



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MEDFORD DISTRICT GLENDALE RESOURCE AREA

Categorical Exclusion Review-NEPA Compliance Record

A. Background

Case File No.: CE#OR118-08-007

Proposed Action Title/Type: Glendale Resource Area Reforestation

Watershed: West Fork Cow Creek, Upper Cow Creek, Lower Cow Creek, Middle Fork Cow Creek, Grave Creek, Jumpoff Joe Creek, Elk Creek/South Umpqua River, Rogue River/Kelsey Creek, Rogue River/Stair Creek, Rogue River/Taylor Creek, Middle Fork Coquille River, and Upper South Fork Coquille River Fifth Fields.

Land Use Allocation: Matrix (General Forest Management Area and Connectivity/Diversity Blocks), Late-Successional Reserve (LSR), and Riparian Reserve (RR).

Counties: Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Curry, and Coos

Purpose and Need for the Action: Glendale Resource Area, Medford District is proposing a variety of treatments to accomplish land use allocation objectives described in the Medford District Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (RMP p.183). Proposed silviculture practices necessary to establish stands on forestland would assure that reforestation objectives are promptly met (RMP, P.184). These reforestation treatments would be implemented on sites located throughout the Glendale Resource Area on approximately 2,500 acres (as needs arise).

Proposed Action: The items of work include: spot scalping, conifer and non-conifer planting and inter-planting, spot fertilizer pellet installation, mulching, tubing, and shade card installation. Reforestation planning involves describing the site, interpreting the seedling environment, identify management and operational constraints, then prescribing the operations. Based on the outcome of this planning, suitable planting stock is selected and management of the seedling environment is prescribed to alleviate severe exposure or moisture stress. Reforestation activities would be done in such areas as: 1) timber sales, 2) stewardship projects, 3) rehabilitation sites, and 4) watershed restoration projects.

Reforestation Activities:

Spot Scalping

- Holes in slash and brush would be created by removing all brush, hardwoods, gravel, humus, ash, living vegetation, slash and woody debris down to mineral soil. Branches or stems entering the area from the outside and extending upward above the hole shall be cut. Two types of treatment are proposed:
 1. Circular planting holes that measure a minimum of four (4) feet in diameter would be created on a 12-foot by 12-foot grid.
 2. Clearing planting spots would be no smaller than 16 inches in diameter spaced on an 8-foot by 8-foot grid.

Planting

- Seedlings would be planted with hand tools to a depth of up to 12 inches for all stock.
- Seedlings would be planted in spots distributed over the area at the intervals and within the spacing specified. However, for individual seedlings, the specified average spacing may be varied + or - 25% of the specified spacing in any direction to find a suitable planting spot, but no closer than seven feet.
- Each seedling would be set firmly in the ground with moist soil filled in and well compacted. After compacting around the seedling, soil would be at ground level with no deep depression or high mound at the stem.

Spot Fertilizer Pellet Installation

- A single fertilizer packet/pellet would be placed in the planting hole at the time of planting of all conifer trees planted.
- Slow release nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium containing briquette-like pellets or teabag-like packets would be placed in contact with the seedling roots. Pellets or packets may contain trace minerals.

Mulching

- Paper or synthetic (plastic) mulch material would be used measuring 36 by 36 inches with an opening in the middle. The material would be placed over the seedling and flat on the ground to inhibit unwanted vegetation growth.
- A 36 inch by 36 inch mulching spot would be prepared by clearing all brush, tall grasses, forbs, stones, slash and other material that can be moved by hand tools for the mulching material would lie flat.

- "U" shaped metal pins six inches long would be used to secure the mulch material. Five pins would be used for each sheet of mulch.

Tubing

- An animal protection device consisting of a rigid plastic mesh tube would be placed over planted seedlings to reduce animal browse.
- Tubing consist of one bamboo stake 30 inches long and one rigid plastic "Vexar" tube (18 inches long, 2-3/4 inches to 3-1/4 inches in diameter), woven through the vexar tube. The bamboo stake would be inserted a minimum of six inches into the ground.
- When the seedling have out grown the tubes, all vexar tubes and bamboo stakes would be removed from live and dead seedlings and placed flat on the ground.

Shade Card Installation

- A bent "U" shaped wire and support installed in the ground with a degradable covering to provide shade to newly planted seedlings would be installed.
- Tree shades would be placed six to eight inches away from planted seedling stems with the bottom of the shade within two inches of the ground. The shade would be securely installed so that ravel, debris, snow, etc., would not tip the tree shade over.
- When the seedlings are established, the wires would be removed from the site.

