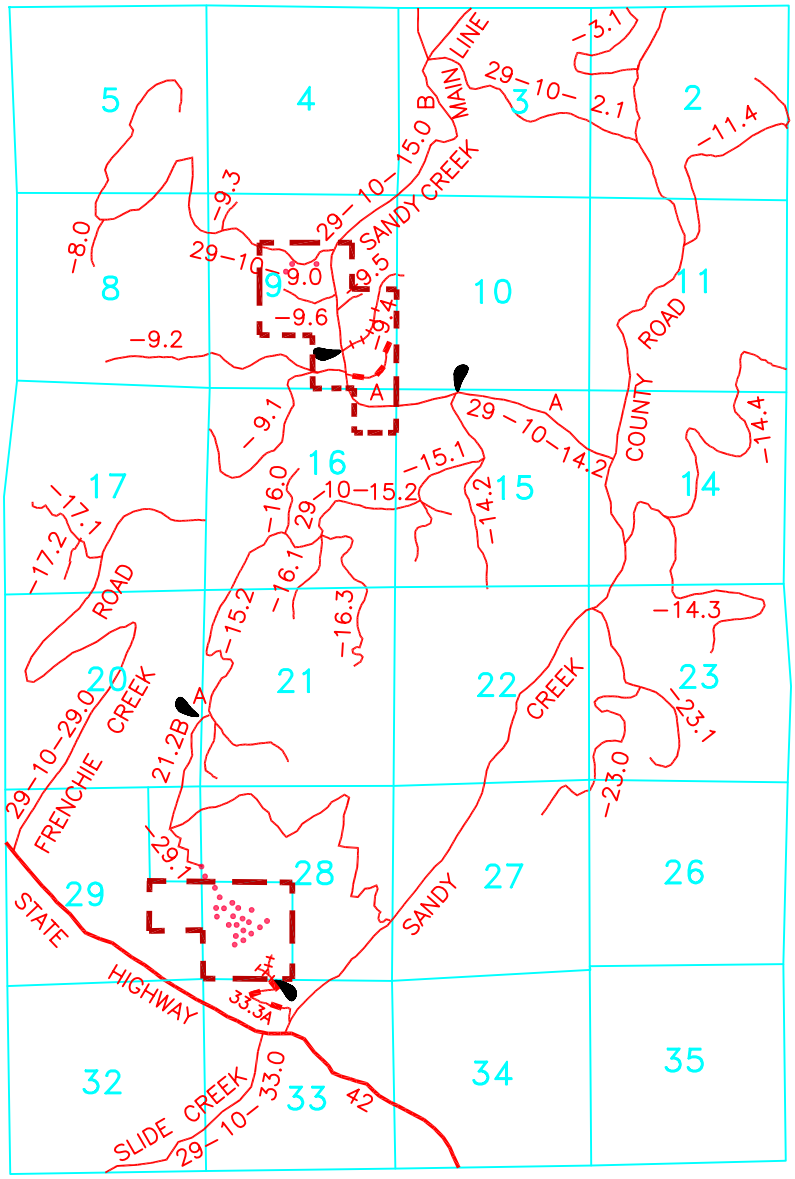
Paul T. Flanagan
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Date

OR120/AHoefs/rme/122208/G:\cb\District\Word Processing\1792\EA\FY 06\EA06-06\Decision Record & FONSI for Remote Control EA.docx

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP
USDI–BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT
T. 29 S., R. 10 W., SECS. 9, 16, 28 & 29, WILL MER.

