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EA-06-05
5401
E-08-674
Mohawk River

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
And
DECISION RECORD
Mohawk River Timber Sale
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-06-05**

BACKGROUND:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed Mohawk East Project were prepared by the Upper Willamette Resource Area, Eugene District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This timber sale was analyzed as part of that project, and would occur on approximately 136 acres located in T. 15 S., R 1 W., Section 13. Action may include:

- thinning
- aquatic habitat restoration
- creation of snags and coarse wood debris
- road improvements
- temporary road construction
- road decommissioning.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the action is to provide a sustainable supply of timber from the Matrix lands, while maintaining valuable structural components (e.g., snags and down wood) and habitat for special status species; and to treat stands to accelerate the growth of trees to restore large conifers in Riparian Reserves. This project also proposes aquatic habitat restoration and road improvements. The objectives of these actions are to enhance stream habitat conditions for fish and other aquatic-dependent species, and reduce road related sediment sources to stream habitat.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The EA was advertised in August of 2006, in the Eugene Register Guard, as available for a 30-day public review period. One comment letter was received during the review period. Comments from this letter were mainly subjective and did not ask for clarification on any issue regarding this timber sale.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the information contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the proposed action will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in the *Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994)* and the *Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995)*, Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) Objectives listed on page B-11 of the *Northwest Forest Plan*, with which this EA is in conformance, and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, a new environmental impact statement or supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Furthermore, on July 25, 2007, the Under Secretary of the Department of the Interior signed a new Survey and Manage Record of Decision that removed the survey and manage requirements from all of the BLM

RMPs within the range of the northern spotted owl. In any case, this project falls within at least one of the exceptions listed in the modified October 11, 2006 injunction.

UPPER WILLAMETTE RIVER (UWR) SPRING CHINOOK (THREATENED) ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) AFFECTS DETERMINATION/RATIONALE

The following proposed treatments: 1) timber felling, 2) timber yarding, 3) road construction and reconstruction, and 4) log hauling were addressed under the ESA Section 7 programmatic consultation process ("*Biological Assessment for Fiscal Year 2007-2009 Low-Risk Thinning timber Sales of the Mt. Hood and Willamette National Forest, and portions of the Eugene and Salem Bureau of Land Management Districts*", March 2007). The Proposed Action for the Mohawk East project is consistent with the effects determination reached under the programmatic consultation for low-risk, low-impact timber sales. On August 9, 2007, the National Marine Fisheries Service agreed with the Eugene District's determination that the proposed action was consistent with the programmatic consultation and that the project was a 'may affect, not likely to adversely affect' (NLAA) for ESA listed UWR spring Chinook. The proposed action will have no impacts beyond those analyzed in the environmental assessment and the associated biological assessment process which may affect spring Chinook salmon.

DECISION

Based on the analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment No. 0R090-EA-06-05 and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), it is my decision to implement Alternative 2. This alternative proposes to thin approximately 136 acres of Matrix and Riparian Reserve. Thinning in the upland would be designed to increase tree size through time, extend the culmination of mean annual increment, and capture anticipated mortality. Stands would be thinned from below with variable spacing.

Thinning in the Riparian Reserve would be designed to enhance late seral forest structure by accelerating tree growth. No-harvest buffers ranging from 75-200 feet would be implemented along all streams within the project area. Three to four snags per acre and three down logs per acre would be created in Riparian Reserves (outside of no-harvest buffers).

Instream Restoration would also occur under this alternative consisting of the placement of large wood and boulder structures within stream 8 of this timber sale.

This alternative would also construct approximately 4000 feet of temporary road and replace approximately 6 culverts.

DECISION RATIONALE

Alternative 2 was selected because it best meets the purpose and need described in the EA.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

The decision to implement this project may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this project will not be subject to protest until the notice of sale is first published in the Eugene Register-Guard. This published notice of sale will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests of this project (43 CFR 5003.2b). Protests of this decision must be filed with this office within fifteen (15) days after first publication of the notice of sale.

As interpreted by BLM, the regulations do not authorize the acceptance of protests in any form other than a signed, written hard copy that is delivered to the physical address of the BLM Eugene District Office.

William O'Sullivan
William O'Sullivan, Field Manager
Upper Willamette Resource Area

10/25/2007
Date