Project Design Features: Project design features (PDFs) are measures included in the site specific design of the action alternatives to minimize adverse impacts on the human environment. Also, many PDFs are contained under Best Management Practices (BMP), Appendix D, in the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP). PDFs and BMPs pertinent to this project are included here for ease of fully understanding the project:

All Treatments

- Treatment of units accessed via inadequately surfaced roads would be suspended or delayed as necessary to prevent offsite erosion, stream sedimentation, or road damage. This would apply to all rocked or natural surface roads, where vehicle use has resulted in, or would result in, conditions such as; surface rutting; fines being pumped through road surfacing from the subgrade, road drainage causes a visible increase in stream turbidities, or any condition that would result in water being chronically routed into tire tracks or away from designed road drainage during precipitation events.
- No mechanized equipment, tracked, or tired vehicles would be driven off existing drivable roads.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the following plans:

- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan FSEIS, 1994 and ROD, 1994)
- *Final-Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision* (EIS, 1994 and RMP/ROD, 1995)
- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (FSEIS, 2004 and ROD, 2004)
- *Supplement to the 2006 Draft Supplement to the 2004 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guideline* (FSEIS, 2007 and ROD, 2007).
- *Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan Environmental Assessment (1998)* and tiered to the *Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program* (EIS, 1985)

The proposed action also complies with the 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2001) (2001 ROD), including any amendments or modifications in effect as of March 21, 2004.

A Port-Orford-cedar root disease risk assessment would be conducted prior to any proposed action taking place. When there is a management need to prevent/reduce the import or export of Port-Orford-cedar root disease (*Phytophthora lateralis*), management practices including scheduling projects during the dry season, use of uninfected water sources for equipment washing, and designate access and egress routes to minimize exposure to the disease would be implemented.

Presence of special status plants, including threatened or endangered (T&E) would be assessed prior to any proposed activities. Appropriate protection/management measures would be implemented as necessary.

C: Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 6, Appendix 5.

5.4 C (3) *Seeding or reforestation of timber sales or burn areas where no chaining is done, no pesticides are used, and there is no conversion of timber type or conversion of nonforest to forest land. Specific reforestation activities covered include: seeding and seedling plantings, shading, tubing (browse protection), paper mulching, bud caps, ravel protection, application of non-toxic big game*

repellant, spot scalping, rodent trapping, fertilization of seed trees, fence construction around out-planting sites, and collection of pollen, scions and cones.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

I considered this Categorical Exclusion and have determined that the Proposed Action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that it complies with the criteria for the categorical exclusions as described under the Department of Interior Manual 516 DM 6. None of the exceptions to categorical exclusions apply nor are any of the environmental impacts to the elements of the environment considered to be significant. Therefore, an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement is not needed. It is my decision to implement the proposed action in accordance with 43 CFR 5003 – Administrative Remedies.

D: Agency Consultation

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Consultation for the Endangered Species Act with the USFWS is not necessary. The proposed action would have no effect on listed species or their habitat.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Consultation for the Endangered Species Act with the National Marine Fisheries Service is not necessary as there would be no impact to listed species within the Planning Area. Southern Oregon Northern California (SONC) coho salmon and Oregon Coast (OC), listed as threatened, are present within this project area.

The proposed reforestation activities would have no effect on the SONC coho salmon, OC coho salmon, or Coho Critical Habitat (CCH) due to the proposed action would 1) not result in a measurable increase in sediment or turbidity within the stream because ground disturbance within each unit would be limited to spot scalping thus the remaining vegetation within the unit, and the duff layer would trap and store sediment on site and 2) not increase stream temperatures due to the proposed project would not remove streamside vegetation.

Ground disturbance

Consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service for habitat listed by the Magnuson Stevens Act is not required as there would be no adverse affects to Essential Fish Habitat.

State Historical Preservation Office

Cultural survey are exempted under the State Historical Preservation Office's *Protocol for Managing Cultural Resource on Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Oregon*, Appendix E (8), "Pre-commerical thinning; reforestation planting except site

preparation involving substantial surface disturbance (rippers); non-commercial firewood cutting.”

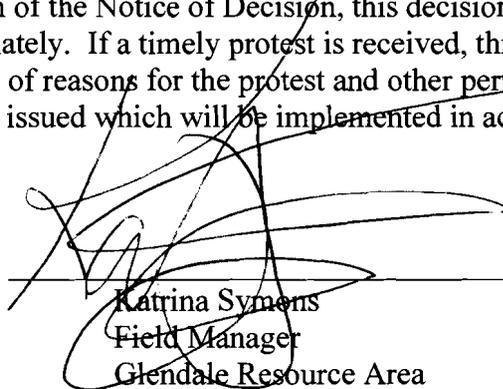
E: Administrative Review

Protest Provisions: This decision is subject to protest by the public. To protest this decision, a person must submit a signed, written protest to Field Manager, Glendale Resource Area, 2164 NE Spalding Avenue, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526 by the close of business (4:00 P.M.) not more than 15 days after publication of the Notice of Decision in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* newspaper. The protest must clearly and concisely state the reasons why the decision is believed to be in error.