SALE NO. 98–33
EXHIBIT A–1
PAGE 1
REMOTE CONTROL



North

SCALE 1" = 1 MILE

Existing Road

Road to be Constructed

Road to be Improved

Road to be Renovated

Segment Break

Road Number Break

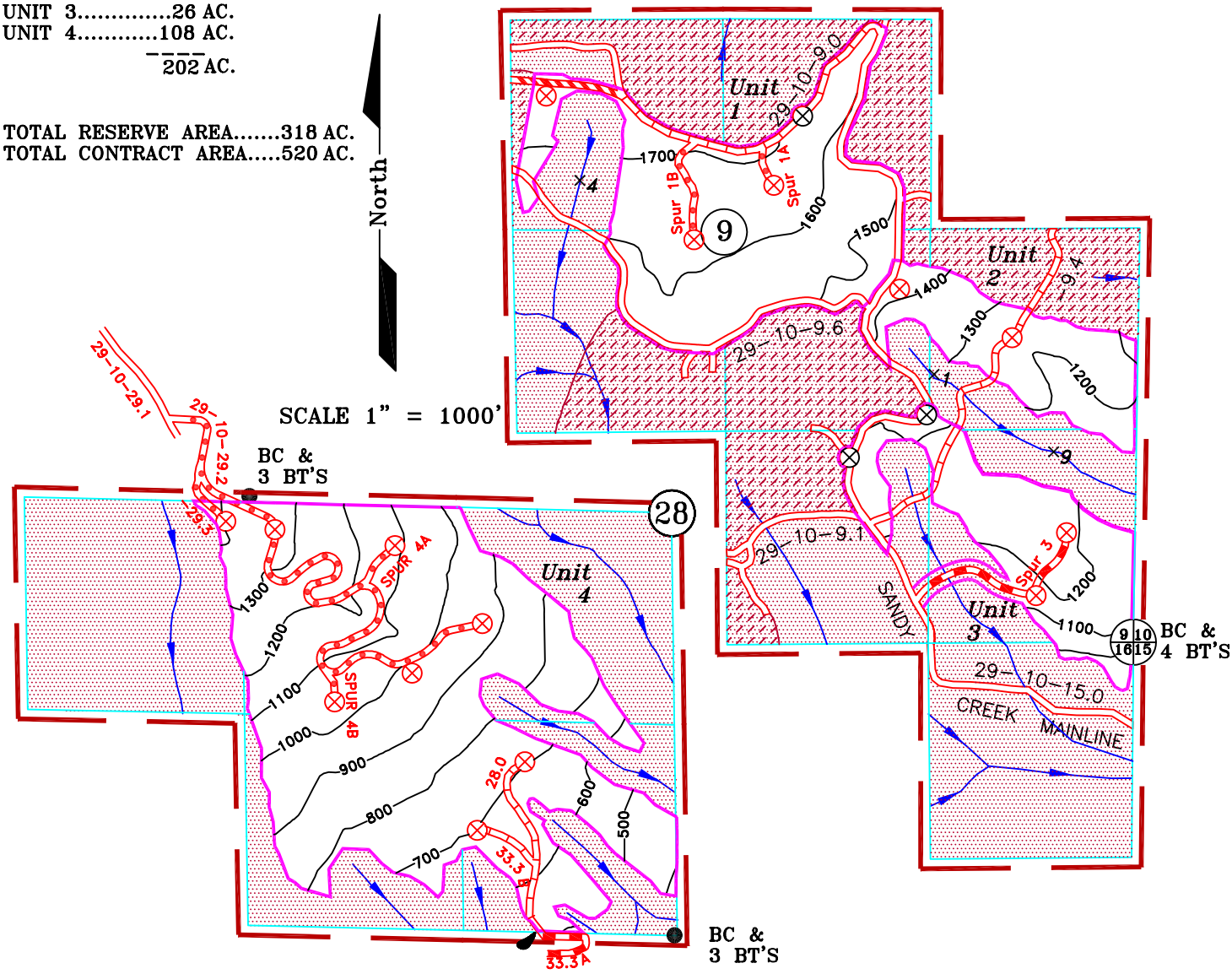
Boundary of Contract Area

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP
USDI–BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT
T. 29 S., R. 10 W., SECS. 9, 16, 28 & 29 WILL. MER.

SALE NO. 98–33
EXHIBIT A
PAGE 1 OF 4
REMOTE CONTROL

REGENERATION CUT UNITS
UNIT 1.....48 AC.
UNIT 2.....20 AC.
UNIT 3.....26 AC.
UNIT 4.....108 AC.
202 AC.

TOTAL RESERVE AREA.....318 AC.
TOTAL CONTRACT AREA.....520 AC.



