

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Decision Record for West Fork Trail Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project

July 2007

EA #OR-115-07-01

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management, Butte Falls Resource Area (BLM) is proposing to install fish habitat improvement structures in West Fork Trail Creek. Based on fish habitat deficiencies and mechanical feasibility, the BLM identified 11 sites for aquatic habitat restoration. The restoration projects would improve fish habitat conditions on 1.2 miles of West Fork Trail Creek. These fish habitat improvement structures would be located on BLM-administered lands in Township 33 South, Range 1 West, Sections 19 and 29 in Jackson County, Oregon.

Five wood structures and six boulder structures would be constructed in West Fork Trail Creek. Current fish habitat conditions are limited due to deficiencies in spawning gravel and the number of pools, high amounts of fine sediment in the gravel, and low amounts of large wood. Adding structures to the stream would trap spawning gravel, aggrade the stream channel, and dissipate the energy of flowing water.

The proposed actions are described in detail in the *West Fork Trail Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project Environmental Assessment* (EA). In accordance with BLM Forest Management Regulation 43 CFR § 5003.2 (a and c), the effective date of this decision, as it pertains to actions which are not part of an advertised timber sale, will be the publication date of the Notice of Decision and FONSI in the *Medford Mail Tribune*.

Public Involvement

Public involvement in the *West Fork Trail Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project* was initiated on June 14, 2007 when the BLM mailed the EA for this project to 11 individuals and organizations. The BLM published a notice in the *Medford Mail Tribune* on June 16, 2007 announcing the availability of the EA for public review and soliciting public comments on the project. The comment period ended July 2, 2007; no comments were received.

The BLM received one letter on July 9, after the close of the comment period. The letter's author expressed concern over the cultural surveys conducted for the project. BLM cultural resource staff completed surveys in the project area and located no archeological or historic sites.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on information contained in the EA and the project record, it is my determination that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment. During the public comment period, no new impacts were brought to light that would indicate a need for further analysis. No environmental effects meet the definition for significance in context

or intensity as defined in 40 CFR § 1508.27. The effects described in the EA are within the range of effects anticipated in the environmental impact statements for the Medford District Resource Management Plan and the Northwest Forest Plan, or the effects were determined to be insignificant. An environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared. Copies of the EA are available at the Medford District BLM Office, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon.

Decision

It is my decision to implement the actions proposed and analyzed under Alternative 2 in the *West Fork Trail Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration EA*. I believe this alternative best meets the objectives identified in the EA. Implementation of the project will include the Project Design Features contained in the EA (p. 10). In addition, I will include the following Project Design Feature:

“If an archaeological site is discovered during the project, work will stop and the BLM will be notified within 12 hours.”

The project will include:

1. Installation of five boulder weirs and one boulder cluster by
 - Transporting boulders on maintained roads during dry conditions.
 - Accessing the boulder weir sites on existing skid roads and completing weir construction while equipment is positioned in the stream channel.
2. Installation of five wood structures by
 - Using a cable yarder to pull over 11 beetle-killed trees located within the Riparian Reserve and placing them in the creek.
 - Using a cable yarder to pull over six hazard trees located along BLM road #33-1W-29.1. Trees would be transported to two restoration sites on West Fork Trail Creek and placed in the creek with a cable yarder.
3. Rehabilitation of all access routes by ripping, mulching, seeding with native grasses, and planting.

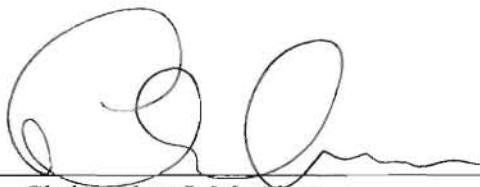
Decision Rationale

My decision to authorize the proposed action is in compliance with the documents listed in the EA (p. 1 and 3), including the *Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*, dated April 1995, and the *Northwest Forest Plan*, dated April 1994. The proposed action complies with the applicable statutes and regulations listed on pages 3 and 4 in the EA. All required Threatened and Endangered, Special Status Species, and cultural surveys were completed and mitigation applied where appropriate.

Administrative Remedies

To protest a forest management decision, a person must submit a written and signed protest to Medford District BLM, Butte Falls Field Manager, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504 by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) not more than 15 days after publication of the *Notice of Decision* in the *Medford Mail Tribune*. Protests shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting this decision. The protest must clearly and concisely state which portion or element of the decision is being protested and why it is believed to be in error, as well as cite applicable regulations. Faxed or emailed protests will not be considered.

If no protest is received by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) 15 days after publication of the *Notice of Decision*, the decision will become final and implementation will begin. If a timely protest is received, the 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 in accordance with 43 CFR § 5003.3.



Christopher J. McAlear
Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

7/11/07

Date