Implementation Date: If no protest is received by the close of business (4:00 P.M.) within 15 days after publication of the Notice of Decision, this decision will become final and may be implemented immediately. If a timely protest is received, this decision will be reconsidered in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available and a final decision will be issued which will be implemented in accordance with regulation.

F: Signature

Authorizing Official:
(Signature)



Katrina Symens
Field Manager
Glendale Resource Area

Date:

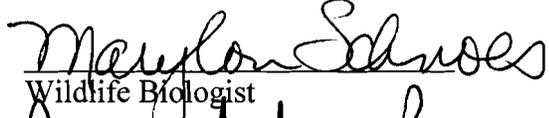
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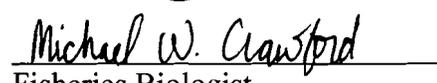
Reviewers:

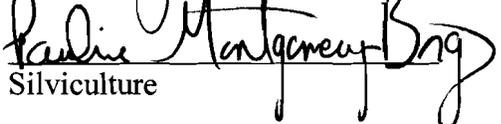

Soils/Hydrology

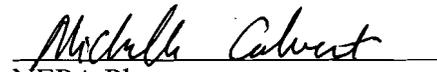

Botanist


Cultural Resources


Wildlife Biologist


Fisheries Biologist


Silviculture


NEPA Planner

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision contact Jim Brimble (541) 471-6534 at 2164 N.E. Spalding Avenue, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526.

ATTACHMENT 1

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION EXCEPTION REVIEW
CE# OR-118-08-007

<p>Table 1. Extraordinary Circumstances. This table shows the exceptions (Extraordinary Circumstances) to Categorical Exclusions that are listed in the Department of Interior Departmental Manual 5.16 DM 2, Appendix 2. An Environmental Document (Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement) must be prepared for any action for which any of these exceptions apply.</p>		
Exception	Does it Apply? Yes/ No	Remarks (Potential for Exception)
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety	No	All proposed activities follow established rules concerning health and safety.
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	No	Based on past experience from these types of activities, there are no predicted impacts on natural resources and unique geographic characteristics from the proposed action. Potentially affected species mentioned by IM 2008-050 that occur on the Glendale Resource Area include only the common yellowthroat and mourning dove. (No other species of concern likely to be found on the Glendale Resource Area forested areas nest on the ground.) Common yellowthroats nest in marshy areas, which are not likely to be included in the proposed action. Mourning doves sometimes nest on the ground, but they're also noted as a species that usually makes more than one nesting attempt per breeding season, especially if interrupted by a one-time event. Disturbance, such as that caused by pedestrian traffic or scalping vegetation, is unlikely to prevent all reproduction from a nesting pair for the season. Because of this, the proposed action is unlikely to cause any loss of recruitment, measurable on even a 7th-field watershed scale.
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2) (E)].	No	Based on past experience from these types of activities, there are no predicted environmental effects from the proposed action which are considered to be highly controversial nor are there unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses.

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Exception	Does it Apply? Yes/No	Remarks (Potential for Exception)
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	No	Past experiences from these types of activities have shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	No	Similar actions have taken place throughout the District and there is no evidence that this type of project would establish a precedent or decision for future action.
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	No	The BLM has conducted these types of activities in the past with no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effects.
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.	No	No eligible or listed properties are affected.
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	No	The proposed reforestation activities would have no effect on the federally listed Southern Oregon Northern California (SONC) coho salmon, Oregon Coast (OC) coho, or Coho Critical Habitat (CCH). The proposed action would 1) not result in a measurable increase in sediment or turbidity within the stream because ground disturbance within each unit would be limited to spot scalping thus the remaining vegetation within the unit, and the duff layer would trap and store sediment on site and 2) not increase stream temperatures due to the proposed project would not remove streamside vegetation.
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	No	The project did not require a Section 106 NHPA survey due to the requirement in the OR BLM Cultural Resource Protocol.
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	No	Similar actions have taken place throughout the District and there is no evidence that this type of project would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on said populations.

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Exception	Does it Apply? Yes/ No	Remarks (Potential for Exception)
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	No	The project was reviewed with concerned Tribes. The Tribes did not identify any issues or concerns regarding this project.
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).	No	The proposed activities outlined in this CE will not be responsible for spreading noxious weeds any faster across federal lands than if the proposed activities did not occur. Botanical surveys are conducted prior to project implementation, and result in new sightings of noxious weed populations in and/or adjacent to proposed units. These new weed sites are then treated as funding permits per Medford District's <i>Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment OR-110-98-14</i>