

Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)

Elementary Watson Commercial Thinning & Density Management

Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District
EA# OR-104-08-03

Elementary Watson Commercial Thinning & Density Management will occur on four units (approximately 286 acres) of mid-seral, second-growth forest approximately 40-64 years old located in the Little River, Lower North Umpqua, and Lower South Umpqua fifth-field watersheds in section 13, T.27 S., R. 4 W. and section 7, T.27 S., R. 3 W., Willamette Meridian (see Figures 1 & 2). In addition, approximately 2 acres will be removed for the development of spur roads and rights-of-way.

This project is within the Adaptive Management Area, General Forest Management Area, and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations and will provide approximately 3.584 million board feet (3.584 MMBF) of timber available for auction. Approximately 1.039 million board feet (1.039 MMBF) of timber will come from the Riparian Reserve land use allocation. This project is in conformance with the Roseburg District *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*.

Test for Significant Impacts.

1. Has significant impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (1))?

Yes No

Remarks: Any impacts will be consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS).

2. Has significant adverse impacts on public health or safety (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (2))?

Yes No

Remarks: The additional amount of down woody debris (i.e. five to nine tons per acre) will not dramatically increase the fire risk to the area. In addition, most of the fine fuels, less than one inch in diameter, would degrade within two years after harvest and decrease the risk of a fire building in intensity that will be capable of consuming larger diameter fuels (EA, pg. 21).

Treatment of logging slash by prescribed fire has the potential to affect air quality locally. Burning will be accomplished under guidelines established by the Oregon Smoke Management Plan and Visibility Protection Plan to avoid adverse effects. Any impacts to local air quality will be localized and of short duration, consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS, pp. 4-9 to 4-12).

3. Adversely effects such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains or ecologically significant or critical areas including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (3))?

Yes No

Remarks: Unique geographic characteristics (such as those listed above) are absent from the project area and will not be affected.

4. Has highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (4))?
 Yes No
Remarks: The BLM conducts thinning and density management regularly across western Oregon. There is also a wide body of literature describing the environmental effects of such forest management activity. No effects are expected to be highly controversial. The public was afforded several opportunities to comment on the current proposal, and none of the comments received indicated controversy over the nature of the effects on the human environment.
5. Has highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks to the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (5))?
 Yes No
Remarks: The risks to the human environment from the project were analyzed in the Elementary Watson EA and found not to be highly uncertain or unique.
6. Establishes a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (6))?
 Yes No
Remarks: The advertisement, auction, and award of a timber sale contract allowing the harvest of trees is a well-established practice and will not establish a precedent for future actions.
7. Is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (7))?
 Yes No
Remarks: The cumulative impacts to forest vegetation (pgs. 14-15), wildlife (pgs. 19-20), fire and fuels management (pg. 21), soils (pg. 25), hydrology (pg. 30), fish populations and habitat (pg. 32) were analyzed in the Elementary Watson EA and found not to be significant.
8. Has adverse effects on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (8))?
 Yes No
Remarks: The BLM has completed Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols (EA, pgs. 11, 35). No cultural resources were discovered (EA, pg. 11). It has been determined that there will be no effect to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (EA, pg. 35).
9. May adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (9))?
- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Botanical Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Fish Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Wildlife Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
- Remarks:** Surveys did not identify the presence of any federally threatened or endangered botanical species; therefore the action will have no effect on

listed botanical species (EA, pgs. 32-33).

Elementary Watson will have no effect on the Oregon Coast coho or its critical habitat (EA, pg. 35). The closest Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho or Chinook salmon is approximately 1.5 miles downstream from the project and it will not be adversely affected by the project (EA, pg. 32).

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the federally threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat (EA, pg. 35).

A Letter of Concurrence was received from the USFWS (*Reinitiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities* [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]) dated June 24, 2005 which concurred with the Roseburg District's conclusion that commercial thinning or density management activities are not likely to adversely affect Northern spotted owls and are not likely to adversely affect the Northern spotted owl as a result of disturbance (EA, pgs. 16, 35). Project design features (EA, pgs. 4-11) will be implemented in compliance with the letter of concurrence.

10. Threatens to violate Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (10))?

Yes No

Remarks: The measures described above ensure that Elementary Watson will be consistent with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws. The impacts of the silvicultural treatment on the human environment will not exceed those anticipated by the Roseburg District PRMP/EIS.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the President's National Energy Policy. Within the project area, there are no known energy resources with commercial potential. There are no pipelines, electrical transmission lines, or energy producing or processing facilities. As a consequence, there will be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that Elementary Watson Commercial Thinning & Density Management will 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 silvicultural treatment will be within those anticipated and already analyzed in the *Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS, 1994)* and will be in conformance with the *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP)* for the Roseburg District, approved by the Oregon/Washington State Director on June 2, 1995.

Marci L. Todd, Field Manager
Swiftwater Field Office

Date