

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION/DECISION RECORD
Spring Tree Planting w/ Radius Scalping
Grants Pass Resource Area
CE #OR117-2008-11

I. PROPOSED ACTION

A. Proposed Action Title / Type: Tree Planting w/ Radius Scalping

B. Location: Grants Pass Resource Area; Jackson, Josephine, and Curry counties.
See attached Resource Area and Unit location maps.

Land Allocations: Matrix, LSR, AMA, and Riparian Reserve.

C. Description of the proposed action:

Approximately 159 acres would be planted with conifer seedlings to successfully reforest or to increase the number of seedlings to acceptable stocking levels (BLM standards) on forest lands denuded by timber harvest, fire, or other causes within the Grants Pass Resource Area. Characteristics of each of the sites may vary, from units which were recently burned from wildfire or from prescribed burn treatments, units planted one or more years ago which do not meet target stocking standards, to sites which have been replanted several times and have grass and/or brush competition existing on the unit. Fertilizer packets may be inserted with newly planted trees.

One six acre unit (Deer Creek 5-2) would be grubbed (scalping to a depth of 2" to remove competing vegetation and roots) for a 3' radius around tree seedlings on an 8' x 8' spacing. The unit was previously surveyed for Special Status vascular plants and surveys are still valid.

The proposed action(s) will take place from early-March 2008 until approximately June 1, 2008.

Port-Orford Cedar

In units where Port-Orford Cedar is present, sequential treatment of the units shall take place so that units which are uninfected and free of the pathogen *Phytophthora lateralis* (PL) shall be treated first, and infested units shall be treated last.

Units will be surveyed by the Government prior to treatment to determine presence or absence of PL and to determine the sequence to follow for treatment.

Access as well as egress routes, and parking locations will be determined for all POC units (unit having Port-Orford Cedar) and *PL* units (units having Port-Orford Cedar and *Phytophthora lateralis*.)

Operations in POC units and *PI* units shall be confined to the dry season unless otherwise authorized. When treatments must occur during the rainy season (before June 15, or after Oct. 15) or during rain events defined as when water forms puddles on the road, and access by vehicular traffic is required, the following guidelines will be followed to prevent introduction of the pathogen to non-infested areas. Some variation of the dates may be permitted depending on weather and soil moisture conditions, which will be defined by the COR. If the vehicle, by visual examination by the Project Inspector, has clods of mud or organic material present, then the vehicle will require washing and removal of the mud or organic material before entering a POC unit. Entry into the area will not be allowed until this measure is followed. Upon departure from a *PL* area, the vehicle shall be washed and free of dirt or organic material.

Noxious Weeds

Prior to treatment, units will be surveyed for the presence of noxious weeds. At the task order pre-work conference, the COR will identify priority areas by silviculture unit and watershed, which have the presence of noxious weeds.

Noxious weed identification will be briefly covered by the COR at the task order pre-work conference. The COR will also identify which measures shall be utilized to prevent spreading noxious weeds into non-infested areas. These measures will be consistent with the Medford District Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment (April 1998).

Measures may include limited access or egress routes on natural surface roads to units during wet weather (when water puddles on the road), development of a sequential treatment plan so non-infested units are treated prior to infested units, and/or other avoidance strategies would be utilized to reduce spread of other noxious weed. In areas with high concentrations of noxious weeds and where there is a high likelihood of spreading noxious weed seed to non-infested areas, vehicles may be required to be taken through a vehicle washing station after leaving an area infested with noxious weeds and prior to entry into a non-infested area. Certain conditions, such as amount and type of noxious weed infestation, time of noxious weed seed dispersal, time of year, road and soil conditions, and weather will have a major effect on whether vehicle washing shall be required.

D. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action:

This proposed action(s) is needed to meet BLM stocking/reforestation commitments. The acres proposed for planting and other treatments are currently non-stocked or under-stocked with trees. The proposed accompanying maintenance and protection measures are necessary to ensure the survival of the planted trees.

II. PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans:

- (1) *Final EIS and Record of Decision for the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP)* (June 1995).
- (2) *Final Supplemental EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (February 1994).
- (3) *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its attachment A entitled the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (NFP)*(April 1994).
- (4) *Final Supplemental EIS for Amendments to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (March 2000), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (January 2001)
- (5) *Medford District Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment* (April 1998)
- (6) *Final Supplemental EIS for Management of Port-Orford Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (December 2003)
- (7) *Final SEIS to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (2004), *as allowed by Judge Pechman's October 11, 2006 Order as follows:*
 - a. Thinning projects in stands younger than 80 years old;
 - b. Replacing culverts on roads that are in use and part of the road system, and removing culverts if the road is temporary or to be decommissioned;
 - c. Riparian and stream improvement projects (planting, placing material in-stream, road and trail decommissioning, channel and floodplain reconstruction, or removal of channel diversions; and
 - d. Hazardous fuel treatments with a commercial component in stands > 80 years old

III. NEPA REVIEW

A. Applicable CE / CE Exclusion Review

The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Department Manual 516 DM 11, 11.9, Section C. Forestry (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: seedling and seedling plantings, shading, tubing (browse protection), paper mulching, bud caps, ravel protection, application of nontoxic big game repellent, spot scalping, rodent trapping, fertilization of seed trees, fence construction around out-planting sites, and collection of pollen, scions and cones."

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any of the exceptions to CEs apply (516 DM 2, Appendix 2). None apply. (See attached review.)

_____	_____
Preparer	Date
_____	_____
NEPA Reviewer	Date

IV. DECISION

I have reviewed this CE, plan conformance and NEPA compliance review and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan(s) noted above and that no further environmental analysis is required.

_____	Date: _____
Field Manager	
Grants Pass Resource Area	

**NEPA COMPLIANCE
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Spring Tree Planting w/ Radius Scalping
Grants Pass Resource Area
CE #OR117-2008-11**

The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) and Appendix 2 requires the review of the following exceptions to categorical exclusion. If it is determined that any of the following exceptions apply to the proposed action, the proposed project is not categorically excluded and environmental documents must be prepared:

The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) requires the review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (516 DM 2 Appendix 2) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

1) *Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

Yes No

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.*

Yes No

3) *Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].*

Yes No

4) *Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*

Yes No

5) *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

6) *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

Yes **No**

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.*

Yes **No**

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.*

Yes **No**

9) *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

Yes **No**

10) *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

Yes **No**

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).*

Yes **No**

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).*

Yes **No**

Reviewers:

Silviculture, Vegetation Dynamics & Port-Orford Cedar	Date
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Botany	Date
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Cultural Resources	Date
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Fisheries	Date
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Wildlife	Date
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Soils/Hydrology	Date
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Visual Resources / Recreation	Date
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Engineering	Date
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Fire and Fuels	Date
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***“Spring Tree Planting w/ Radius Scalp Installation FY 2008”
Grants Pass R.A.***

TREE PLANTING UNITS

Legal	Unit Name	Key #'s	Acres	Land Allocation	Remarks
38S-7W-5 - 001	Deer Creek 5-2	113301	6	Matrix	3' Radius Scalp/ Grub to be installed at 8' x 8' spacing on all planted and suitable seedlings within the unit.
38S-7W-5 - 009	Deer Creek 5-1	116491	34	Matrix	
38S-7W-5- 002	Deer Creek 5-3	113302	13	Matrix	
38S-7W-5 - 007	Deer Creek 5-5	116489	19	Matrix	
35S-7W-11 - 012	Stratton Hog	165556	43	Matrix	
35S-9W-23 - 003	Biscuit 23-1	164689	18	LSR	
35S-9W-15- 009	Cedar Flat 3	113140	6	LSR	
35S-9W-22- 003	Cedar Flat 3	113150	20	LSR	
		Totals:	159		