Regeneration Cut Unit

Reserve Area

Previous Sale Area – Reserve

Boundary of Cutting Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted

Boundary of Contract Area

Existing Road

Road to be Constructed

Road to be Renovated

Road to be Improved

Road to be Constructed Under Another Contract

Proposed Landing

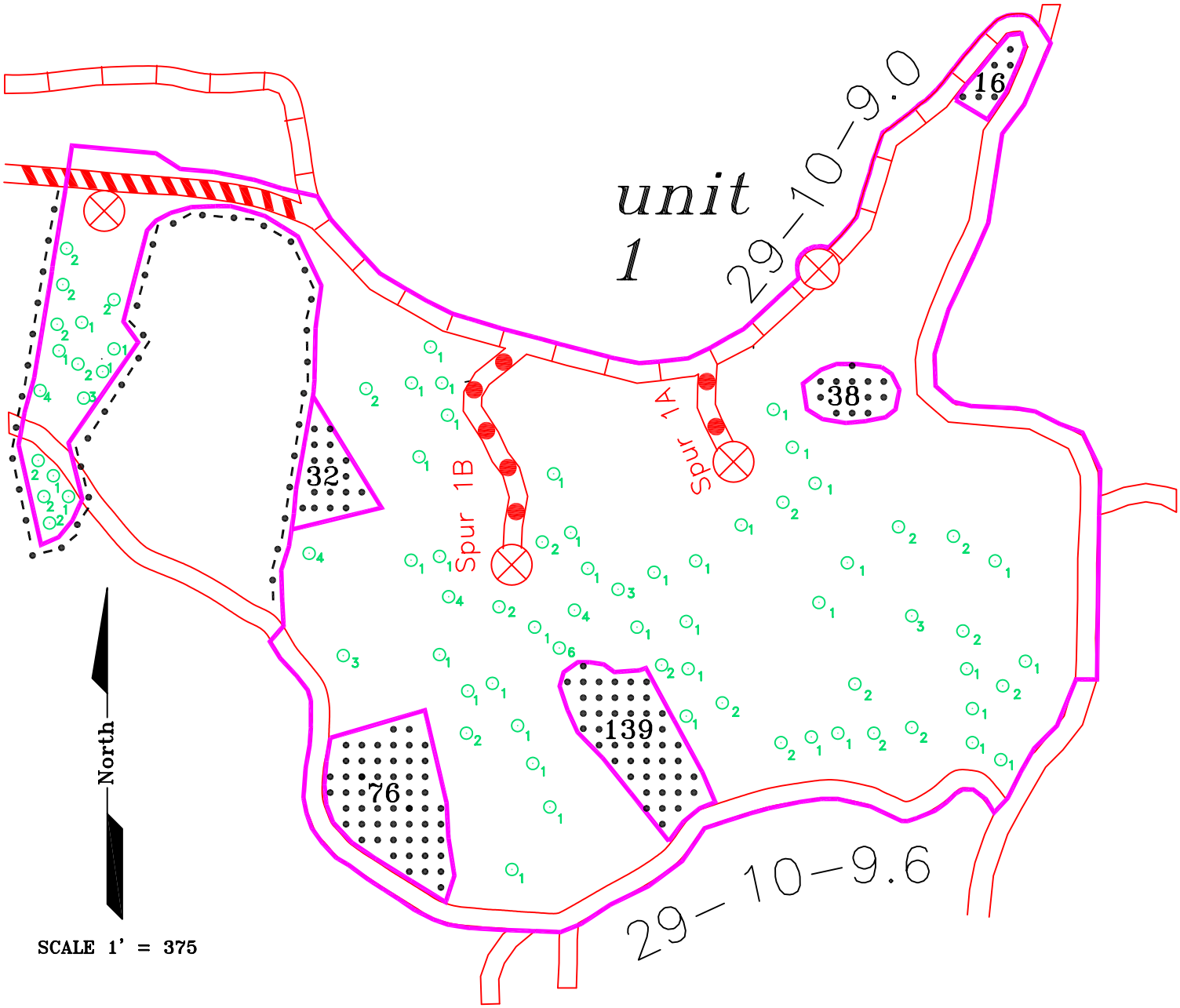
Stream Channel

Corner Found

×2 Approximate Location and Number of Trees to be Topped in the Reserve

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP
USDI–BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT
T. 29 S., R. 10 W., SECS. 9, 16, 28 & 29 WILL. MER.

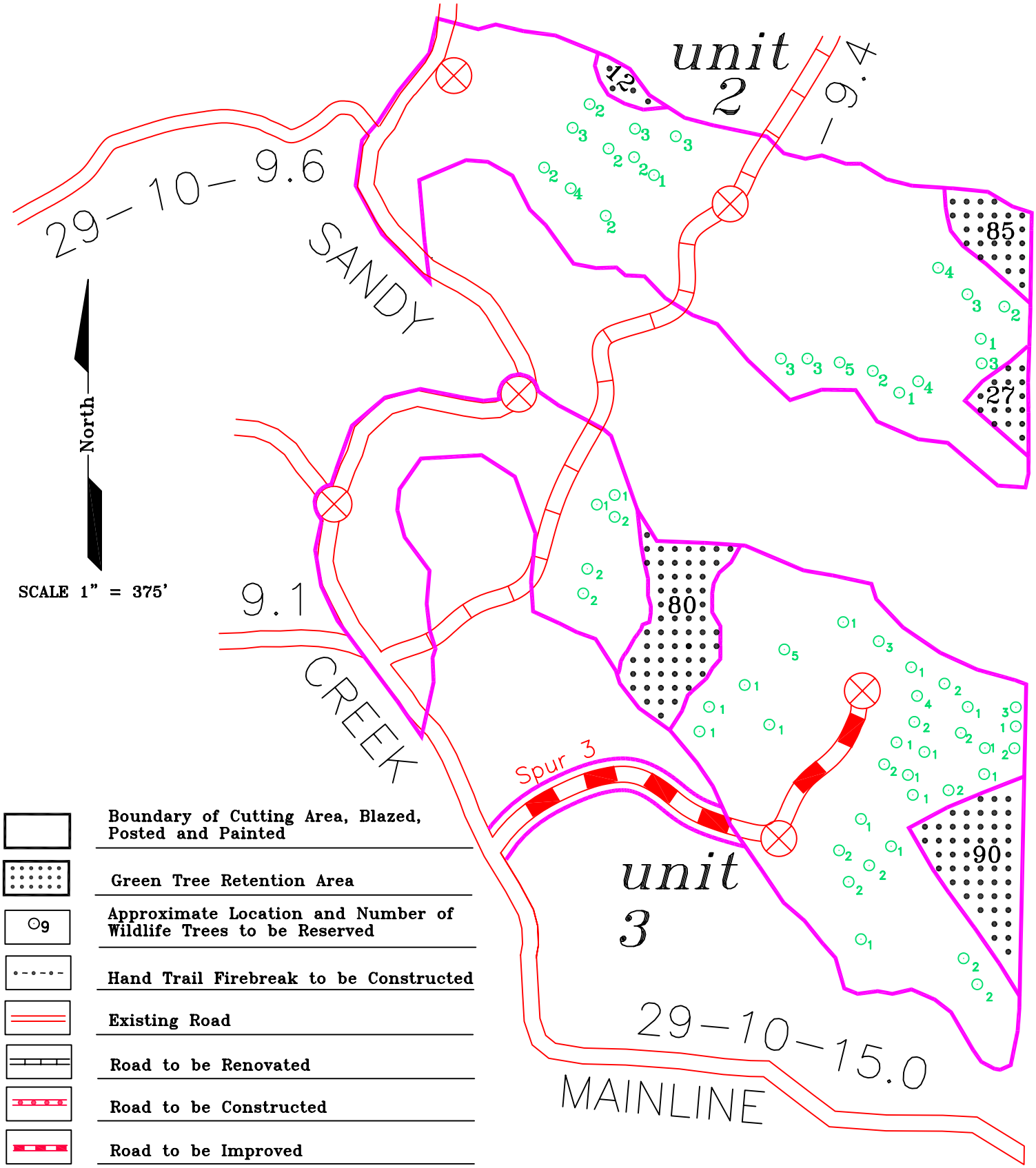
SALE NO. 98–33
EXHIBIT A
PAGE 2 OF 4
REMOTE CONTROL



Boundary of Cutting Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted	Road to be Renovated
Green Tree Retention Area	Road to be Constructed
Approximate Location and Number of Wildlife Trees to be Reserved	Road to be Constructed Under Another Contract
Hand Trail Firebreak to be Constructed	Road to be Improved
Existing Road	Proposed Landing

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP
USDI–BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT
T. 29 S., R. 10 W., SECS. 9, 16, 28 & 29 WILL. MER.

SALE NO. 98–33
EXHIBIT A
PAGE 3 OF 4
REMOTE CONTROL



Boundary of Cutting Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted

Green Tree Retention Area

Approximate Location and Number of Wildlife Trees to be Reserved

Hand Trail Firebreak to be Constructed

Existing Road

Road to be Renovated

Road to be Constructed

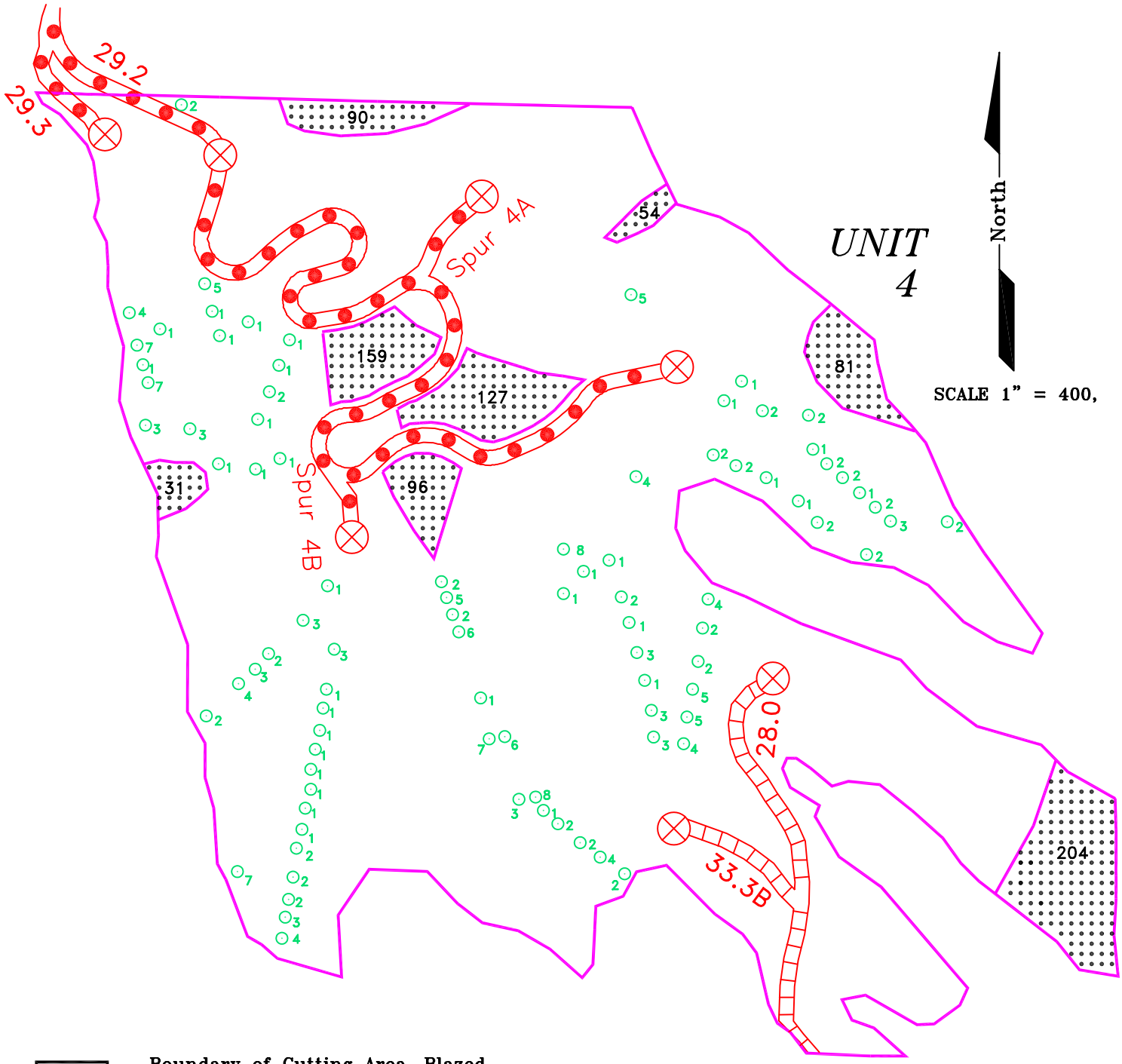
Road to be Improved

Proposed Landing

Approximate Location and Number of Wildlife Trees to be Reserved

TIMBER SALE CONTRACT MAP
USDI–BLM COOS BAY DISTRICT
T. 29 S., R. 10 W., SECS. 9, 16, 28 & 29 WILL MER.

SALE NO. 98–33
EXHIBIT A
PAGE 4 OF 4
REMOTE CONTROL



Boundary of Cutting Area, Blazed, Posted and Painted

Green Tree Retention Areas

Approximate Location and Number of Wildlife Trees to be Reserved

Existing Road

Road to be Constructed

Road to be Renovated

Proposed Landing